

ESPA's understanding of poverty

Available at:

<http://www.espa.ac.uk/files/espa/Povertyframework.pdf>

With particular thanks to the participants of the
September, 2011 workshop in Oxford

Poverty is generally understood as a lack of, or inability to achieve, a socially acceptable standard of living, or the possession of insufficient resources to meet basic needs.

Social differentiation, equity and issues of power central to poverty analyses.

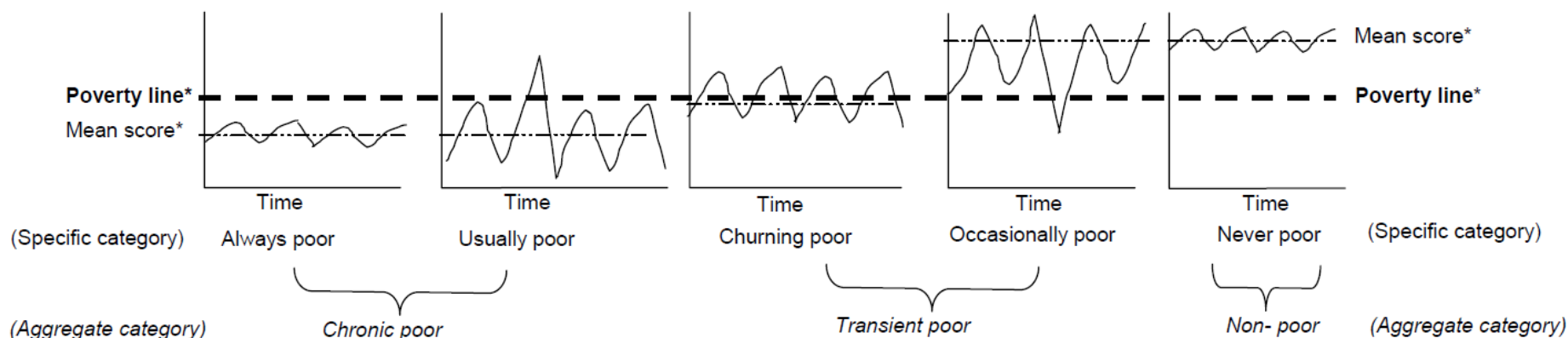
Have moved away from single dimensions to multidimensional poverty.

The choice of dimensions should reflect the way that communities and individuals at research sites understand and experience poverty.

Understanding the connections and interactions between dimensions is also important.

Poverty dynamics – what factors affect whether people move out of poverty, whether they stay poor, or whether they become poor (or poorer).

Figure 1: The chronic poor, transient poor and non-poor – a categorisation



Depending on data availability poverty could be assessed in terms of household expenditure, income, consumption, a nutritional measure, a poverty index, a poverty scale or an assessment of assets/capitals.

Source: Adapted from Jalan and Ravallion (2000). Note that terms are used with different meanings than in Jalan and Ravallion.

Source: Hulme et al. 2001

Vulnerability understood as the situation where livelihoods are so sensitive to shocks, so lacking in resilience, that they would find it difficult or impossible to recover from such shocks.

Equity is a principle of fair treatment. Here, it is understood as meaning equal opportunities (though not necessarily equal outcomes).

Measurement should be broader than simply classifying who 'the poor' are, it should improve our understanding of the underlying factors and dynamics of poverty.

The use of mixed methods is strongly encouraged!