



INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty  
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# Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index

## Call for Applications for Ph.D. Dissertation Fellowships

Released: May 7, 2012

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) invites applications for Ph.D. dissertation research fellowships on the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), in collaboration with US Government's Feed the Future initiative, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI).

### About the WEAI

The WEAI is the first measure to directly capture women's empowerment and inclusion levels in the agricultural sector. The WEAI focuses on five domains: 1) decisions over agricultural production, 2) power over productive resources such as land and livestock, 3) decisions over income, 4) leadership in the community, and 5) time use. Women are considered to be empowered if they have adequate achievements in four of the five areas. The Index also takes into consideration the empowerment of women compared with men in the same household, based on asking women and men the same survey questions.

The Index is a partnership between IFPRI, the US Government's Feed the Future initiative of USAID, and OPHI of Oxford University. The index focuses on women because they play a critical role in agricultural growth in developing countries yet face persistent obstacles and economic constraints, limiting further inclusion in the sector.

Piloted in three countries with diverse socioeconomic and cultural contexts, Bangladesh, Guatemala, and Uganda, the Index was developed to track the change in women's empowerment that occurs as a direct or indirect result of US government intervention under the Feed the Future initiative to tackle global hunger and food security. The US government will use the Index for performance monitoring and impact evaluations across Feed the Future focus countries. The WEAI is also a useful tool for tracking progress toward gender equality, which is one of the Millennium Development Goals. Since its launch in February 2012 at the Commission on the Status of Women in New York, there has been great interest from donors, partners and other organizations to use and adopt the WEA Index to monitor and evaluate a diverse set of interventions targeted towards the agriculture and food security sector.

More information on the WEA Index and partnerships can be found on the IFPRI, OPHI and USAID websites: [IFPRI](#); [USAID](#); [OPHI](#)

## Objectives of the fellowship

The objectives of sponsoring PhD work on the WEAI are the following:

1. Strengthen understanding and evidence of the WEAI through application to other settings or furthering knowledge surrounding a particular domain or analysis of the Index.
2. Expand understanding of WEAI dynamics through complementary qualitative and ethnographic work on domains or frameworks underlying the WEAI.
3. Support promising researchers interested in gender and agriculture through strengthening capacity for research, fieldwork and policy experience, and to build collaborations with their home academic institutions.

Research proposals supported under this call must be focused entirely or mostly on one or more of 19 FTF focus countries. The FTF focus countries eligible for research proposals are Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Rwanda, Senegal, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. More information about FTF and its activities in those countries can be found on the FTF [website](#).

Proposals submitted for this fellowship have the option of using quantitative methods, qualitative methods or mixed methods. Applicants may propose to use secondary data (as specified below) or collect their own data. However, proposals including primary data collection or participation at some level in fieldwork are highly encouraged. Applicants can propose use of IFPRI pilot survey data or use of/field participation in ongoing FTF monitoring baselines, which will be granted and coordinated with FTF contingent upon funding of proposals. Countries for which applicants can propose to participate in FTF baseline collection are: Cambodia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Tajikistan, and Zambia.

Examples of potential research proposals could include, but are not limited to the following:

- A. Using mixed methods to better understand key questions and assumptions surrounding women's decisionmaking and autonomy in agriculture-related production and how these dynamics may affect measurement and data collection, with implications for index application in Uganda and Ethiopia.
- B. Using quantitative data to validate diverse measures of time use indicators using data from Cambodia and how variations in these indicators have implications for the WEAI and gendered program evaluation.
- C. Program evaluation of a specific agriculture and food security intervention in Honduras using quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods using the WEAI as a key outcome.
- D. Examining relationships between the WEAI domains or indicators and agricultural productivity or household food security in Bangladesh to estimate how increasing women's empowerment could contribute to other policy objectives.

Support for this research and the overall WEAI development is provided under funding from USAID. Three research fellowships are expected to be awarded funding.

## **Who may apply**

An eligible candidate for a WEAI Dissertation Fellowship will have the following criteria:

1. Is a full-time Ph.D. student in the social sciences or humanities, including but not limited to programs in Agricultural Economics, Economics, Health Policy, Nutrition, Public Policy, or Sociology;
2. All nationalities may apply;
3. Preference will be given to students completing their Doctorates at developing country universities, however students from all universities may apply;
4. Preference will be given to proposals which include primary data collection or participation in fieldwork of ongoing survey efforts as noted above;
5. Applicants must complete all Ph.D. requirements except dissertation by the time the fellowship begins;
6. Applicants must be willing to present research to USAID, IFPRI and other stakeholders upon completion in both written and oral formats;
7. Applicants must submit at least one article based on research funded through the WEAI Dissertation Fellowship to a peer-reviewed journal for publication upon completion.

## **Criteria for Grant Selection**

1. Quality of the proposal, particularly in theory and methods, for addressing domains of the WEAI or WEAI in general (50% weight),
2. The importance of the proposed research for policy and FTF programming (20% weight),
3. Demonstrated interest and background of student and professor(s) on gender and agriculture, food and nutrition issues. In particular, sufficient analytical skills and training to conduct proposed research, including language skills and experience to conduct field work (if proposed) (15% weight),
4. Feasibility of the proposed work to be completed within two years of time (5% weight).

Proposals will be reviewed according to these criteria by a committee by a panel of representatives from IFPRI, OPHI, and USAID.

## **Funding**

Fellowships will provide support for up to two years and up to \$30,000 total. The fellowships must be held for a single continuous period and are expected to start September 2012.

The proposal may request funding for the following expenses, as needed:

- Travel expenses for fieldwork, presentations or conference attendance (including visa and health fees, if applicable);
- Cost of fees related to academic degree program;

- Cost of living expenses during fieldwork or write-up (including board and room);
- Costs for equipment and research (including computing, software and other research expenses);

Upon completion of the field-work the student will present his/ her preliminary findings to IFPRI, USAID or other stakeholders in Washington DC or in country of fieldwork. A copy of the dissertation will be provided to IFPRI upon completion.

## Process and Timetable

July 31, 2012	Proposals due. <b>Fully completed proposals must be sent by email no later than the due date.</b> All submissions will receive notification upon receipt of their application.
August 31, 2012	Announcement of research awards. Recipients will be notified, and all other applicants will be notified of the decision.

## How to Apply

The completed application form including any supporting material should be emailed to: [IFPRI-WEAI@cgiar.org](mailto:IFPRI-WEAI@cgiar.org). The application form and instructions for supporting documentation can be downloaded here:

<http://www.ifpri.org/blog/dissertation-research-fellowships-gender-and-agriculture>

**Late proposals or proposal components cannot be accepted. Proposals which do not conform to the requirements listed above will not be considered.**

## Questions

Any questions that are not addressed by a careful reading of this call for proposals and the material online on the IFPRI, USAID or OPHI websites should be directed to IFPRI by contacting: Amber Peterman, Research Fellow in the Poverty, Health and Nutrition Division at [a.peterman@cgiar.org](mailto:a.peterman@cgiar.org).

For questions specifically related to use of FTF baselines including how to participate in the implementation of FTF baselines, please contact Emily Hogue, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist in the Bureau for Food Security at [ehogue@usaid.gov](mailto:ehogue@usaid.gov).

Please note that because of the large number of inquiries, requests for information on topics already covered by this document or associated websites may not be answered.