



GAAP² phase

Gender, Agriculture & Assets Project

Led by IFPRI

Exploring empowerment transitions of women and men in Bangladesh

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Empowerment

- ▶ Process of gaining the ability to make strategic life choices, when these choices were previously denied (Kabeer, 1999)
- ▶ Drydyk (2008) proposed that empowerment should be durable
 - ▶ Gaining the ability to make strategic life choices
 - ▶ Also be able to continue to exert that power and remain empowered over time
- ▶ Empowerment is an ongoing process
 - ▶ Not a one-time destination
- ▶ Empowerment is relative
 - ▶ To others
 - ▶ To oneself at a different point in time

Current evidence



Photo credit: Kalyani Raghunathan

- ▶ Akter & Chindakar (2019)
 - ▶ Decision making, control over financial resources, freedom of mobility, freedom from domestic violence, and marital inclusiveness
 - ▶ Created a multidimensional empowerment index (MDEI)
 - ▶ India Human Development Survey (IHDS), for the years 2004–5 and 2011–12
 - ▶ 54% of women remained empowered over time
 - ▶ Age, education, asset ownership, wealth and collective assets foster empowerment durability

Motivation



Photo credit: HKI and VAARD teams

- ▶ Drawing from the poverty literature
- ▶ Household poverty transitions has been well-studied in Bangladesh
 - ▶ Ahmed & Tauseef, 2018; Quisumbing, 2007; Davis & Baulch, 2011
- ▶ Apply the poverty dynamics methodology to empowerment
- ▶ Study explores transitions in empowerment using a panel dataset
 - ▶ For men and women in the same household
 - ▶ Uses an internationally validated measure of empowerment

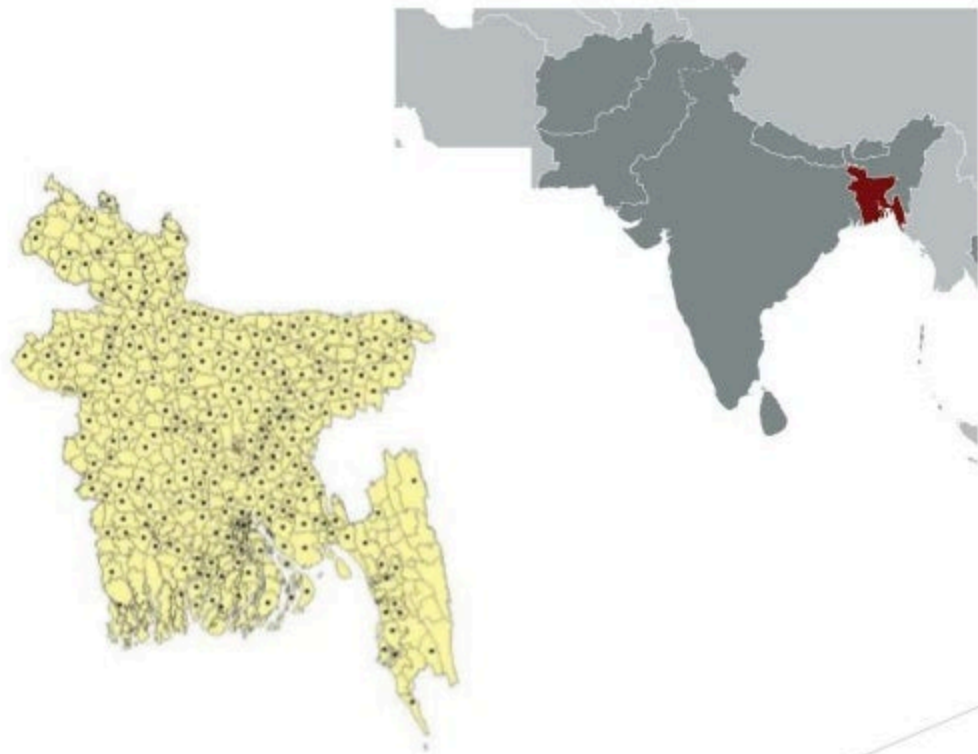
Research questions

- ▶ How do men and women transition into and out of empowerment over time?
- ▶ In what domains do these transitions occur, and how do they differ between men and women?
- ▶ What are the factors that facilitate these transitions?

		Time 1	
		Empowered	Disempowered
Time 2	Empowered	Sustained empowerment	Moving into empowerment
	Disempowered	Falling into disempowerment	Persistent disempowerment

Bangladesh Integrated Household Survey (BIHS)

- ▶ Nationally-representative rural household panel survey
- ▶ Two survey instruments:
 - ▶ HH-questionnaire with detailed sex-disaggregated data
 - ▶ Different modules administered to M and F in each HH
 - ▶ Community questionnaire
- ▶ 2011-12 and 2015



The BIHS 2011/12 and 2015 panel dataset is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), designed by the Bangladesh Policy Research and Strategy Support Program (PRSSP) implemented by IFPRI, and administered by Data Analysis and Technical Assistance (DATA).

What in the world is WEAI?

- ▶ Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
- ▶ Developed by USAID, IFPRI & OPHI
- ▶ Launched in 2012, now used in 53 countries
- ▶ Measures inclusion of women in the agricultural sector
- ▶ Survey-based index - interviews men and women in the same household



How is the Index constructed?

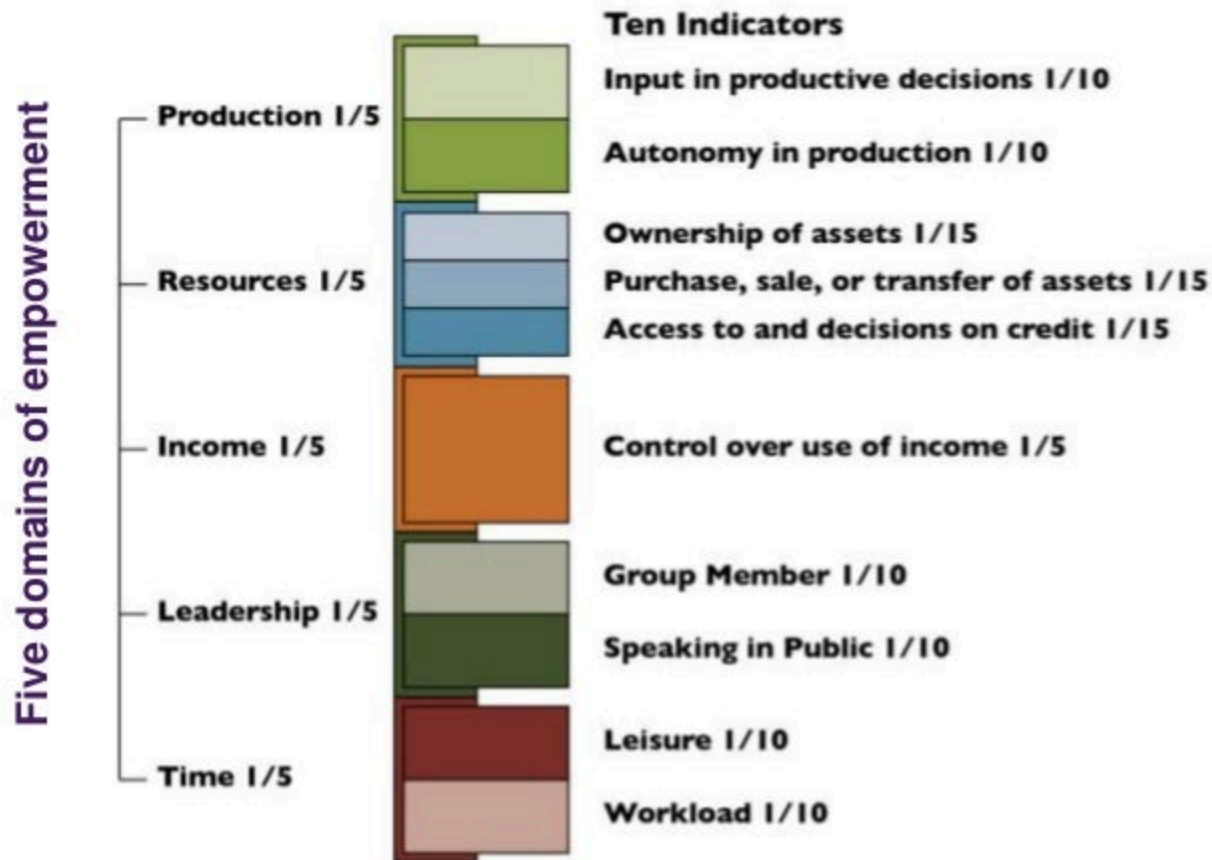
- ▶ Constructed using interviews of the **primary male** and **primary female** adults in the same household

WEAI is made up of two sub indices

**Women's
Empowerment in
Agriculture Index
(WEAI)**

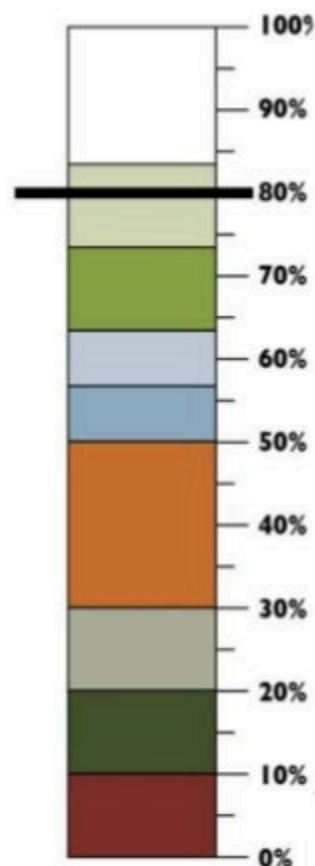
All range from zero to one;
higher values = greater empowerment

WEAI Indicators



Empowerment

- ▶ Empowered if respondent is adequate in at least 80% of the weighted indicators
 - ▶ We use a binary indicator for empowerment
 - ▶ Alkire et al., 2012
- ▶ Only HHs with no missing indicators for the primary male and female respondent in both time periods
 - ▶ Attrition weights calculated following methodology in Fitzgerald, Gottschalk and Moffitt (1998)
- ▶ Sample covers 2,575 HHs
 - ▶ Adult men and women



Respondent characteristics

	Female	Male	Test of difference
	Mean (SE)	Mean (SE)	
Age (years)	36.88 (0.23)	43.56 (0.24)	***
No schooling	0.48 (0.01)	0.51 (0.01)	***
Some primary education	0.14 (0.01)	0.12 (0.01)	**
Completed primary education	0.15 (0.01)	0.12 (0.01)	***
Some or completed secondary education or higher	0.23 (0.01)	0.25 (0.01)	

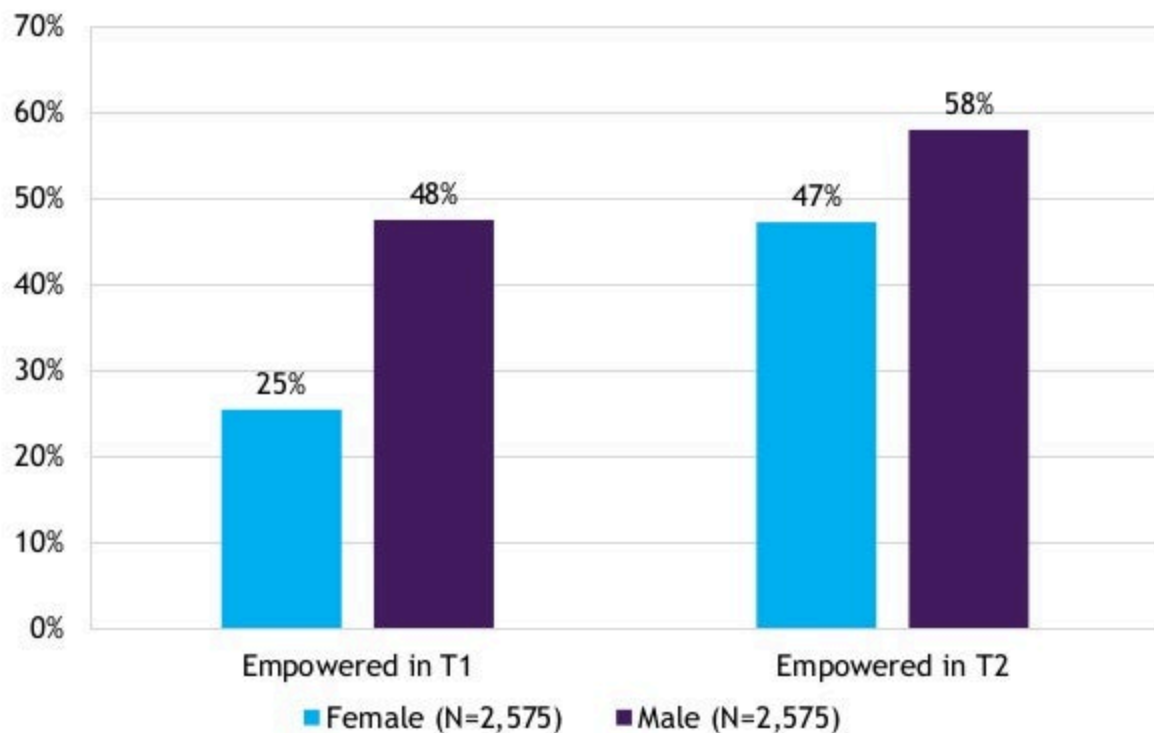
Estimates are weighted using HH-level attrition weights
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Household characteristics

Estimates are weighted using HH-level attrition weights
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

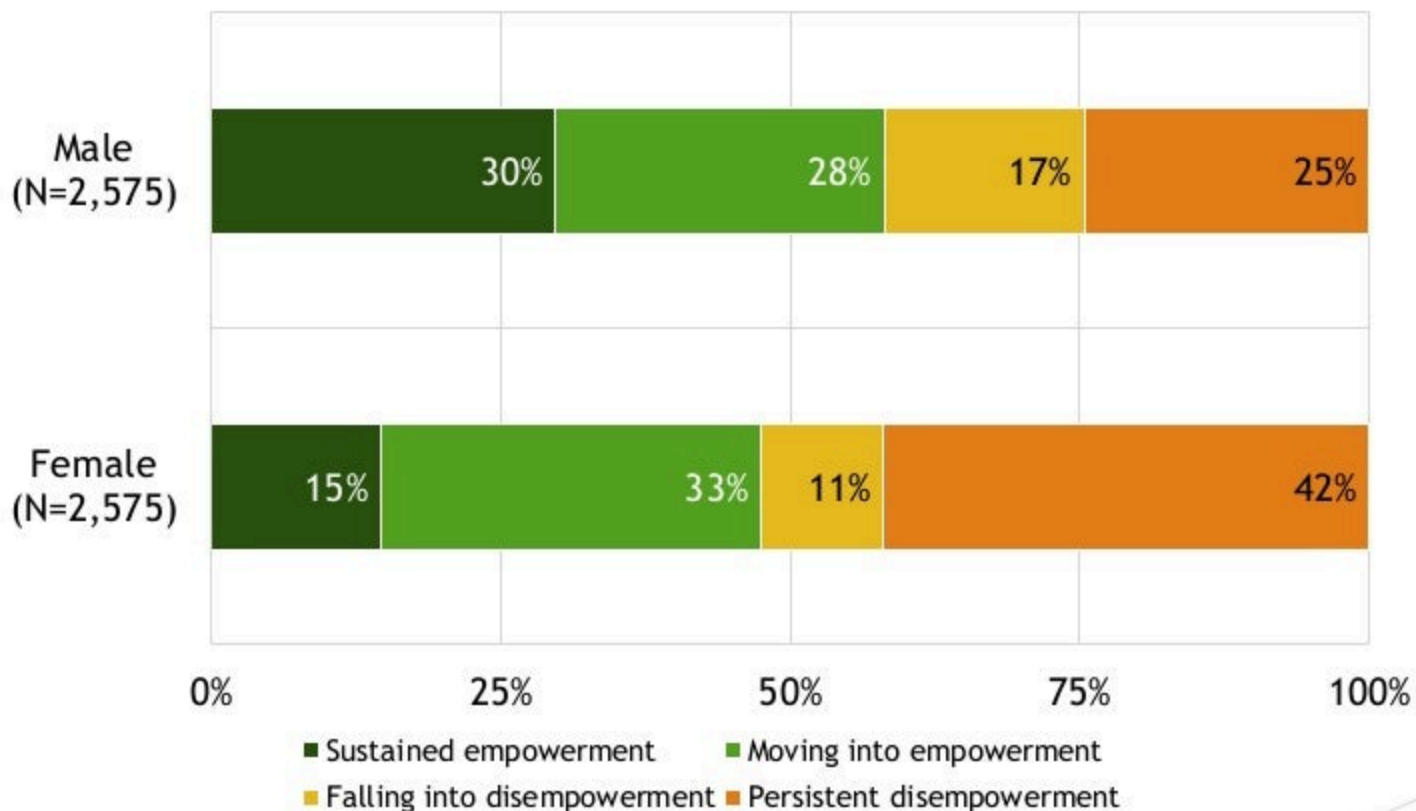
Household	Mean (SE)	Negative Shocks	Mean (SE)	Positive events	Mean (SE)
Household size	4.34 (0.04)	Any death in household	0.00 (0.00)	Received remittances	0.01 (0.00)
Child <5 years lives in HH	0.38 (0.01)	Any illness in household	0.14 (0.01)	New job or business profit	0.03 (0.00)
Adult >55 years lives in HH	0.29 (0.01)	Dowry or wedding expenses	0.05 (0.00)	Daily per capita HH expenditure (taka)	87.89 (1.23)
Nuclear HH	0.77 (0.01)	Any livestock death or theft	0.07 (0.01)		
		Flood damage to house/livestock/crops	0.07 (0.01)		
		Crop loss due to non-flood reasons	0.04 (0.01)		
		Other shocks	0.07 (0.01)		

Empowerment T1 & T2



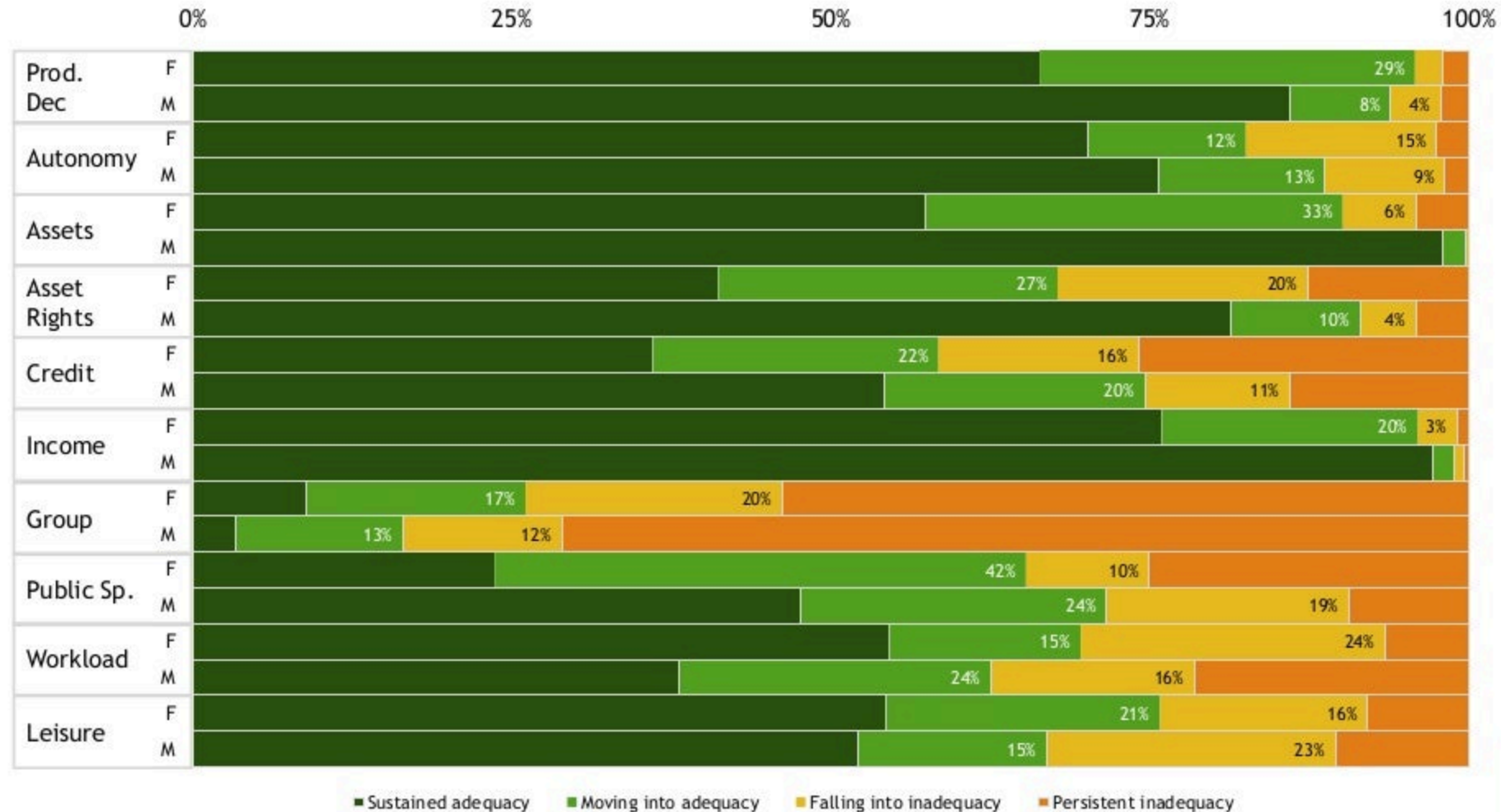
- ▶ Improvement in empowerment status for women and men over time (net)
- ▶ Statistically significant differences between women and men within each time period at $p < 0.01$

Empowerment transitions



All estimates are statistically significantly different between men vs. women at $p < 0.01$

Empowerment transitions by indicator

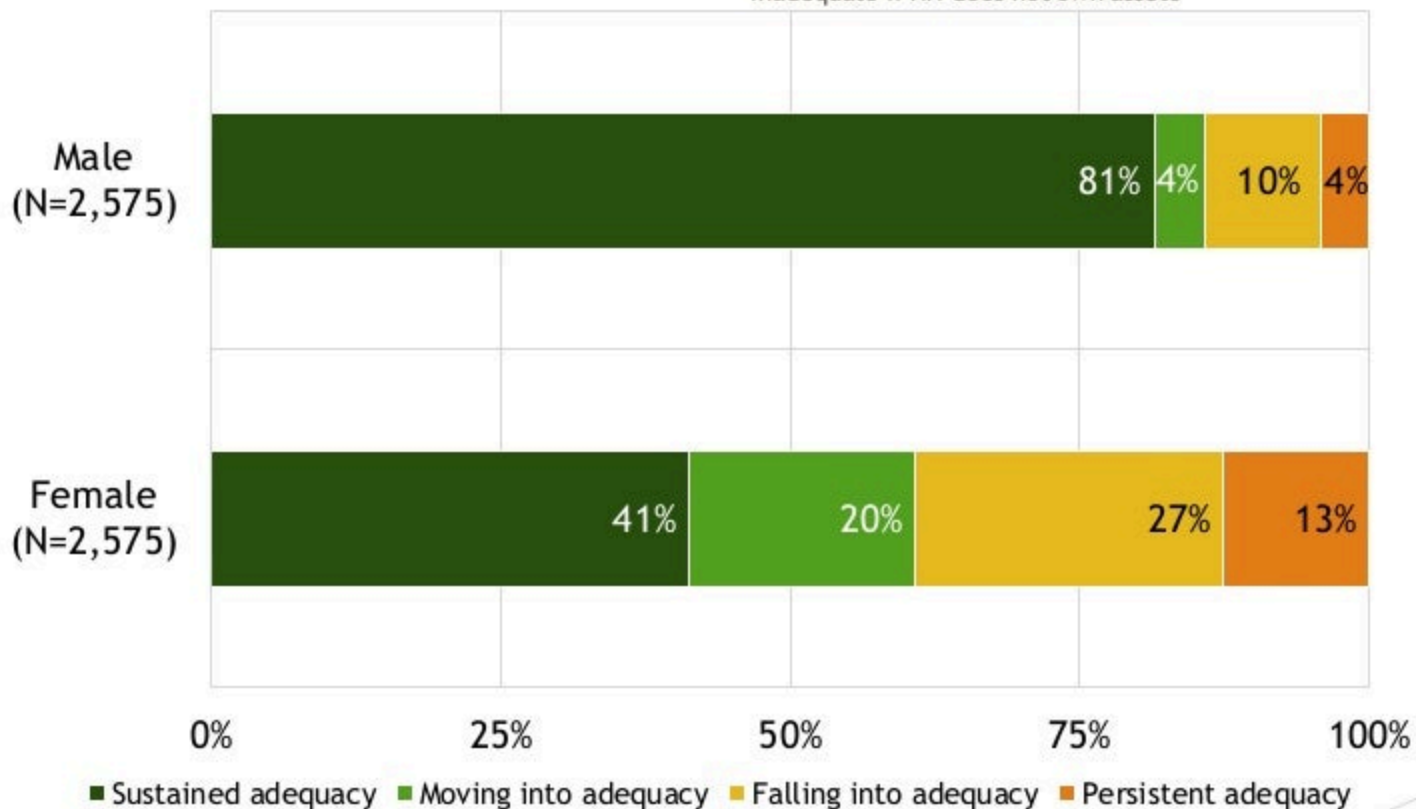


Rights over assets

Respondent can decide whether to sell, give away, or rent/mortgage [asset] most of the time

HH assets except chickens and non-mechanized farming equipment

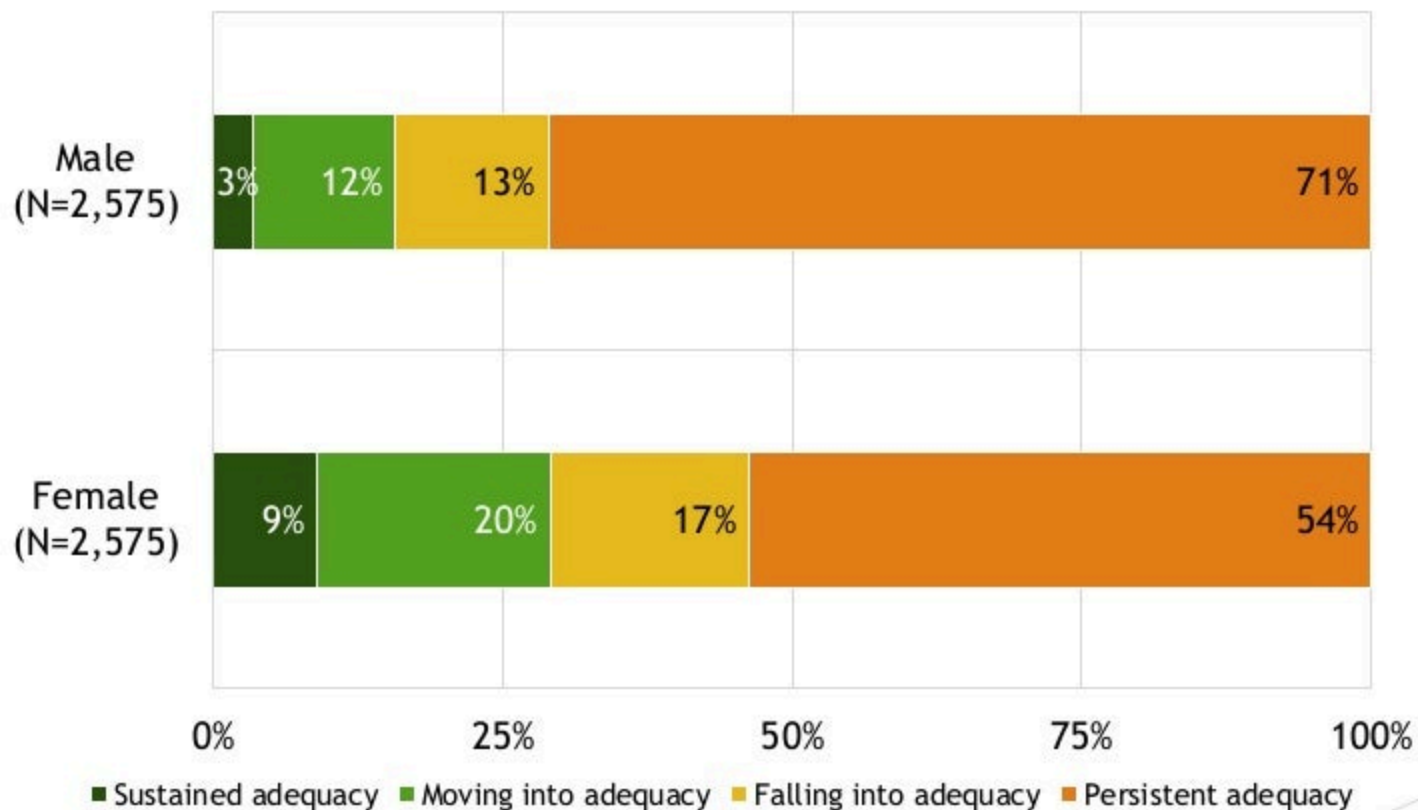
Inadequate if HH does not own assets



Group membership

Respondent is part of at least one group in the community

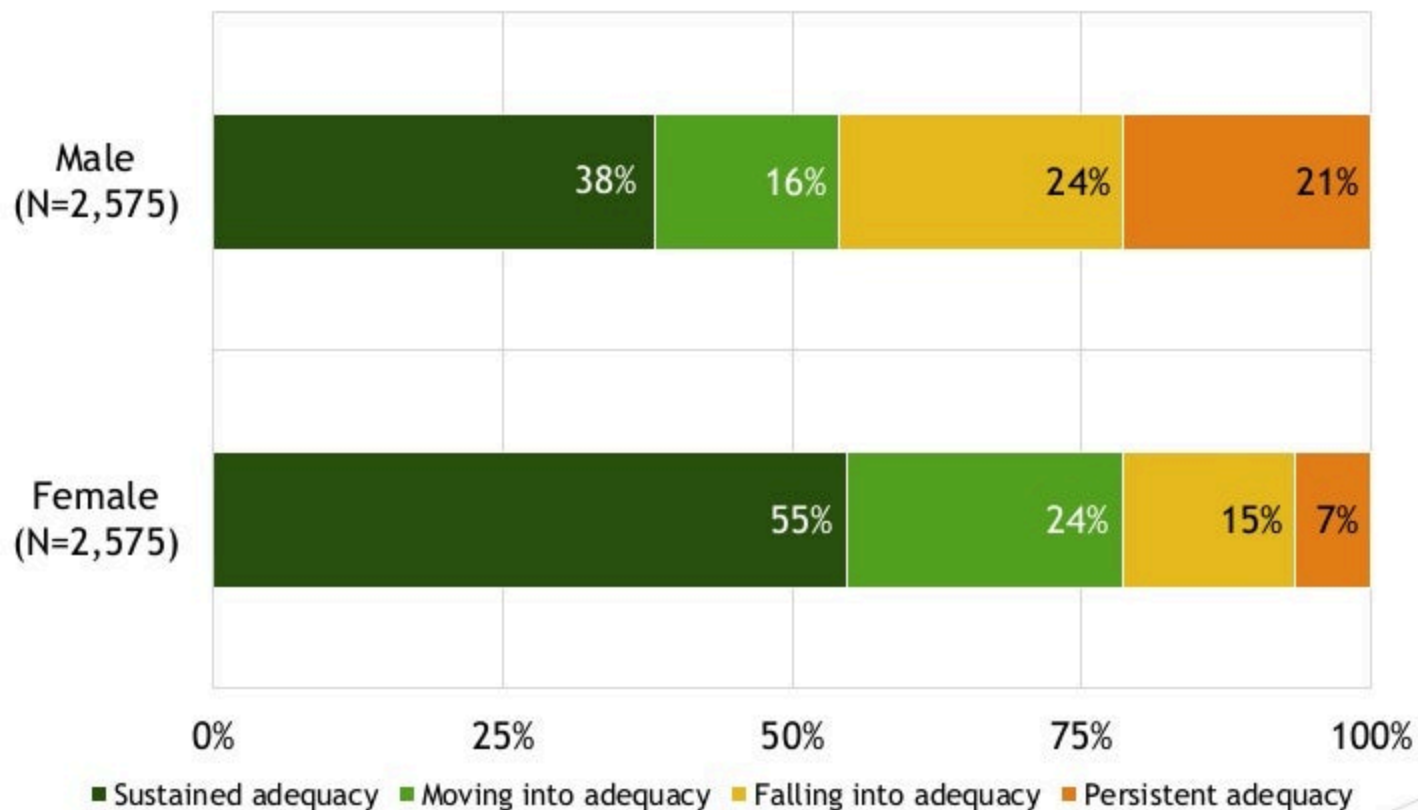
Inadequate if no groups in community



Workload

Respondent worked ≤ 10.5 hours in the previous 24 hours

Includes productive and domestic/reproductive work



Methodology

- ▶ Outcome: probability of being in an empowerment state
- ▶ Multinomial regression models
 - ▶ Reference category: Persistent disempowerment
- ▶ Controls (shocks 2015 data; 2011-12 others)

Individual	Household	Idiosyncratic Shocks	Covariate shocks	Other
Age	HH size	Death	Flood damage to house/livestock/crops	Other shocks
Education	Nuclear HH	Illness	Crop loss due to non-flood reasons	Positive remittances
	Child <5 in HH	Wedding expenses/dowry		New job; business profit
	Adult 55+ in HH	Livestock death/theft		
	Female-headed HH	Productive asset loss		
	Income per capita			
	Division			

Selected results: Individual characteristics

Reference category:
Persistent disempowerment

	Falling into disempowerment			Moving into empowerment			Sustained empowerment		
	Women	Men	Test	Women	Men	Test	Women	Men	Test
Age (years)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)		0.02** (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)		0.00 (0.01)	0.02*** (0.01)	
<i>No education (reference group)</i>									
Some primary education	0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	*	-0.02 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)	*	0.02 (0.02)	0.10*** (0.03)	**
Completed primary education	-0.00 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)		0.07** (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)		-0.00 (0.02)	0.06** (0.03)	
Some secondary education or higher	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)		0.00 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)		0.03* (0.02)	0.11*** (0.02)	*

Selected results - Shocks

Reference category:
Persistent disempowerment

	Falling into disempowerment			Moving into empowerment			Sustained empowerment		
	Women	Men	Test	Women	Men	Test	Women	Men	Test
Female-headed household	-0.90*** (0.09)	0.73*** (0.15)	***	-2.59*** (0.14)	0.99*** (0.24)	***	1.02*** (0.14)	-2.42*** (0.16)	***
Any death in household	-1.12*** (0.08)	-0.01 (0.11)	***	1.14*** (0.11)	0.06 (0.12)	***	-1.36*** (0.09)	-0.02 (0.12)	***
Any illness in household	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)		0.04 (0.03)	0.05* (0.03)		-0.02 (0.02)	0.05** (0.02)	**
Dowry or wedding expenses	0.01 (0.03)	-0.09** (0.04)	*	0.06 (0.05)	0.03 (0.04)	*	0.06* (0.03)	0.08* (0.04)	
Any livestock death or theft	-0.03 (0.03)	0.01 (0.04)		0.02 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)		0.07** (0.03)	0.09* (0.05)	
Flood damage to house/livestock/crops	-0.06 (0.03)	-0.05 (0.04)		0.12** (0.05)	0.08 (0.05)		-0.13** (0.05)	-0.06 (0.04)	
Crop loss due to non-flood reasons	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.00 (0.05)		0.13** (0.07)	0.10* (0.05)		0.06 (0.04)	0.12** (0.06)	

Next steps and conclusion

- ▶ There has been considerable progress in improving women and men's empowerment in Bangladesh
 - ▶ Need for better recognition of unintended consequences that may exacerbate gender differences and/or outcomes
 - ▶ Role of programs and policies: who are we (not) reaching?
- ▶ Next steps : more iterations; unpacking the data by indicator
 - ▶ Suggestions welcome!

Acknowledgments and references

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