



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

12-14 December 2017

Manila, Philippines

Report of the Meeting ¹

Prepared by

United Nations Statistics Division

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background and objectives of the workshop

1. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Statistics Division of the Food and Agricultural 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 ten countries attended the meeting: Bangladesh, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao, Mongolia, Nepal and the Philippines.

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, ADB and FAO staff.

B. Organization of the workshop.

4. Day one and two of the workshop focused on the implementation of the guidelines and included an introductory session plus a further eight sessions on the follow key aspects:

- defining assets and ownership of assets;
- valuing assets;
- recommended global and national indicators;
- data sources;
- whom to interview;
- data collection strategies and questionnaire design;
- sample design, with a focus on within household selection;
- field operations and interviewer protocols, data processing and weighting;

5. 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. Each day concluded with group exercises and discussions to reinforce the concepts presented during the day and to obtain feedbacks on the recommendations from national perspectives.

II. SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Introductory session

6. The meeting was opened by Mr. Rana Hasan, Development Economics and Indicators Division, ADB and Ms. Francesca Grum, Chief, Social and Housing Statistics Section, UNSD.

7. In his opening remarks, Mr. Hansan noted the importance of collecting data on all SDG indicators and the importance of developing methods to allow for the international comparable indicators. Mr. Hasan outlined the work ADB that have been doing alongside countries in the region to build capacity to produce statistics on asset ownership and to support the development of the guidelines.

8. Ms. Grum delivered an opening statement on behalf of the Director of UNSD to welcome participants to the meeting and thank the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for hosting the meeting. The opening statement highlighted the importance of collecting data on asset ownership for women's empowerment and drew attention to why asset ownership is important for gender equality as well as why good quality data is needed to support this vital work.

Session 1

9. The first session provided an overview of the UN Methodological Guidelines on the Production of Statistics on Asset Ownership from a Gender Perspective. This session included four presentations: two presentations from UNSD, one from ADB and one from Mongolia.

10. UNSD presented an overview of the EDGE project and introduced the UN Methodological Guidelines (the Guidelines) on the Production of Statistics on Asset Ownership from a Gender Perspective. An overview of the purpose of the guidelines, the target audience (NSOs) and the conceptual framework were introduced to participants along with some key considerations such as which assets to include, priority versus additional assets, how is ownership is defined and conceptualized, and self-reported versus proxy data. A brief history of the EDGE project was also provided. This presentation provided a foundation for the rest of the workshop as many of these concepts, such as data collection strategies, sampling issues, and data processing and analysis continued to be discussed during the remainder of the workshop.

11. The ADB presented the key results of their work in the pilot countries. In this presentation, the ADB discussed their contribution to the development of methods under the global EDGE initiative for data collection on asset ownership and entrepreneurship from a gender perspective. The presentation highlighted the assistance ADB has provided countries in adapting the methodology for conducting pilot surveys in the National Statistics Offices (NSOs) of Georgia, Mongolia, and, the Philippines. ADB presented on survey design and implementation (including the ADB approach operationalizing the key concepts from the guidelines); data collection; and key survey results. As with the previous UNSD presentation, this presentation provided a foundation for the rest of the workshop as many of these concepts and the national experience with implementing the EDGE methods continued to be discussed during the remainder of the workshop.

12. UNSD continued with a presentation based on the guidelines which covered the list of priority and additional assets for the measurement of asset ownership from a gender perspective as well as their definitions. These concepts link with the 2008 SNA, including the concept that an asset is a store of value representing a benefit or a series of benefits accruing to the economic owner by holding or using the entity over a period. The list of priority and additional asset were presented.

13. Mongolia provided insights from their experience as an EDGE pilot country and reported on the process used to decided which assets to collect data on based upon the country's policy needs and types of assets owned in the country. The set of asset questions in Mongolia covered dwellings, livestock, enterprises, agricultural land, agricultural equipment, other real estate, consumer durables, financial assets, liabilities and valuables. Ownership rates by sex and by urban and rural areas were presented for these assets.

14. Participants discussed the situation in their counties, the challenges with collecting the priority and additional assets, and the approaches taken in pilot countries to determine the set of assets to include in the questionnaire. Several countries raised questions about how to overcome the challenges related to collecting data on financial assets. The importance of interviewer training to improve the quality of data and to reduce missing data was suggested by UNSD and ADB as a potential approach to overcome these implementation challenges.

Session 2

15. Session two covered the topic of defining and analyzing ownership of assets and discussed the impact of differing legal frameworks on asset ownership. The session included two presentations by UNSD and two country presentations from India and Bangladesh on their legal frameworks.

16. UNSD provided an overview of (a) different types of ownership/rights that are important from a gender perspective; (b) the importance of joint and exclusive ownership; and (c) how assets are acquired and its implication for gender equality.

17. UNSD provided examples of reported ownership, documented ownership, the right to sell, and the right to bequeath to introduce participants to the concept of the bundle of ownership rights. The presentation noted that there may be certain ownership rights no individuals hold due to the tenure systems governing property rights in each country and even when the full set of ownership rights exists, they may not all be vested in one individual. This means national statistical agencies need to develop a thorough understanding of the country context prior to collecting individual-level data on asset ownership. UNSD noted that to capture gender differences in asset ownership, countries will have to measure a combination of ownership rights. Countries were comfortable with the types of ownership rights presented and indicated that defining ownership as a bundle of rights, was an appropriate approach for the region.

18. Joint and exclusive ownership concepts were presented to participants. The benefits associated with asset ownership may differ depending on whether the asset is owned jointly or exclusively and participants were encouraged to consider the marital regimes and property laws in their country when collecting data on asset ownership. Different common methods of

acquisition such as through marriage, inheritance, purchase, and government programmes were discussed by UNSD.

19. UNSD presented on the various legal frameworks that exist globally and within the Asia Pacific region using data on inheritance law from the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators. An individual's property rights are dependent on both inheritance laws and the marital laws. Broadly speaking, there are three types of marital regimes: a common property regime, a partial community property regime and a separation of property regime. UNSD presented global data on inheritance laws and asked countries to consider the following questions:

- a. Which type of law regarding property ownership within marriage exists in your country?
- b. In addition to the legal framework, are there customary norms that govern the marital regimes?
- c. Describe the legal framework and customary norms that govern inheritance regimes in the country.

20. Countries discussed the different legal frameworks that exist and the implications for the collection of data on asset ownership from a gender perspective. Most countries reported they had either a common property regime or partial community property regime. Participants noted that actual practice can vary from the legal definitions. Different marital regimes and inheritance laws exist in certain communities due to religious or customary practice.

Session 3

21. Methods for valuing assets were discussed in the third session with presentations from UNSD, Georgia, Indonesia and Kazakhstan.

22. In this session, UNSD presented (a) the importance of valuing assets in assessing gender difference in asset ownership; (b) challenges in valuing assets; and (c) from whom the valuation data should be collected. The session also provided an opportunity for countries to share experience in obtaining or improving valuation data and using external/independent data sources. Why valuing assets is important and the principles for asset valuation were presented from the guidelines. UNSD outlined the principles from the guidelines which state assets should be a) valued at current market prices; b) recorded at current values; c) valued consistently across assets; d) valued item by item. Alternative methods for valuation, such as using price indices, depreciation or administrative sources were discussed. Which assets should be valued, who should provide valuations and examples for valuing specific types of assets were also presented.

23. To support the UNSD presentation, which outlined the methods specified in the guidelines, Georgia presented on the challenges faced when collecting valuation data. In the pilot study, difficulties collecting data on asset values related to either:

- a. Lack of knowledge on the value of assets, such as the valuation of dwellings (especially in rural areas), land, large agricultural equipment; or
- b. Reluctance to report ownership and reluctance to disclose the value of financial assets.

24. In summarizing the challenges, Georgia suggested some possible solutions such as using alternative methods of estimating the values of dwelling and deriving estimates of financial assets directly from the banking system.

25. Using the Georgian experience as an example, participants discussed the practical challenges with collecting valuation data which can arise due to the sensitive nature of the information, the use of hypothetical questions related to selling an asset when the respondent may have no intention of selling the asset, and limited markets for certain assets in some countries. Considering the importance of valuation data to measure the gender wealth gap, UNSD encouraged countries to explore alternative data sources. The important role of administrative data to supplement and/or validate survey information on assets ownership and valuation was also emphasized.

26. Indonesia presented on Government Programmes and Policies Related to the Ownership of Housing and Distribution or Titling of Land as well as provided details of the national marital regime and inheritance laws. Indonesia currently collects data on asset ownership through the National Socio-Economic Survey (SUSENAS). As the survey is a large-scale multipurpose survey, it was mentioned that there may be challenges implementing the EDGE guidelines as the objectives of the survey cover many dimensions and there is limited flexibility. During the discussion, many countries favored the option of appending a module to an existing survey to obtain data on asset ownership.

Session 4

27. UNSD presented the set of recommended indicators at both the national and global levels. For comparability at the international level, ownership of priority assets is best defined as documented ownership or the rights to alienate the asset. The recommended global indicators are shown in the table below.

Global Indicator	Rationale	Asset coverage
1. Proportion of total population with documented ownership of [asset] or the right to sell or bequeath the [asset], by sex	Measures ability to claim ownership rights in law over an asset as well as right to sell or bequeath asset in absence of documentation	Principal dwelling, agricultural land, non-agricultural land
2. Share of women among individuals with documented ownership of [asset] or with the right to sell or to bequeath [asset]	Comparable across countries with disparate rates of documentation.	

28. At the national level, countries will need to assess the legal frameworks and social norms governing access to assets. Countries may want to measure the full set of ownership rights depending on policy objective. Countries may want to address all issues that are of policy-relevant (joint/exclusive ownership, asset acquisition). The recommended national indicators are shown in the table below.

National Indicator	Rationale	Asset coverage
1. Proportion of individuals with [type of ownership rights] of [asset], by sex	Measures different types of ownership rights	All assets
2. Distribution of individuals by forms of ownership (do not own, own exclusively, own jointly) and sex	Useful for monitoring national policies and programs to increase women's ownership of land and housing through joint titling	Principal dwellings, agricultural land, non-agricultural land
3. Proportion of individuals who acquired ownership of [asset] through [specific mode of acquisition], by sex of individuals.	Useful for developing policies and programs promoting women's and men's accumulation of assets	Principal dwelling, agricultural land, non-agricultural land
4. Gender wealth gap	Accounts for gender differentials in quantity and characteristics of assets owned by women and men	Principal dwelling, agricultural land, non-agricultural land and other real estate, non-agricultural enterprise assets, financial assets

29. Lao PDR presented on the measurement of land and livestock ownership through an annual household survey. The Kyrgyz Republic presented a national gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods.

30. During the group discussion, participants noted the key components of the conceptual framework proposed by the guidelines provided a strong basis for measuring asset ownership. Participants discussed the need to customize questionnaires to take account of the national context and noted additional qualitative research may be required at country level to adapt the instrument to the national context. Participants, including those from pilot countries, noted that additional training for the enumerators and investigation into how valuation data from surveys can be supplemented by information from other sources should be considered.

Session 5

31. The second day of the workshop began with a session on the various data sources used to produce statistics on asset ownership.

32. UNSD encouraged participants to consider all relevant sources in a complementary manner, and decide, within the context of the overall statistical plan, each source's role in collecting individual-level data on asset ownership and generating statistics relevant from a gender perspective. The scope, links to the conceptual framework, units of observation, and limitations were discussed for household surveys, census, administrative data and agricultural censuses and surveys.

33. Discussions focused on the various administrative sources of data on asset ownership available in each country such as land and vehicle registers. Countries discussed using administrative data to validate survey data and raised questions about how to deal with inconsistencies between survey data and administrative data. UNSD noted that countries

should thoroughly investigate all possible sources of information and understand the quality of each source when making decisions about which data sources to rely on.

Session 6

34. UNSD presented the respondent rules for collecting data on asset ownership at the individual level and discussed why self-reporting, instead of proxy reporting, is recommended for and what this entails for the overall data collection such as the selection of respondents.

35. Participants discussed the respondent selection rules and the importance of self-reported data. Countries noted that additional interview training may be required, and existing field operational protocols may need to be adjusted, to accommodate the EDGE recommendations. During the discussion and group exercises, most participants indicated that implementing the requirement of self-reporting for the collection of data on asset ownership and would be feasible.

36. The Philippines presented on their experience as an EDGE pilot country. In the Philippine pilot study, both members of the principal couple and 1 randomly selected respondent was interviewed. The presentation also covered the field protocols on interviewing respondents alone and gender matching of enumerator and respondent. This presentation provided a range of practical advice and observations for countries considering undertaking data collection.

37. Following these presentations, participants discussed the practical aspect of implementing the recommendation from the guidelines and focused on survey implementation issues such as translation; interviewer training; dealing with non-response; challenges related to simultaneous interviewing in small houses; building trust between the interviewer and respondents; and dealing with respondents who were reluctant to disclose information on asset ownership.

Session 7

38. This session covered the different data collection strategy such as appending a minimum set of questions to an existing survey, adding a module to an existing survey, or conducting a stand-alone survey.

39. UNSD presented the procedure for adapting the generic set of questions into the national data collection and suggested countries should start by conducting background research, including desk review, into the legal framework and customary norms related to property rights. Qualitative research can be used to assess if the questionnaire design, the flow of the questions, the terminologies used, and key concepts are fit for purpose. The content of the questionnaire should be developed in accordance with the objective and the data collection strategies. If the objective of the data collection is only the gender asset gap than the simple set of questions attached to existing survey is probably sufficient. However, if there is also a need

40. During the session and subsequent group exercises, most countries considered appending the minimum set of questions to existing surveys as the preferred approach to collect individual data on asset ownership. Surveys such as the Household Income and Expenditure Survey

(HIES), the Labour Force Survey (LFS), Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and agriculture surveys were identified as potential vehicles for data collection.

Session 8

41. This session covered sampling issues specific to EDGE and discussed in detail how within-household selection could be done to sample individual respondents. Key sampling concepts, such as the target population, sampling frame, methods for determining the required sample size were discussed. In addition to the usual considerations when design a sample scheme, NSOs should take account important sub-populations such as women and men; the agricultural population; regions with different inheritance and marital regimes and land tenure systems. UNSD reported on the development of an online sample size calculator to support countries during the sample design phase.

42. Session 9

43. ADB presented on the important aspects related to field operation and interview protocol from their experience with the pilot studies in the regions. The presentation covered field operations and interview protocols, data validation, calculation of survey weights, post-stratification and weight adjustments to account for non-response.

44. Nepal presented on the operational aspects of household surveys, including their experience with CAPI and collecting self-reported data.

45. During the group discussion participants were asked to consider which approach is most feasible for collecting individual-level data on asset ownership:

- a. appending a minimum set of questions on dwellings and land to an existing household survey;
- b. appending a module on a wider range of assets to an existing household survey;
- c. conducting a stand-alone survey on the full range of assets

Most of the countries identified the first option, appending a minimum set of questions on dwellings and land to an existing household survey, as the most feasible option for collecting individual-level data on asset ownership. The primary reason for this choice was the high cost associated with conducting a stand-alone survey. UNSD noted that this option will allow statistics on assets ownership from a gender perspective to be produced, however, if policymakers require a more comprehensive set of statistics on the gender-dimension of asset ownership, the minimum set of questions is unlikely to meet this requirement.

Session 10 and 11

46. Day 3 of the workshop was facilitated by FAO and introduced the methodology for SDG indicator 5.a.1. The session began by introducing participants to the key terms and concepts of the indicator such as agricultural land, adult agricultural population, land ownership, and land tenure rights. Based upon the conclusions of the EDGE project, and to generate a globally valid

indicator, FAO recommends the use of three proxy conditions: Legal document, the right to sell, and the Right to bequeath. The presence of one of the three proxies is sufficient to define a person as owner or holder of tenure rights over agricultural land.

47. Much of the session focused on data collection strategies. FAO recommended the use of agricultural surveys and national household surveys to capture data of 5.a.1, alternatives such as population censuses and agricultural censuses were also discussed. Definitions for identifying agricultural households, respondent selection rules and the minimum set of data required to monitor the indicator were presented.

48. FAO, UN-HABITAT and the World Bank are collaborating to align concepts, definitions and data collection tools, to facilitate countries in the collection and generation of indicator 5.a.1 and indicator 1.4.2 which measures secure tenure rights. A common 'land tenure module' has been developed with the aim of generating the data for calculating both indicator 5.a.1 and 1.4.2. Different variations of the same module are being finalized and they can be appended to existing national household surveys.

III. CONCLUSIONS

49. Workshop participants welcomed the series of presentations on the set of guidelines. Throughout the workshop discussion focused on the practical aspects of implementing the recommended methods within existing national statistical systems. Participants discussed ways to operationalize the new measures of asset ownership at the individual-level, and noted the opportunities that improved data will provide for policymakers to understand the gender dimension of assets ownership.

50. The meeting stressed the importance of developing data collections that are consistent with the guidelines and that 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, the addition of a module, or the development of a standalone survey of asset ownership at individual level.

51. Participants welcomed key components of the conceptual framework proposed by the Guidelines, including the list of priority and additional assets; the 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 only instead of proxy responses. The development of an online sample size calculator to support countries with their sample design was also appreciated.

52. The group noted different national legal frameworks related to inheritance as well as the ownership of property within marriage and at the dissolution of marriage and acknowledged the importance of qualitative research that helps customizing the instrument taking into consideration national context, as emphasized by the guidelines.

53. Participants also noted that although the law may not discriminate against women and girls, in practice there are customary, religious or traditional practices that still discriminate. In this regard, the guidelines provide necessary tools to measure the prevalence of assets ownership by sex and additional variables such as modes of acquisition, to highlight any systematic differences between the way women and men accumulate asset and build wealth over their lifetime.

54. 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, and limited markets for certain assets in some countries. Considering the importance of valuation data to measure gender wealth gap, countries are encouraged to explore alternative data sources including administrative records. The important role of administrative data to supplement and validate survey information on other data related to assets ownership was also emphasized.

55. Presentations from the ADB and the EDGE pilot countries in the region pointed to challenges with field operations and in enforcing the field interviewing protocols.

56. Lessons learned in the pilots such as better interviewer training and improved interviewer manual with illustrative examples have provided a good basis for finalizing the guidelines. UNSD took note of the interest from countries to start to collect data on asset ownership at the individual level either through the development of new surveys or by appending a module on asset ownership to existing household surveys. Given the extensive data requirements 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), Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and agriculture surveys were identified as potential vehicles for data collection.

57. The workshop discussed the need for ongoing work to reconcile ownership rights within the household when multiple conflicting responses are provided within the household.

58. The workshop introduced 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).

59. At the end of the presentation, similarities and differences between SDG indicator 5.a.1 and 1.4.2 were discussed. It was explained that custodian agencies are working on a common module that will allow NSOs to monitor both the indicators through national household surveys. Finally, FAO summarized the plans for capacity development and technical assistance for 2018.

60. 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) pilot countries had contributed extensively to the discussion and had shared their experience on assets data collection; and (c) participating countries had provided significant feedback on the relevance and applicability of the EDGE recommendations. Finally, UNSD thanked the participants and co-organizers of the meeting (ADB and FAO), shared the 2018 planned activities under the EDGE project, including additional training workshops and ad-hoc technical assistance to interested countries, and welcomed all the participants to the 7th Global Forum on Gender Statistics to be held in