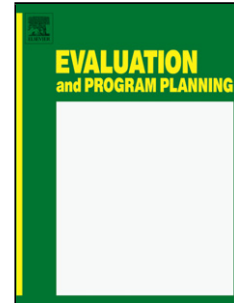


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Author: Udaya S. Mishra

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Measuring Progress towards MDGs in Child Health:

Should Base Level Sensitivity and Inequity Matter?

Udaya S Mishra Ph.D
Professor
Centre for Development Studies
Prasanth Nagar Rd, Ulloor
Trivandrum 695 011
Kerala India
Tel 91-471-2774222
Fax 91-471-2447137

Highlights:

Assessment of progress in development indicators is a routine exercise of evaluation that has gained significance in recent times with the advent of MDGs. Whether it is temporal progress or comparison of progress across nations, it has to be robust accounting for levels from where progress is made and the quantum progress made. As regard temporal progress, time taken for a specific quantum of progress from varying levels needs to be differentiated while making judgment on progress. On this premise the highlight of this exercise are as below

- Measurement should offer a comprehensive vision regarding progress
- This vision should be an integral part of the measurement exercise and should not be pushed back to explanation exercises alone
- Target monitoring should not sightlessly allow unadjusted level comparisons
- The applicability of the proposed method is immediate for issues with similar character

Abstract

Measurement of achievement or progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) should be suggestive of the issues involved in intertemporal comparison. Commonly, we observe that the measurement techniques such as simple differentials, rates and ratios are employed for comparisons and interpretations. But such chosen measures are insensitive to two very important and fundamental concerns. Firstly, such measures are not differentially sensitive to the base level of the indicator against which comparisons are made to comment on the progress or achievement. Secondly, it is observed that in most of the progress assessments and comparisons, without exception, the focus is on population averages thus ignoring the inherent inequalities therein. To incorporate these two concerns, a method is proposed and an illustrative application is provided to review the MDG achievements in child health across 32

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