

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

24 – 26 July 2018, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Background and objectives of the workshop

1. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) 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 thirteen countries attended the meeting: Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Republic of Tanzania, South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

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 and FAO staff.

A. Organization of the workshop.

4. Day one and two of the workshop focused on the implementation of the guidelines and included an introductory session and 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. During day three of the workshop, a presentation was made by UNECA staff on the regional work programme on gender statistics, followed by focused discussion 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 data effort of SDG indicator 5.a.1 and 1.4.2. Group exercises and discussions were carried out to

reinforce the concepts presented during the day and to obtain feedbacks on the recommendations from national perspectives.

CONCLUSIONS

6. 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 obtain 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 assets ownership.

7. In this context, participants emphasized the importance of sensitizing all stakeholders, including policy makers on the importance of collecting data on asset ownership from a gender perspective. One of the strategies to achieve this is to invite relevant users and policy makers to similar training sessions, at national and local levels. It was also suggested to the NSOs to link the asset ownership at the individual level with national development plans to get support from the government, in addition to its linkage with the SDG monitoring.

8. 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.

9. 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 ownership 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.

10. The group noted the needs for a comprehensive assessment of national legal frameworks related to inheritance as well as the ownership of property within marriage and at the dissolution of marriage for better understanding asset ownership in the country, as well as its gender dimension; and acknowledged the importance of qualitative research that help customising the instrument taking into consideration national context, as emphasized by the Guidelines. This is an important activity that needs to be carried out before the data collection.

11. Participants also noted that although the law may not discriminate against women and girls, in practice there might be 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.

12. 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, the absence of information on the value for certain assets, 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 gender wealth gap, countries were encouraged to explore alternative data sources including administrative records, as well as the use of local market value for imputation purposes. In addition, some countries suggested to collect information of the life span of the assets according to the 2008 SNA guidelines for valuation purposes. The issue of reconciling the macro data in the SNA with asset owned by individuals was also discussed.

13. UNSD took note of the interest from some countries to start collecting data on asset ownership at the individual level through the existing development of new surveys, by appending a module or a minimum set of questions on asset ownership to existing household surveys. 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 Living Conditions Surveys, the Labour Force Survey (LFS), Demographic and Health surveys (DHS) and agriculture surveys were identified as potential vehicles for data collection. Recognising the challenges in incorporating the self-reporting mechanisms in existing household surveys, participants emphasized that a well-planned data collection strategies and early involvement of such data collection with the host survey are essential.

14. In particular, UNSD noted that Ethiopia is planning for a stand-alone survey to collect data on gender asset gap, possibly in 2019-2020. The survey is planned as one of the activities under the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (2015/16 – 2019/20) and financial resource for the survey has been secured. In addition, Kenya and Malawi expressed the interest of conducting a stand-alone survey on asset ownership if funding can be secured.

15. Most of the countries have being using handheld device for data collection in their household surveys and censuses. Participants discussed the advantages and challenges of using CAPI and welcomed the Guidelines' key considerations to conduct surveys using handheld devices.

16. Participants highlighted the importance of having specific guidance on selecting respondent within households and appreciated the development of an online sample size calculator to support countries with their sample design.

17. Specific suggestions to improve the model questionnaire were made and will be taken into consideration in finalizing the Guidelines.

18. Participants took note of the activities on gender statistics carried out by the African Centre for Statistics and appreciated its efforts made on improving gender statistics in the region.

19. FAO 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). The presentation also highlighted 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.

20. Guidance on collecting data for the land-specific SDG indicators was greatly appreciated by participants. The linkage between agricultural holdings and households that is reflected in the proposed methodology was supported and considered important for better connection between these two concepts at the country level.

21. In terms of collecting data on 5.a.1, the importance of kitchen/backyard gardens in the region was emphasized, especially from a gender perspective.

22. 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 (ECA 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 Japan in November 2018.