

Taking the MDGs Beyond 2015: Hasten Slowly

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“Knowledge is acquired when we succeed in fitting a new experience into the system of concepts based upon old experiences. Understanding comes when we liberate ourselves from the old and so make possible a direct, unmediated contact with the new”.¹ The aim of the paper is to help alter the outlook of the post-2015 MDG period from knowledge to understanding.

1. Hasten slowly

The MDGs have been tremendously successful in galvanizing political leaders, civil society organisations, private sector actors, the media and donors in the pursuit of human development. The conceivers of the MDGs never expected the support to spread so wide and so deep.² As their deadline draws closer, the calls for preparing the post-2015 period are being made with greater frequency and more urgency. Several actors are determined to shape the new framework and believe that early proposals will make the greatest impact.

A hasty definition of the post-2015 targets would be ill-advised. Considerable work is required beforehand. It would be a grave mistake to take for granted the continued support for the current set of goals and targets beyond 2015 without responding to the many concerns and criticism voiced by several stakeholders, observers and analysts.

The inter-governmental process for preparing the post-2015 period should not be intermingled with the review of progress in 2010. That review should focus on global progress towards the global targets. In doing so, the preparatory phase for defining the post-2015 targets can cover a two-year period following the 2010 review. The inter-governmental debate on the post-2015 agenda can then start in 2012.

A UN panel of Eminent Persons should be established to prepare a set of intelligent and feasible options and suggestions. They will be based on the assessment of progress at the 2010-event. The outcome will inform the inter-governmental debate in shaping the post-2015 framework. Apart from its regional and gender balance, the panel should include representatives from the worlds of policymaking, academia, development practice and the media.

The panel must take a ‘big tent’ approach. Its consultations should yield a range of options and possibilities that capture the views of a wide array of stakeholders. The process must be led by the stakeholders from developing countries; not by those from donor countries. Jim Collins, a well-known author on business management and

^o Former UN staff member and co-architect of the MDGs. The paper was commissioned for a High-Level Policy Forum on “After 2015: Promoting Pro-Poor Policy after the MDGs”, organised by DSA/EADI/Action Aid; Brussels, June 2009.

¹ Aldous Huxley (1955) ‘Knowledge and Understanding’ A lecture given at the Vedanta Society of Southern California. [Vedanta and the West](#).

² While I was at UNDP at the time, the other architect of the MDGs worked in the office of the UN Secretary-General. He was initially reprimanded by his superior because the MDGs were bringing the SG’s office too close to the development debate; away from political and diplomatic matters. Fortunately, things have changed since the early days.

leadership, writes “those who fund the social sectors can bring an assumption that is highly dysfunctional: if we give you money, we are entitled to tell you how to use that money”.³ The degree of donor-ship will need to be reduced drastically if the successor targets to the MDGs are to emerge from a genuine partnership among equals.

2. Unconventional wisdom

The idea of simply extrapolating the current set of goals and targets beyond 2015 is not a smart one. Some fundamental aspects of the current MDG agenda must be addressed.⁴ First, the conventional view has misinterpreted the MDGs as one-size-fits-all targets. Second, it has reinforced the money-metric and donor-centric view of development. Third, as any successful acronym, the MDGs are at risk of being misappropriated for other aims.

A recent CGD paper exemplifies some of these points. It states, “By aiming for targets [i.e. the MDGs] that are out of reach from the neediest countries’ public authorities, the ‘international community’ (i.e. donor nations) has therefore accepted to substitute itself to some states in the provision of basic social services through long-term financial transfers”.⁵

The MDGs are global targets; they do not need to be achieved in each and every country. Nevertheless, the perception is widespread that unless all countries achieve the same numerical targets, the world will not meet them. Such a view is incorrect. The MDGs are to be achieved collectively, not necessarily individually.

The misinterpretation of the MDGs as one-size-fits-all targets has set the bar for sub-Saharan African countries unrealistically high. This has reinforced the perception of Afro-pessimism among development practitioners, policymakers and in the media. But it begs the question whether Africa is missing the targets or whether the world is missing the point. It is regrettable that some quarters are using the MDGs to present Africa as a failure so as to gain support for a particular agenda or argument.

Furthermore, the MDGs express ends of development; not means. They never aimed to prescribe a particular development approach, strategy or policy framework. Yet, several quarters have tried to misappropriate the MDGs to gain support for their specific agenda – especially for more aid or for faster economic growth.

Bourguignon *et al.*, for instance, conclude that “most developing countries were lagging behind, except, for some of them, on the income poverty front. In middle-income countries, and in those countries with fast growth, filling these gaps may be essentially a question of implementing the adequate MDG-oriented policies. In other countries, accelerating growth and generating budget resources may be as important as MDG

³ Jim Collins (2005) Good to Great and the Social Sectors. Why Business Thinking is not the Answer. A monograph to accompany ‘Good to Great’. Boulder, Colorado.

⁴ These are explored in detail in: Jan Vandemoortele (2009) “The MDG Conundrum: Meeting the Targets without Missing the Point.” Development Policy Review 27 (4) – forthcoming.

⁵ Jean-Michel Severino and Olivier Ray (2009) The End of ODA: Death and Rebirth of a Global Public Policy. Working Paper 167. Center for Global Development: Washington D.C.

policies themselves. From that point of view, the focus of the international development community on Sub-Saharan Africa is fully justified.”⁶

It is not the first time that international goals are being misappropriated. In 2000, a joint publication by the UN, OECD, IMF and WB reviewed progress towards the international development goals that had been adopted by the OECD/DAC in 1996.⁷ The civil society organisations quickly re-branded the booklet from “A Better World for All” to “Bretton Woods for All” because they understood that a certain agenda had misappropriated the international goals. The section ‘What it will take to achieve the goals’ was particularly problematic.⁸

‘Evidence-based’ policymaking has recently emerged as development jargon.⁹ It merits a pause to reflect on its meaning. Does it mean that in the past, policies were made by people who sat in a dark room or were blindfolded; or who were driven by emotions or beliefs? Does it mean that policies are now made by purely rational beings; people who are no longer influenced by experience, context or politics?

‘Neuroeconomists’¹⁰ understand that the human eye and ear get trained to see and hear what the brain wants to see or hear. In other words, human beings wear lenses that colour the way by which they perceive and interpret reality. This is normal. It is dangerous, however, to deny this vital fact. It is a fallacy to pretend that there is a single way of perceiving and interpreting reality. Implying that politics can be taken out of the process of policymaking, whilst at the same time advocating for multi-party democracy, is stretching the internal logic of the argument.

Hence, evidence-based policymaking can be a euphemism for misappropriating the policy debate in order to impose a certain worldview on everyone else. Having an ideology or believing in a particular theory is not dangerous. What is dangerous and deceptive is to pretend not to be influenced by a particular theory or ideology, whilst hiding behind a false neutrality of so-called ‘evidence-based’ analysis. It is utopian to pretend that there is no more ideology or politics; that policymaking can be based on rational analyses or objective interpretation of reality.

The Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, chaired by Michael Marmot, puts it as follows: “Traditional hierarchies of evidence (which put randomized controlled trials and laboratory experiments at the top) generally do not work for research on the social determinants of health. Rather, evidence needs to be judged on fitness for purpose – that is, does it convincingly answer the question asked. Evidence is only one part of what swings policy decisions”.¹¹ The call for evidence-based

⁶ François Bourguignon, Agnès Bénassy-Quéré, Stefan Dercon, Antonio Estache, Jan Willem Gunning, Ravi Kanbur, Stephan Klasen, Simon Maxwell, Jean-Philippe Platteau, Amedeo Spadaro (2008) Millennium Development Goals at Midpoint: Where do we stand? Paper written for DFID and the DG Development of the European Commission.

⁷ OECD/DAC (1996) Shaping the 21st Century. Paris: OECD.

⁸ UN-OECD-IMF-WB (2000) A Better World for All. Document presented at ‘Geneva 2000’, a conference to review of progress on the Social Summit of 1995. Pp. 20-23.

⁹ E.g. Philip Davies (2004) Is Evidence-Based Government Possible? The Jerry Lee Lecture presented at the 4th Annual Campbell Collaboration Colloquium in Washington D.C. The speaker was then Chief Social Researcher in the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit, London.

¹⁰ Term mentioned by Tim Harford (2009) The Logic of Life. Abacus: London.

¹¹ WHO (2008) Closing the Gap in a Generation: Health Equity through Action on the Social Determinants of Health. Commission on Social Determinants of Health: Geneva.

policymaking is often accompanied by an emphasis on rigorous quantitative analyses. Statistics, however, have been frequently used as a fig leaf to cover a particular theory or ideology.

‘Misplaced concreteness’ is a common obstacle to gaining understanding over knowledge. The term was coined by a mathematician who became a philosopher. Alfred North Whitehead argued that concepts such as aggregates and averages were introduced in order to facilitate the comprehension of reality in all its complexity. In the process, however, one easily forgets that aggregates and averages are concepts that exist only in the human mind; they do not exist in reality. Misplaced concreteness is to pretend that one is dealing with concrete persons or situations when, in fact, one deals with abstractions of reality. The danger of misplaced concreteness occurs when conclusions are drawn based on deductions from such abstractions, whilst believing that they are based on observations of concrete realities.

Too much reliance on abstract concepts can unduly bias the view and interpretation of reality. Whitehead wrote that economics “fixes attention on a definite group of abstractions, neglects everything else, and elicits every scrap of information and theory which is relevant to what it has retained”.¹²

A concrete example of misplaced concreteness unfolded in Kenya in the early 1980s. It was the era of structural adjustment when user fees for public utilities and basic social services were introduced around the world. Kenya was considering fees at public water points. The economists at the Ministry of Finance (including several foreign advisers) set about to develop the fee system. Some raised concerns about their impact on poverty and argued for waivers and exemptions. After lengthy discussions, it was agreed to introduce the water fee only in those districts where the average household income exceeded a certain threshold. When the utilisation rate of the public water points dropped dramatically in the wake of the fee introduction, the economists in Nairobi were baffled. How could a small nominal fee have such a large impact on the demand for water? Their information showed that the average household income was more than adequate to cover this small expense. What they failed to understand was that the district’s average household income was an abstraction of reality. It did not have any practical meaning to most women when they had to pay the water fee. To these women, the concept of an average household income did not correspond with the daily reality they faced; whereas the payment of the water fee represented a very concrete reality.

3. Six areas of concern

Before taking the MDGs beyond 2015, several aspects need to be clarified and modified. They include: (a) reshaping the structure of the set of goals and targets; (b) interpreting global targets as collective ones; (c) redefining the type of benchmarks; (d) setting new quantitative targets; (e) fixing a new time horizon; and (f) monitoring below the national surface.

a. New structure

The current set of MDGs has three health-related goals (i.e. child mortality, maternal health, infectious diseases). They could be collapsed into one overall health goal,

¹² Alfred North Whitehead (1925) An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge. Cambridge University Press.

thereby making space for the inclusion of other areas of concern. The current set of MDGs also includes two overlapping targets – i.e. countries that achieve universal primary education automatically comply with the target on gender equality in education. Such overlaps are unnecessary and ultimately unfair.

b. Global targets, not national ones

Global targets only apply at the global level. Unfortunately, the MDG canon has turned them into yardsticks for measuring and judging performance at the national level. In doing so, the MDG debate suffers from misplaced concreteness. Their interpretation as one-size-fits-all targets abstracts away the specific and historical background of each country, its political system, its natural endowment, its geography, its internal divisions, and other challenges it may face. The post-2015 targets must guard against the misconception that global and national targets are one and the same.

c. Type of benchmarks

Performance can be measured according to absolute or relative benchmarks. Both are valid but none gives a complete picture. Most of the MDGs are expressed in relative terms – e.g. reducing poverty by half; cutting infant mortality by two-thirds; slashing maternal mortality by three-quarters. Since proportional changes tend to be inversely related to the initial situation, the current set of MDGs puts the least developed and the low income countries at a disadvantage. This leads to an unconcealed discrimination against these countries. Earlier targets were expressed in either absolute terms or combined relative and absolute benchmarks. The post-2015 goals and targets will have to consider the implication of selecting a particular type of benchmark.

d. New targets

The success of the MDGs is undoubtedly related to their concise nature. The number of goals and targets must be kept to a minimum. No matter the number of targets that are added, they can never adequately cover the many dimensions of human development. Any belief in the perfectibility of the MDGs is misguided. The MDGs were not conceived as a comprehensive or near-perfect expression of the complexity of human development. Rather, they offer a version of it that can be easily understood by a general audience. Most stakeholders value this branding and agree it deserves to be protected. A multitude of new candidates is knocking at the MDG-door. They range from climate change to secondary education, quality of education, human rights, infrastructure, economic growth, good governance, security and others. While included in the current MDGs, many have criticised the poor coverage of gender equality and environmental sustainability. Defining the content of the post-2015 set will demand tough choices. The natural tendency is to accommodate more goals and targets, thereby diminishing their capacity for being understood intuitively and communicated easily with the general public. A strong but fair gatekeeper will be called for, because ‘less is more’.

e. New time horizon

The Millennium Declaration did not spell out the period over which the numerical targets had to be achieved. It mentioned the deadline year (mostly 2015) but relative benchmarks need a base year too. Based on historical trends at the global level, we decided to take 1990 as the base year. Since the MDGs came into being in 2001, there has been confusion as to whether they are to be achieved between 2000 and 2015 or over the period 1990-2015. The post-2015 targets will need to be clear about the baseline year and the period over which they are to be achieved. The selection of the

time horizon will need to take into account the usual 3-5 year time lag in obtaining global statistics.

f. Disaggregated monitoring

The world is unlikely to meet the MDGs, largely because disparities within the majority of countries have grown to the point of slowing down national progress.¹³ Monitoring must bring this to the fore. The MDG indicator for measuring equity – i.e. the ‘share of the poorest quintile in national consumption’ – covers it only partially. Moreover, it is seldom mentioned by the many MDG monitoring reports. The growing availability of disaggregated data, however, makes it possible to adjust key national statistics for equity. Given its critical importance for achieving the MDGs and for realising pro-poor growth, the remainder of the paper presents a concrete proposal on how to move forward on disaggregated monitoring.

4. Equity-adjusted national statistics

Measurement influences action. When the nature and extent of poverty are unknown, it is unlikely that society will take strong action to reduce poverty. The same applies for equity. Societies measure things that are considered important. If something is not being measured, it often means that it is not important to that society. When something is not being counted, it typically means that it does not count. Since a separate indicator for equity proves to be insufficient to bring disparities to the fore, this proposal seeks to embed equity within existing indicators.

Different groups in society usually have different levels of social and economic wellbeing. Data confirm that social indicators vary considerably across groups within countries. Thus, national statistics do not only reveal; they also conceal. Some call it the ‘fallacy of the mean’; others put it more strongly as the ‘tyranny of averages’.

Recent surveys provide disaggregated data – especially the Demographic & Health Surveys (DHS) and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS). They have generated information by wealth quintile (i.e. a fifth of the population) for numerous countries. The grouping of households is not based on income or consumption, which are notoriously difficult to measure. Instead, it is based on household assets that can be readily observed – such as the possession of a bicycle or a radio, electricity or water connections, size of dwelling and type of construction materials.¹⁴

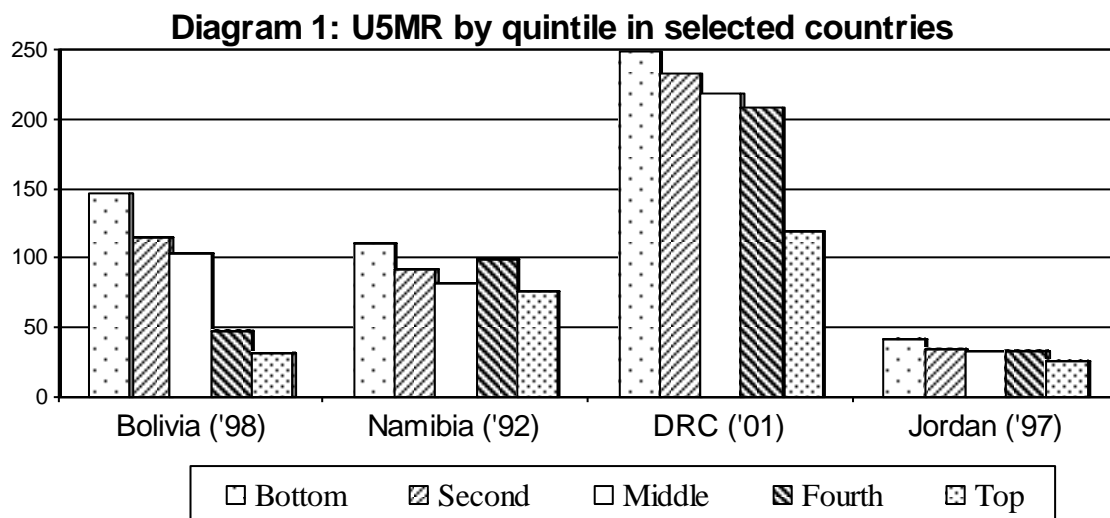
4.1. Patterns of disparities

U5MR declines steadily across quintiles in all countries with data, albeit that different patterns exist. In Diagram 1, the gradient for Bolivia, for instance, is much steeper than for Namibia. Although both countries have a similar national U5MR value,¹⁵ the degree of representativeness of the national statistic is considerably lower for Bolivia than for Namibia. The children in the bottom quintile in Bolivia are considerably worse-off than what the national U5MR statistic suggests. Children in the top quintile in Bolivia, on the other hand, face a much smaller risk of early death than their counterparts in Namibia.

¹³ Jan Vandemoortele (2008) “Making Sense of the MDGs.” *Development* 51 (2).

¹⁴ Deon Filmer and Lant Pritchett (2001) “Estimating wealth effects without expenditure data—or tears: an application to education enrollments in states of India.” *Demography* 38 (1). Davidson Gwatkin (2005) “How much would poor people gain from faster progress towards the MDGs for health?” *The Lancet* 365.

¹⁵ *The State of the World’s Children 2008* indicates that both countries have a U5MR value of 61 per 1,000 live births. UNICEF: New York.



The Democratic Republic of the Congo displays a typical pattern of many of the least developed countries, namely similar U5MR values across the lowest four quintiles with a sharp drop for the top quintile. Jordan, on the other hand, shows an egalitarian pattern.

In short, there are different patterns to distribute a national statistic across the population. At one extreme, progress can be limited to improvements for the better-off people – i.e. through a low-equity approach. At the other extreme, national progress can be driven by ameliorations in the situation of the worse-off people – i.e. through a high-equity approach. Many combinations are possible in-between.

4.2 Proposed method

Adjusting a national statistic for disparities can be done by weighing the quintile-specific values in a way that accords more importance to progress for the lower quintiles than to similar progress for the upper quintiles. Table 1 proposes weights that adjust for equity. According to standard practice, the national average gives an equal weight to each quintile.¹⁶ The equity-adjusted national average accords a higher weight to the lower quintiles.

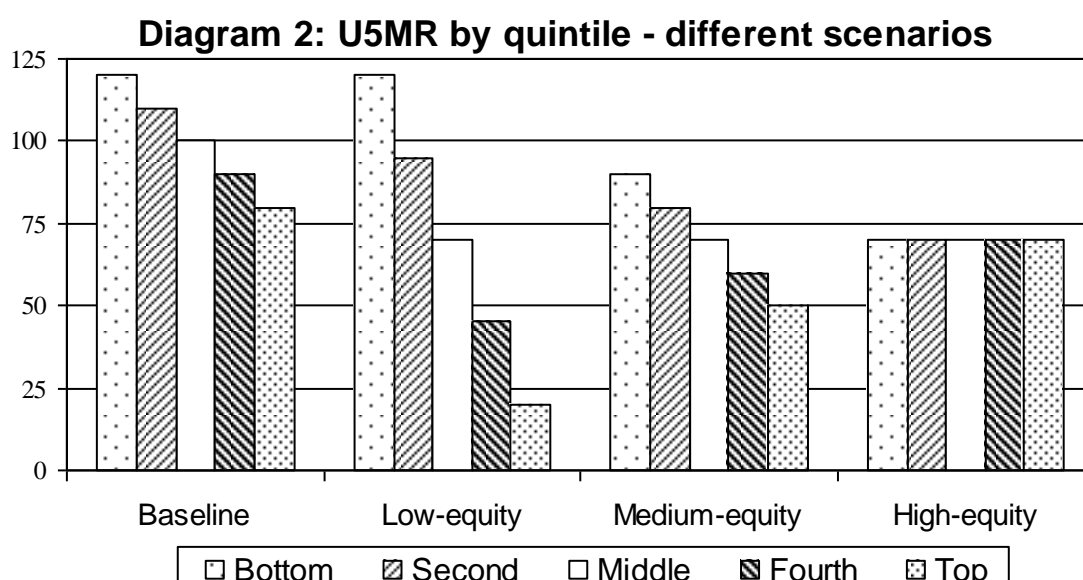
It is not unreasonable to give the bottom quintile a 30 per cent weight and the top quintile a 10 per cent weight – implying that progress for the lowest quintile will count for three times more than the same progress made for the highest quintile. Other quintiles receive intermediate weights according to a sliding scale so that they add up to 100 per cent. The values suggested in Table 1 are to illustrate that national statistics can be adjusted to reflect disparities within countries. Other weights can be considered, including non-linear ones.

¹⁶ Equity-adjusted weights will differ by indicator. The un-adjusted weights of 20% per quintile for U5MR would assume that the fertility rate is uniform across quintiles. In reality, families in the lower quintiles tend to have more children so that their share in the under-five population will exceed 20%. Hence, weights that adjust for equity will have to be indicator-specific.

Table1: Quintile-specific weights

Quintile	Un-adjusted weight	Equity-adjusted weight
Bottom	20%	30%
Second	20%	25%
Middle	20%	20%
Fourth	20%	15%
Top	20%	10%
Total	100%	100%

The method is illustrated at the hand of quintile-specific U5MR data. Take, for instance, a country with an average U5MR of 100 per 1,000 live births and characterised by a moderate gradient across quintiles, as depicted under the baseline scenario in Diagram 2.



Assume that the country manages to reduce its national U5MR from 100 to 70. Three possible scenarios can be considered. First, the low-equity scenario implies that most of the gains accrue to the upper quintiles. The gradient across quintiles becomes steeper than the one for the baseline year. Second, the medium-equity scenario reduces U5MR by 30 points for all quintiles. The gradient across quintiles remains the same as in the baseline year. Third, the high-equity scenario equalises the U5MR for all quintiles to 70; implying that the lowest quintiles benefit the most. The gradient across quintiles disappears.

Under each of the three scenarios, the various quintiles face very different realities, yet this is not captured by the national U5MR statistic. The U5MR for the bottom quintile ranges from 120 to 70; that for the top quintile varies between 70 and 20. Nonetheless, the un-adjusted national U5MR statistic is the same under the three scenarios, namely 70 per 1,000 live births. Thus, it cannot be known from the national statistic how much each of the quintiles benefits from the progress made at the national level.

By using equity-adjusted weights, however, the national U5MR statistic will indicate whether progress has been distributed equitably or not. By applying the equity-adjusted weights given in Table 1, the low-equity scenario yields a national U5MR of 83. This is about one-fifth higher than the un-adjusted national U5MR statistic. The medium-equity scenario results in a national U5MR value of 75 (shown in Table 2).

Table 2: National U5MR statistics by scenario

Scenario	Using un-adjusted weights	Using equity-adjusted weights
Low-equity	70	83
Medium-equity	70	75
High-equity	70	70

With the equity-adjusted weights, countries that follow a low-equity scenario register slower progress than countries that pursue a high-equity pattern. Thus, the ranking of countries will be different from the standard ranking.

4.3 Data & analyses

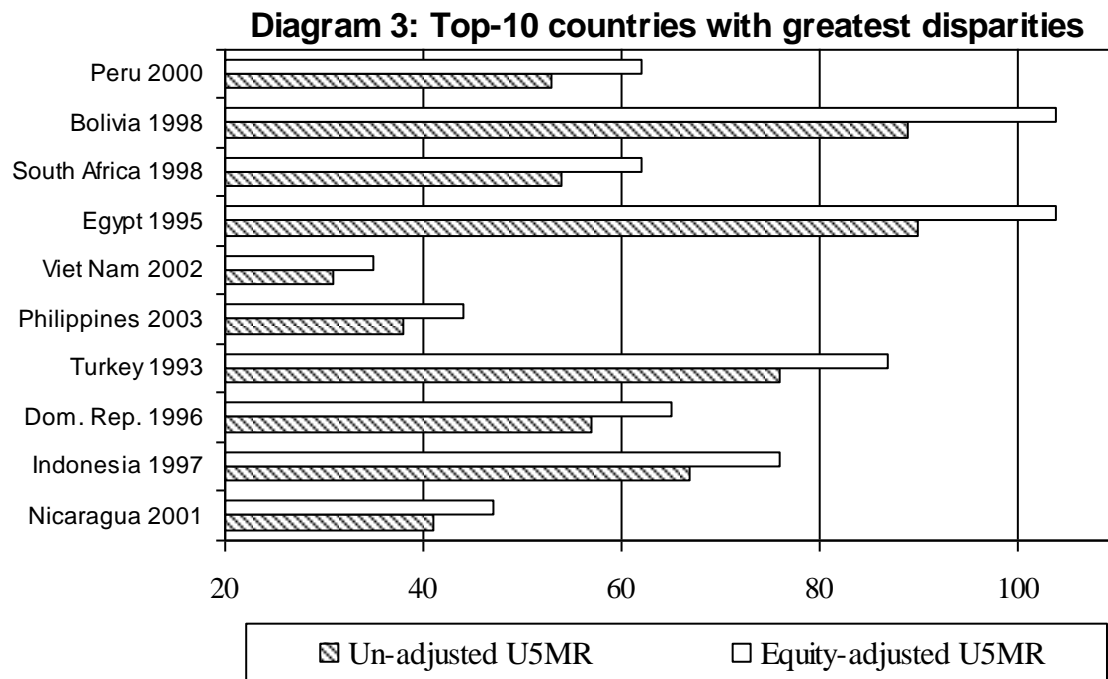
Quintile-specific U5MR estimates are readily available from DHS and MICS sources for 58 countries. Several countries have two or more surveys so that a total of 112 observations are included in our sample (see annex). Additional ‘data mining’ is likely to increase the sample size considerably. Using these data, it is possible to compare the equity-adjusted U5MR values with the un-adjusted statistics and assess the different equity patterns across countries and over time.

The un-adjusted and equity-adjusted U5MR values for each country in the sample are shown in columns 7 and 8 respectively (table in annex). A small difference between them implies that national progress has followed a relative equitable pattern. The difference for the 112 observations in the sample averages 8 per cent; ranging from 18 per cent (Peru) to -0.9 per cent (Chad)¹⁷ (column 9). The data show that disparities are sizeable in several countries. Diagram 3 lists the top-10 countries in terms of relative disparities.

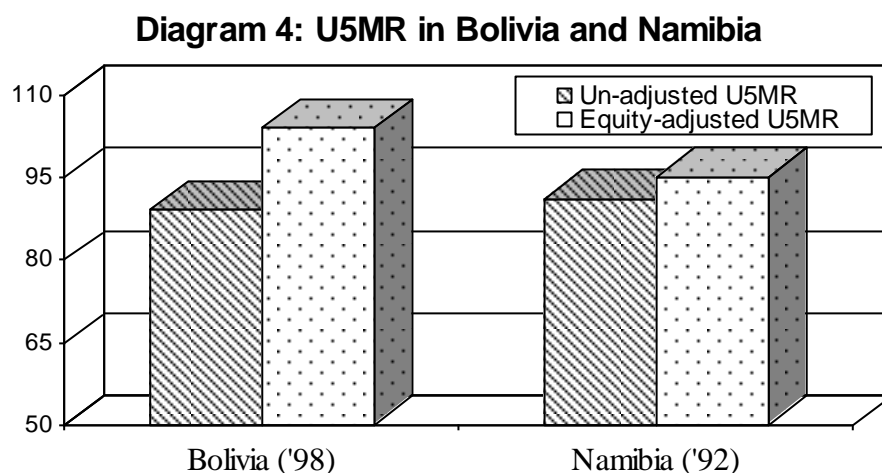
The ratio between the U5MR for the bottom quintile over that for the top quintile averages 2.2. This implies that a child born in a family in the bottom quintile faces a risk of premature death that is more than twice as high as the risk faced by a child born in the top quintile.¹⁸ Among the 112 observations, the ratio ranges from 5.3 (Peru) to 0.9 (Chad).

¹⁷ Chad (2004) is the sole observation in the sample that shows an upwardly sloping gradient in U5MR by wealth groups. Between 1996 and 2004, the U5MR increased for the bottom and top quintiles whereas it decreased for the other quintiles.

¹⁸ It could be argued that the ratio between the bottom and top quintiles has greater intuitive value to express disparities than the equity-adjusted weighing of quintile-specific values. The former, however, does not inform about the other three quintiles and is therefore less representative of the entire distribution.



Returning to the comparison between Bolivia and Namibia (section 4.1), the former sees an increase by 17 per cent in its equity-adjusted U5MR. Namibia's equity-adjusted statistic increases by a mere 3 per cent. Diagram 4 illustrates how the equity-adjusted statistic brings to the fore the fact that inequality is more entrenched in Bolivia than in Namibia; something the standard statistic does not reveal.



Of the 41 countries in the sample with trend data, the majority (24) displays widening disparities over time; 15 witness a tendency towards less inequity, and 2 show no change. Six countries record an increase in the absolute U5MR value for the bottom quintile. In Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Senegal, the increase for the bottom quintile contrasts with a marked decrease in the U5MR value for the top quintile.

The ranking of the countries changes considerably. Based on the most recent observation for each of the 58 countries, 30 change their rank with the equity-adjusted statistic (column 10). Uzbekistan's rank changes the most (improves 4 places); three

other countries change 3 places. Most sub-Saharan African countries see their ranking unchanged. Only 4 out of 30 see their rank worsen (i.e. 13%).¹⁹ By contrast, 4 out of 7 Latin American countries in the sample (i.e. 57%) get a lower rank with the equity-adjusted statistic.

5. Conclusion

In its effort to explain reality – which is often complex – conventional wisdom frequently indulges in over-abstraction and over-generalisation; and hence in over-simplification. This has been the case with the global MDG canon. The MDGs have been misinterpreted as one-size-fits-all targets; misused to reinforce a donor-centric view of development; and misappropriated by lobbies to defend their particular agenda or perspective.

Regarding the post-2015 framework, the paper recommends to hasten slowly. It will be vital for bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, international non-governmental organisations and think-tanks not to rush in defining the successor to the MDGs. Adequate consultations among the various stakeholders will be essential for maintaining the current level of support for a target-driven approach to the international development agenda. The process must be led by the stakeholders from developing countries.²⁰

The 2010 review must focus on the global progress towards 2015. The inter-governmental discussions on the post-2015 framework should not start until 2012. A UN panel of Eminent Persons should be established and given adequate time to consult widely so as to prepare intelligent and smart options before the member states engage in a political discussion on the post-2015 targets. The worst scenario would be to simply keep the same MDGs and set new targets with a new timeline.

The areas to be covered by the UN panel include: (a) new set of goals and targets; (b) distinction between global and national targets; (c) type of benchmarks; (d) new quantitative targets; (e) new time horizon; and (f) disaggregated monitoring.

Reducing disparities within countries emerges as the critical condition for meeting the MDGs by 2015. If countries do not address inequality in earnest, the world is condemned to fail the MDGs. Given the increased availability of disaggregated data, it is now feasible to adjust key national statistics to reflect disparities within countries. The paper proposes a straightforward method for embedding equity into national statistics on key dimensions of human development. The resulting change in the ranking of countries is likely to trigger a much needed focus on disparities.

The suggested method is meant to keep watch over equity. It is likely to be criticised by mainstream statisticians and economists alike. However, league tables do catch the eye of political leaders. They have prompted local and global action in the pursuit of pro-poor outcomes. Such action will be vital for ensuring a future for the MDGs, or whatever they will be called beyond 2015.

¹⁹ Madagascar and Nigeria are among the few countries in the sample that lower their ranking by 3 places. Thus, regional characteristics do not mean that some countries follow a distinct pattern.

²⁰ “Les solutions, il va falloir les chercher ensemble. Sinon, on s'épuisera à prévoir des aides aux pays en voie de développement.” Abbé Pierre (1994) *Testament*. Bayard Editions: Paris.

Annex: U5MR by quintile in selected countries for selected years

Country/Year (1)	Wealth Quintiles					National U5MR		U5MR difference	
	Bottom (2)	Second (3)	Middle (4)	Fourth (5)	Top (6)	Un- adjusted (7)	Equity- adjusted (8)	In % (9)	In rank -- out of 58 countries (10)
Armenia 2000	61	54	40	50	30	47	50	7%	-
Armenia 2005	52	30	24	33	23	32	35	8%	0
Bangladesh 1996/97	141	147	135	122	76	124	132	6%	-
Bangladesh 1999/00	140	127	106	85	72	106	115	8%	-
Bangladesh 2004	121	98	97	81	72	94	99	6%	0
Benin 1996	208	202	197	178	110	179	190	6%	-
Benin 2001	198	176	181	132	93	156	169	8%	-1
Bolivia 1998	147	115	104	48	32	89	104	17%	-
Bolivia 2003	119	115	87	71	37	86	96	12%	-2
Burkina Faso 1992/93	199	226	230	202	157	203	208	3%	-
Burkina Faso 1998/99	239	250	220	232	155	219	229	4%	-
Burkina Faso 2003	206	213	196	193	144	190	198	4%	0
Cambodia 2000	155	137	115	113	64	117	127	9%	-
Cambodia 2005	127	129	114	92	43	101	111	10%	-2
Cameroon 1991	201	171	142	120	82	143	158	10%	-
Cameroon 1998	199	162	136	117	87	140	154	10%	-
Cameroon 2004	189	162	150	116	88	141	153	9%	0
CAR 1994/95	193	183	158	150	98	156	167	7%	1
Chad 1996/97	171	228	225	204	172	200	201	1%	-
Chad 2004	176	208	212	225	187	201	200	-1%	0
Colombia 1995	52	37	31	35	24	36	39	8%	-
Colombia 2000	39	35	24	14	20	26	29	11%	-
Colombia 2005	39	27	24	16	16	24	27	12%	-1
Comoros 1996	129	136	112	81	87	109	116	6%	1
Congo 2005	135	130	130	124	85	121	126	4%	1
Cote d'Ivoire 1994	190	167	148	128	97	146	157	8%	-
Cote d'Ivoire 2005	150	146	121	111	100	126	132	5%	0
Dom. Rep. 1996	90	73	60	37	27	57	65	14%	-
Dom. Rep. 2002	66	46	43	31	22	42	47	12%	1
DR Congo 2001	248	233	219	209	119	206	220	7%	0
Egypt 1995	147	119	85	62	39	90	104	15%	-
Egypt 2000	98	80	71	54	34	67	75	12%	-
Egypt 2003	84	57	51	44	32	54	59	11%	-
Egypt 2005	75	55	47	41	25	49	54	12%	0
Eritrea 1995	152	153	183	168	104	152	156	3%	-
Eritrea 2002	100	127	142	88	65	104	110	5%	1
Ethiopia 2000	159	195	227	206	147	187	188	0%	-
Ethiopia 2005	130	144	144	139	92	130	134	3%	1
Gabon 2000	93	108	97	96	55	90	94	5%	1
Ghana 1993	156	173	139	104	75	129	141	9%	-
Ghana 1998	139	113	125	94	52	105	114	9%	-
Ghana 2003	128	105	111	108	88	108	112	3%	1
Guatemala 1995	89	103	82	61	38	75	82	10%	-
Guatemala 1998/99	78	71	76	47	39	62	67	8%	0
Guinea 1999	230	230	198	162	133	191	204	7%	-
Guinea 2005	217	214	204	162	113	182	195	7%	0

Country/Year (1)	Bottom (2)	Second (3)	Middle (4)	Fourth (5)	Top (6)	Un- adjusted (7)	Equity- adjusted (8)	Difference in % (9)	Difference in rank (10)
Haiti 1994/95	163	150	137	131	106	137	144	5%	-
Haiti 2000	164	144	141	120	109	135	142	5%	-
Haiti 2005/06	125	114	110	83	55	97	106	9%	0
India 1992/93	155	153	120	87	54	114	127	12%	-
India 1998/99	141	118	101	70	46	95	107	13%	-2
Indonesia 1997	109	77	70	52	29	67	76	14%	-
Indonesia 2002/03	77	64	56	45	22	53	59	12%	-1
Jordan 1997	42	34	34	33	25	34	35	5%	0
Kazakhstan 1995	48	47	49	55	40	48	48	1%	-
Kazakhstan 1999	82	73	72	36	45	62	67	9%	0
Kenya 1993	129	120	81	62	62	91	100	11%	-
Kenya 1998	136	130	92	85	61	101	111	10%	-
Kenya 2003	149	110	121	77	91	110	117	7%	1
Kyrgyz Rep. 1997	96	79	78	64	49	73	79	7%	0
Madagascar 1997	195	186	175	130	101	157	170	8%	-
Madagascar 2003/04	142	147	101	90	49	106	118	11%	-3
Malawi 1992	253	248	258	256	172	238	245	3%	-
Malawi 2000	231	207	219	195	149	200	209	4%	-
Malawi 2004	184	171	168	146	111	156	165	5%	0
Mali 1995/96	298	284	252	241	169	249	264	6%	-
Mali 2001	248	264	262	244	148	233	244	5%	0
Mauritania 2000/01	98	102	131	98	79	101	104	2%	3
Moldova 2005	29	28	33	22	17	26	27	6%	1
Morocco 1992	112	97	79	71	39	80	88	11%	-
Morocco 2003/04	78	66	47	37	26	51	57	13%	-1
Mozambique 1997	278	214	216	187	145	208	222	7%	-
Mozambique 2003	196	200	203	155	108	172	183	6%	0
Namibia 1992	110	92	81	99	76	91	95	3%	-
Namibia 2000	55	95	59	60	31	60	64	7%	0
Nepal 1996	156	164	155	118	83	135	145	7%	-
Nepal 2001	130	125	104	97	68	105	112	7%	-
Nepal 2006	98	83	91	63	47	76	83	8%	0
Nicaragua 1997/98	69	67	53	49	30	53	58	9%	-
Nicaragua 2001	64	52	39	32	19	41	47	13%	-1
Niger 1998	282	355	348	315	184	297	309	4%	-
Niger 2006	206	232	240	245	157	216	220	2%	1
Nigeria 1990	240	230	188	159	120	187	203	8%	-
Nigeria 2003	257	293	215	179	79	205	228	11%	-3
Pakistan 1990/91	125	147	135	115	74	119	126	6%	1
Paraguay 1990	57	50	59	39	20	45	49	9%	0
Peru 1996	110	76	48	44	22	60	70	17%	-
Peru 2000	93	76	44	35	18	53	62	18%	-2
Philippines 1998	80	61	50	33	29	51	57	13%	-
Philippines 2003	66	47	32	26	21	38	44	15%	0
Rwanda 2000	246	217	210	207	154	207	217	5%	2
Senegal 1997	181	180	145	103	70	136	151	11%	-
Senegal 2005	183	164	136	92	64	128	143	12%	-2
South Africa 1998	87	71	49	40	22	54	62	15%	0

Country/Year (1)	Bottom (2)	Second (3)	Middle (4)	Fourth (5)	Top (6)	Un- adjusted (7)	Equity- adjusted (8)	Difference in % (9)	Difference in rank (10)
Tanzania 1996	140	180	148	153	98	144	149	4%	-
Tanzania 1999	160	159	193	155	135	160	163	2%	-
Tanzania 2004	137	156	147	117	93	130	136	5%	1
Togo 1998	168	158	154	122	97	140	149	6%	0
Turkey 1993	125	84	83	62	27	76	87	14%	-
Turkey 1998	85	67	53	47	33	57	63	11%	0
Turkmenistan 2000	106	99	86	80	70	88	93	5%	1
Uganda 2000/01	192	173	164	136	106	154	165	7%	-
Uganda 2006	172	157	155	140	108	146	154	5%	0
Uzbekistan 1996	70	44	55	52	50	54	56	3%	4
Viet Nam 1997	63	52	42	38	23	44	48	11%	-
Viet Nam 2002	53	38	24	22	16	31	35	15%	0
Yemen 1997	163	138	112	107	73	119	129	9%	-2
Zambia 1996	212	226	191	191	136	191	201	5%	-
Zambia 1999	192	183	196	163	92	165	176	7%	0
Zimbabwe 1994	85	85	62	88	56	75	78	4%	-
Zimbabwe 1999	100	93	102	91	62	90	93	4%	-
Zimbabwe 2005/06	72	73	76	68	57	69	71	3%	0

Source: "MICS & DHS Health Equity Data Sourcebook" (Preliminary Findings); UNICEF: New York, 2008; augmented with recent DHS & MICS results; and own calculations