

COUNTING WOMEN'S WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

RECENT METHODOLOGICAL ADVANCES AND TRACING THE LINKS BETWEEN DATA AND POLICY

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Workshop: "Improving data collection on women and youth employment"

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Background

- The 19th ICLS provides the opportunity to re-evaluate the measurement of work, particularly for women and youth
 - New emphasis on better measurement of all forms of work, including unpaid activities
- Increasing concern amongst World Bank operational staff that women's participation in the labor market is not adequately captured by standard survey instruments
 - For example: Honduras, South Asia, low/declining female labor force participation
 - Policy response may not be adequate
- Additional concern that the 19th ICLS employment definition may affect men and women differentially
 - Gender roles in agriculture

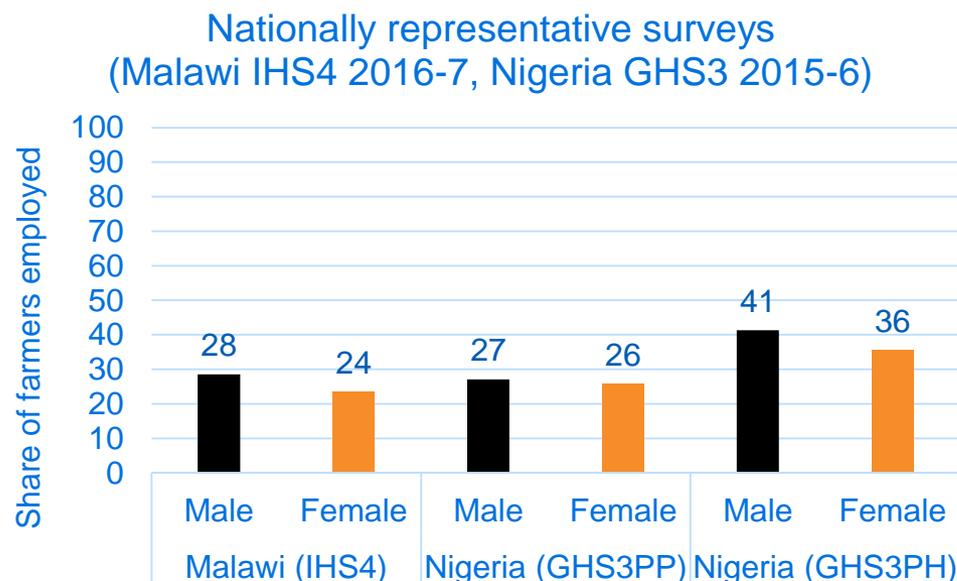
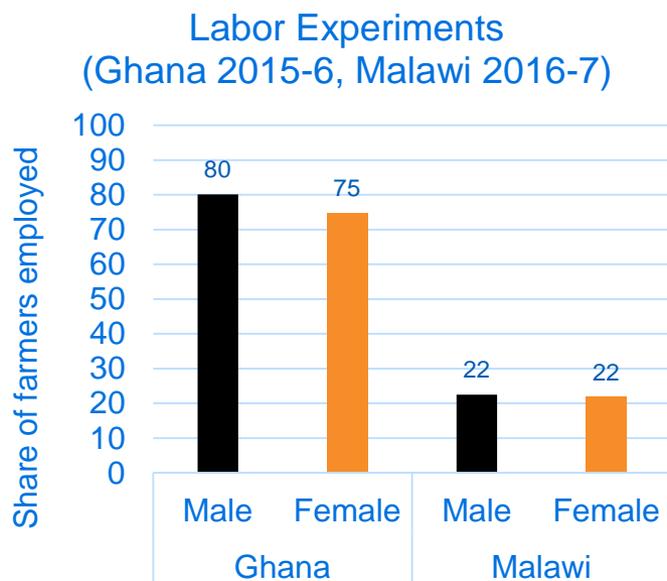
Methodological progress since 19th ICLS

- Women's Work and Employment Partnership (WWEP)
 - Phase 1 (2015-17): 2 pilot studies completed, Ghana and Malawi
 - Phase 2 (2018-now): 1 pilot study ongoing – Sri Lanka (with ILO, DCS)
 - Supported by Hewlett Foundation and Data2X
- Objectives:
 - Improve measurement of male and female labor in multitopic household surveys (such as Living Standard Measurement Study surveys), esp. labor in agriculture
 - Align household survey labor modules with new LFS practices
 - Explore use of new technologies for measuring physical activity and understanding gender differences
 - Develop guidelines on labor measurement
 - Disseminate best-practice standards and support countries in the implementation

Operationalization challenges of 19th ICLS

- Data collection
 - Boundary between employment and own-use production work based on the “main intended destination of the production”
 - How to assess the boundary?
 - Total potential production
 - Clusters of production activities (crop farming, livestock, fisheries)
 - Single product (e.g. maize, beans, milk)
- Transition
 - How to manage the break in time series
- Link to National Accounts
 - Macro-measurement of labor productivity

Ag employment declines under 19th ICLS standards

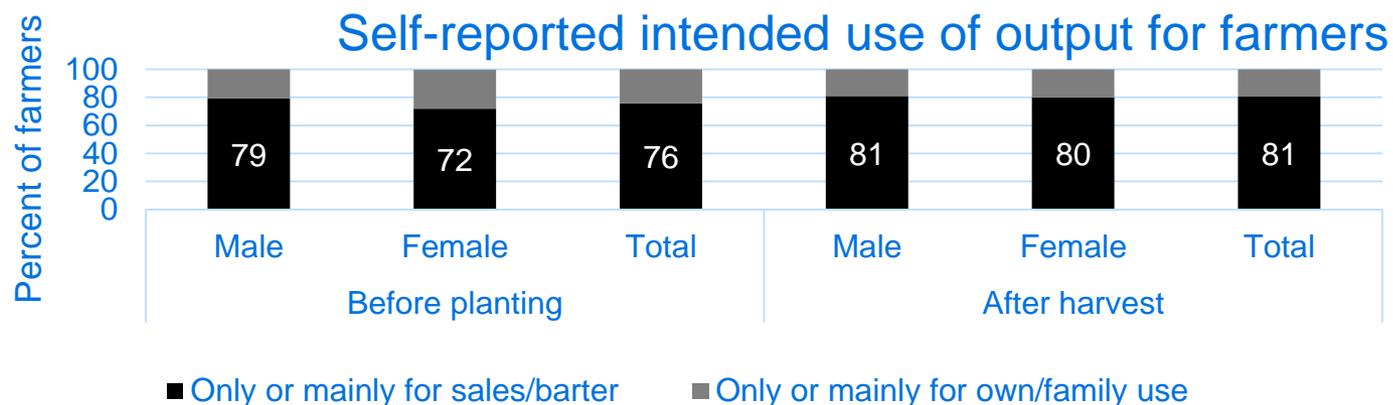


- Women's employment in agriculture declines disproportionately, but gender differences not always significant

How to assess the boundary: Activity?

Activity-level operationalization: Ghana study

- **~1 in 5 farmers is no longer classified as employed under the new international definition of employment**
 - 76-82% of adult farmers report their products are mainly or only intended for sale => employed by the new standards.
 - Percentage is lower for female farmers, but statistics for women also show greater variability over time.



- Significant churning (~1/3 of farmers judge their intended use of output differently before planting than after harvesting)

How to assess the boundary: Crop-Level?

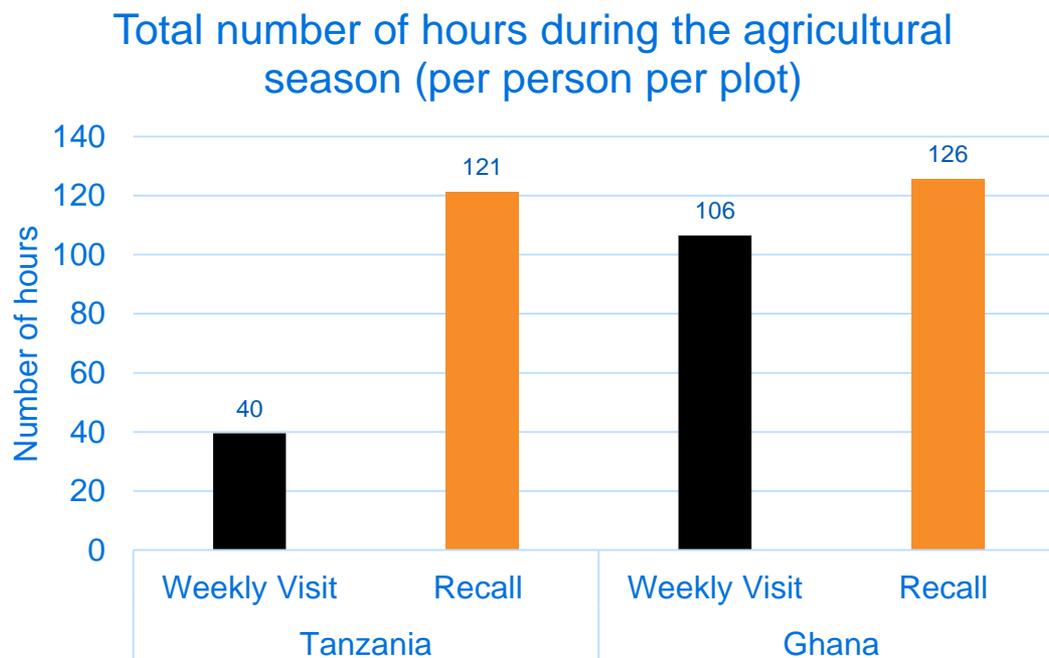
Crop-level operationalization: Ghana study

- **Broadly similar results based on crop-level data on intended sales and intended labor allocation and aggregation across crops if ...**
 - ... using a commercialization threshold of 50% (=> *row C below*).
 - Clearly, the threshold matters.

Intends to sell... (in percent)	Male	Female	Total
A: any harvest	98	98	98
B: at least half the harvest of at least one crop	93	93	93
C: at least half the harvest, total across crops	82	80	81
N	687	567	1254

- Gender differences are smaller using this approach
→ few gender differences in cropping patterns

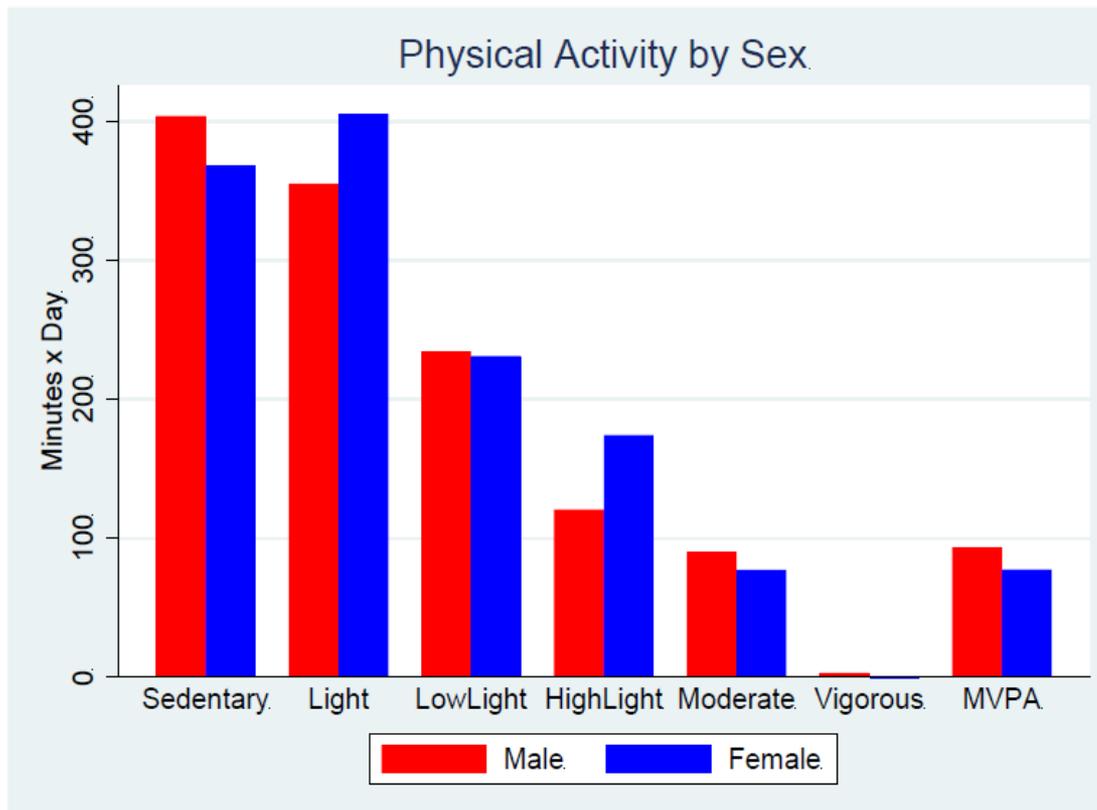
Recall method may overestimate farming hours



- Recall method overestimates hours per person per plot, but doesn't capture all persons and plots
- Household members marginally involved in agriculture often not captured (esp. women)

New technologies

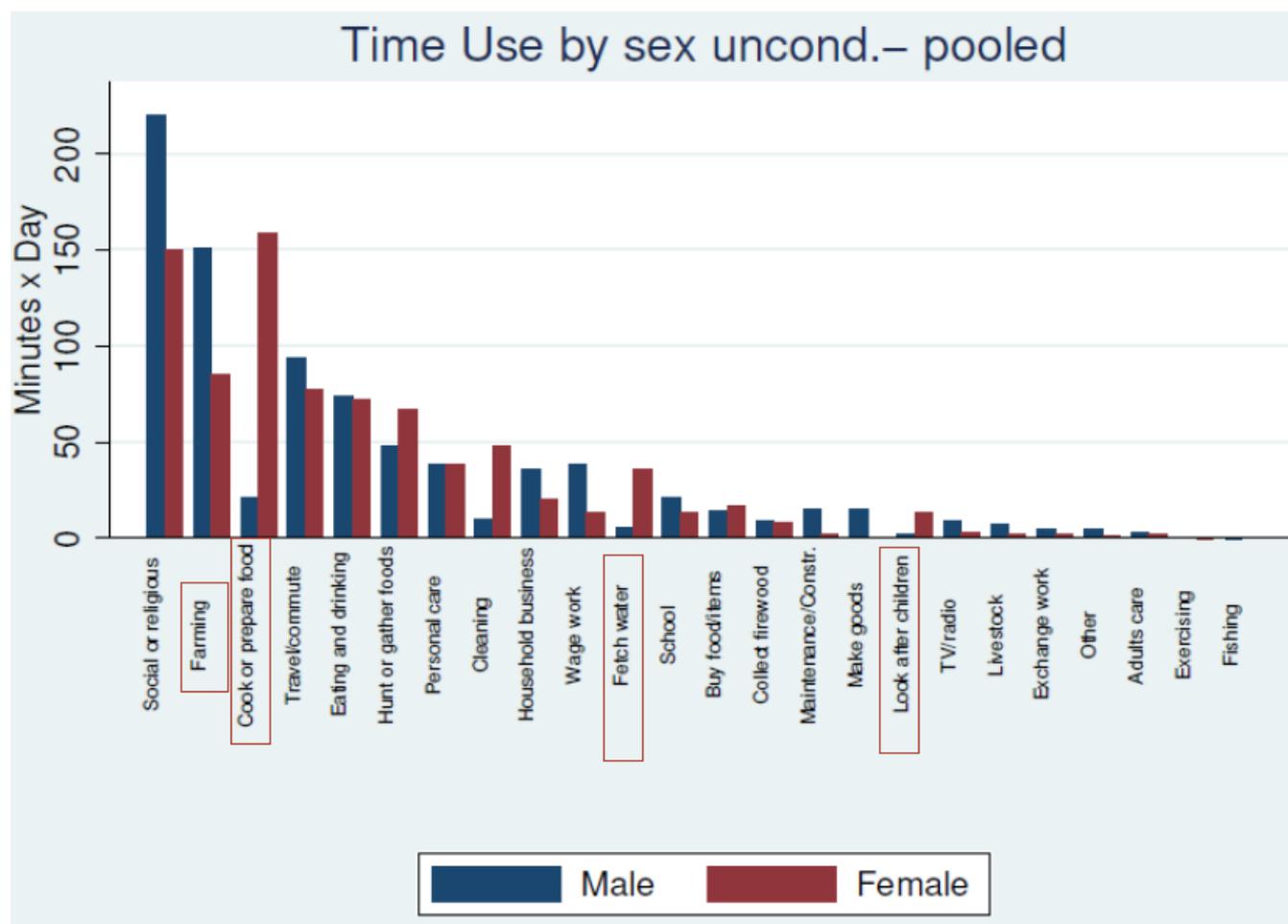
- New technologies can provide further insights but require more testing
- Example: Study to track physical activity in Malawi using accelerometers
 - Joint with University of California, San Diego, data collected in 3 districts



- Women: more light activity, less time sedentary
- Men: more medium and vigorous activity, more time sedentary

Combining new and traditional technologies

Activity tracking data can be combined with traditional time use data



Malawi study highlights traditional gender patterns in time use

- Women devote more time to unpaid work: cooking, gathering food cleaning
- Men devote more time to social and economic activities

Relevance and next steps

Relevance for development policy making

- Understanding women's and men's work is critical for the success of development policies
- 19th ICLS allows providing more nuanced labor market information to policy makers
 - Better measurement of time spent on unpaid activities can document women's labor constraints and time poverty
- WWEP has resulted in better coordination across agencies (ILO, FAO, World Bank) in harmonizing survey instruments and supporting the design of statistical systems

Next steps:

- Finalize Sri Lanka pilot study (jointly with ILO and DCS)
- Develop technical guidelines for multi-topic household surveys
- Disseminate best-practice standards and support countries in the implementation (jointly with ILO)

THANK YOU

