

Presented at the FAO-IFAD-ILO Workshop on
“Gaps, trends and current research in gender dimensions of agricultural
and rural employment: differentiated pathways out of poverty”
Rome, 31 March - 2 April 2009



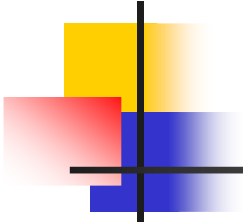
Food Poverty, Livelihoods and Employment Constraints

The Structural Differences between Rural Poverty in Female- and Male-Headed Households

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(The views expressed do not represent the official views of WFP)

Overview



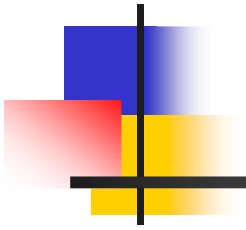
Question:

Are there significant differences in the underlying factors explaining food poverty in female-headed households and male-headed households?

Answer:

The structural causes of a lack of employment and food poverty transcends gender differences, though the road taken by females and males is divergent.

Key Issues and Findings



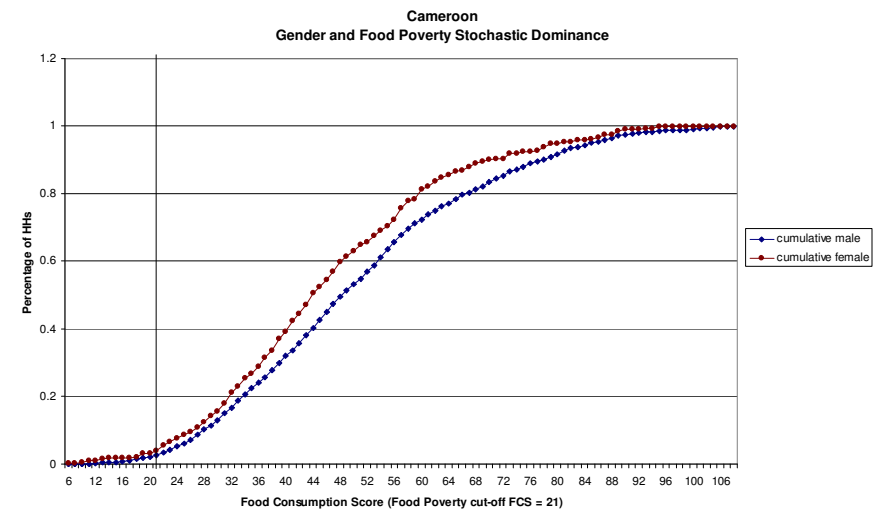
Are FHHs Over-Represented among the Food Poor?

- Patterns of food poverty dominance explored using Stochastic Dominance Analysis.

Results

- There is significant dominance of female-headed food poverty over male-headed food poverty in countries under study.
- In fact, a greater proportion of FHHs in the sample fall into the food poor category than do MHHs.

Country	Gender Group	Food Consumption Group			Pearson Chi2
		Poor	Borderline	Acceptable	
Laos	Female	4.50%	13.40%	82.10%	11.97 [0.003]
	Male	1.90%	10.40%	87.70%	
Madagascar	Female	24.40%	24.40%	51.10%	44.87 [0.000]
	Male	13.90%	18.80%	67.40%	
Tanzania	Female	8.10%	6.40%	85.50%	4.83 [0.089]
	Male	5.70%	5.90%	88.40%	





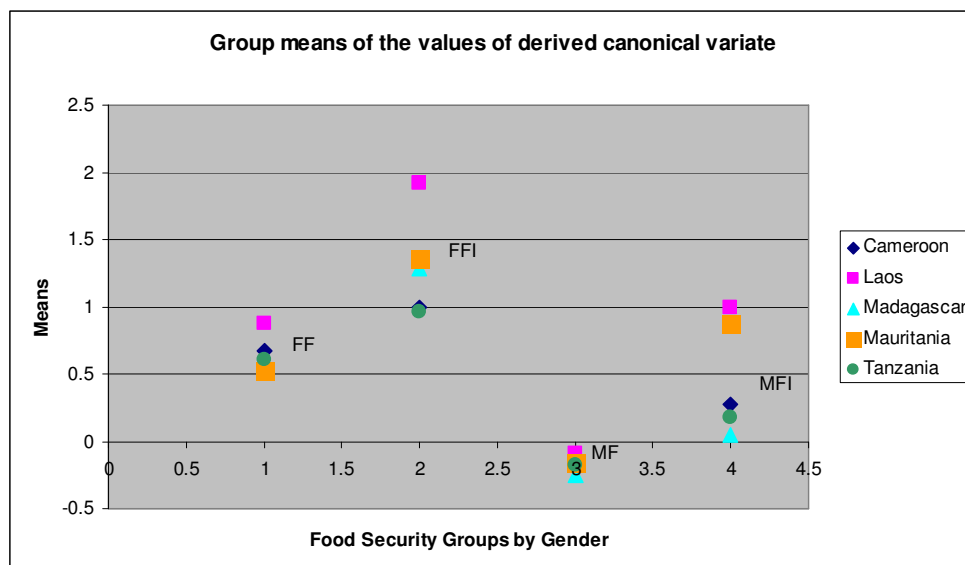
How do Food Secure and Insecure MHHs and FHHs Compare?

- Discriminant Function Analysis used to understand how MHHs and FHHs differ in relation to structural factors determining rural employment and direct measures of rural employment
 - Age, Education, Household dependency ratio;
 - Land size, Type of land tenure;
 - Productive assets, Livestock assets;
 - Reliance on subsistence agriculture; skilled and unskilled wage labour, on salary income, and on remittances.

What are the factors that differentiate FHHs and MHHs?

Results:

- FHHs, whether food poor or not AND food poor MHHs resemble each other in relation to the means of the indicators under study.
- In all cases, food 'rich' male-headed households stand apart from the rest.



Significant indicator	Relation to Food Poverty
Education	-
Productive Assets	-
Remittances	+
Access to Land	-
Dependence on subsistence agriculture	-



Implications for Future Research

- Time series analysis required to truly test the 'feminisation of poverty' assertion.
- Still requires further investigation at the individual level due to the often ambiguous definition of 'female-headed household'.
- Requires in-depth understanding of the nature and difference in obstacles for FHHs and MHHs: social, cultural, political and economic exclusion.
- Further validation of Food Consumption Score as a proxy of food poverty required.



Policy Implications and Conclusions

- Employment and income-generating activities may not be sufficient for poverty alleviation.
- Long-term links for poverty reduction through employment are required: asset-building, land rights, education and other asset-forming social spending.
- Targeted or universal?
 - Universal in issues tackled
 - Targeted approach still required



Thank you!
