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## **Choosing Dimensions: The Capability Approach and Multidimensional Poverty**

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## Choosing Dimensions: the Capability Approach and Multidimensional Poverty Sabina Alkire<sup>1</sup>

*There can be substantial debates on the particular functionings that should be included in the list of important achievements and the corresponding capabilities. This valuational issue is inescapable in an evaluative exercise of this kind, and one of the main merits of the approach is the need to address these judgmental questions in an explicit way, rather than hiding them in some implicit framework.<sup>2</sup>*

In their opening chapter of *Poverty and Inequality*, David Grusky and Ravi Kanbur observe that “there is growing consensus among academic, policy makers, and even politicians” that attention to multidimensional poverty and inequality should not be treated as soft social issues that can be “subordinated to more important and fundamental interested in maximizing total economic output.”<sup>3</sup> While the authors view this “newfound concern with poverty and inequality” positively, they observe that it creates a set of conceptual questions that are really quite pressing. One such question is how to define the dimensions of concern. They argue that this question merits active attention because “economists have not reached consensus on the dimensions that matter, nor even on how they might decide what matters.”<sup>4</sup>

The problem is not that poverty researchers refuse to select dimensions. On the contrary, in an increasing number of situations, researchers or practitioners do indeed choose dimensions. The problem is that they do not make explicit their reason for choosing the dimensions they do. Without knowing the basis for their choice the reader is unable to probe the chosen dimensions and either trust them or question them. Was the choice one of convenience or are the researchers making a claim regarding people’s values (and on what basis), or are they following a convention within the literature? As Robeyns suggests, a practice in which authors explicitly described *how and why they chose dimensions*, could itself be of tremendous value – even if it only consumed one short paragraph of a paper.<sup>5</sup> But what would such descriptions look like? And more importantly, what might be legitimate grounds for selecting dimensions?

The present chapter explores this conceptual issue, which it focuses as follows: if poverty is conceived as capability deprivation, and if the task is to identify multidimensional poverty, what are the legitimate ways of defining dimensions? Put differently, by what methods should researchers decide ‘what matters’. It may be worth emphasizing that the terms ‘poor’ and ‘poverty’ are used consistently across this chapter to mean capability deprivation, and never to mean income poverty alone. After introducing the capability approach, the chapter situates the task of choosing dimensions of poverty within the wider task of multidimensional poverty measurement, and with respect to other kinds of poverty analyses that employ plural variables. It considers the debate regarding whether there should be one fixed ‘list’ of dimensions and argues in the negative. It then identifies five processes by which dimensions are regularly selected, and proposes when and how each could contribute to the task of selecting dimensions of multidimensional poverty. The five processes are: 1. Use existing data; 2. Make assumptions – perhaps based on a theory; 3. Draw on an existing list that was generated by consensus; 4. Use an ongoing deliberative participatory process; and 5) Propose dimensions based on empirical

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful for the comments of Cesar Calvo, Séverine Deneulin, Ian Gough, Javier Iguíñez, Nanak Kakwani, Mark McGillivray, Xavier Ramos, Jacques Silber, Frances Stewart, and the participants of the Brasilia Conference in August 2005 on this paper or an earlier version of it, and to Afsan Bhadalia for research assistance; errors remain my own.

<sup>2</sup> Sen 1999 p. 75

<sup>3</sup> Grusky and Kanbur 2006 p. 1 both quotes

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 12

<sup>5</sup> Robeyns 2005

studies of people's values and/or behaviors. The discussion regarding each process is practical, and the very real foundational issues regarding whether to defend a consensus-based vs practical-reason-based vs theoretical approach, which are so near to the surface, are here sidestepped.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Normative framework, technique, and method***

At its base, the capability approach is a normative framework for assessing alternative policies or states of affairs or options – whether in welfare economics, development, or poverty reduction. The capability approach proposes that social arrangements should be primarily evaluated according to the extent of freedom people have to promote or achieve plural functionings they value. It follows that the capability approach views poverty as a deprivation of these valuable freedoms and evaluates multidimensional poverty in the space of capabilities.<sup>7</sup>

As this chapter is set within a book on the many dimensions of poverty, it is important to emphasize that the capability approach engages with and draws upon a plethora of methodologies and analytical techniques. It does not *compete* with the techniques by which domains of interest may be identified, or kinds of data for multidimensional poverty comparisons. The capability approach can draw on quantitative, qualitative, participatory, or subjective data. It can examine income data – although income data alone is perhaps the crudest form of measurement.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the capability approach has been advanced by participatory methods; it has been represented by various indices and quantitative measures; it advocates empowerment, and draws attention to the critical role of social, political, legal and economic institutions in advancing capabilities over time. Within quantitative approaches, techniques that have been used to measure capabilities range from factor analysis and principle component analysis type tests, to fuzzy set theory, to multidimensional indices, to structural equation models, to dominance approaches, to equivalent income measures and beyond.<sup>9</sup> The capability approach is a coherent framework that researchers can draw on in order to utilize diverse approaches to multidimensional poverty and well-being in a concerted and conceptually coherent fashion.

The capability approach can be and, it is expected, will be applied differently depending on the place and situation, the level of analysis, the information available, and the kind of decision involved. The methods will be plural. So if one expects the capability approach to generate one specific and universally-relevant set of domains for all evaluative exercises, or to generate a specific and distinctive methodology by which to identify the domains of poverty any particular group values, one may be disappointed. This chapter will indeed discuss the processes by which to select the relevant domains for a particular evaluative exercise. But it will also argue that no single set of domains, or combining techniques, or levels of analysis will *always* be relevant and one of the important strengths of the capability approach is that researchers can employ plural techniques, selecting those most relevant for each context. What the capability approach offers, fundamentally, is a framework with respect to which

<sup>6</sup> Elsewhere I have proposed that Finnis' Aristotelian approach, which develops an objective account of human flourishing that is open to plural interpretations and is based on practical reasoning, be used to identify dimensions of human development in general, and that these be specified by deliberative participation that engages practical reasoning. Alkire 2002

<sup>7</sup> Additional principles or procedural considerations such as equity, efficiency, stability across time, sustainability, voice and participation, as well as additional information, for example pertaining to human rights and responsibility, might also be considered in an evaluation that fully reflects the capability approach as it has been developed within Sen's other writings on rationality and freedom. Robeyns 2000, Sen 2000, Robeyns 2000, Sen 2000 p. 477

<sup>8</sup> For example Reddy, Visaria and Asali 2006. See also section 7 of the Technical Annexe by Foster and Sen in Sen, 1997.

<sup>9</sup> See Alkire 2006, Kuklys 2005, Robeyns 2006

various multidimensional poverty research and policy questions can be analysed, and the multiple deprivations which so many suffer can be reduced.

Turning now to the issue of selecting dimensions, the capability approach emphasizes the objective of *expanding* valuable freedoms and, conversely, of reducing capability poverty. One distinctive feature of the approach is the emphasis it places on identifying and prioritizing freedoms that people *value*. Thus when we turn to consider “what are the methods by which domains can be identified and selected?” we can expect that a primary concern in the selection of domains are that they be things people value and have reason to value. A great deal of attention has been placed on which judgements are ‘informed’, on how to determine value, who determines value, and how to resolve conflicting value claims. For the purposes of this discussion, the most salient point to notice is that if the domains included in a comparison are intended to represent a community’s wellbeing and to be used for policy purposes, then these domains should be able to be critically examined and challenged *by the people involved* on an ongoing basis, and amended if they fall short. This implies the need for some process that can air the values issues. As Sen clarifies, the process need not be one of formal democracy nor of deep deliberative participation, but some attention to people’s present values seems essential.

“In the democratic context, values are given a foundation through their relation to informed judgements by the people involved...It is not so much a question of holding a referendum on the values to be used, but the need to make sure that the weights – or ranges of weights – used remain open to criticism and chastisement, and nevertheless enjoy reasonable public acceptance. Openness to critical scrutiny, combined with—explicit or tacit—public consent, is a central requirement of non-arbitrariness of valuation in a democratic society.”<sup>10</sup>

The selection of dimensions of poverty represent only one quite narrow application of the capability approach. The next two sections set the conceptual issue in its wider context both of potentially value-ridden measurement questions, and of alternative evaluative exercises.

### ***Situating the Question: Multidimensional Poverty Measurement***

Multidimensional poverty measures relate to the capability approach insofar as they provide information by virtue of which people’s capability deprivations might be reduced more accurately. While this might seem quite a basic point, it is worth recalling, particularly if the conceptual tasks seem daunting. For what is needed in this context is not a quixotic search for the perfect measure, but rather domains and corresponding measures – and indeed other categories of information – that are *sufficient* to guide multidimensional poverty reduction efforts to critical objectives. Indeed most or even all empirical outworkings of the capability approach have used drastic simplifications, and these can often be cheered and heralded as true advances, at the same time that their limitations may also be borne in mind. “In all these exercises clarity of theory has to be combined with the practical need to make do with whatever information we can feasibly obtain for our actual empirical analyses. The Scylla of empirical overambitiousness threatens us as much as the Charybdis of misdirected theory.”<sup>11</sup>

Still, research underlying the empirical measurement of capability for welfare or poverty reduction exercises is strongly increasing. Diagrams 1 and 2, below, introduce the main areas of research and discussion on quantitative measures in the capability approach. As will be evident immediately, there are significant overlaps between capability-related measurement work and other approaches to multidimensional poverty.

<sup>10</sup> Sen 1997 p. 206

<sup>11</sup> Sen 1985 p. 49

## INSERT DIAGRAMS 1 AND 2 ABOUT HERE

Diagram 1 depicts multidimensional poverty in three-dimensional space. The vertical axis represents the achievement of individual  $i$ . The axis leading into the page, as it were, is segmented according to the ‘dimensions’ or domains of poverty. The dimensions or domains are discrete, hence this axis is not continuous (as Diagram 2 clearly shows), but rather has one segment for each of the domains under consideration. For each domain there will be one or more indicators that proxy the capabilities (and these can be evaluated separately or aggregated). The horizontal axis represents time – and the dotted portion of the horizontal axis, after the vertical marker represents the future. The ‘future’ section would be populated by estimations of vulnerability where vulnerability is understood to be the threat of future poverty.<sup>12</sup> The thick grey dotted line denotes an achievement level for a particular domain, beneath which a person or household is deemed to be poor (in the diagram this line is constant across time; the poverty line or band might also vary over time). Of course the poverty ‘line’ may be a fuzzy poverty band with the lower bound depicting the certainly poor and the upper bound, the certainly non-poor.<sup>13</sup>

Clearly, in order to populate the diagram, further specification is required. For example one or more indicators must be selected for each domain (and indicator-specific poverty lines may then need to be set rather than domain-specific). A range of further issues require consideration in order to assess poverty across the multiple dimensions, such as:

- How to choose domains or dimensions
- How to choose relevant indicators for the domains and related capabilities (these are usually output indicators)
- How to model the interaction among indicators and among dimensions and address endogeneity issues.
- How to set relative weights for each dimension (and for each indicator)
- How to aggregate or compare across individuals or groups (and whether to aggregate before or after aggregating across dimensions)
- How to aggregate across dimensions or, alternatively, to perform rankings and comparisons without prior aggregation
- How to incorporate freedom and agency into multidimensional capability poverty measures.

This chapter will focus on only the first of these issues: how to choose focal domains or dimensions of poverty. But it is important to note that even if dimensions are chosen carefully, a great many other important questions remain that merit equally careful consideration. In some of these the capability approach might also be brought to bear.

### ***Situating the Question: Instrument, Result, and Capability***

On the face of it, there are distinct reasons that economists might consider certain dimensions to “matter” and these vary a great deal depending upon the nature of the exercise. Consider three: instrumental importance for achieving *other* poverty reduction goals; anticipated outcomes of investments that are to be monitored; and direct poverty measures that represent a person’s or a population’s ill-being.

<sup>12</sup> Dercon 2005

<sup>13</sup> Chiappero-Martinetti 1994, Chiappero-Martinetti 1996, Chiappero-Martinetti 2000, Chiappero-Martinetti 2004

The first possible reason that a dimension might matter is that it has *instrumental* power. That is, the dimension is expected to contribute effectively to the reduction of one or more other dimensions of poverty and inequality. To take a slightly unlikely example, consider a poor rural community that believed that good cricket players became far more productive and socially adept members, both immediately and in the longer term, of the technological work force which a great majority of the students attempted to join upon graduation. In this case, cricket skills might be included in a multi-dimensional measure of poverty. This would not have to do at all with the intrinsic value of cricket. Rather, information on cricket skills would be used in order to evaluate the local hypothesis on the empirical connection between cricket skills and subsequent poverty reduction. If cricket skills proved as instrumentally potent as was believed, a subsequent question might be how to foster it more widely. In a similar way, information on health and education might be collected, for example under a human capital approach that viewed these ‘dimensions’ as instrumentally potent means to sustained economic growth and wished to probe more fully their instrumental features, but did not regard them to be of intrinsic value.

A very different reason that a dimension might matter would be if it represented an *intended result* of a project or activity – if the 250 basic health clinics in a province were successful in terms of the outcomes they had agreed to create. Answering this question is important regardless of whether the intended outcomes were means or ends or simply represented what the institution was ‘good at’ (neonatal care, or installing lift irrigation, or introducing new seed varieties). In this monitoring / evaluation approach, the ‘dimensions’ are implicitly set *a priori* in the planning phase (how the dimensions are set, and whether this is based upon a more substantive deliberative process, is not important at this point). For example, if the school in the poor rural community mentioned above decided, on the basis of new research results, to try to *encourage* cricket skills among its pupils, then the “outcomes” or “results” of schooling in that community might include several dimensions such as exam results, athletic records, social activism, *and* the levels of cricket skills. Here the analysis might consider how effective the school had been in generating the intended results; it might also broaden the analysis to include certain unintended outcomes.

The above considerations are often vitally important strategic poverty-reducing interventions. It is with good reason that considerations of *instrumental effectiveness*, and the *resultant outcomes* often guide the selection of dimensions. However this chapter does not further focus on these exercises.

In other situations it is necessary to identify dimensions of poverty, of capability deprivation. That is, if cricket skills are instrumental to poverty reduction, what dimensions *comprise* poverty reduction itself? Similarly, while some schooling outcomes are solely useful in an instrumental sense, some outcomes directly contribute to people’s well-being (as, perhaps, the ability to read whatever captures one’s curiosity)? This chapter focuses only on this third question. The first issue that emerges is whether it is possible to have one list of dimensions of poverty to guide all multidimensional poverty research.

### ***Should there be one list of capabilities or domains?***

A single, one-size-fits-all, authoritative list of dimensions of poverty that could be shared internationally seems, on the face of it, quite an attractive idea. It seems efficient, because researchers (whose expertise lies in other areas) would not have to pore over possible domains laboriously over and over again. It could inform the broad research agenda – such as the design of internationally comparable poverty-related surveys, and so on. It may help to maintain a critical edge, as Martha Nussbaum (2000) argues in support of her list of Central Human Capabilities (see Table 6). Yet this chapter will argue against

“one” list despite its evident appeal (while arguing that one or more lists need to be developed precisely to guide internationally comparable survey work). As the issue of whether to have one authoritative list is the subject of a sharp and clear exchange between Martha Nussbaum (2003) and Amartya Sen (2004), we will briefly review the debate. Our focus at this point is on whether or not there should be one authoritative ‘list’ of core capabilities or domains of poverty. Whether this list should be the list Nussbaum proposes, or should comprise all human rights, or take a different form, is a separate question that only arises if we agree that there should be an authoritative list.

Nussbaum argues, as do others, that specification of one ‘list’ of domains or central capabilities is necessary to make sure that the content of the capability approach carries critical force. If the approach is too open-ended then there is a real, practical possibility that the wrong freedoms will be prioritized and expanded. She writes,

“[C]apabilities can help us to construct a normative conception of social justice, with critical potential for gender issues, only if we specify a definite set of capabilities as the most important ones to protect. Sen’s “perspective of freedom” is too vague. Some freedoms limit others; some freedoms are important, some trivial, some good, and some positively bad. Before the approach can offer a valuable normative gender perspective, we must make commitments about substance.”<sup>14</sup>

Nussbaum repeatedly, and consistently, sets forth a set of central human capabilities that, she argues, should provide the basis of political guarantees (Table 6).

In response to all those who call for a more explicit set of capabilities, Sen writes, “I have nothing against the listing of capabilities but must stand up against a grand mausoleum to one fixed and final list of capabilities.”<sup>15</sup> Because Sen’s argument in that paper is instructive I will observe it a bit more specifically.

First, he affirms that researchers need to select dimensions or capabilities (for the moment we can consider both terms because the structure of the problem is the same – although a dimension might encompass more than one capability). “The problem is not with listing important capabilities, but with insisting on one predetermined canonical list of capabilities, chosen by theorists without any general social discussion or public reasoning.”<sup>16</sup>

A primary objection to having a fixed list or set of capabilities is that it sidelines ongoing public reasoning “[P]ure theory cannot “freeze” a list of capabilities for all societies for all time to come, irrespective of what the citizens come to understand and value. That would be not only a denial of the reach of democracy, but also a misunderstanding of what pure theory can do....”<sup>17</sup> And relatedly, “To insist on a fixed forever list of capabilities would deny the possibility of progress in social understanding and also go against the productive role of public discussion, social agitation, and open debates.”<sup>18</sup>

An additional reason that a fixed list is inappropriate in practice is that the purposes (often called ‘evaluative exercises’) for which the lists will be used vary greatly in practice. “What we focus on cannot be independent of what we are doing and why (e.g., whether we are evaluating poverty, specifying

<sup>14</sup> Nussbaum 2003.

<sup>15</sup> Sen 2004 p. 80

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 77

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. p. 78

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. 80

certain basic human rights, getting a rough and ready measure of human development, and so on).”<sup>19</sup> In addition to the instrumental and evaluation analyses mentioned in the previous section, the appropriate elements (and the extensiveness of the list) will also depend in part on the social conditions as well as on the kind of public understanding of, and engagement with, the issues.

In the context of some types of social analysis, e.g. in dealing with extreme poverty in developing economies, we may be able to concentrate, to a great extent on a relatively small number of centrally important functionings and the corresponding basic capabilities (e.g. the freedom to be well nourished, well sheltered, and in good general health, the capability of escaping avoidable morbidity and premature mortality, the ability to move about freely, and so forth). In other contexts, the list may have to be longer and more diverse.<sup>20</sup>

In sum, Sen argues that key capabilities must be selected, but argues consistently against the specification of only one authoritative ‘canonical’ list of capabilities, that is expected to apply at all times and places.<sup>21</sup> The debate, which is here lightly sketched rather than analyzed, might be caricatured “having a list” vs “making lists for every occasion”. It might seem rather unfortunate, however, if we had to choose between these positions, to walk out one exit door or declare victory for one side or another. Sen’s position leaves researchers without any systematic guidance as to *how* to choose capabilities or domains in different contexts. Not every evaluative exercise can be open to public discussion in the same way and it is not clear what criteria *besides* public scrutiny there might be. Also, Sen’s position would still seem very open to the charge that capabilities or dimensions could be specified – even with public discussion – in ways that are detrimental or even, as Frances Stewart has forcefully argued, fundamentally misguided.<sup>22</sup> Nussbaum’s position seems, however, too limiting of public discussion and also, in practice, of limited relevance to many much narrower situations. Her list has generated criticism on grounds of its specificity, its prescriptivity, its unclear epistemological basis, and the fact that, being one author’s list, it is not clear who decides - if it is to claim an overlapping consensus how is constructive disagreement with, or modification of, the list to proceed?<sup>23</sup> It may be that the debate has stopped prematurely, before a satisfactory alternative has been proposed.

### ***How Researchers Select Domains:***

By this point, it might seem that the problem of selecting dimensions is fiercely complex. However in practical applications of the capability approach and related multidimensional approaches, it seems that the methods for identifying capabilities or dimensions of poverty are surprisingly straightforward. In particular, although as mentioned initially the discussion of the basis of choice is rarely explicit, it seems that most researchers draw implicitly on five selection methods, either alone or in combination. The five selection methods are:

*Existing Data or Convention* – to select dimensions (or capabilities) mostly because of convenience or a convention that is taken to be authoritative, or because these are the only data available that have the required characteristics.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 79

<sup>20</sup> Sen 1996 p. 57-8

<sup>21</sup> For a fuller account see Alkire 2002, Ch. 2 section 1.

<sup>22</sup> Stewart 2005 See also Robeyns 2005.

<sup>23</sup> I have tried to elaborate these in Alkire 2002, Ch. 2.

*Assumptions* – to select dimensions based on implicit or explicit assumptions about what people do value or should value. These are commonly the informed guesses of the researcher; they may also draw on convention, social or psychological theory, philosophy, religion, and so on.

*Public ‘consensus’* – to select dimensions that relate to a list that has achieved a degree of legitimacy due to public consensus. Examples of such lists at the international level are universal human rights, the MDGs, and the Sphere project; these will vary at the national and local levels.

*Ongoing Deliberative Participatory Processes* – to select dimensions on the basis of ongoing purposive participatory exercises that periodically elicit the values and perspectives of stakeholders.

*Empirical Evidence regarding people’s values* – to select dimensions on the basis of expert analyses of people’s values based on empirical data on values, or data on consumer preferences and behaviors, or studies of which values are most conducive to mental health or social benefit.

What is very clear, immediately, is that these processes overlap and are often used in tandem. For example, rights-based approaches to development<sup>24</sup> might decide to make use of participatory processes to set specific priorities, and then choose indicators drawing on existing data. Psychological studies may make normative assumptions regarding human values then test these empirically. Nearly all exercises will need to consider data availability or data issues.

The following sections introduce each of the five methods briefly; Table 1 summarizes the analysis as to the strengths, weaknesses, and appropriate use of each of the five methods.

## **INSERT Table 1 ABOUT HERE.**

### ***Existing Data***

One way to choose dimensions or capabilities is to draw on existing data or conventions, with or without explicit attention being given to the values that the choice of variables may or may not represent. Most or even all empirical outworkings of the capability approach eventually consider data issues, but for many, data form the *only* guiding criterion. The standard approach is to identify a problem and analytical framework, then to seek data which are both related to the problem and have the requisite characteristics to be useful in the analysis (e.g. country coverage, number of data points, type of variables, etc). In many cases, only a few variables fit the criteria and researchers use these.

In some circumstances, selection according to existing data without any regard to a population’s values is entirely appropriate. For example, after developing a proposed index of multidimensional poverty, Bourguignon and Chakravarty (2003) chose two dimensions from Brazilian data in order to test the index. “Poverty includes two dimensions: income on the one hand, and educational attainment on the other.”<sup>25</sup> Their purpose in choosing the dimensions was to test the newly-defined index using existing data and see whether it generated reasonable results, rather than to make any strong analyses of or

<sup>24</sup> The definition used by the Office of the High Commission for Human rights is: “A rights-based approach to development is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights.” “Essentially, a rights-based approach integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into the plans, policies and processes of development.” <http://193.194.138.190/development/approaches-04.html> accessed 30 April 2006

<sup>25</sup> Bourguignon and Chakravarty 2003 p. 42

prescriptions regarding poverty in Brazil. In this context (eg testing a technique), it was not necessary to consider the values issues at all. Existing data might be sufficient for many other exercises – for example descriptive historical research in which one observes the data a particular institution chose to collect.

However we are focusing on the selection of dimensions of deprivation that people value, and in these kinds of exercises authors should combine consideration of data requirements with one or more of the other methods. The choice of dimensions for (and indicators for) the HDI was driven in part by the need to identify existing indicators of readily apparent importance for which cross-country comparable data was available for most countries and was relatively robust. However comparable data was not the *only* requirement (one could have compared, for example, wheat prices) – the data also had to relate to human development, and had to fit the political logic of the HDI, namely having a few readily comprehensible domains, and large country coverage. Those developing HDI made quite transparent claims as to the data requirements and the logic behind these. They also made claims regarding the basic importance of each dimension: income, basic education and not dying prematurely. These claims appealed to what they assumed to be a tacit public consensus. This transparent explanation enabled some people (those who could exercise certain democratic freedoms) to disagree with these claims or assumptions or propose improvements, or to state their support. The process of having communicated the reasoning publicly also meant that had no healthy criticism emerged (which in fact it did), the authors would have presumed tacit public consent.

In most situations, data considerations should not be the primary grounds on which to choose dimensions according to the capability approach (because splendid and robust data are not *necessarily* related to centrally valued capabilities). But eventually the feasibility of obtaining adequate data will influence the outworking of many different evaluative exercises.

### ***Normative Assumptions***

In the case of the HDI, the authors assumed that people across cultures, regions, ages, genders, ethnicities, and even across individual sources of diversity, valued survival, income, and basic education. Furthermore, the authors made this assumption explicit. Making informed assumptions regarding the dimensions that matter to people is perhaps the most common method for selecting dimensions (although most researchers do not explicitly argue their case). In addition to drawing on the researchers' own informed views, normative assumptions might draw on social theory, on religious views, or on psychological views, or on conventions in the literature. For example, Ryan and Deci (2000) have suggested that people enjoy psychological well-being if they have a well-developed sense of *competence*, of *autonomy*, and of *relatedness*. In their theory these three features form the basic structure of well-being. Given this theory, Ryan and Deci might well choose dimensions that relate to their three features.<sup>26</sup> Maslow, as is well-known, provided a hierarchy of human needs that must be filled.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, many of the needs-based approaches to poverty reduction fall at least partly in this area, although they often mix this method with appeals to consensus and empirical evidence of the proposed needs (method five).

Nussbaum's list of Central Human Capabilities may be considered to fall at least partly in this category of normative assumptions. For although she argues that the list *could* be supported by overlapping consensus (and if it were then it would move into the next category), a public deliberative process has

<sup>26</sup> Chirkov, Ryan, Kim and Kaplan 2003, Ryan and Deci 2000, Ryan and Deci 2001

<sup>27</sup> Maslow 1943, Maslow 1948, Maslow 1959, Maslow 1963

not yet engaged with this list to the same extent as it has engaged, for example, with human rights or the MDGs.

The strength of the normative or theoretical assumptions is deeply limited, from the perspective of the capability approach, *unless* the authors transparently communicate their assumptions in order to catalyze public discussion or scrutiny of these issues. If they do communicate these assumptions and encourage reflection, the list can become the subject of public debate – as occurred with the HDI. In the absence of the possibility of such public discussion, and especially if the dimensions are more than a very few or if the study addresses a local context, it can be difficult to know whether the normative or theoretical assumptions about which dimensions of poverty matter track the priorities of the poor.

### ***Public Consensus***

Another approach is to use a set of dimensions that have been generated by some arguably legitimate consensus-building process at one point in time, and are relatively stable, thus not expected to be iterative or subject to ongoing participatory evaluation. There are many such lists in use – particularly within sectors or institutions. Some commonly known international and more ‘holistic’ lists at present in development activities are Human Rights, the Millennium Development Goals, and the Sphere project.

It would be inaccurate to claim that these lists represent an *actual* full consensus, for human rights and the MDGs in particular have been the subject of energetic criticism and ongoing debate – and the consensus explicitly involves heads of state rather than the general public. Yet in both cases a number of quite diverse groups have been able to support them, despite ongoing differences; furthermore the instruments themselves were shaped and changed in response to some criticisms. And their legitimacy in the public sphere stems at least in part from a wider claim to consensus.

Rights-based development – which has been advanced by the United Nations Development Program and national development agencies in, for example, the UK and Sweden - uses the framework of human rights and duties to guide development policy. Rights-based development draws attention not only to development outcomes, but also to development processes, insofar as it requires that no processes violate human rights. Framing development in rights terms can encourage individuals and communities to demand these rights and in some cases to engage formal legal instruments as well.

The Millennium Development Goals are a set of 8 goals, 18 targets and 49 indicators relating to poverty reduction, that have received widespread political support in different countries. Because progress on the MDG indicators is being monitored annually by the international community, and in some cases are also monitored at the national level, the MDGs exert pressure on public priorities although their influence is highly variable.

Another familiar resource in the humanitarian space is the Sphere project, which was set up in 1997 by NGOs including the Red Cross and Red Crescent to self-police their own activities. In emergency and disaster situations, Sphere provides guidance for those engaged in humanitarian assistance, particularly in situations in which the possibilities of beneficiary involvement are limited by time and situational factors. The Sphere *Handbook* emphasizes its basis in consensus: “The Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response are the product of the collective experience of many people and agencies.”<sup>28</sup> The project developed a set of universal minimum standards in core areas of

<sup>28</sup> The\_Sphere\_Project 2004 p. 2

humanitarian assistance, and a humanitarian charter and code of conduct. Thus unlike the MDGs, the Sphere approach includes processes as well as a 'list' of minimum standards. As the 2004 *Handbook* describes their approach, "Sphere is three things: a handbook, a broad process of collaboration and an expression of commitment to quality and accountability."<sup>29</sup> The consensus included the community delivering the support, not what Sen calls 'the people involved' as recipients.

One true advantage of such lists is their claim to legitimacy (although the question of who decide when there 'is' a consensus remains), and also authority because so much attention was given to their construction by persons with diverse experiences and priorities. In addition, because of their stability over time, they may provide incentives to develop a set of indicators or analyses that are comparable across communities and time and that can be periodically revised. Furthermore their basis in a broad consensus gives rise to the anticipation that they will have some relevance to diverse contexts across time and space. This also means that they might be drawn on in emergencies as well as in national or international policy processes where time and circumstances prohibit more participatory processes. Furthermore, human rights and the MDGs are also the subject of vigorous criticism in the public space, and this criticism itself can be read by researchers and can inform their studies. Thus in some sense, researchers are able to take advantage of an ongoing public debate without having the cost of organizing participation itself. A disadvantage, of course, is that those who are most likely to engage in public debate may not be the poor population whose well-being is the concern of the study, and indeed their values may diverge significantly from the public consensus. This is important because capabilities are things people "value and have reason to value" – and it is important to check whether or not the poor persons concerned value what others claim they do and agree they should. Furthermore the lists may be inflexible, and may not incorporate dissenting views.

It may be possible to combine a consensus-based set of dimensions or capabilities with some attention to processes of local specification and leadership, as the Sphere and some rights-based development approaches have done.

### ***Ongoing Deliberative Participation***

Another fundamental approach to the selection of dimensions is a process of ongoing deliberative participation. The processes of interest aim to draw out people's actual values and priorities using group discussions and participatory analyses – whether for the purposes of planning, assessment, policy, or interim monitoring and continuous improvement. They can be used at the local level – as in the example of the Pakistani NGO SUNGI's village development plans below – or at state or national levels, as in participatory poverty assessments or sector-specific participatory initiatives. The problems of combining conflicting views are amplified at the higher levels or scales.

#### **Box: Participatory Village Development Plans**

SUNGI's social mobilization & development approach starts with the selection of area/village for social organization under pre-determined criterion for all partner communities. It includes (a) deprivation (b) remoteness of area (c) ecological degradation (d) willingness to be organized and work as partners with SUNGI and (e) ability of women to work in women Village Committees. These factors determine the future of SUNGI's intervention in a particular village.

Once a village is selected then work on building a partnership with local community starts. The foundation block of this partnership consists of viable village committees at the grassroots levels. The formation of these village committees reflects unrelenting efforts of SUNGI field staff. The steps involved in creating a viable village committee include:

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. p. 5

- Preparation of village profile
- Contacts with village activists
- Group meetings with cross section of community members
- Identification of primary groups
- Joint village meeting to establish terms of partnership
- Primary training in social organization
- Group formation
- Village development planning.

All these steps could take 6 to 12 months before a formal contract of partnership is finalized. The logic behind this partnership is to enhance the institutional capacity of communities to implement and manage their development programs through participatory approaches to serve as the primary advocates for institutional change. ... SUNGI is working with 9,776 activists through 267 men and women Village Committees....

[An] important feature of SUNGI's Social Mobilization approach is the facilitation of Village Development Planning process at the village level. In 1994, in an effort to develop a planning and analysis framework, which could reflect the development challenges of local communities accurately, SUNGI started using participatory analysis methods of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA). But the search for an alternative framework, which could serve as a bottom up planning tool continued till, the concepts of Village Development Plan was worked out. The process was initiated in 1997 [The process consists of a one- or two-day process in which the community considers the set of participatory analyses it has conducted over the past 6-12 months (with analyses by different groups – e.g. men and women – considered jointly). After reviewing the evidence, the groups select their priorities for a village development plan – if men and women meet separately then each group selects priorities independently and a compromise is negotiated if they differ]. So far SUNGI has completed 119 village development plans successfully.<sup>30</sup>

Conceptually participatory processes have a strong attraction because the value judgments are made and revised directly by the community concerned. Furthermore, the give and take of views and reasons may have constructive usefulness in improving the selected dimensions. In the case of vitally important functionings (or basic capabilities, or needs), an iterative participatory process can be used to identify the appropriate dimensions and, within the dimensions, the appropriate specific indicators or activities to pursue.<sup>31</sup> This process might include the following activities:

1. articulation of general dimensions or goals of special importance and social influenceability<sup>32</sup>
2. identification of long term valued goals and strategies for the community of interest (i.e. using participation)
3. establishment of vital priorities that seem feasible and instrumental to these goals in the short term for the community of interest
4. implementation of a strategy such that negative freedoms are safeguarded and the goals and strategies can be influenced by public debate in an ongoing iterative manner
5. mitigation of (especially vital) capability contraction that occurs either among the community of interest or among other groups, while meeting vital needs. This may require attention to externalities.<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, in participatory processes it may be possible to deepen the level of deliberative discussion, and probe values issues more directly than in other methods. One approach to identifying relevant domains, that interfaces well with Sen's capability approach, involves a set of vague dimensions of human development. Earlier, drawing on the work of John Finnis (1981) I proposed the use of

<sup>30</sup> Adapted from <http://www.sungi.org/ggovernance.asp> accessed 10 May 2006. Bold mine.

<sup>31</sup> This is argued in Alkire 2006 see also Alkire 2002 Ch. 5.

<sup>32</sup> Sen 2004

<sup>33</sup> Alkire 2002, Alkire 2006

dimensions of human development to catalyze such discussions. While there need be no authoritative list of dimensions of value – nor a definitive number, or nomenclature, for the dimensions – nevertheless, some mental checklist of the categories of human purpose that many different cultures find to be central to well-being can be useful. Finnis proposes roughly seven dimensions, displayed below.

**Dimensions of Poverty or Human Flourishing**

**Life** - survival, health, and reproduction.

**Knowledge** including understanding, education, and also aesthetic experience.

**Meaningful Work and Play**

**Friendship** and other valued kinds of human relationships

**Self-Integration** (inner peace)

Authentic **Self-Direction** (participation, self-determination, practical reason)

**Transcendence** ‘peace with God, or the gods, or some nontheistic but more-than-human source of meaning and value.’

The use of this or other open-ended accounts of multidimensional poverty can deepen a deliberative process when it is important to have a relatively complete account of poverty and well-being. They may be of more general use also beyond the confines of poverty issues. Although some domains (such as friendship or transcendence) are not usually considered relevant to poverty reduction and may not be amenable to measurement, in some cases it may be crucial to acknowledge these domains because *resistance* to poverty reduction initiatives may stem from perceptions of a trade-off between poverty reduction and cultural or social or cultural values.<sup>34</sup>

Ongoing deliberative participation, when it works well, seems to be the ideal forum for selecting capabilities and dimensions. In practice, however, participatory processes may be subject to a number of distortions.<sup>35</sup> Power imbalances can derail the discussion and so only the views of the elite dominate; in situations of low trust or conflict it may not be possible to engage in a values discussion. Thus it cannot be assumed that participatory processes always generate value judgments that establish and accurately reflect a group’s values.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, the problem of synthesizing conflicting views, which can be difficult enough at the local level, is compounded when participatory exercises held in a number of venues are combined or aggregated in some way to inform a regional or national set of priorities, so the exercises can be limited in scale. Finally participatory processes, being dynamic, are likely to lead to different sets of dimensions at different times and for different groups, so if these form the basis for survey work the data generated will not be comparable across communities or across time.

***Empirical Analyses***

The final possibility is that the task of explicitly formulating and justifying a set of dimensions draws on expert analysis from various disciplines including quality of life literature, cross-cultural psychology, and other areas.

<sup>34</sup> Rao and Walton 2004

<sup>35</sup> Chambers 1997, Cooke and Kothari 2001, Deneulin 2006, Forester 1999

<sup>36</sup> The literature on participation, deliberation, and capability is large and growing. See Gutmann and Thompson 1996, Fung and Olin Wright 2003 on deliberation and capability; Bohman 1996 on deliberation; Richardson 2006, Richardson 1994, Blackburn and Holland 1998, Chambers 1997, Cooke and Kothari 2001, Crocker 2006, Deneulin 2006, Forester 1999, Holland, Blackburn and Chambers 1998, Richardson 1994 on democracy.

A number of psychologists articulate normative values that, they argue (usually but not always on the basis of empirical evidence) are required for healthy human flourishing. Surveys such as the *World Values Survey* has given rise to a significant empirical literature on cross-cultural values.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore *Voices of the Poor* gathered and synthesized data regarding the views of poor people about issues related to poverty, well-being, and institutions.<sup>38</sup> There are also numerous surveys of consumer preferences and consumer behaviors. And a surging literature explores the causes and triggers of happiness.<sup>39</sup> The recent developments in, and insights and implications of, empirical and expert analyses of well-being and poverty, including those that draw upon survey data, may also inform the selection of capabilities, although the way that this data can complement or supplement the other approaches requires greater clarification.<sup>40</sup>

Empirical analyses have not often been used; however the burgeoning studies of subjective well-being and its causes, as well as the increasing interchange between psychology and economics in behavioral economics, means that this interface may become increasingly active. The difficulty with empirical analyses based on a biological or psychological observation is that it sidelines practical reason and people's own aspirations, and studies them as objects. For this reason the empirical approach may be best used to inform participatory methods or participatory deliberations, but not as the sole basis for selecting dimensions.

### ***Conclusion: Explicit Documentation of Selection Procedures***

The preceding sections outlined the five methods that researchers use to select dimensions. It argued that considerations regarding data availability and adequacy permeate the study of multidimensional poverty but are not sufficient to choose capabilities or domains of poverty. Empirical studies may introduce new information regarding interconnections between behaviors or situations and aspects of well-being, but alone these are insufficient to select dimensions; however when they are used in combination with an approach that engages people's practical reason – such as participation or public debate – they may play a good role in informing the discussion and making it more balanced. Three additional methods were identified. The widely-used 'Normative Assumptions' method draws on the researchers' opinions or on theoretical frameworks. Initially its relevance seems limited. However if the researchers share their assumptions hence invite public dialogue and scrutiny of them, then the approach may be both efficient (being relatively quick) and constructive. In a similar way, while a prior consensus of a limited group of people is not necessarily authoritative for an existing group of persons in their own context, because instruments of consensus such as Human Rights and the MDGs are a magnet for public discussion, researchers may find it useful to draw on them (informed by the surrounding discussions). The fourth approach to identifying capabilities and domains of poverty, at least at a small scale, is deliberative participation, at least in those situations in which it is not subject to distortions. Finally, dimensions may be selected on the basis of empirical claims about what people appear to value based on surveys and their behaviors, although we argued that it would be better to inform the participants regarding these alleged connections, but still engage participatory processes. Clearly in most cases researchers will use two or three methods in an iterative approach.

<sup>37</sup> Biswas-Diener and Diener 2001, Inglehart 1997, Inglehart and Baker 2000, Kahneman, Diener and Schwarz 1999, Schwartz 1992

<sup>38</sup> Narayan-Parker 2000, Narayan 2000

<sup>39</sup> Alkire 2005a, Alkire 2005b, Argyle and Martin 1991, Clark 2005, Comim 2005, Diener 2000, Frey and Stutzer 2002, Layard 2005, McGillivray 2005, Ng 1997, Ng 2003, Oswald 1997, Ott 2005, Ryan and Deci 2001, Veenhoven 1993, Veenhoven and co-workers 1994 *inter alia*

<sup>40</sup> Sen 1985 p. 48

However the set of domains is generated – whether through participatory exercises, empirical study, or another manner (including data availability) – what is clear in every instance is that the domains should be, to some extent, open to public scrutiny and ongoing debate. To this end, Ingrid Robeyns has proposed that authors use four procedures when identifying the relevant domains and capabilities. These are:

1. *Explicit formulation*: the list [of domains and/or capabilities] should be made explicit, discussed and defended: why it is claimed to be something people value and have reason to value.

2. *Methodological justification*: The method that has generated the list should be clarified and defended (and open to critique or modification). For example, whether this domain was chosen on the basis of a participatory exercise, or through consultation of empirical studies of human values.

3. *Two stage process: Ideal-Feasible* : If a set of domains aims at an empirical application or at implementable policy proposals, then the list should be drawn up in at least two stages. Each stage will generate a list at a different level, ranging from the level of ideal theory to more pragmatic lists. This means that only from the second stage onwards will constraints and limitations related to the measurement design and data collection, or to political or socio-economic feasibility in the case of policy-oriented applications, be taken into account. Distinguishing between the ideal and the second-best level is important, because these second best constraints might change over time, for example as knowledge expands, empirical research methods become more refined, or the reality of political or economic feasibility changes.

4. *Exhaustion and non-reduction*: the capabilities on the [ideal] list should include all elements that are important: no dimensions that are relevant should be left out. For example, those capabilities related to the non-market economy should also be included in economic assessments.<sup>41</sup>

The advantage of such explicit documentation of selection procedures is that it enables technical artists of multidimensional poverty comparisons to articulate their methods, both for the purposes of instigating public discussion, and also in order to learn from and contribute to the academic discussion on this topic. As was mentioned at the opening of this chapter, such documentation is missing from the grand majority of papers on multidimensional poverty. The third element – ideal vs feasible – open space for researchers on multidimensional poverty to advocate plainly and consistently for “more and better data” relating to valuable domains of poverty for which poor data exists.

This chapter has argued that we should not generate exactly one list of dimensions of poverty. For although it will be tremendously useful for some exercises (such as the ongoing improvement of international survey instruments) to generate such a list – and we should – that list will not be of use for local kitchen garden projects in Bolivia, or for health-related poverty assessments in Niger. But whereas researchers might feel quite daunted by the prospect of selecting domains transparently for their work, the options for selecting dimensions are really surprisingly few, and if the grounds of choice are clear, the project is really not that difficult. Grusky and Kanbur had observed that “economists have not reached consensus on the dimensions that matter, nor even on how they might decide what matters.” While it may be highly unlikely that economists *will* reach consensus on these matters, this chapter has argued that it may be possible to identify a bit more explicitly why they hold the views they do, and that this itself could be a step forward.

<sup>41</sup> Robeyns 2003

**Table 1**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>When to Use</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Existing Data</b>	Identify data that have the requisite technical features and that relate to the issue(s) of the study.	Does not raise values issues.	Only use in conjunction with another method, unless the exercise is a technical test and will not provide the basis for practical recommendations.	n/a
<b>Normative Assumptions</b>	Make assumptions regarding what people should value based on researcher's views or drawing on social theory, religion, etc. It is deeply desirable that these assumptions should be communicated so that they become the subject of public scrutiny.	The assumptions may be inaccurate and even detrimental.  May perpetuate inaccurate assumptions and inaccurate academic conventions.  May be asserted ideologically rather than subjected to scrutiny and reasoned debate.	When the researcher has a clear view regarding the relevant dimensions (drawn from a theory or from their own informed experience), and is able to present them transparently such that public discussion that includes the poor could challenge or improve the view.	May be comparable across time and place; may also be modified or adjusted locally.
<b>Public Consensus</b>	Use a set of dimensions that has generated some consensus and/or critical public discussion, as the basis for generating comparable data across time and space.	May mask conflict.  May be inflexible.  May not have involved poor people in the consensus.	When an instrument of consensus exists, preferably having been debated regularly, and when comparable data are required across a number of situations where the same instrument of consensus is held.	Comparable across time and place; may be modified or adjusted locally.
<b>Ongoing Deliberative Participation</b>	Generate the set of dimensions directly through an ongoing, deliberative process in which participants articulate the dimensions of poverty that matter to them, and by sharing their reasons and improving their arguments, forge a set of dimensions that reflects their views.	May be hijacked by local elite  If trust is low, 'values' discussions may be superficial and misleading.  May be expensive and difficult to repeat.  Unlikely to be feasible at a large scale.  If dimensions change, data are not comparable across time.	When participation a) can be 'deep' and address value issues in a reflective manner where conflicting views are safely expressed; and b) can involve all relevant groups without being too distorted by power imbalances.  It is difficult to use if there is a threat of violent conflict, or in the face of deep inequities between participants.	Unlikely to be comparable across place. May change over time.
<b>Empirical Evidence</b>	Analyse data on people's values, beliefs, or behaviors to construct a set of dimensions that seems to represent their values.	Surveys may not include the relevant population.  People cannot necessarily object if they disagree because they are treated as objects of study.	When data are available – whether on poor people's values (e.g. from past participatory poverty assessments) or other surveys – and when a third party view is necessary, for example because deep conflict precludes direct discussion.	Variable.

**Table 2 Some Domains of Quality of Life**

Andrews & Withey 1976: Concern Clusters <sup>42</sup>	Allardt 1993: Comparative Scandanavian Welfare Study <sup>43</sup>	Cummins 1996: Domains of Life Satisfaction <sup>44</sup>	Anand & Sen 1994: Basic Features of Well-Being <sup>45</sup>	The Millennium Development Goals 2000. <sup>46</sup>	Modules in World Bank Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) Questionnaires <sup>47</sup>
media societal standards weather government safety community house money job services recreation facilities traditions marriage children family relations treatment imagination acceptance self-adjustment virtues accomplishment friends religion health own education beneficence independence mobility beauty	<p><i>Having:</i>                      econ resources,                      housing, employment,                      working conditions,                      health,                      education</p> <p><i>Loving:</i>                      attachments/ contacts                      with                      local community,                      family and kin,                      friends, associations,                      work-mates</p> <p><i>Being</i>                      self-determination,                      political activities,                      leisure-time activities,                      meaningful work,                      opportunities to enjoy                      nature.</p>	Material well-being, Health, Productivity, Intimacy/ friendship, Safety, Community, Emotional well-being	Longevity infant / child mortality preventable morbidity literacy nourishment personal liberty and freedom	(1) extreme hunger and poverty. (2) universal primary education. (3) gender equality and empower women. (4) child mortality. (5) maternal health. (6) HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases. (7) environmental sustainability. (8) global partnership for development.	<p><i>Household:</i>                      Household Composition                      Food Expenditures                      Non-Food Expenditures                      Housing                      Durable Goods                      Non-farm self-                      employment                      Agro-pastoral activities                      Economic Activities                      Other income                      Savings and Credit                      Education                      Health                      Migration                      Fertility                      Anthropometrics</p> <p><i>Community:</i>                      Demographics                      Economy and                      Infrastructure                      Education                      Health</p> <p>Agriculture</p>

<sup>42</sup> Andrews and Withey 1976 p. 38-39

<sup>43</sup> Allardt 1993 Categories used in a survey of 4,000 respondents from Scandanavia. See Article in Nussbaum and Sen 1993

<sup>44</sup> Cummins 1996:303

<sup>45</sup> Anand and Sen 1994

<sup>46</sup> www.millenniumgoals.org

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/lsms/guide/lsmsbox1.html> accessed 20 September 2006

**Table 3** Participatory Dimensions, Human Rights, and Sphere Project

<i>Voices of the Poor</i> Narayan et al 2000 <sup>48</sup>	Chambers '95: Dimensions of Deprivation <sup>49</sup>	Max-Neef 1993: Axiological Categories <sup>50</sup>	Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Index of Articles <sup>51</sup>	Sphere Project: Minimum Standards. <sup>52</sup>
<p>Material Wellbeing: Having Enough</p> <p>Food</p> <p>Assets</p> <p>Work</p> <p>Bodily Wellbeing: Being and Appearing Well</p> <p>Health</p> <p>Appearances</p> <p>Physical Environment</p> <p>Social Wellbeing:</p> <p>Being able to care for, bring up, marry and settle children</p> <p>Self-respect and dignity</p> <p>Peace, harmony, good relations in the family/community</p> <p>Security:</p> <p>Civil peace</p> <p>A physically safe and secure environment</p> <p>Personal physical security</p> <p>Lawfulness and access to justice</p> <p>Security in Old Age</p> <p>Confidence in the Future</p> <p>Psychological Wellbeing:</p> <p>Peace of Mind,</p> <p>Happiness,</p> <p>Harmony (including a spiritual life and religious observance)</p> <p>Freedom of Choice and Action</p>	<p>Poverty</p> <p>Social inferiority</p> <p>Isolation</p> <p>Physical weakness</p> <p>Vulnerability</p> <p>Seasonality</p> <p>Powerlessness</p> <p>Humiliation</p>	<p>Subsistence</p> <p>Protection</p> <p>Affection</p> <p>Understanding</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>Leisure</p> <p>Creation</p> <p>Identity</p> <p>Freedom</p>	<p>1-2 Human dignity, equality and non-discrimination</p> <p>3 Life, Liberty and Security</p> <p>4 Slavery and Slave Trade</p> <p>5 Torture and Cruel/Inhuman/Degrading Treatment or Punishment</p> <p>6-11 Legal Rights</p> <p>12 Arbitrary Interference</p> <p>13 Freedom of Movement and Residence</p> <p>14 Asylum</p> <p>15 Nationality</p> <p>16 Marriage</p> <p>17 Property</p> <p>18-19 Freedom of Thought/Conscience/ Religion/ Opinion/ Expression</p> <p>20 Peaceful Assembly and Association</p> <p>21 Political Rights</p> <p>22 Social security and general recognition of socio-economic rights</p> <p>23-24 Employment, Trade Union and Rest</p> <p>25 Adequate standard of living</p> <p>26 Education</p> <p>27 Cultural Life</p> <p>28 International order</p> <p>29 Limitations (Morality/public order/general welfare)</p>	<p>The Sphere project has developed minimum standards around the following five areas:</p> <p>Water, Sanitation &amp; Hygiene</p> <p>Food Security</p> <p>Nutrition</p> <p>Food Aid</p> <p>Shelter &amp; Settlement</p> <p>Non-Food items (bedding, stoves)</p> <p>Health Services</p>

<sup>48</sup> Narayan 2000

<sup>49</sup> Chambers 1995

<sup>50</sup> Max-Neef 1989

<sup>51</sup> [www.unhcr.ch/udhr](http://www.unhcr.ch/udhr) accessed 20 Sept 2006

<sup>52</sup> [www.sphereproject.org](http://www.sphereproject.org) accessed 20 Sept 2006

**Table 4 Basic Needs – Practical Applications**

Braybrooke: <sup>53</sup>	Doyal & Gough 1992: Intermediate Needs <sup>54</sup>	Nielsen 1977 central elements <sup>7</sup> of human need <sup>55</sup>	Lane 1969 needs inform political behavior <sup>56</sup>	Packard 1960 hidden needs towards which marketing theory is orientated <sup>57</sup>	Hamilton 2003: Needs categories <sup>58</sup>
<p>life-supporting relation to environment                      food &amp; water excretion                      exercise                      periodic rest, including sleep                      whatever [else] is indispensable to preserving the body intact                      companionship                      education                      social acceptance and recognition                      sexual activity                      freedom from harrassment                      recreation</p>	<p>Nutritional food/water                      Protective housing                      Work                      Physical environment                      Health care                      Security in childhood                      Significant primary relationships                      Physical security                      Economic security                      Safe birth control/childbearing                      Basic education</p>	<p>Love                      companionship                      security                      protection                      a sense of community                      meaningful work                      adequate sustenance                      shelter                      sexual gratification                      amusement                      rest                      recreation                      recognition                      respect of person</p>	<p>cognitive needs - curiosity, learning, understanding                      consistency needs - emotional, logical, veridical                      social needs (affiliation, being linked)                      moral needs                      esteem needs                      personality integration and identity needs                      agrasion expression needs                      autonomy needs                      self-actualisation needs                      guides to reality, object appraisal</p>	<p>emotional security, self-esteem, ego gratification, recognition and status, creativity, love, sense of belonging, power                      a sense of immortality</p>	<p>Vital needs                      Adequate shelter                      Sufficient clothing                      Required daily caloric intake                      Periodic rest                      Exercise                      Social entertainment                      Particular social needs                      Bald need-claims, i.e. the need for an efficient train service                      Provision, i.e. the need for a television                      Consumption and production, i.e. the need for a car                      Agency Needs                      Autonomy                      Intersubjective recognition                      Active and creative expression</p>

<sup>53</sup> Braybrooke 1987 p. 36

<sup>54</sup> Doyal and Gough 1991

<sup>55</sup> Nielsen 1977

<sup>56</sup> Lane 1969

<sup>57</sup> Packard 1960

<sup>58</sup> Hamilton 2003 p. 23-4

Table 5 Basic Needs – Psychological Bases

Murray 1938 <sup>59</sup>	Fromm 1956 <sup>60</sup>	Maslow 1943 Instinctive and universal needs <sup>61</sup>	Ramsay 1992: Human Needs <sup>62</sup>
Achievement Sentience Sex Aggression Dominance Succorance	relatedness, transcendence- creativity, rootedness, sense of identity and individuality the need for a frame of orientation and devotion  ***** food water sex love power destruction 'frames of orientation and devotion'	Physical needs Safety needs Affective needs Esteem Self-actualisation	Physical survival Sexual needs, Security, Love and relatedness, Esteem & identity Self-realisation

<sup>59</sup> Murray 1938  
<sup>60</sup> Fromm 1955  
<sup>61</sup> Maslow 1943  
<sup>62</sup> Ramsay 1992

**Table 6 Philosophical Dimensions of Human Value**

Finnis: <sup>63</sup>	Griffin 1986 Prudential Values <sup>64</sup>	Galtung 1980 True Worlds <sup>65</sup>	Davitt 1968: Value Areas <sup>66</sup>	Lasswell & Holmberg 1969: Human Values <sup>67</sup>	Nussbaum 2000 Central Human Capabilities <sup>68</sup>	Qizilbash 1996: Prudential values for Development <sup>69</sup>	Rawls' Primary Goods 1971 <sup>70</sup>	Sen 1999 Instrumental Freedoms <sup>71</sup>
Life Survival Health Reproduction Knowledge Meaningful Work / Livelihood Authentic Self- Direction / Participation / Agency Relationships Inner Peace Harmony with a greater than human source of meaning and value <i>Environment &amp; Aesthetic</i>	Accomplishment components of human existence deciding for oneself/agency minimum material goods limbs & senses that work freedom from pain & anxiety liberty understanding enjoyment deep personal relations	input-output (nutrition, water, air) climate balance with nature (clothing, shelter) health community symbolic interaction and reflection (education)	Life and reproduction, Protection and Security Title (Property) Sexual Union Decision- Responsibility Knowledge, Art, Communication, Meaning	Skill Affection Respect Rectitude Power Enlighten-ment Wealth Well-Being	Life Bodily health Bodily integrity Senses, thought imagination, Emotions Practical reason Affiliation Other species Play Control over one's environment	Health/nutrition/sanitation/re st/ shelter/ security Literacy/basic intellectual and physical capacities Self-respect and aspiration Positive freedom, autonomy or self-determination Negative freedom or liberty Enjoyment Understanding or knowledge Significant relations with others and some participation in social life Accomplishment (sort that gives life point/ weight)	rights liberties opportunities income and wealth freedom of movement & choice of occupation social bases of self respect powers and prerogatives of offices and positions of responsibility	Political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, protective security

<sup>63</sup> Finnis 1980

<sup>64</sup> Griffin 1986

<sup>65</sup> Galtung has listed different needs in different places. Galtung 1980

<sup>66</sup> Davitt 1968

<sup>67</sup> Lasswell and Holmberg 1969

<sup>68</sup> Nussbaum 2000

<sup>69</sup> Qizilbash 1996

<sup>70</sup> 'things that every rational man is presumed to want' Rawls 1971 p. 60-5, Rawls 1982 p. 162, Rawls 1988 p. 256-7

<sup>71</sup> Sen 1999 p. 10

**Table 7** Cross-Cultural Empirical Studies of Well-Being and Universal Values

Rokeach-Terminal Values <sup>72</sup>	Schwartz 1994 Universal Human Values <sup>73</sup>	Willson 1967 Correlates of Avowed Happiness <sup>74</sup>	Argyle 1991 Causes of 'joy' <sup>75</sup>	Ryff Dimensions of Wellness <sup>76</sup>	Myers and Diener: Correlates of high subjective well-being <sup>77</sup>	Biswas-Diener and Diener 12 Life Domains <sup>78</sup>
A comfortable life (a prosperous life) An exciting life (a stimulating, active life) A sense of accomplishment (lasting contribution) A world at peace (free of war and conflict) A world of beauty (beauty of nature and the arts) Equality (brotherhood, = opportunity for all) Family Security (taking care of loved ones) Freedom (independence, free choice) Happiness (contentedness) Inner Harmony (freedom from inner conflict) Mature Love (sexual and spiritual intimacy) National security (protection from attack) Pleasure (an enjoyable, leisurely life) Salvation (saved, eternal life) Self-respect (self-esteem) Social Recognition (respect, admiration) True Friendship (close companionship) Wisdom (a mature understanding of life)	Power Achievement Hedonism Stimulation Self-direction Universalism Benevolence Tradition Conformity Security	young, healthy, well-educated, well-paid, extroverted, optimistic, worry-free, religious, married person with high self-esteem, job morale, modest aspirations, of either sex, and of a wide range of intelligence	Social contacts with friends, or others in close relationship Sexual activity Success, achievement Physical activity, exercise, sport Nature, reading, music Food and drink Alcohol  1991	Autonomy Environmental Mastery Positive Relations with Others Purpose in Live Personal Growth Self-Acceptance	1. Certain traits: self-esteem personal control optimism extraversion 2. Strong supportive relationships 3. Challenging work 4. Religious faith	Morality Food Family Friendship Material resources Intelligence Romantic relationship Physical appearance Self Income Housing Social life

<sup>72</sup> Rokeach 1973

<sup>73</sup> Schwartz 1994

<sup>74</sup> Wilson 1967 p. 294-306

<sup>75</sup> Argyle and Martin 1991

<sup>76</sup> Ryff 1989 p. 1069-1081. Her work synthesizes ideas from Maslow, Jung, Rogers, Allport, Erikson, Buhler, Neurgartens and Jahoda. See Christopher 1999, who argues that it is culturally embedded.

<sup>77</sup> Myers and Diener 1995 p. 10-19

<sup>78</sup> Biswas-Diener and Diener 2001

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Diagram 1

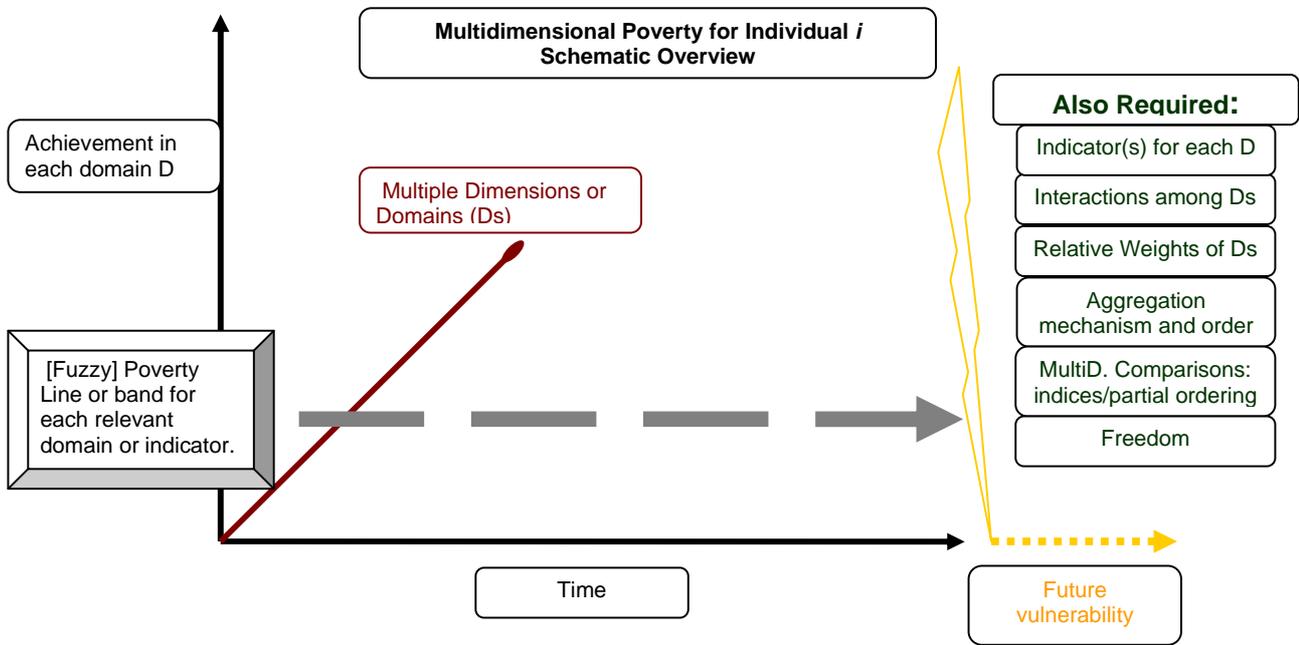


Diagram 2

