



Pro-WEAI for Market Inclusion

Many development agencies are designing and implementing value chain interventions that aim to reach, benefit, and empower rural women. Monitoring and evaluating the success of these value chain interventions requires tools to identify the constraints women and men face and to track empowerment across multiple nodes of the value chain. The project-level Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index for market inclusion (pro-WEAI+MI) includes the core pro-WEAI module plus new complementary indicators to investigate barriers to market access and inclusion for different value chain actors. The survey also offers several optional indicators, including access to reliable sanitation and sexual hostility in the working environment, to assess the empowerment environment. These additions and enhancements increase pro-WEAI's ability to measure and contextualize empowerment and inclusion across value chains.

The new indicators were validated using a combination of cognitive interviewing, and qualitative and quantitative analysis, based on pilot testing in Bangladesh, Benin, Malawi, and the Philippines.

Core indicators

- 1 Intrinsic Agency or “power within”:** A person’s internal voice, self-respect, or self-confidence. Consists of four indicators: autonomy in decision-making, self-efficacy, attitudes about intimate partner violence against women, and respect among household members.

“After my divorce, it was like the world changed for me, and I developed into this woman you are seeing today. I was not supposed to say anything when we were in a group, because when I spoke my husband would give me signs to stop talking. Now, I can do whatever I want to do.” (woman, Malawi)

- 2 Instrumental Agency or “power to”:** A person’s ability to make decisions in their best interest. Consists of six indicators: input in productive decisions, ownership of land and other assets, access to and decisions on financial services, control over use of income, freedom of movement, and work balance.

“Not all of the production is sold. A part of it is reserved for household consumption... Men keep the corn to guarantee household food consumption, whereas woman keep the gari from processed cassava. The woman decides how much to keep because it is she who provides the food for the children, so it is she who makes the decision to keep this or that, but with the participation of the man.” (woman, Benin)

- 3 Collective Agency or “power with”:** The power we get from acting together with others. Consists of two indicators: group membership and membership in influential groups.

“When I am weak on my own, I can be strengthened by the group through enlightening me on what I do not know. When the group teaches me something, I can use this knowledge to support my family.” (woman, Malawi)

Individuals are considered empowered if they achieve the requirements for (i.e., are adequate in) 9 out of the 12 indicators in the three types of agency shown above.¹

New indicators

- a Autonomy in working conditions**

“If you have to plant rice in a paddy field, you have to work bending down all day long. It will tax your waist heavily. Whoever learned to do this work is doomed. It has become a liability. Since I have learned this skill, I cannot go do something else.” (woman, Bangladesh)

- b Attitudes about use of gender-based violence (GBV) by employer/landlord**

“She is being harassed by the landlord and she cannot act because the land is the source of her livelihood, so she just keeps quiet.” (stakeholder discussion, Philippines)

- c Control over use of income and outputs from the main value chain**

“In coconut farming, once you earn you can already decide what important thing to do since you have the means to acquire or buy rice, food, and clothes for the children.” (woman, Philippines)

¹ The Benin and Malawi surveys used 8 out of 11 indicators as the cutoff because the freedom of movement indicator is currently undergoing validation. The Philippines survey did not collect data on self-efficacy and freedom of movement but used a 75% of indicators empowerment cutoff.

d Entrepreneurial mindset

"Women have now realized that business is a way of life. If you look at a woman, you are looking at a whole nation. As women, we are encouraging more women to go into this business because we know it will change us socially, economically." (woman, Malawi)

e Input in decisions about main value chain

"I am capable of doing it [farming, going to the market to shop, getting a loan] myself so far. I do everything on my own will. There is none to stop me or to hold me back from doing what I do." (woman, Bangladesh)

f Empowerment environment:²

- i. Access to reliable sanitation—includes urination, defecation and handwashing facilities
- ii. Sex and fertility agency—measures decision-making on childbearing and contraceptive use
- iii. Sexual hostility in the working environment—perceptions of sexual hostility in the working environment

"It's a private issue. But I can call the harasser to tell him to stop. If I go to denounce the person [in public], I can be the cause of the breakdown of his relationships at home. I wouldn't like or want that." (woman, Benin)

Components of the pro-WEAI calculations

The table shows results from the pro-WEAI+MI study in Benin.³ The Three Domains of Empowerment (3DE) score has two parts: (1) the proportion of women/men who are empowered; and (2) the average empowerment score among those who are disempowered. It thus reflects both the proportion of those who are empowered and the extent of adequacy across the indicators among those who are disempowered. Scores range from 0 to 1 and higher scores reflect greater empowerment; in this example, men fare better than women. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) considers how, overall, women fare compared to the men in their respective households. The GPI reflects the proportion of households that achieve gender parity (the woman is empowered or has at least the same empowerment score as the man in the household), and the average empowerment gap in households that do not achieve gender parity (the average difference between the woman's and man's empowerment scores). In this example, only 45 percent of households achieve gender parity. Together the 3DE and GPI make up the pro-WEAI score, which reflects the absolute and relative extent of women's empowerment in this context. Higher pro-WEAI scores indicate higher levels of women's empowerment and gender parity.

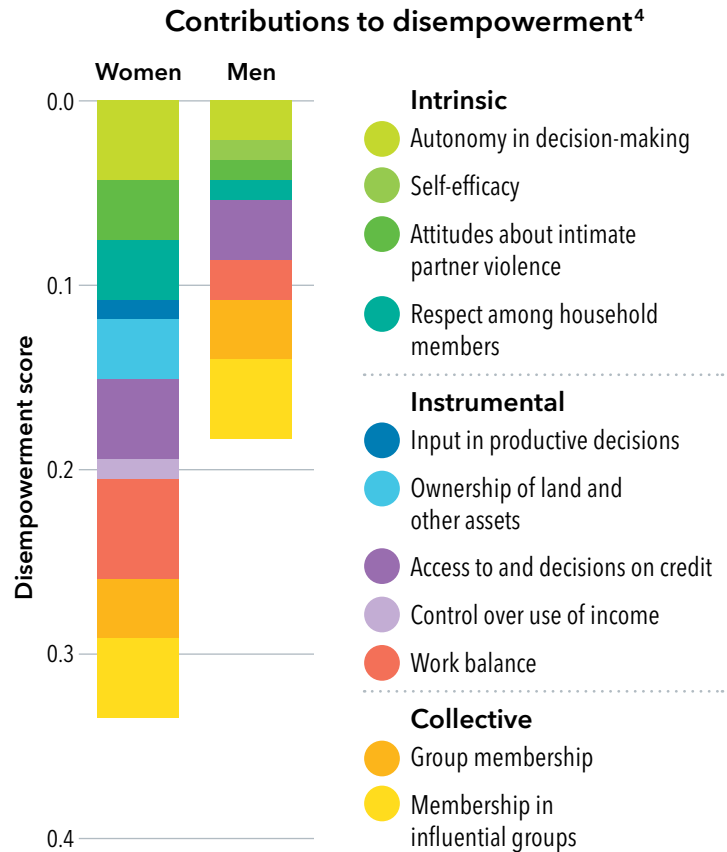
Example core pro-WEAI results

Indicator	Women	Men
Number of observations	628	439
3DE score	0.67	0.82
Disempowerment score (1 - 3DE)	0.33	0.18
% achieving empowerment	0.33	0.59
% not achieving empowerment	0.67	0.41
Mean 3DE score for not yet empowered	0.51	0.57
Mean disempowerment score (1 - 3DE)	0.49	0.43
Gender Parity Index (GPI)	0.84	
Number of dual-adult households	439	
% achieving gender parity	0.45	
% not achieving gender parity	0.55	
Average empowerment gap	0.30	
Pro-WEAI score	0.69	

² Varies by survey.

³ This study excludes the "visiting important locations" indicator as it is currently undergoing additional validation.

The chart to the right characterizes disempowerment among women and men from the same study in Benin. The disempowerment score is shown on the y-axis; the longer the bar, the more disempowered the subgroup. In this example, the bar for women is longer, showing that women are more disempowered than men. The individual colored blocks represent the contributions of each indicator to the disempowerment score; bigger blocks reflect bigger contributions to disempowerment and thus, areas needing more focus and effort. Accordingly, the top three largest contributors to disempowerment among women and men are ranked. The green blocks present disempowerment across the four “intrinsic agency” indicators, the orange blocks represent disempowerment in “instrumental agency,” and the purple blocks represent “collective agency.” Such graphs clearly reveal the indicators in which women and men are most disempowered and where policymakers might target future resources and policies.

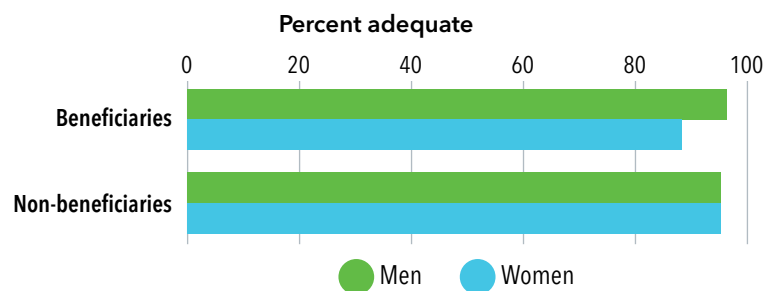


Example of complementary and empowerment environment indicator results

The following graphs represent results from the pro-WEAI+MI study in Benin, where a training intervention was evaluated by comparing program beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (those who were not trained).

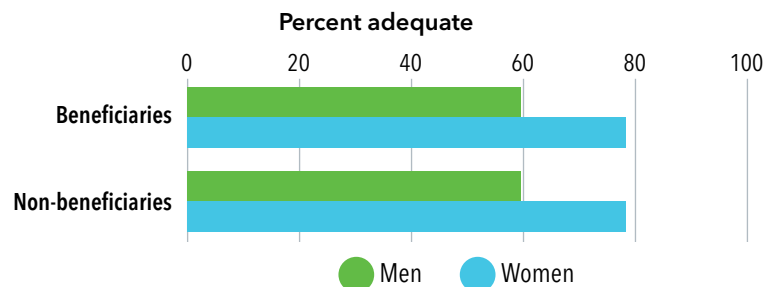
Entrepreneurial mindset

The graph to the right shows the percent of respondents who achieved adequacy in the entrepreneurial mindset indicator, by gender and beneficiary status. Adequacy in this indicator was relatively high; men in beneficiary households were the most likely to be adequate in this indicator.



Access to reliable sanitation

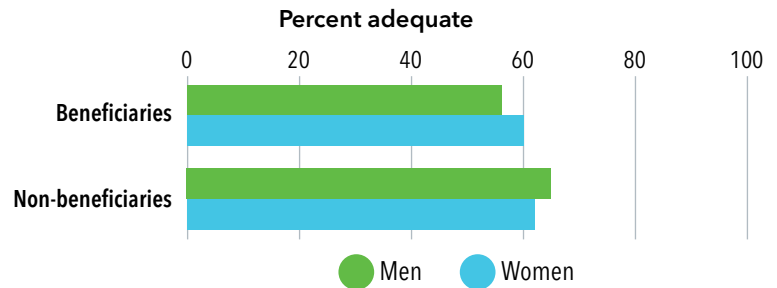
In this example, women were more likely to report having access to urination, defecation, and handwashing facilities.



⁴ For the study in Benin, only 11 of the 12 pro-WEAI indicators were used, and participants need to achieve adequacy in 8 of the 11 indicators to be considered empowered.

Sexual hostility in the working environment

Almost 60 percent of women and men reported that they believed that others like them in the community had never experienced any form of sexual violence, as shown in the graph to the right.



Additional reading

Malapit, Hazel J.; Ragasa, Catherine; Martinez, Elena M.; Rubin, Deborah; Seymour, Gregory; and Quisumbing, Agnes R. 2020. "Empowerment in Agricultural Value Chains: Mixed Methods Evidence from the Philippines." *Journal of Rural Studies* 76: 240-253. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.04.003>

WEAI Resource Center: This site offers information about WEAI and related research instruments, including the enhanced pro-WEAI for market inclusion instrument, how to calculate empowerment using the quantitative surveys, WEAI-related publications, and more. <http://weai.ifpri.info/>



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