Women’s empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI)

ANH Academy 2016
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

By: Hazel Malapit and Kenda Cunningham
Objectives

For participants, at the end of the course, to be able to:

- Understand how and why gender considerations and women’s empowerment matter for nutrition-sensitive agricultural programs.
- Understand how the WEAI can be used to diagnose areas of disempowerment, and monitor intended and unintended impacts of agricultural development programs on women’s empowerment.
- Understand how the WEAI data is collected, and be familiar with best practices on survey implementation.
Agenda

10:30-10:40: Ag-nutrition pathways + Gender-focus
10:40-10:50 WEAI introduction
10:50-11:50 WEAI interactive sessions - 10 min mock/ 5 min Q&A
  - Production, Resources, Income, and Leadership
11:50-12:00 - WEAI FAQs

13:30-13:40 Pro-WEAI introduction
13:40-14:10: Pro-WEAI interactive sessions - 20 min mock/ 10 min Q&A
  - Nutrition
  - Time Use

14:40-15:00: WEAI Quiz and FAQs
Gender along ag-nutrition pathways

1. Agriculture as a source of food for own consumption
2. Agriculture as a source of income
3. Agricultural policies affect prices of food and non-food crops
4. Women’s participation in agriculture and the effect on her social status and empowerment, & in particular her access to and control over resources
5. Women’s participation in agriculture and the effect on her time allocation
6. Women’s participation in agriculture and the effect on her own health and nutritional status (and also that of her child/ren)

(Ruel and Alderman 2013)
WEAI: An Introduction

WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE INDEX

[Image of a person picking leaves from a plant, with logos for USAID, IFPRI, and OPHI]
WEAI: Women’s Empowerment In Agriculture Index

Survey-based index designed to measure empowerment and inclusion of women in the agricultural sector

- Collaboration between USAID, IFPRI and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative in 2012
- Designed initially as tool to monitor US government’s Feed the Future interventions
- Broadly applicable as a diagnostic tool to identify potential areas for policy intervention

WEAI methodology

- Belongs to family of multidimensional poverty indices, FGT indices
- Interviews from primary male and female in same household
- Focus on agriculture, distinct from education, economic status, and other dimensions of empowerment
- Details on index construction in Alkire et al. (2013), World Development
WEAI: Construction

Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI)

Five domains of empowerment (5DE)
A direct measure of women’s empowerment in 5 dimensions

Gender parity Index (GPI)
Women’s achievement’s relative to the primary male in hh

All range from zero to one
higher values = greater empowerment

90%
10%
WEAI: 5DE components

Five Domains of Empowerment

- Production 1/5
  - Ten Indicators
    - Input in productive decisions 1/10
    - Autonomy in production 1/10
- Resources 1/5
  - Ownership of assets 1/15
  - Purchase, sale, or transfer of assets 1/15
  - Access to and decisions on credit 1/15
- Income 1/5
  - Control over use of income 1/5
- Leadership 1/5
  - Group Member 1/10
  - Speaking in Public 1/10
- Time 1/5
  - Leisure 1/10
  - Workload 1/10
WEAI: Who is empowered?

Overall empowerment cut-off:
A woman who has achieved ‘adequacy’ in 80% or more of the weighted indicators is empowered
WEAI Use Across Countries

Source: Malapit et al. (2014)
WEAI: Interactive Sessions

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE INDEX
WEAI: Production

- 2 components
  - Input into productive decisions
  - Autonomy in productive decisions
WEAI: Resources

- 3 components
  - Ownership of assets
  - Purchase, sell, or transfer of assets
  - Access to and decision-making on credit
WEAI: Income

- 1 component:
  - Control over use of income
WEAI: Leadership

2 components:

- Group membership
- Speaking in public
WEAI: FAQs
Pro-WEAI: An Introduction
What projects want from WEAI

- More streamlined, easier to collect indicators, that can be part of regular M&E
  - Better adaptability to their own project contexts, specifics of their own interventions
  - Better understanding of the qualitative aspects of empowerment (how and why?)

- Depending on the project:
  - More detail on some areas (livestock), less detail in others (crops) for a livestock project, the reverse for crop projects
  - Extends beyond agriculture
  - Greater emphasis on autonomy in different spheres (control over income or participation in labor force, not necessarily agricultural decisions)
  - Ability to tackle dimensions of empowerment that relate to health and nutrition outcomes

How to achieve this, but still have comparability?
How to know what strategy works best, if metrics are different?
Pro-WEAI: Adaptable but standardized

► Stands for “Project-level” WEAI

► To be developed as part of a Gender, Agriculture, and Assets Project phase 2 (GAAP2), supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID, and A4NH

► GAAP2 works with a portfolio of agricultural development projects in South Asia and Africa to develop comparable metrics for empowerment, across different types of commodities (crop or livestock/dairy) and project objectives (value chain/income or health/nutrition)

► Standardized add-on modules will be developed by the GAAP2 team, in collaboration with participating projects, for each project cluster and will be comparable within clusters of projects working on similar issues

► These modules will be added onto a core set of original WEAI modules measuring other domains of women’s empowerment
Pro-WEAI tweaks to WEAI modules

- **Productive Decision-Making:**
  - Crop activities separated into staples and horticulture
  - Livestock split into large, small, and poultry
  - Add 2 macro-questions: 1) access to knowledge; 2) home consumption vs. selling

- **Access to Productive Capital**
  - Replace access to land with new series of questions on land access and decision-making
  - Cut 2 macro-questions: 1) give away/mortgage/sell items; 2) purchase a new item

- **Access to Financial Services**
  - Add 2 macro-questions: 1) opinion on borrowing decisions; 2) who responsible for repay
  - Add 1 overall question: own/joint access to transactional account

- **Time allocation**
  - Replace 2 activities with only primary plus question on “childcare during this time?”

- **Group membership**
  - Add 3 questions: 1) group composition; 2) influence group decision; 3) group influences community
Pro-WEAI additional modules

- **Nutrition Decision-making:**
  - Women’s and child’s health/nutrition (Pregnancy/child feeding, as applicable)
  - Decisions on obtaining food, etc.

- **Land:**
  - Access and decision-making

- **Physical mobility:**
  - Visits to urban areas, markets, hairdresser
  - Total times away from home; away for more than 1 month at a time
  - Decision-making re: visits to market, visit family; visit friends; seek health services; temple/church; public gathering; NGO training; outside village

- **Intrahousehold relationships:**
  - Relationships with other HH members: respect, trust, comfortable disagreeing
  - Opinion re: domestic violence for various reasons

- **Psychological well-being:**
  - Truth of statements on self-worth, goals, performance, life satisfaction
Pro-WEAI: Interactive Sessions
Pro-WEAI: Nutrition

- Nutrition decision-making
Pro-WEAI: Time Use

- Primary Activity
- Childcare
**Pro-WEAI: Time Use**

- **G4.01**: please record a log of the activities for the individual in the last complete 24 hours (starting yesterday morning at 4 am, finishing 3:59 am of the current day). The time intervals are marked in 15 min intervals. Mark one activity for each time period by entering the corresponding activity code in the box.

- **G4.02**: check the box below if the respondent was caring for children while performing each activity.

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**ACTIVITY CODES FOR G4.01**

- A. Sleeping and resting
- B. Eating and drinking
- C. Personal care
- D. School (incl. homework)
- E. Work as employed
- F. Own business work
- G. Staple grain farming
- H. Horticultural (gardens) or high value crop farming
- I. Large livestock raising (cattle, buffaloes)
- J. Small livestock raising (sheep, goats, pigs)
- K. Poultry and other small animals raising (chickens, ducks, turkeys)
- L. Fishpond culture
- M. Commuting (to/from work or school)
- N. Shopping / getting service (incl. health services)
- O. Weaving / sewing / textile care
- P. Cooking
- Q. Domestic work (incl. fetching water and collecting fuel)
- R. Caring for children
- S. Caring for adults (sick, elderly)
- T. Traveling (not for work or school)
- U. Exercising
- V. Social activities and hobbies
- W. Religious activities
- X. Other (specify)
WEAI problems and solutions

Problems

- Questionnaire too long; respondent fatigue:
- Autonomy module problematic in the field
- Time use module problematic in the field and concerns about seasonality
- Too little qualitative work/nuance
- No attention to other domains of empowerment that might affect nutrition/health
- What does autonomy really mean and does current measure get it?
- Too much detail in some modules, too little detail in others
- Possibility that indicators may not change during the life of a project
- Indicators not relevant to particular projects, depending on project objectives

Solutions

- Streamline questionnaire, eliminate redundancy
- Cognitive testing to make sure respondents understand concepts
- Sensitivity testing of alternative time use modules; question added on whether yesterday was typical or involved more work
- More qualitative work, especially on barriers and “what works” to empower women in project settings
- Expand scope of empowerment measures
- Projects have done their own adaptations, but data not comparable
- Need to examine indicators of empowerment in a project setting
- Need to make modules adaptable for “types” or “clusters” of projects, but comparable within types
WEAI: Quiz time!
WEAI: Quiz Questions

- Which donor funded the creation of the WEAI and to measure empowerment in which set of global programs?
- How many domains of empowerment are measured in the WEAI? Name as many of them as you remember.
- What are the 2 sub-indices of the WEAI and how much weight does each sub-index have in the overall WEAI?
- What is the overall empowerment cut-off?
- Is greater empowerment measured by higher values or lower values?
THANK YOU!

For more information, visit the WEAI Resource Center: http://www.ifpri.org/topic/weai-resource-center

Or contact Hazel Malapit, h.malapit@cgiar.org