

MEXA GLOSSARY OF TERMS

What is an “asset”?

Assets are all items that are source of benefits accruing to the owner (a household or members of the household, for example), by holding or using it for producing goods and services over a period of time.

Assets may include (i) household dwelling, (ii) agricultural parcels, (iii) livestock, (iv) farm and non-farm machinery and implements, (v) durable household items, such as stoves and refrigerators, (vi) dues receivable against loans advanced in cash and kind, and (vii) financial assets, such as shares in a company, national saving certificates, and deposits with banks, post offices and other individuals, and (viii) valuables, such as jewelry, held as store of value.

An asset has three characteristics:

- Its ownership right, whether legal and/or economic, is enforced;
- It is used repeatedly in the process of production for producing goods/services or held as a storage of value; and
- It can be used for more than a year.

What do we mean by “ownership”?

Economic ownership is having the right to claim the economic benefits associated with the use or disposal of an asset.

Joint ownership refers to two or more individuals legally and/or economically owning economically an asset together.

Legal ownership refers to the existence of any document an individual can use to claim ownership rights in law over an asset.

Ownership document is usually for land and housing and refers to any type of written documentation (government-issued or not) including a title deed, certificate of customary ownership, will, or purchase agreement that states which persons own, have inherited, have been allocated, or have purchased the land or dwelling.

When the individual(s) **inherits** an asset, it means that he/she receives the asset from another family member(s) upon the death of the family member(s) in question.

A **liability** is established when one party (the debtor) is obliged to provide a payment or a series of payment to the other party (the creditor).

Bundle of Rights

When the owner(s) **bequeaths** an asset, it means that he/she gives or lives the asset by oral or written will, to another person(s) after the death of the owner in question.

When the owner(s) **uses an asset as collateral**, it means that he/she provides the asset as a security/guarantee for obtaining loans or other obligations.

When the owner(s) **rents out an asset**, it means that he/she bestows the use rights of the asset onto another person(s) for a specific period of time, in return for cash or in-kind benefits.

The individual **providing permission/consent to another individual to exercise a particular right** is the individual that has the **final say/veto power** in whether that particular right (e.g. selling a parcel) can be exercised by another individual.

The individual **seeking permission/consent from another individual to exercise a particular right** is the individual that CANNOT act on his/her own AND that needs to receive authorization from another individual to exercise a particular right.

One individual member **simply informing** another individual of his/her plans to sell, rent out, use as collateral or make improvements in a parcel is **NOT the same as seeking permission!**

How are agricultural holding, parcels and plots related?

An agricultural holding is an economic unit of agricultural production under single management comprising all livestock kept and all land used wholly or partly for agricultural production purposes, without regard to title, legal form, or size.

Single management may be exercised by an individual or household, jointly by two or more individuals or households, by a clan or tribe, or by a juridical person such as a corporation, cooperative or government agency.

The holding's land may consist of one or more parcels, located in one or more separate areas or in one or more territorial or administrative divisions, providing the parcels share the same production means utilized by the holding, such as labour, farm buildings, machinery or draught animals. The requirement of sharing the same production means utilized by the holding, such as labour, farm buildings, machinery or draught animals should be fulfilled to a degree to justify the consideration of various parcels as components of one economic unit.

A parcel is any piece of land, regardless of type of tenure, entirely surrounded by other land, water, road, forest or other features not forming part of the holding or forming part of the holding under a different land tenure type. A parcel may consist of one or more plots within. Note that in urban areas, people may also refer to a parcel of land as a plot.

A plot/musiri is a part or whole of a parcel on which a unique crop or crop mixture is cultivated.

What are the different types of marriages and marital statuses?

Adult is an individual who is at least 18 years old on the date of survey.

Civil marriage is a marriage solemnized before the District Registrar under section 48 of the Registration of Marriage Act.

Cohabitation refers to an unmarried man and an unmarried woman living together as if they were husband and wife.

Monogamous marriage is a marriage between a man and a woman neither of whom, during the subsistence of the marriage, shall be at liberty to enter into or contract any other valid marriage.

Customary marriage is a marriage celebrated according to the rites of an African community to which one or both of the parties belong.

Polygamous marriage is a marriage in which a man is married to more than one wife.

Religious marriage is a marriage solemnized in a place of worship (e.g. mosque, church) by a recognized minister; includes, a marriage solemnized by a recognized minister in a place directed by the Minister's license.

Separated refers to a person who does not physically live with his or her spouse/partner without having gone through a legal divorce but may be considering divorce or a permanent separation. This does not include spouses in a polygamous marriage who live in separate houses.

Widow/er refers to a person whose spouse/partner is deceased and who is not currently married.

Divorced refers to a person who has terminated legal marriage through the legal system.

What are “valuables”?

Valuables are produced goods of considerable value that are not used primarily for purposes of production or consumption but are held as stores of value over time. The nature of valuables is that they are held as a store of value in the expectation that their value will increase over time.

Valuables include precious metals and stones, antiques and art objects. These are often regarded as alternative forms of investment. At various times, investors may choose to buy gold rather than a financial asset when the prices of financial assets were behaving in a volatile manner. Individuals/households may also choose to acquire some of these items knowing that they may be sold if there is a need to raise funds.