NEWS RELEASE
Multidimensional Poverty Index for Sri Lanka 2018 at Global Aspects
Department of Census and Statistics
Ministry of Economic Reforms and Public Distribution

TEL: 011-2147458 FAX: 011-21447447 E-mail: sample.survey@statistics.gov.lk

Overview

According to the Sustainable Development Goals (2030) poverty should be eliminated in all its forms everywhere. Accordingly, in addition to the consumption approach the DCS has decided to measure poverty in multidimensional approach periodically. This publication provides the measures of poverty in multidimensional approach using on Alkire and Foster (2007) counting method which is globally accepted and used to measure acute poverty covering more than 100 developing countries. The DCS has compiled the Multidimensional poverty measures as official statistics for the first time in 2018 in collaboration with the Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI) in the United Kingdom using the data collected through the Demography and Health Survey (DHS) conducted by the DCS in 2016. This note provides the multidimensional poverty statistics considering the Global concept to understand the people who live in poverty and makes a comparison mainly across countries.

Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) in Global Context complements traditional income-based poverty measures by capturing the severe deprivations that each person faces and at the same time with respect to three dimensions Education, Health and Living Standards with respect to ten indicators. The ten indicators are; years of Schooling, School attendance (Education), Nutrition, Child Mortality (Health), Electricity, Drinking water, Sanitation, Floor type, Cooking fuel, Assets (Standard of living).

According to the survey findings, it is reported that the proportion of population that is multidimensional poor living in Sri Lanka is 2.4 percent (around five hundred thousand people). The average deprivation scores a multidimensional poor person experiences is 37.5 percent for Sri Lanka in 2016. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is 0.009 in 2016. This means the poor in Sri Lanka experience 0.9 percent of the total possible deprivations the country could experience. According to the definition of vulnerability use in this analysis, from the total population 11.9 percent are reported as vulnerable in poverty in Sri Lanka. That amounts to 2.5 million poor people. It is reported that 0.2 percent are severely multidimensional poor in Sri Lanka in 2016.

According to the global MPI for Asian countries which is published by OPHI, it reveals that among seven countries Pakistan reported the highest MPI (.230) while Sri Lanka reported the lowest MPI (.009). This figures is very low at national level for Sri Lanka because many indicators considered for this exercise are success in country context. Global MPI measures are especially useful for cross country comparisons and in country context it is useful for policymakers to target resources more effectively identifying severely deprived dimensions of poverty. For example, in Sri Lankan context among the ten areas considered, the most deprived area is nutrition. However, it is needed to compile National MPIs to understand poverty measure that reflects local priorities in multidimensional approach for policy targeting. Further, it provides the information for the SDGs to target goal 1 indicator 1.2 in 2030.

I.R.Bandara
Director General
Department of Census and Statistics