

Case Study 6. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO): Agri-Statistics Toolkit

Countries: Sub-Saharan Africa

Year(s) of project/ study: 1993 – 2006

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Background: This toolkit was developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in support of enhanced production and use of sex-disaggregated agricultural data. It presents examples of gender relevant questions and tables jointly developed by national statisticians and FAO for agricultural censuses undertaken in Africa between 1993 and 2006. Statistics producers and users alike called for the development of such a tool to improve the production of reliable sex-disaggregated agricultural data needed for gender specific targeted policy formulation and planning of agricultural and rural development. The toolkit has been developed in line with the framework of the 2010 round of the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture. It is designed for a wide range of users involved in development planning, ranging from agricultural statisticians and researchers to policy planners and gender advocates.

Methodology: The methodology described in the toolkit was developed over two decades of research and direct work on census surveys in numerous countries in Africa. The first edition of the toolkit includes examples of gender-relevant questions and table formats used in agricultural censuses in fifteen African countries between 1993 and 2006. It covers topics such as agricultural population and households, access to resources, production and productivity, labor and time use, the destination of agricultural produce, income and expenditures, membership in farmer organizations and some indicators for food security and poverty. The toolkit consists of two sections. *Section 1* highlights examples of gender-sensitive questions and questionnaire components obtained from agricultural censuses. Most questions relate to subsistence and commercial farming activities carried out on small-scale agricultural production units rather than purely commercial activities performed on large-scale agricultural production units, as small-scale agricultural production units are predominant in most African countries. *Section 2* contains examples of tables that can be prepared with the data collected through the questions and questionnaire components presented in section 1 of the toolkit. Each table provides sex-specific information expanding the more classical presentation of agricultural census data with valuable information on the socio-economic position of men and women farmers. The format of the tables allows for data presentation at national and sub-national level as any gender disparities usually show better in data presented at lower levels of aggregation.

Findings: The toolkit is currently being used by statistics teams in Senegal and Togo, preparing their next agricultural census and is used by the statisticians in Lesotho assisting them in analyzing data their census collected recently.

For more information:

FAO Agri-Gender Statistics Toolkit: <http://www.fao.org/gender/agrigender/en>

The examples of gender relevant questionnaires included in the database have been obtained from agricultural censuses conducted in the following countries: Benin (forthcoming), Botswana (1993), Burkina Faso (1993), Côte

d'Ivoire (2000/2001), Ethiopia (2001/2002), The Gambia (2001), Guinea (2000/2001), Mali (1999/2000), Mauritania (2003/2004), Niger (2004 – 2006), Senegal (1998/1999), Tanzania (2002/2003), Togo (1996), Tunisia (1995) and Uganda (2003), are available at <http://www.fao.org/gender/agrigender/agri-gender-toolkit/the-database/en/>.

Feedback on methodology based on an interview with Diana Tempelman:

1. What are the unique gender-asset questions/indicators you collected in your survey instrument that were particularly valuable or reflective of methodologies you would like to see replicated in future work and why?

Most important is the use of the *sub-holder* concept, distinguishing the holder (usually the head of the household) from other active family members (sub-holders) that operate a part of the farm in their own right. To allow for intra-household gender analysis it is critical that a direct link is kept between the questionnaire section on household demographics and the separate plots cultivated or animals owned.

2. What are the unique gender-asset questions/indicators you either collected in your survey instrument that you would have implemented differently or you were not able to collect, but which you would have liked to collect and why?

The following aspects would benefit from more and more specific questions:

- The use of family labor by sex AND age (to find out about child labor)
- The destination of the produce: home consumption/ seeds/ animal feed/ sale
- Few countries collect data on credit availability and use by active household member
- Few countries collect data on membership of farmer organizations and the benefits derived from that
- Few countries collect data on availability of extension services and the content of the services provided by active household member
- Few countries collect data on the general food security situation of the household

3. Asset-gender dynamics are heterogeneous, complex and rooted in social, economic and institutional factors—are there any background factors that relate strongly to gender-asset dynamics that you either collected or wish you had collected?

Most countries that provided examples for the toolkit collected data on landownership/sex and origin. Only few countries indicated the sex of the owners of the different farm animals. Little information is available on the access to other farm tools, family labor and services like market information, financial services and other assets

4. Are there any particularities about the region or country of implementation which you think are important to recognize in relation to the gender-asset indicators you collected which are important for other researchers to be aware of?

Men and women in African farm households often keep separate budgets and have gender specific family responsibilities. The head of the farm household may provide seeds, fertilizer and pesticides to the other active household members (who are sub-holders when farming in their own right) or may not. The sub-holders may not always have control over the use of the produce they generate. It is important to relate access to assets with control over the outputs and compare these two with the gender – specific household budget responsibilities to get a meaningful picture of the data collected on gender-assets

5. Did any of these context- or country-specific factors influence your survey implementation methodology, and how?

I am not aware of any incidents related to male enumerators interviewing female respondents, though a few incidents of this nature may have occurred in selected situations. What is more important is that agricultural census manuals recommend that the Head of the Household is the sole respondent to the census questionnaire. This may have an impact on the viability of the responses concerning assets of and work undertaken by the other sub-holders of the holding.

6. What do you see as the largest methodological challenges in collecting gender-asset data in general and how can we as a research community work towards filling this gap?

Other than the areas mentioned under question 2 and 4, the challenge at this stage is not so much in the collection of gender specific data but more in promoting the USE of such data in policy analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The work of the research community is critical in this regard, as well-researched case studies, using census or survey data in substantiating “gender-findings” will help planners to understand and see the relevance of the use of this kind of data. Improved statistics user – producers collaborations and in particular feedback from the data users (researchers, activists or planners) on the usefulness (or not) of the gender specific data collected, will go a long way in keeping statisticians enthusiastic and open to continue collecting gender specific data in regular census and surveys.