



# MPI

## MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX

### STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF BELIZE

#### INCIDENCE OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY DOWN FROM 22.1% IN SEPTEMBER 2024 TO 19.1% IN SEPTEMBER 2025

##### Overview of the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI):

The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is a direct measure of poverty, which captures deprivations across various dimensions of well-being such as health, education, employment, and living standards. The MPI provides insights into both the incidence and intensity of poverty within a population.

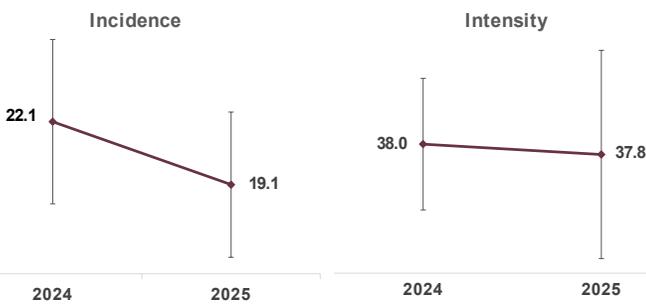
**Incidence** measures the share of persons or households that are multidimensionally poor in the population, while **intensity** measures the average level of deprivation experienced among the poor. The MPI is computed by multiplying the incidence by the intensity of poverty and is represented by a number between 0 and 1, where 0 represents no poverty and 1 represents extreme poverty. The MPI complements monetary measures of poverty and serves as a useful tool for the development and monitoring of targeted poverty reduction interventions.

##### Incidence and Intensity of Poverty:

In September 2025, 19.1 percent of the population were estimated to be multidimensionally poor, down from 22.1 percent in September 2024 (see Figure 1). This decline reflects an estimated 13,095 fewer individuals and 2,809 fewer households experiencing multidimensional poverty between September 2024 to September 2025. Improvements seen across the various deprivations indicated gains in internet connectivity, household well-being, and youth engagement in education, training or employment.

While the incidence of poverty decreased by 3 percentage points between September 2024 and September 2025, the intensity of poverty remained almost unchanged, declining only slightly from 38.0 percent in 2024 to 37.8 percent in 2025 (see Figure 1).

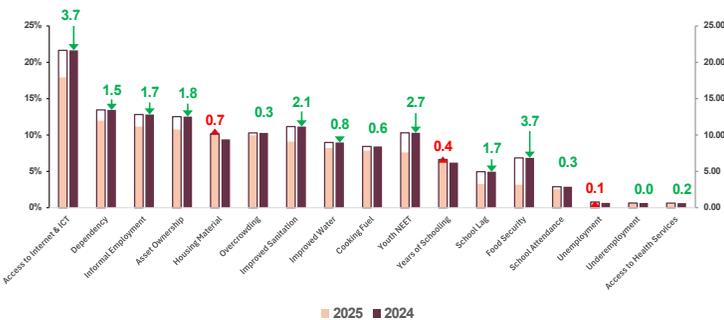
**Figure 1: Incidence and Intensity of Multidimensional Poverty, September 2024, and September 2025**



Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

The **Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)**, calculated as the product of incidence multiplied by the intensity of poverty, fell from 0.084 to 0.072 between September 2024 and September 2025. An estimated 76,779 persons across 17,753 households were multidimensionally poor in September 2025. Among these households, there were improvements recorded across most deprivation indicators between the two periods. The largest reductions were observed in 'Access to Internet and Information and Communication Technology' and 'Food Security' (down by 3.7 percentage points each), and 'Youth Not in Employment Education or Training' (down by 2.7 percentage points). Nonetheless, slight increases in deprivation were observed for 'Housing Material' (up by 0.7 percentage points), 'Years of Schooling' (up by 0.4 percentage points), and 'Unemployment' (up by 0.1 percentage points) (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Changes in Deprivation Levels Among the Poor, September 2024 and September 2025**

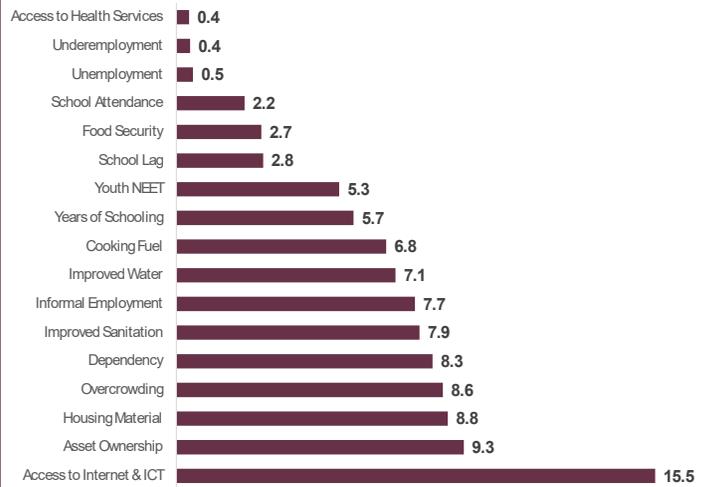


Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

Of the 17 indicators used to measure multidimensional poverty, 'Access to Internet and Information and Communication Technology', 'Asset Ownership' and 'Housing Material' contributed the most to the September 2025 MPI, accounting for 15.5 percent, 9.3 percent, and 8.8 percent, respectively.

The indicators contributing the least to the overall MPI were 'Access to Health Services', 'Underemployment' and 'Unemployment', accounting for 0.4 percent, 0.4 percent, and 0.5 percent, respectively (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Percent Contribution of Indicators to the Multidimensional Poverty Index, September 2025**

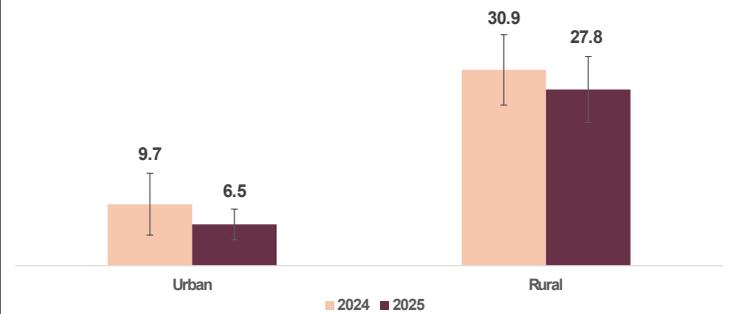


Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

##### Multidimensional Poverty by Area:

In September 2025, the incidence of multidimensional poverty remained considerably higher in rural areas than in urban areas, with 27.8 percent of the rural population experiencing multidimensional poverty, compared to 6.5 percent of the urban population. Rural intensity was higher at 38.7 percent compared to urban intensity at 32.4 percent in September 2025. Nonetheless, the incidence of poverty was down in both areas of the country. Urban areas recorded a decline in incidence, from 9.7 percent in 2024 to 6.5 percent in 2025. Rural areas experienced a more moderate reduction, with the incidence decreasing from 30.9 percent in 2024 to 27.8 percent in 2025.

**Figure 4: Incidence of Multidimensional Poverty by Area, September 2024 and September 2025**



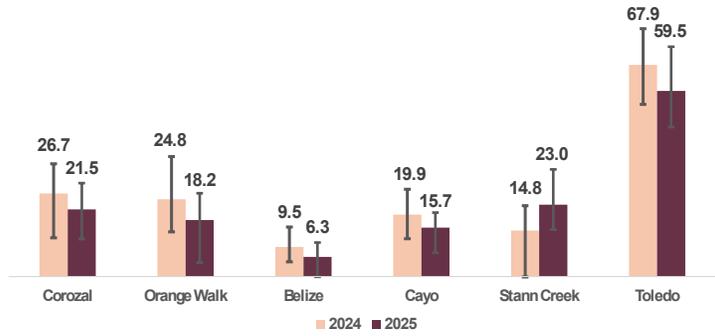
Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

##### Multidimensional Poverty by District:

The Toledo district recorded the highest rate of multidimensionally poor persons at 59.5 percent, while the Belize District registered the lowest at 6.3 percent. Compared to 2024, the incidence of poverty declined in all districts except in Stann Creek, where it rose from 14.8 percent in September of last year to 23.0 percent in September of this year. The largest reduction was seen in Toledo, where the incidence of poverty was down by 8.3 percentage points from 67.9 in 2024, driven by improvements in 'Improved Sanitation' (down by 25.8 percentage points), 'Access to Internet and Information and Communication Technology' (down by 8.3 percentage points), and 'Food Security' (down by 7.7 percentage points). This was followed by Orange Walk, which declined by 6.6 percentage points from 24.8 in 2024, due to decreases in 'Access to Internet and Information and Communication Technology' (down by 10.5 percentage points), 'Housing Material' (down by 9.1 percentage points) and 'Asset Ownership' (down by 7.5 percentage points).

Stann Creek was the only district to record an increase in the incidence of multidimensional poverty, which rose by 8.3 percentage points between 2024 and 2025. Additionally, the percentage of people deprived worsened in 10 of the 17 indicators of deprivation, most notably 'Improved Sanitation' (up by 11.2 percentage points), 'Access to Internet and Information and Communication Technology' (up by 8.8 percentage points) and 'Overcrowding' (up by 8.5 percentage points).

**Figure 5: Incidence of Multidimensional Poverty by District, September 2024 and September 2025**

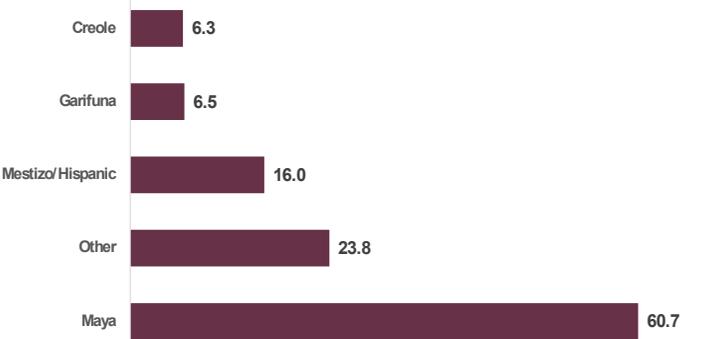


Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

**Multidimensional Poverty by Demographic Characteristics: Multidimensional Poverty by Ethnicity of Household Head**

Households headed by persons of Maya ethnicity experienced the highest level of multidimensional poverty at 60.7 percent. Conversely, households headed by persons of Garifuna and Creole ethnicity had the lowest levels at 6.5 percent and 6.3 percent, respectively. Households where the head was of Mestizo/Hispanic ethnicity recorded a 16.0 percent incidence of poverty (see Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Incidence of Multidimensional Poverty by Ethnicity of Household Head, September 2025**

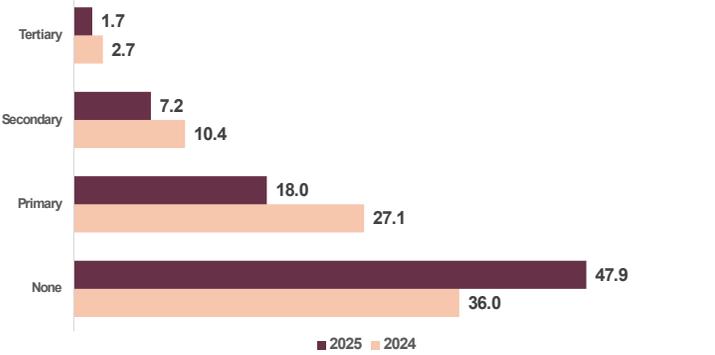


Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

**Multidimensional Poverty by Education of Household Head:**

As has been seen in previous rounds, multidimensional poverty continued to be closely linked to educational attainment. In September 2025, households headed by persons who had not completed any level of education experienced the highest incidence of poverty at 47.9 percent. In contrast, households headed by individuals with a tertiary education saw the lowest incidence of poverty at 1.7 percent (see Figure 7).

**Figure 7: Incidence of Multidimensional Poverty by Education of Household Head, September 2024 and September 2025**

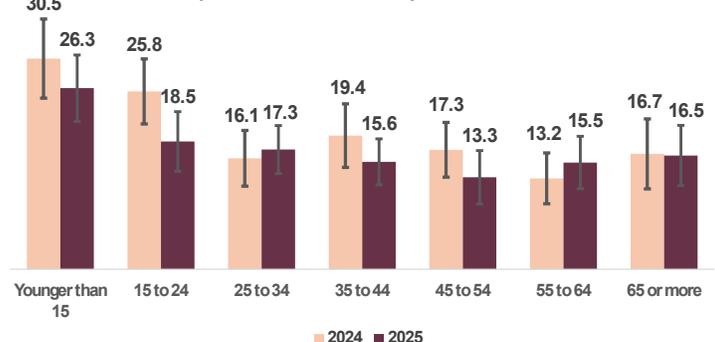


Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

**Multidimensional Poverty by Age Groups:**

Similarly, the results for September 2025 indicated certain age groups continued to be at a higher risk of experiencing multidimensional poverty. The highest incidence was seen among individuals aged 0 to 14, at 26.3 percent. Persons aged 15 to 24 saw the greatest improvement, with the incidence for this group falling from 25.8 percent in September 2024 to 18.5 percent in September 2025. In contrast, persons 55 to 64 years old recorded a 2.3 percentage point increase in the incidence of poverty (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8: Incidence of Multidimensional Poverty by Age Groups, September 2024 and September 2025**

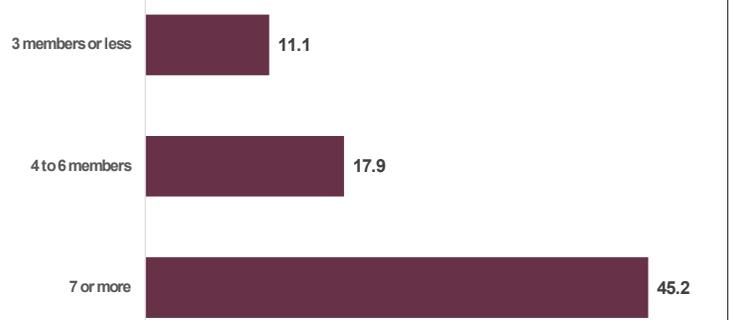


Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

**Multidimensional Poverty by Household Size:**

Results indicated that the likelihood of being multidimensionally poor increased along with household size. In September 2025, households with three members or less had a poverty incidence of 11.1 percent, while those with 4 to 6 members had an incidence of 17.9 percent. Households that had seven members or more had the highest incidence of poverty at 45.2 percent (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9: Incidence of Multidimensional Poverty According to Household Composition, September 2025**

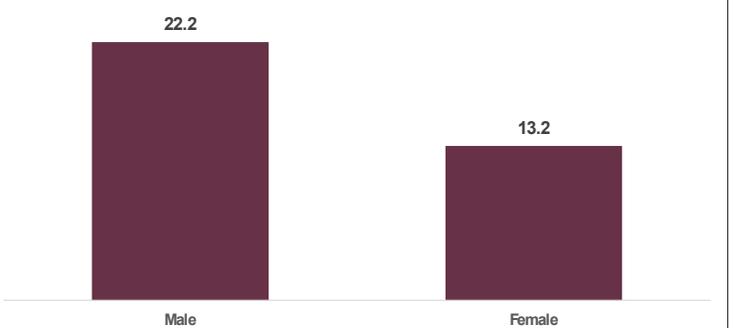


Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

**Multidimensional Poverty by Sex of Household Head:**

There was also a notable difference in the incidence of multidimensional poverty by the sex of the household head. In September 2025, the incidence of poverty was higher in male-headed households at 22.2 percent, compared to 13.2 percent among female-headed households (see Figure 10).

**Figure 10: Incidence of Multidimensional Poverty by Sex, September 2025**

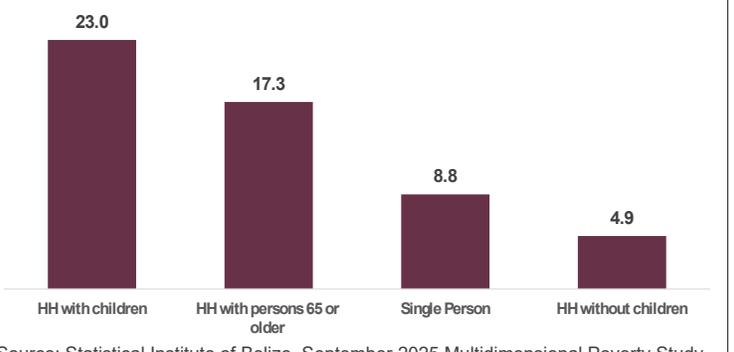


Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

**Multidimensional Poverty by Household Composition:**

Households without children experienced the lowest incidence of multidimensional poverty at 4.9 percent in September 2025, followed by single-person households at 8.8 percent. Households with children recorded the highest incidence of poverty at 23.0 percent, while those with persons over 65 years old recorded an incidence of 17.3 percent (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11: Incidence of Multidimensional Poverty by Household Composition, September 2025**

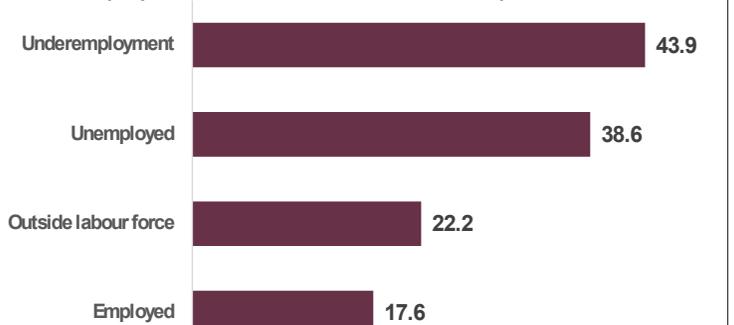


Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study

**Multidimensional Poverty by Employment Status of Household Head:**

Households headed by persons that were employed experienced the lowest incidence of poverty at 17.6 percent, followed by those headed by persons that were outside of the labour force at 22.2 percent. In contrast, 43.9 percent of those living in households headed by persons who were underemployed and 38.6 percent of persons living in a household headed by someone who was unemployed were multidimensionally poor (see Figure 12).

**Figure 12: Incidence of Multidimensional Poverty According to Employment Status of Household Head, September 2025**



Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, September 2025 Multidimensional Poverty Study