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METHODOLOGY FOR TARGETING REGIONAL INVESTMENTS BASED ON THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX AND INVESTMENT FORECASTS

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Abstract. The article presents a methodology for managing investments aimed at poverty reduction by consistently integrating multidimensional poverty assessment, causal identification of project effects, marginal efficiency assessment, and the transformation of investment forecasts into management decisions. Only results contained in the source materials are used, including the Multidimensional Poverty Index framework, results-based financing, remittance-based credit scoring, and existing ARIMA forecasts for Kashkadarya region.

Keywords: poverty reduction, multidimensional poverty index, investment methodology, investment forecast, ARIMA, results-based financing, credit scoring, monitoring and evaluation.

INTRODUCTION

The improvement in official poverty-reduction indicators in Uzbekistan further strengthens the need to link investment policy with final social outcomes. From the 8.9 percent level recorded in 2024, approximately 1.5 million citizens had been lifted out of poverty by the end of 2025 [1]. Materials of the Islamic Development Bank also emphasize practical directions aimed at reducing poverty and expanding inclusive prosperity in Uzbekistan [2]. Along with increasing the volume of investment, these results require measuring which social deprivations investments reduce and how they are transformed into outcomes across territories.

In conventional evaluation, input and output indicators such as project cost, disbursed funds, or the number of jobs created occupy a leading position. However, such an approach does not fully reveal the extent to which investment outcomes are transmitted into changes in health, education, living conditions, employment, and income opportunities. The multidimensional poverty approach reduces this limitation by allowing poverty to be viewed not only as a lack of income but also as the simultaneous manifestation of several deprivations [3].

LITERATURE REVIEW

In assessing poverty as a subject of economic analysis, monetary and multidimensional approaches have developed as two complementary paradigms. A. Sen's capability approach links poverty not only to low income but also to deprivation of a person's real opportunities to attain health, knowledge, and a decent standard of living [4]. S. Alkire and J. Foster transformed this conceptual foundation into a multidimensional assessment methodology based on the counting approach, making it possible to account for several deprivations simultaneously [5].

In international experience linking multidimensional poverty to public expenditure and investment decisions, particular attention is paid to the targeting and effectiveness of expenditures. In the approach of the Brazilian Federal Court of Accounts, a deprivation threshold is established for each indicator, after which the multidimensional condition is identified through the overall combination of deprivations [6]. This logic makes it possible to shift the evaluation of an investment project from the question "how much was spent?" to the question "which deprivation was reduced and to what extent?"

Results-based financing links resource allocation to predefined and verifiable outcomes. It is also noted that blended finance combines public, private, and philanthropic resources, creating a catalyst for attracting private capital to projects for which conventional financing is difficult because of high risk or low profitability. Financial inclusion is likewise an important channel for linking investment resources to poverty reduction. The program launched in 2026 by IFAD, the European Union, and Hamkorbank envisages covering nearly 4,000

remittance-receiving households and returnees and using remittance-based credit scoring [7].

World Bank material on expanding entrepreneurship, jobs, and opportunities in rural areas also shows that financial resources do not automatically translate into social outcomes [8]. The FIIND Impact Foundation proposes an approach that highlights the need to incorporate multidimensional poverty indicators into impact-investment decisions [9]. These sources methodologically support the need to jointly monitor the volume of financing, project outcomes, and multidimensional changes in poverty when making investment decisions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is based on two interrelated blocks. The first block is the developed investment-evaluation model based on multidimensional poverty. In this model, MPI is used to identify the state of deprivation, while project-impact assessment tools are applied to separate observed changes from the influence of other factors. The second block is the investment forecasting and scenario approach. This block reflects the probable trajectory of investment resources for 2026–2030 and the associated uncertainty through the central value and 95 percent bounds.

At the first stage, MPI is calculated periodically to determine the level of deprivation and its change across territories or population groups. The dimensions presented include health care, maternal and child mortality, drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, electricity, housing, and asset ownership. The data are linked to national statistics, administrative databases, and household surveys. This stage moves investment needs from a general territorial indicator to a specific deprivation profile.

At the second stage, project impact is assessed causally. Where feasible, random assignment is envisaged; otherwise, difference-in-differences, matching, or synthetic control methods are used. The purpose of this stage is to bring the observed change in MPI as close as possible to the net outcome attributable to the project. At the third stage, the relationship between project cost and the change in MPI is assessed through the marginal efficiency index.

The fourth stage provides for reallocating resources according to results. In the source article, high-efficiency projects are classified within the top 25 percent, medium-efficiency projects within the middle 50 percent, and low-efficiency projects within the bottom 25 percent; projects with a negative change in MPI are subject to separate in-depth analysis. The fifth stage consists of monitoring and evaluation, with results tracked at the levels of outputs, outcomes, and final impact.

The forecasting block adds the time dimension to this five-stage system. ARIMA models for investment factors were selected using the AIC, AICc, BIC, RMSE, and MAPE criteria, while residuals were diagnosed using the Shapiro–Wilk, Ljung–Box, and Breusch–Pagan tests. In this article, the existing forecast results are not recalculated; they are used as a ready analytical layer representing the external resource environment for MPI-based project selection and resource planning (Figure 1).

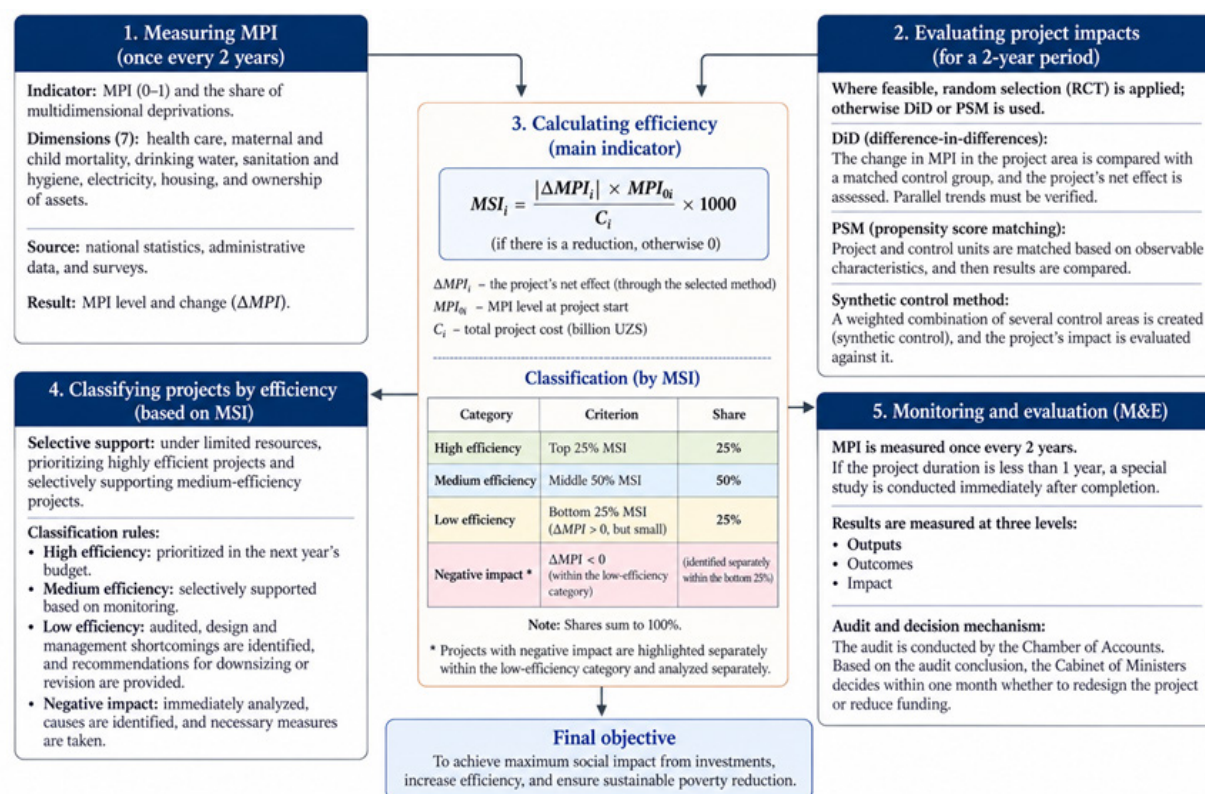


Figure 1. Methodological model for evaluating investments aimed at poverty reduction¹

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The first requirement in the practical application of the methodology is the correct interpretation of the measurement regime of the poverty indicator. The structural break in the Y1 series used in the study, corresponding to 2021, is explained by Resolution No. 544 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 27 August 2021 [10]. This resolution introduced a new national procedure for identifying poverty on the basis of minimum consumption expenditure. Therefore, mechanically interpreting the series before and after 2021 as belonging to the same statistical regime is methodologically inappropriate.

It is noted that the process of developing and piloting a national Multidimensional Poverty Index in Uzbekistan has begun. This institutional direction creates a practical foundation for linking investment efficiency to multidimensional outcomes in the future.

The prospective volume of investment resources is also important for project selection. In the dissertation source, the ARIMA(0,2,1) model was selected on the basis of information criteria for the x2 factor, which represents investment in fixed capital financed through foreign direct investment and loans in Kashkadarya region. The model forecast for 2026–2030 indicates growth in the central value, while the 95 percent interval widens as the forecast horizon increases. This means that the investment plan should not be tied to a single point forecast; the lower and upper bounds should also be incorporated into management decisions (Table 1).

Table 1

Forecast for the x2 factor in Kashkadarya region for 2026–2030 based on the ARIMA(0,2,1) model, million UZS²

Year	Lower 95% bound	Central forecast	Upper 95% bound
2026	23 890 172,72	30 838 661,54	37 787 150,36
2027	23 995 887,01	35 694 956,18	47 394 025,34
2028	23 880 965,68	40 551 250,81	57 221 535,95
2029	23 418 677,88	45 407 545,45	67 396 413,02
2030	22 589 987,27	50 263 840,09	77 937 692,91

¹ Author's elaboration

² Compiled by the author based on the research

The values in the table show an upward trajectory from a central forecast of 30,838,661.54 million UZS in 2026 to 50,263,840.09 million UZS in 2030. At the same time, the upper bound widens from 37,787,150.36 million UZS to 77,937,692.91 million UZS. Within the study, this widening is interpreted as increasing uncertainty in long-term forecasts. This is important for MPI-based investment selection: the future volume of resources should be viewed not as a single exact number, but as a probable corridor.

The management purpose of the forecast is not to automatically increase the volume of investment. The investment forecast is considered in a sequence in which investment risk is assessed through the central value and the lower and upper bounds, after which it is combined with the conditional baseline poverty forecast and territorial diagnostics. The main constraint is then identified as a lack of capital, weak transmission to employment, weak local cooperation, or insufficient transmission to income.

This sequence is directly consistent with the MPI methodology. MPI indicates which deprivation is predominant in a territory or population group, while the investment forecast defines the resource environment that may be available to address that problem. Causal assessment of project impact and the MSI result then test whether the allocated resource actually reduced deprivation. Thus, three distinct questions are addressed sequentially: which problem is a priority, what resource environment is expected in the future, and what outcome the resource produced (Figure 2).

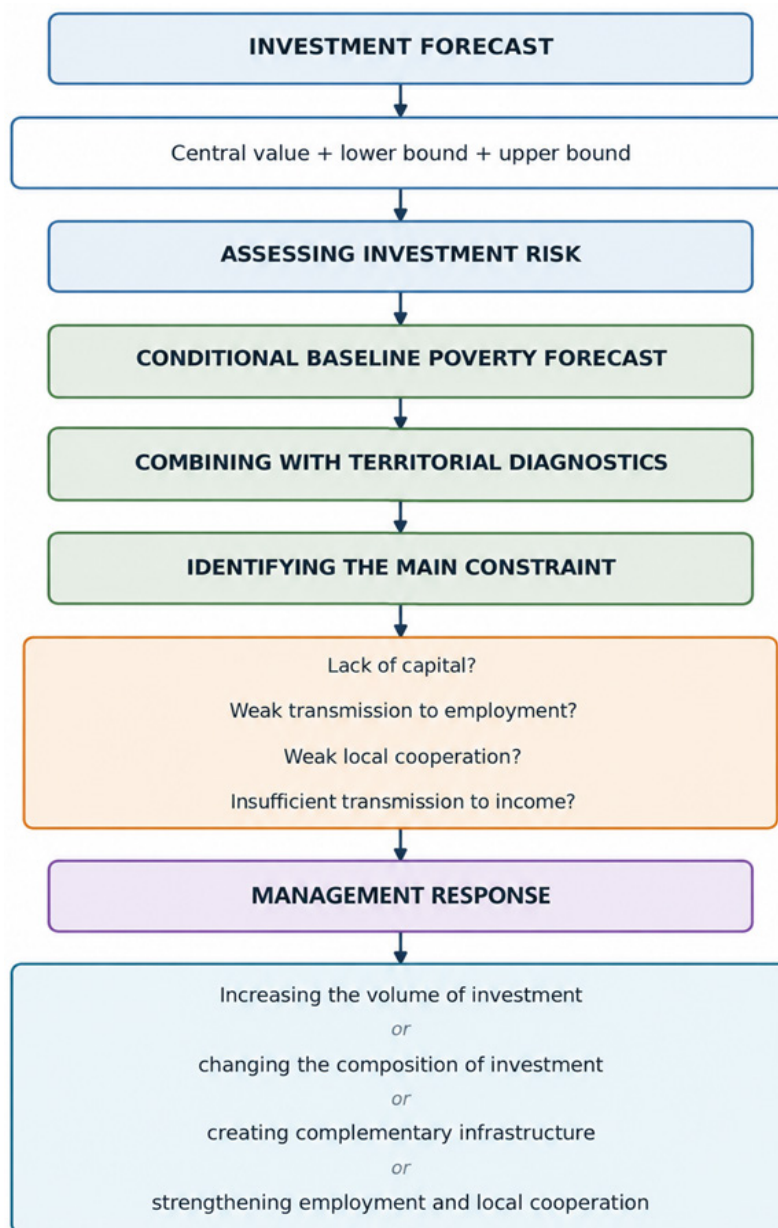


Figure 2. Mechanism for transforming forecast results into management decisions³

3 Author's elaboration

Within the study, the scenario approach was also developed as an additional management tool alongside the point forecast. Under a scenario assuming relatively low rates of investment and economic growth, foreign investment is expected to form near the lower forecast bound, while no significant real growth is assumed for budget investment. In such a situation, the management task is to protect projects with high social returns under constrained resources and to strengthen employment and cooperation channels.

The scenario in which current trends and existing conditions are maintained is based on central forecasts and historical relationships. Under this scenario, foreign investment follows a growing central trajectory, while budget investment remains around the existing baseline level. This scenario does not mean that “no additional policy is required”; rather, it requires regular monitoring of the conditions for forecast realization, the risk corridor, and territorial outcomes.

Under the active scenario, not only the volume of investment but also its integration into the local economy is strengthened. In the source dissertation, the active functioning of the production–cooperation–employment–income channels is regarded as a high degree of transmission of investment effects into the economy. This scenario does not calculate a new numerical poverty forecast; it defines the possibility of a faster and more stable decline relative to the baseline trajectory as an economic condition. This approach is particularly useful in MPI-based resource allocation because the deprivation profile may indicate which channel needs to be strengthened.

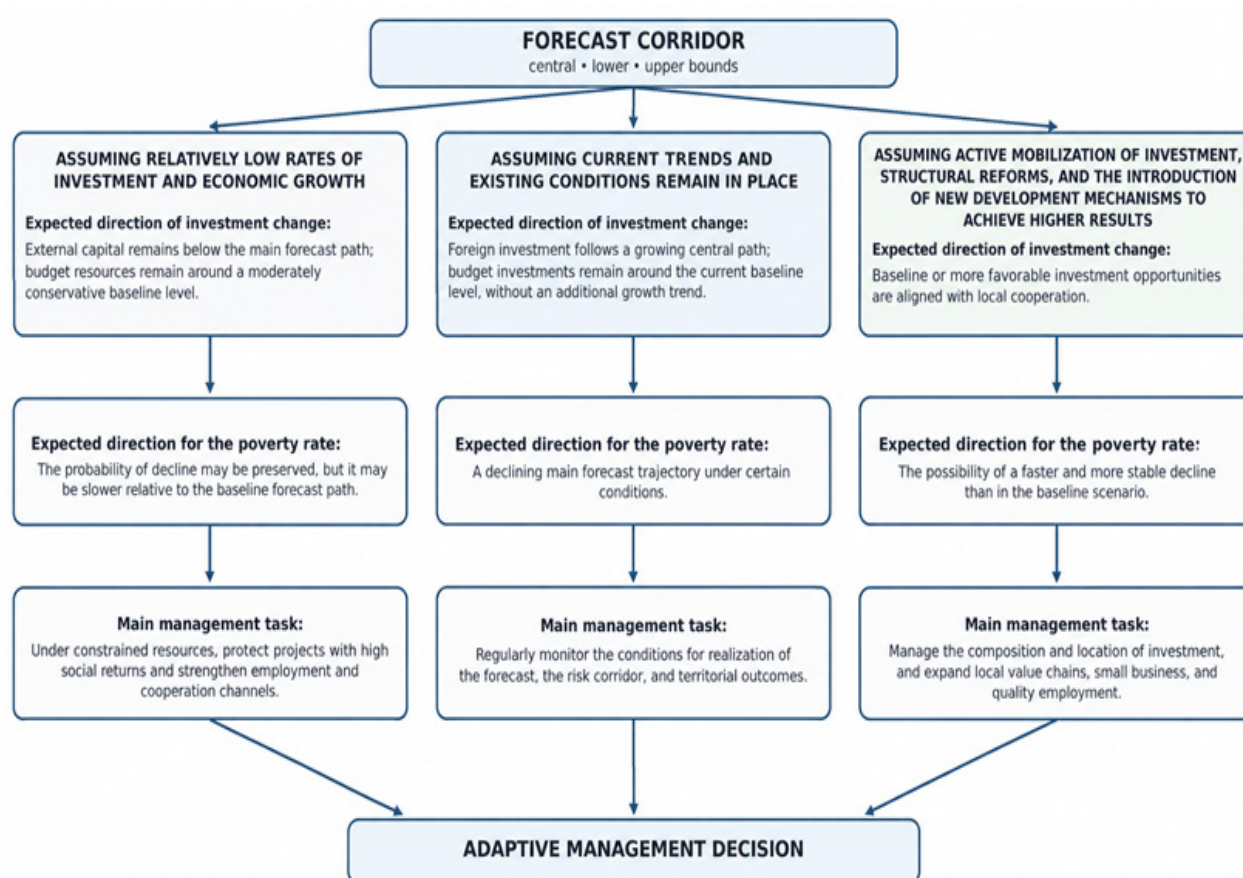


Figure 3. Three-scenario development model for poverty reduction through investment attraction⁴

Remittance-based credit scoring is considered in this methodology as a practical form of diversifying investment sources. The source article indicates that the IFAD, European Union, and Hamkorbank program is aimed at transforming remittance flows into rural business opportunities [7]. However, evaluating agents' performance only by the number of loans issued and cards distributed does not reveal the final social impact. Therefore, the need to include outcomes such as changes in the income of borrowing households and exit from the social registry in monitoring is of particular importance.

When results-based financing, MPI, and forecasting are applied together, the management cycle is

⁴ Author's elaboration

completed. MPI identifies the spatial and social location of the problem; the forecast shows the expected range of resources; project design is selected in accordance with deprivation; causal evaluation isolates the impact; MSI links cost and outcome; and monitoring tracks the output–outcome–impact chain. In this sequence, no stage substitutes for another.

In particular, a high investment forecast does not automatically imply rapid poverty reduction. The study emphasizes that, within the management mechanism, the local economic integration of investment capital and the cooperation, employment, and income channels should be diagnosed separately. The MPI approach provides an additional measure for identifying which of these channels may be a priority from the perspective of reducing social deprivation.

The practical limitations of the methodology are also clearly reflected in the sources themselves. First, the change in the statistical regime in 2021 requires cautious interpretation of time series. Second, because MPI indicators are updated periodically, it is not always possible to measure a project result directly through the index over a short period; therefore, the source article proposes conducting a special study after short-duration projects are completed. Third, the widening of the forecast interval requires long-term resource planning to be managed as a flexible scenario rather than a rigid point value.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research sources, it can be concluded that the management of investments aimed at poverty reduction should not be limited to increasing investment volume or the number of projects. The Multidimensional Poverty Index identifies the substance of investment needs, namely which deprivation must be reduced. Causal assessment of project impact and MSI then test the effectiveness of the resources spent for this purpose.

Investment forecasts add a forward-looking layer to this system. The ARIMA results available in the source for Kashkadarya show that the central forecast for the x2 factor is increasing, while the 95 percent interval widens as the horizon lengthens. Therefore, when preparing annual investment programs, it is appropriate to consider the lower and upper bounds alongside the central forecast and to predefine specific protection priorities for conditions in which resources decline.

Instruments for transforming remittances into credit opportunities, results-based financing, and blended finance should also be applied in connection with final social outcomes. The volume of credit or investment alone cannot serve as a criterion of success; changes in income, employment, deprivation, and social-registry status should be monitored as outcomes.

The general methodological proposal is that a territorial investment decision should simultaneously answer three questions: which deprivation is a priority, what investment-resource corridor is expected in the coming period, and whether the allocated resource was transformed into a measurable social outcome. This linkage makes it possible to orient investment policy away from input indicators and toward outcomes and impact.

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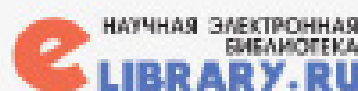
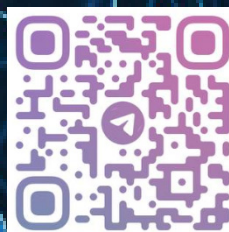
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