



# Measuring children's time use in MICS

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02.

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# Objective

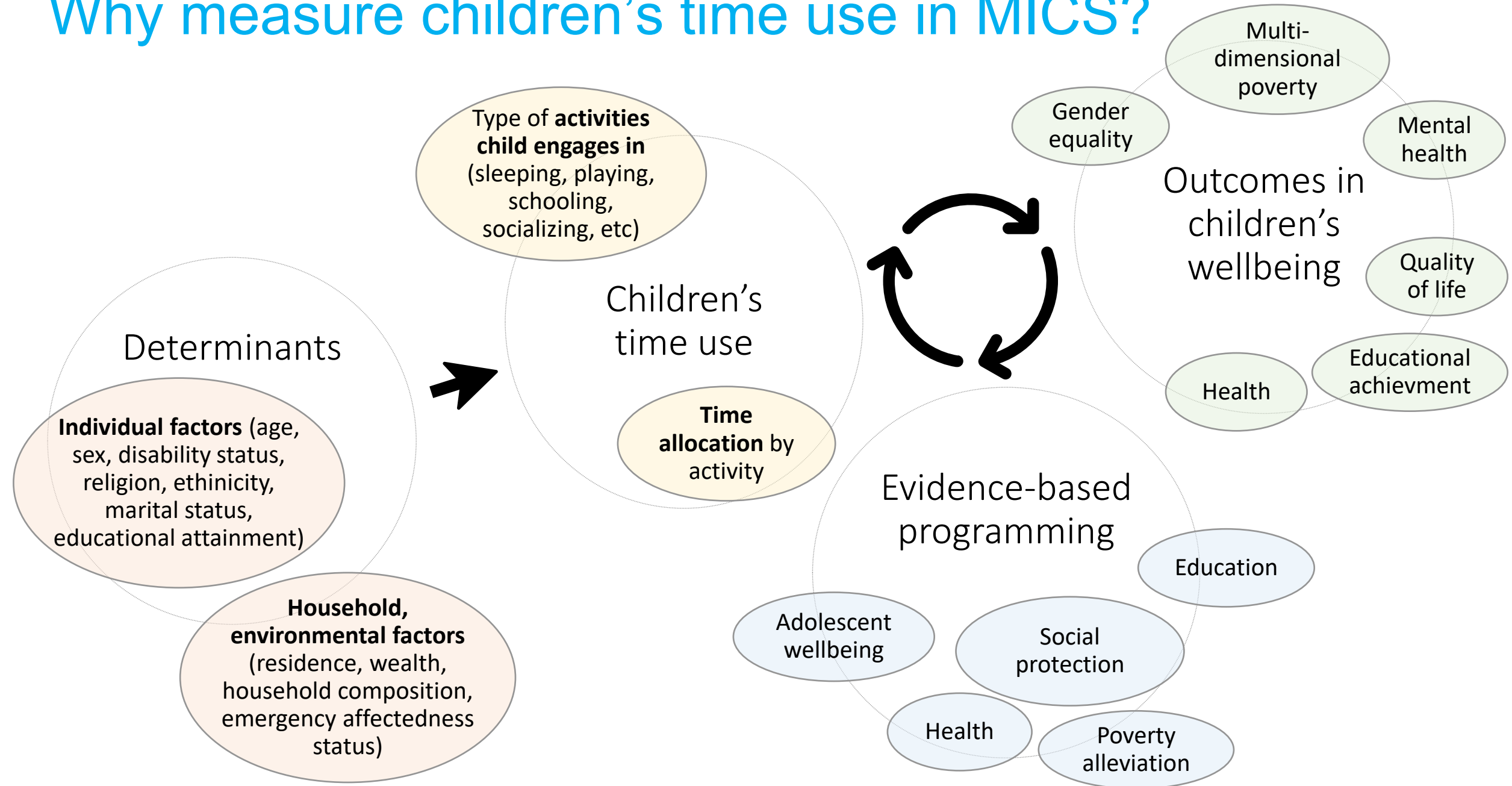
To develop a household survey module measuring children's time use at the population-level for inclusion in the UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)



# Why measure children's time use?

- How children spend their time affects their wellbeing and shapes their opportunities (e.g. unpaid care and domestic work may be associated with schooling, learning, socializing)
- Relevant to monitoring SDG 5 on Gender Equality:
- Gender disparities in time use begin to form in childhood but focus of TU data collection efforts is on adult population
- No standard data collection tools to measure children's TU

# Why measure children's time use in MICS?



# Challenges & considerations integrating a children's time use module in MICS

- Seasonality bias
- Accurate reporting of timing and duration of activities in more traditional rural settings
- Enumerator training requirements
- Respondent burden associated with integrating TU module into multipurpose household survey

# Challenges (cont'd): Self vs proxy reporting



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Is there social desirability bias when caregivers report? (e.g. under/over reporting of stigmatized/desirable activities)

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How accurate is caregivers reporting? Do they know what children are doing?

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At what age can children self-report?



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Parents underreport girls' domestic work (Levison 2000)

Social desirability bias by proxy respondent may decrease with age (Janzen 2016)

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Discrepancies in time spent in paid/unpaid work, sleep and leisure

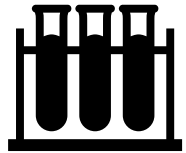
Few discrepancies in time spent learning (Rost 2020)

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From age 8-10, most children can report on their own time (Eurostat 2016)

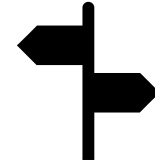
TU instruments typically completed by caregivers of children 12 yrs. or younger and by children themselves, 13-17 yrs.

# Overview of field testing children's time use module in MICS

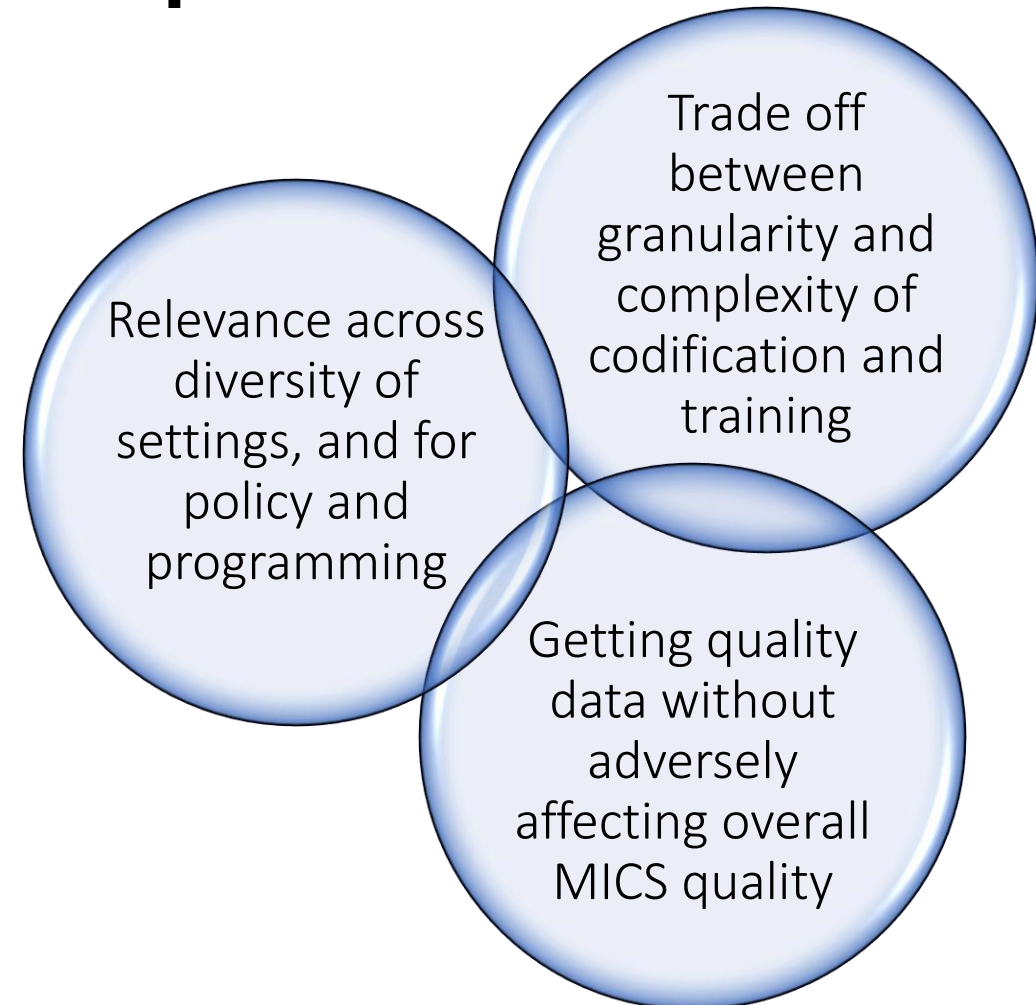


## Field testing

- Stylized questions vs. time diary
- Child versus caregiver reporting
- Adequacy of time use categories adapted from ICATUS 2016
- Additional respondent burden in multi-topic survey
- Low literacy, rural settings
- Enumerator training



## Guiding criteria





# Overview of field tests (cont'd.)

	Malawi (2017)	Belize (2019)	Zimbabwe (2022)
<b>Instrument</b>	Stylized questions with 2 reference periods (7 days & 24 hrs.)	Survey-based <b>time diary</b> (past 24 hrs.) <b>Adaptation of ICATUS 2016 to prioritize children's activities</b>	Survey-based <b>time diary</b> (past 24 hrs.) <b>Further adaptation of ICATUS 2016</b> Introduction of <b>contextual questions</b>
<b>Sample design</b>	Split purposive sample of 447 households in 2 rural districts (Nkhata Bay and Balaka)	Probability-based sample of 680 households in 2 districts (mostly rural; urban)	Purposive sample of 250 households in urban, peri-urban and rural settings in Mutare
<b>Respondent</b>	Proxy reporting by <b>primary caregiver</b> of children aged 5-17	Proxy reporting by <b>primary caregiver</b> of children aged 5-17	<b>Self-reporting by adolescents aged 15-17 and proxy reporting by primary caregiver</b> of adolescents aged 15-17
<b>Implementing partners</b>	UNICEF Malawi & Malawi National Statistical Office	UNICEF Belize & Statistical Institute of Belize	UNICEF Zimbabwe & Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

# Lessons learned

- In general, respondents pleased to speak about their day/their child's day
- Stylized questions versus time diary
  - Respondent fatigue observed with stylized questions, potentially owing to cognitive burden of retrieval and aggregation
  - Diary performed better, although detailed probing is needed to avoid gaps in accounting of activities
- Some difficulty collecting accurate information in low-literacy settings
  - Non-numeric responses (“a bit”, “not long”, etc.) required time estimation after extensive probing

## Lessons learned (cont'd.)

Child self reporting versus care-giver proxy reporting:

- Caregivers not as able to report child's activities and duration when child away from home
- Caregivers found it harder than children to report activities children were engaged in, even when children at home

# Lessons learned (cont'd.)

- Quality data depends on good interviewer-respondent rapport and strong interviewing skills
  - Interviewing techniques differ from typical MICS survey administration (facilitated conversation rather than scripted set of questions)
- With adequate training and practice, interviewers' probing and activity coding skills significantly improve
- CAPI can minimize entry and estimation errors with prompts and consistency checks but can interfere with interview's flow
- Training manuals need to be customized to provide country-relevant examples to aid in activity coding
- Sufficient time for training is critical



# Lessons learned (cont'd.)

Developing a time diary meaningful for children involved:

- **Re-classification and re-grouping** of ICATUS domain activities and introduction of **new activity labels** to prioritize children's activities and align with UNICEF programming
- Examples - School attendance in person/remote, gaming separately from play, socialization in person/through digital technologies, social media as entertainment
  - Tradeoff between granularity and complexity of coding and interviewers' training
- Introduction of **contextual questions** related to homework support/tutoring, digital/online engagement associated with learning, socialization and civic participation (Zimbabwe)
- ICATUS activities adaptation and contextual questions were understood, but small samples did not capture low prevalence activities in testing locations

# Next steps

Time use module for children 10-17 yrs. now available as **complementary** topic in MICS7 (2023-2026)

- Direct reporting for children aged 15-17
- Proxy reporting by caregiver for children aged 10-14
- Tool package includes administration guidelines, interviewer’s instructions, protocols, ethical considerations for interviewing children and tabulation plan
- Further methodological work to lower direct reporting for children 10-14 as well as to collect time use data for children below age 10

TIME USE										TU
TU1. Check WB4: Respondent's age?					AGE 15-17 .....1	AGE 18-49 .....2	2 ⇨ End			
TU2. Begin by asking the respondent what time (he/she) woke up the day before the interview and what time (he/she) went to sleep. Then ask (him/her) to list the activities (he/she) did during the day in chronological order, from the time (he/she) woke up until the time (he/she) went to sleep. For each activity the respondent reports, choose and record in TU7 the appropriate code from the list of activity codes provided at the end of the time diary. Then, proceed to ask questions TU8-TU10: at what time did the activity start, how long did it take and at what time did it end. Depending on the activity reported by the respondent, you will be prompted to ask a follow-up question. Record the answer to the follow-up question, move on to the next row and ask the respondent about the activity (he/she) did next. After recording all activities and relevant follow-up questions, ask TU20 to check once again if there is any other activity the respondent did during the day and forgot to mention.										
TU3. I will now ask you about what you did yesterday, between waking up in the morning and going to bed at night for sleeping. You can include anything you did. These can include active tasks such as studying and eating or passive activities such as relaxing or thinking.										
TU4. What time did you wake up yesterday?					HOURS AND MINUTES    ___:___					
TU5. What time did you go to sleep for the night yesterday?					HOURS AND MINUTES    ___:___					
TU6. Activity order	TU7. What did you do (first/next)?	TU8. What time did this activity start?	TU9. How long did you do this activity?	TU10. What time did this activity end?	TU11. Check TU7: Is activity code 080, 090, 110, 120, 130, 150 or 042?	TU12. Did you play online/ over the internet?	TU13. With whom did you play?	TU14. Did you watch this online/over the internet?	TU15. Did you get the news online/over the internet?	
	Choose activity code from list on the following page				1 YES, TU7=080 2 YES, TU7=090 ⇨ TU14 3 YES, TU7=110 ⇨ TU15 4 YES, TU7=120 ⇨ TU16 5 YES, TU7=130 ⇨ TU17 6 YES, TU7=150 ⇨ TU18 7 YES, TU7=042 ⇨ TU19 8 NO, OTHER CODES ⇨ Go to next row and record next activity in TU7	1 YES 2 NO	A ALONE (ONLINE / OFFLINE) B WITH FRIENDS IN PERSON (ONLINE / OFFLINE) C WITH FRIENDS ONLINE D WITH OTHERS ONLINE E WITH FRIENDS AND OTHERS ONLINE  Record all mentioned. Do not record C, D, E if TU12=2  Probe: Anyone else?  Go to beginning of next row and record next activity in TU7	1 YES 2 NO  Go to beginning of next row and record next activity in TU7	1 YES 2 NO  Go to beginning of next row and record next activity in TU7	
ORDER	ACTIVITY	START TIME	HOURS	MINUTES	END TIME		YES NO	YES NO	YES NO	
001	_____	4:00			___:___	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2	A B C D E	1 2	1 2
002	_____	___:___			___:___	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2	A B C D E	1 2	1 2
003	_____	___:___			___:___	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2	A B C D E	1 2	1 2
004	_____	___:___			___:___	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2	A B C D E	1 2	1 2
005	_____	___:___			___:___	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2	A B C D E	1 2	1 2
006	_____	___:___			___:___	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2	A B C D E	1 2	1 2
007	_____	___:___			___:___	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2	A B C D E	1 2	1 2
008	_____	___:___			___:___	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2	A B C D E	1 2	1 2

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# Thank You

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