Meeting Needs Index (MNI) revised

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The Meeting Needs Index, or MNI, is a proxy measure of household welfare, providing a single-figure composite indication of how able a household is to meet multiple basic needs. It was first developed and utilized by Mercy Corps in the Gaza Strip, then at larger scale by the Gaza Protection Consortium, as an outcome indicator in multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) programming.

The MNI incorporates multiple, context-specific basic needs, and uses a balanced weighted average approach, with responses to each need given along a scaled range. By summing the scores and dividing the sum by the maximum possible score (50 if all 10 sectors are factored in the analysis), the MNI will generate an overall household score from 0.0 - 1.0, where 0 means they are fully unable to meet any need, and 1 means they are fully able to meet all needs. In addition to use as a household-level multi-sectoral outcome indicator in MPCA programming, the MNI can also be used as part of response analysis (in area-based needs assessments) and as part of minimum expenditure basket construction or revision. As each need is recorded individually, changes in household ability to meet each separate need can be analyzed individually, highlighting gaps in access to basic goods and services.

Meeting Needs Index (MNI) new parameters											
Food	Shelter	Water	Hygiene	Health	Education	Energy	Transport	NFIs	Comms	**Sum**	**new NMI**
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	50	1.000
3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	35	0.700
1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	15	0.300
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000
3.5	5	3.5	1.5	0	5	5	3.5	1.5	0	28.5	0.570
0	1.5	3.5	5	5	0	1.5	3.5	5	1.5	26.5	0.530
0	1.5	3.5	5	3.5	5	3.5	1.5	0	1.5	25	0.500
1.5	3.5	5	1.5	5	3.5	1.5	3.5	5	3.5	33.5	0.670
3.5	5	1.5	3.5	5	3.5	0	0	3.5	3.5	29	0.580
3.5	5	1.5	5	5	5	3.5	3.5	1.5	1.5	35	0.700

Using the MNI

The MNI is easily incorporated into households needs assessments and post-distribution monitoring (PDM) surveys. After deciding on the basic needs to include in the MNI, the module is comprised of as many sub-questions as there are needs. For example:

'*In the past 30 days, how able were you to meet your food needs*?'

Each need has four possible responses, ranging from fully able to meet the need to fully unable to meet the need. During analysis, each response to each need (or index component) is re-coded on a scale of 0 – 5[1]. Then the sum of these score is divided by the maximum possible score (50, if all ten needs/index components are factored in the analysis).

Based on the average MNI scores, households can be defined "*not able*" (0.0 – 0.25), only "*partially able*" (0.26 – 0.50), "*mostly able*" (0.51 – 0.75), or "*fully able*" (0.76 – 1).

[1] For each sector, respondents would then self-report on their capacity to meet their households needs. These answers should then be coded as:

Fully unable = 0
Partially able = 1.5
Mostly able = 3.5
Fully able = 5

Need	Fully unable to meet this need	Partially able to meet this need	Mostly able to meet this need	Fully able to meet this need	If selected either "fully unable" or "partially able" for any of the sectors, what are the main barriers you face in meeting the needs of the household?
Food					☐ Insufficient money to purchase goods or services ☐Distance / need to travel makes it difficult to access markets/service providers ☐The security situation makes it difficult to access markets/service providers ☐Social discrimination makes it difficult to access markets/service providers ☐Insufficient amount of goods/services available ☐Poor quality goods/services available ☐Insufficient skills of service providers ☐Other
Shelter					
Water					
Hygiene					
Health					
Education					
Energy					
Transportation					
NFIs					
Communication					

Presenting the MNI results

To present results in changes across individual needs, a recommended approach is to tabulate the percentage of households responding fully unable or partially able in one column, and mostly able and fully able in another, at two or more points in time. To present changes in MNI scores, line, scatter, or box and whisker graphs can be used. An example of changes in household MNI scores in a box and whisker graph are shown below, taken from a PDM report produced by the Gaza Protection Consortium. The graph shows increasing average MNI scores, and increasing minimum and maximum scores.