

Advancing Methodology on Measuring Asset Ownership from a Gender Perspective



United Nations Statistics Division

UN Women

Workshop on the Production of Statistics on Asset Ownership
from a Gender Perspective through Household Surveys
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Respondent rules for data collection

Proxy vs. self-report

- Proxy reporting = selected respondent (head of HH or most knowledgeable on topic) provides info for assets owned by HH members
- Self reporting = selected respondent(s) provides info on assets he/she owns
 - Capture people's self-perception of what they own rather than what somebody else (the proxy) believes they own.

Proxy vs. self-report

No “gold standard” to assess accuracy of proxy vs self reported information, but proxy reporting may be problematic due to:

- Incomplete pooling of information within household
- Disagreement among household members about who owns a given asset
- Prevailing gender norms that may bias proxy responses

Proxy vs. self-report

Available research on other topics shows that:

- Tanzania = significant underreporting on male Labor Force Participation
- Malawi = women's earnings when proxy is used; significantly (45% lower on average) underestimated in 66% of Households sampled;
EDGE-MEXA experiment in Uganda plus results from other pilots => recommending self-reported;

Proxy vs self-report

Percentage point increase in prevalence of asset ownership, by sex, when data is self-reported (not proxied)

Country	Sex of respondent owner	Percentage point increase, reported ownership of principal dwelling	Percentage point increase, reported ownership of agricultural land
Georgia	Men	2	7
	Women	4	3
Mongolia	Men	10	na
	Women	5	na
Philippines (Cavite Province)	Men	7	na
	Women	6	na
Uganda	Men	11	10
	Women	14	5

Proxy vs self-report

Unpacking household reporting dynamics

- Non-negligible share of individuals across pilots who do NOT consider themselves owners are identified as owners by proxy respondents
- Problematic from a gender perspective

Key recommendation

- ✓ NSOs are encouraged to collect **self-reported**, not proxy reported, data on individual-level asset ownership
- Rationale:
 - ✓ Sizeable discrepancies in prevalence estimates of both women's and men's ownership of key assets, including dwellings, agricultural land and financial assets
 - ✓ Assignment of ownership, by proxy, to people who do not consider themselves owners

Thank you

For additional information:
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