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EXPLORING MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY ACROSS IsDB MEMBER COUNTRIES IN THE AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA REGIONS USING THE GLOBAL MPI



Islamic Development Bank Institute

Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative

معهد البنك الإسلامي للتنمية
Islamic Development Bank Institute



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These poverty briefs were jointly prepared by the Islamic Development Bank Institute (IsDBI) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) under the strategic guidance and direction of the Sami Al-Suwailem (Acting Director General, IsDBI/Chief Economist) and Sabina Alkire (Director OPHI).

The team comprised of Areef Suleman (Director Economic Research and Statistics, IsDBI), Bukhari M. S. Sillah (Senior Research Economist, IsDBI), Corinne Mitchell (Director of Programmes and Operations, OPHI), Sophie Scharlin-Pettee (Policy Officer, OPHI) and Ross Jennings (Research Officer, OPHI). The contributions of Habeeb Idris Pindiga (Lead Specialist and Team Leader, Knowledge Horizons, IsDBI), Maarit Kivilo (Designer, OPHI), Maya Evans (Research Communications Officer, OPHI), Aziza A. Zarei (Internal Communication Officer, IsDBI) and Abdul Rashid (IsDBI) for design and technical support is highly appreciated.

FOREWORD

The COVID-19 pandemic has reversed the gains made in the fight against poverty, battering both lives and livelihoods, and leading to millions of people across the world falling back into poverty. Lockdowns and other interventions have brought about a global economic standstill, resulting in job and income losses, particularly among people living in poverty, many of whom are informally employed in vulnerable sectors. As economic activities recover, we face a widening inequality gap in a post-COVID-19 world.

Given that one in three people in Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Member Countries tend to live in multidimensional poverty, fighting poverty has been and will always be at the core of the strategies and policies of IsDB.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further compelled us as a development institution to strengthen our efforts to ensure a more inclusive recovery in our Member Countries. At IsDB, we believe it is imperative that nobody is left behind. Our emphasis on inclusive growth is embedded in our response to COVID-19, the IsDB Group Strategic Preparedness and Response Programme (SPRP), which focuses on '3 Rs' – Respond, Restore, and Restart. The SPRP has been developed in line with the IsDB's President's Five-year Program (P5P), which aims to make us more proactively engage with Member Countries through 'better understanding their unique development challenges, stimulating the private sector, and making markets work for development' to provide the much-needed impetus to foster sustainable and inclusive growth.

The path towards post-pandemic inclusive recovery must start with an understanding of the lived experiences of poor people. Together with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), we are publishing a series of briefs that go beyond assessing poverty through a monetary lens to offer a more comprehensive story of the different deprivations of people living in poverty in our Member Countries. By providing data-driven evidence, these briefs can contribute towards the formulation of well-targeted interventions and efficient mobilization of resources to have a larger impact on the lives of poor people.



We have less than a decade to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but economic recovery remains mired with uncertainties. At this crossroads, we have an opportunity to make a difference in the trajectory of poverty reduction and help end poverty in all its forms and dimensions. Further reversals in the global fight against poverty can be prevented through evidence-based, innovative solutions centred on creating an equal society for all. We can forge a new path and create a better world.

Let us act collectively and be relentless in our pursuit of uplifting the everyday lives of poor people.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be 'بندر محمد الحجاج' (Bandar Muhammad al-Hajjar).

Dr Bandar M.H. Hajjar

Chairman, Islamic Development Bank Group

PREFACE

Poverty is conventionally measured in terms of income, with people often considered poor if their incomes fall below a certain monetary threshold. However, poverty comes in many forms. People living in poverty are often deprived in various non-monetary dimensions, from health, education, access to basic utilities, ownership of assets, to housing.

Therefore, uplifting the lives of poor people in our Member Countries while protecting them from current and future crises requires a more holistic perspective of poverty – one that addresses the different deprivations that people can face. Such an undertaking will enhance poverty-related interventions by multilateral institutions, including the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group.

It is with this in mind that the IsDB Institute rekindled its partnership with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). IsDB and OPHI have collaborated since 2013 in a number of areas, most recently in 2016 on the Multidimensional Poverty Assessment in IsDB Sub-Saharan African Member Countries. We are building on the success of our previous collaborations to help strengthen IsDB Group's evidence-based policies and interventions in our Member Countries.

As part of this collaboration, the IsDB Institute and OPHI are publishing a series of briefs exploring different dimensions related to multidimensional poverty in IsDB

Member Countries. This brief, focusing on the Africa and Latin America regions, moves away from standard income poverty assessments and explores multidimensional poverty in 20 IsDB Member Countries for which data are available. It brings to light multidimensional poverty as experienced at the national and subnational levels, providing a basis by which IsDB country programmes and government policies can be crafted. The brief highlights the nuances of countries' multidimensional poverty situations through a systematic analytical framework, bringing out, for example, variations across sub-regions, between urban and rural populations, and across age groups.

This brief also tracks and highlights success stories, such as in Sierra Leone, which made exemplary progress in reducing multidimensional poverty. Doing so serves as a motivation for policymakers and development institutions that reducing poverty remains possible, despite high initial levels of poverty and other challenges.

We hope that this brief provides insights into how and where we, in the development community, should focus our efforts towards achieving a more inclusive and balanced post-COVID-19 world.

Together, we can build a better future.

Dr Sami Al-Suwailem

Acting Director General, IsDB Institute
and Chief Economist, IsDB Group

Dr Sabina Alkire

Director, Oxford Poverty and Human Development
Initiative (OPHI)

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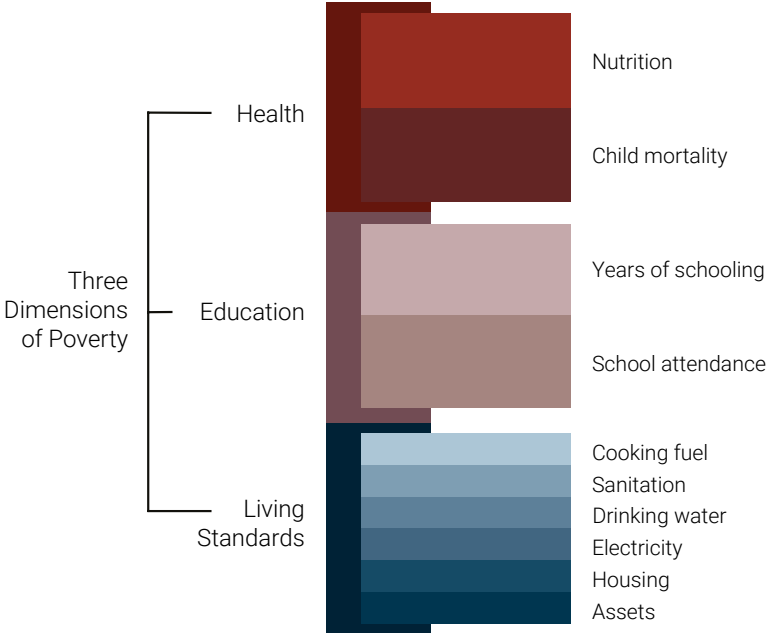
INTRODUCTION

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has changed people's lives in diverse and unexpected ways. The global progress in poverty reduction delivered in the last two decades must be reassessed now that the COVID-19 crisis has put many of these gains at stake. To salvage these gains, policymakers must invest in targeted, evidence-driven interventions to build back better. This brief analyses the most recent and up-to-date trends in multidimensional poverty among the Member Countries of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) in the Africa and Latin America regions prior to the pandemic, which is essential for both understanding the progress made in the past and for use as a benchmark for the future.

The global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is a measure co-designed by OPHI and UNDP that reflects the multiple deprivations of those unable to reach minimum standards in the dimensions of health, education, and living standards. It measures acute poverty (Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa, 2020) using 10 indicators grouped into the three equally weighted dimensions (Figure 1).

The global MPI has been estimated annually for over 100 countries in developing regions since its launch in 2010. For 2020, the global MPI covers 107 countries worldwide (Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa, 2020), including 20 of the 22 IsDB Member Countries in the Africa and Latin America regions. The data come from international surveys such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). In 2020, trends in the global MPI over time were launched for 80 countries with a combined population of 5 billion people, using two rounds of the most recent, comparable cross-sectional data (Alkire, Kovesdi, et al., 2020). Trends are available for 18 of the 20 Africa and Latin America IsDB Member Countries in the global MPI. For the intertemporal trends, the first period of analysis ranges between 2000 to 2014, while the second period ranges from 2010 to 2017/2018, with an average difference between periods of around 6 years.

Figure 1. The global MPI structure



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Source: OPHI 2018.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE ALKIRE-FOSTER METHOD

The MPI conveys information regarding both the incidence and the intensity of poverty. The incidence of poverty is the proportion of people who are identified as poor. This is the proportion of the population experiencing multiple and simultaneous deprivations and is denoted by H, which stands for headcount ratio. The intensity of poverty is the average proportion of (weighted) deprivations poor people experience and is denoted by A. The MPI is the product of both and can be simply obtained by the interaction of the incidence of poverty and the intensity of poverty: $MPI = H \times A$.

Source: Alkire and Foster (2011).

1. KEY FINDINGS ON MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

The analysis in this section is based on the global MPI 2020 data (Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa, 2020).¹ It provides multidimensional poverty data for 20 IsDB Member Countries in the Africa and Latin America regions,² using household surveys between 2010 and 2018. These countries, when using 2018 population data (UNDESA, 2019), are home to almost 460 million people.

Analysis across these Member Countries shows the following key findings:

- In total, 257 million people (56% of the total) are living in multidimensional poverty.
- Nine out of ten people in Niger and more than 8 out of 10 in Chad and Burkina Faso are poor.
- In 11 of the 20 countries, the majority of the population are living in multidimensional poverty.
- Nigeria (91 million) has the largest number of people who are poor, followed by Uganda (24 million) and Mozambique (21 million).
- In 148 of the 234 subnational regions, the majority of the population are multidimensionally poor.
- Eighty-two per cent of people who are poor live in rural areas.
- Children under the age of 18 make up the majority (54%) of the population and a greater share (59%) of those who are poor.
- Fifteen of the eighteen countries for which we have trend analyses reduced their global MPI significantly in absolute terms.
- In six countries, the number of multidimensionally poor people increased, even though their MPI decreased, because of population growth.
- Multidimensional poverty trends do not match monetary poverty trends in US\$1.90 a day headcount trends and GNI per capita growth, suggesting different drivers.

1.1 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: KEY NATIONAL STATISTICS

Three key statistics are used in analysing multidimensional poverty. The first is the incidence or headcount ratio of poverty (known as H), which is the percentage of people who are multidimensionally poor. The second is the intensity of poverty (known as A), which reflects the average share of weighted deprivations that poor people experience. Lastly, the MPI or adjusted headcount ratio (calculated as a product of H and A) reflects the deprivations experienced by poor people as a percentage of the total deprivations that would be experienced if all people were deprived in all indicators. Table 1 presents these statistics for the 20 IsDB Africa and Latin America countries.

When poverty is measured using the global MPI, the Africa and Latin America regions contain 10 of the poorest IsDB Member Countries for which data are available. All these countries are in Africa. As indicated in Table 1, Niger has the highest MPI at 0.590, followed by Chad (0.533) and Burkina Faso (0.519). In each of these three countries, the proportion of people who are poor is very high. Nine out of ten people in Niger (90.5%) are living in poverty, and more than 8 out of 10 in Chad (85.7%) and Burkina Faso (83.8%). In contrast, approximately one out of two people in Senegal (53.2%) are multidimensionally poor, approximately one out of three in Togo (37.6%) and Comoros (37.3%), while the incidence of poverty is only 3.4% in Guyana and 2.9% in Suriname.

In 11 of the 20 countries in the two regions, the majority of the population (257 million people) are living in multidimensional poverty. This means that more than one out of every two (56%) people are multidimensionally poor. Nigeria, with 91 million, has the largest number of people living in poverty, followed by Uganda (24 million) and Mozambique (21 million). More than half (52.9%) of all the poor people in the 20 countries live in these three countries alone.

Table 1. Multidimensional poverty in IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries

Country	MPI data source		Multidimensional poverty					Population 2018	
			MPI MPI = H*A)		H		A	Total population ^a	Number of MPI-poor people ^b
			Survey	Year	Range 0 to 1	Standard error	% population	Standard error	Average % of weighted deprivations
Benin	DHS	2017/18	0.368	0.007	66.8	1	55	11,485	7,672
Burkina Faso	DHS	2010	0.519	0.006	83.8	0.8	61.9	19,751	16,559
Cameroon	MICS	2014	0.243	0.007	45.3	1.1	53.5	25,216	11,430
Chad	DHS	2014/15	0.533	0.005	85.7	0.6	62.3	15,478	13,260
Comoros	DHS	2012	0.181	0.01	37.3	1.7	48.5	832	310
Côte d'Ivoire	MICS	2016	0.236	0.006	46.1	1.1	51.2	25,069	11,549
Gabon	DHS	2012	0.066	0.004	14.8	0.9	44.3	2,119	315
Gambia	MICS	2018	0.204	0.007	41.6	1.3	49	2,280	948
Guinea	DHS	2018	0.373	0.009	66.2	1.2	56.4	12,414	8,220
Guinea-Bissau	MICS	2014	0.372	0.007	67.3	1.1	55.3	1,874	1,261
Guyana	MICS	2014	0.014	0.002	3.4	0.4	41.8	779	26
Mali	DHS	2018	0.376	0.01	68.3	1.5	55	19,078	13,036
Mozambique	DHS	2011	0.411	0.007	72.5	1	56.7	29,496	21,371
Niger	DHS	2012	0.59	0.006	90.5	0.6	65.2	22,443	20,304
Nigeria	DHS	2018	0.254	0.006	46.4	0.9	54.8	195,875	90,919
Senegal	DHS	2017	0.288	0.007	53.2	1.2	54.2	15,854	8,430
Sierra Leone	MICS	2017	0.297	0.005	57.9	0.8	51.2	7,650	4,432
Suriname	MICS	2018	0.011	0.001	2.9	0.4	39.4	576	16
Togo	MICS	2017	0.18	0.008	37.6	1.5	47.8	7,889	2,967
Uganda	DHS	2016	0.269	0.006	55.1	1	48.8	42,729	23,540

Notes:

MPI Multidimensional Poverty Index.

H Headcount ratio: population in multidimensional poverty.

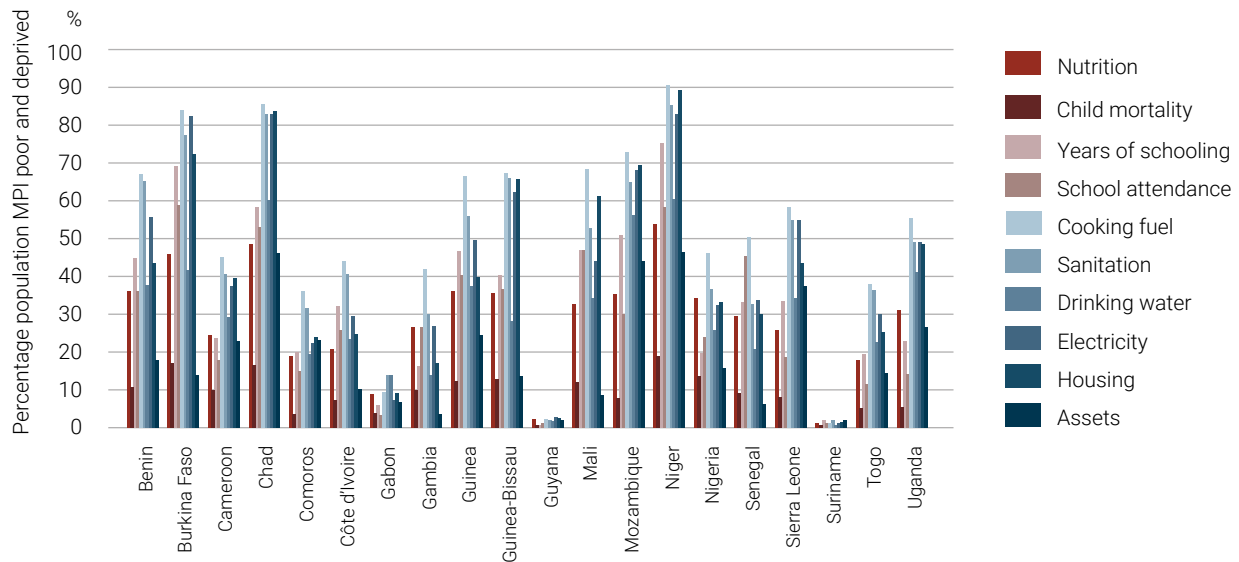
A Intensity of deprivation among poor people.

a UNDESA (2019). Data accessed 28 April 2020.

b Own calculations based on the MPI results and population projection from the year of 2018. This was computed by multiplying the headcount by the population of 2018, and rounding to the nearest thousand.

Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa (2020).

Figure 2. Censored headcount ratios of MPI indicators in IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries



Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

Figure 2 looks at the censored headcount ratios, or the percentage of people who are MPI poor and deprived. It shows that the levels of deprivation differ from country to country – being higher in Benin than in its neighbour, Togo, and higher still in Chad and Niger. Figure 2 also shows how the mix of deprivations differs from country to country. In Niger, censored headcount ratios for cooking fuel (89.9%) and housing (88.4%) are the highest across all 20 countries. While the level of deprivation in cooking fuel is commonly the highest across all the countries in Africa, except for Gabon, where the highest headcount ratio is sanitation (13.9%), levels of deprivation differ across other indicators. In Burkina Faso, the second-highest deprivation was in electricity (81.6%), in Chad it was housing (82.8%), and in Senegal it was in school attendance (44.9%).

To further illustrate the point about different indicators being important in each country, Figure 3 presents the percentage contributions of each of the indicators to the MPI for all countries in the two regions. Focusing on two neighbouring countries in the Latin America region with similar low MPI, the largest contribution to the MPI in Guyana is from the nutrition indicator (24.4%), followed by school attendance (10.9%) and electricity (10.9%). In Suriname, the largest contribution comes from the years of schooling (28.0%) indicator, followed by school attendance (15.8%) and nutrition (15.0%).

Across the three poorest countries – Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso – the contributions of the different indicators to the MPI are very similar. Years of schooling is the largest contributor in Niger (21.0%), Chad (18.0%) and Burkina Faso (21.9%), followed by school attendance (16.3%, 16.4% and 18.7%, respectively) and nutrition (15.0%, 15.0% and 14.6%, respectively). In contrast, the three largest contributors to the MPI in Uganda are nutrition (19.1%), years of schooling (14.0%) and cooking fuel (11.3%), while in Gabon they are nutrition (21.9%), years of schooling (14.6%) and sanitation (11.7%).

Figure 3. Percentage contributions of MPI indicators for IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries

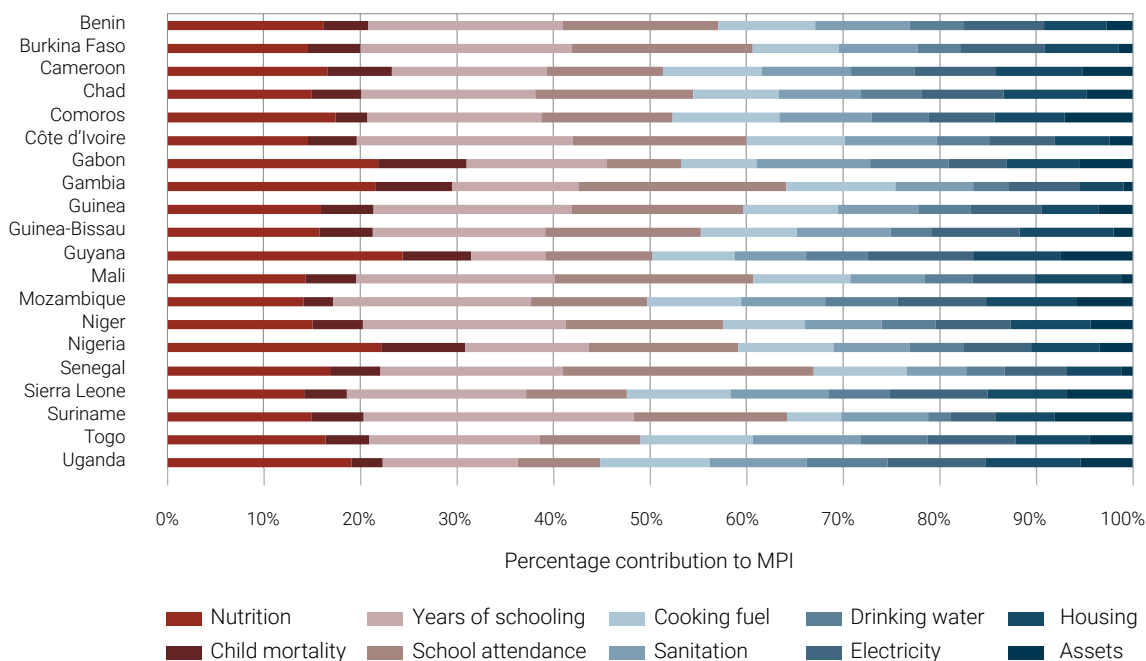
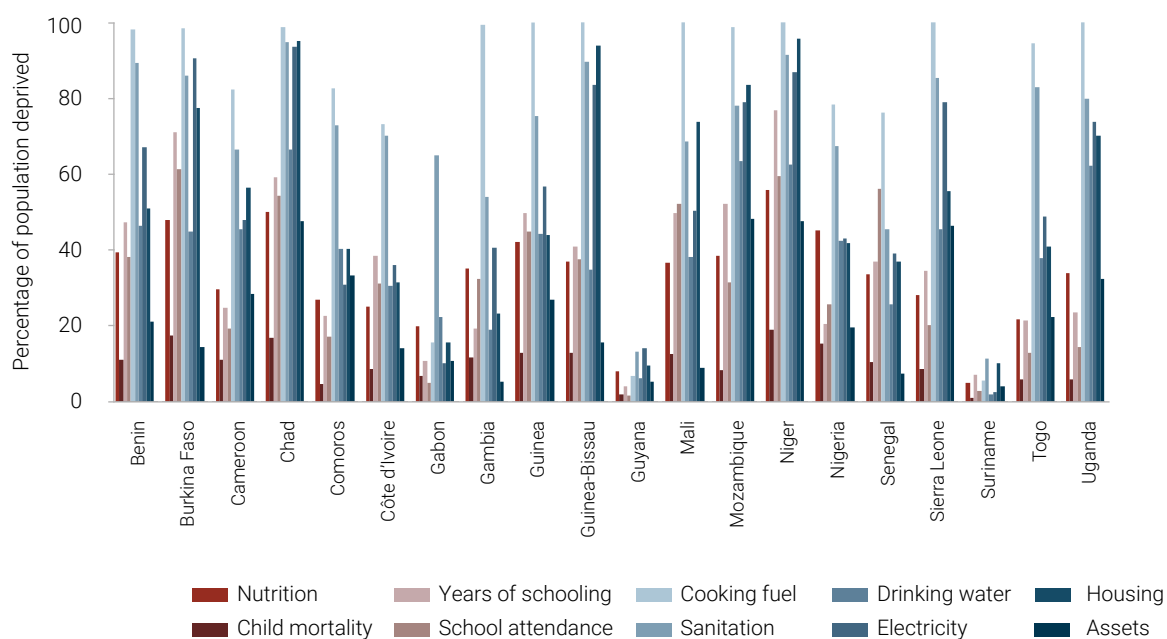


Figure 4. Uncensored headcount ratios of MPI indicators in IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries



The similarities and differences across Member Countries are also evident in the uncensored headcount ratios. While the censored headcounts focus only on the multidimensionally poor, uncensored headcounts reflect the percentage of the total population of a country who are deprived in each of the 10 indicators. From Figure 4, it is immediately clear that deprivation in cooking fuel is a pervasive problem for many countries in the Africa region, irrespective of whether the population is poor or not. The uncensored headcounts were above 90% in 12 countries and reached 98.7% in Mali. Chad had uncensored headcounts above 90% on four indicators – cooking fuel (96.6%), housing (93.0%), sanitation (92.6%) and electricity (91.5%).

The uncensored headcount ratios are an important reminder of the levels of deprivation on the various indicators even where countries may have a lower MPI. For example, more than 6 out of every 10 people (63.5%) in Gabon were deprived in sanitation. In Comoros, deprivation in cooking fuel (80.6%) and sanitation (71.3%) is experienced by significant proportions of the total population. Even in Guyana, where the poverty headcount ratio is only 3.4%, more than 1 out of 10 people were deprived in electricity (14.0%) and sanitation (12.9%).

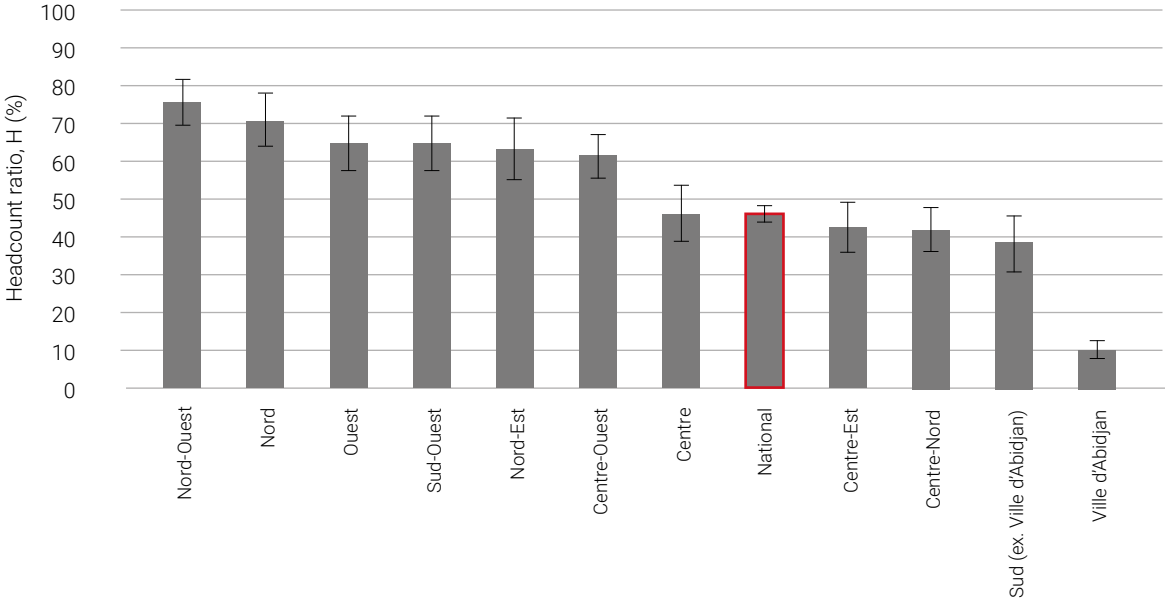
1.2 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: SUBNATIONAL STATISTICS

A key feature of the MPI is that it can be broken down and analysed by a number of variables, in order to inform policy directed at poverty reduction or eradication. One such variable is subnational region. There are 234 subnational regions across the 20 IsDB Member Countries in Africa and Latin America. Although Niger has the highest MPI of all the countries, the 10 subnational regions with the highest MPI are from Chad (8 of the 10 regions) and Burkina Faso (two). The subnational region with the highest MPI is Lac in Chad, with an MPI of 0.711. In total, 46 subnational regions have an MPI of 0.500 and above, from Benin (one region), Burkina Faso (11), Chad (15), Guinea-Bissau (three), Mali (one), Mozambique (two), Niger (six), Nigeria (three), Senegal (three) and Uganda (one). In contrast, there are seven subnational regions with an MPI of less than 0.010: six in Suriname and one in Guyana.

Focusing on the headcount ratio, almost the entire population (99.4%) of Wadi Fira in Chad is multidimensionally poor. In 27 subnational regions, at least 9 out of 10 people are living in poverty; in 64 subnational regions, this is true for at least 8 out of 10 people. In 148 of the 234 regions, the majority of the population are multidimensionally poor.

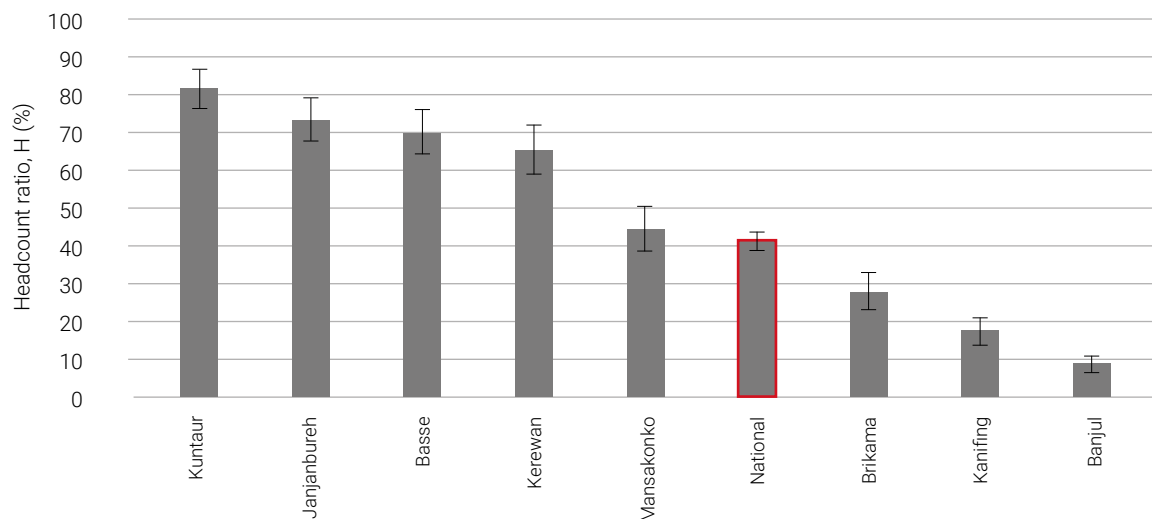
By disaggregating the MPI by subnational region, pockets of poverty within a region and within a country can be seen, and these pockets can then be targeted by appropriate poverty reduction or eradication interventions. By way of example, Figures 5 and 6 detail the incidence of poverty across the subnational regions of Côte d'Ivoire and Gambia. In Côte d'Ivoire, the headcount ratios range from 75.4% in Nord-Ouest and 70.8% in Nord, to only 38.2% in Sud and 10.2% in Ville d'Abidjan. It is, however, important to note the population shares in each of the subnational regions. While there are 2.2 million people who are multidimensionally poor across Nord and Nord-Ouest, there are a similar number (1.9 million) of people who are poor living in Sud and Ville d'Abidjan, and together these two subnational regions are home to more than a third (36%) of the total population in Côte d'Ivoire.

Figure 5. Headcount ratio in Côte d'Ivoire's subnational regions



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.
Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

In the case of Gambia (Figure 6), more than 8 out of 10 people (81.9%) living in Kuntaur were poor, as were three quarters (73.5%) of the population of Janjanbureh. However, 60% of Gambia’s population live in Brikama and Kanifing. As a result, even though the headcount ratio of poverty is far lower in Brikama (28.3%) and Kanifing (17.7%), they are home to more people who are multidimensionally poor (336,000 combined) than the regions of Kuntaur and Janjanbureh (203,000 combined).

Figure 6. Headcount ratio in Gambia's subnational regions

Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

1.3 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: URBAN–RURAL STATISTICS

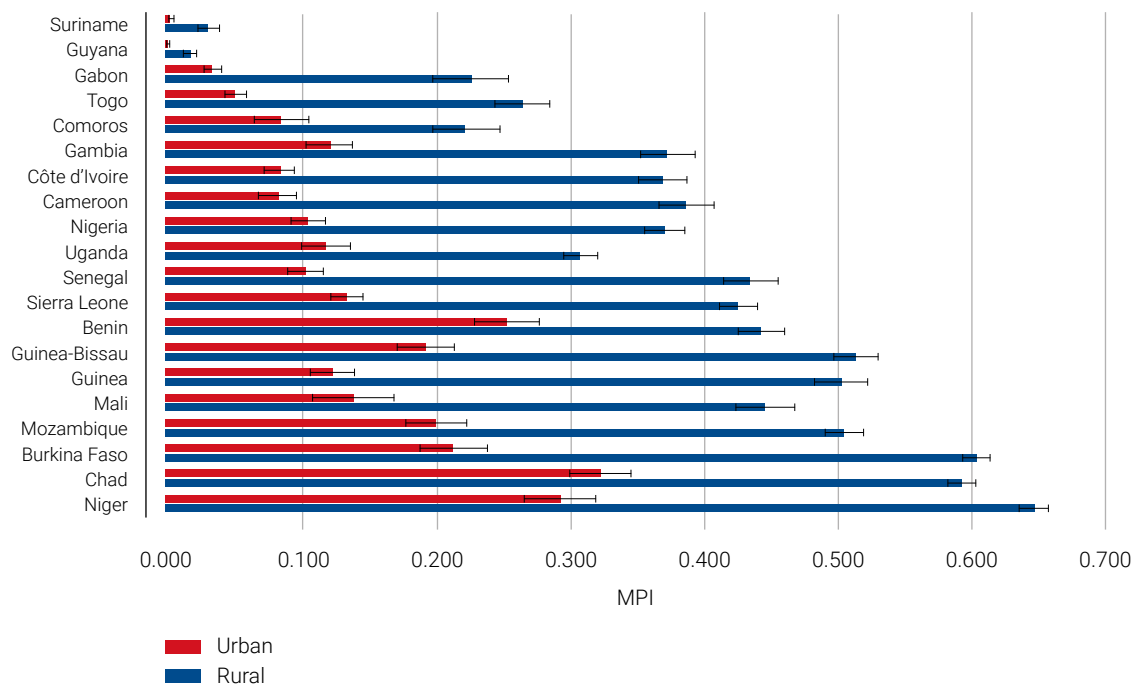
The global MPI is also disaggregated by area, allowing for a comparison of multidimensional poverty in rural and urban areas. Across the 20 IsDB Member Countries, 63% of the total population can be found in rural areas and 37% in urban areas. As shown in Table 2, this proportion varies greatly – 84% of the population in Niger live in rural areas while only 16% of the population in Gabon do so. Rural areas not only have the greatest population share, but also a larger share of the population that are poor. Rural areas are home to 82% of those people who are multidimensionally poor across all the countries in the two regions.

What is constant across every country is that multidimensional poverty is higher in rural areas than in urban areas (Table 2 and Figure 7). In the country with the highest MPI, Niger, the MPI in rural areas is 0.647, more than twice as high as the MPI in urban areas of 0.294. In Gambia, the MPI in rural areas (0.374) is three times that in urban areas (0.122), while in Guinea, the rural MPI (0.503)

Table 2. Multidimensional poverty in IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries, by urban and rural areas

Country	Population share (%)		MPI (decimal)		H (% of population)		A (average % of weighted deprivations)		Number of poor people (thousands)	
	Urban	Rural	Urban*	Rural*	Urban*	Rural*	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Benin	40	60	0.254 (0.012)	0.443 (0.009)	49.2 (1.86)	78.5 (1.05)	51.7	56.4	2,259	5,413
Burkina Faso	21.8	78.2	0.214 (0.013)	0.604 (0.005)	44.1 (2.54)	94.9 (0.45)	48.6	63.6	1,898	14,660
Cameroon	47.7	52.3	0.083 (0.007)	0.388 (0.010)	17.9 (1.31)	70.3 (1.47)	46.5	55.2	2,155	9,274
Chad	22	78	0.324 (0.012)	0.593 (0.005)	61.3 (1.79)	92.6 (0.52)	52.9	64	2,091	11,170
Comoros	31.3	68.7	0.086 (0.012)	0.224 (0.013)	18.7 (2.10)	45.7 (2.23)	45.9	49	49	261
Côte d'Ivoire	47.1	52.9	0.085 (0.006)	0.370 (0.009)	18.8 (1.15)	70.3 (1.49)	45.1	52.6	2,218	9,330
Gabon	84	16	0.035 (0.004)	0.227 (0.015)	8.4 (0.87)	48.7 (2.94)	41.7	46.7	149	165
Gambia	67.6	32.4	0.122 (0.009)	0.374 (0.010)	27.0 (1.78)	72.0 (1.50)	45.1	52	417	531
Guinea	34.2	65.8	0.124 (0.009)	0.503 (0.010)	27.4 (1.91)	86.4 (1.14)	45.1	58.2	1,166	7,054
Guinea-Bissau	44.2	55.8	0.193 (0.011)	0.514 (0.008)	42.3 (2.46)	87.1 (0.90)	45.7	59	351	911
Guyana	26.4	73.6	0.002 (0.001)	0.019 (0.003)	0.4 (0.16)	4.4 (0.57)	39.8	41.9	1	25
Mali	23.1	76.9	0.140 (0.017)	0.447 (0.011)	30.4 (3.17)	79.7 (1.61)	46.1	56.1	1,337	11,699
Mozambique	31.2	68.8	0.202 (0.012)	0.506 (0.007)	39.7 (2.06)	87.3 (0.85)	50.8	57.9	3,657	17,713
Niger	16	84	0.294 (0.014)	0.647 (0.006)	57.5 (2.31)	96.7 (0.40)	51	66.8	2,067	18,237
Nigeria	44.3	55.7	0.106 (0.007)	0.372 (0.008)	22.9 (1.17)	65.1 (1.08)	46.4	57.2	19,881	71,038
Senegal	44.6	55.4	0.105 (0.007)	0.436 (0.010)	22.7 (1.50)	77.7 (1.46)	46	56.1	1,608	6,822
Sierra Leone	44.6	55.4	0.135 (0.006)	0.427 (0.007)	31.2 (1.23)	79.4 (0.99)	43.2	53.8	1,065	3,366
Suriname	73.1	26.9	0.004 (0.001)	0.032 (0.005)	0.9 (0.27)	8.0 (1.11)	39.5	39.3	4	12
Togo	40.4	59.6	0.052 (0.005)	0.266 (0.011)	12.8 (1.13)	54.4 (1.79)	40.7	48.9	409	2,558
Uganda	21.1	78.9	0.120 (0.010)	0.309 (0.006)	26.0 (1.90)	62.9 (1.14)	46.1	49.1	2,342	21,199

Note: * Figures in brackets represent standard error.
Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

Figure 7. MPI by area for IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries (ordered by country MPI)

Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

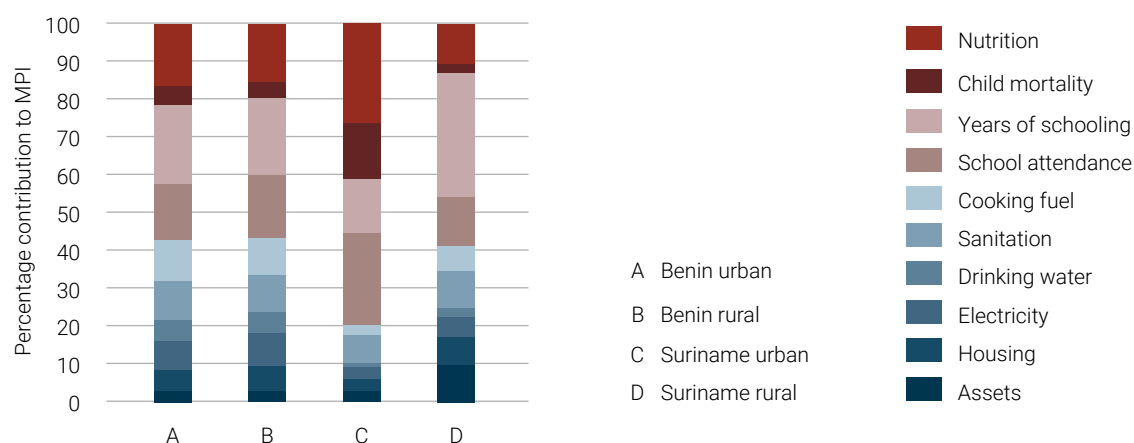
Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

is approximately four times that in urban areas (0.124). In Suriname, the country with the lowest MPI, the rural MPI (0.032) was eight times as high as the urban MPI (0.004). These findings underpin the need for a poverty reduction strategy that prioritises rural areas.

Not only does the MPI highlight the differences in poverty across urban and rural areas and suggest the need for a targeted approach to dealing with multidimensional poverty, it also provides information of what such an approach should look like and how it may differ from country to country. This is achieved by looking at the percentage contributions of each indicator to the MPI for both rural and urban areas in a country. To illustrate this, Figure 8 shows these contributions for Benin and Suriname.

As detailed in Table 2, the levels and intensity of poverty in Benin are different across urban and rural areas. In urban areas, the MPI is 0.254, approximately half (49.2%) of the population are multidimensionally poor, and the average intensity of poverty is 51.7%. In contrast, rural areas have a far higher MPI (0.443), more than three quarters (78.5%) of the population are poor and the average intensity is 56.4%. Nevertheless, the contributions to the MPI of the different indicators are quite similar across urban and rural areas (Figure 8). Years of schooling is the largest contributor to the MPI in both urban (20.6%) and rural areas (19.9%). While nutrition is the second-largest contributor in urban areas (17.0%) followed by school attendance (15.0%), the order is flipped in rural areas, although the contribution levels are similar (15.8% by nutrition and 16.6% by school attendance). The indicators of sanitation and drinking water also contribute similarly to the MPI in urban (10.1% and 5.5%, respectively) and rural (9.6% and 5.7%, respectively) areas.

Figure 8. Percentage contributions of MPI indicators for urban and rural areas in Benin and Suriname



Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

In contrast, the contributions of the indicators to the MPI are very different across urban and rural areas in Suriname. In urban areas, the largest contributions come from nutrition (26.5%) and school attendance (24.8%), while in rural areas, years of schooling (32.5%) is the single largest contributor. The contributions of assets (9.8%) and housing (7.1%) are also higher in rural areas than in urban areas (2.8% and 3.1%, respectively). This analysis illustrates the wealth of information that can be gleaned from the MPI statistics and how responding to poverty in urban and rural areas can differ greatly between countries.

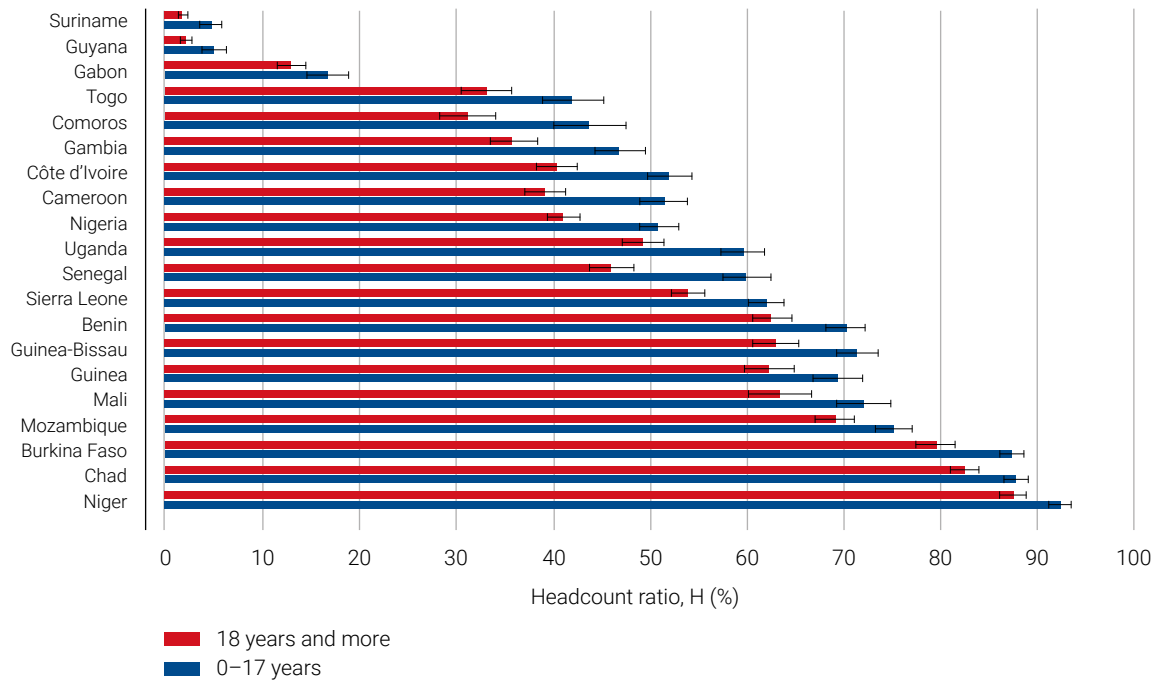
1.4 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: AGE GROUP STATISTICS

The global MPI also provides poverty information for different groups of people as it is disaggregated by age. An initial analysis comparing two age groups – children under the age of 18 and adults aged 18 and above – reveals that children have a slightly higher share of poverty than they do of the population. Children make up the majority (54%) of the population across the Africa and Latin America countries, and 59% of those who are multidimensionally poor. Figure 9 shows the headcount ratio for these two age groups. It indicates that the proportion of those people that are poor is not only higher for chil-

dren than for adults in all countries, but that the differences are significant across all countries. The difference in headcount ratio between children under 18 and adults is greatest in Senegal (a difference of 14%), Comoros (13%) and Cameroon (12%).

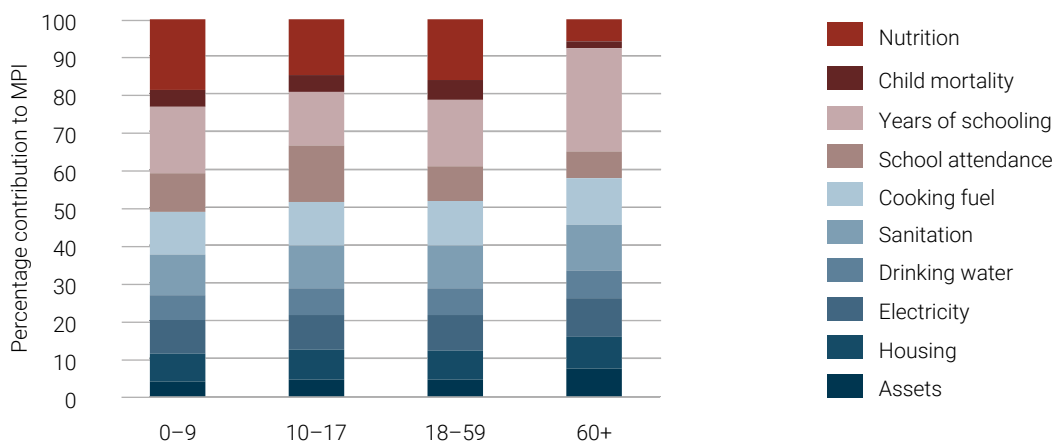
The global MPI is also broken down into more age groups: children aged 0 to 9; children aged 10 to 17; adults aged 18 to 59; and adults aged 60 and above. Figure 10, which uses Togo as an example, indicates that the contributing factors to the MPI for each of these groups can be quite different. Among those aged 0 to 9, the largest contributor to the MPI is nutrition (19.0%) and is followed by years of schooling (17.6%) and cooking fuel (11.2%). For children aged 10 to 17, the largest contributors to the MPI are all at a similar level and are nutrition (15.0%), school attendance (15.0%) and years of schooling (14.1%). Among adults aged 18 to 59, the main contributors were years of schooling (17.7%), nutrition (16.3%) and cooking fuel (11.8%). The indicator of years of schooling (27.4%) is the largest single contributor for people aged 60 and above, followed by cooking fuel (12.3%) and sanitation (12.2%). Conducting such an analysis reveals that different interventions are needed to deal with the poverty situation of different age groups of people.

Figure 9. Headcount ratio by age for IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries (ordered by country MPI)



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.
Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

Figure 10. Percentage contributions of MPI indicators by age group in Togo



Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

2. MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION OVER TIME

In terms of intertemporal trends among the IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries, data ranges differ by country, with an average difference between the two time periods of 5.8 years. We include data for 18 of the 20 countries, excluding Comoros and Guinea-Bissau, for which we did not have available trend data.³

We report changes in multidimensional poverty over time in the harmonised global MPI (MPI_T) and its components – the headcount ratio (H_T), the percentage of people identified as multidimensionally poor, and intensity (A_T) or the average percentage of deprivations that poor people experience simultaneously – as well as for the 10 indicators of the index. These global MPI_T estimates follow a strict harmonisation methodology using the same information from both the older and newer datasets to ensure that any differences in poverty are due to changes in the conditions of the country rather than changes in the questionnaire.⁴ All indicator definitions, weights, and poverty cutoffs used in the survey comparisons follow the same structure within countries. Such analysis allows us to infer broad poverty alleviation trends over time, to investigate the contributions and levels of poverty by each indicator, and to focus on poverty reduction broken down by province, urban and rural areas, and age groups. We further interrogate which of the indicators drove progress and analyse where population growth competes with this progress. We also compare reductions in multidimensional poverty with trends in income poverty and economic growth.

2.1 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: POVERTY REDUCTIONS

Fifteen of the eighteen countries observed a statistically significant reduction in the MPI_T between their two time periods, with the exceptions of Benin, Cameroon, and Togo.⁵ Sierra Leone had the greatest reduction per year (at a rate of -0.027 per year for 2013 to 2017), followed by Guinea (-0.022 from 2012 to 2016) and Côte d'Ivoire (-0.017 from 2011/2012 to 2016).

Guyana, which had the slowest absolute reduction per year in multidimensional poverty, nonetheless had the second-greatest reduction relative to its initial poverty

levels of all the countries (at -10.0% per year for 2009 to 2014), second to Suriname (-11.2%, from 2006 to 2010) and followed by Sierra Leone (-7.5%, from 2013 to 2017).

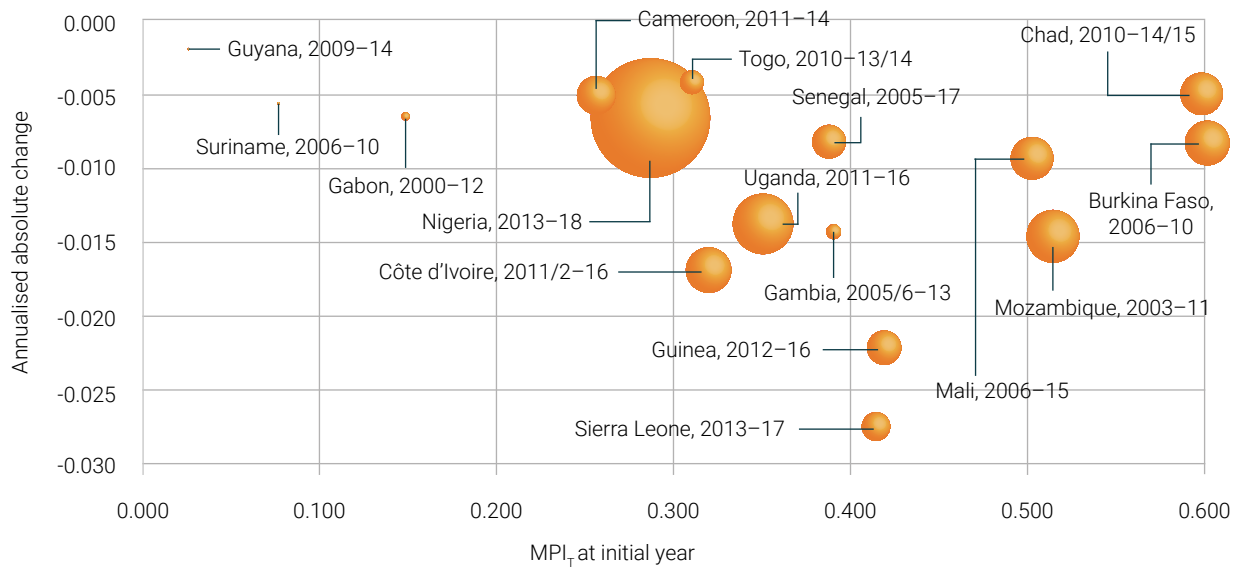
Figure 11 plots the starting level of MPI_T poverty on the horizontal axis, with the poorest country, Burkina Faso, furthest to the right. The vertical axis is the pace of reduction of the MPI_T , with the lower bubbles showing fastest absolute poverty reduction. Unlike the other IsDB regions, the figure does not show a clear pro-poor reduction among the IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries, as the poorer countries, such as Burkina Faso and Chad, do not outpace the others in their rates of MPI_T reduction.⁶ The Africa and Latin America regions present a far more varied picture.

Part of the reason is because the poorest countries in the regions – Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger – are also countries facing fragility, conflict, and violence (IBRD/World Bank, 2020). That the share of the world's poor living in fragile or conflict-affected states could constitute two-thirds of the world's extreme poor by 2030 should be cause for concern. Multidimensional poverty – as well as income poverty – is sensitive to the political situation of countries, and poverty eradication strategies must consider the complexity of human security.

Of the 155 subnational regions included in these countries for which we have data,⁷ 83 experienced statistically significant reduction in their MPI_T . Among these 83 regions, we find reductions across all regions of Gabon, Gambia, Guyana, Mozambique, and Niger; six of the eight regions in Mali; 9 of the 11 regions in Senegal; 12 of the 14 regions in Sierra Leone; and two of the three regions in Suriname.

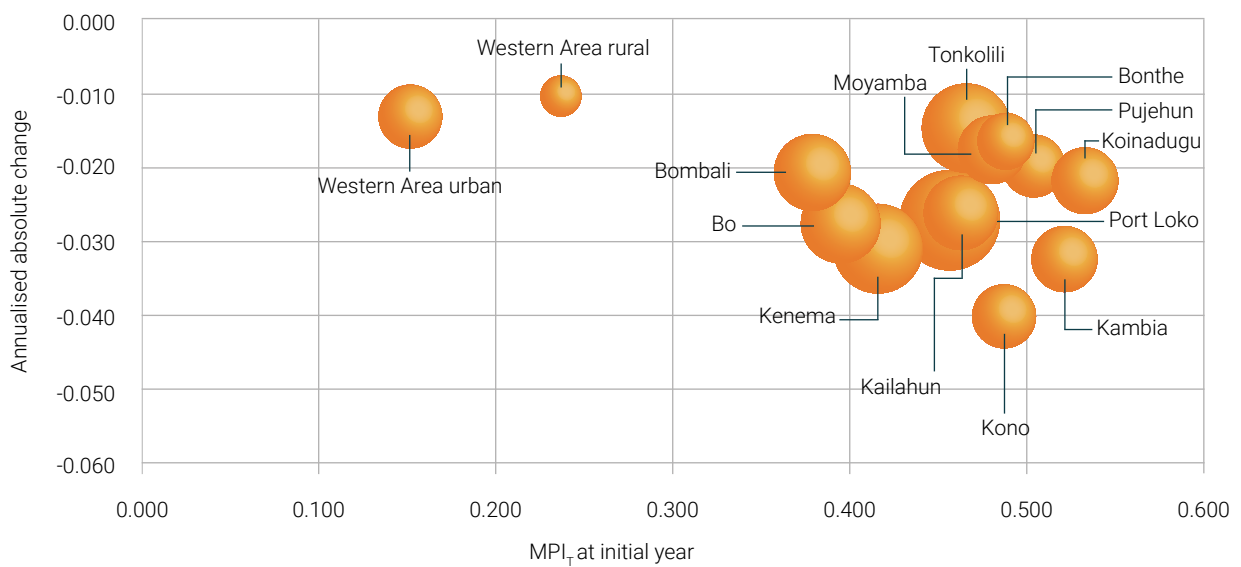
Figure 12 highlights the example of Sierra Leone and plots the starting level of MPI_T poverty on the horizontal axis, with the poorest subnational region, Koinadugu, furthest to the right. It illustrates the consistently high reduction among Sierra Leone's subnational regions, as three regions – Kono, Kambia, and Kenema – outpace the absolute national reduction rate in poverty at -0.040, -0.032, -0.031 per year, respectively. Moreover, as Sierra Leone is the fastest national reducer among the Africa

Figure 11. Annualised absolute reductions in the MPI_t



Note: The size of the bubbles is a proportional representation of the total number of MPI poor in each country in the initial year.
Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell et al. (2020).

Figure 12. Annualised absolute reductions in the MPI_t of Sierra Leone



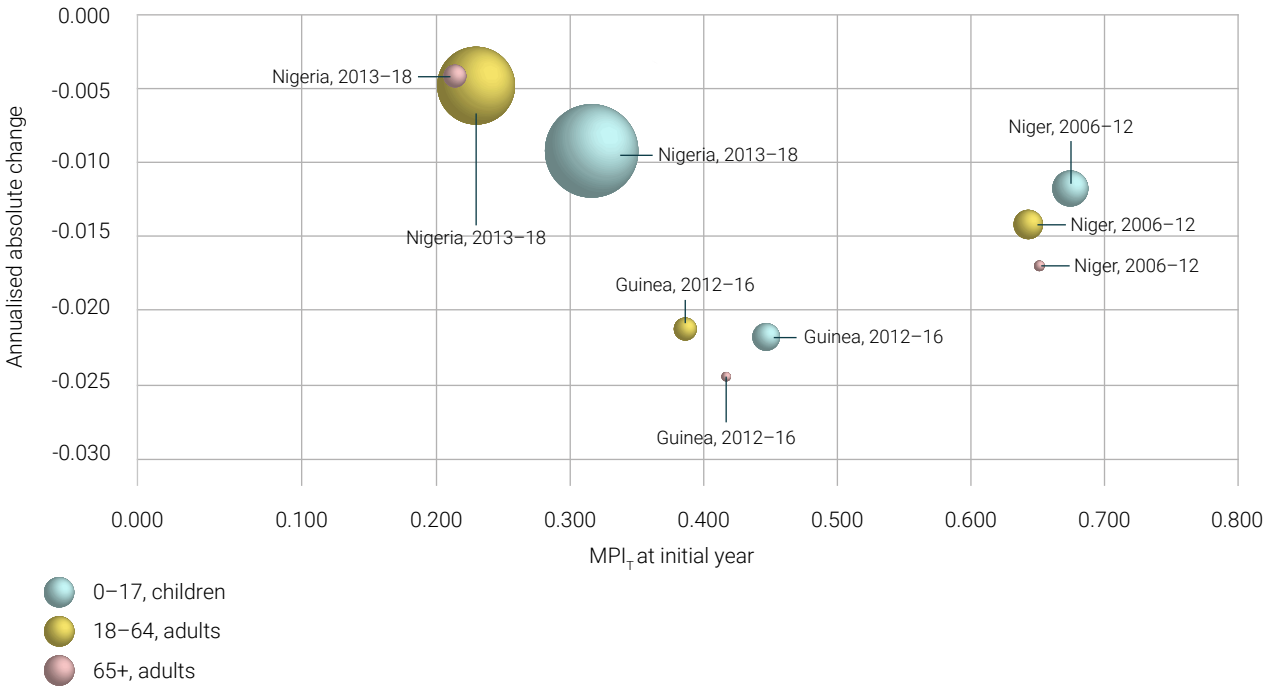
Note: The size of the bubbles is a proportional representation of the total number of MPI poor in each region in the initial year.
Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell et al. (2020).

and Latin America countries, these three subnational regions also outpaced the rest of those countries at the national level. This remarkable reduction was also seen in its East African neighbour Guinea, where the Kindia and Kankan regions also outpaced the Sierra Leone national average between 2012 and 2016. As in Sierra Leone, this reduction occurred during the Ebola crisis. Furthermore, the Janjanbureh region in Gambia warrants mention, as it was the second-poorest region in Gambia in the starting year (with an MPI_T of 0.604) and had the greatest reduction per year (at a rate of -0.029 per year between 2005/06 to 2013) among Gambia’s subnational regions – all of which had significant reductions – as well as outpaced the Sierra Leone national average.

We can also break down the reductions in the MPI_T by age group. Looking at three demographic categories – children aged 0-17; adults aged 18-64; and adults aged 65 and above – we observe plenty of variation among the age of the population who are living in multidimensionally poor households. Figure 13 shows the reduc-

tions in the MPI_T for each country’s disaggregated age groups. Chad, Gambia, Mali, and Nigeria see children with the largest gains in poverty reduction; whereas Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Niger, Senegal, Suriname and Togo see adults aged 65 and above with the greatest change; meanwhile, Benin, Guyana, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, and Uganda see adults aged 18-64 with the greatest change. The MPI_T age group reductions were significant in all countries except Cameroon, as well as children and adults aged 65 and above in Benin and Guyana, children and adults aged 18-64 in Togo, children in Burkina Faso, and adults aged 65 and above in Chad and Uganda. This demographic disaggregation reaffirms the move towards poverty eradication among all ages, but also highlights the different lived experiences within and between countries, through their initial levels of poverty, their relative share of the population, and their relative capability in pursuing lives they have reason to value.

Figure 13. Annualised absolute reductions in the MPI_T by age group



Note: The size of the bubbles is a proportional representation of the total number of MPI poor in each country in the initial year.
Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

2.2 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: REDUCTIONS IN INCIDENCE AND INTENSITY

As Tables 3A and 3B show, of the 18 IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries for which we have data on multidimensional poverty trends, 13 reduced both the MPI_t and the percentage of people identified as multidimensionally poor (incidence, H_t) significantly.¹ Only six – Benin, Cameroon, Guyana, Nigeria, Suriname, and Togo – did not significantly reduce the average percentage of deprivations that these poor people experience si-

multaneously (intensity, A_t). Reductions in intensity were strongest in Guinea and Niger. With these two additional statistics in mind, Sierra Leone stands out as a top-performing country, being a top-three reducer in the MPI_t , H_t , and A_t in both absolute and relative terms. Between 2013 and 2017, nearly three-quarters of a million people left multidimensional poverty in Sierra Leone. That Sierra Leone reduced its incidence from 74.1% to 58.3% in a four-year period, a yearly decrease of 3.9 percentage points. is made all the more remarkable by its experience

Table 3A. Annualised change in incidence (H_t) for IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries

Country	H_t (%)		Annualised change ^a			Number of poor people (thousands)	
	Y1	Y2	Absolute (p.p.)	Relative (%)		Y1	Y2
Benin (2014–17/18)	63.2	66	0.8	1.2	*	6,504	7,477
Burkina Faso (2006–10)	88.7	86.3	-0.6	-0.7	*	12,272	13,469
Cameroon (2011–14)	47.7	45.5	-0.7	-1.6		9,966	10,312
Chad (2010–14/15)	90	89.4	-0.1	-0.2		10,759	12,413
Côte d'Ivoire (2011/12–16)	58.9	46.1	-2.8	-5.3	***	12,235	10,975
Gabon (2000–12)	30.9	15.5	-1.3	-5.6	***	379	271
Gambia (2005/06–13)	68	54.7	-1.8	-2.9	***	1,067	1,073
Guinea (2012–16)	71.3	61.6	-2.4	-3.6	***	7,590	7,229
Guyana (2009–14)	5.5	3.3	-0.4	-9.9	**	41	25
Mali (2006–15)	83.7	73	-1.2	-1.5	***	11,057	12,733
Mozambique (2003–11)	84.3	71.2	-1.6	-2.1	***	16,305	17,216
Niger (2006–12)	92.9	89.9	-0.5	-0.6	***	13,141	15,992
Nigeria (2013–18)	51.3	46.4	-1	-2	***	88,162	90,919
Senegal (2005–17)	64.3	52.5	-1	-1.7	***	7,129	8,102
Sierra Leone (2013–17)	74.1	58.3	-3.9	-5.8	***	5,084	4,364
Suriname (2006–10)	12.8	8.4	-1.1	-10	***	65	44
Togo (2010–13/14)	57.5	55.3	-0.6	-1.1		3,693	3,899
Uganda (2011–16)	67.7	57.2	-2.1	-3.3	***	22,672	22,672

Notes: a) Where the survey was conducted over two years, the average of the years was used to compute the annualised changes. *** statistically significant at $\alpha=0.01$, ** statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$, * statistically significant at $\alpha=0.10$.

Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

Table 3B. Annualised change in intensity (A_i) for IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries

Country	A _i (%)		Annualised change ^a			Number of poor people (thousands)	
	Y1	Y2	Absolute (p.p.)	Relative (%)		Y1	Y2
Benin (2014–17/18)	54.7	54.9	0.1	0.1		6,504	7,477
Burkina Faso (2006–10)	68.4	66.5	-0.5	-0.7	**	12,272	13,469
Cameroon (2011–14)	54.2	53.5	-0.2	-0.4		9,966	10,312
Chad (2010–14/15)	66.7	64.7	-0.4	-0.7	***	10,759	12,413
Côte d'Ivoire (2011/12–16)	52.7	51.2	-0.3	-0.6	**	12,235	10,975
Gabon (2000–12)	47	44.7	-0.2	-0.4	***	379	271
Gambia (2005/06–13)	56.9	51.4	-0.7	-1.3	***	1,067	1,073
Guinea (2012–16)	59.1	54.2	-1.2	-2.1	***	7,590	7,229
Guyana (2009–14)	42.2	41.9	-0.1	-0.2		41	25
Mali (2006–15)	59.9	57.2	-0.3	-0.5	***	11,057	12,733
Mozambique (2003–11)	61.2	56.3	-0.6	-1	***	16,305	17,216
Niger (2006–12)	71.9	66.1	-1	-1.4	***	13,141	15,992
Nigeria (2013–18)	55.9	54.8	-0.2	-0.4	*	88,162	90,919
Senegal (2005–17)	59.4	54	-0.4	-0.8	***	7,129	8,102
Sierra Leone (2013–17)	55.3	51.5	-0.9	-1.8	***	5,084	4,364
Suriname (2006–10)	46.3	43.9	-0.6	-1.3	*	65	44
Togo (2010–13/14)	54.9	54.5	-0.1	-0.2		3,693	3,899
Uganda (2011–16)	51.5	49.2	-0.5	-0.9	***	22,672	22,672

Notes: a) Where the survey was conducted over two years, the average of the years was used to compute the annualised changes. *** statistically significant at $\alpha=0.01$, ** statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$, * statistically significant at $\alpha=0.10$.

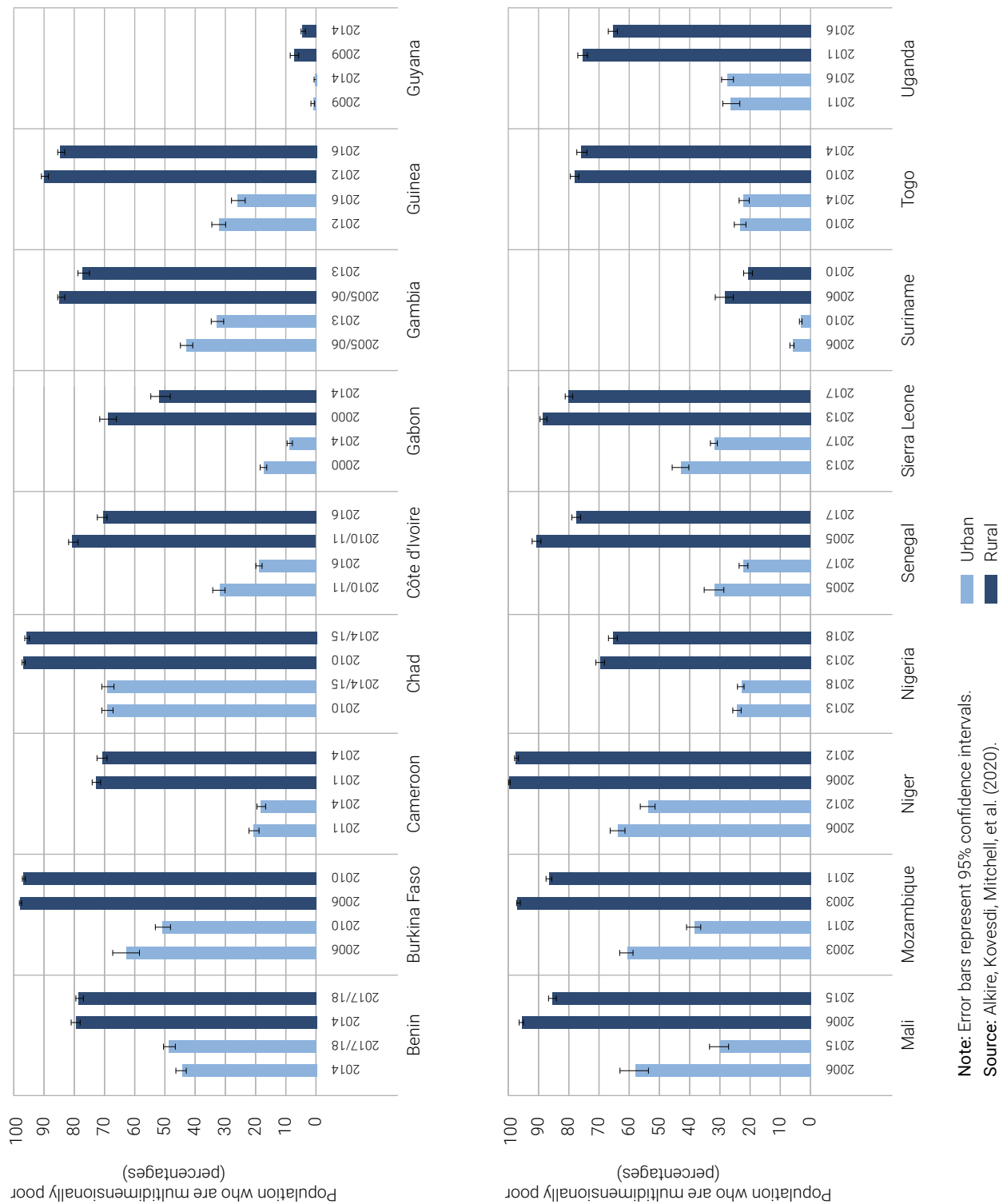
Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

of the Ebola crisis during that period. Its example offers meaningful lessons for other countries and invites further research in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, there is variation in the reduction of poverty incidence – the percentage of the population who are multidimensionally poor – among the urban and rural areas of the 18 countries (Figure 14). The incidence of poverty was reduced significantly in the rural areas of all countries except Benin, Cameroon, and Togo, whereas the incidence of poverty was reduced significantly in the urban areas of all countries except Benin, Cameroon,

Chad, Guyana, Nigeria, Togo, and Uganda. While this disaggregation compliments the Africa and Latin America Member Countries for their pro-poor reductions to some extent, rural areas in all countries started out poorer than their urban counterparts, and significant poverty reduction was more consistently achieved in those rural areas. This also reveals the inequalities faced by urban and rural populations. Clearly, multidimensional poverty among the Africa and Latin America countries is more frequently experienced by their rural inhabitants. This re-

Figure 14. Incidence of poverty over time by urban and rural areas



ality must be considered to ensure that, when focused on ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions, no one is left behind.

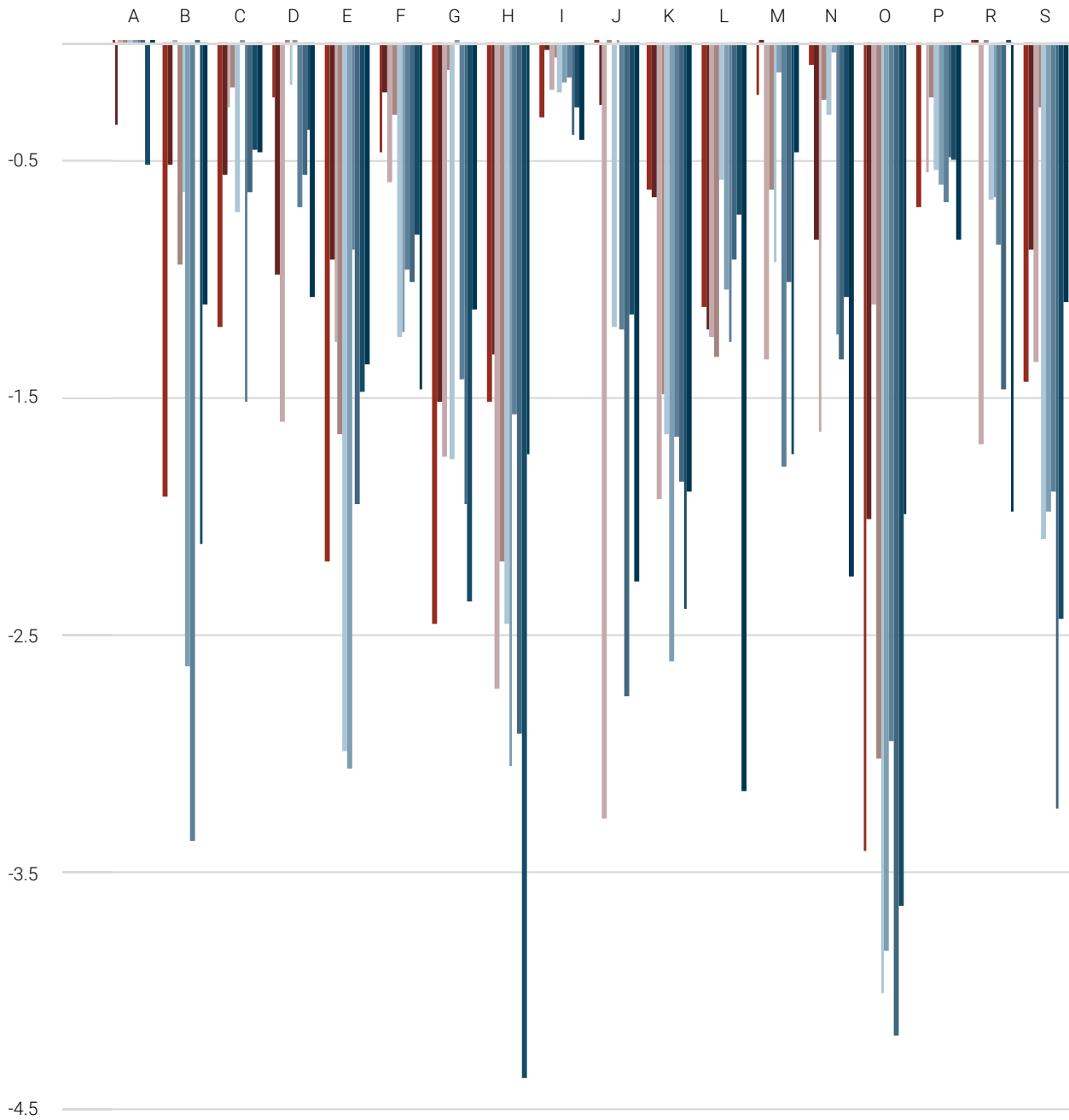
2.3 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: REDUCTIONS BY INDICATOR

Figure 15 presents the yearly reductions in the percentage of people who are poor and deprived in each of the indicators. None of the 10 indicators saw significant yearly reductions in all 18 countries, although the years of schooling and assets indicators saw reductions in all countries except for Benin and Cameroon.⁸ Furthermore, Gabon, Guinea, Mozambique, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Suriname all observed significant reductions in every indicator of their MPI_t. Sierra Leone reduced the percentage of people who are poor and deprived in nutrition the fastest (3.4% per year), as well as in child mortality (2.0% per year), school attendance (3.0% per year), cooking fuel (4.0% per year), sanitation (3.8% per year), and electricity (4.2% per year). Meanwhile, Burkina Faso saw the fastest reduction in drinking water conditions (3.4% per year); Guinea saw the fastest reduction in housing conditions (4.4% per year); and Niger saw the fastest reduction in assets (3.2% per year). Gambia and Uganda saw significant reductions in all indicators except school attendance, as did Côte d’Ivoire in all indicators except drinking water.

- A Benin, 2014–17/18
- B Burkina Faso, 2006–10
- C Cameroon, 2011–14
- D Chad, 2010–14/15
- E Côte d’Ivoire, 2011/12–16
- F Gabon, 2000–12
- G Gambia, 2005/06–13
- H Guinea, 2012–16
- I Guyana, 2009–14
- J Mali, 2006–15
- K Mozambique, 2003–11
- L Niger, 2006–12
- M Nigeria, 2013–18
- N Senegal, 2005–17
- O Sierra Leone, 2013–17
- P Suriname, 2006–10
- R Togo, 2010–13/14
- S Uganda, 2011–16

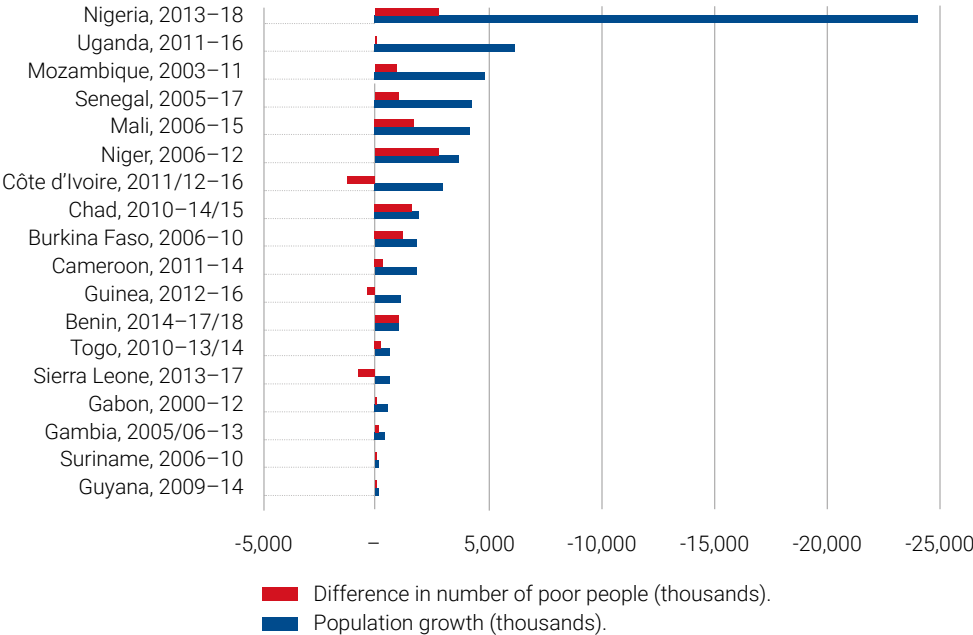
- Nutrition
- Child mortality
- Years of schooling
- School attendance
- Cooking fuel
- Sanitation
- Drinking water
- Electricity
- Housing
- Assets

Figure 15. Annualised change in censored headcount ratios of MPI indicators



Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

Figure 16. Population growth versus number of poor people in IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries

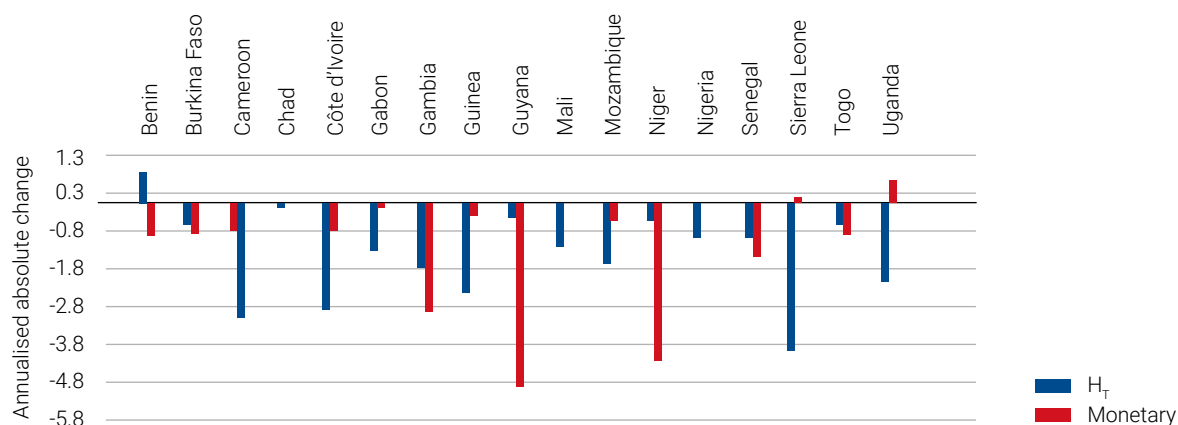


Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

2.4 POPULATION GROWTH AND THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY

To eradicate poverty, the speed of reduction in the multi-dimensional headcount ratio (H_t) must outpace population growth. All of these 18 IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries that reduced their MPI_t significantly also observed overall population growth between the two time periods (Figure 16). With population growth taken into account, only six countries reduced the number of poor people across the periods: Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Guyana, Sierra Leone, Suriname, and Uganda. In terms of success stories, in Côte d'Ivoire, the number of poor people reduced by over 1.25 million, and in Sierra Leone, the number reduced by nearly three-quarters of a million people. Unfortunately, in Niger and Nigeria, the number of poor people increased by over 2 million, and in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali, the increase was over 1 million. While the exponential population growth of the Africa and Latin America regions does not dismantle the progress in poverty reduction within these countries, it

gives us cause to pause before celebration. These concerns have been raised before in the sub-Saharan Africa region, as although country population shares of those living in extreme poverty have declined since the 1990s, the number of poor people has increased substantially (World Bank, 2016).

Figure 17. Annualised absolute change in incidence of H_T and US\$1.90 a day

Country	H_T	Monetary	Country	H_T	Monetary
Benin (2014–17/18)	0.8	-0.9	Mali (2006–15)	-1.2	0.00
Burkina Faso (2006–10)	-0.6	-0.83	Mozambique (2003–11)	-1.6	-0.50
Cameroon (2011–14)	-0.7	-3.06	Niger (2006–12)	-0.5	-4.18
Chad (2010–14/15)	-0.1	0.00	Nigeria (2013–18)	-1.0	0.00
Côte d'Ivoire (2011/12–16)	-2.8	-0.79	Senegal (2005–17)	-1.0	-1.47
Gabon (2000–12)	-1.3	-0.13	Sierra Leone (2013–17)	-3.9	0.10
Gambia (2005/06–13)	-1.8	-2.93	Togo (2010–13/14)	-0.6	-0.87
Guinea (2012–16)	-2.4	-0.38	Uganda (2011–16)	-2.1	0.58
Guyana (2009–14)	-0.4	-4.88			

Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

2.5 COMPARING MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND MONETARY POVERTY

Multidimensional poverty incidence was larger than income poverty at the beginning of the comparison period in all 17 of the countries for which we have both MPI and monetary poverty data.⁹ The gap between the initial multidimensional and income poverty incidence varies from slight differences in Togo (57.5% and 54.5%), to dramatic differences in Chad (90.0% and 41.5%) and Niger (92.9% and 53.5%). Figure 17 depicts the annualised absolute rates of change in the incidence of H_T and US\$1.90/day poverty for the 17 countries. Eleven countries had a reduction in poverty according to both measures, with multidimensional poverty declining faster in Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, and Mozambique. In Sierra Leone and Uganda,

multidimensional poverty incidence declined significantly while the incidence of monetary poverty increased.

If income and multidimensional poverty measures were perfectly correlated, and if they both identified the same people as poor, there would be no need for two separate measures. Instead, we observe important variations between both rates and, at times, the direction of change of these two poverty measures. This suggests that multidimensional poverty trends are not tracking with monetary poverty trends, and we must look at both 'sister' measures to understand the character of poverty around the world.

Table 4. Relative change in the MPI_T and GNI per capita growth

Country	Multidimensional poverty		GNI per capita ^a	
	MPI _T Year 1	Change per year, relative to initial poverty levels (%)	GNI per capita in Year 1, Atlas method (current US\$)	Average GNI per capita growth (annual %) ^b
Benin (2014–17/18)	0.346	1.3	1,270	1.8
Burkina Faso (2006–10)	0.607	-1.4	490	2
Cameroon (2011–14)	0.258	-2	1,330	2.2
Chad (2010–14/15)	0.6	-0.8	830	3.1
Côte d'Ivoire (2011/12–16)	0.31	-5.9	1,180	4.3
Gabon (2000–12)	0.145	-6	3,090	-1.3
Gambia (2005/06–13)	0.387	-4.2	580	-1
Guinea (2012–16)	0.421	-5.6	700	3.2
Guyana (2009–14)	0.023	-10	4,180	-
Mali (2006–15)	0.501	-2	500	1
Mozambique (2003–11)	0.516	-3.1	320	5.5
Niger (2006–12)	0.668	-2	360	1.4
Nigeria (2013–18)	0.287	-2.4	2,690	0.3
Senegal (2005–17)	0.382	-2.4	1,000	1.5
Sierra Leone (2013–17)	0.409	-7.5	660	-0.5
Suriname (2006–10)	0.059	-11.2	4,040	-
Togo (2010–13/14)	0.316	-1.3	560	3.8
Uganda (2011–16)	0.349	-4.2	850	1.8

Notes: a) GNI figures from the World Development Indicators (World Bank, 2021). Where the survey was conducted over two years, the average of the years was used to compute the GNI statistic.

b) Guyana and Suriname did not have available data on GNI per capita growth (annual %).

Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

2.6 GROWTH IN GNI PER CAPITA AND POVERTY REDUCTION

The level of success in translating the gains of economic growth into poverty reduction varies across countries and, at times, across periods (Table 4). For instance, in the periods under analysis, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Uganda registered similar rates of growth in GNI per capita, while Uganda saw an impressive reduction relative to its initial poverty levels (at -4.2% per year for 2011 to 2016) and Benin did not see any significant reduction in multidimensional poverty. Meanwhile, between 2013 and 2017, Sierra Leone's average GNI per capita shrank by -0.5%, compared to a growth rate nearly

six times that in Mozambique – which far outpaced the others in GNI per capita growth. However, the Sierra Leone reduced its MPI_T far faster and led the region in yearly reductions by the MPI_T, H_T, and A_T. Like the comparison with income poverty, the juxtaposition of multidimensional poverty trends and GNI per capita growth trends reveals the importance of both measures for capturing the experience of global poverty. While governments may pursue lightning-quick economic growth rates, without proper attention to the human development on the ground, they will struggle to meet both the needs of their citizens and their target of ending poverty in all its forms by 2030.

3. COVID-19 AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

The global MPI 2020 data (Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa, 2020) uses household surveys between 2009 and 2019, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic that has shaken the world. Few countries have been spared the devastation caused by the pandemic, which has had an impact not only on health systems but also on the world's economic and social systems. Widespread data are not yet available to gauge the full impact of the pandemic, especially its impact on levels of multidimensional poverty, but insights can be gleaned on the risk that the pandemic poses for poor people across IsDB Member Countries. This section briefly examines the risk profile of IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries, the data available on deaths to date, and some of the strategies and responses that countries have adopted to try and mitigate the risk of COVID-19 and its consequences.

3.1 THE RISK PROFILE OF AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA MEMBER COUNTRIES

The global MPI can be used to identify populations at higher risk of COVID-19, using three of the indicators that lead to increased risk.¹⁰ Alkire, Dirksen, et al. (2020a) outline the reasons behind the selection of these indicators – nutrition is selected because ‘undernutrition is strongly associated with weakened immune systems, morbidity, and mortality’, drinking water is selected because ‘unsafe drinking water is associated with much of the global disease burden and weakened immune systems’, and cooking fuel is selected because ‘deprivation in clean cooking fuel is associated with indoor air pollution and acute respiratory infections’. The analysis profiles those individuals within a country who are at risk – defined as those deprived in at least one of the indicators – and those who are at high risk as they are deprived in all three indicators at the same time.

Table 5 indicates that the proportion of the total population who are at risk and at high risk varies greatly across the countries in Africa and Latin America. At one end of the scale are countries such as Mali (99.3%) and Niger (99.2%) where almost the entire population are at risk.

Furthermore, across the 12 countries in Africa, more than 9 out of 10 people are at risk. At the other end of the scale, 16.2% of the population in Guyana are at risk, as are 11.4% of the population in Suriname. Looking at the proportion of the population in each country that is at high risk – that is, they are deprived in all three indicators of nutrition, drinking water and cooking fuel – approximately one out of three people in Niger (35.4%) and Chad (32.2%) are at high risk. One out of four people are at high risk in Mozambique (26.2%), while one out of five are at high risk in Guinea (19.9%) and Benin (19.6%). In contrast, only 3.0% in Guyana and 2.1% in Suriname are at high risk.

Table 5 also shows the proportion of the population who are MPI poor and at risk. In most countries, the difference between those at risk and those who are MPI poor and at risk is large. For example, in Mali, 99.3% of the population is at risk while 68.2% are MPI poor and at risk. In Niger, however, 99.2% of the population are at risk and 90.3% are at risk and MPI poor.

As of 15 April 2021, the global death toll from the COVID-19 pandemic is nearing 3 million people. Across the IsDB Member Countries in Africa and Latin America, there have been fewer than 10,000 recorded deaths due to COVID-19, with Nigeria, Senegal, Cameroon, and Mozambique reporting the highest number of deaths (Worldometer, 2021).

Responses to the pandemic have also varied from country to country. During the course of 2020, Gentilini et al. (2020) tracked governments' responses across a range of different social protection measures and jobs responses, according to three different categories: social assistance (including cash-based transfers, public works programmes, and in-kind support); social insurance (including unemployment, pension and disability benefits) and labour markets (such as wage subsidies and training support).

Table 5. MPI and COVID-19 risk in IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries

Country	At risk (%)	At high risk (%)	MPI poor and at risk (%)	MPI poor and at high risk (%)
Benin	96.7	19.6	66.7	19.5
Burkina Faso	97.1	22.6	83.7	22.6
Cameroon	85.5	15.5	45	14.8
Chad	97.9	32.2	85.4	32.2
Comoros	87.7	9.7	37	9.1
Côte d'Ivoire	75.9	9.7	45.1	9.6
Gabon	39.7	3.3	14.4	3.2
Gambia	97.4	8.3	41.5	8
Guinea	98.5	19.9	66.1	19.5
Guinea-Bissau	98.5	14.7	66.9	14.7
Guyana	16.2	0.9	3	0.9
Mali	99.3	15.7	68.2	15.5
Mozambique	97.1	26.2	72.4	26.1
Niger	99.2	35.4	90.3	35.4
Nigeria	88.2	18.3	46.3	17.7
Senegal	78.8	11.4	52.1	11.1
Sierra Leone	98.7	13.9	57.8	13.8
Suriname	11.4	0	2.1	0
Togo	93.3	10.2	37.5	10
Uganda	98.7	21.6	55	21.4

Source: Alkire, Dirksen, et al. (2020c).

There are 54 measures recorded across the 20 Member Countries in Africa and Latin America.¹¹ Table 6 details how social assistance transfers are the most widely used class of measure (accounting for 87% of all measures, or 47 types). These are complemented by only seven measures in social insurance and no labour market-related measures. Among the social assistance measures, cash transfer measures and utility and financial support measures are the most widely used safety net intervention by governments. Sixteen Member Countries had such measures in place, with 12 countries having some form of in-kind food assistance or school feeding schemes.

Table 6. Social protection and jobs responses to COVID-19 in the IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries

Country	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE				SOCIAL INSURANCE				LABOUR MARKETS			
	Cash-based transfers	Public works	In-kind (in-kind/school feeding)	Utility and financial support	Paid leave / unemployment	Health insurance support	Pensions and disability benefits	Social security contributions (waiver/subsidy)	Wage subsidy	Activation (training)	Labour regulation adjustment	Reduced work time subsidy
Benin	✓			✓								
Burkina Faso	✓		✓	✓								
Cameroon	✓			✓			✓	✓				
Chad				✓								
Comoros	✓											
Côte d'Ivoire	✓		✓	✓		✓						
Gabon			✓	✓								
Gambia	✓		✓	✓								
Guinea	✓	✓	✓	✓								
Guinea-Bissau			✓	✓								
Guyana	✓			✓								
Mali	✓		✓	✓								
Mozambique	✓				✓			✓				
Niger	✓		✓	✓								
Nigeria	✓	✓	✓	✓								
Senegal			✓	✓								
Sierra Leone	✓		✓									
Suriname	✓				✓							
Togo	✓			✓								
Uganda	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				

Source: Gentilini et al. (2020).

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The first quarter of 2021 continues to reveal the devastating and multifaceted nature of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Without proper attention to the impacts of this public health crisis and the varied conditions among poor people, governments risk jeopardising the last two decades' progress towards eradicating poverty. Governments and policymakers need more information to cope with the multidimensional effects of the pandemic, to act against its adverse consequences, and to protect and improve the lives of the most deprived. To this end, this brief has synthesised data on where IsDB Africa and Latin America Member Countries stand in terms of poverty levels and trends, so as to better understand the way ahead.

The case of Sierra Leone is a good closing example for several reasons. On the one hand, more than half of Sierra Leone's population was living in multidimensional poverty according to the most recent information from 2017. Sierra Leone also has stark differences in the incidence of poverty between its urban and rural populations (31.2% and 79.4%, respectively), and the MPI among its subnational regions varies from as little as 0.092 in Western Area Urban to 0.461 in Koinadugu. On the other hand, Sierra Leone illustrates the progress possible in turning the tide of poverty dynamics. Between 2013 and 2017, and at the height of the Ebola epidemic, Sierra Leone's reduction in its MPI was the largest among the countries (an annualised absolute rate of -0.027 per year), as well as in terms of incidence (an annualised absolute rate of -3.9 per year). It also ranked in the top-five country reductions in intensity (an annualised absolute rate of -0.9 per year). Despite its inequalities and the public health crisis in Western Africa at the time, Sierra Leone charged ahead as a global leader in poverty reduction, illustrating that progress is feasible despite high and generalised initial levels of poverty.

These findings reveal a very heterogeneous experience of acute multidimensional poverty in the two regions. The brief shows that as the COVID-19 pandemic risks reversing hard-won advances in poverty reduction, better data can improve decision-making in a context of limited fiscal resources. For example, information on overlapped

deprivations analysed in this brief may help to set some principles for identifying those who are most prone to the severest adverse effects of the pandemic. This information, in line with Sustainable Development Goal Target 1.5, could serve as a guide for countries to create tailored policies at subnational levels. For instance, as in the case of Sierra Leone, 98.7% of the population are at risk (without either appropriate nutrition, drinking water, and cooking fuel), even as only 57.8% of that figure are also MPI poor. To build back better in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence-driven policymaking must centre the diverse and multidimensional realities of poor people globally or else risk losing the gains of the first two decades of the twenty-first century.



ENDNOTES

- 1 For details on the global MPI, see also the accompanying data tables in Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa (2020); and UNDP and OPHI (2020).
- 2 Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Suriname, Togo, and Uganda.
- 3 While there is global MPI data for Comoros and Guinea-Bissau, we do not have trend data, as the Comoros dataset from 2000 was insufficient for harmonisation with its recent data and the sample size for the Guinea-Bissau datasets did not allow for intertemporal analysis. Furthermore, like with the global MPI, we do not have trend data for Djibouti or Somalia. For more information, see Alkire, Kovesdi, et al. (2020).
- 4 The harmonisation process is outlined in greater detail in Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020, sec.3).
- 5 All statistical significance is evaluated at the level of $\alpha=0.01$, except for Pakistan, at $\alpha=0.05$.
- 6 Absolute changes are easy to compare across countries and are key comparisons to make, but for countries with lower initial poverty levels, large absolute reductions are far more difficult to achieve (Figure 11). The annualised absolute rate of change is the difference in the relevant point estimate (e.g., MPI_t) between two periods, divided by the difference in the two time periods, whereas the annualised relative rate of change is the compound rate of reduction in the point estimate per year between the initial and the final periods. We can also look at annualised relative reductions to understand the changes in poverty for countries with low absolute poverty levels.
- 7 Burkina Faso, Chad, and Uganda could not be disaggregated by subnational region, as either the survey reports established that the results were not representative at the subnational level, or administrative changes in the subnational unit definitions between the two time periods were incomparable (Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. 2020).
- 8 Suriname's MPI_t is computed using 9 of the 10 indicators, excluding child mortality (Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. 2020).
- 9 As Suriname does not have any data on US\$1.90 a day incidence later than 1999, it was excluded from this analysis.
- 10 See Alkire, Dirksen, et al. (2020a, 2020b, 2020c and 2020d) for more detail on the method and the analysis possible.
- 11 A measure, such as a cash-based transfer, could be made up of a number of different interventions or programmes.

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