



Case study

Systematic ways to 'leave no one behind'

How intersectionality informs
Development Initiatives programs



Development Initiatives (DI) is a founding Champion of the Inclusive Data Charter (IDC), a global multi-stakeholder network launched in 2018. The IDC works to advance the availability and use of inclusive and disaggregated data so that governments and organizations better understand, address, and monitor the needs of marginalized people and ensure no one is left behind.

Intersectional approaches to data ([see bit.ly/IDC-primer](https://bit.ly/IDC-primer)) focuses on individuals and their specific needs, along with making changes in

wider data systems to reduce inequality. Yet, figuring out where to start or how to spend limited resources can be challenging.

This case study introduces systematic ways to ‘leave no one behind.’ It highlights three innovative methods Development Initiatives uses to operationalize an intersectional approach to data. They are especially useful to consider for governments and organizations that seek to support diverse communities and are not sure how to begin.

1

Development Initiatives (DI) P20 approach is a systematic way to establish and monitor a population at greatest risk of marginalization. It involves selecting an indicator, such as income or well-being, and focusing on the bottom 20% for further intersectional analysis and in depth study.

2

DI also created a data landscape approach to explore available data sources on a particular issue, such as financing, or a particular population group, such as persons living with disabilities. Data landscaping is a way to explore data ecosystems in a more focused and holistic way from an intersectional perspective.

3

Lastly, DI employs participatory methods to ‘center the voices’ of individuals and communities at greatest risk of marginalization through community-driven data processes. The case study discusses the practical steps involved in taking an intersectional approach to data to leave no one behind.



Key messages

- Promoting equity across the data value chain requires multiple methods to identify individuals at greatest risk of marginalization and to design data ecosystems that leave no one behind.
- DI has developed and collaborated on three different methods that can be used in an intersectional approach to improve data ecosystems. Each method has its own strengths and purpose.
- The P20 approach can be used to identify and monitor individuals at greatest risk of marginalization or discrimination.
- A data landscape approach can be used to investigate data that currently exists, where and how that data is produced, and how the ecosystem can be improved to support the needs of different stakeholders using intersectional approaches.
- Community-driven data can be used to ‘center the voices’ of communities at greatest risk of marginalization. It can complement government or organizational data collection to fill data gaps and increase responsiveness.

The Intersectional Approaches to Inclusive and Disaggregated Data series

Different aspects of a person's identity – such as their ethnicities, gender, religion, disability, or sexual orientation – can influence the amount or type of discrimination or exclusion a person faces. 'Intersecting inequality' refers to when aspects of a person's identity overlap and worsen the discrimination or exclusion they experience. People who face intersecting inequalities are the most likely to be left behind by development.

The IDC is a global multi-stakeholder network that advances the availability and use of inclusive and disaggregated data so that governments and organizations better understand, address, and monitor the needs of marginalized people and ensure no one is left behind. The Intersectional Approaches to Inclusive and Disaggregated Data series contributes resources and practical insights to help practitioners in their work to resolve intersecting inequalities.

This case study should be read alongside other resources in the Series, which unpack intersectionality definitions, data processes and value chains, and other intersectionality concerns.

The context of Development Initiative's work

DI is a global organization harnessing the power of data and evidence to end poverty, reduce inequality, and increase resilience. It works on the 'supply' side of data, by collaborating with governments and organizations to improve data production processes and systems. Increasingly, DI also focuses on the 'demand' side of data, by understanding where the gaps in information are, identifying barriers to data use, and working collaboratively with their stakeholders to foster data use and impact.

Through their experience working on both ends of the data value chain (by improving the 'supply' side, and building the 'demand' side of data), DI has learned to approach data from an ecosystems perspective, in which they build up the relationships, infrastructure, processes, and procedures holistically with partners in context. For DI, intersectionality provides a lens through which to see how poverty, inequality, and resilience are interlinked in data ecosystems.

Tackling intersecting inequality and chronic poverty requires a combination of political change, constitutional reform, community participation in politics, targeted services, and social mobilization (Arauco et al., 2014). Data ecosystems must be designed to support these diverse activities. DI has developed and used a variety of methods for this.

This case study examines three systematic ways to leave no one behind through better design of data ecosystems. It highlights how these methods can be used in an intersectional approach to data.

Using the P20 approach to identify and monitor individuals at greatest risk of marginalization

The first way is the P20 approach. Data needed by governments to plan and deliver services and by citizens to ensure accountability needs adjustment to take into account intersectional differences unique to each country. Development Initiatives' P20 approach was designed to address this challenge. It is based on the need to track both poverty and inequality as they relate to the needs of the poorest and most marginalized people in a country and is focused on achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 and 10 simultaneously.

The focus of the P20 approach is on the bottom 20% of a population distribution, referred to henceforth as the P20. Any indicator can be used to distribute a population, whether it be income, education levels, health, or well-being. Each country faces distinct challenges to address inequality, so the P20 approach focuses on relative levels of poverty or wealth and prompts a discussion to select key indicators that represent a nation's priorities first and foremost.

The approach strengthens national data ecosystems across government, civil society, and the private sector, focusing on administrative systems, data disaggregation, and open data. These efforts are crucial for identifying data gaps and equipping actors to improve decision-making from local to global levels to help ensure that no one is left behind.

In 2018, DI started working with the Government of Benin and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation to implement the P20 approach for the first time (DI, 2020a). Benin has seen steady economic growth since the 1990s, with an estimated annual GDP growth rate of around 2-6% (OECD, 2018). Nevertheless, the national poverty rate rose from 36% to 40% between those years (OECD, 2018). Clearly, growth was not benefitting the poorest and most-

marginalized people in Benin, and a new strategy was needed to address their needs.

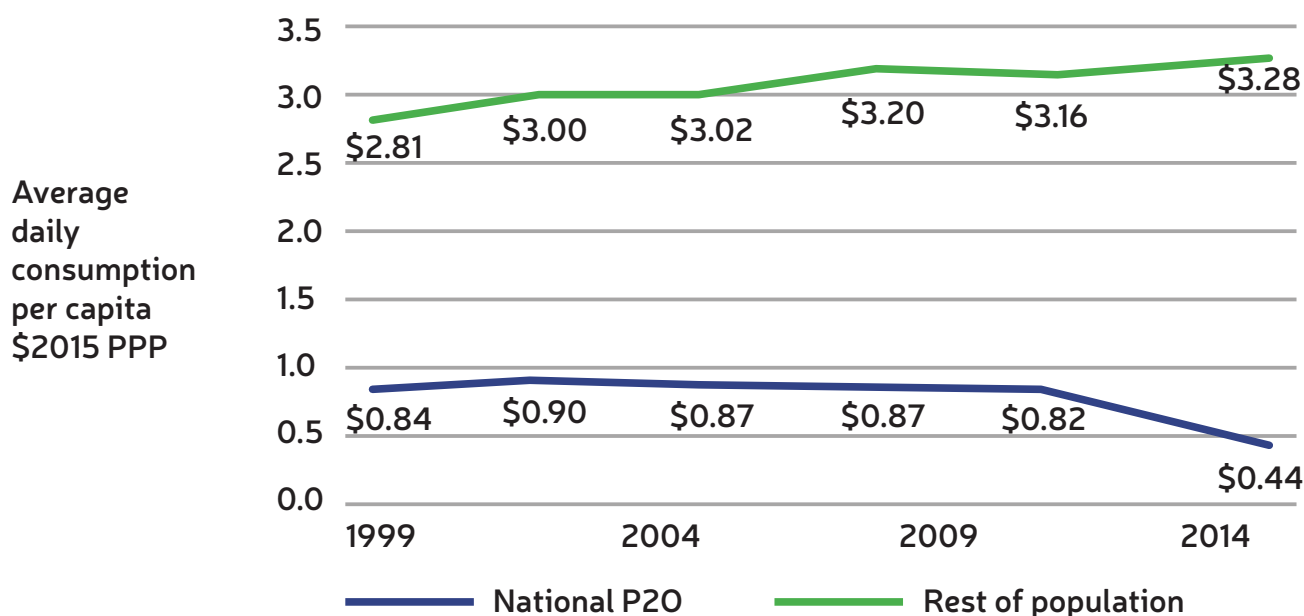
Tracking and monitoring selected indicators involves compiling statistics on the bottom 20% (P20) in relation to the top 80% (taken by averaging the top four quintiles) (DI, 2020). Where rates of progress seem to differ, this analysis points to areas that need further investigation. For example, Figure 1, drawn from Benin's report, shows that average daily consumption is decreasing for the P20, but increasing for others. The gap indicates that the P20 must be facing distinctly challenging circumstances and are worse off than they used to be.

When the P20 are not progressing at the same rate as the rest, the next step is to investigate intersectional inequality further. The P20 approach proposes using data disaggregated not just by income, but also by ethnicity, age, geography, and disability, to achieve a clearer understanding of who is included and who is left behind. DI and their project partners also selected two of the most highly unequal regions of the country to conduct more in-depth research.

Their research in Benin showed that the three northernmost areas account for around half of the nation's total population 30%, but in two of these regions, many children between the ages of six and 11 were not attending school (45% in Alibai, 62% in Borgouan) (DI, 2020a). Child marriage seemed to be a main reason for this. They also found that children in these rural parts of Benin went unrecorded in birth registration systems. Addressing child malnutrition is impossible without this basic information.

Through these targeted and more in-depth pieces of work, evidence was provided to the Benin government to establish subnational units in order to serve the identified areas better (OECD, 2018).

Figure 1: The growing gap in consumption between the P20 and the rest of the population



Source: Development initiatives based on World Bank's PovcalNet 2019

Creating a data landscape to increase context-awareness in an intersectional approach

Creating a 'data landscape' identifies key data sources, issues, and recommendations to improve the enabling environment surrounding a data ecosystem. It is a process that governments and organizations can use to systematically understand what data is available, who produces it and uses it, as well as test their assumptions about data. It provides a framework to see how data collected can be improved, analysed and used to leave no one behind. This sort of critical reflection is a crucial part of intersectional approaches as a means of increasing context awareness of data ecosystems.

DI adopted a data landscape approach to examine data systems from the perspective of the disability community and organizations representing persons with disabilities in Uganda (DI, 2020b). As part of the Inclusive Futures consortium that is working to create and test innovative approaches to improve the long-term economic empowerment and inclusion of persons with disabilities,

DI identified key gaps in the available data to track disability relevant and disability inclusive aid as well as a clear need from a range of stakeholders to understand and improve the disability data ecosystems.

A data landscape involves documenting:

- The governance of data, such as the institutions, principles, legislation, and accountability mechanisms for managing data responsibly across the data value chain.
- Sources of data by conducting a data inventory and data gap analysis (see our White Paper at bit.ly/IDC-whitepaper) for more information about this).
- Uses of data for various dimensions of policy and practice, including an examination of what demand there is for particular uses of data.
- **Key data related challenges**, including resources, capacity, or environmental constraints.

It is vital to consider how each of these facets of a data landscape are related. In an intersectional approach, consider examining a specific activity (a survey, a project activity, an evaluation, etc.) from the perspectives of individuals at greatest risk of marginalization or discrimination. A range of methods are available, including key informant interviews, consultation with CSOs and organizations directly representing or made up of the target demographic, as well as focus groups and validation workshops that bring together a range of stakeholders. Use the facets of the data landscape to prompt discussion on the activity from different angles. Local civil society groups or human rights organizations are often aware of the data that is already available that could support analysis of intersectional inequalities. Some of these organizations may also have data that can be shared and used within a data landscape approach.

Data landscapes can effectively outline concrete actions that can be taken. The results of DI's disability data landscape in Uganda showed that, while there was limited data on disability, it did exist, and an inclusive multi-stakeholder approach led to a set of recommendations that included the institution of a multi-stakeholder working group to drive forward long-term improvements to the disability data ecosystem. The DI review of data on international aid projects focused on disability found that data available on international aid projects that are targeted as disability-relevant did not consider whether the spending was disability-inclusive. While disability-relevant aid is any and all spending aimed at supporting persons with disabilities, it works specifically to accommodate full and equal participation in society. Without data that disaggregates how a disability affects a person's functional limitations and what that means for their everyday life, it was not possible to monitor whether certain persons with disabilities were being left behind.

'Centering the voices' of individuals at greatest risk of marginalization through community-driven data

Along side the above methods, targeted data collection, or specific analysis to address intersectional inequality and discrimination, is needed to leave no one behind. DI suggests that partnerships between official data producers¹ and the communities that they're trying to serve are vital for this purpose. DI's research in Benin in Alibai and Borgouan showed that it would not be effective to implement large sample household surveys, especially when they could see that women, children, and persons living with disabilities experienced the most vulnerability to poverty (DI, 2020a).

In contrast, speaking directly with the communities, through facilitated discussion and community-driven data collection, could be much better value for money and is likely to be more effective for addressing intersectional inequality.

To this end, DI joined a coalition to pilot 'community-driven data' initiatives in five countries.² The activities piloted to generate community-driven data and ranged from focus groups, interviews, community dialogues, feedback collected via an app, and citizen scorecards. See Figure 1 for an example of this, along with detailed guidance to implement citizen scorecards in CARE Malawi (2013).

1 Such as government departments or statistics offices.

2 Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Nepal and Vietnam.

Example - scoring matrix						
Group name	Date	Village			Catchment area	
Indicator	Score					Reasons
	Very bad = 1	Bad = 2	Just okay = 3	Good = 4	Very good = 5	
Indicator 1						
Indicator 2						
Indicator 3						

Across the pilot studies, differences between the data generated by marginalized communities often differed from aggregated SDG indicators. Qualitative analysis of the data often points to intersectional inequality as one of the main reasons why.

Community-driven data can be used to point to areas of intersectional inequality that governments can address, but communities will need ongoing support to develop step-by-step processes for each group to compile, share, and update their data with decision-makers. Working in partnership with local community groups to harmonize community-driven data collection has enabled success in rolling out participatory processes effectively (Wells, 2020).



Recommendations on using an intersectional approach to (re)examine data ecosystems

The P20 approach focuses on leaving no one behind, but addressing intersectional inequality requires increasing opportunities for the P20 to have a say in what needs to be addressed. Official statistics can be complemented by community-driven data to address intersectional inequality, increasing accountability by governments and organizations to the P20. Yet, it is a challenge to convince governments and statistics offices of the value of community-driven data.

To address intersectional inequality, and to better design data ecosystems to leave no one behind:

- **Consider using the P20 approach to identify and monitor individuals at greatest risk of marginalization or discrimination.** In an intersectional approach, in-depth research needs to be conducted focusing on the P20 to understand and address intersectional inequality.
- **Conduct a data landscape to critically appraise data ecosystems and increase context awareness.** Data landscapes can be conducted by teams to explore the governance, sources, uses, and challenges of data from an intersectional perspective.
- **Consider developing community-driven data initiatives** to develop more responsive and accurate feedback loops between marginalized groups and governments or organizations that intend to support them. Consider also whether there is a process to establish who may not be included in community-driven data (e.g. should it only be the P20, or are there other marginalized groups that need to have a voice?). Moreover, marginalized groups will also need training to collect and analyse data from an intersectional perspective as well.



References

1. Arauco, V. P. (2014). Strengthening Social Justice to Address Intersecting Inequalities Post-2015. London: Overseas Development Institute.
cdn.odi.org/media/documents/9213.pdf
2. CARE Malawi. (2013). The Community Score Card (CSC): A Generic Guide for Implementing CARE's CSC Process to Improve Quality of Services. Lilongwe: CARE Malawi.
insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CARE_Community_Score_Card_Toolkit.pdf
3. Development Initiatives. (2020a). The P20 in Benin: From Consultation to Consensus. Bristol.
devinit.org/documents/722/The_P20_in_Benin_-_From_consultation_to_consensus.pdf
4. Development Initiatives. (2020b). Uganda's Disability Data Landscape and the Economic Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities. Bristol.
devinit.org/documents/849/Uganda-disability-data-landscape_IF.pdf
5. OECD. (2018). Case studies from developing countries: What works and why. In Development Co-operation Report 2018. Paris: OECD Publishing.
doi.org/10.1787/dcr-2018-en
6. Wells, C. (2020). Using the Power of Community Data to Tackle Gender Violence, April 27.
voicescount.org/stories/a-new-normal-for-data-collection-using-the-power-of-community-to-tackle-gender-violence-amid-covid-19/



INCLUSIVE
DATA CHARTER



**Global
Partnership**
for Sustainable
Development Data

www.data4sdgs.org

