Individual Deprivation Measure

Knowing who is poor, in what way and to what extent

In March 2018, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW62) considered the priority theme **'Challenges and Opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls'.** Women and girls face diverse challenges across the globe with, factors such as age, disability, geography and more influencing their circumstances and opportunities.

However, people living in rural areas often face different challenges from those living in urban areas. These can include more limited employment opportunities and relative isolation from markets, infrastructure including energy, water and sanitation, and services including health and education. This has particular impacts on women and girls, given gendered roles and responsibilities. For example, women and girls continue to bear major responsibility for unpaid household and care work, and so the time and labour burdens associated with lack of infrastructure fall heavily on them. However, persistent gender data gaps limit insights into the situation of rural women.

The Individual Deprivation Measure (IDM) is a new, gender-sensitive and multidimensional measure of poverty. It assesses deprivation at the individual level, overcoming the limitations of current approaches which measure poverty at the household level. By collecting data on 15 economic and social dimensions from the same individual, the IDM can show how deprivations are related. Because the IDM also collects information about sex, age, disability, geographic location and more, it can show how these factors influence deprivation. This allows new insights into the circumstances of particular groups, including women living in rural areas. Information about who is deprived, in what ways, and to what extent can support more informed, better targeted policies and programs.

> **'…[T]here is little or no reliable sex-disaggregated data. Such data are key to getting an accurate picture of what the gaps are and where they lie so that policy interventions can be monitored to ensure they are impactful and relevant.'**
>
> Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the CSW 62 Priority Theme: Challenges and Opportunities in Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Rural Women and Girls, UN Women, Rome, 20-22 September 2017
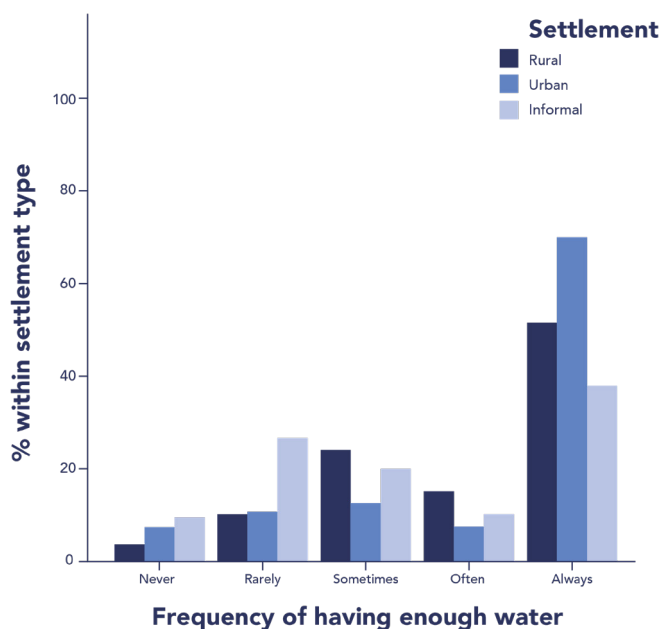
GENDER, AREA AND WATER

Figure 1. Percent of sample within settlement type reporting frequency of adequate water quantity[1]

The Report of the Expert Group Meeting to prepare for CSW62 noted that 'Rural women and girls, particularly in developing countries, are the most water insecure. They are disproportionately responsible for water fetching for domestic uses and for irrigation, but they often lack access to affordable and appropriate water infrastructure or quality.'[2]

An IDM study in Fiji (2015, published 2017) found a difference in water access between poor rural, urban and informal settlements, as the chart (left) shows. It also found that:

- The collection of water in Fiji is gendered, with women having primary responsibility for collection.

- In rural settlements, the distance travelled to access water was up to 90 minutes each day. (Walking a longer distance to a water source takes time away from other productive activities, and potentially exposes women and girls to increased risk of violence.)[3]

- Urban settlements were the least deprived because the majority of residents had water piped into their dwellings.

- Women were more likely than men to report that they did not have enough water to meet their needs.

Residents in both rural and informal settlements were more deprived than those in urban areas, but the nature of deprivation differed: residents in informal settlements struggled with water reliability, and residents of rural areas struggled with travelling long distances to access water. **Being able to disaggregate data, including for sex and location, is key to understanding where to focus our efforts for change.**

[1] Fisk, K & Crawford, J 2017, *Exploring multidimensional poverty in Fiji – Findings from a study using the individual deprivation measure*, International Women's Development Agency, Melbourne, p 60, accessible at http://www.individualdeprivationmeasure.org/wp-content/uploads/IDM-Fiji-Final-Study-Report-31072017.pdf

[2] Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the CSW 62 Priority Theme: Challenges and Opportunities in Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Rural Women and Girls , UNWomen, IFAD Headquarters, Rome, Italy, 20-22 September 2017, http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/62/egm/expert%20group%20report_revised_final.pdf?la=en&vs=2212

[3] http://violence-wash.lboro.ac.uk/

REVEALING INEQUALITY WITHIN HOUSEHOLDS

Collecting data from more than one individual within a household using the IDM may also allow us to explore the relationship between poverty and gender within the household. Within-household measurement can reveal inequality inside households. Better understanding inequality inside households can support more informed policy and targeted investments to achieve the SDGs. Investigation of the power of the IDM to reveal such differences is underway.

Figure 2 represents a rural household in Fiji, comprising a mother, father, son, and daughter-in-law. Age, education, and disability status (as identified by the Washington Group Short Set of questions) for each household member is indicated in the figure key.

The parents perform unpaid subsistence labour, the daughter-in-law performs unpaid household labour, and the son performs both paid seasonal work and unpaid subsistence labour. Household members do not differ in terms of the shelter dimension, and none are deprived in the time use dimension. However, they differ on every other dimension.

These differences also appear to be gendered. The men of the household are less hungry, perceive more control over their lives, feel they can present themselves in socially acceptable clothing, are exposed to fewer environmental pollutants, and face less deprivation in exposure to unclean cooking fuels. The father perceives more voice in the community than other household members.

Looking inside the household makes it possible to identify (and track) who will benefit most, from what kinds of policy action. For example, women in rural areas spend more time exposed to cooking fumes and collecting water than men in the same households. They will particularly benefit from prioritising investments in infrastructure that bring electricity and water to the home.

Improved measurement = Improved data!

Measuring multidimensional deprivation at the individual level and sampling multiple adults within the same household can reveal inequality inside households, providing a more complete picture of poverty and inequality.

The IDM program is exploring better ways to capture the diverse circumstances of individuals experiencing deprivation.

For example, the revised IDM Survey (2018) introduces a measure of land tenure security, a particularly salient issue for rural women, with multiple implications for women's empowerment.[4]

For more information about revisions to the IDM survey, see the 2017 Methodology Update available at: http://www.individualdeprivationmeasure.org/resources/methodology-update-2017/

MOTHER
Female
49 years old
3rd year high school
Some difficulties

DAUGHTER IN LAW
Female
23 years old
Some university
No difficulties

FATHER
Male
45 years old
2nd year high school
Some difficulties

SON
Male
22 years old
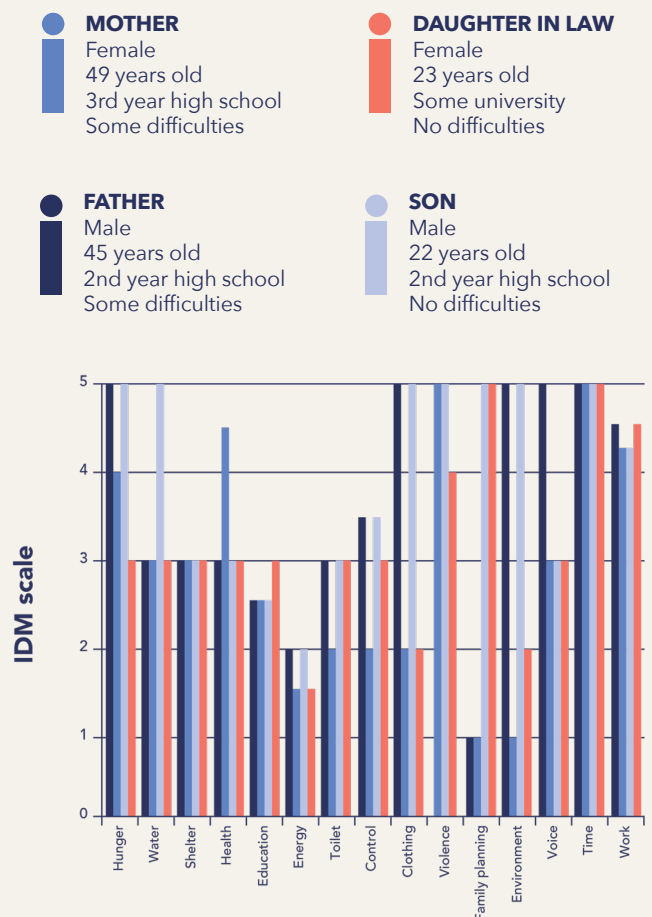2nd year high school
No difficulties

Figure 2. Case study of a rural household across IDM dimensions

CHALLENGES OF REACHING WOMEN LIVING ON THE EDGES – NEITHER RURAL NOR URBAN

Definitions of 'rural' and 'urban' are not as clear cut as generally discussed. Many individuals live in peri-urban settlements, which are also referred to as 'informal' or 'squatter' settlements. They may be less geographically isolated than rural communities, but still not benefit from infrastructure development in urban settlements.

With increasing rural-urban migration in many countries, making visible the situation of women in peri-urban settlements can support a deeper understanding of how internal movement is impacting lives, and highlight priorities for policy makers. In Suva, Fiji, for example, an estimated 20% of the city's population live in informal settlements, and Government of Fiji statistics show poverty rates are highest in informal settlements, across all parts of the country[5]. **IDM data from Fiji showed that those living in peri-urban, or 'informal' settlements, were more deprived than both rural and urban communities across a range of dimensions, including water access, shelter quality, and health status.**

[4] http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/309091468153867580/Land-tenure-and-gender-approaches-and-challenges-for-strengthening-rural-womens-land-rights
[5] http://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/statistics/social-statistics/poverty-indicators

THE AGENDA THAT DRIVES US FORWARD

There has been an increasing focus on gender and poverty within the global development agenda, with growing recognition that gender and poverty are deeply intertwined. However, as UN Women's 2015-16 flagship *Progress of Women* report noted, while 'women's socio-economic disadvantage is reflected in pervasive gender inequalities across many dimensions of poverty, the absence of sex disaggregated data makes it difficult to establish if women are, across the board, more likely to live in poverty than men.'

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE INDIVIDUAL DEPRIVATION MEASURE

Individual level, gender-sensitive, multidimensional measurement is critical to tracking global progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is also vital for guiding investment to achieve the goals, in ways that leave no one behind.

At a time when the 2017 Expert Group Meeting on Rural Women has highlighted 'a stark and growing urban-rural divide', individual level, gender-sensitive and multidimensional measurement is especially important for rural women.

The SDGs have 17 Goals, 169 targets and 230 Indicators. 53 of these indicators are gender-related. As of December 2017, some 75% of the gender-related indicators have no established methodology / standards for data collection, or limited data availability.

The IDM can provide data relevant to some 25% of the gender-related indicators. It can also generate disaggregated data for indicators which do not currently specifically require disaggregated data. It offers a relevant, complementary tool to support better targeting of policies and programs.

1 NO POVERTY

The wording of Goal 1 – **To end poverty in all its forms everywhere** – requires improved measurement of poverty, and more informed, focused and consistent action.

Measuring the poverty of individuals, in a way that is sensitive to gender and considers the range of factors that poor people say are keeping them poor, is key to better understanding the effects of gender, age, disability and rural/ urban location on poverty.

The IDM makes it possible to see who is poor, in what ways and to what extent, and how overlapping deprivations deepen poverty. This information is essential to inform the targeted action required to leave no one behind.

5 GENDER EQUALITY

SDG 5 recognises that ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is essential to realising their human rights and accelerating sustainable development. The integration of gender across the SDGs, recognises that gender inequality exists in all countries, and changing this is central to achieving sustainable, equitable development.

Gender data gaps hide the detail of women's lives, and the extent of gender inequality, making it more difficult for policy makers to target action where it is most needed. The lack of quality data on women in rural contexts is a particular problem given their central contribution to families, communities, economies and societies, and the different development challenges and opportunities in rural areas.

The IDM can provide data relevant to some 25% of the 53 gender-related SDG indicators. When ready for global use in 2020, it will provide a complementary tool to show how national results are translating into change for different social groups and in particular geographic areas.

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

1 FOOD	**2 WATER**	**3 SHELTER**	**4 HEALTH**	**5 EDUCATION**
6 ENERGY/FUEL	**7 SANITATION**	**8 RELATIONSHIPS**	**9 CLOTHING**	**10 VIOLENCE**
11 FAMILY PLANNING	**12 ENVIRONMENT**	**13 VOICE**	**14 TIME-USE**	**15 WORK**

**The Individual Deprivation Measure (IDM) is a new tool that measures:**

- The poverty of individuals, not just households
- Differences in how women and men experience poverty

The IDM recognises that escaping poverty requires more than just money.

This is why it assesses 15 key areas of life for each individual

Why is the IDM important?

It is the first poverty measure in the world based on the views of poor women and men.

Least Deprived

Most Deprived
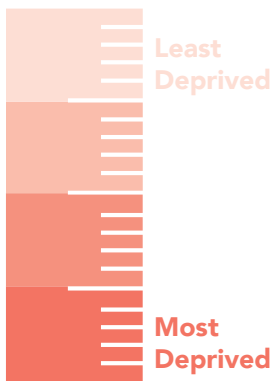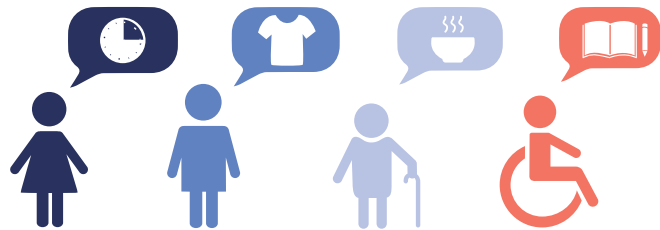
We can see which factors make them poor, and the extent of their poverty.

By measuring the poverty of individuals instead of households, the IDM can show differences by gender, age, disability and more, **including within households.**

Any differences between women and men in each area of life can also be added up to generate a new gender equity measure that is relevant to poor people.

How does the IDM support change?

The IDM collects data about 15 dimensions from the same person, helping to reveal policy priorities and relationships between deprivations.

Not only will the IDM help governments and organisations target poverty more effectively, it will also help them measure effectiveness, revealing what aspects of poverty are changing, by how much—and for whom.

individualdeprivationmeasure.org