



**Women's empowerment and improved nutrition: An assessment of a project in Bangladesh using an adapted version of Pro-WEAI for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture (Pro-WEFI)**

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# Overview

- **Getting to know about Pro-WEFI**
- **Study design and data collection**
- **Summary of the preliminary findings of the quantitative results**
- **Summary of the preliminary findings of the qualitative results**

# What is pro-WEFI?

- The Project Level **Women's Empowerment in Fisheries and Aquaculture Index** (ProWEFI) measures the *empowerment, agency and inclusion* of women in *fisheries and aquaculture* contexts.
- ProWEFI helps to identify ways to *overcome the obstacles and constraints* facing women in the fisheries and aquaculture value chain.
- **Useful tool** for policymakers, other research organizations, implementing organizations and academics seeking **to measure and increase women's empowerment** in a fisheries and aquaculture.
- The WEFI also allows projects to **track Reach-Benefit-Empower-Transform** (RBET) outcomes for women in fisheries and aquaculture projects (McDougall et al., 2021).

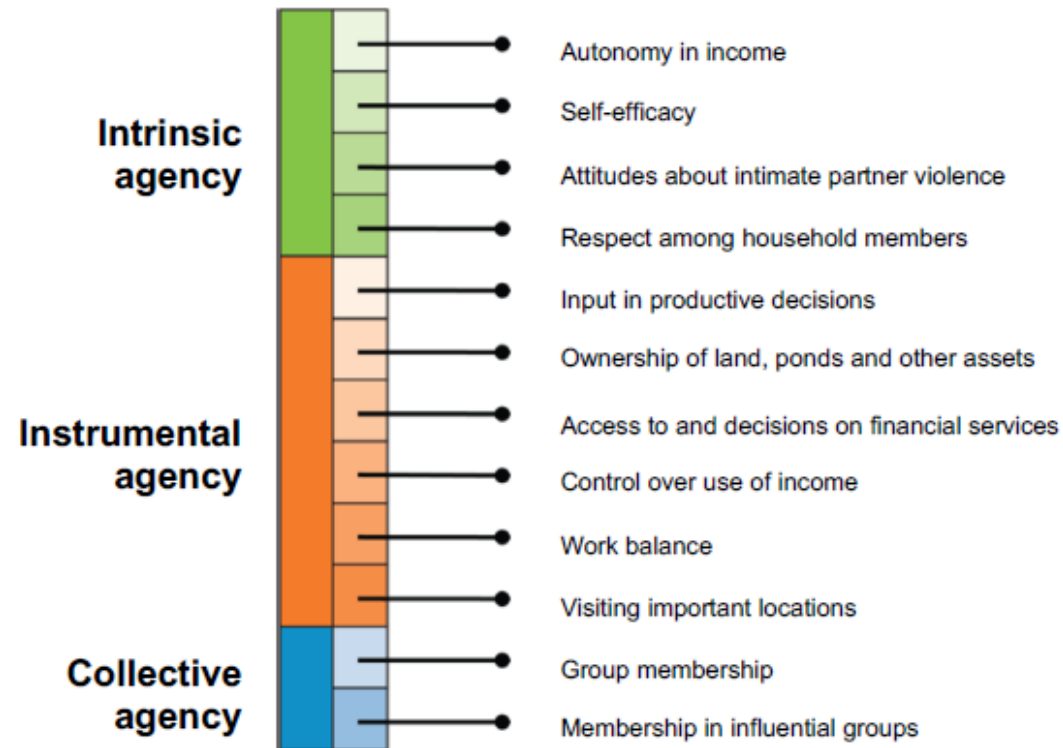
# How is pro-WEFI calculated?

- ProWEFI is a **survey-based index** using interviews of the primary male and primary female adults in the same household.
- ProWEFI **draws largely on the ProWEAI** but is **tailored to aquaculture and fisheries contexts** in addition to capturing information on agriculture.
- It is aligned based on **three domains of empowerment: *intrinsic, collective*** and ***instrumental agency***.
- It is an aggregate index, composed of **two parts**: weighted empowerment score (**3DE**) and gender parity index (**GPI**).
- It is a multidimensional index composed of **12 indicators**, where a respondent is said to be **empowered** if she/he achieves adequacy (i.e. meets a set threshold) for **75%** of the indicators.

# Pro-WEFI domains and indicators

## Pro-WEFI

- It has 12 indicators
- Each indicator receives **equal** proportion (1/12) of the overall weight
- An individual is **empowered** if adequate in 75% of indicators (8/12 indicators).



# Pro-WEFI Index Composition

- The Pro-WEFI 3 domains of empowerment (3DE): Assesses the degree to which women are empowered in the 3 domains of empowerment.
- Gender Parity Index (GPI): Reflects the percentage of women who are empowered or who are as empowered as the men in their households.



# Pro-WEFI pilot study

- **Question:** What is the status of economic and social empowerment of women relative to men, as well as the nutrition and dietary diversity of women relative to men, in households in North Western (NW) Bangladesh, which participate in “Aquaculture: Increasing income, diversifying diets and empowering women in Bangladesh and Nigeria” (IDEA) project?
- **Location** : 2 Districts in Northwestern Bangladesh (Bogura and Nagaon)
- **Villages** : 30 Villages
- **Duration** : July – August 2022

## Quantitative Data:

No.	Study arms/categories	Female	Male	Total
1	Aquaculture +nutrition + gender training	161	159	320
2	Aquaculture training (landless women)	21	20	41
3	Control group	35	35	70
Total		217	214	431

# Qualitative data collected

No.	Study arms	FGDs M	FGDs F	KIIs M	KIIs F	Comments
1	Aquaculture + Nutrition + Gender training	3	4	16	15	
2	Aquaculture training (landless women)	3	3	10	21	They also received forum theatre
3	GTA (ie. forum theatre)	4	4	17	17	They also received Aq++ training
4	Control group	2	2	5	5	
5	Project and Govt Staff			4		
Total FGDs and KIIs		12	13	52	58	
Total Participants		96	104	52	58	

We covered 12 villages out of the quant sample of 30 villages. We covered all upazilas and districts from the quantitative sample.





# Summary of the Preliminary Quantitative Results

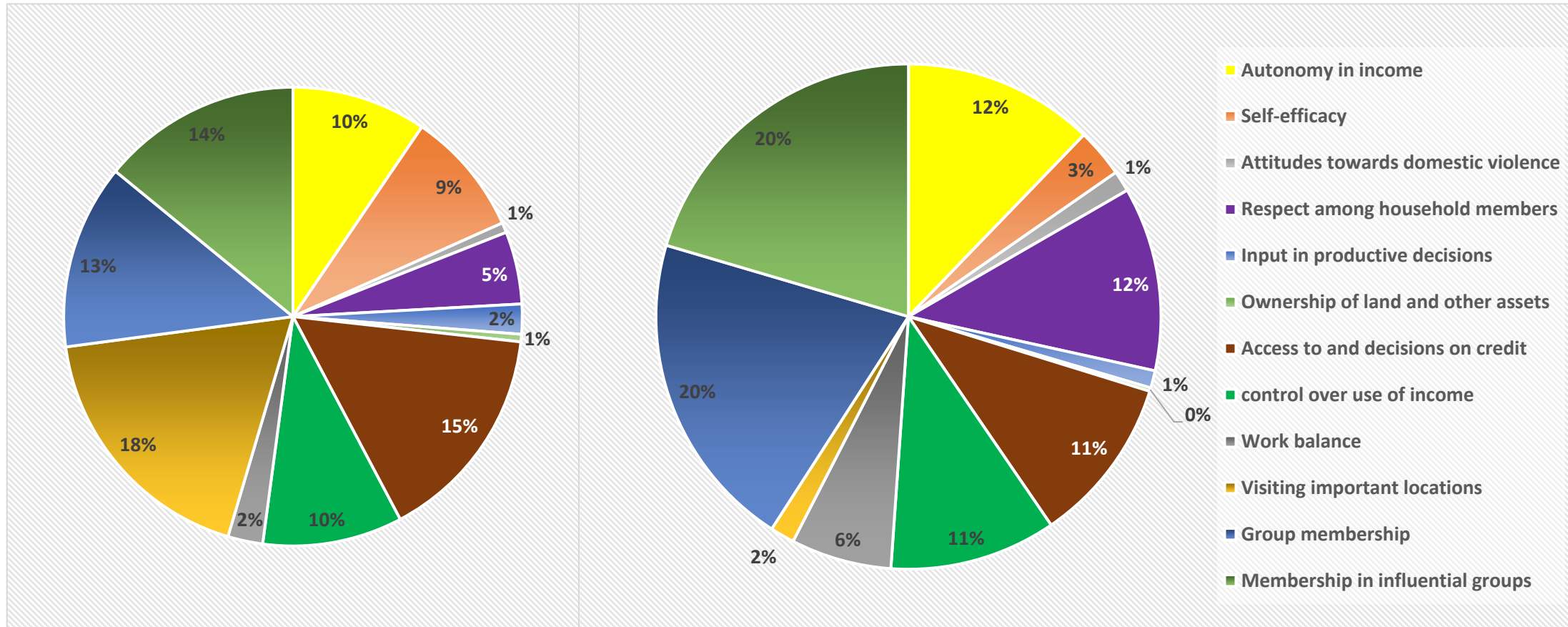
**Table 1. PRO-WEFI Results (using 75% cut off-score)**

Indicator	Women	Men
Number of observations	208	187
<b>3DE score</b>	<b>0.77</b>	<b>0.80</b>
Disempowerment score (1 – 3DE)	0.23	0.20
<b>% achieving empowerment</b>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>0.49</b>
% not achieving empowerment	0.56	0.51
Mean 3DE score for not yet empowered	0.60	0.61
Mean disempowerment score (1 – 3DE)	0.40	0.39
Gender Parity Index (GPI)	0.93	
<b>% achieving gender parity</b>	<b>0.66</b>	
<b>% not achieving gender parity</b>	<b>0.34</b>	
Average empowerment gap	0.22	
PROWEFI score	0.79	

**Table 2. Percentage of respondents by adequacy in PROWEFI indicators**

Adequacy (%) by indicators	Women	Men
Autonomy in income	60.1	61.0
<b>Self-efficacy</b>	<b>64.9</b>	<b>89.3</b>
Attitudes towards domestic violence	97.1	96.3
<b>Respect among household members</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>61.0</b>
Input in productive decisions	93.3	97.3
Ownership of land and other assets	98.6	99.5
<b>Access to and decisions on credit</b>	<b>41.8</b>	<b>65.8</b>
control over use of income	57.2	68.4
Work balance	91.3	74.3
<b>Visiting important locations</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>91.4</b>
Group membership	52.9	43.3
<b>Membership in influential groups</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>28.3</b>

# Contribution of indicators to disempowerment score



**LEFT side:** Highest contributors to **WOMEN's** disempowerment: **Freedom of mobility, Access to credit and Group membership.**

**RIGHT side:** Highest contributors to **MEN's** disempowerment: **Ownership of land and other assets, Input in productive decisions, Respect among hh members and Autonomy in income.**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Observation</b>	<b>% Achieving Adequacy</b>
Decides on own health and diet	202	97.5
Decides on health and diet during pregnancy	6	83.3
Decides on child's diet	3	100.0
Decides on weaning and breastfeeding	4	100.0
Decides to seek healthcare	13	92.3
Decides to purchase food and health products	150	100.0
<b>Has access to food and health products</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>67.3</b>

**More WOMEN report:**

- **achieving adequacy in respect among household members.**
- **having access to membership in groups and influential groups.**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Aquaculture + Nutrition + Gender</i>	<i>Landless</i>	<i>Control</i>
Number of observations	152	21	35
<b>3DE score</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>0.76</b>
Disempowerment score (1 – 3DE)	0.24	0.12	0.24
% achieving empowerment	0.41	0.67	0.40
% not achieving empowerment	0.59	0.33	0.60
Mean 3DE score for not yet empowered	0.59	0.63	0.61
Mean disempowerment score (1 – 3DE)	0.41	0.37	0.39

- Households in the “Landless” arm achieve higher scores across all empowerment indices compared to the other groups
- However, sub-sample is very small to suggest statistical significance of results.



# Summary of the Preliminary Findings of the Qualitative Study

# Preliminary findings

- Main form of group membership was reported to be **micro-credit groups for women**. Landless women reported the fishing group they are part of.
- Landless women reported **a higher power and freedom to make important life decisions**. However, most of them reported finding this decision making to be a burden
- Most landless women also reported their **husband's to be negligent, disrespectful and even violent towards them**
- The **landless women also have high mobility**, and since they are extreme poor, gender norms are more relaxed in the landless community.
- **Landless women take up multiple jobs in a day to fend for their families**. This leaves them little time for any leisure. Many of the men drink, gamble and are in polygamous relationships



# Preliminary findings ...

- Women from farming communities expressed lower freedom and power to make important decisions in their lives. The only important decision most of them reported being able to make is regarding the child's education and marriage.
- Most of them expressed regret at not being able to pursue their education and at being married at young age without consent
- Women from farming communities also expressed a lack of power to pursue business or work as they please
- Many of the women expressed the belief that earning an income brings power
- Women from the Hindu communities had a better understanding of their decision making or lack of

# Nutrition and health

- Most participants **reported understanding** the importance of fish based diet after the nutrition training, especially of small fish like *mola* (but complained about lack of supply)
- There **was no report of malnutrition**, however there were reports of mentally disabled children among the participants
- Most **women got married and gave birth at a very young age**, leading to trauma and birth related difficulties
- All participants reported **eating better compared to 10 years ago** as they have more food production
- Most participants reported **not receiving any nutrition related education from NGOs or health workers except a few** when they are pregnant
- Most **women participants reported making food related decisions in household**



# Thank You

## Contact

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**WorldFish**

# KIIs

KIIs	Who?
Community Profiles with village authorities	Village authorities
KII with project and Govt officials	Project and Govt
Retrospection on project activities with all trainees	All
Life Histories with women trainees only	Women only

# FGDs with project participants

Chapters of FGD	AQ+nutrition+gender training and landless women
Community FGD	Men and women
Seasonality patterns	Men and women
Local understanding of Empowerment	Men and women
Decision making processes	Men and women
Group membership and participation	Men and women
Intra-household and community relationships	Men and women
Nutrition and health	Men and women

# Insights about Tools

- The ladder of power and freedom tool and the life history methodology were key tools in bringing to light women's aspirations and feelings towards empowerment. Ladder of power and freedom took time to explain but the tool itself created realizations of own disempowerment

