

WEBINAR

THE EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES LIVING IN POVERTY

Qualitative methods to assess
child poverty

20 JULY 2023

 **2:00 PM (GMT+2)**

[#EndChildPoverty](#)



Speakers

Presenters:

- Gwyther Rees, Social & Economic Policy Manager, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti
- Cath Porter, Director, Young Lives
- Fernanda Paredes, Social Policy Officer, UNICEF Argentina
- Julia Karpati, Senior Researcher, Social Policy Research Institute (SPRI Global)
- Yasmine Ibrahim, Social Policy Specialist, UNICEF Lebanon

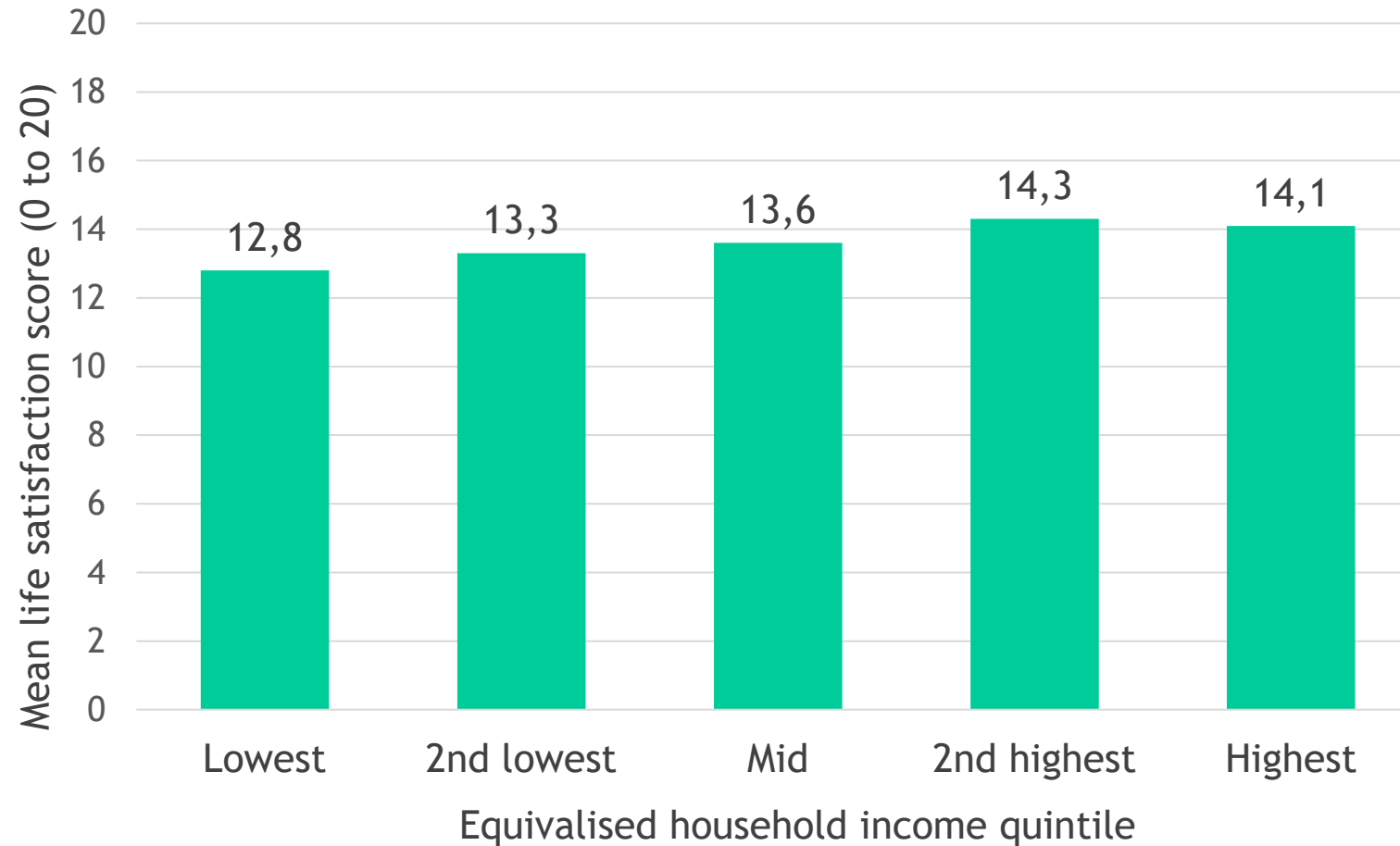
Moderators:

- Sola Engilbertsdottir, Co-chair, Global Coalition to End Child Poverty
- David Lambert Tumwesigye, Co-chair, Global Coalition to End Child Poverty

Children's perspectives on their well-being

*Having close friends, a loving family, a nice home, **enough money for food and things wanted** and good school work*

Household income and children's life satisfaction (mean)



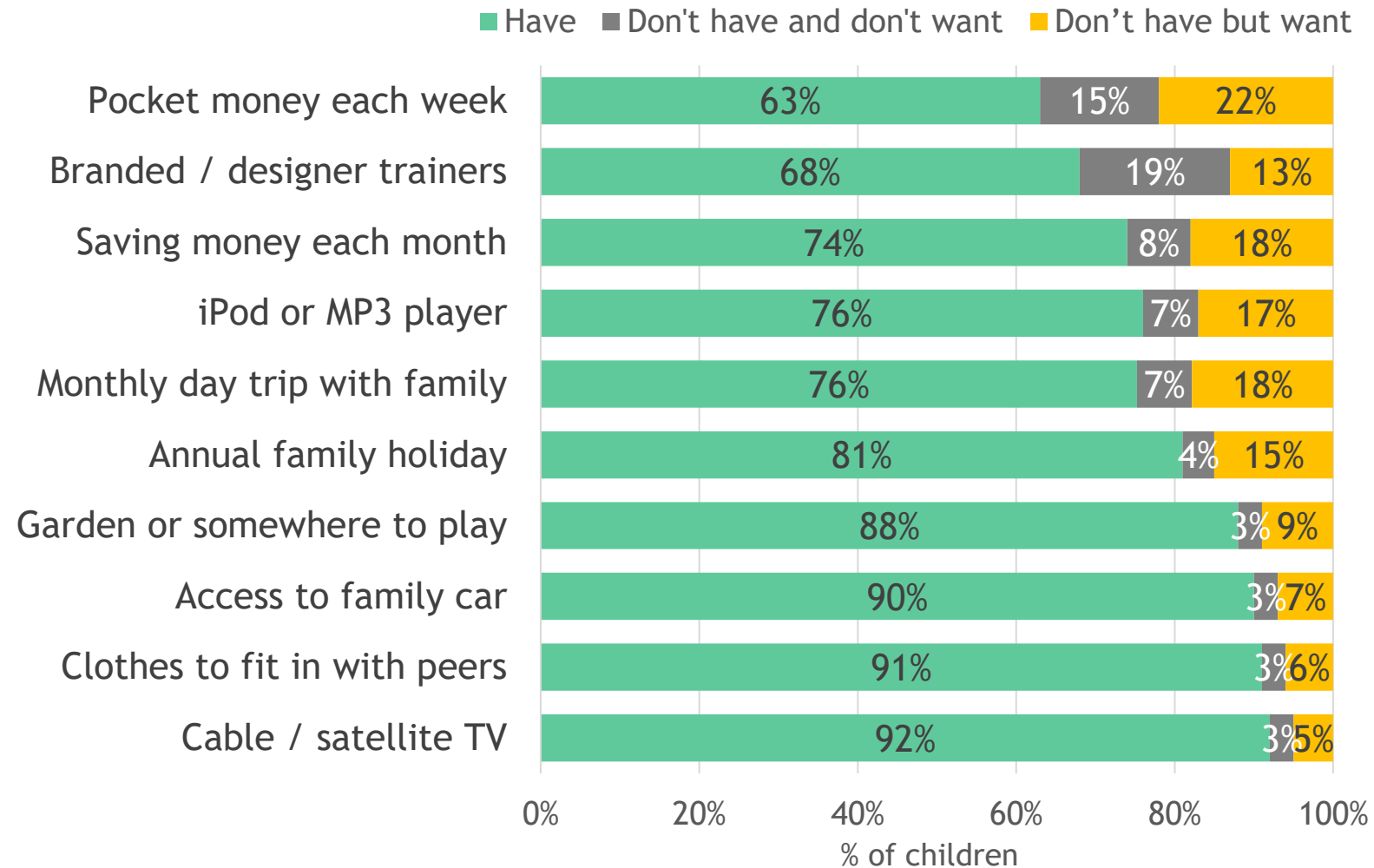
*Children aged 8 to 15 in England, Scotland and Wales 2010 , Feb 2011, N≈2000.
Source: The Children's Society*

Poverty as social exclusion

Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and the amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average family that they are in effect excluded from the ordinary living patterns, customs, and activities

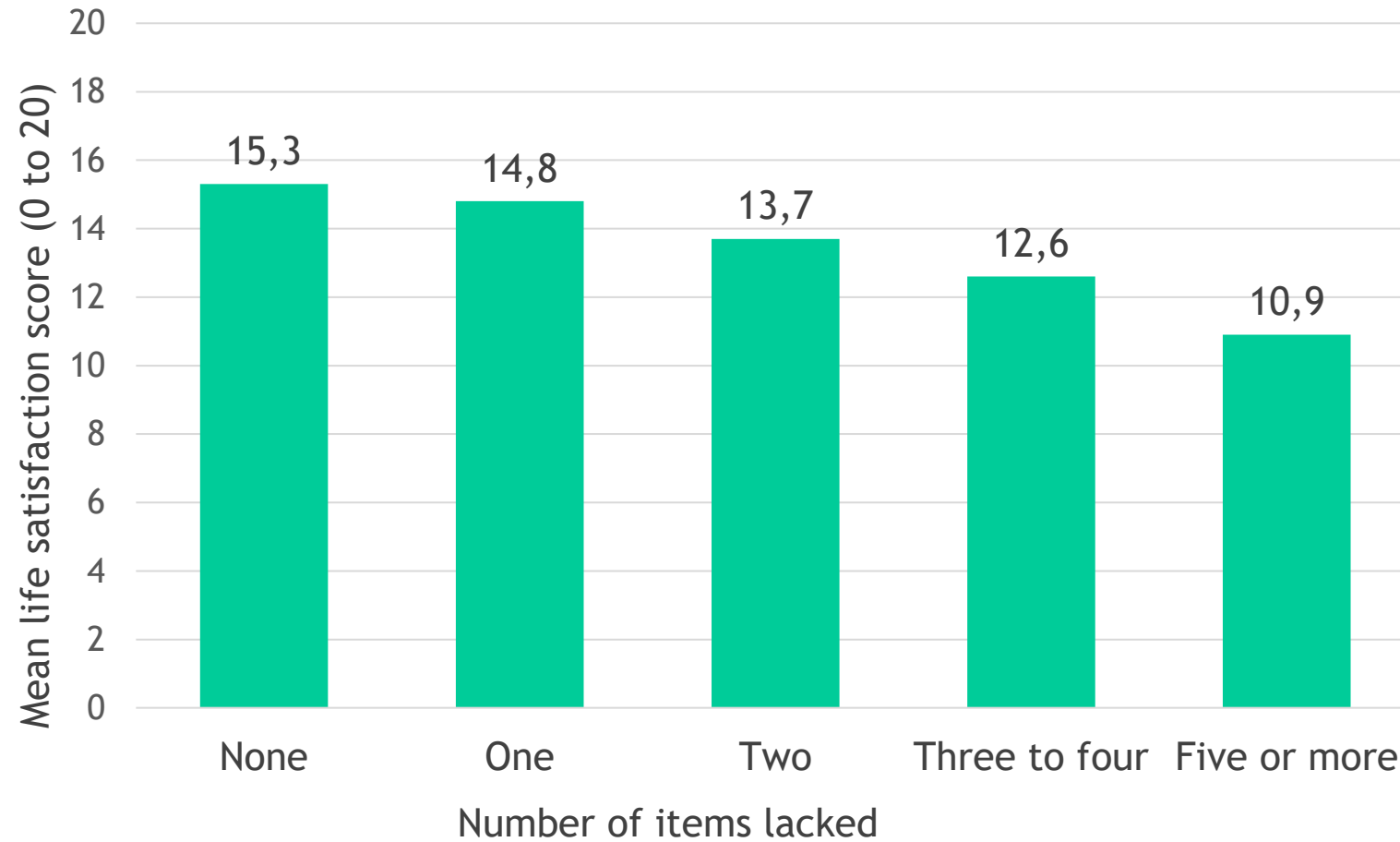
Townsend, P. (1979) *Poverty in the United Kingdom*.
Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd.

Child-centred material deprivation index



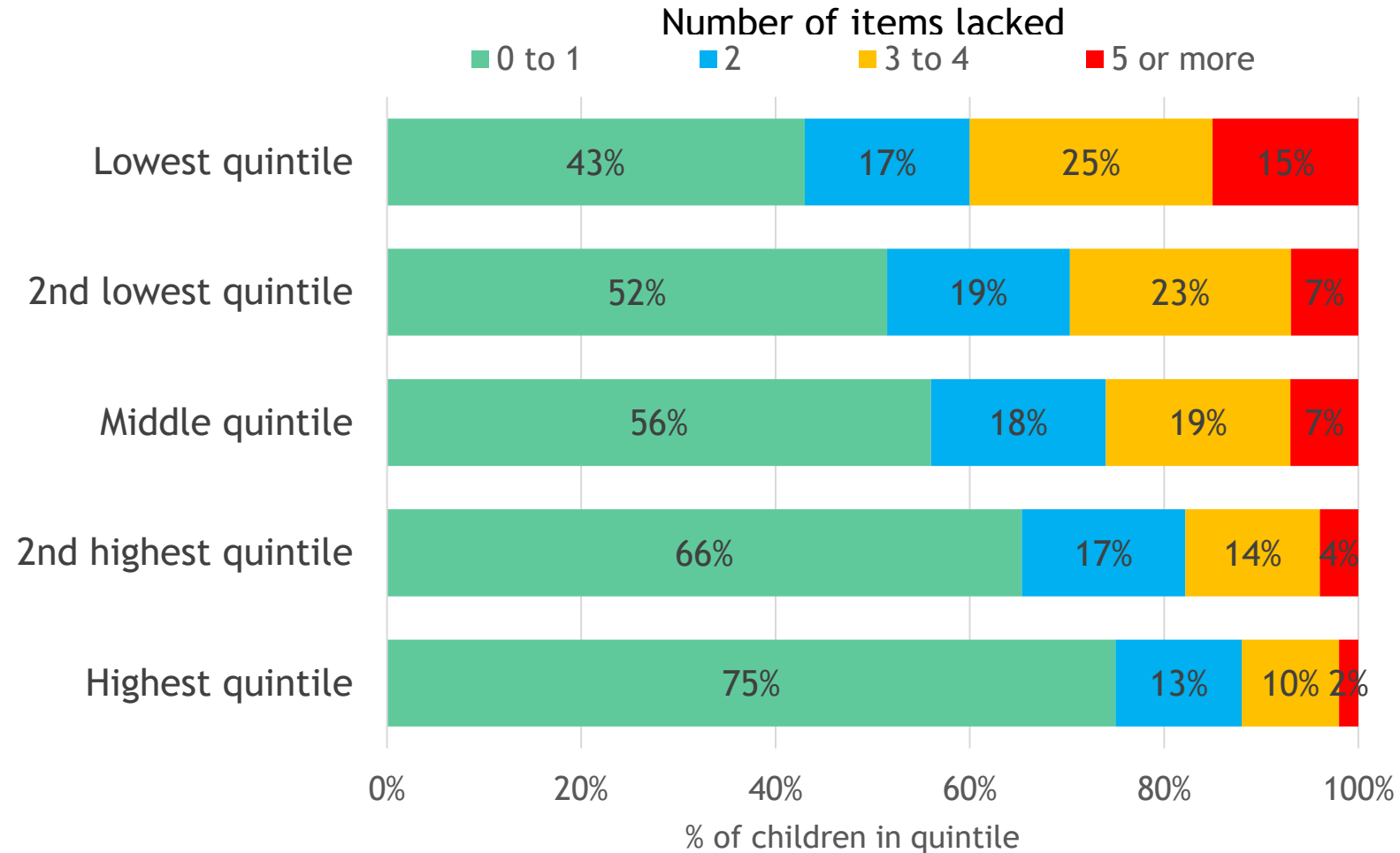
Children aged 8 to 15 in England, 2010-11, N≈3,800.
Source: Main & Pople (2012)

Material deprivation and children's life satisfaction (mean)



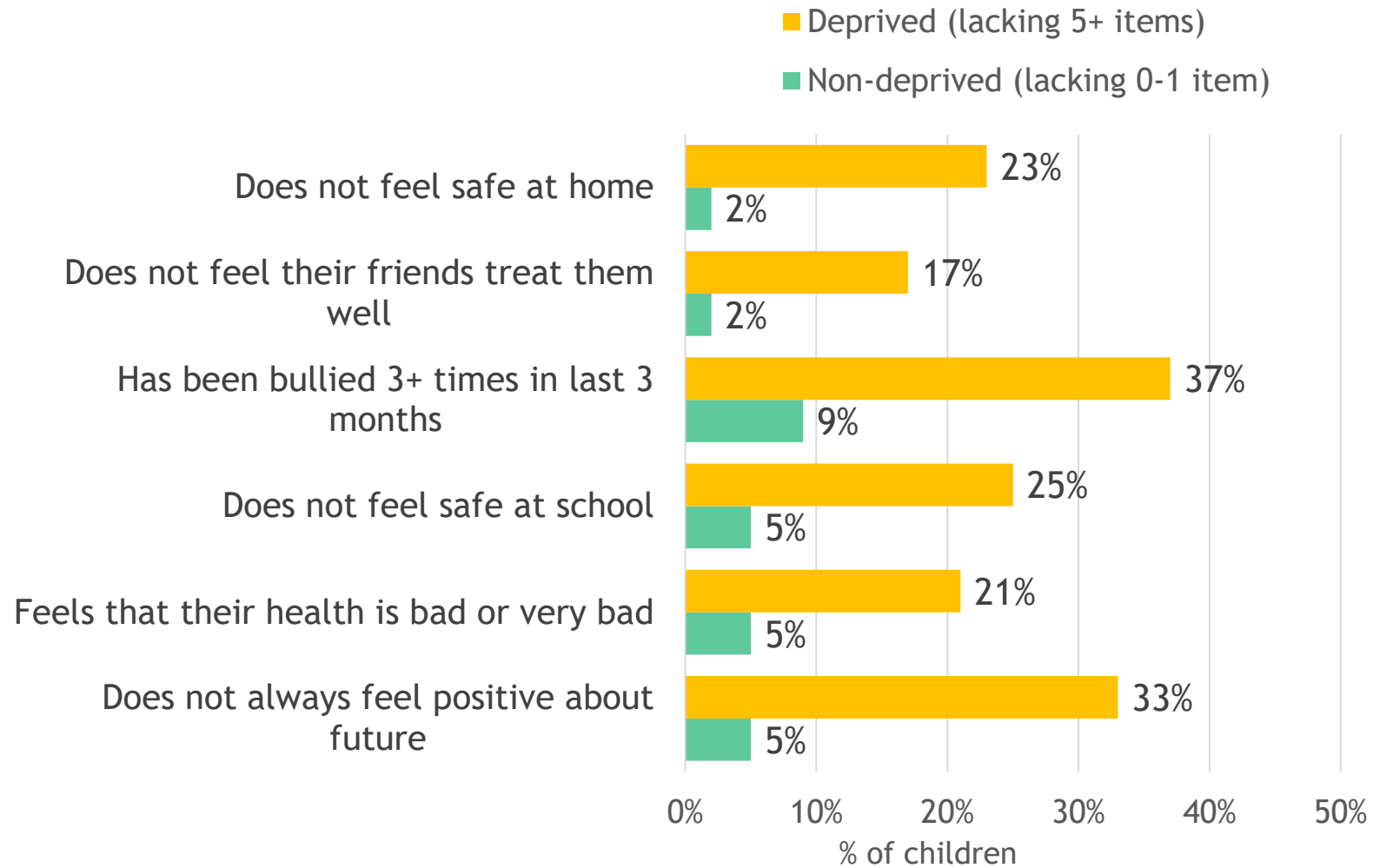
*Children aged 10 to 15 in England, 2010-11, N≈3,800.
Source: The Children's Society*

Income and material deprivation



Children aged 8 to 15 in England, 2010-11, N≈3,800.
Source: Main & Bradshaw (2012)

Material deprivation and children's lives



Children aged 10 to 15 in England, 2010-11, N≈3,800.
Source: The Children's Society (2013)

References and sources

Main, G., & Pople, L. (2012). *Missing Out: A child-centred analysis of material deprivation and subjective well-being*. London: The Children's Society.

Main, G. (2014). Child Poverty and Children's Subjective Well-Being. *Child Indicators Research*, 7(3), 451-472.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-014-9237-7>

Main, G., & Bradshaw, J. (2012). A Child Material Deprivation Index. *Child Indicators Research*, 5(3), 503-521.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-012-9145-7>

Pople, L., Raws, P., Mueller, D., Mahony, S., Rees, G., Bradshaw, J., Main, G., Keung, A. (2014). *The Good Childhood Report 2014*. London: The Children's Society.

Rees, G., Goswami, H., Pople, L., Bradshaw, J., Keung, A., & Main, G. (2013). *The Good Childhood Report 2013*. London: The Children's Society.

Rees, G., Pople, L., & Goswami, H. (2011). *Links between family economic factors and children's subjective well-being*. London: The Children's Society.



Dr Gina Crivello
1972-2022



Young Lives' Mixed Methods approach

What have we learned from qualitative research?

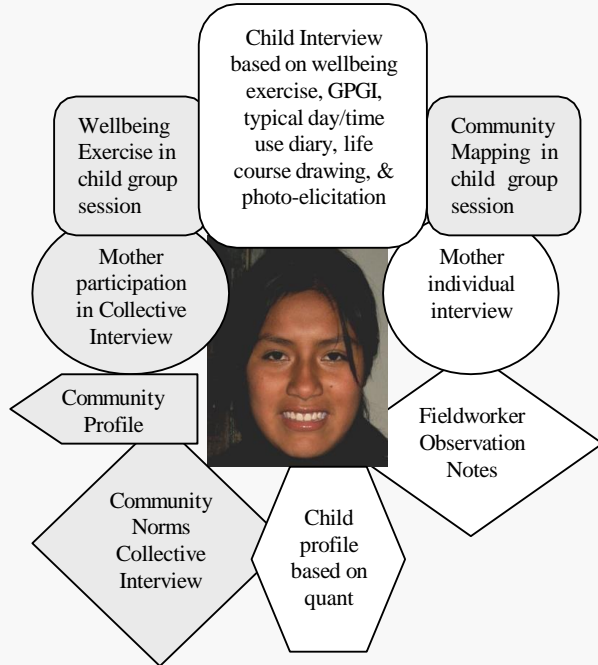
Catherine Porter, Director Young Lives

July 20th 2023

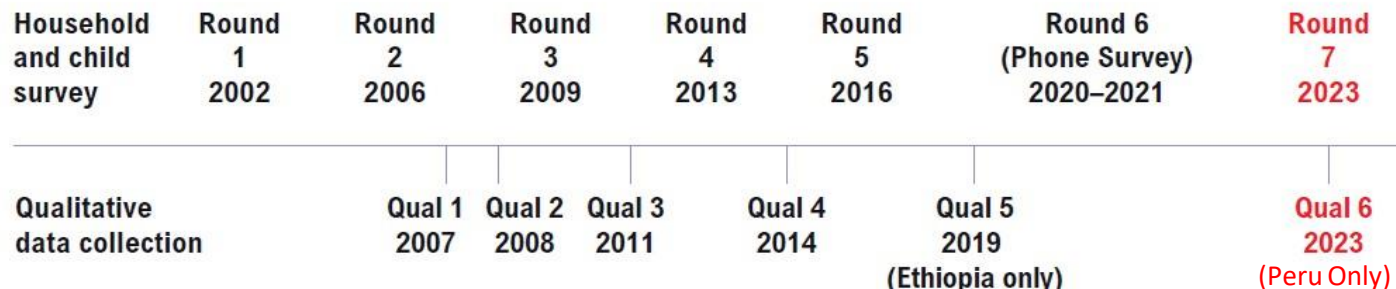
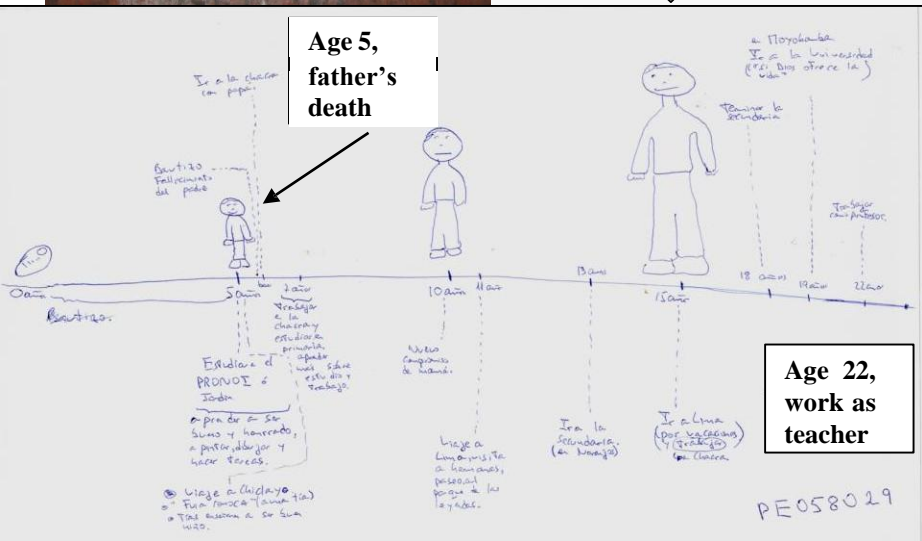
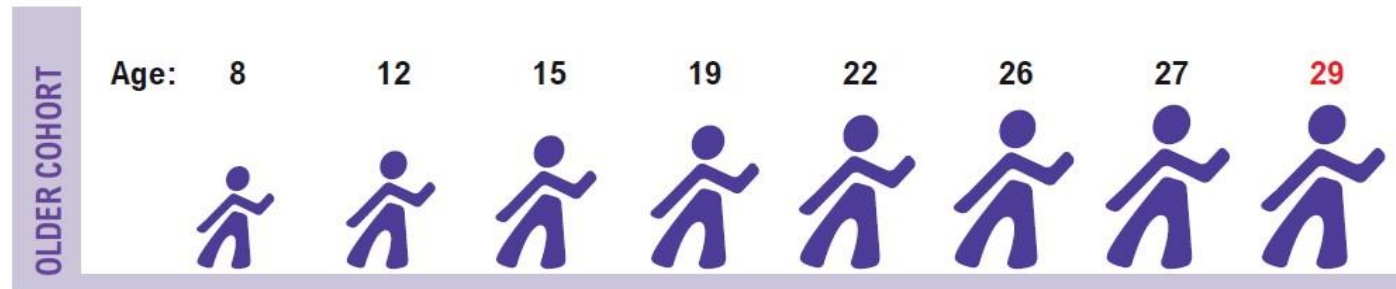
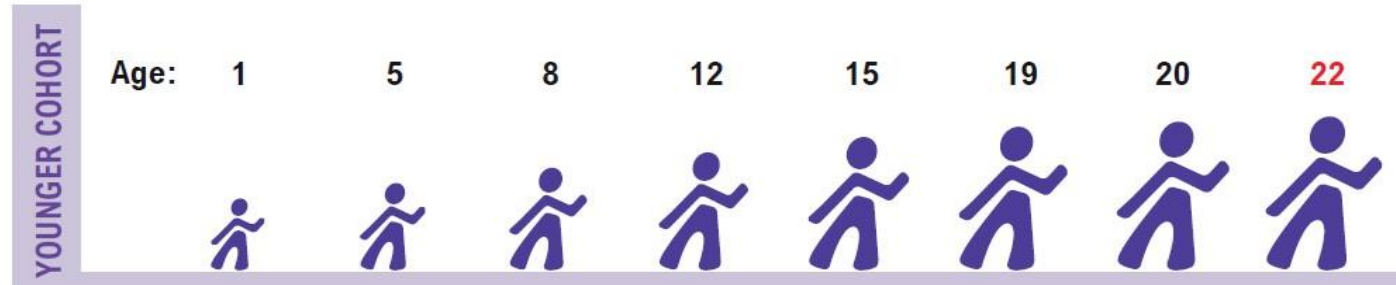
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Young Lives Survey waves and qualitative data collection



Qualitative Methods include: child interviews, caregiver interviews, focus group discussions & teacher interviews, observations; repetition of methods at different ages/ rounds



Qualitative evidence is often used as illustration with cases highlighting survey trends in poverty with a personal story, often about deprivation.

But it can go much further:

- Highlighting cases that buck trends, dismissed by quant research as outliers (beating the odds) – and **identifying those who are marginalised/hard to reach** (leave no-one behind)
- Challenge quant findings or **pick up on things missed**, e.g. PSNP mixed methods study child labour
- Explore or **explain unexpected survey findings** (why women don't return to work post pandemic)
- **Raise and explain puzzling questions** (e.g. why girls might actually want to undergo FGM/C)
- Providing evidence/hypotheses that can be followed up with quant
- Address **issues which are difficult for people to talk about in surveys** e.g. violence affecting children in home, school and communities
- **Problematise complex issues of poverty** e.g. child labour and child marriage
- Bring to light and show differences between countries, urban/rural locations, boys and girls, cohorts

Mixed methods research that combines statistics with qualitative evidence on lived experience can really **connect with policymakers to effect change** (e.g. ET early learning; India Disabilities)

- Targets are important – indicators are important. But...
- Household measures of poverty can hide child deprivation – qualitative work draws out **intra household inequality**.
- Children's voices highlight the **shame and insecurity of poverty**.
- But, also their hopes and aspirations: **access to education as hope for the future**, and the importance of care and feeling secure while growing up.

Leads to new policy recommendations:

- Focus on the relevance of access to care services in poor areas (rural and urban)
- Policies related to banning violence against children
- Policies to support poor children in the face of discrimination and violence
- Importance of improving quality and inclusive educational services that will allow children to leave poverty

“Why isn’t he helped by relatives or neighbours?

People do not get close to him because he has dirty clothes

Why can’t he do paid work such as shoe shining?

There is no-one to buy the boy polish for the shoe shining

Why can’t he get help from an NGO?

No-one gets close to him so he doesn’t have any access [...] no-one can prove his problems to the Kebele or NGOs”

“Qualitative research can ... ensure that the ‘stylised facts’ such as the ‘a dollar a day’ metric that influence international assistance are based on measures of what matters”

Camfield, Crivello and Woodhead, 2009



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Qualitative Research on Child Poverty and Wellbeing: Experiences in Ghana and Viet Nam

JULY 2023

Julia Karpati



Studies

1. The Impact of COVID-19 on Children and Families in Ghana: Qualitative Research with Caregivers and Children (2021-22)

2. The Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19 on Children and Families in Viet Nam (2021-22)

- Utilising qualitative research methods to capture the **experiences of children and families affected by poverty, deprivation, vulnerability, shocks** (COVID-19 & related impacts)
- Grounded in mixed-methods approaches, with sampling frame, research questions and instrument design **informed by and expanding upon prior quantitative research findings**



^a *Child Poverty In Kenya Report (UNICEF & KNBS, 2017): example/background of qualitative research on child poverty under “normal” circumstances, covering both service providers and children living in poverty, and covering multiple sectors, which helped to inform the design of the following two studies*

^b *“When they closed the school, I was always in the house. We play and we watch television. We also go to the farm sometimes. We had no friends to play with. We were all bored.” - Boy aged 13 years (Lamashegu, Northern), The Impact of COVID-19 on Children and Families in Ghana: Qualitative Research with Caregivers and Children*

Methodologies (I): Research Q. & Sampling



Research Focus

- Perceptions of caregivers and children in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic; emphasis on: 1) coping mechanisms; 2) access to services; 3) lockdown/ school closures; 4) psychosocial wellbeing; 5) changing roles and care responsibilities
- Special focus on experiences of vulnerable groups
 - **Ghana (GH):** Poor/disadvantaged, Northern region, out-of-school boys & girls (before, during and after school closures)
 - **Viet Nam (VN):** Poor and near-poor households, parents with a migrant background, freelance/informal sector workers, disability, service providers at institutions for vulnerable families and children, (non-)recipients of social assistance



Sampling

- Purposive and convenience sampling, adjusted in evolving pandemic context
- Informed by policy interest, COVID-19 cases, quantitative research to ID areas with issues of child poverty, deprivation, service access

Methodologies (II)

Instruments carried out in-person/by phone

	Ghana Study	Viet Nam Study
Semi-structured in-depth interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Caregivers of children aged 6-17YAdolescents 15-17Y	Caregivers of children 0-5, 6-14, 16-17 years
Focus Group Discussion		Male and female caregivers of children 0-5, 6-14, 16-17 years in Bac Giang
Participatory exercise	Transcribed guided drawing activity with children 6-14Y	
Key Informant Interviews		Service providers, frontline workers in child-relevant sectors & institutions

Data analysis

- Thematic and content analysis of transcribed interviews
- Triangulation with quantitative research findings for contextualisation
- Identification of emergent themes

Results (selection)

- Negative coping mechanisms
 - School dropout
 - Debt
 - Diet changes
 - Reliance on informal assistance
 - Temp. family separation (VN)
- Impact of social assistance varied; fairly limited in both GH & VN
- Changing life courses – different opportunities or visions of future among adolescents (GH)
- Changing roles of duty and care among men and women, boys and girls, older and younger siblings
- Mental health & coping mechanisms
- Insight into daily life of children during school closure, challenges of online learning



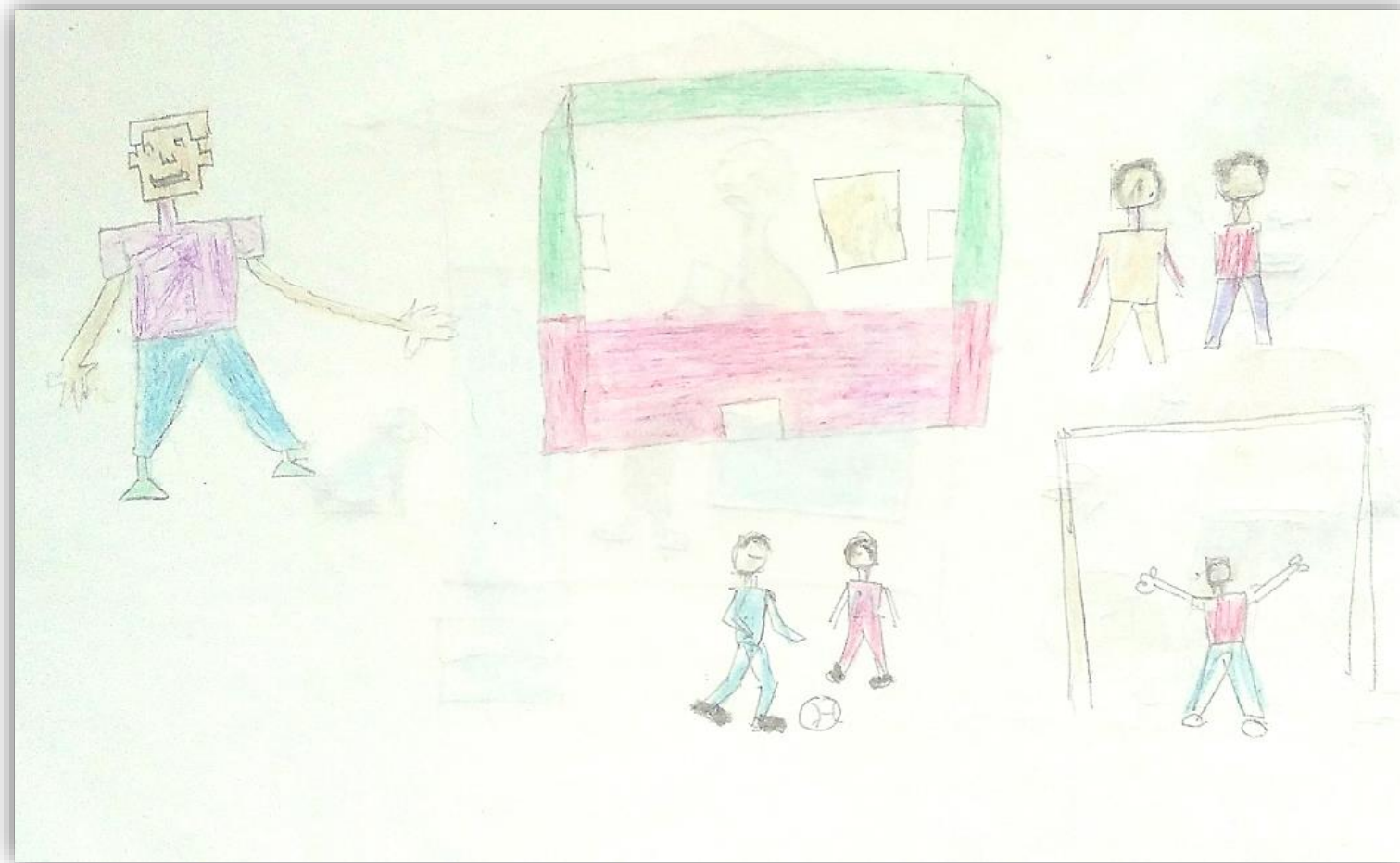
“During the lockdown, we were at home. Some friends used come to our house so that we play skipping. This one is fetching water. A cat is lying nearby. This is a pen. They are writing. This is a room and also where a barrel is placed. This is what we were doing at home during the school closure.” - Girl aged 12 years (Amantena, Ashanti)

Policy & Advocacy

- Evidence to support advocacy efforts through 1) evidence generation complementing rapid quant surveys (especially on vulnerable groups), 2) monitoring of wellbeing of children and families in times of crisis, 3) monitoring impact of policy and social protection in crisis context
- Value of including children's voices in research on issues affecting them
- Deriving sectoral policy recommendations and program feedback informed by the participatory inputs from the respondents themselves

Lessons

- Protracted research process due to 1) evolving pandemic and 2) ethical clearance → issues with recall among participants, and policy relevance once findings are made available
- Evolving pandemic context & safety protocols → changes in instrument and research design & data collection limitations
- Challenges with instrument design - complex interview guides, difficulties or hesitation answering questions esp. vulnerable groups
- Research gaps on specific vulnerable groups, e.g. ethnic minorities, children living in the streets



“When they reopened the school, we were afraid of the corona virus. We did social distancing and used hand sanitisers and washed our hands. We met our friends. We were talking but we were not playing. But we are now playing. We are happy.”

- Boy aged 13 years (Lamashegu, Tamale, Northern region)



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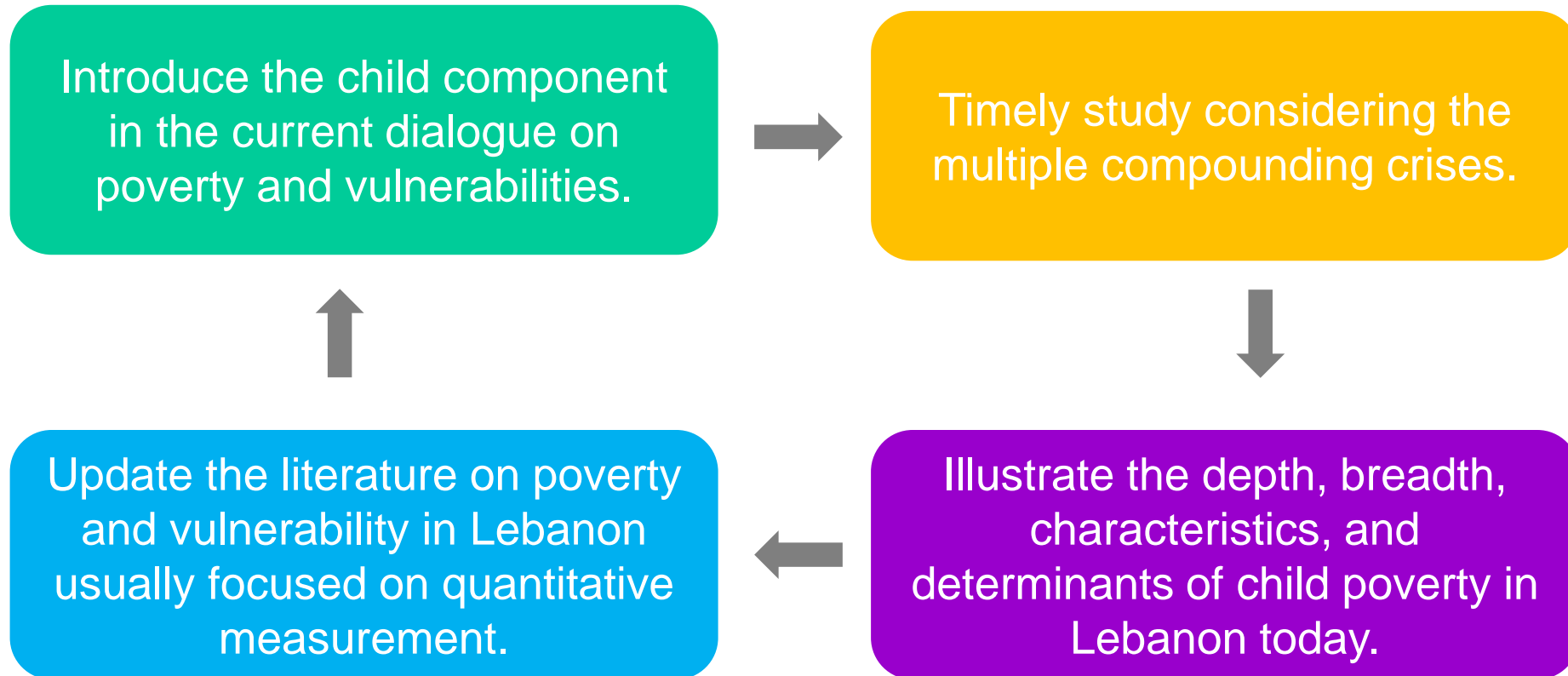
Multidimensional Child Wellbeing in Lebanon

A Qualitative Research

20 July 2023

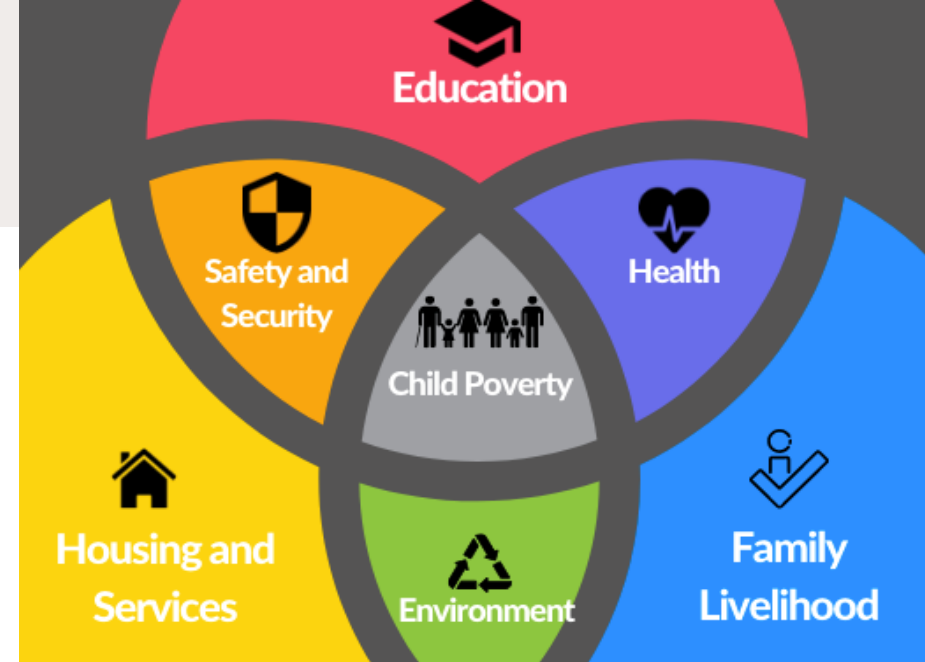


Research Objectives



Key Dimensions of Child Poverty

- The project was designed with the aim to examine the ways in which poverty affected multiple **dimensions of the world of children**
- The work was conducted around the **themes of the CRC** and patterned deprivations, highlighting the issues faced by children and households in Lebanon around the CRC key dimensions



Research Instruments

- **20 PVVDs** were held with caregivers and children allowing them to share aspects of their experience through **videos / photos** to highlight the issues that felt important to them, and that reflected **daily life, hopes, and aspirations**, and the way they define/experience **poverty** → This helped to **balance the power dynamic** between research and participant
- **10 KIs** were conducted with Government ministries, municipalities and NGOs to capture a macro perspective from stakeholders supporting vulnerable communities
- **4 case studies** were conducted with children and caregivers to highlight particularly important / unique findings, including among children with disabilities, children in child marriage, refugee children and children from single-parent households and other vulnerable backgrounds



Limitations and Challenges

- **Limitations of qualitative research:** Given the small sample sizes, this **study is not fully representative**, and results should not be viewed as fully generalizable.
- **Temporal context:** Households across the country experienced **new challenges during the period of data collection**, which may have affected the representation and the experiences of poverty.
- **Limitations resulting from human bias:** Every study has the potential to encounter various forms of **human bias**, including **selection and information bias**.
- **Contextual limitations and challenges:** The current crisis posed challenges at the levels of research and fieldwork, such as significant periods of **limited internet and electricity, COVID-19 restrictions, fuel crisis, road closures** etc.



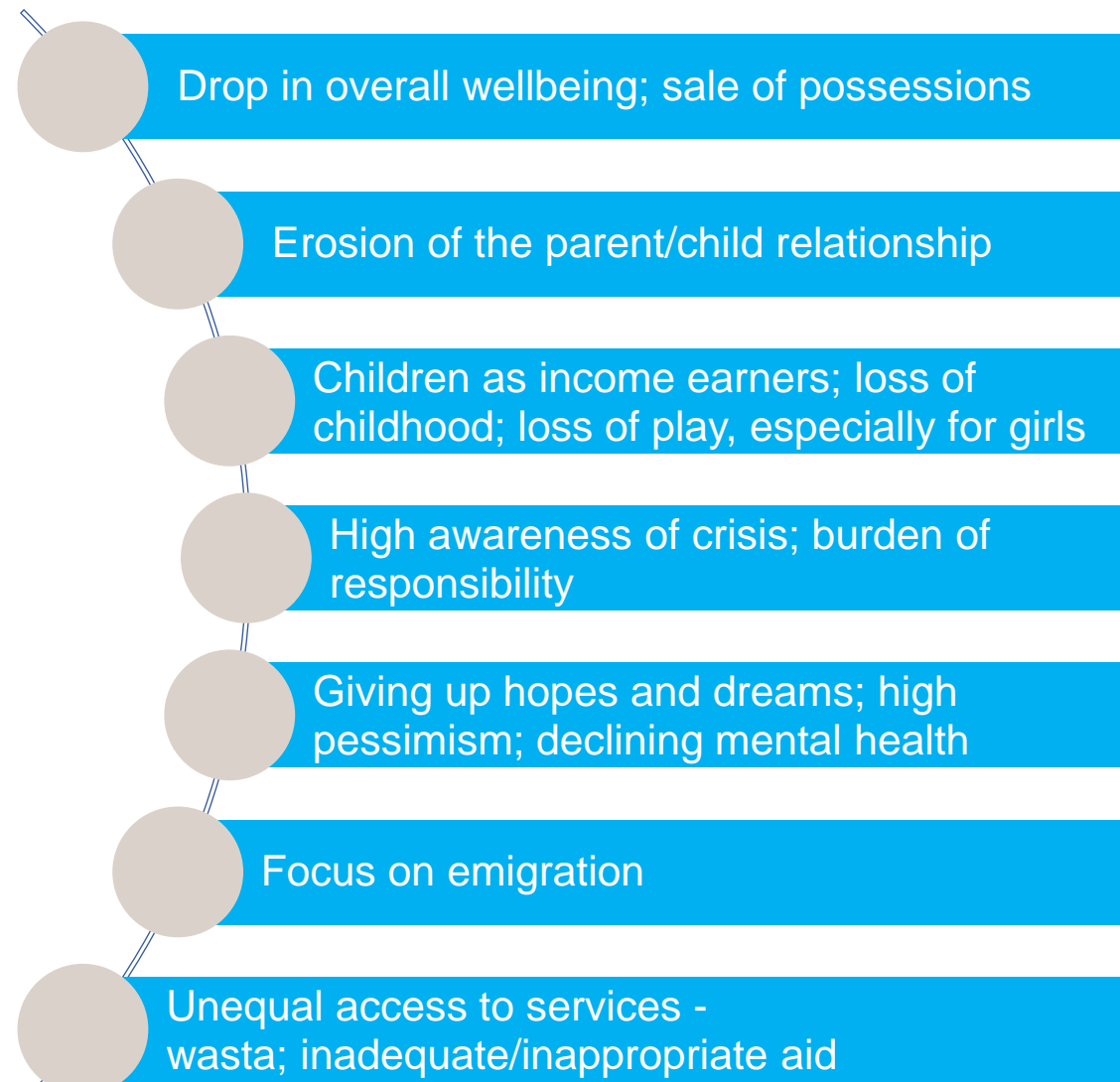
Multidimensional Child Deprivation in Lebanon

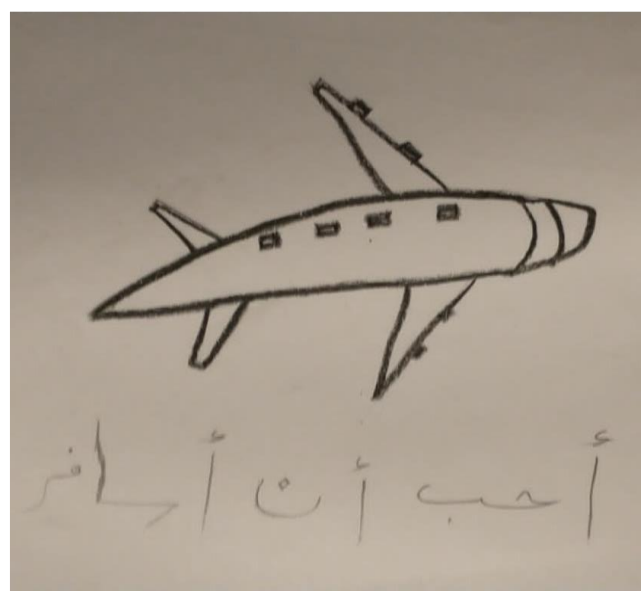
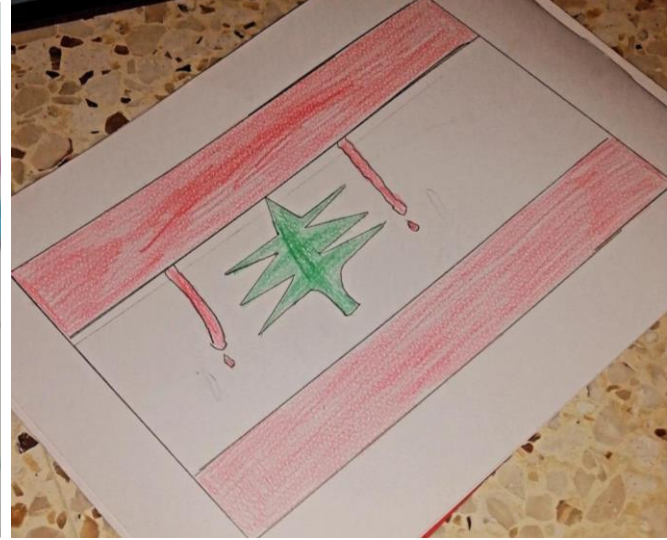
“My son does not trust me anymore and does not call me ‘baba’ [dad] - because I am not fulfilling my role as a father. I feel that there is no more respect from children towards their elders.”- Lebanese Male Caregiver

“We don’t have the right to play. We can’t play or do any activities”- Palestinian Girl (12-14 age)

“I neither feel like a boy nor a man. I feel like a worthless kid” – Lebanese Boy [age 12-14]

“Living has become very expensive. We haven’t lived our childhood.” - Syrian Girl [age 15-17]





Thank you!