

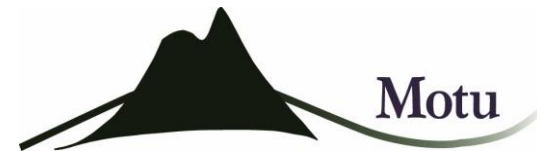
# An introduction to the Human Rights Measurement Initiative (HRMI)

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Presentation at The New School, March 9, 2017



ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RIGHTS  
*Empowerment Initiative*



# Outline

1. Introduction to HRMI
2. PRODUCTION – how do we measure human rights?
3. IMPACT – broader agenda of HRMI
4. How can we make this most useful for YOU?

“We tend to overvalue the things we can measure and undervalue the things we cannot.”

— John Hayes

# What is wrong with the status quo?

- Human Rights abuses remain rife
- Impunity is a major problem
- Existing Human Rights data are piecemeal and of varying quality
- There are LOTS of efforts to improve enjoyment of human rights but their combined efficacy could be improved

# Intro to HRMI



## Our Purpose

To reinvent the way human rights data are produced and used, in order to inspire more ethical behaviour by Governments and other actors.



## Our goal

To produce a suite of metrics for countries that become the go-to source for global measures of Human Rights



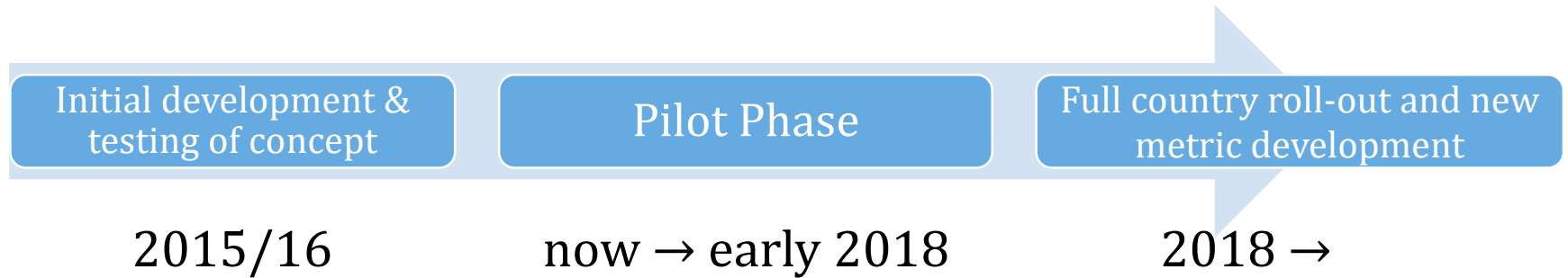
## Our values

Transparency, participation, collaboration, innovation, independence from Government

# Likely users

- Human Rights NGOs
- International Governmental Organisations
- Media
- Academics
- Private sector
- Public
- Philanthropic sector
- Governments and NHRIs

# HRMI – key phases



# How do we measure human rights?

- Tailored methodologies for each thematic area
- Based on:
  - Objective data when available  
(e.g. for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)
  - Expert opinion data otherwise  
(e.g. for Civil and Political Rights)
- Leverage off existing expertise



# Last week – co-design workshop



# Measuring Enjoyment of Civil & Political Rights

RIGHT TO LIFE



RIGHT NOT TO BE TORTURED



RIGHT TO NOT BE UNLAWFULLY DETAINED



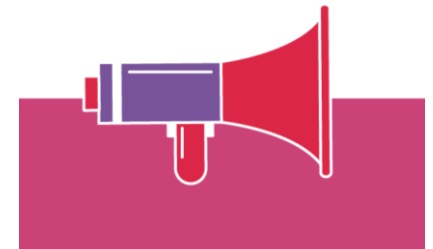
RIGHT TO FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS



RIGHT TO FREE ASSOCIATION

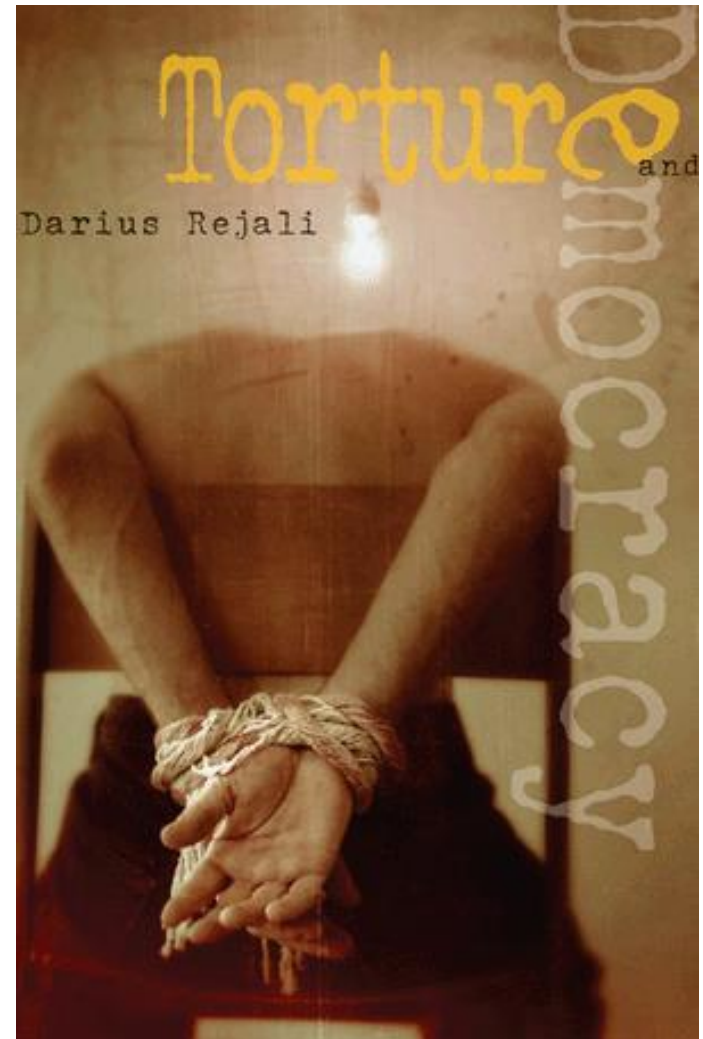


RIGHT TO FREE EXPRESSION



# Why is it Difficult to Measure Enjoyment of Civil & Political Rights?

- Perfect, **direct** measurement of violations of civil and political rights is impossible.
- Potential value of **indirect** measures that are honest about uncertainty is immense



# Other Previous & Ongoing CPR Measurement Projects

- CIRI Human Rights Data Project

**CIRI Human Rights Data Project**  
www.humanrightsdata.org

LOGIN TO **MyCIRI**  
New users: [register here.](#)

HOME DOWNLOAD DATA FAQ DOCUMENTATION PEOPLE SPONSORS CONTACT CIRI

**The CIRI Human Rights Data Project:**

The Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset contains standards-based quantitative information on government respect for 15 internationally recognized human rights for 195 countries, annually from 1981-2009. It is designed for use by scholars and students who seek to test theories about the causes and consequences of human rights violations, as well as policy makers and analysts who seek to estimate the human rights effects of a wide variety of institutional changes and public policies including democratization, economic aid, military aid, structural adjustment, and humanitarian intervention.

**The CIRI Human Rights Dataset:**

- ❖ Contains measures of government human rights practices.
- ❖ Contains both disaggregated measures of specific human rights practices, which can either be analyzed separately or combined into valid and reliable indices, as well as two already-aggregated indices.
- ❖ Describes a wide variety of government human rights practices (15) including torture, workers' rights, and women's rights over a 29-year period.
- ❖ Is replicable. The detailed coding manual allows anyone to reapply our detailed coding rules to cases included in the dataset.
- ❖ Is reliable. At least two trained coders evaluated each variable for each country year. Reliability scores are available for each variable.
- ❖ Allows users to save their customized datasets on their MyCIRI page for easy updating when the master CIRI dataset is updated.

**Questions?**

For details about the CIRI data, project, and about how to download CIRI data, please visit our [FAQ](#).

**CIRI News**

**NEW: CIRI BLOG**  
CIRI now has its own blog at <http://humanrightsdata.blogspot.com>. The blog will keep CIRI users updated on and informed about our annual data production process as well as new features for our website and dataset.  
Posted: 2011-04-30

**2009 CIRI DATA & UPGRADE**  
The 2009 CIRI Data will be available on Human Rights Day, December 10th. Also included in this release are scores for domestic movement, foreign movement, religious freedom, and judicial independence for 1981-2006. Finally, the state of Kosovo has been added, with data beginning in 2009.  
Posted: 2010-11-22

[More CIRI news](#)

[RSS 2.0](#)

# Why is it Difficult to Measure Enjoyment of Civil & Political Rights?

- Previous measurement projects' approach
  - Public documentation produced by INGOs, NGOs, and governments

The screenshot shows the U.S. Department of State website. The header includes the U.S. Department of State logo and the tagline "DIPLOMACY IN ACTION". Below the header is a navigation menu with categories like "SECRETARY KERRY", "MEDIA CENTER", "BLOG", "TRAVEL", "CAREERS", "BUSINESS", "YOUTH & EDUCATION", and "MY STATE DEPARTMENT". The main content area is titled "Human Rights Reports" and features a list of years from 2015 to 1996. A search bar is located at the top right, and a "Stay Connected with State.gov" section is on the right side. The footer contains various links such as "Blog", "What's New", "FAQ", "Contact Us", "Subject Index", "Search", "USA.gov", "Share", "Mobile", "Email this Page", "Video", "Photos", "Accessibility Statement", "External Link Policy", "Privacy Policy", "FOIA", "Copyright Information", "White House", and "Other U.S. Government Info".

The cover of the Amnesty International Report 2015/16 features a large, stylized globe graphic in the background. The title "AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT 2015/16" is prominently displayed in bold, black, sans-serif font on a yellow background. Below the title, the subtitle "THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S HUMAN RIGHTS" is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom left, the Amnesty International logo is visible, consisting of the words "AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL" and a stylized torch icon.



# Finding a better way forward

- Previous data projects have produced important findings for NGOs
- However, too coarse and aggregated to do more than study general trends
- We can do better:
  - HR researchers say “Why don’t you just ask us?”

# HRMI methodology for CPRs

- Expert opinion survey approach
- Cross-nationally comparable assessments of enjoyment of several CPRs collected directly from human rights NGO researchers
  - Includes previously inaccessible information
  - Opens door to many additional information sources
  - Allows for the calculation and reporting of uncertainty

# HRMI – new CPR metrics

- Pilot Phase – 7 new metrics
  - Right to freedom from execution
  - Right to freedom from torture
  - Right to freedom from political imprisonment & arbitrary arrest
  - Right to freedom from disappearance
  - Right to opinion & expression
  - Right to assembly & association
  - Right to participate in government
- Each right receives measures on multiple dimensions
  - Intensity (Frequency) vs Range (Distribution)
  - Responsible Violator: State and/or Non-State Actors?
  - Targeting & Discrimination



# Example: Draft Torture Survey Intensity/Frequency

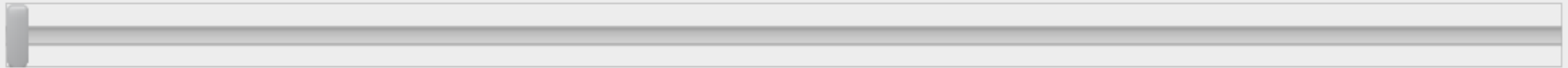
From July to December 2016, **how often** did government agents, such as soldiers, police officers, and others acting on behalf of the state, violate the right to be free from torture or ill-treatment?

No  
Violations

Occasional  
Violations

Frequent  
Violations

I don't know



# Example: Draft Torture Survey Range/Distribution & Targeting

From July to December 2016, **who was vulnerable** to torture and ill-treatment by government agents, such as soldiers, police officers, and others acting on behalf of the state? (Select all that apply)

- No one
- Detainees or those accused of non-political criminal activity
- Those engaged in or suspected of peaceful political activity  
(e.g. protesters, journalists, activists)
- Those engaged in or suspected of violent political activity  
(e.g. suspected terrorists, rebels, rioters)
- Members of discriminated classes, identities, or groups
- All persons were equally at risk; abuse was applied indiscriminately
- I don't know/Prefer not to answer
- Other (Please Specify)

# Example: Draft Torture Survey Vulnerable Populations

(Select all that apply)

- Ethnicity
- Race
- Cultural background
- Political affiliation
- Detainees/Accused Criminals
- Immigrants
- Refugees/Asylum Seekers
- Sexual Orientation
- ... etc
- Socioeconomic Status
- Disabled
- Children
- Homeless
- Religious minorities
- Journalists
- Human Rights Advocates
- Indigenous People
- ... etc

# Our new CPR metrics will be much better than what now exists

- More transparent
- More collaborative
- More advanced techniques
- Will provide info on perpetrators and vulnerable populations, as well as timing of abuse
- Independent of governments

If this project doesn't succeed, lots of users will continue to use existing sub-standard data

# Measuring enjoyment of Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ESCRs)



## FULFILLING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

SAKIKO FUKUDA-PARR | TERRA LAWSON-REMER | SUSAN RANDOLPH

# Pilot phase – suite of 5 ESR metrics

- Rights – from list of ICESCR enumerated rights

Right to Food

Right to  
Education

Right to Adequate  
Housing

Right to  
Health

Right to Decent Work/  
Social Security

- Rights indicators from objective, internationally comparable, publically accessible statistical indicators

# Principle of Progressive Realization

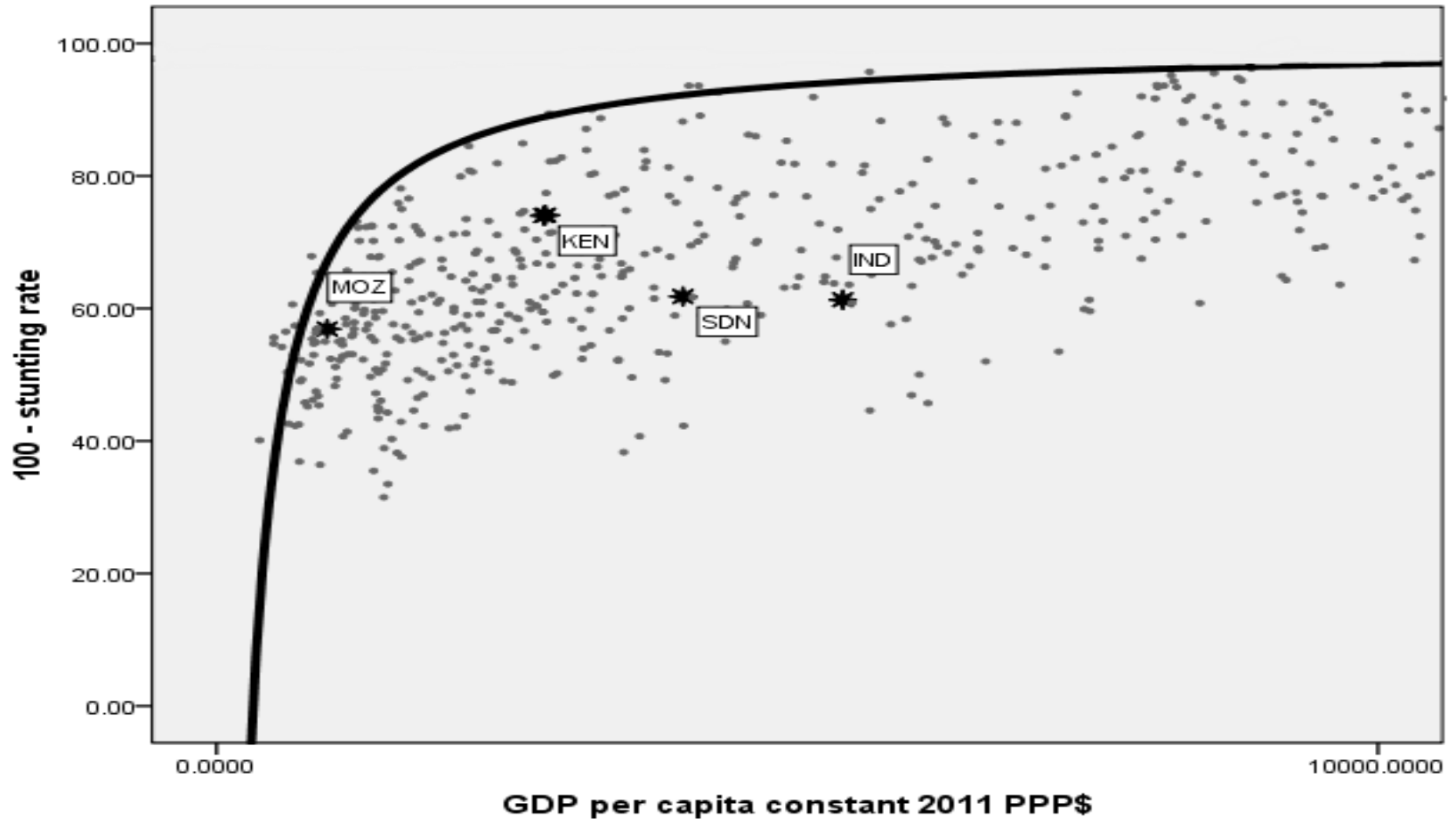
- Obligates countries to fulfill rights to the extent possible given their available resources
- The SERF methodology benchmarks obligations:
  - for each country
  - at each point in time
  - on each economic and social right

# Example - Right to Food

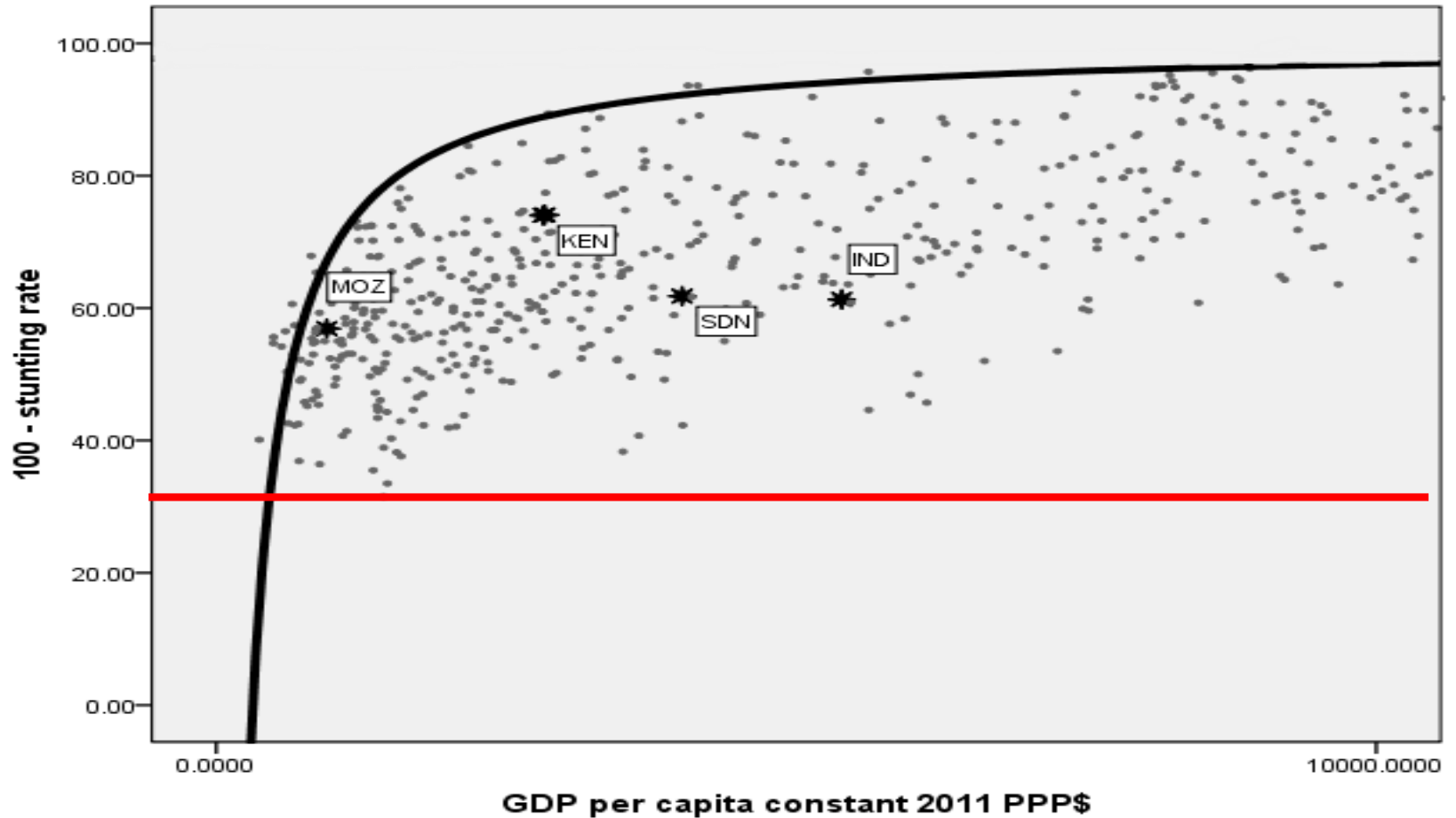




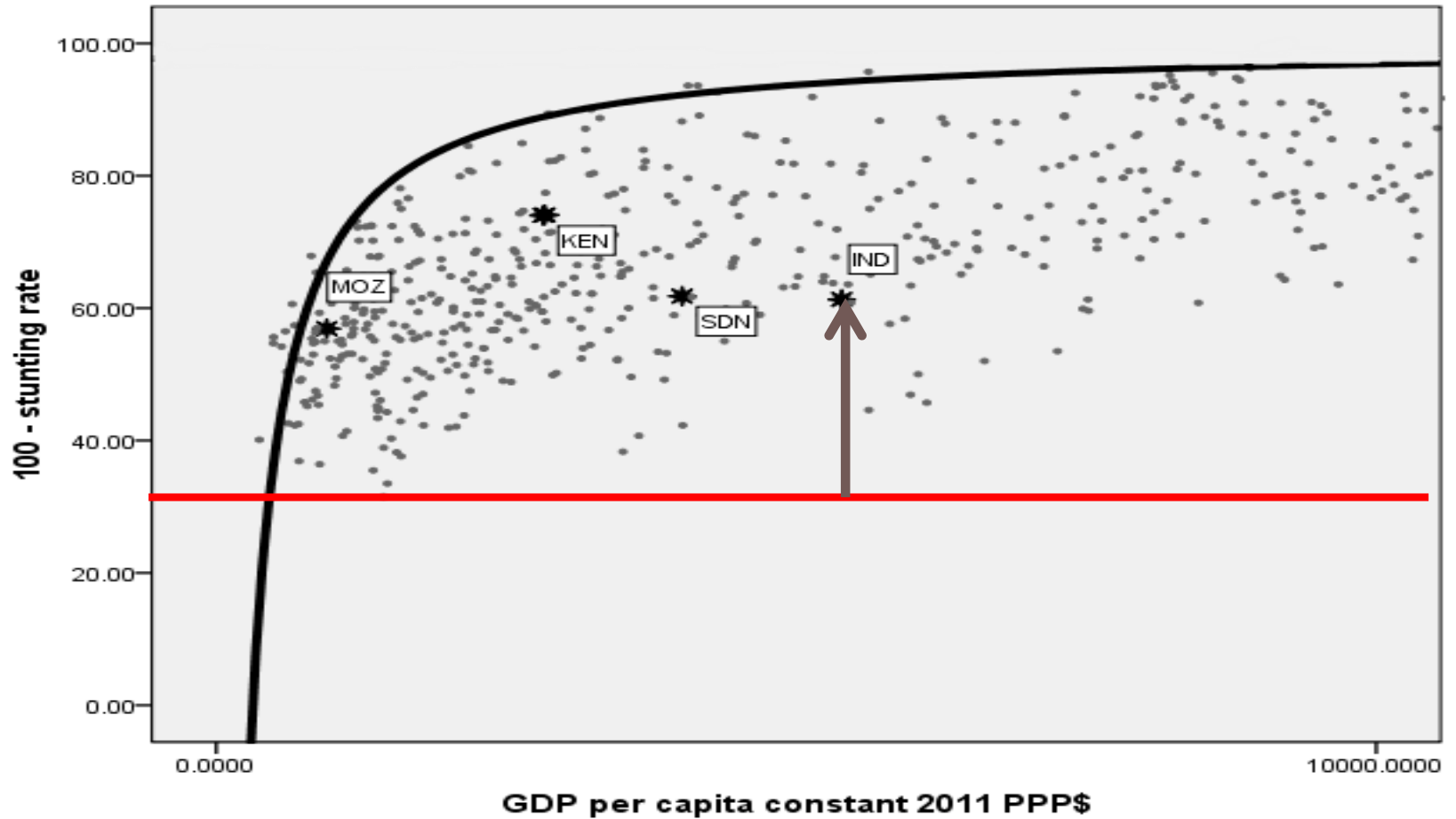
# Achievement Possibilities Frontier— Food



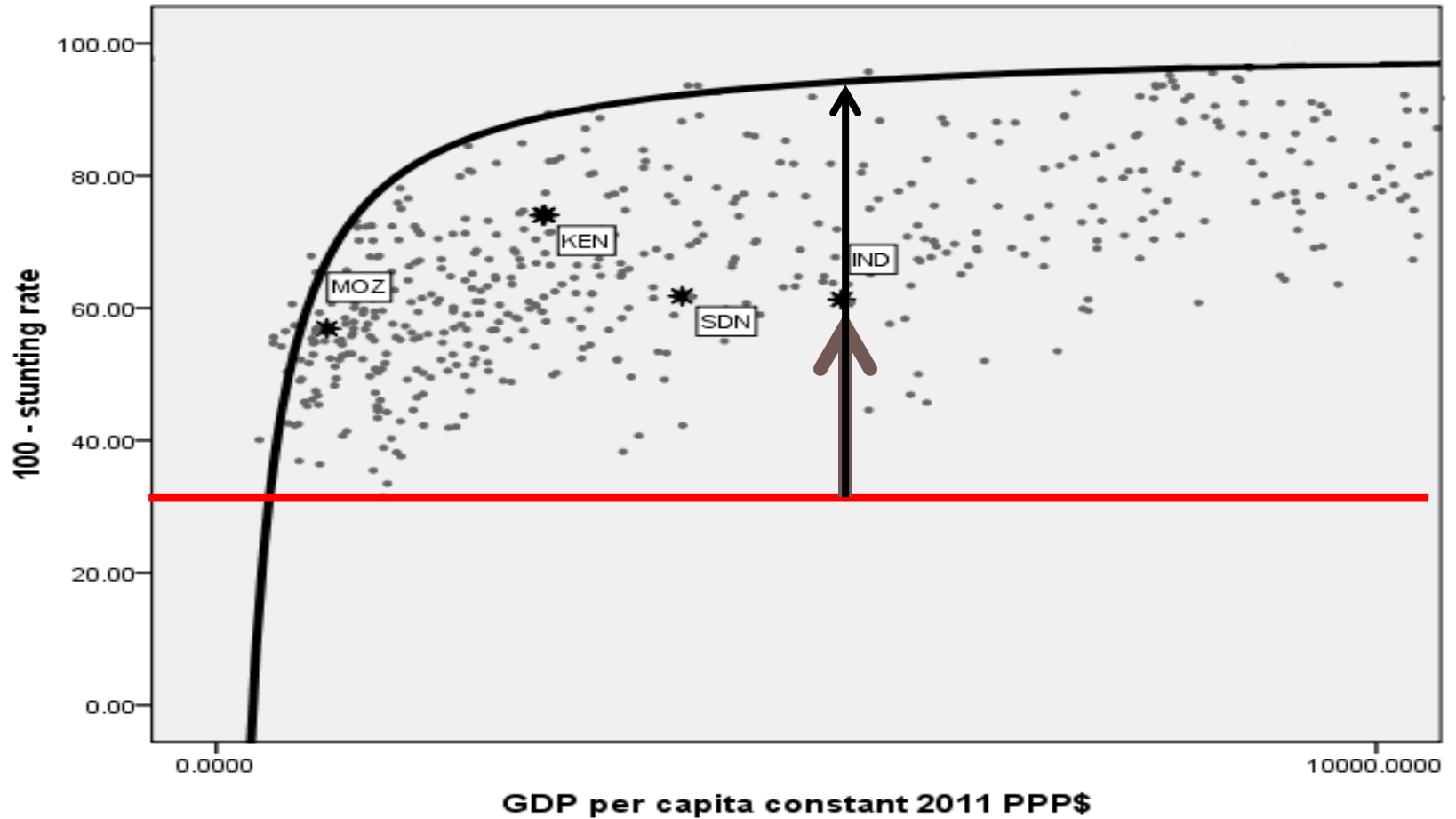
# Achievement Possibilities Frontier— Food



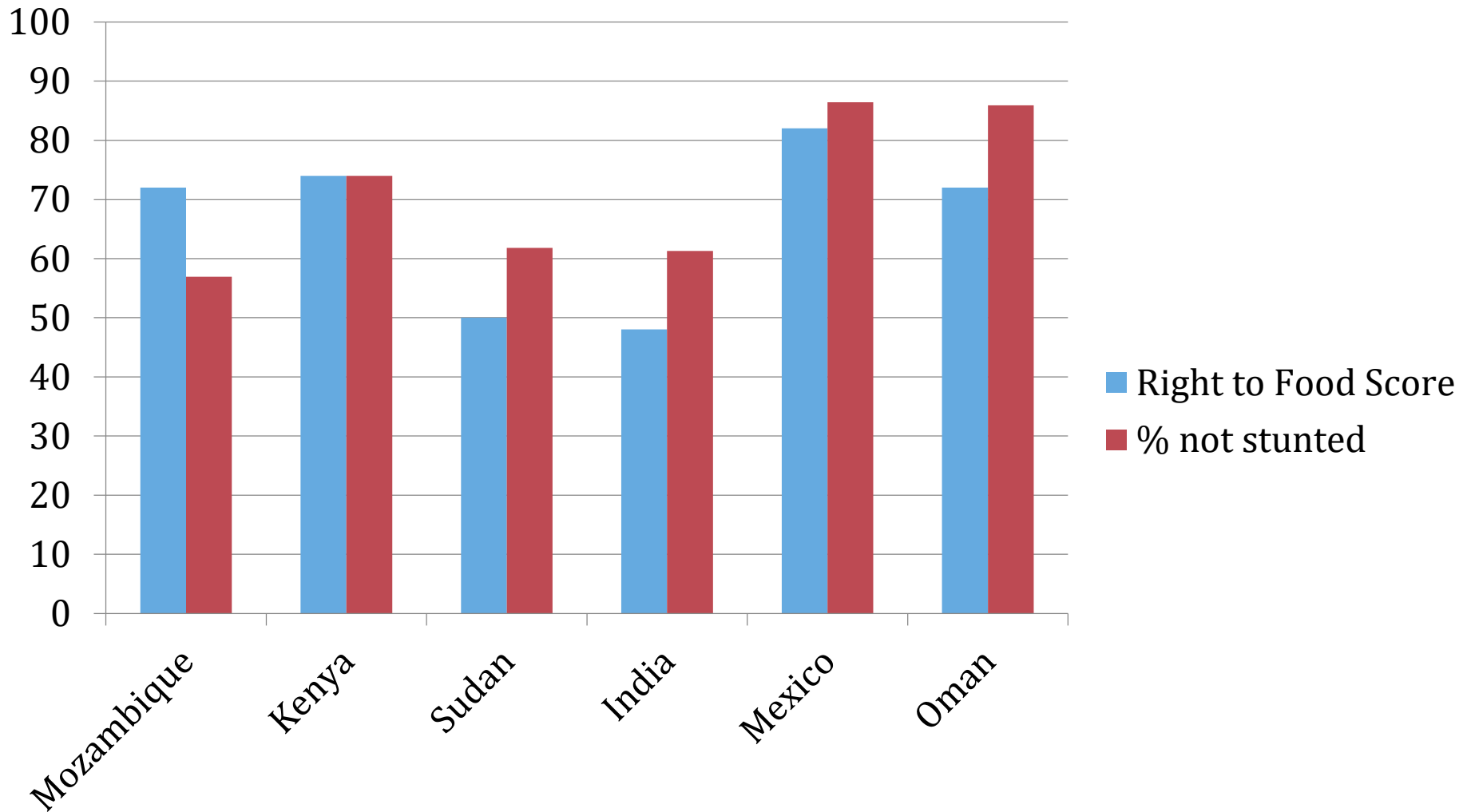
# Achievement Possibilities Frontier— Food



# Achievement Possibilities Frontier— Food



# Right to food measures for selected countries



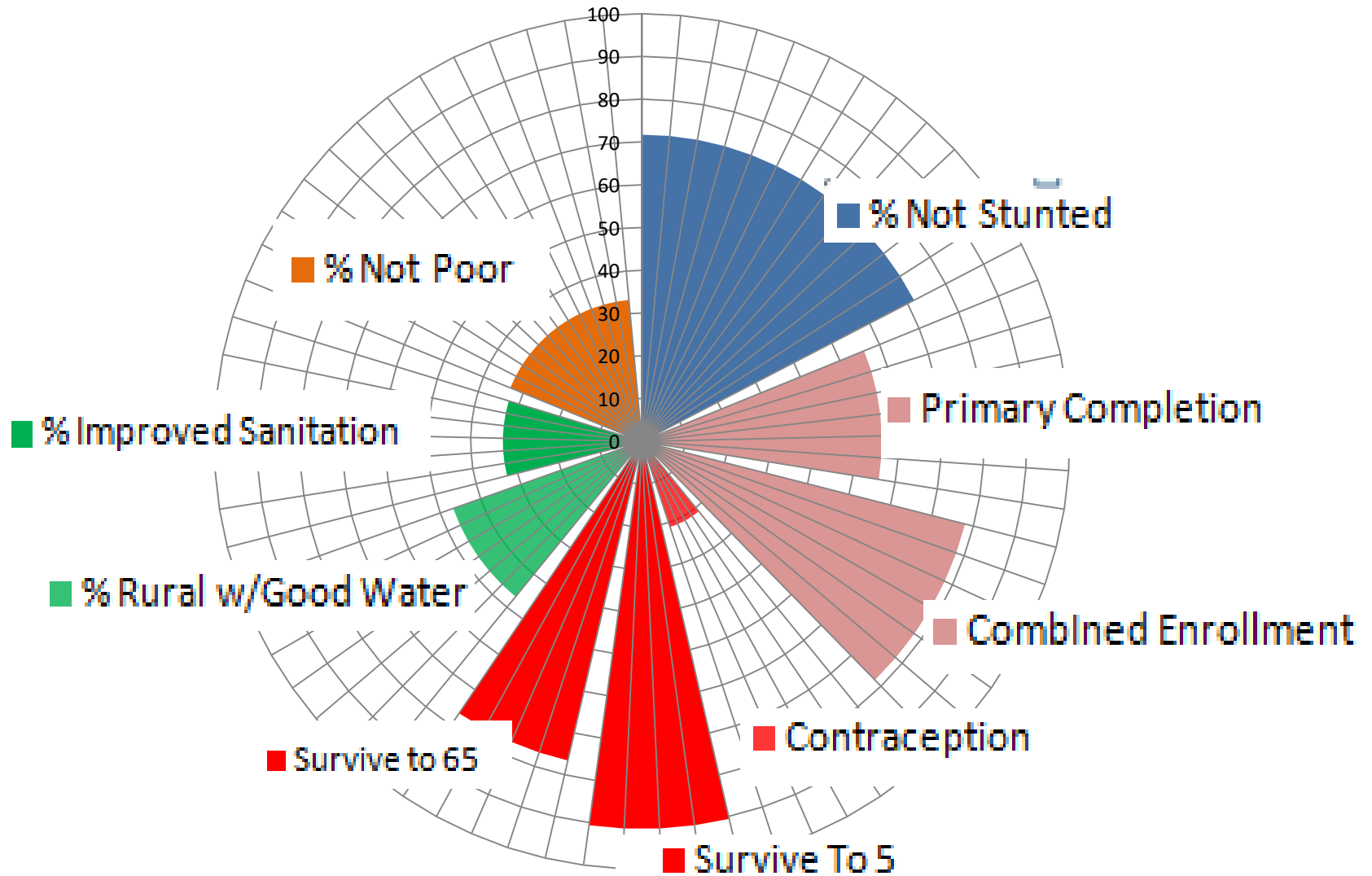
# India Right to Food Scores (selected States)

State	Right to Food Score (%)
Kerala	77.38
Tamil Nadu	65.18
Punjab	51.44
Delhi	37.04
Bihar	23.43
Uttar Pradesh	17.28

# Interpreting SERF Scores

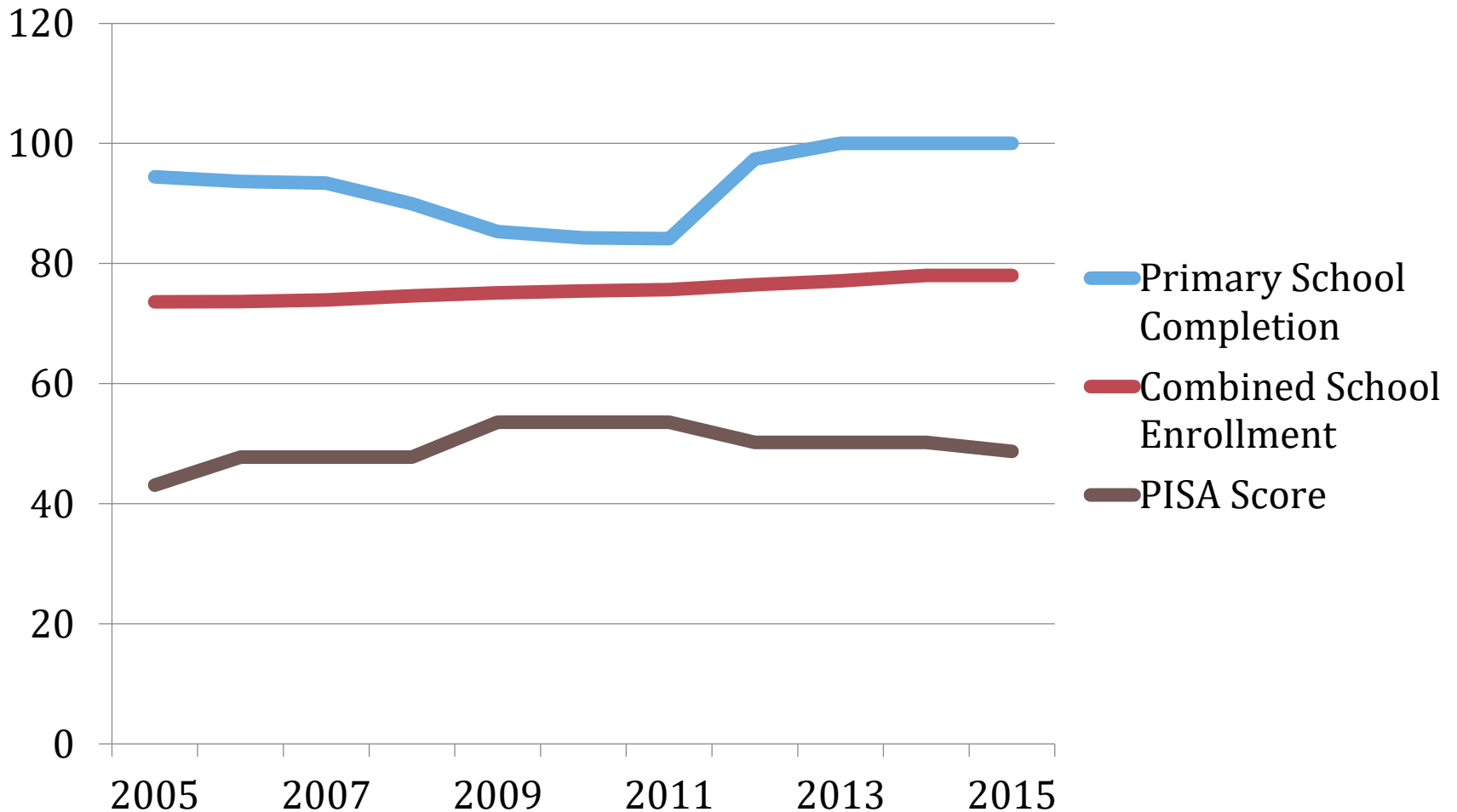
- A low score means the country is not doing nearly as much as it could given its resource capacity.
- A SERF score of 100% does **NOT** imply the right concerned is enjoyed by all.
- Countries should still strive to push the possibility frontier out further.

# Mozambique: SERF=54.8





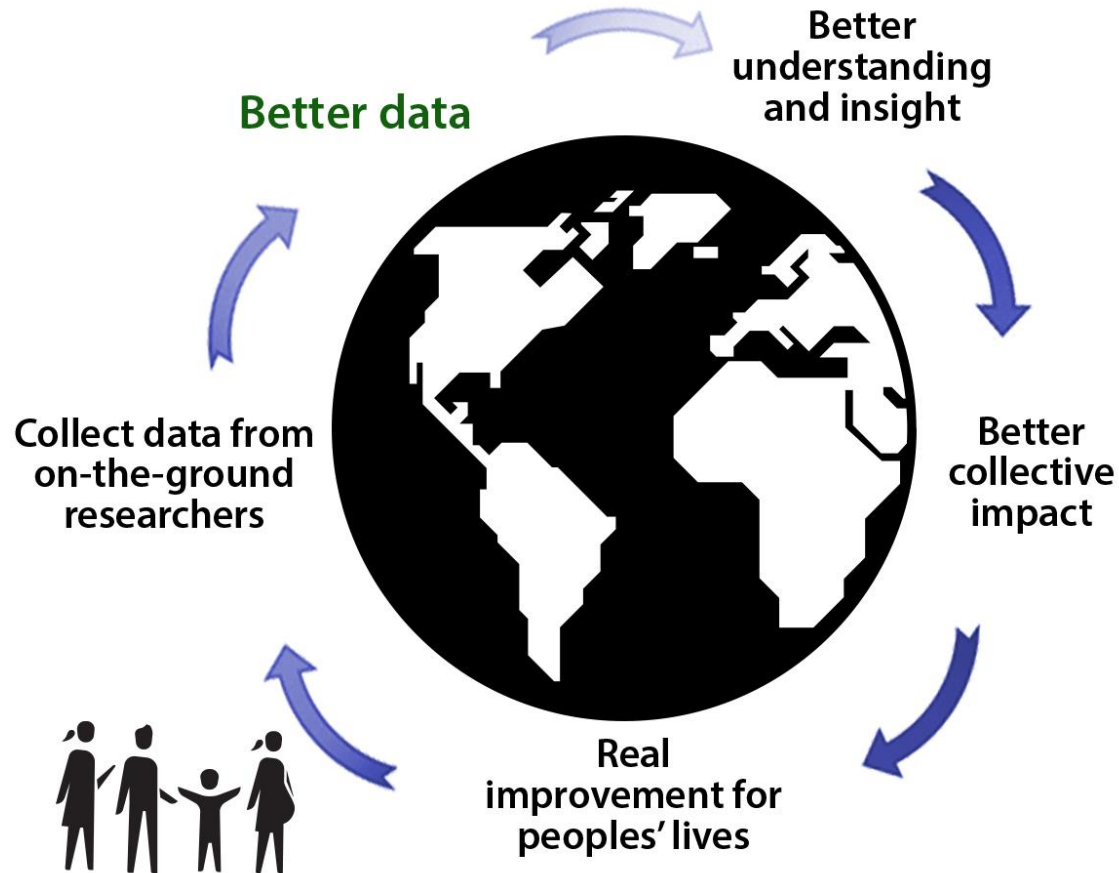
# Mexico: The Right to Education



# What next for our ESR measures?

- Development of data visualization tools for exploring the ESR scores
- Working with NGOs to bring these data into reports and advocacy
- What other directions might we take this work?
  - Disaggregation by sex?
  - Other population subgroups?
- Post-pilot: Should we bring some ESR questions into the expert opinion surveys?

# What else will it take to succeed?



# Goals: short/med-term

## Goal

## Things we will monitor

1. A reasonable sample of human rights experts participate in our expert survey

- Snowball sampling: referrals & acceptances

2. Our target users look for opportunities to use HRMI data in their work

- Viral growth model: number of people accessing pilot metrics, citations etc

3. HRMI attracts sufficient funding

- \$ funding secured

# Support to date



# Goals: longer-term

## Goals

## Things we will monitor

4. Use of HRMI data leads to better understanding and advocacy

- Publications and reports using HRMI metrics

5. Network of users becomes large enough to catalyse cross-fertilisation and collective impact

- Collaborative initiatives

6. Pressure on Governments and other actors becomes more impactful

- Response of Governments and other actors

# Criteria for Country Selection

1. Enough researchers want to participate as survey respondents
2. Sub-set of countries offers diversity of:
  - sizes
  - regions
  - cultures
  - income levels
  - degree of openness
3. Measures for that country likely to be of high value to users

# Timeline

- **Near term:**
  - Secure funding
  - Begin developing website and data visualization
- **Summer:** Build survey respondent pool / test surveys
- **Late summer:** Launch static website
- **Fall:** Survey respondents fill in surveys
- **Late 2017/early 2018:** Launch data visualization tools and release pilot data



# Ways that you can help

- Ask questions, point out tensions, make suggestions
- Help connect us to human rights researchers for our pilot countries
- Offer to give us feedback on our metrics as we develop them
- Use our data in your work
- Help us secure funding

**Contact us:** [anne-marie.brook@motu.org.nz](mailto:anne-marie.brook@motu.org.nz)