

Gender and women's empowerment in nutrition-sensitive agriculture: A review, new evidence, guidelines and implications for programming

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What dimensions of empowerment matter for maternal and child nutrition?



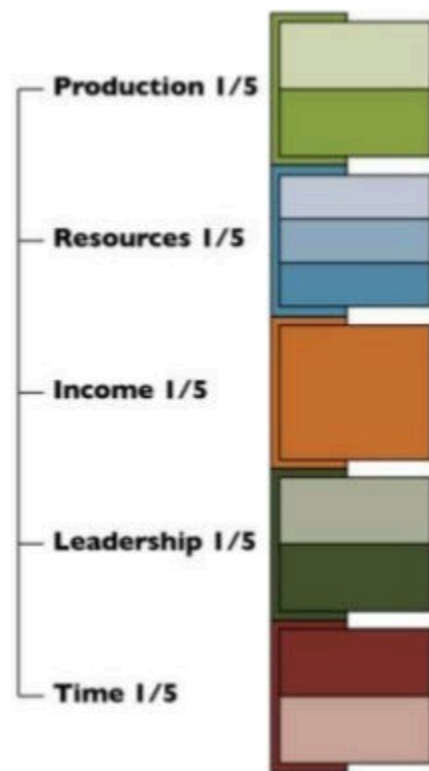
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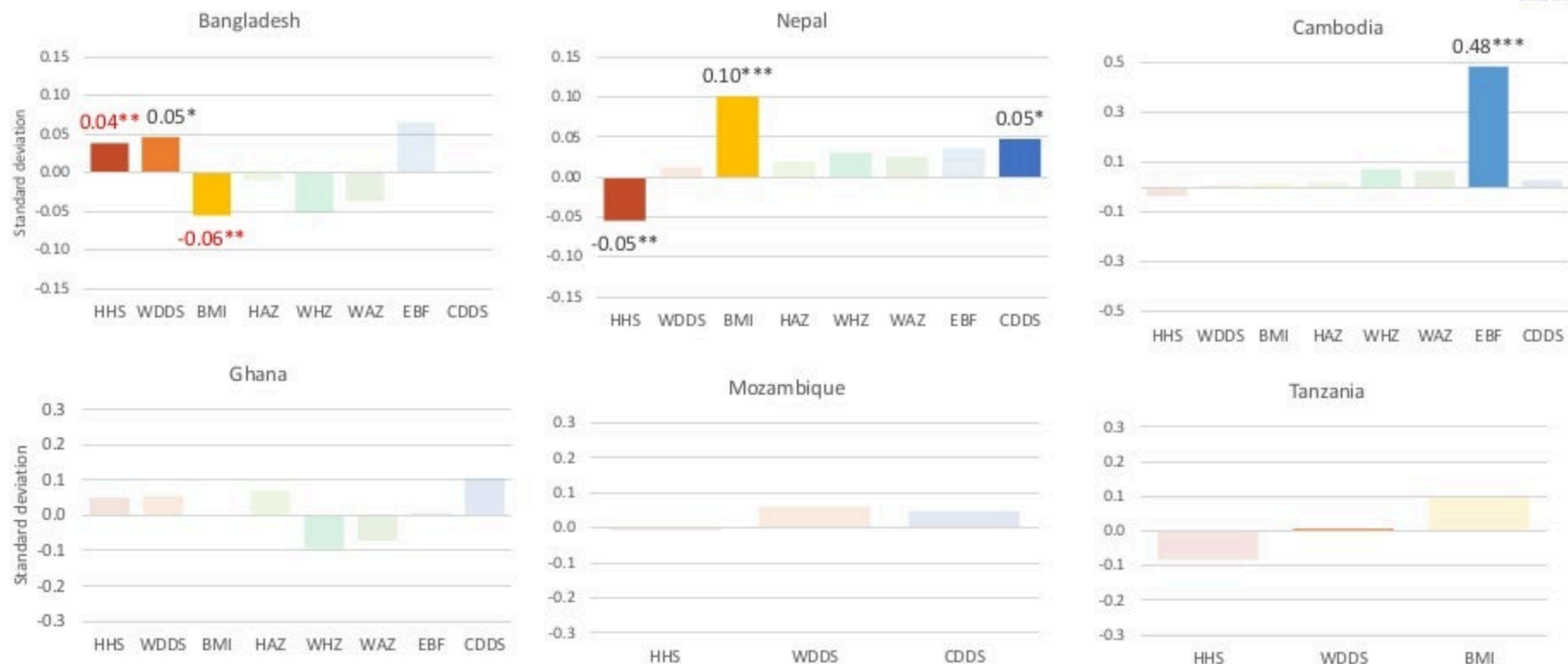
- Data from 6 Feed the Future countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ghana, Nepal (Suaahara), Mozambique, Tanzania
 - Bangladesh is nationally-representative of rural areas
 - The rest representative of project areas and/or the ZOI
- Estimate relationship between nutrition outcomes and women's empowerment using quantitative (regression) analysis
 - The analysis also looked at differential effects on the nutrition of girls compared to boys
- Associations only, NOT causality!
 - Accounts for individual (age, education), household (household size, wealth quintile) and community characteristics

A woman's empowerment score reflects her achievements in the five domains

- WEAI is an aggregate index in two parts:
 - Five Domains of Empowerment (5DE)
 - Gender Parity Index (GPI)
- Constructed using interviews of the **primary male** and **primary female** adults in the same household



Women's 5DE score and nutritional outcomes



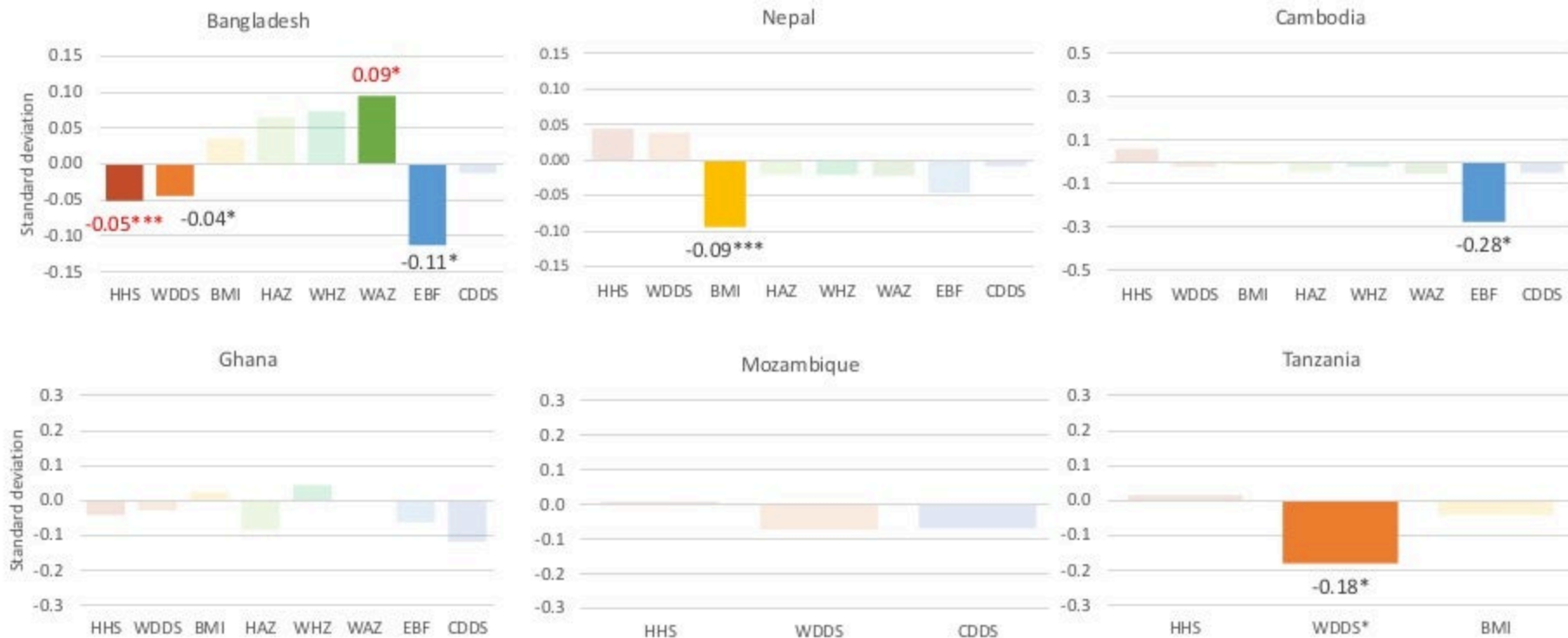
Notes: Preliminary findings from A4NH report by Quisumbing et al (2017), "Gender and women's empowerment in nutrition-sensitive agriculture: New evidence and implications for programming". Charts report effect sizes, defined as the number of sample standard deviations in the household, maternal, and child nutrition variables that are associated with a 1.0-SD change in the empowerment measure. Stars indicate statistical significance at the 10% (*), 5% (**), and 1% (***) levels.

Intrahousehold inequality score and nutritional outcomes



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Nepal - women's nutritional outcomes



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Nepal - children's anthropometric outcomes



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Lessons learned

- **Context matters** - overall empowerment more important in the Asian samples (Bangladesh and Nepal) compared to the African ones
- **Greater equality** within households is associated with **positive nutritional outcomes**, indicating importance of a household working together to generate good nutrition for the family
- **Tradeoffs exist** between agriculture-nutrition pathways and women's empowerment
 - In Nepal, control over assets is associated with lower hunger at the HH level but also poorer outcomes for women (WDDS, BMI) and children (HAZ)
 - Control over income matters for improving women's diets, **BUT** if intensifying participation in agriculture increases workload, then both maternal and child nutrition could be at risk



Lessons learned

- WEAI can be used to **identify policy and programming priorities** by disaggregating the contribution of each indicator to women's disempowerment
- Results suggest that interventions **targeting top contributors to disempowerment** that could potentially improve a range of nutritional outcomes could be very **cost-effective**, BUT we need to **be mindful of tradeoffs**
- Given results are based on associations, not impact evaluations, gender- and nutrition-sensitive agricultural programs that address the top contributors to women's disempowerment would need to be **rigorously evaluated** both in terms of impact and cost-effectiveness to guide future programming

Thank You!



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