

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE INDEX (WEAI)

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CONTENT SUMMARY

Brief Description: The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) is a survey-based index designed to measure the empowerment, agency, and inclusion of women in the agricultural sector. It focuses on women's empowerment within five domains of empowerment in agriculture and gender parity within a household.

Uses: The WEAI was initially developed as a tool to reflect changes/increases in women's empowerment that may result from the U.S. government's Feed the Future Initiative. The WEAI can also be used more generally by other organizations to assess the state of empowerment and gender parity in agriculture, identify key areas in which empowerment needs to be strengthened, and to track progress over time.

Tool Components: The WEAI comprises two subindexes:

1. The first assesses the degree to which women are empowered in five domains of empowerment (5DE) in agriculture.
2. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) subindex measures gender parity within surveyed households. GPI reflects the percentage of women who are equally empowered as the men in their households.

OPERATIONS

Number of Staff Required: Not specified, but it is recommended that enumerators travel in male and female pairs to interview male and female decision makers separately.

Time: The final WEAI questionnaire is estimated to take 30-40 minutes per person. If the surveys are conducted concurrently with men and women, the additional time per dual-adult household is also 30-40 minutes.

Cost of Assessment: Field costs for the WEAI pilots (including enumerator training, translation, and data entry) were \$38,000 in Bangladesh (450 households), \$56,000 in Guatemala (350 households), and \$36,000 in Uganda (350 households). Costs differed across the three pilot countries due to varying basic field, transportation, and translation costs. Note, however, that the pilot questionnaires were longer than the final WEAI modules, so these costs may not be accurate.

Training: The WEAI module focuses on concepts that are not traditionally collected in standard household surveys. Therefore, extensive training is necessary to ensure the quality of the data collected. Beyond basic interviewer training, field staff must undergo specific training on the distinctive features of WEAI.

Geographic Targeting: Sampling guidelines will depend on the overall objectives of the survey and the motivations for using it. As a monitoring tool for the Feed the Future Initiative, the relevant population is located in the "zones of influence" or priority areas where Feed the Future has programs. The results are not representative of the country as a whole; they reflect regional implementation of programs and should be interpreted accordingly.

Type of Data Collection: WEAI is a household survey. The Instructional Guide details how to define a household and who qualifies as an interview subject or a "primary" or "secondary" respondent.

Degree of Technical Difficulty: The WEAI measures complex concepts that can pose problems in translation and local interpretation. The survey modules are clear but enumerators must be well trained.

Complements other Resources: The Instructional Guide recommends completing the WEAI on the same households sampled by a Feed the Future population-based survey or similar household survey. This allows linking of the index with individual or household-level outcomes collected by other modules, such as nutrition or poverty.