

# MY410 Week 9 Seminar

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# Lecture takeaways

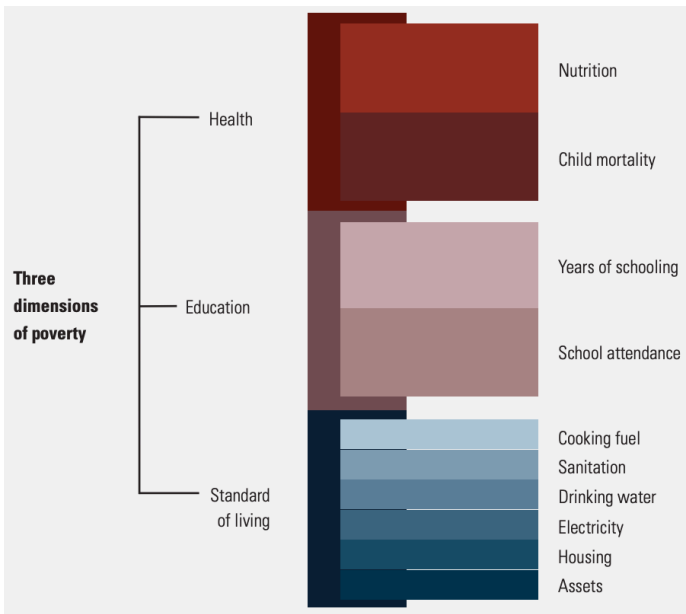
- ▶ Many empirical studies involve the construction of indicators to abstract concepts.
- ▶ The decisions to create indicators are justified with reference to theory, literatures (prior studies), interlocutors, and pragmatic concerns.
- ▶ The measures you choose will often determine the answers you get.
- ▶ A good measure has high validity and reliability.
  - Validity (accurate): Does the measure capture what one seeks to capture?
  - Reliability (precise): Does the measure generate consistent results every time?

# Measuring poverty and conceptualization

**Each conceptualization of poverty implies different underlying theoretical perspectives and aims at answering a different question.**

- ▶ Monetary approach (World Bank) – do people have enough money?
- ▶ Capability approach (Amartya Sen) – do people have the range of capabilities they need to adequately function in the world?
- ▶ Social exclusion approach – are people excluded from full participation in society?
- ▶ Participatory approach – do people think they are poor?

# Aggregation of different poverty indicators



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DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY	INDICATOR	SDG AREA	DEPRIVED IF...	WEIGHT
Health	Nutrition <sup>1</sup>	SDG 2	Any person under 70 years of age for whom there is nutritional information is undernourished.	1/6
	Child mortality <sup>2</sup>	SDG 3	Any child has died in the family in the five-year period preceding the survey.	1/6
Education	Years of schooling	SDG 4	No household member aged 10 years or older has completed six years of schooling.	1/6
	School attendance <sup>3</sup>	SDG 4	Any school-aged child <sup>4</sup> is not attending school up to the age at which he/she would complete class 8.	1/6
Living Standards	Cooking fuel	SDG 7	A household cooks with dung, agricultural crop, shrubs, wood, charcoal or coal.	1/18
	Sanitation <sup>4</sup>	SDG 11	The household's sanitation facility is not improved (according to SDG guidelines) or it is improved but shared with other households.	1/18
	Drinking water <sup>5</sup>	SDG 6	The household does not have access to improved drinking water (according to SDG guidelines) or safe drinking water is at least a 30-minute walk from home, roundtrip.	1/18
	Electricity	SDG 7	The household has no electricity.	1/18
	Housing <sup>6</sup>	SDG 11	The household has inadequate housing: the floor is of natural materials or the roof or walls are of rudimentary materials.	1/18
	Assets	SDG 1	The household does not own more than one of these assets: radio, TV, telephone, computer, animal cart, bicycle, motorbike, or refrigerator, and does not own a car or truck.	1/18

## Exercise: Create a women empowerment index (WEI)

- ▶ Conceptualization: Concepts and definition? Any theoretical foundation? For what end? Why?
- ▶ Measurement: Key indicators of empowerment? Validity and reliability.
- ▶ Aggregation: How will you bring together and weight the different attributes?
- ▶ Context: Where, when, and why?
- ▶ Data sources and collection?
- ▶ Political and policy implications?
  - How do you reach a consensus about the above?
  - What influence, if any, the funding agency might have in your research? Any other stakeholders that can influence your research?
  - How do you make sure your index helps with policy making?

# Suggested data sources

## ▶ International organizations

- WHO (<http://www.who.int/gho/en/>)
- UN (<http://data.un.org/>)
- ILO (<http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/>)
- World Bank (<http://data.worldbank.org/>)

## ▶ Cross-national surveys

- European Social Survey (<https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>)
- World Values Survey (<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>)
- Afrobarometer (<http://www.afrobarometer.org/>)
- Demographic & Health Surveys (<https://dhsprogram.com/data/>)

## Additional references

- ▶ Stiglitz, Joseph E. 2021. "GDP Is the Wrong Tool for Measuring What Matters." *Scientific American*.  
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/gdp-is-the-wrong-tool-for-measuring-what-matters/> (November 29, 2021).