Poverty amongst Women: A Multidimensional Perspective
A case study in Rwanda

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INTRODUCTION

- One of the issues facing sub-Saharan Africa is the recurrent risks and challenges faced by women generation in and generation out.
- Poverty, the main fuel behind the ravaging problems in sub-Saharan Africa, is undeniably not gender neutral but if viewed with a gender lens, poverty reduction strategies can be far more efficient and effective.
- Research problem:
  - There is no official measurement of women poverty
  - The literature measures poverty at the household level – no difference is made between men and women
  - There is a gap in the literature on the multidimensional aspect of women poverty & characteristics of poor women
  - This study comes in time for the measurement of Target 1.1.2 of the Sustainable Development Goal 1 (as described below)

1 NO POVERTY

Sustainable Development Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Target 1.1.2: By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.

We also want to emphasize the national definition of poverty for women in this study – poverty is different for women in different countries! Example, poverty for women in Europe is different from poverty in sub-Saharan Africa, similarly women poverty in Rwanda is not similar to that of Burundi, despite being neighbouring countries.

The research questions of the study:
What is multidimensional poverty for the Rwandese woman?
How to measure target 1.1.2 of SDG 1 for women in Rwanda?
What are the characteristics of the multidimensionally poor Rwandese woman?

OBJECTIVES

1. Measure Women Poverty for target 1.1.2 of SDG 1 based on the context of Rwanda

2. Find out the characteristics of the multidimensionally poor women in order to identify the most vulnerable women in the country for policy actions.

METHODOLOGY

- Poverty, also women poverty, can be measured using three approaches: monetary, deprivation (measuring access to basic needs and non-fulfilment of rights) and subjective poverty.
- In this paper, we measure poverty using the deprivation approach based on Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) tool developed by UNICEF.
- Data source: Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2014/2015
- The deprivations in the contextualised dimensions of well-being are measured and the unit of analysis is the woman. The chosen dimensions to capture women poverty in Rwanda are as follows;

15-49 years
- Nutrition
- Health
- Education
- Water
- Sanitation
- Housing
- Infomation
- Family Planning

50 years and above
- Health
- Education
- Water
- Sanitation
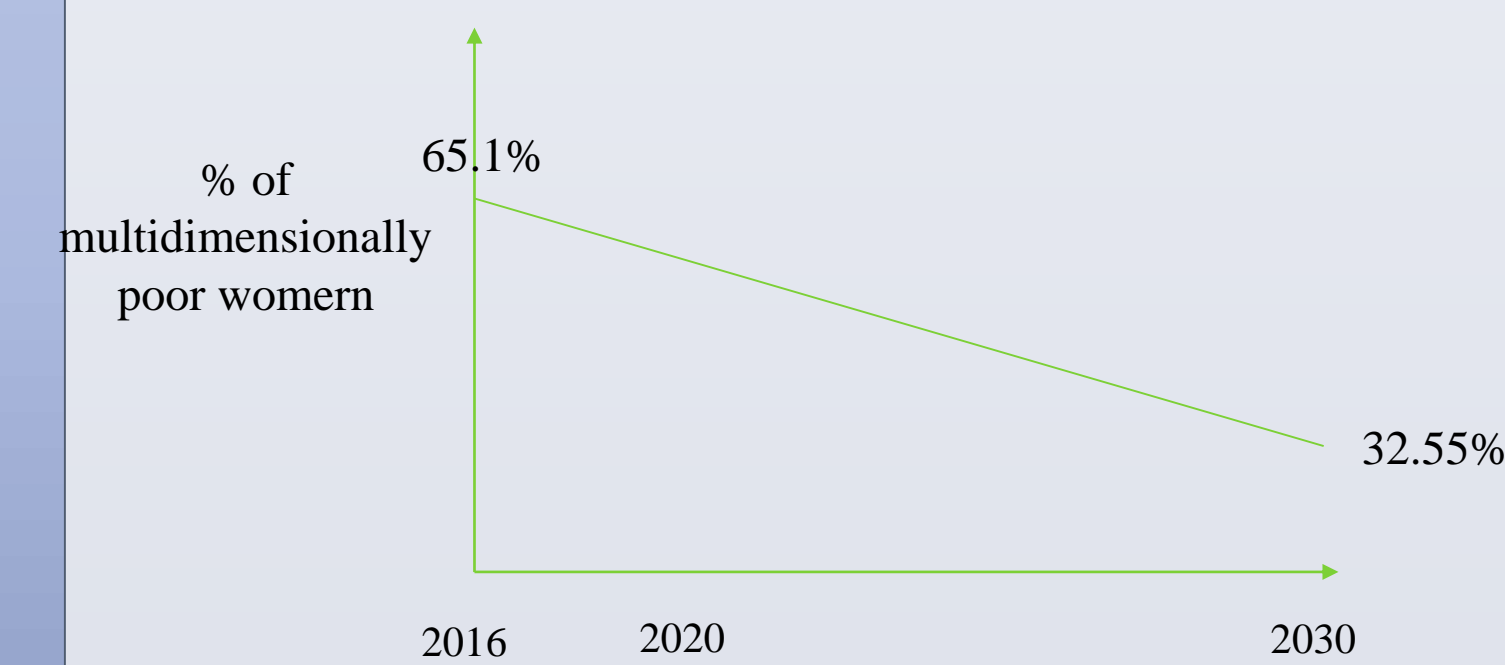- Housing
- Information

- The dimensions is divided into 2 age groups, 15-49 and 50+ years because of availability of data.
- Each dimensions are measured by proxy indicators (see attached leaflet). A woman is deprived in the dimension if she is deprived in at least one of the indicators.
- A woman is considered as multidimensionally poor if she is deprived in at least 3 of her dimensions of well-being.
- A multivariate logistic regression is used to investigate into the characteristics of the multidimensionally poor Rwandese women.
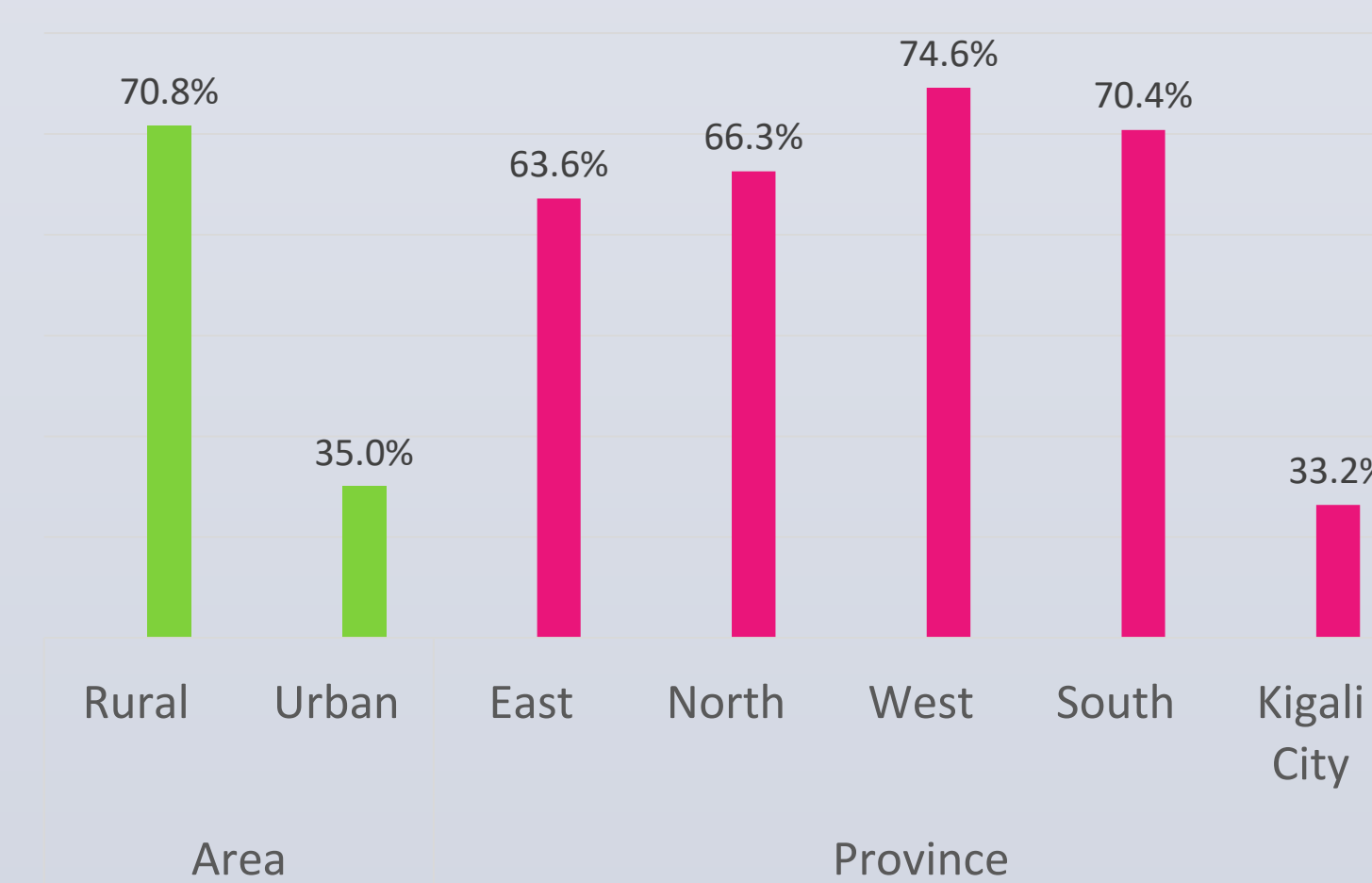
RESULTS

1. Measure of women poverty as per target 1.1.2 of SDG 1

Reference rates for target 1.1.2 of the SDG 1 (based on Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2014/15)				
			2015	2030
SDG 1	Description of the target	Poverty threshold	Poverty rate (Reference rate)	Poverty rate (Aim to achieve)
Target 1.1.2	The proportion of women of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	Deprivation in at least 3 out of the total number of dimensions	65.1%	32.55%

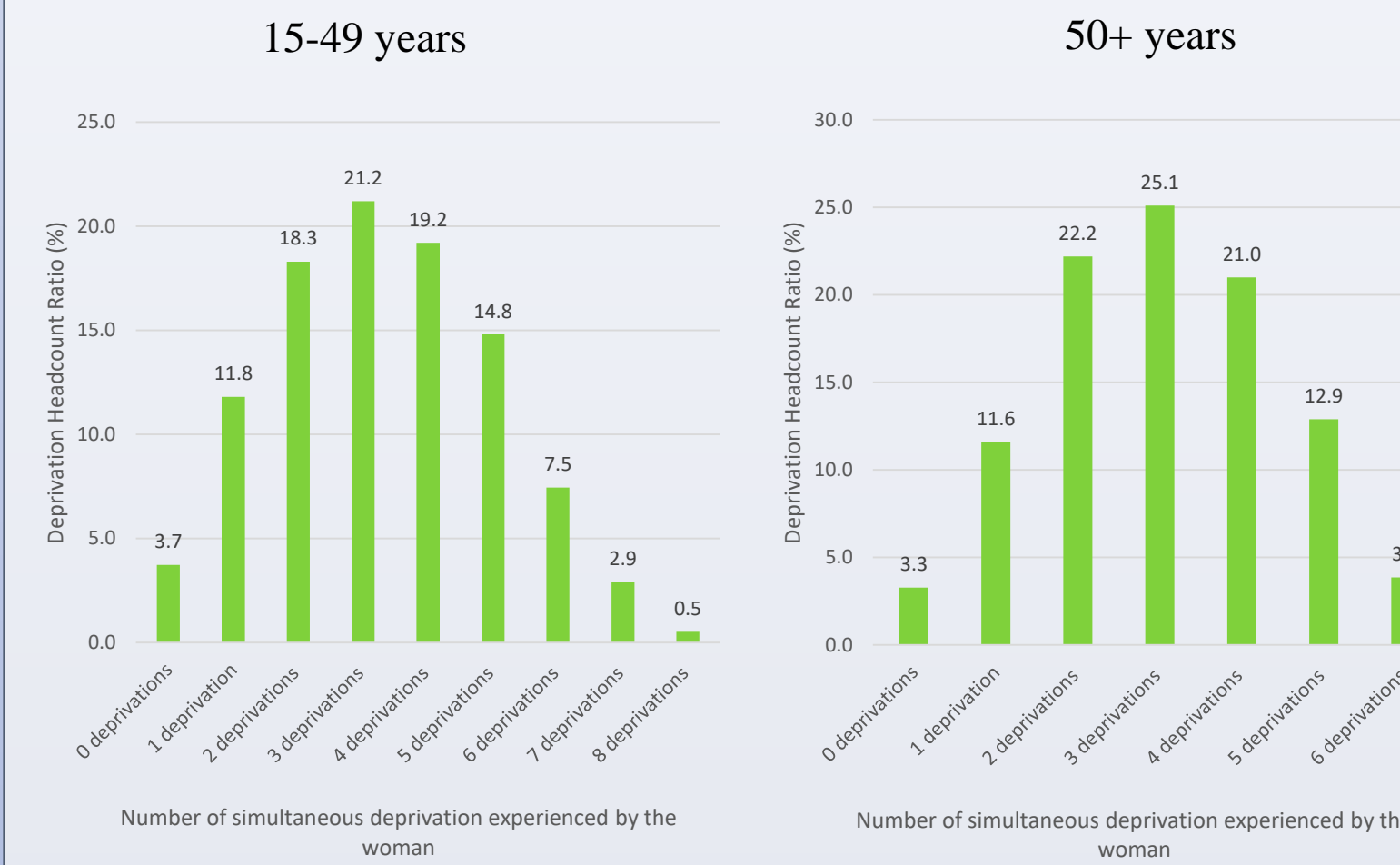**Objective**: Multidimensional women poverty should decrease by at least half by 2030!

% of multidimensionally poor womern — 65.1% (2016) → 32.55% (2030)

2016 — 2020 — 2030

% of Multidimensionally Poor Women

Area
- Rural: 70.8%
- Urban: 35.0%

Province
- East: 63.6%
- North: 66.3%
- West: 74.6%
- South: 70.4%
- Kigali City: 33.2%

Notable disparities between deprivation rates based on geographical location!

RESULTS

Distribution of deprivations:

15-49 years
Deprivation Headcount Ratio (%) by Number of simultaneous deprivation experienced by the woman:
- 0 deprivations: 3.7
- 1 deprivation: 11.8
- 2 deprivations: 18.3
- 3 deprivations: 21.2
- 4 deprivations: 19.2
- 5 deprivations: 14.8
- 6 deprivations: 7.5
- 7 deprivations: 2.9
- 8 deprivations: 0.5

50+ years
Deprivation Headcount Ratio (%) by Number of simultaneous deprivation experienced by the woman:
- 0 deprivations: 3.3
- 1 deprivation: 11.6
- 2 deprivations: 22.2
- 3 deprivations: 25.1
- 4 deprivations: 21.0
- 5 deprivations: 12.9
- 6 deprivations: 3.9

Characteristics of multidimensionally poor women:

- Women in early adulthood have a lower probability of being multidimensionally poor as compared to women in their late twenties. Similar results are also found for old-aged women (50+ years): the older the woman, the more chances that she is multidimensionally poor. This shows that there has been **progress over time**.
- Women working in the **agriculture sector** are worse-off and are most likely to be poor.
- **Higher number of children** born from a woman results in an increased probability of being multidimensionally poor.
- Significant correlation between mother's multidimensional poverty and her **child's stunting level**.
- Single women younger than 30 years and married woman are more likely to be poor if the **household head is female**.
- The higher the **education level of the household head**, the better off are the women living in that household.
- Higher **household size** is associated with lower poverty level of the woman.
- There is less likelihood for a 50+ year old woman to be poor if there is a man in the household; the relationship between **presence of a man** and multidimensional poverty for other categories of women is insignificant.
- **Rural** women and those from the **West and South province** having higher likelihood of being multidimensionally poor.

CONCLUSIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- An important conclusion of this study is that women are deprived in multiple dimensions at a time. It is therefore imperative to create policy packages that involve different sectors to more efficiently target the multidimensionally poor women. Inter-sectoral efforts to address women poverty may also be effective in terms of budgeting and reducing costs with implementation.

- Particular attention should be given to:
  - Rural women
  - Women from the West and South provinces
  - Women working in the agricultural sector
  - Women with many children
  - Women whose children are stunted
  - Female headed households
  - Households with heads having no or low level of education

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