GOING BEYOND MONETARY POVERTY
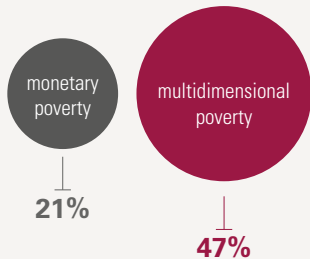
UGANDA'S MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY PROFILE

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

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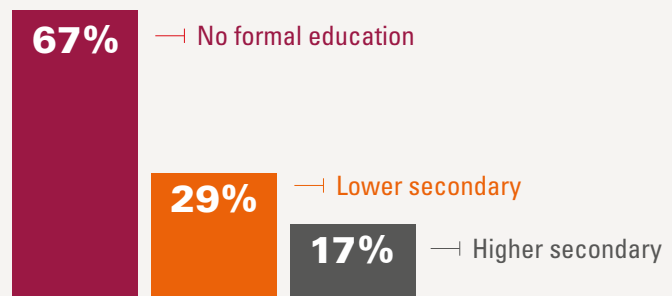ECONOMIC POLICY RESEARCH CENTRE

unicef
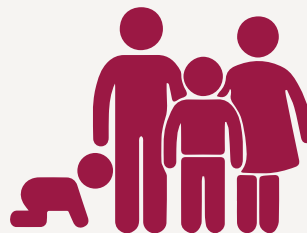for every child

MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY: KEY FINDINGS

NEARLY HALF

of Ugandan households experience multidimensional poverty, **more than double** the percentage living in monetary poverty

monetary poverty
21%

multidimensional poverty
47%

Multidimensional poverty is **highest** among households where the **household head has no formal education**

67% ⊢ No formal education

29% ⊢ Lower secondary

17% ⊢ Higher secondary

Households with 4+ children per adult
70% IN MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

Households with fewer than 4 children per adult
47% IN MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

56% Children below 18 years of age experience the highest rates of multidimensional poverty

Rural households experience higher rates of multidimensional poverty

Rural **55%**   Urban **23%**

50% **of households headed by women** experience multidimensional poverty **compared with 46% of male-headed households**

In Kampala, around
5 x more children
are living in multidimensional poverty **(15%)** than monetary poverty **(3%)**

UGANDA'S MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY PROFILE

Over the past three decades, the Government of Uganda has made remarkable progress in its quest to eradicate poverty. Indeed, between 1992 and 2017 the proportion of the population living in monetary poverty fell dramatically from 56% to 21%.

However, while the method used to measure monetary poverty provides a clear account of households' financial resources, it does not capture the extent and depth of deprivations experienced by children and adults in Uganda. Broadening our understanding of poverty requires going beyond traditional household expenditure dynamics.

Drawing on data from the 2016/17 Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS), this policy brief presents the national multidimensional poverty profile. Additional details on the integration of the consensual approach in national statistics and the methodology underpinning the construction of the multidimensional poverty profile can be found in *Multidimensional Child Poverty and Deprivation in Uganda Volume 1: The Extent and Nature of Multidimensional Child Poverty and Deprivation*[1] and its Appendix I.[2]

The following three sections present the distribution of multidimensional poverty levels for the Ugandan population by:

- **HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS:** sex, education and marital status of the household head, households with and without orphans or elderly person/s (65+), the composition of adults and children in the household, and the household dependency ratio based on the number of children relative to that of adults

- **GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:** regions and sub-regions in Uganda, and place of residence (i.e. urban or rural)

- **INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS:** sex and age of household members along with their economic activity, disability and migration status.

Decrease in proportion of the population living in monetary poverty

1992 **56%**   2017 **21%**

The Consensual Approach

Based on Townsend's theory of poverty as relative deprivation and the Ugandan constitutional rights framework, the consensual deprivation approach rests on the public's ability to identify the necessities of life that all adults and children should be able to afford and no one should have to do without due to a lack of money. Only deprivation items are selected which the majority (i.e. more than 50%) of respondents agree are necessities/essentials, i.e. socially perceived necessities (SPNs). The advantage of this method is that it produces socially realistic and culturally appropriate poverty measures that have the support of the majority of the population and allows the public to participate in decision making about poverty measurement in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

1   https://www.unicef.org/uganda/reports/multidimensional-child-poverty-and-deprivation-uganda-report-volume-one
2   https://www.unicef.org/uganda/reports/multidimensional-child-poverty-and-deprivation-uganda-appendix-one

MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY
BY HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1 shows the percentage of the Ugandan population experiencing multidimensional poverty by household characteristics. Overall, 47% of households experience multidimensional poverty, more than double the percentage living in monetary poverty.

The multidimensional poverty rate is highest among households where the household head has no formal education and declines consistently with the educational level of the household head. Households headed by unmarried women represent the lowest level of multidimensional poverty (31%), while it is highest for those with widowed heads (56%). Although there is only a difference of 6 percentage points between the house-holds with and without elderly member/s, the rate of multidimensional poverty is above the national average for those living with elderly people (52%). People living in households with an orphan tend to experience a greater level of multidimensional poverty (53%) than those with no orphan (48%). Households where there are more children than adults experience higher levels of multidimensional poverty than average. For example, households with four or more children per adult represent a particularly vulnerable group, with a multidimen-sional poverty rate of 70%. Based on household characteristics, the multidimensional measure captures a 4 percentage point gender disparity, with 50% of households headed by women showing multidimensional poverty compared with 46% of male-headed households.

Households with 4 or more children per adult
70% experience multidimensional poverty

Households with four or more children per adult *are particularly vulnerable*

TABLE 1: MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY BY HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS		Multidimensionally Poor (%)
Uganda	National estimate	47
Sex of household head	Female	50
	Male	46
Education level of household head	No formal education	67
	Some primary	60
	Completed primary	44
	Some secondary	36
	Lower secondary	29
	Higher secondary	17
	Diploma	16
	Degree	3
Marital status by headship	Unmarried female head	31
	Married female head	47
	Divorced female head	51
	Widow	56
	Male head	46
Household with elder person/s (60+)	No	46
	Yes	52
Household with an orphan	No orphan in household	48
	Orphan in household	53
Household composition	One adult, one child	28
	One adult, two children	45
	One adult, three or more children	62
	Two adults, one child	34
	Two adults, two children	44
	Two adults, three or more children	57
	Three or more adults, one child	28
	Three or more adults, two children	31
	Three or more adults, three or more children	46
High dependency ratio (4+ children per adult)	No	47
	Yes	70

MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY
BY GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Table 2 presents the geographical distribution of multidimensional poverty in Uganda, with stark differences emerging between those living in urban and rural areas. At 55%, the rate of multidimensional poverty in rural areas is not only above the national average but also more than double that in urban areas (23%). Regionally speaking, multidimensional poverty is least prevalent in central and western urban regions. Prevalence rates are the highest in the eastern and northern rural areas. Sub-regions with multidimensional poverty levels below the 47% national average include Kampala, Central 1, Central 2, Tooro, Ankole, Bunyoro and Lango. The eight remaining sub-regions all have multidimensional poverty rates higher than the national average: Bukedi (78%), West Nile (76%) Karamoja (76%), Bugishu (72%), Acholi (69%), Busoga (61%), Teso (50%) and Kigezi (49%).

Rural 55%   **Urban 23%**

The rate of multidimensional poverty in rural areas is *more than double that in urban areas* and highest in eastern and northern rural areas

TABLE 2: MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY BY GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION		Multidimensionally Poor (%)
Uganda	National estimate	47
Place of residence	Rural	55
	Urban	23
Region urban/rural	Central rural	38
	Central urban	15
	East rural	67
	East urban	46
	North rural	68
	North urban	33
	West rural	43
	West urban	23
Sub-region	Kampala	10
	Central1	26
	Central2	36
	Busoga	61
	Bukedi	78
	Bugishu	72
	Teso	50
	Karamoja	76
	Lango	36
	Acholi	69
	Westnile	76
	Bunyoro	42
	Tooro	40
	Ankole	30
	Kigezi	49

MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY
BY INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

Table 3 presents the distribution of multidimensional poverty disaggregated by the key demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the Ugandan population. Multidimensional poverty rates are highest among those aged under 18 years (56%) and decline consistently with age until the 65+ age group – i.e. the prevalence of multidimensional poverty is greater than the national average for those of non-working age. Apart from employees (other than casual agriculture), the self-employed, the unemployed, home-makers, retired people and students, all other economically active or inactive groups experience multidimensional poverty at a level above the national average of 47%.

Adults who moved within Uganda or internationally are found to experience multidimensional poverty at levels below the national average, unlike non-movers (49%).
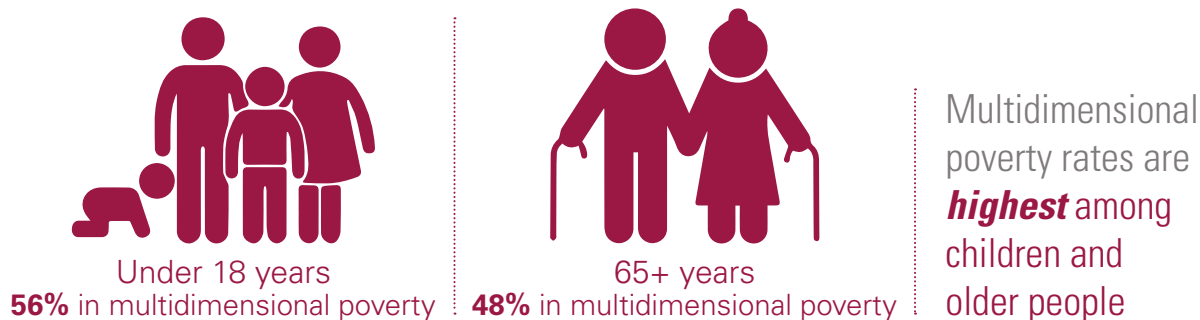

Under 18 years
56% in multidimensional poverty

65+ years
48% in multidimensional poverty

Multidimensional poverty rates are *highest* among children and older people

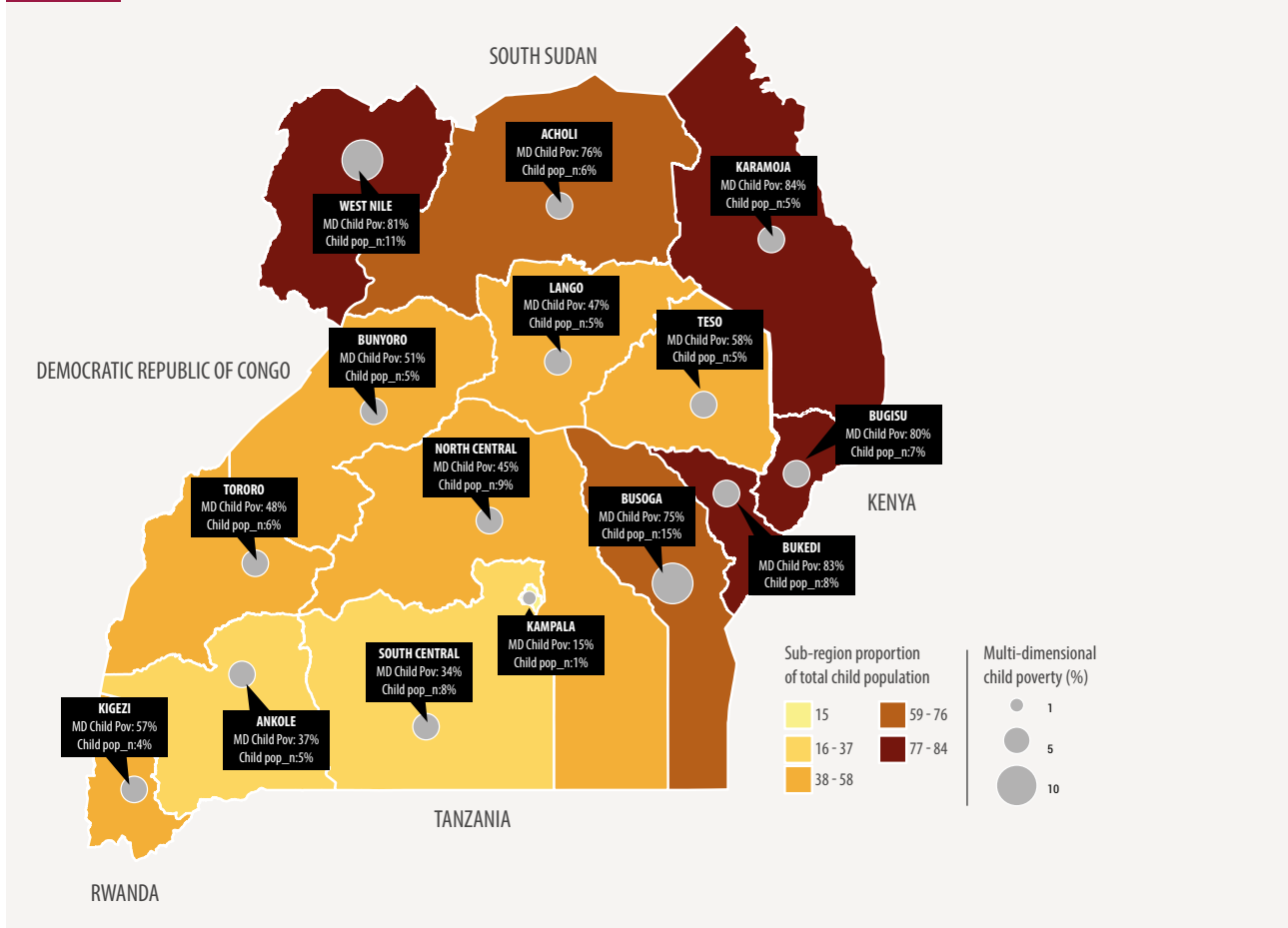| TABLE 3: MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY BY INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS		Multidimensionally Poor (%)
Uganda	National estimate	47
Sex	Male	47
	Female	47
Age Group (UBOS)	Below 18	56
	18–24	34
	25–34	32
	35–44	38
	45–54	39
	55–64	42
	65 and above	48
Economic activity status	Employee (not casual agriculture)	19
	Employee (agric. labourer)	55
	Self-employed (not subsistence farming)	27
	Self-employed (subsistence farming)	46
	Family worker (not subsistence farming)	61
	Family worker (subsistence farming)	60
	Unemployed	27
	Looking after home	33
	Retired	42
	Sick/Disabled	52
	Student	41
	Child	56
	Other inactive	52
Recent limiting illness	No	47
	Yes	46
Migration status since 2012	Not moved	49
	Moved within Uganda	29
	International migrant	34

MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY RATES
HIGHEST AMONG CHILDREN

As Table 3 shows, children below 18 years of age experience the highest rates of multidimensional poverty (56%). The rates are even higher for those living in households with three or more children (62%).

The highest rates of multidimensional child poverty are found in rural areas (see map below): Karamoja (84%), Bukedi (83%), West Nile (81%), Bugishu (80%), Acholi (76%) and Busoga (75%). Busoga, Bukedi and Bugishu – which along with Karamoja, Acholi and West Nile are among the poorest sub-regions in the country – are very densely populated and together account for one-third of Uganda's child population.

The disparity between rates of monetary and multidimensional child poverty varies across sub-regions (see figure below). In Kampala, around five times more children are identified as living in multidimensional poverty (15%) than monetary poverty (3%), while the variation in Karamoja is less than 2% and in Kigezi around 5%.

FIGURE 1 GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL CHILD POVERTY

SOUTH SUDAN

ACHOLI
MD Child Pov: 76%
Child pop_n:6%

KARAMOJA
MD Child Pov: 84%
Child pop_n:5%

WEST NILE
MD Child Pov: 81%
Child pop_n:11%

LANGO
MD Child Pov: 47%
Child pop_n:5%

TESO
MD Child Pov: 58%
Child pop_n:5%

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

BUNYORO
MD Child Pov: 51%
Child pop_n:5%

NORTH CENTRAL
MD Child Pov: 45%
Child pop_n:9%

BUGISU
MD Child Pov: 80%
Child pop_n:7%

KENYA

TORORO
MD Child Pov: 48%
Child pop_n:6%

BUSOGA
MD Child Pov: 75%
Child pop_n:15%

BUKEDI
MD Child Pov: 83%
Child pop_n:8%

KAMPALA
MD Child Pov: 15%
Child pop_n:1%

SOUTH CENTRAL
MD Child Pov: 34%
Child pop_n:8%

KIGEZI
MD Child Pov: 57%
Child pop_n:4%

ANKOLE
MD Child Pov: 37%
Child pop_n:5%

TANZANIA

RWANDA

Sub-region proportion of total child population

15
16 - 37
38 - 58
59 - 76
77 - 84

Multi-dimensional child poverty (%)

1
5
10