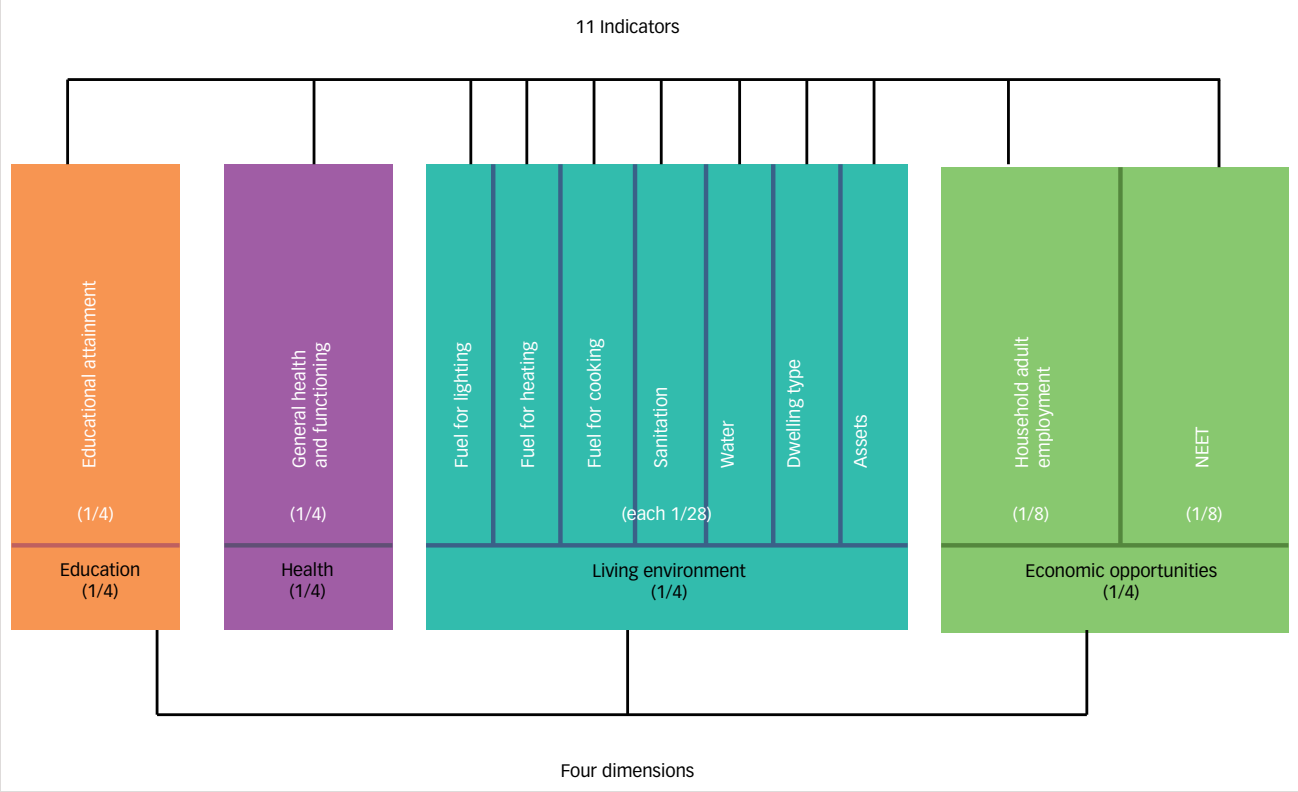
Money-metric measures of poverty do not fully capture the experience of poor people. Research shows that the poor define poverty much more broadly, citing multiple dimensions of deprivation that are interrelated and often co-occur.[1] The Alkire Foster method is a way of measuring poverty that takes into account these multiple forms of deprivation.

Applying this method, a Youth Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for individuals aged 15 – 24 was constructed using data from the 2011 Census. While several analyses of multidimensional poverty in South Africa exist, most look at deprivation at the household level.[2] By including dimensions and indicators that reflect experiences unique or particularly relevant to young people, the Youth MPI aims to provide a youth-focused perspective of deprivation.

The Youth MPI comprises 11 indicators in the dimensions of education, health, living environment and economic opportunities (as illustrated in figure 3).[3] Each of the indicators is associated with a deprivation cut-off that defines whether a young person is deprived in that area. For example, under sanitation, a young person is defined as deprived if he or she is living in a household without a flush toilet;[4] and under "NEET", a young person is defined as deprived if he or she is not in employment, education or training. For a full list of the deprivation cut-offs associated with each indicator, see table 2 on page 2.

Using these cut-offs, the number of deprivations each young person experiences is added up, with the four dimensions receiving equal importance in the overall score. If a young person is deprived in a third or more of the indicators, he or she is considered multidimensionally poor. With these stipulations, one can calculate the percentage of youth who are multidimensionally poor (the incidence of poverty) as well as the average proportion of dimensions in which poor youth are deprived (the average intensity of poverty). The results show that in 2011, 33% of young people were multidimensionally poor (incidence of poverty), and that, on average, those young people who were multidimensionally poor experienced deprivation in 50% of the indicators (intensity of poverty).

Figure 3: Components of the Youth Multidimensional Poverty Index



Source: Adapted from: Alkire S & Santos ME (2010) Acute multidimensional poverty: a new index for developing countries. Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative Working Paper No. 38.

1 May J (1998) Poverty and inequality in South Africa. *Indicator*, 15(2): 53-58.
2 Statistics South Africa (2014) The South African MPI: *Creating a Multidimensional Poverty Index using Census Data*. Pretoria: Stats SA; Finn A, Leibbrandt M & Woolard I (2013) *What Happened to Multidimensional Poverty in South Africa between 1993 and 2010*? Working Paper No. 99. Cape Town: SALDRU, UCT.
3 Further details on the design and methodology of the Youth MPI are available in: Frame E, De Lannoy A & Leibbrandt M (2016) *Measuring Multidimensional Youth Poverty in South Africa at the Sub-national Level*. SALDRU Working Paper. Cape Town: SALDRU, UCT.
4 Our definition of the water and sanitation indicators is based on Stats SA's MPI work (see footnote 2).

*This addendum is an extract from: De Lannoy A, Leibbrandt M, & Frame E (2015). A focus on youth: An opportunity to disrupt the intergenerational transmission of poverty. In A De Lannoy, S Swartz, L Lake, & C Smith (Eds.), *South African Child Gauge 2015*. Cape Town: Children's Institute, UCT

The Youth MPI can be used as an analytical tool to highlight the spatial patterns of youth poverty. This is important in a context like South Africa, where advantage and disadvantage are spatially concentrated. Figure 4 shows how the incidence of multidimensional poverty among the youth population varies across municipalities, with the darker red indicating a higher percentage of poor youth in those municipalities. This map highlights the deep levels of deprivation that continue to be found within the former homeland areas, even within the youth cohort.

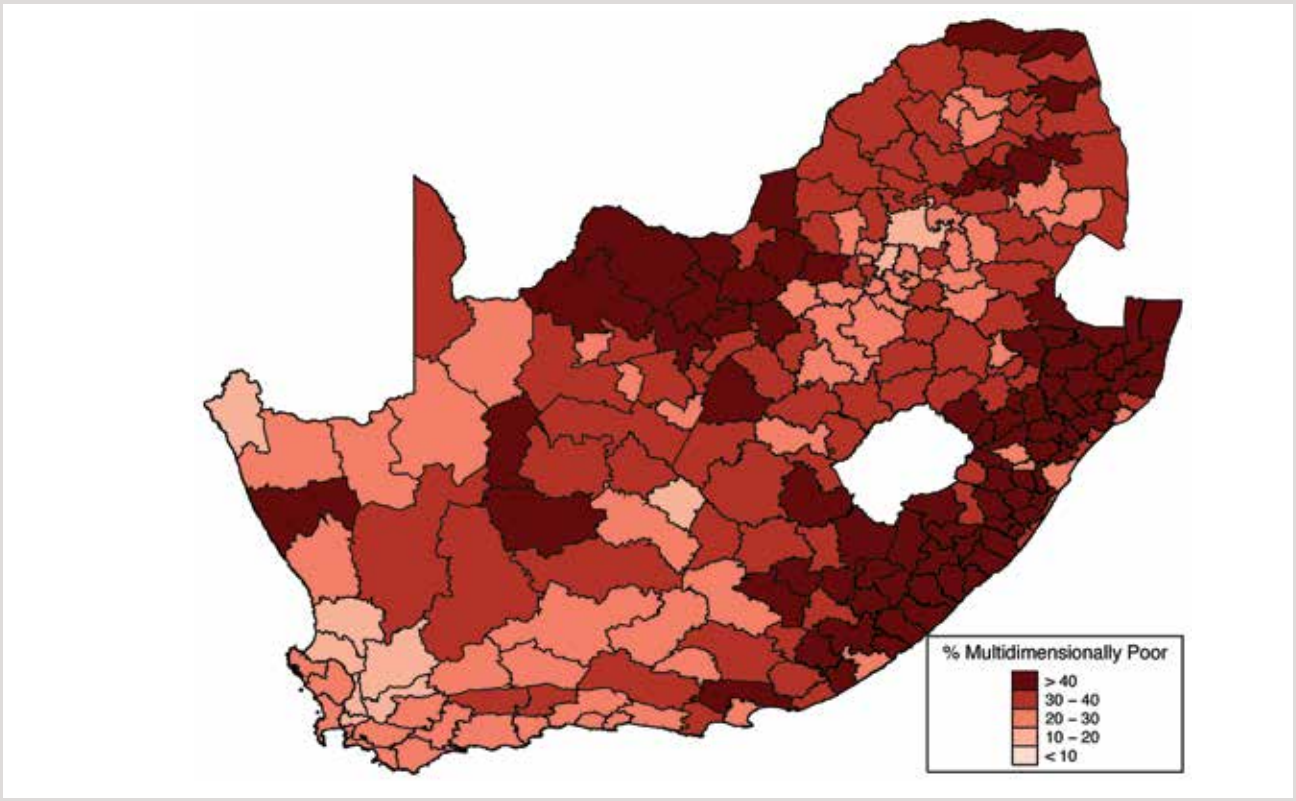
The overall Youth MPI is calculated by multiplying the incidence of poverty by the average intensity. Figure 5 maps the Youth MPI for each municipality in South Africa, with the darker red indicating a higher score and therefore greater poverty for the youth population in those municipalities. The strength of this index is that it reflects both the percentage of the youth population that is poor *as well as* the intensity of the deprivation suffered. Within one province, for example, two municipalities may have a similar percentage of multidimensionally poor youth, but the intensity of deprivation may be higher in one municipality. By combining incidence and intensity, the overall index is able to highlight these differences and therefore provide a more nuanced picture of poverty than traditional measures.

Table 2: Deprivation cut-offs for the Youth Multidimensional Povery Index

Dimensions of poverty	Indicator	Deprived if…
Education	Educational attainment	Individual is age 15 – 16 and has completed less than primary school Individual is age 17 – 20 and has completed less than grade 9 Individual is age 21 – 24 and has completed less than matric or matric equivalent
Health	General health and functioning	Individual experiences difficulty in one or more functions: hearing, vision, communication, mobility (walking or climbing stairs), cognition (remembering or concentrating) or self-care
Living environment	Fuel for lighting	Individual is living in a household that is using paraffin/candles/ nothing/other for lighting
	Fuel for heating	Individual is living in a household that is using paraffin/wood/coal/ dung/other/none for heating
	Fuel for cooking	Individual is living in a household that is using paraffin/wood/coal/ dung/other/none for cooking
	Sanitation	Individual is living in a household without a flush toilet
	Water	Individual is living in a household without piped water on site
	Dwelling type	Individual is living in a household that is an informal shack/traditional dwelling/caravan/tent/other
	Assets	Individual is living in a household that does not own more than two of: radio, television, landline, cell phone or refrigerator AND does not own a motorcar.
Economic opportunities	Household adult employment	Individual is living in a household where no working-age adults (18 – 64) are employed
	NEET	Individual is not in education, employment or training

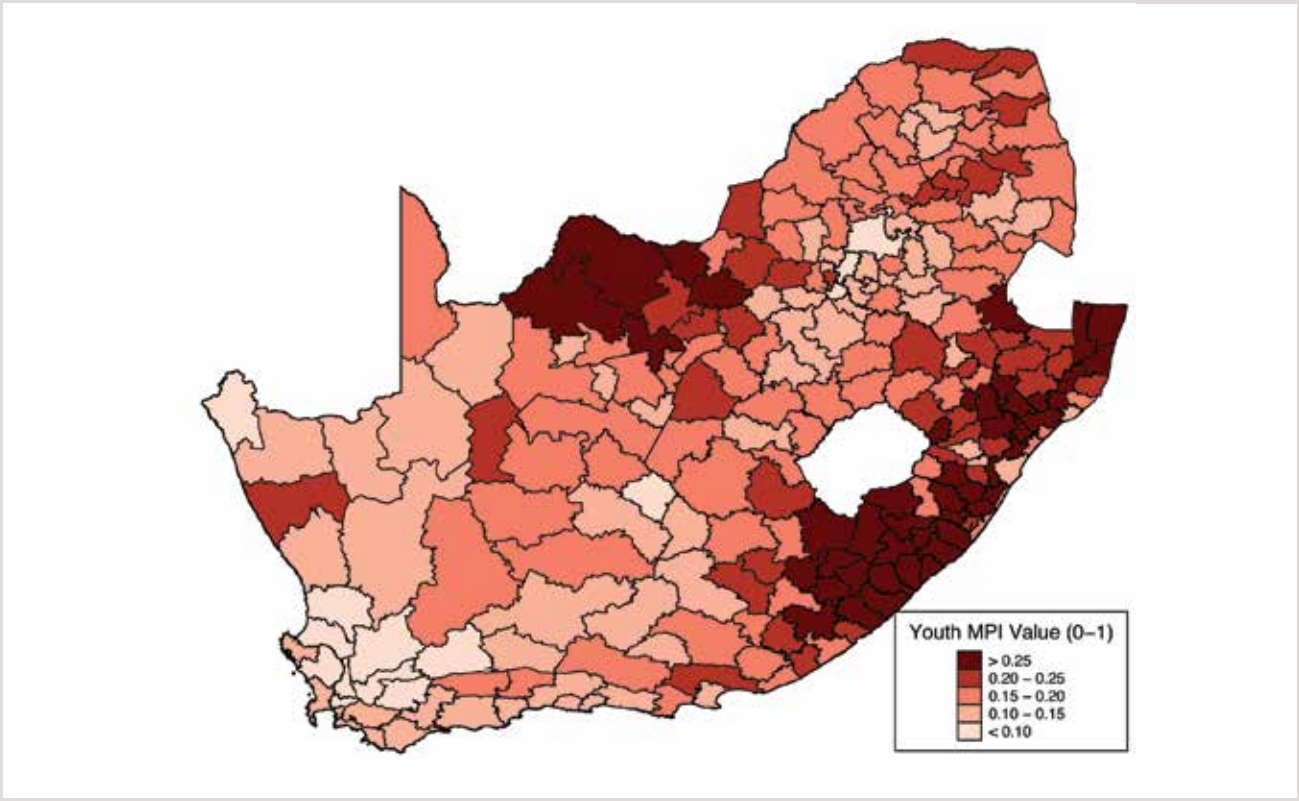
Source: Adapted from: Alkire S & Santos ME (2010) Acute multidimensional poverty: a new index for developing countries. Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative Working Paper No. 38.

Figure 4: Incidence of multidimensional poverty amongst youth in South Africa, by municipality, 2011



Source: Statistics South Africa (2011) *Census*. Pretoria: Stats SA.
Calculations by Emily Frame, Poverty and Inequality Initiative, UCT, based on weighted data from the Census 2011 10% sample.

Figure 5: Youth Multidimensional Povery Index, by municipality, 2011

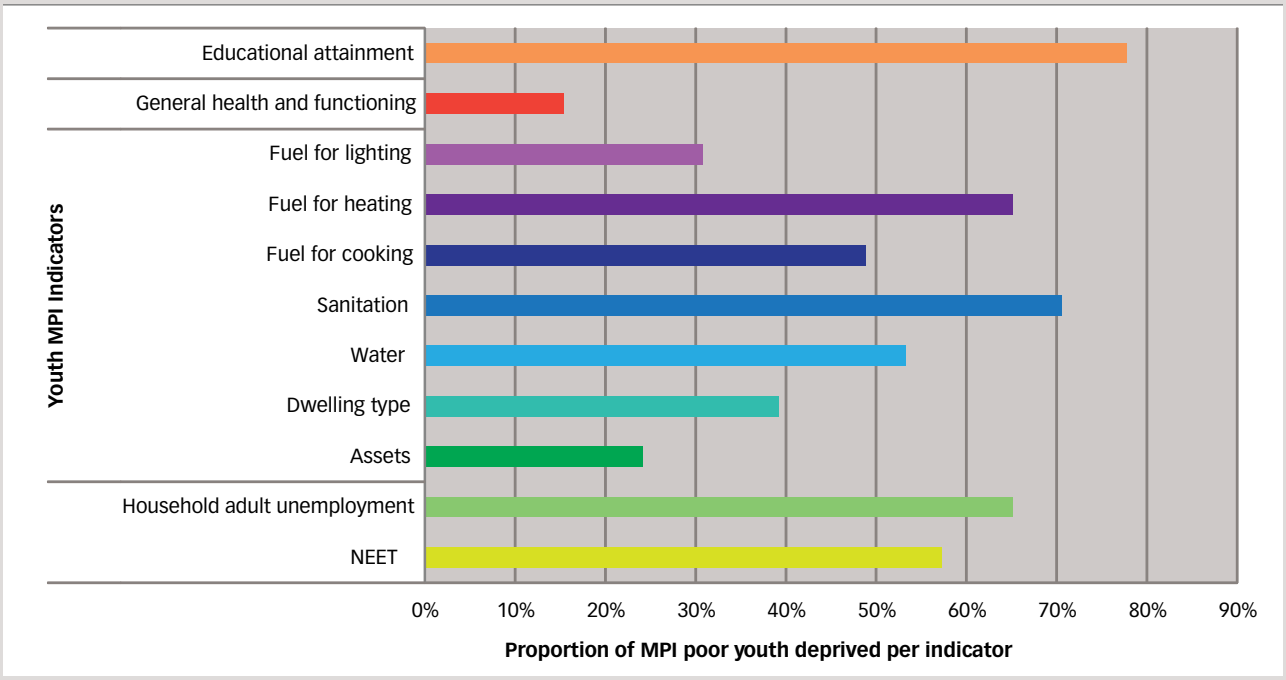


Source: Statistics South Africa (2011) *Census*. Pretoria: Stats SA.
Calculations by Emily Frame, Poverty and Inequality Initiative, UCT, based on weighted data from the Census 2011 10% sample.

The Youth MPI can be unpacked in a number of ways to provide valuable insights about multidimensional poverty in the youth population. Figure 6, for example, shows the proportion of the youth population that is poor *and* deprived in each indicator. Notably, deprivation in educational attainment and sanitation is especially high, affecting 78% and 70% of the multidimensionally poor youth respectively.

Youth-centered analyses of deprivation are key to improving our understanding of the situation of young people in South Africa. The Youth MPI is a valuable tool for such analyses as it provides a robust assessment of multidimensional poverty that is uniquely suited to youth living in the South African context and is able to highlight important spatial inequalities that continue to exist.

Figure 6: Dimensions of deprivation among multidimensionally poor youth, 2011



Source: Statistics South Africa (2011) *Census*. Pretoria: Stats SA.
Calculations by Emily Frame, Poverty and Inequality Initiative, UCT, based on weighted data from the Census 2011 10% sample.