



# **DOMAIN 7 INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE**

**THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL INEQUALITY FRAMEWORK:  
THE OXFAM TOOLKIT**



**OXFAM**

This domain covers inequalities in the capability to enjoy individual, family and social life, including to express yourself and have self-respect, to be free to formulate and pursue goals and objectives, to develop as a person and live without fear of humiliation, harassment, or abuse based on who you are.

## DOMAIN 7 – INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE

Inequality in the capability to enjoy individual, family and social life, to express yourself and to have self-respect

The multidimensional inequality framework allows you to measure inequalities in seven domains that matter for human life, through a number of suggested indicators, measures and variables of disaggregation.

This paper contains a brief description of the individual, family and social life domain and the list of sub-domains, indicators and measures suggested to measure and assess inequalities in the capability to enjoy individual, family and social life, to express yourself and to have self-respect. Please, remember that the MIF is flexible and it is up to you to decide how to use it, based on what makes sense in your unique context.

### Brief description

The capability to **enjoy individual, family and social life**, to express yourself and have self-respect is fundamental to being able to live the type of life people have reason to value. People need to be free to formulate and pursue goals and objectives for themselves, **to develop as a person** and live without fear of humiliation, harassment, or abuse based on who they are.

In the **family and relationship sphere**, the ability to form intimate relationships and a family and to enjoy independence and equality in primary relationships, underpinned by freedom in matters of sexual relations and reproduction, are all important for individual well-being. In the **social sphere**, it is important to be able to form friendships, have time to spend with, and care for, friends and family and to be able to celebrate special occasions and cultural events. Engagement in cultural and religious practices with other members of your chosen group or groups is important for developing and maintaining cultural and religious identities. Equally knowing that there is someone who will look out for you and care for you in times of need is important for personal well-being.

Not everyone enjoys these freedoms and important inequalities exist between different groups of people in many countries. Differences in personal resources, legal frameworks, social norms, treatment by those in authority, social recognition, religious hostilities and discrimination based on personal characteristics can all play an important role in shaping these inequalities. These issues would be examined under this domain.

The **sub-domains** covered in the individual, family and social life domain are:

**7.A:** Freedom to develop as a person, maintain dignity and self-respect

**7.B:** Form and maintain intimate relationships, friendships and a family; enjoy independence and equality in primary relationships, including marriage, be confident that they will be treated with dignity and respect

**7.C:** Enjoy family life, including in the context of global displacement and international migration

**7.D:** Be free to enjoy a social life, engage in cultural and other valued activities

### Indicators and measures

It is highly unlikely that you will find data for your city, country or region for *all* measures across *all* domains. What is suggested here is a relatively comprehensive list of indicators and measures, presented by each sub-domain. You can choose priority measures from this list and add or adapt measures to suit your context.

**To find data** related to this domain, as well as using any national surveys and sources available, you can consider the following global data sources (please, visit the [online Oxfam toolkit](#) for updated global and regional data sources):

- Barometer Surveys
- [Demographic and Health Surveys](#)
- [Fund for Peace Fragile States Index](#)
- [Gallup World Poll](#)
- [Sustainable Development Goal Indicators](#) Global Database
- [World Values Survey](#)

## Sub-domain 7.A. Freedom to develop as a person, maintain dignity and self-respect

### **Indicator 7.1: Personal autonomy and freedom to develop as a person and live the life you choose**

Measure 7.1.1: Percentage who feel able to practice their religion or beliefs freely

Measure 7.1.2: Percentage who feel they have sufficient control in making personal decisions that affect their everyday lives

Measure 7.1.3: Inequality in life satisfaction

Measure 7.1.4: Percentage who feel they have freedom of choice and control over the way their life turns out

### **Indicator 7.2: Have freedom from stigma, harassment; enjoy dignity and self-respect, self-esteem and self-confidence**

Measure 7.2.1: Inequality in self-esteem – using for example the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES)

Measure 7.2.2: Percentage of the population reporting personally feeling discriminated against or harassed within the previous 12 months

Measure 7.2.3: Percentage who feel lonely

Measure 7.2.4: Group Grievance indicator. Discrimination, powerlessness, ethnic violence, communal violence, sectarian violence, and religious violence, measured on a scale of 0 (low pressures) to 10 (very high pressures)

**Remember make the framework yours! You can choose priority measures from this list and add or adapt measures to suit your context**

## Sub-domain 7.B. Form and maintain intimate relationships, friendships and a family; enjoy independence and equality in primary relationships, including marriage, be confident that they will be treated with dignity and respect

### **Indicator 7.3: Being able to form and pursue the relationships you want, free to make decisions on when to form and start a family, live as a family and have a say on family life**

Measure 7.3.1: Percentage for whom others decide on their behalf who they form their primary relationship with

Measure 7.3.2: Percentage of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18

Measure 7.3.3: Percentage of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions

regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care

Measure 7.3.4: Percentage of children who maintain contact with non-resident parent after parental separation

### Sub-domain 7.C. Enjoy family life, including in the context of global displacement and international migration

#### ***Indicator 7.4: Enjoy family life in the context of global displacement and international migration***

Measure 7.4.1: Percentage or number separated from family due to displacement, migration and work

### Sub-domain 7.D. Be free to enjoy a social life, engage in cultural and other valued activities

#### ***Indicator 7.5: Being able to participate in key social and cultural occasions which matter to you***

Measure 7.5.1: Percentage who say they have been unable to participate in important social or cultural occasions and reasons why

## Oxfam 2020

This Oxfam toolkit was written by Claire Kumar. The Multidimensional Inequality Framework and online toolkits are free resources which have been developed as part of a collaboration between academics in the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) at the London School of Economics (LSE) and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), led by Abigail McKnight, and practitioners in Oxfam, led by Alex Prats. The initial project was funded by the LSE's International Inequalities Institute's Atlantic Visiting Fellows Programme.

The project team was formed by Abigail McKnight (project lead, Associate Director CASE, LSE), Alex Prats (Inequality Lead, Oxfam Intermón), Ana María Claver (Policy advisor, Oxfam Intermón), Polly Vizard (Associate Director CASE, LSE), Pedro Mendes Loureiro, (Research Officer, PhD candidate SOAS), Claire Kumar (Senior Consultant), Patricio Espinoza-Lucero (Research Assistant, CASE, LSE), Laurie Mompelat (Research Assistant, CASE, LSE) and Cara Leavey (Research Assistant, CASE, LSE). As advisors: Ricardo Fuentes-Nieva (Executive Director Oxfam Mexico), Ben Fine (Professor of Economics, SOAS), Chiara Mariotti (Policy Advisor Oxfam GB), and Naila Kabeer (Professor of Gender and Development, LSE).

This paper is part of a series of papers written to inform public debate on development, poverty and inequality. For further information on the issues raised in this paper please email [inequality.toolkit@oxfam.org](mailto:inequality.toolkit@oxfam.org)

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Oxfam Intermón, Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 641, 08010 Barcelona (Spain).

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