

## **Regional Workshop on the Production of Statistics on Asset Ownership from a Gender Perspective through Household Surveys**

7 – 9 August 2018, Santiago, Chile

### **Background and objectives of the workshop**

1. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Statistics Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), organized a Regional Workshop on the measurement of Asset Ownership from a Gender Perspective. The workshop was organized under the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) project and brought together national statisticians to discuss the concepts and methods outlined in the *UN Guidelines on the Production of Statistics on Asset Ownership from a Gender Perspective through Household Surveys* (referred to as *the guidelines* in the rest of this document).

2. Survey specialists and gender statisticians from the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of eleven countries attended the meeting: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

3. The objectives of the workshop were to improve country data on asset ownership at the individual level by providing participants with practical advice to support the implementation of the guidelines. The workshop provided participants with the opportunity to learn from the experience of countries that piloted the EGDE methodology and to benefit from discussions related to the practical aspects of operationalizing the UN guidelines with their peers and UNSD, FAO and GeoStat staff.

A. Organization of the workshop.

4. During the first day of the workshop, the Director of ECLAC's statistic division gave the opening remarks followed by ECLAC presentation on an overview of the regional work programme on gender statistics. Then, it was followed by the presentation from UNSD and GeoStat on:

- overview of the EDGE project and the objectives of the workshop
- key results of the pilot study in Georgia, Mongolia and the Philippines.
- defining assets and ownership of assets;
- whom to interview
- responding to data users' needs/recommended global and national indicators

5. Day two of the workshop focused on the implementation of the guidelines and included an introductory session and further five sessions on the follow key aspects:

- valuing assets
- data sources;
- data collection strategies and questionnaire design;

- sample design, with a focus on within household selection;
- field operations and interviewer protocols;

6. Day three of the workshop focused on the methodology for monitoring SDG indicator 5.a.1 including the proposed questions for measuring SDG indicator 5.a.1 and data collection strategies; as well as the joint harmonization effort of SDG indicators 5.a.1 and 1.4.2.

7. During the three days of the workshop, group exercises and discussions were carried out to reinforce the concepts presented and to obtain feedback on the recommendations from national perspectives.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

8. Workshop participants welcomed the series of presentations on the UN Guidelines for the Production of Statistics on Asset Ownership from a Gender Perspective through Household Surveys. Throughout the workshop the discussion focused on the practical aspects of implementing the recommended methods within existing national statistical systems. Participants discussed ways to operationalize the new methods to produce asset ownership statistics at the individual-level, and took note of the opportunities that obtaining data on individual-level asset ownership, rather than on data disaggregated by sex of the household head, will provide for policy makers to understand the gender dimension of asset ownership.

9. The meeting stressed the importance of developing data collections that are consistent with the Guidelines; focus on the gender aspect of asset ownership; are cost effective; are sustainable and can be integrated in existing national data collection mechanisms through appending a minimum set of questions, through the addition of a module, or through the development of a standalone survey of asset ownership at individual level.

10. Participants welcomed key components of the conceptual framework proposed by the Guidelines, including the list of priority and additional assets; the concept of bundle of rights including the reported and documented ownership and the rights to sell and bequeath; and the respondent rule in terms of relying on self-reporting instead of proxy responses.

11. Given the complexity of the definition of asset ownership as a bundle of ownership rights, participants emphasized the importance to conduct cognitive testing with both the enumerators and respondents as part of pre-testing the survey instruments as an important activity that needs to be carried out before the data collection.

12. Participants acknowledged the importance of customizing the instrument by taking into consideration the national context, as emphasized by the Guidelines. This is an important activity that needs to be carried out before the data collection. The group also noted that, in addition to the bundle of rights questions, the survey should include questions on the allocations of the proceeds from the sale of the assets. This would highlight whether men and women have any systematic differences in terms of power and decision making on assets they own.

13. Participants noted the importance of data disaggregation on asset ownership and control by region, sub-region, small areas, and by ethnic group.

14. Although the methods for collecting valuation data in line with the SNA 2008 are well defined, there are still practical challenges with collecting such data due to the sensitive nature of the information, the use of hypothetical questions related to selling an asset, limited markets for certain assets in some countries, and the absence of the information on land value when the State or the clan is the owner of land. Considering the importance of valuation data to measure the gender wealth gap, countries were encouraged to explore alternative data sources including administrative records. The important role of administrative data to supplement and validate survey information or other data related to assets ownership was also emphasized.

15. Another sensitive topic to be covered in the survey is the ownership of financial assets. Discussion in the workshop pointed to the need for (a) better understanding of the types of financial assets existing in the country as well as the relevant terms and definitions that are familiar to and understandable by respondents; (b) better enumerator training on this topic; (c) pre-testing the questions; and (d) taking more advantage of the existing administrative data sources to supplement data collected from the survey.

16. GeoStat presented the key results of the pilot study in Georgia, Mongolia, and the Philippines, the challenges faced when collecting valuation data, sample design and the important aspects related to field operation and interview protocol. Presentations from GeoStat were welcomed by the participants. Mexico also presented their experience in implementing the EDGE pilot study, and participants were particularly interested in knowing how challenges were overcome and the lessons learned from the pilot. Overall, participants were interested in the implementation of the surveys, challenges and lesson learned taking into consideration the Georgian and the Mexican experience.

17. UNSD took note of the interest from countries to start collecting data on asset ownership at the individual level through the development of new surveys, by appending a module or a minimum set of questions on asset ownership to existing household surveys, or by using data collected through administrative sources such as land and dwelling registers. Given the extensive data requirement under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, most countries considered appending the minimum set of questions to existing surveys as the preferred approach. Surveys such as the Household Income and Expenditure survey (HIES), the Labour Force Survey (LFS), National Household Surveys (Costa Rica: Encuesta Nacional de Hogares, Ecuador: Encuesta Multipropositos and Encuesta de Seguimiento del Plan de Desarrollo) Living Standards Survey, Household Budget Survey, Multipurpose and agriculture surveys were identified as potential vehicles for data collection. However, some countries expressed that it might be difficult to implement self-reporting data collection as most of the household surveys collect the data through a proxy respondent, either through household head or the most knowledgeable persons in the household.

18. The workshop discussed the need for guidance to reconcile ownership rights within the household when multiple conflicting responses are provided. Participants also highlighted the importance of having specific guidance on selecting respondent within household and appreciated the development of an online sample size calculator to support countries with their sample design. Participants also suggested having more options in the sample calculator for the selection of the household member to include two or more persons.

19. Increase in non-response rate in the surveys was one of the concerns of the participants. Due to the nature of the sensitivity of the question on assets, it would be difficult to obtain information in particular for some population groups. Countries exchanged experiences and suggestions on how to overcome such difficulties.

20. Given that the main language in the region is Spanish, participants highlighted the importance of having the set of Guidelines translated into Spanish.

21. The workshop welcomed FAO presentation on the methodology for SDG indicator 5.a.1. In particular, the following was discussed: 1) the key terms and concepts of the indicator, 2) the reference population, 3) possible data sources and 4) proxy conditions and data collection strategies. The presentation emphasized the similarities between the key EDGE recommendations and the 5.a.1 methodology; however, it also highlighted that the 5.a.1 indicator aims at monitoring gender disparities on agricultural land tenure rights within a specific group of the population (agricultural households). At the end of the presentation, similarities and differences between SDG indicator 5.a.1 and 1.4.2 were discussed and five different sets of questions were introduced to collect data for both indicators.

22. Guidance on collecting data for 5.a.1 and 1.4.2 were greatly appreciated by participants. It is common in the region for some people residing in urban areas to have agricultural land and being engaged in agriculture activities. Therefore, participants sought clarification whether or not they would be included as agricultural population. Participants also discussed appropriate data sources to be used in their national context to collect information on the indicators 5.a.1 and 1.4.2. In this regard, it was emphasized again the importance of customizing and adapting data collection instruments at national level. Some participants expressed concerns about the inclusion of backyards in agriculture land, as the production from these activities is very small in their countries.

23. In the closing session, UNSD pointed out that the objectives of the meeting had been achieved: (a) the key EDGE recommendations on how to produce statistics on asset ownership from a gender lens had been shared with countries; (b) experience of the pilot countries had contributed extensively to the discussion on assets data collection; and (c) participating countries had provided important feedback on the relevance and applicability of the EDGE recommendations. Finally, UNSD thanked the participants and co-organizers of the meeting (ECLAC and FAO), shared the 2018 planned activities under the EDGE project, including ad-hoc technical assistance to interested countries, and welcomed all the participants to the 7th Global Forum on Gender Statistics to be held in Japan in November 2018.