

SIERRA LEONE 2024

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND NUTRITION  
SURVEY REPORT



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	1
List of Figures .....	4
List of Tables.....	5
FOREWORD .....	6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	7
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	8
KEY INSIGHTS .....	9
STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT .....	10
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	11
1.1: <i>Integration of the Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Module in the Agricultural Survey</i> .....	11
1.2: <i>Design and Implementation of the WEN Survey</i> .....	12
1.3: <i>Lesson learned</i> .....	13
1.3.1: Key Achievements .....	14
1.3.2: Challenges.....	14
1.3.3: Lessons Learned.....	15
1.3.4: Recommendations for Future Surveys.....	15
CHAPTER 2: WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT.....	16
SECTION 2.1: CLAIMING RIGHTS .....	18
2.1.1: Results by Region.....	18
2.1.2: Results by Age Groups .....	19
2.1.3: Results by Literacy .....	20
2.1.4: Results by Household Headship.....	21
SECTION 2.2: MAKING CHOICES.....	22
2.2.1 Influence Over Time Allocation .....	22
2.2.1.1: Results by Region .....	23
2.2.1.2: Results by Household Headship .....	24
2.2.1.3: Results by Age Groups .....	25
2.2.2 Influence in spending decision.....	26
2.2.2.1: Results by Age Groups .....	26
2.2.2.2: Results by Position in the Household .....	27
2.2.3 Influence over own health decisions .....	28
2.2.3.1: Results by Education Level.....	28
2.2.3.2: Results by Region .....	28
SECTION 2.3: ENGAGING IN COMMUNITIES.....	29
2.3.1: Participation in Organizations .....	30
2.3.1.1: Results by Region .....	31
2.3.1.2: Results by Age Groups .....	32
2.3.1.3: Results by Literacy and Education Level .....	33
2.3.1.4: Results by Household Headship and Position in the Household .....	34

2.3.2: Leadership in Organizations .....	35
2.3.2.1: Results by Region .....	36
2.3.2.4: Results By Household Headship and Position in the Household .....	39
2.3.3: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement .....	39
2.3.3.1: Results by Region .....	41
2.3.3.2: Results by Age Groups .....	42
2.3.3.3: Results by Literacy and Education .....	42
<b>SECTION 2.4: MOBILIZING RESOURCES</b> .....	<b>44</b>
2.4.1: Use of ICT .....	45
2.4.1.1: Results by Region .....	45
2.4.1.2: Results by Age Groups .....	46
2.4.2: Use of Financial Services .....	47
2.4.2.1: Results by Region .....	47
2.4.3: Access to Credit .....	48
2.4.3.1: Results by Region .....	48
2.4.4: Property Ownership .....	49
2.4.4.2: Results by Region .....	51
<b>SECTION 2.5: EMPOWERMENT</b> .....	<b>53</b>
2.5.1: WEMNS Results .....	53
2.5.1.1: Empowerment Indicators .....	54
2.5.1.2: Contribution of Each Indicator to Disempowerment .....	55
2.5.2: Results by Region .....	57
2.5.3: Disempowerment Headcount .....	58
2.5.3.1: Results by Region .....	58
2.5.3.2: Results by Household Headship and Position in the Household .....	59
2.5.4 Intensity of Disempowerment: Results by Education .....	60
<b>CHAPTER 3: SDG 5.a.1</b> .....	<b>62</b>
3.1 <i>SDG 5.a.1 - Overview</i> .....	63
3.2 <i>Sierra Leone context</i> .....	63
3.3 <i>Survey Findings</i> .....	64
<b>CHAPTER 4: WOMEN'S DIETARY DIVERSITY</b> .....	<b>66</b>
4.1. Prevalence of MDD-W among women 18-64 .....	67
4.1.1. Results by Area and Region of Residence, Age and Education .....	68
4.3. Consumption of MDD-W Food Groups by Age Groups .....	69
4.3. Consumption of MDD-W Food Groups by Area of Residence .....	70
4.4. Consumption of Other Food Groups .....	70
4.5: Comparative Analysis Across National Surveys .....	72
<b>CHAPTER 5: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPOWERMENT AND DIETARY DIVERSITY</b> .....	<b>74</b>
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b> .....	<b>77</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>78</b>
<b>GLOSSARY</b> .....	<b>79</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>80</b>
<b>Annex 1: Sampling Methodology</b> .....	<b>81</b>

**Annex 2: Women’s empowerment and nutrition questionnaire..... 85**  
***Module E: Participation and leadership in community..... 87***

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Women's Agency .....	17
Figure 2: Percentage of awareness Toward Women's Freedoms and Rights Across Different Regions	19
Figure 3: Claiming Women's Rights by Age group .....	20
Figure 4: Claiming Women's Rights by literacy.....	21
Figure 5: Claiming Women's Rights by household headship.....	21
Figure 6: Influence over time allocation at the National level and by region .....	24
Figure 7: Influence over time allocation by gender of household head.....	25
Figure 8: Influence over time allocation by age groups .....	26
Figure 9: Percentage influence in spending decisions - Relation to Household Head. ....	27
Figure 10: Percentage of Individuals Reporting Influence in Own Health Decisions by Region.....	29
Figure 11: Percentage of individuals participating in at least one group, by regions.....	32
Figure 12: Percentage of individuals participating in at least one group, age groups.....	33
Figure 13: Percentage of individuals participating in at least one group, by Literacy and level of education.....	33
Figure 14 Participation in at Least One Organization by Household Headship: .....	34
Figure 15: Participation in Organization by relation to Household Head .....	35
Figure 16: Leadership in at least one Organization – National/Regional level .....	37
Figure 17: Leadership in at least one Organization - By age group .....	38
Figure 18: Leadership in at least one Organization - By literacy and education level .....	38
Figure 19: Leadership Participation Among Individuals in Male- and Female-Headed Households, by Gender and Relationship to Head .....	39
Figure 20: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement - National level and by region.....	41
Figure 21: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement - By age Group .....	42
Figure 22: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement - By Literacy and education level	43
Figure 23: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement, by Gender and Relationship to Head .....	44
Figure 24: Percentage of individuals having daily access to either the internet or mobile phone - National and regional level.....	46
Figure 25: Percentage of individuals having daily access to either the internet or mobile phone - by age group.....	47
Figure 26: Contributions of each indicator to disempowerment .....	56
Figure 27: Empowerment score - Regional levels .....	58
Figure 28: Disempowerment Headcount - National and regional levels.....	59
Figure 29: Disempowerment headcount relationship to the HH .....	60
Figure 30: Intensity of disempowerment by literacy and education level .....	61
Figure 31: SDG 5.a.1(a) - National and regional disparities.....	64

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Percentage of women and men engaged in different types of paid and unpaid activities in the past seven days - National Level.....	22
Table 2: Percentage of women and men with a lot of influence in time spent on specific activities – National Level.....	23
Table 3: Percentage of individuals having influence in spending decisions - by age.....	26
Table 4: Percentage of individuals having influence in own health decisions by education level: .....	28
Table 5: Gender-Disaggregated Participation in Organizational Groups .....	30
Table 6: Gender-Disaggregated Participation in Organizational Groups, by regions.....	31
Table 7: Individual acting as leader in different organizations .....	36
Table 8: Perceptions of Participation and Influence in Community Activities (Self-Reported), by statement .....	41
Table 9: Gender Differences in Digital Access and Daily Use of Mobile Phones and Internet .....	45
Table 10: Percentage of individual using different financial service - National and regional levels.....	48
Table 11: Percentage of individual reporting access to different credit platform - National and regional levels.....	49
Table 12: Ownership and Tenure Security of Land and Dwellings.....	51
Table 13: Legally Documented Ownership, Transfer Rights, and Secure Tenure.....	51
Table 14: Empowerment Results.....	54
Table 15: Headcount ratios (% of respondents constrained in each indicator).....	54
Table 16: Contributions of each indicator to disempowerment .....	57
Table 17: Share of women among owners or rights bearers over agricultural land .....	64
Table 18 MDD-W achievement and Food Group Diversity Score for women 18-64 .....	67
Table 19: MDD-W achievement and Food Group Diversity Score for women 18-64 by region, education and age groups .....	68
Table 20: Proportion of Women Consuming Each MDD-W Food Group by Age Group.....	69
Table 20: Consumption of the MDD-W food groups by residence type.....	70
Table 22: Consumption of other food groups .....	71
Table 23: Consumption of other food groups - Regional pattern.....	71
Table 24: MDDW Prevalence and the FGCS Score across other surveys.....	72
Table 25: Comparative Consumption of Savory Snacks, Sugar-Sweetened Beverages, and Sweet Foods (DHS 2019, SLNNS 2021, WEN 2024) .....	72
Table 25: Mean Empowerment Scores by Women’s Dietary Diversity (MDD-W) Status .....	74
Table 26: Percentage of Women Consuming Each Food Group by Empowerment Category (Low, Medium, High).....	75
Table 27: Consumption of other foods by Women’s Empowerment Level (%).....	75

## FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2024 Women's Empowerment and Nutrition (WEN) Survey Report, a groundbreaking study that provides critical insights into the intersection of gender, agriculture, and nutrition in Sierra Leone. As our nation strives to achieve the ambitious goals outlined in the Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP 2024-2030), this report serves as an indispensable tool for evidence-based policymaking and program development.

Agriculture remains the backbone of our economy and the cornerstone of our Feed Salone<sup>1</sup> initiative. However, as this report clearly demonstrates, we cannot achieve true agricultural transformation without addressing the systemic barriers that limit women's full participation and empowerment in the sector.

The findings presented in this report reveal both progress and persistent gaps. While we see encouraging signs of women's participation in agricultural organizations and increasing awareness of women's rights, the data also shows disparities in decision-making power, access to resources, and nutritional outcomes. What makes this survey particularly valuable is its integrated approach, examining not just agricultural production but also the critical linkages between women's empowerment and household nutrition.

I wish to acknowledge the collaborative effort that made this report possible. The partnership between Statistics Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been instrumental in producing these high-quality statistics.

As Statistician General, I reaffirm our commitment at Stats SL to continue producing timely, reliable, and disaggregated data that illuminates the path toward inclusive development.

**Andrew Bob Johnny**  
Statistician General  
Statistics Sierra Leone

---

<sup>1</sup> The **Feed Salone Initiative**, launched in October 2023, is Sierra Leone's flagship agri-food transformation strategy. It is built around six strategic pillars—spanning mechanization, access to finance, AgTech, and value-chain development—with the core aim of reducing food imports, expanding exports, fostering climate resilience, promoting inclusive job creation, and achieving food security. Supported by partners such as FAO, the EU, Africa Phytosanitary Programme, and through investments of over US \$100 million, Feed Salone has already reached tens of thousands of farmers and is operationalizing regional ecological planning and market integration. More info [here](#)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The successful completion of the 2024 Women's Empowerment and Nutrition (WEN) Survey Report represents a significant collaborative achievement for Sierra Leone's statistical system.

Statistics Sierra Leone (Stats SL) and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) extends its deepest appreciation to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for their unwavering technical and financial support throughout this initiative.

The 50x2030 Initiative, a transformative partnership between the World Bank, FAO, and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), has been instrumental in strengthening Sierra Leone's capacity to produce high-quality agricultural and gender statistics.

We are particularly grateful to the dedicated coordination team that made this report possible: **Momodu M. Kamara**, Principal Statistician and Head of Agriculture Division at Stats SL. and **Edward Kargbo**, Assistant Director at MAFS, who both served as Coordinators for the WEN Survey and as lead editors of this report. Special recognition goes to the core team of analysts and writers who contributed their expertise: **Christopher H. Kalokoh** and **Aruna M. Kanu** (Statistics Sierra Leone), **Andrew Samura** and **Margaret Bangura** (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security).

Our sincere appreciation extends to the various government agencies, development partners, and local authorities who facilitated the survey implementation.

This collaborative effort demonstrates Sierra Leone's growing capacity to produce gender-sensitive agricultural statistics that will inform policies to empower women, improve nutrition, and transform our agricultural sector.

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Meaning
AASS	Annual Agricultural Sample Survey
AG	Agricultural Survey
AGRIS	Agricultural Integrated Survey
EA	Enumeration Area
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGDS	Food Group Diversity Score
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GSARS	Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics
HH	Household
HoH	Head of Household
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MDD-W	Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women
MTNDP	Medium-Term National Development Plan
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SLAAS	Sierra Leone Annual Agricultural Survey
SLARI	Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute
Stats SL	Statistics Sierra Leone
ToE	Training of Enumerators
ToT	Training of Trainers
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WEN	Women's Empowerment and Nutrition (Survey)
WEMNS	Women's Empowerment Metric for National Statistical Systems

## KEY INSIGHTS

<p><b>Women’s empowerment in agricultural communities/households</b></p>  <p>Women in Sierra Leone score lower on empowerment (0.46) than men (0.56), with 93% of women classified as disempowered compared to 78% of men. Women face more widespread constraints—especially in spending decisions, digital and financial access, and social norms—while men’s limitations are more concentrated. No region met the 80% empowerment threshold; the lowest scores were in the North (37.8%)</p>	<p><b>Claiming Rights</b></p>  <p>Endorsement of women’s freedoms is highest in the Southern region, and more common among younger and literate women. In contrast, the North region and older or illiterate women show lower levels of awareness and endorsement. While rejection of sexual harassment remains high across all groups, broader understanding and support for women’s rights are still uneven across demographics</p>
<p><b>Decision Making Power</b></p>  <p>Men consistently report greater control over key decisions, especially in spending (42% of young men vs. 18% of young women) and health (51% vs. 39%). While female-headed households show slightly higher influence over time use, women overall have less say, particularly in commercial agriculture. The gender gap is widest among youth and the less educated, pointing to a need for targeted support.</p>	<p><b>Leadership roles in organizations</b></p>  <p>Men are more likely than women to participate in community groups, especially those tied to livelihoods and services. This higher engagement also translates into leadership—46% of men hold leadership roles compared to 38% of women. Men consistently report feeling more informed, involved, and heard in community decision-making.</p>
<p><b>Property Ownership</b></p>  <p>Land and property rights are widespread but rarely documented. Most women and men say they have rights to land or housing, mostly through joint or customary arrangements. But very few women have their names on formal documents, and even fewer hold sole rights to sell or inherit property.</p>	<p><b>ICT Usage and Financial Services</b></p>  <p>Digital and financial access remains unequal: only 38% of women use mobile money or bank accounts, compared to 55% of men. Young women (18–29) are more connected, but usage drops with age and is lowest in the North (30%). While 67% of women report access to credit, they rely more on informal sources, unlike men who use more formal channels. Formal financial inclusion, especially bank use, remains low—particularly in the Southern and North-Western regions</p>
<p><b>Dietary Diversity</b></p>  <p>Women of childbearing age (18–49) had more diverse diets (75.1% consumed ≥5 food groups) compared to older women (71.9% for ages 50–64). Literate women consumed more diverse foods (80.6%) than illiterate women (72.1%). The Southern region showed the highest dietary diversity (78.5%), while the Eastern had the lowest (64.1%).</p>	<p><b>Empowerment and Dietary diversity</b></p>  <p>Empowered women are more likely to meet minimum dietary diversity (MDD-W). Those consuming ≥5 food groups had a higher average empowerment score (0.48) than those who did not (0.42). Food group consumption increases with empowerment. Intake of sugary drinks also rises, while traditional protein sources decline. This suggests empowerment expands dietary choices, both healthy and less healthy.</p>

## STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

**Chapter 1: Introduction** – Provides an overview of the survey, detailing the roles of MAFS, STATS SL and FAO along with survey objectives, sample selection, data collection period and lesson learned.

**Chapter 2: Women’s Empowerment** – Presents survey findings on the four domains of empowerment—*intrinsic agency, instrumental agency, collective agency, and agency enabling resources*, the indicators that comprise each domain, and an overall view of women’s empowerment.

**Chapter 3: SDG 5.a.1** –Analyses the gender equality in agricultural land rights. It outlines the global context, explains the SDG 5.a.1 framework, and describes Sierra Leone’s land tenure system.

**Chapter 4: Women’s Dietary Diversity** – Examines women’s consumption patterns across various food groups, highlighting nutritional trends.

**Chapter 5: Relationship Between Empowerment and Dietary Diversity** – Analyses the relationship between empowerment and dietary diversity.

**Conclusion:** summarises the main insights from the analysis, reflecting on what they reveal about gender gaps in land rights and the factors driving them. It highlights the broader implications for policy and practice, reinforces the importance of addressing structural barriers, and points to priority areas for future action and research.

**Recommendation:** translates the analysis into actionable next steps. It outlines priority policy and program measures, practical implementation consideration

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a survey on Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition (WEN) that was integrated into the Sierra Leone Agricultural Survey 2024 under the umbrella of the [50x2030 Initiative to Close the Agricultural Data Gap](#), a global project jointly launched by the World Bank, FAO and IFAD and implemented in Sierra Leone with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) and Statistics Sierra Leone (STATS SL). The primary objective of the WEN survey was measuring women’s empowerment and dietary diversity among agricultural households. Findings are reported to relevant Ministers to inform policy planning and program development, ultimately contributing to improved women’s living conditions and women’s rights.

### **1.1: Integration of the Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Module in the Agricultural Survey**

The Sierra Leone Annual Agricultural Survey is a key component of the country’s strategy to generate high-quality data for evidence-based agricultural policy and planning. Jointly implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) and Statistics Sierra Leone (STATS SL), the survey receives technical support from the 50x2030 Initiative—a global partnership spearheaded by the World Bank, FAO, and IFAD. The Initiative supports countries in modernizing their agricultural data systems through a modular approach, combining an annual core questionnaire on farm production with rotating thematic modules that address complementary issues less frequently.

Within this collaborative framework, STATS SL oversees survey implementation, including planning, data collection, analysis, and dissemination. Meanwhile, MAFS leads methodological development, including the design of instruments and specialized operations. FAO provides technical assistance throughout the survey cycle, both remotely and through in-country missions, ensuring that Sierra Leone’s agricultural data production aligns with international statistical standards.

In 2024, the survey introduced a Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition (WEN) module as a thematic component administered to a sub-sample of agricultural households. The WEN survey was designed to pursue four strategic objectives:

- First, to assess women’s empowerment and dietary diversity within agricultural households, offering policymakers critical insights for planning and program design that promote gender equity and women’s rights.
- Second, to refine the Women’s Empowerment Metric for National Statistical Systems (WEMNS) by documenting lessons learned during implementation.
- Third, to raise awareness and visibility of empowerment and nutrition indicators at national and global levels by showcasing the feasibility of integrating such modules into existing surveys.
- Fourth, to build national capacity in data collection and analysis on these often-under-measured topics.

The WEN survey specifically focused on two key areas: empowerment and women’s dietary diversity. Empowerment was assessed across four dimensions: instrumental agency (*making choice*), collective agency (*engaging in community*), agency enabling resources (*mobilizing resources*) and intrinsic agency (*claiming rights*). The first three dimensions were measured on both women and men while intrinsic agency – which captures the capacity to claim one’s rights and reject restrictive gender norms – was measured exclusively among women. Dietary diversity, an important proxy for women’s micro-nutrient intake, was also assessed only among women.

## **1.2: Design and Implementation of the WEN Survey**

The sampling design was embedded within the national agricultural survey. A total of 520 Enumeration Areas (EAs) were selected for the agricultural survey, covering a national sample of 5,200 agricultural households. From this, the WEN sub-sample of 2,525 households was drawn. The sub-sampled households were distributed proportionally across EAs: 452 EAs received five WEN questionnaires each, and 68 EAs received four. Each selected household could include interviews with up to three individuals (for more information on sampling design see the [Annex 1](#) on the sampling methodology)<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> While national-level estimates are robust, sub-national disaggregation is also available, albeit with higher sampling variability (detailed in Annex I), sub-national disaggregation may result in small sub-sample sizes, limiting the accuracy of findings.

The WEN survey aimed to provide statistically valid estimates, with a 5% margin of error, for women aged 18–49, women aged 18–64, and men aged 18–64 (for empowerment only). The 18–49 age group is widely used in global health and nutrition surveys, as it includes women of reproductive age and is central to monitoring maternal and child health, dietary diversity, and related indicators. The 18–64 group incorporates elder women who, while beyond reproductive age, remain active in agriculture and household decision-making.

To ensure coordination, WEN field teams mirrored the agricultural survey structure, with 26 teams deployed nationwide. Each team consisted of one supervisor and either one or two enumerators, totaling 26 supervisors and 30 enumerators. While WEN teams visited the same EAs as the agricultural survey, they operated independently and administered separate questionnaires. On average, each team was responsible for 20 EAs and covered at least 97 households.

The average time spent per EA ranged from 4 to 5 hours, excluding time spent waiting for agricultural survey enumerators. This included 30 minutes of consultation meetings with local community stakeholders and approximately 20 minutes to identify selected households and eligible individuals. The administration of the individual questionnaires took maximum 30 minutes for women and 20 minutes for men. Time spent in each household varied between 25 minutes and 1 hour and 15 minutes, depending on the number of eligible respondents and their availability.

Data collection for the WEN module ran concurrently with the agricultural survey during the rainy season, from July to August 2024, spanning a total of 24 days.

### **1.3: Lesson learned**

Survey operations were structured to ensure balanced team composition and efficient coverage. Each field team was expected to cover approximately 20 Enumeration Areas (EAs), with each WEN enumerator responsible for interviewing a minimum of 97 households over a 24-day period. Daily workloads ranged between 4 and 5 interviews per enumerator, reflecting both the length of the WEN instrument and the need to ensure quality and respondent comfort.

On the ground, enumerators engaged in a structured series of activities in each EA. These included:

- Community entry and stakeholder consultation meetings (averaging 30 minutes),
- Identification of eligible households and individuals (approximately 20 minutes),
- Interview administration, which averaged 15 minutes for men and 30 minutes for women, depending on the complexity of responses and number of eligible individuals per household.

In total, field teams spent between 4 to 5 hours per EA, with additional time often required due to dependence on the Agricultural Survey teams.

### **1.3.1: Key Achievements**

Despite a demanding timeline and operational challenges, the field exercise yielded several notable achievements:

- Enumerator recruitment and training followed clearly defined criteria and quality standards.
- A user-friendly CAPI platform was successfully deployed, allowing for streamlined and accurate digital data collection.
- Full EA coverage was achieved as planned, and a comprehensive dataset was produced without major gaps.
- The exercise provided a significant opportunity to build national capacity, on the collection and management of data related to Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) and women's empowerment metrics.

### **1.3.2: Challenges**

Several operational and contextual challenges were encountered during implementation:

- Fieldwork was conducted during the rainy season, which made access to certain areas difficult and at times unsafe.
- Coordination between WEN enumerators and Agricultural Survey teams proved complex, especially where AG teams were conducting time-consuming activities like area measurement, causing delays in WEN data collection.

- The team faced difficulties in recruiting qualified nutritionists, which limited technical support in the field.

### **1.3.3: Lessons Learned**

This initial experience with WEN implementation provided several operational insights:

- Matching WEN and AG survey enumerators should be done with caution and clear planning to avoid unnecessary downtime, especially when workflows differ.
- Robust planning, thorough training, and comprehensive pretesting of instruments contributed to smoother field execution and higher data quality.
- The presence of female enumerators played a critical role in building trust, improving respondent comfort, and safeguarding confidentiality, particularly for sensitive questions.
- Care must be taken when asking questions related to nutrition, as these can unintentionally raise expectations among respondents, especially in contexts where food insecurity is prevalent.

### **1.3.4: Recommendations for Future Surveys**

Drawing from this experience, several actionable recommendations have emerged:

- Schedule data collection during the dry season to reduce access challenges and logistical disruptions.
- Include trained nutritionists as part of the field team to strengthen technical *supervision* and respondent engagement.

## CHAPTER 2: WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Women's empowerment is the process of making strategic life choices in a context where these choices were previously denied. In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action set forth a global agenda on women's empowerment and gender equality. The 2015 adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) further solidified the universal importance of women's empowerment and gender equality in SDG 5. The adoption of SDG 5 also motivated the need for improved measurement of women's empowerment. Numerous metrics have been developed to consider the multidimensional nature of women's empowerment, yet many of these were sector specific or too long for inclusion in multitopic surveys.

To address the need for a streamlined multidimensional measure of women's empowerment that is appropriate for nationally representative surveys, IFPRI – together with Oxford and Emory Universities and the World Bank – developed the Women's Empowerment Metric for National Statistical Systems (WEMNS). WEMNS can be applied to respondents regardless of age or livelihood strategy and uses the same methodological approach used in multidimensional poverty indices. It covers three domains of agency – intrinsic, instrumental, and collective – as well as agency-enabling resources, as illustrated in Figure 1. Each domain is comprised of three indicators. By embedding an empowerment metric into national statistical systems, countries can identify priority areas for interventions and generate evidence that informs inclusive policies and tracks progress toward gender equality over time.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the concept of agency is structured around four key components that together determine women's ability to act upon their goals, make strategic life choices, and participate meaningfully in society.

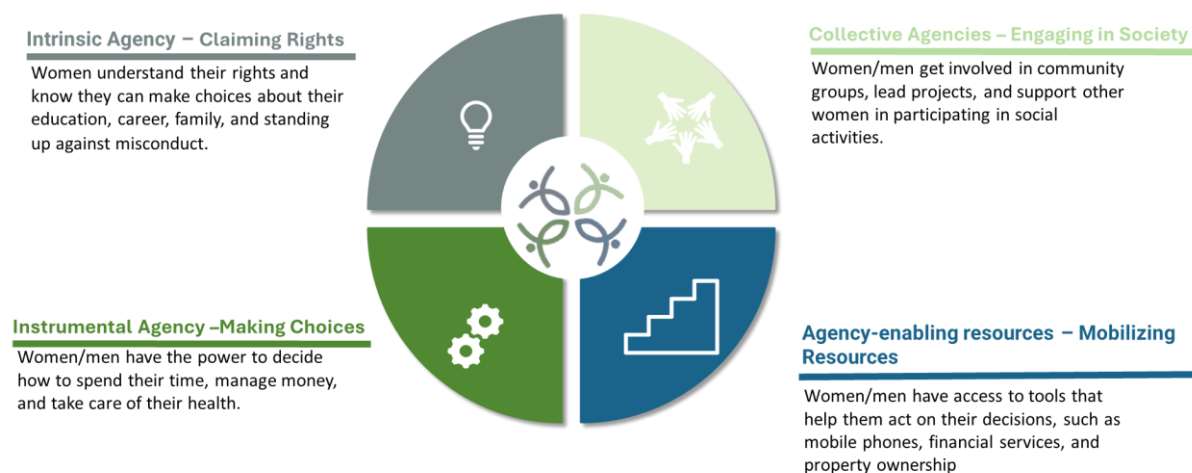
1. **Intrinsic Agency – Claiming Rights:** This domain captures women's internal consciousness of their rights. It includes their perceived right to make decisions about livelihoods and family formation, as well as their belief in the right to be free from sexual harassment and any form of coercion that restricts personal choices. Intrinsic agency forms the foundation of other forms of agency.
2. **Instrumental Agency – Making Choices:** Instrumental agency is the power to make strategic decisions. It includes women's influence over time use, household spending,

and personal health decisions, representing their ability to act on their preferences in day-to-day life.

3. **Collective Agency – Engaging in Society:** Beyond the individual focus, collective agency is the power gained from bringing multiple individuals together. It includes involvement and leadership in organizations as well as support of women’s and men’s community engagement.
4. **Agency-Enabling Resources – Mobilizing Resources:** This component highlights the foundational resources for supporting strategic decisions. Key enabling factors include access to and use of information and communication technologies (ICT), financial services and credit, and secure property rights. These resources are critical for enabling and sustaining empowerment.

By integrating these four domains, the framework provides a comprehensive lens through which women's agencies can be assessed, promoted, and strengthened within development programs. It reflects the understanding that true empowerment involves both internal capabilities and external opportunities.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Women's Agency



Not all domains of WEMNS are applicable to both men and women. While women are assessed across all four domains, the domain on claiming rights is specific to women and is therefore not collected for men. Following the conceptual framework above, this chapter presents the results of the analysis on women’s empowerment highlighting patterns across different domains and population subgroups.

**SECTION 2.1: CLAIMING RIGHTS**

Awareness of rights is a key starting point for women’s empowerment. It means women understand their rights and feel able to make decisions about their lives — like choosing work, forming a family, or resisting harassment.

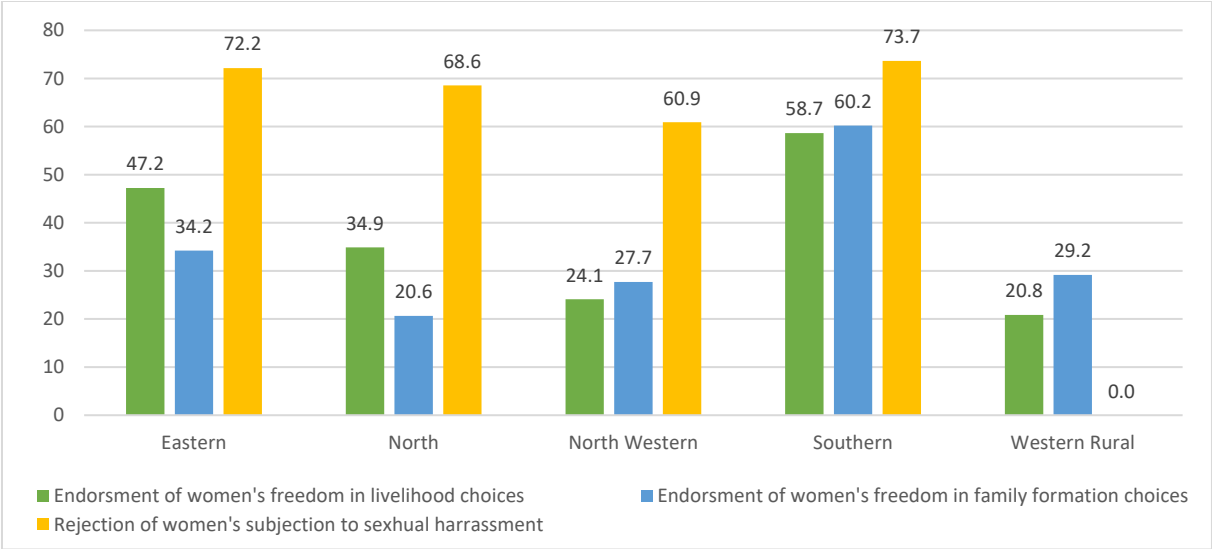
**CLAIMING RIGHTS—KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- Endorsement of women's rights and freedoms varies considerably across country regions. Women in the Southern region are more likely to endorse women’s freedom in family formation and livelihoods and more likely to reject sexual harassment.
- Women who are younger and those who are literate exhibit a higher endorsement of women’s freedoms related to livelihoods and family formation.
- While rejection of sexual harassment is consistently high across almost all groups, broader awareness of personal freedoms remains uneven, particularly in the North-Eastern region and among older or illiterate women.

**2.1.1: Results by Region**

Women in the Southern region show the highest endorsement of their rights, with strong support for autonomy in both livelihood (58.7%) and family decisions (60.2%), and the highest rejection of sexual harassment (73.7%). Also, the Eastern region shows high rejection of harassment (72.2%), though endorsement of women’s decision-making is more moderate. In the North and North-Western, support for women’s rights is notably lower, especially in family formation, though rejection of harassment remains above 60%. Western Rural stands out with the lowest endorsement of women’s freedoms and no reported rejection of sexual harassment, indicating a critical gap in awareness. These results suggest that while rejection of harassment is generally high, support for women’s freedoms in livelihood and family formation choices varies significantly across regions.

Figure 2: Percentage of awareness Toward Women's Freedoms and Rights Across Different Regions



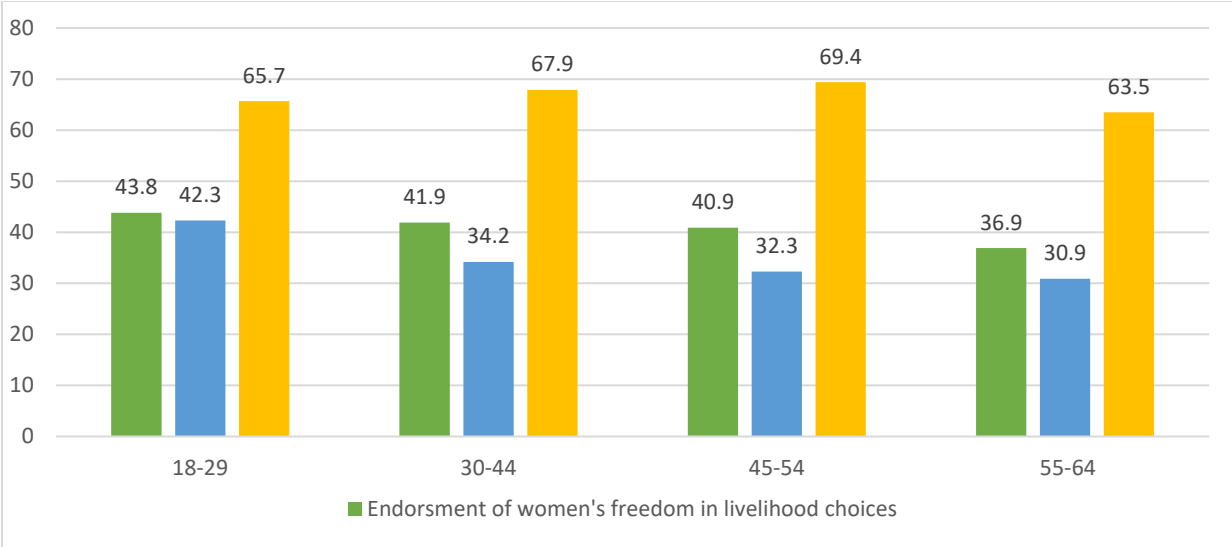
Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.1.2: Results by Age Groups**

Awareness of women’s rights was lower among older women. Among young women aged 18-29, endorsement of freedom of livelihood and family formation choices is highest, at 43.8% and 42.3% respectively, while it is lowest among women aged 55-64, at 36.9% and 30.9%. Meanwhile, rejection of sexual harassment is higher among women aged 45–54 compared to both the younger and older age groups.

These findings may reflect generational differences in how empowerment is experienced or prioritized. While younger women are more likely to express awareness of their rights and personal freedoms, particularly regarding livelihood and family decisions, older women show higher rejection of harassment, especially through mid-life.

Figure 3: Claiming Women's Rights by Age group

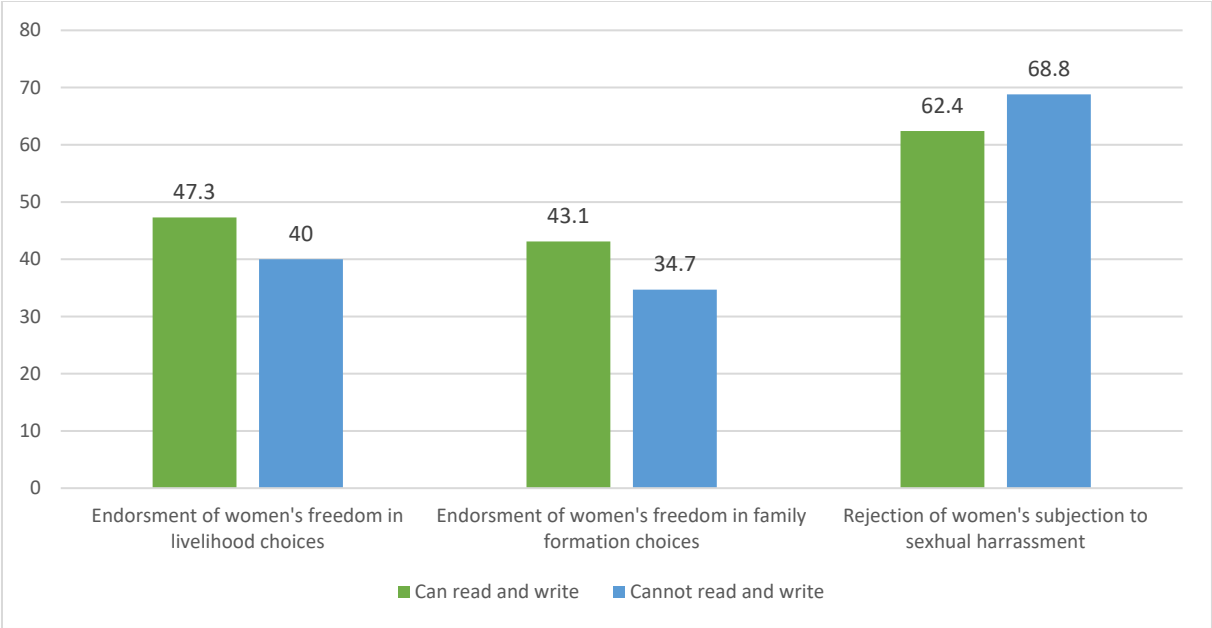


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.1.3: Results by Literacy**

Literacy plays a key role in shaping awareness and support for women’s rights. Among women in agricultural households, those who are literate are more likely to support women’s personal and economic freedoms. Interestingly, rejection of harassment is high in both groups — 62.4% among literate women and 68.8% among those who are not. This may be due to cultural or religious teachings that emphasize the importance of respect for women. These findings indicate that education plays a crucial role in broadening the scope of women’s rights beyond safety, helping to reinforce agency and decision-making in life and family.

Figure 4: Claiming Women's Rights by literacy

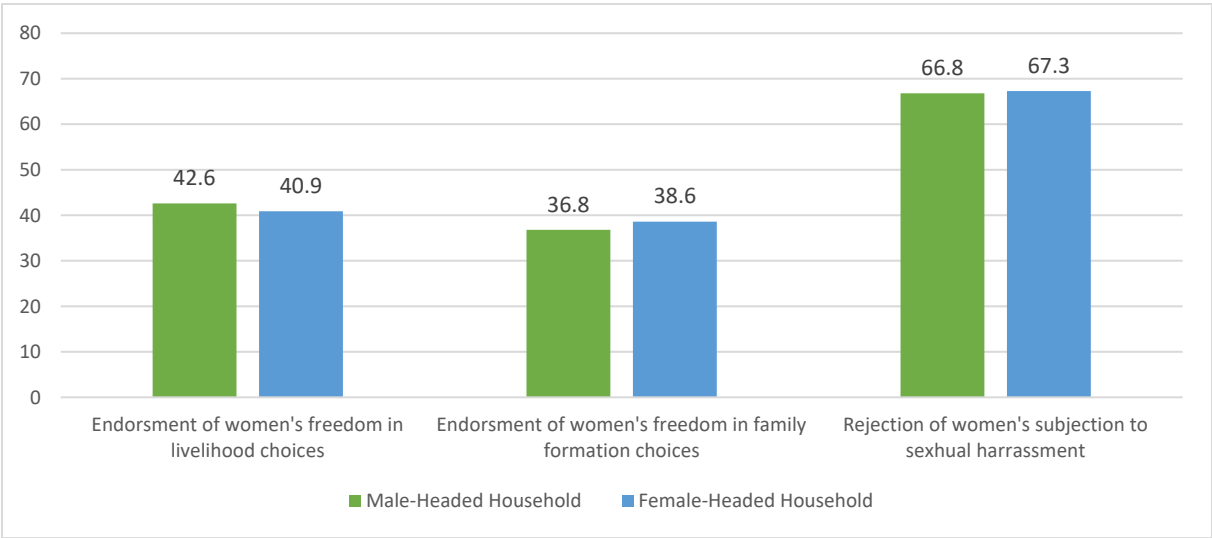


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.1.4: Results by Household Headship**

This section compares women’s response based on whether they live in male- or- female-headed households. Results suggest minimal differences: women in male headed-households reported slightly lower awareness on livelihood rights (by 1.7%) and family formation rights (by 1.8%), freedom in livelihood choices (1.7%) and family formation choices (1.8%) compared to those in female-headed households. In both groups, respondents report strong rejection of sexual harassment, indicating a broadly shared stance on the issue regardless of household leadership structure.

Figure 5: Claiming Women's Rights by household headship



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**SECTION 2.2: MAKING CHOICES**

Instrumental agency refers to the ability to make and act on decisions that directly affect one’s life, particularly in areas like time use, financial choices, and personal health. This section explores who holds greater influence over these everyday decisions, shedding light on gender and age dynamics in managing time, spending money, and making health-related choices.

**MAKING CHOICES—KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- Women remain heavily engaged in unpaid domestic and caregiving tasks, while men dominate in decision-making power across most productive activities.
- Despite similar involvement in agricultural work (compared to men), women report less control over time allocation and financial decisions, particularly in commercial agriculture and spending.
- Influence tends to increase with age for both genders, but men consistently report higher levels of control.
- The gender gap is especially wide on spending and health-related decisions, particularly among younger adults and those with limited education.

**2.2.1 Influence Over Time Allocation**

To better understand the context of time-use decision-making, it is helpful to examine how women and men actually allocate their time across key household and productive activities (see Table 1).

*Table 1: Percentage of women and men engaged in different types of paid and unpaid activities in the past seven days - National Level*

	HH Duties	Caring for HH Members	Going to market to purchase essential Items	Non-Agricultural Work Activities	Commercial Agricultural Production	Agricultural Production for HH consumption
Women	96.7%	93.8%	80.1%	51.4%	66.2%	79.3%
Men	72.9%	68.6%	44.2%	50.4%	67.3%	78.2%

*Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone*

National-level data show that women carry most of the load when it comes to unpaid care and domestic work, with 96.7% reporting involvement in household duties and 93.8% caring for household members in the seven days prior to the survey. In contrast, 72.9% of men reported engaging in household duties and only 68.6% in caregiving tasks. Women are also more involved than men in essential daily tasks such as going to the market to purchase items (80.1% vs. 44.2%). Interestingly, when it comes to non-agricultural work, participation is nearly equal (51.4% for women, 50.4% for men). Also, in terms of agricultural activities involvement in production for household consumption differences are minimal.

Table 2: Percentage of women and men with a lot of influence in time spent on specific activities – National Level

	HH Duties	Caring for HH Members	Going to market to purchase essential Items	Non-Agricultural Work Activities	Commercial Agricultural Production	Agricultural Production for HH consumption
Women	63.8%	64.6%	50.9%	29.4%	36.4%	45.8%
Men	45.0%	47.0%	26.0%	30.6%	42.3%	51.7%

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

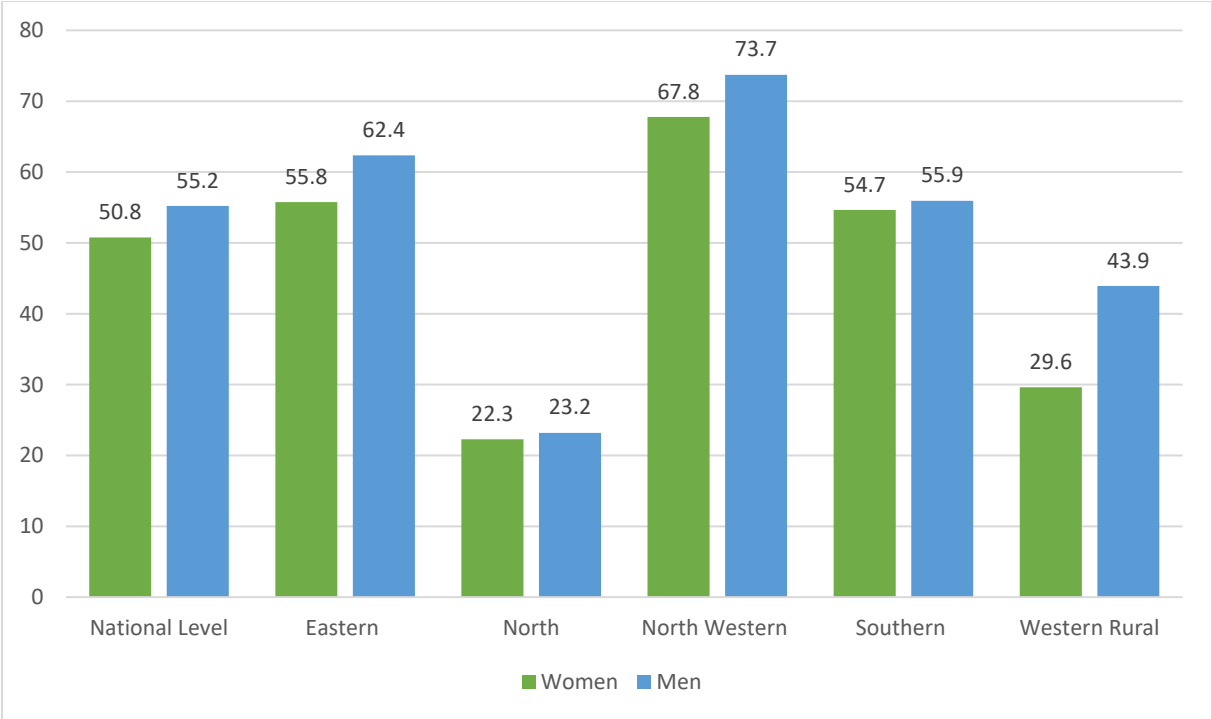
In addition to differences in time use, women and men also report different levels of control over the activities they perform (see Table 2). Across nearly all domains, men are more likely to report having a lot of influence in the tasks they undertake. For instance, 51.7% of men feel they have significant influence over agricultural production for household consumption, compared to just 45.8% of women. The gap is even wider in commercial agriculture (42.3% of men vs. 36.4% of women) and in non-agricultural work (30.6% vs. 29.4%).

These figures suggest that while women are more engaged in care and domestic work, they also feel more control over those tasks. However, when it comes to market or production-related activities — especially commercial agriculture — men perceive themselves as having greater decision-making power, reflecting persistent gender imbalances in economic autonomy.

### 2.2.1.1: Results by Region

The chart shows the percentage of women and men who reported having a lot of influence over the activities they engaged in across different regions. At the national level, men report slightly more influence (55.2%) compared to women (50.8%). The North-Western region stands out with the highest reported influence for both women (67.8%) and men (73.7%), while the North region shows the lowest levels, with only 22.3% of women and 23.2% of men reporting high influence. While regional differences are significant, women consistently report less autonomy over their time use than men, highlighting the ongoing challenges in achieving gender equality in decision-making over daily activities.

Figure 6: Influence over time allocation at the National level and by region

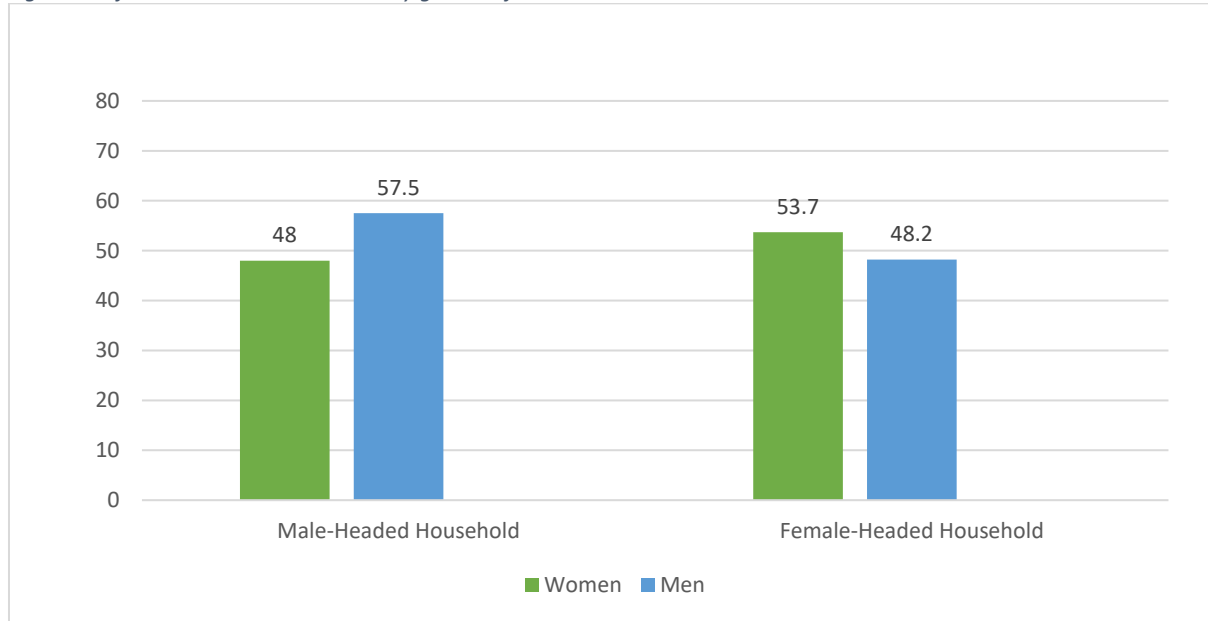


**2.2.1.2: Results by Household Headship**

The section focuses on household members and highlights how gender of the household head affects the influence over time allocation spent on specific activities. Among members of male-headed households, men report more control over time use (53.7%) than women (48%) (see Figure 7).

The gender of the household head appears to play a significant role in who has more influence over time allocation within the household. This could indicate a shift in power dynamics when a woman is the primary decision-maker and might suggest that female heads of households exert a slightly stronger influence over time allocation compared to male heads of households.

Figure 7: Influence over time allocation by gender of household head



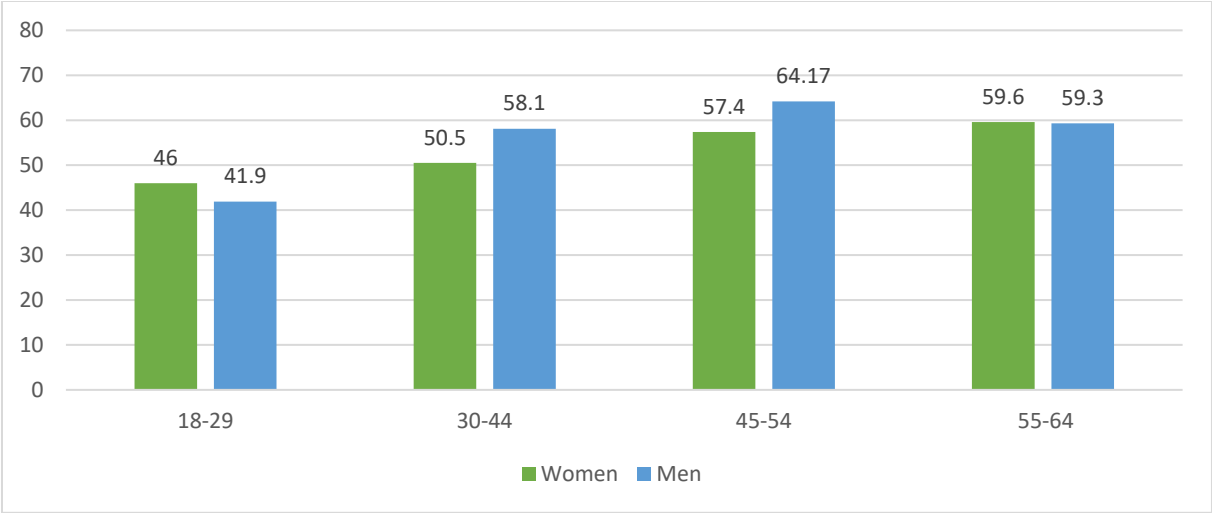
Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

### 2.2.1.3: Results by Age Groups

Figure 8 below presents the "Percentage of women and men with influence over time allocation by age" across four age groups. For both women and men, there is a general increasing trend of influence over time allocation as age progresses from "Young Adults" to "Pre-retirement Age." This indicates that both men and women gain more control over how they use their time as they grow older, particularly in the productive years of adulthood.

Young women aged 18 to 29 report slightly more control (46%) than young men (41.9%), but this pattern reverses by early middle age. Among those aged 30 to 44, men report significantly more influence over time use (58.1%) than women (50.5%). The gap begins to narrow in the late middle age group (45–54), where women's influence rises to 57.4%, while men reach a peak at 64.1%. In the pre-retirement age group (55–64), women report their highest level of control at 59.6%, nearly matching men at 59.3%. The gender gap essentially disappears in Pre-retirement Age (55-64).

Figure 8: Influence over time allocation by age groups



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.2.2 Influence in spending decision**

**2.2.2.1: Results by Age Groups**

Table 3 below, presents the "Influence in spending decisions by age," broken down by gender (women and men) across four age groups.

Table 3: Percentage of individuals having influence in spending decisions - by age

Age Group	WOMEN	MEN
18-29	17.7	41.9
30-44	19.6	58.1
45-54	27.8	64.2
55-64	30.8	59.3

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

There is a clear trend of increasing influence in spending decisions across age groups. This suggests that control over household resources may increase as individuals have increased household responsibilities and responsibilities for earning money. A consistent and substantial gender gap exists across all age categories, with men reporting a significantly higher influence in spending decisions compared to women within the same age group. The gender gap is widest in the Young Adult age group (18-29) where men report a considerably higher influence on spending decisions (41.9%) compared to women (17.7%). This could reflect differences in early career stages, financial independence, or societal expectations regarding financial roles. In addition, influence in Early Middle Age 30-44 increases for both genders compared to the

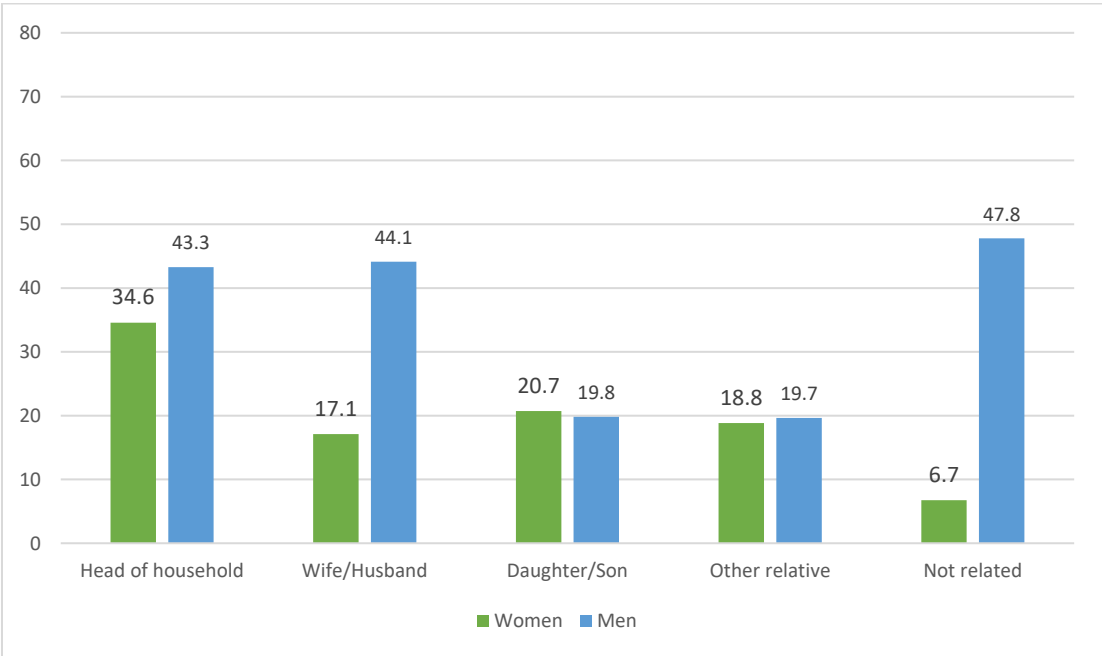
younger age group, but the gender gap remains large with men reporting 58.1% influence and women at 19.6%.

**2.2.2.2: Results by Position in the Household**

Influence in spending decisions also varies by one’s relationship to the head of household.

As expected, those who are themselves “household heads” report the highest influence in spending decisions for both women (34.6%) and men (43.3%). Among “spouses”, their reported influence is dramatically different, with women reporting 17.1% and men reporting 44.1%. The level of influence among “sons and daughters” is lower but similar to each other, with men at 19.8% and women at 20.7%. The same holds true for the “other relatives” category, where women and men report 18.8% and 19.7% respectively. A substantial gender gap exists in the “not related” category. Here, men report much greater influence (47.8%) than women (6.7%), likely reflecting women’s more marginal status in households where they lack kinship ties. These results suggest that being a member of the household through blood or marriage — particularly being the head — significantly enhances financial agency for both genders but being unrelated may leave women at a greater disadvantage.

Figure 9: Percentage influence in spending decisions - Relation to Household Head.



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

### 2.2.3 Influence over own health decisions

#### 2.2.3.1: Results by Education Level

This section explores how education affects men’s and women’s reported influence over decisions concerning their own health. The data reveal a consistent pattern: men report higher levels of influence than women across all education levels, although the gap varies. Influence tends to increase with higher levels of formal education for both men and women, suggesting that education strengthens individual agency in health-related decision-making. However, the benefits of education appear to be more strongly felt by men.

The widest gender gap is observed among individuals with no formal education: 57.6% of men report a high level of influence in their health decisions, compared to only 39.7% of women. At the primary education level, the gap nearly disappears, with men and women reporting almost identical levels of influence (38.1% for men and 38.2% for women). At the secondary level, the gender gap widens again, with men at 44.6% and women at 38.6%. Among those with tertiary education, both genders report their highest levels of influence, but men (53%) still outpace women (43.5%) by nearly 10 percentage points. A significant gap also exists among those with other education (Arabic/Adult/Nursery) where 56.3% of men report strong influence compared to 37.1% of women.

Table 4: Percentage of individuals having influence in own health decisions by education level:

	WOMEN	MEN
No education	39.7	57.6
Primary	38.2	38.1
Secondary	38.6	44.6
Post-secondary education	43.5	53.0

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

#### 2.2.3.2: Results by Region

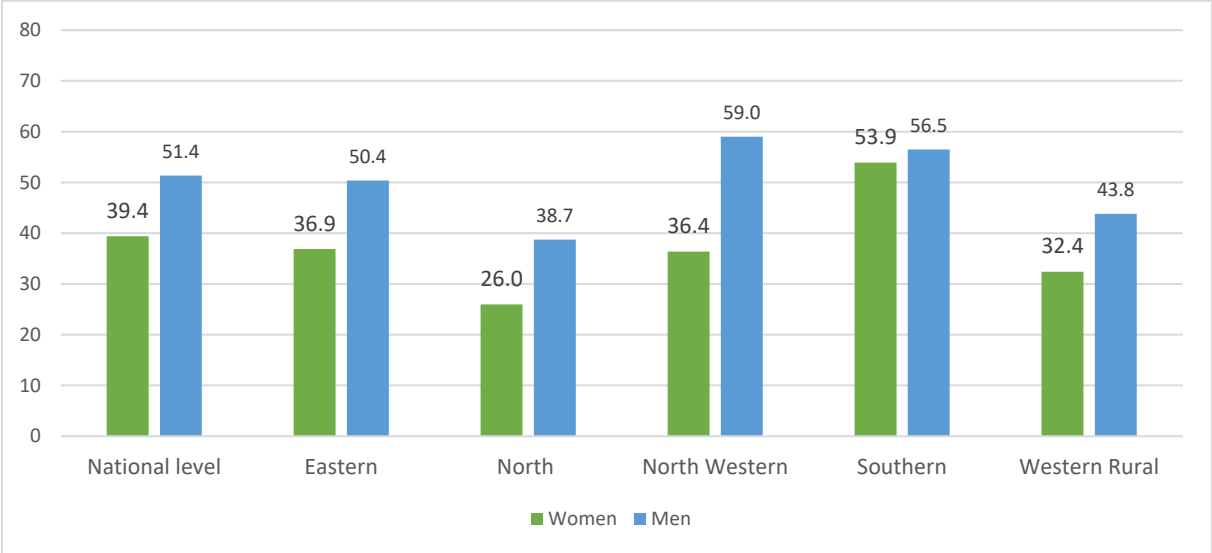
Nationally, 51.4 percent of men report having strong influence over their own health decisions, compared to 39.4 percent of women. We observe a consistent pattern of men having more influence in their health decisions than women across all regions of Sierra Leone although regions like the South demonstrate near parity.

The North-Western region shows the highest proportion of men having strong influence in spending and the widest gender gap, with 59% of men and only 36.4% of women, respectively, reporting strong influence in spending decisions. By contrast, the Southern region reports the

smallest gap, with 56.5% of men reporting strong influence and women close behind at 53.9%. Men in the Eastern region (50.3%) are close to the national male average while women (37.9%) are below the national female average. In this region there is a moderate gap of 12.4%, still highlighting gendered constraints, though less extreme than in the North-Western. In the Western Rural region, the proportion of men having strong influence drops to 43.8%, the lowest of all regions, yet just 35.5% of women in this region report having strong influence, resulting in a gender gap of over 8 percentage points.

Women in the North region have the smallest proportion reporting a strong influence, at just 33.4%, compared to 38.7% of men. Both figures reflect widespread limitations in personal health autonomy in this region, but the 5.3-point gender gap reinforces the specific disadvantages faced by women.

Figure 10: Percentage of Individuals Reporting Influence in Own Health Decisions by Region



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**SECTION 2.3: ENGAGING IN COMMUNITIES**

Engagement and leadership in groups are key means for engaging in society. Women’s participation and leadership in groups is a critical dimension of empowerment, reflecting their ability to exercise collective agency and influence broader social dynamics. With the growing recognition of gender equality, some organizations are striving to create an environment that promotes and supports women in leadership roles. Gender-balanced leadership brings diverse perspectives, experiences, and ideas to the decision-making table. Consequently, it allows organizations to tackle challenges more effectively, foster innovation and drive profitability.

This section examines the extent of women’s and men’s engagement in community-based organizations, their representation in leadership roles, and their support for their own gender’s community engagement.

**ENGAGING IN COMMUNITIES—KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- While both women and men engage in community organizations, a higher proportion of men participate in groups, especially in livelihood, service-related, and local government groups.
- Higher engagement in groups translates into higher leadership: 45.9% of men hold leadership roles compared to 37.9% of women.
- Men also report more confidence in community engagement. Across all regions, age groups, and education levels, men are more likely to feel informed, involved in decision-making, and listened to by community leaders.

**2.3.1: Participation in Organizations**

Participation in organizations is a key indicator of collective agency and an essential aspect of women's empowerment. Women’s participation across a broad range of groups has emerged as a crucial topic of discussion. It reflects the extent to which women engage in community-based activities and contribute to group decision-making.

Individuals were asked whether they participated in any of the following five types of groups:

- Government councils or agencies
- Local service groups (e.g. water or health committees)
- Formal/informal saving and credit groups
- Livelihood-related groups (e.g. producer associations or agricultural cooperatives)
- Other community groups, such as religious groups, women’s groups, or sports clubs

The table below presents the percentage of men and women aged 18–64 who reported participating in each type of group:

*Table 5: Gender-Disaggregated Participation in Organizational Groups*

	Government Councils / Agencies	Local Service Groups	Savings / Credit Groups	Livelihood-related Groups	Other Groups (religious, women’s, sports)	Participation in at least one group
<b>Women (18–64)</b>	15.8%	28.6%	42.5%	35.8%	60.7%	76.6%
<b>Men (18–64)</b>	22.9%	33.9%	42.3%	42.3%	56.7%	75.9%

*Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone*

While the participation in at least one group shows similar levels (76.6% for women and 75.9% for men), the types of groups vary significantly by gender. Women are more likely to participate

in women’s groups, religious or social associations, whereas men report higher engagement in government councils, local service groups, and livelihood-related groups.

**2.3.1.1: Results by Region**

Regional differences in organizational participation reflect both geographic variation in institutional presence and underlying gender norms.

*Table 6: Gender-Disaggregated Participation in Organizational Groups, by regions*

	Group	Government Council/Agencies	Local Service	Formal/informal saving groups	Livelihood activities	Other groups	Participated in at least one group
EASTERN	Women 18-64	15.9%	21.9%	38.6%	26.8%	46.6%	66.4%
	Men 18-64	22.0%	33.7%	37.0%	29.3%	44.1%	66.6%
NORTH	Women 18-64	14.8%	37.8%	39.3%	31.6%	56.8%	75.2%
	Men 18-64	24.8%	41.4%	45.9%	37.4%	52.81%	78.5%
NORTH-WESTERN	Women 18-64	27.1%	40.6%	58.1%	56.2%	74.0%	88.2%
	Men 18-64	30.3%	46.7%	56.3%	65.2%	75.5%	91.0%
SOUTHERN	Women 18-64	8.3%	21.4%	34.8%	32.5%	63.2%	75.0%
	Men 18-64	18.3%	19.5%	32.5%	38.2%	53.3%	69.6%
WESTERN RURAL	Women 18-64	10.9%	12.9%	51.6%	26.7%	83.0%	93.9%
	Men 18-64	19.5%	44.3%	66.6%	78.5%	100.0%	100.0%
Country level	Women 18-64	15.8%	28.6%	42.4%	35.8%	60.7%	76.6%
	Men 18-64	22.9%	33.9%	42.3%	42.3%	56.7%	75.8%

*Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone*

Men consistently report higher participation in government councils and local service groups, with the widest gaps observed in the North and Western Rural regions. For example, in Western Rural, 44.3 percent of men participate in service groups compared to just 12.9 percent of women.

Savings groups show a more gender balance nationally. Women’s participation in religious or women's associations is highest particularly in the Southern and North-Western regions.

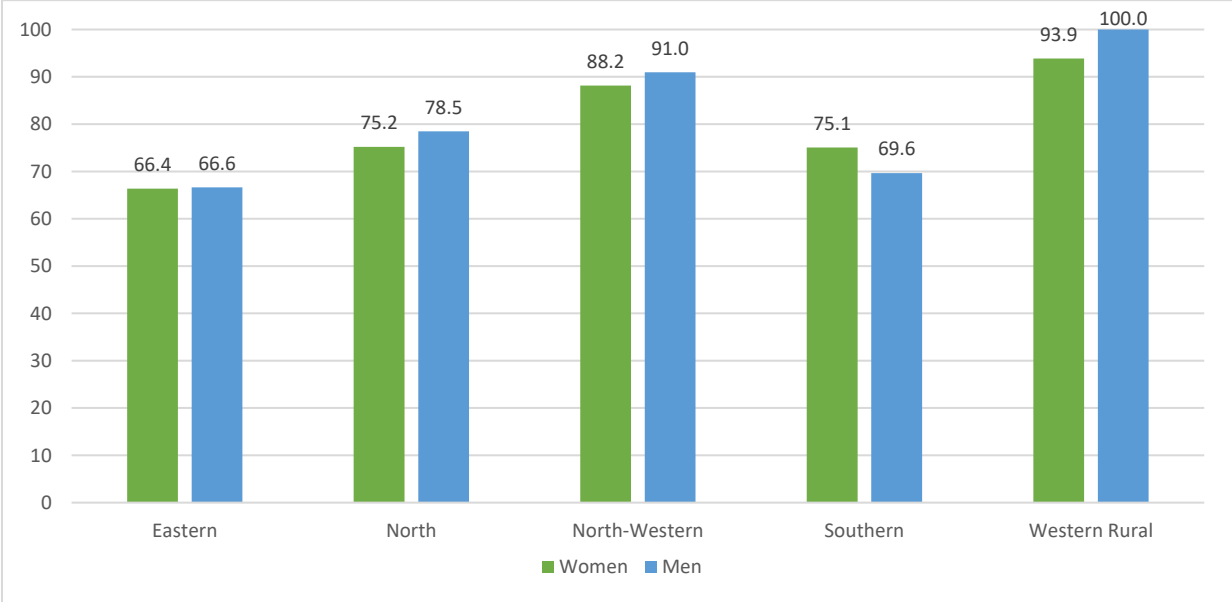
Looking at overall participation in at least one group, rates are high across all regions.

In the Eastern region, participation levels are much lower and closely aligned across genders (66.6% for men, 66.4% for women), indicating limited organizational reach or structural barriers that affect both men and women equally, though men are still more likely than women to engage in government and livelihood-related groups.

In the Southern region, women report higher overall participation than men (75.1% vs. 69.6%). This is the only region with such a reversal and may reflect stronger social group engagement by women or greater barriers faced by men in certain organizational spaces.

Regional variations highlight that while gender parity in overall group participation appears balanced, the types of organizations, levels of influence, and regional contexts significantly shape the nature and depth of women’s collective agency.

Figure 11: Percentage of individuals participating in at least one group, by regions

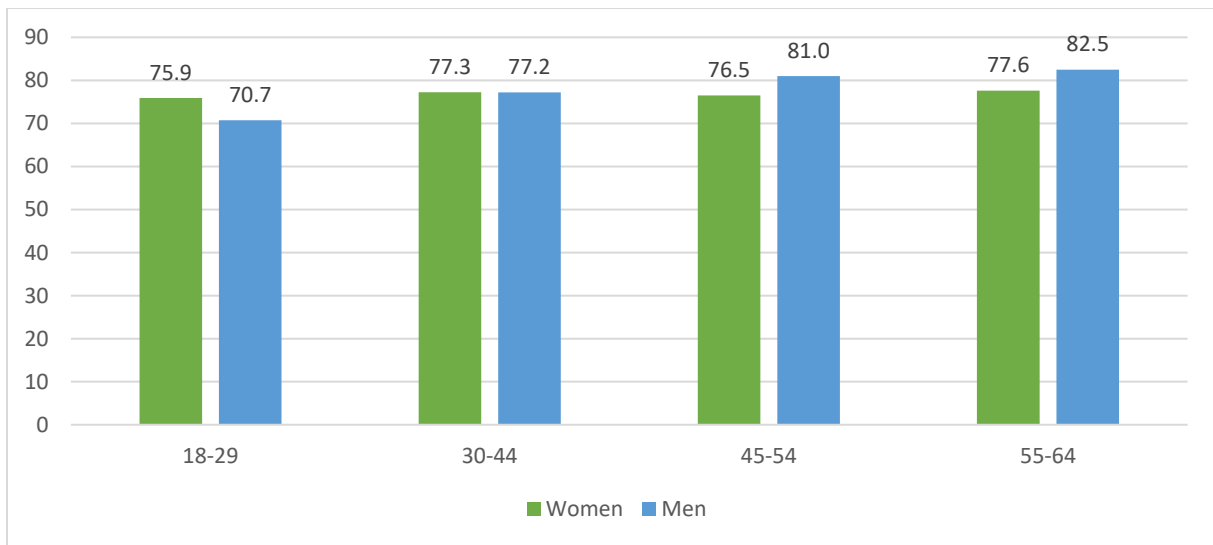


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.3.1.2: Results by Age Groups**

The WEMNS survey shows that organizational participation increases with age for both women and men. Participation is highest among individuals in the pre-retirement age group (55-64) (82.5% for men and 77.6% for women). Similarly, the late middle age group shows participation rates of 81 percent for men and 76.5 percent for women. In the Early Middle Age, participation rates are nearly the same across gender (77.3% for women and 77.2% for men) suggesting relative parity in engagement during mid-adulthood. Among young adults, women show higher participation (75.9%) than men (70.7%), indicating that younger women may be increasingly engaged in collective or community activities.

Figure 12: Percentage of individuals participating in at least one group, age groups

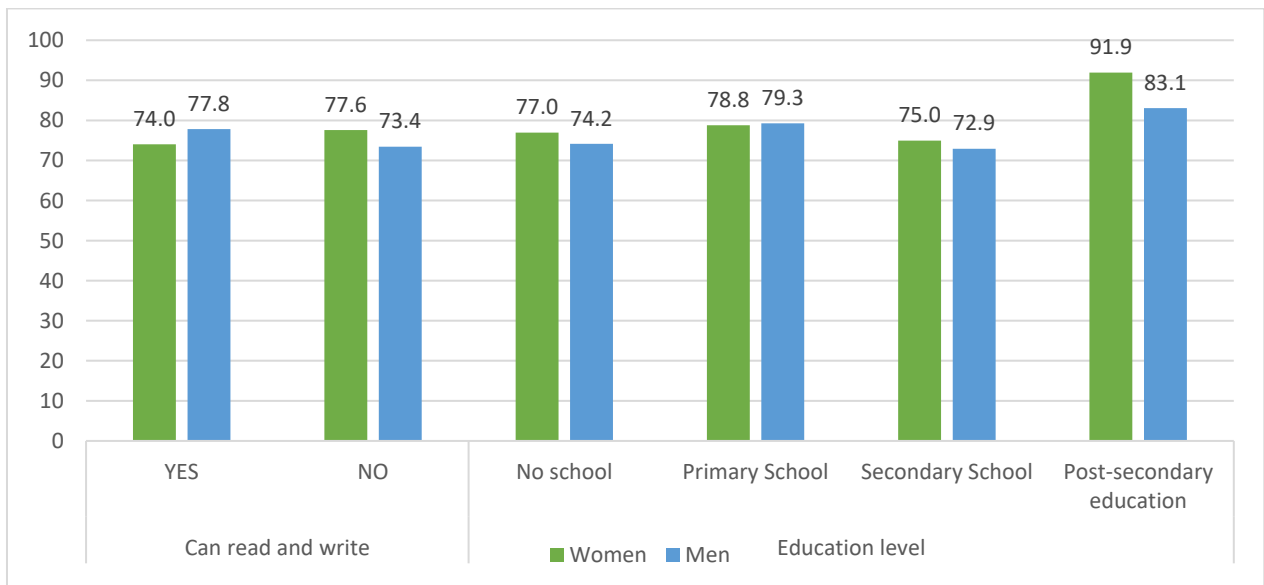


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

### 2.3.1.3: Results by Literacy and Education Level

When disaggregated by literacy status, participation in organizations is slightly higher among literate men (77.8%) compared to literate women (74%). Women with tertiary education exhibit the highest participation rate overall (91.9%), surpassing men at the same level (83.1%). At the secondary education level, participation remains higher for women (75%) than for men (72.9%). Similarly, women with no formal education still participate slightly more (77%) than men (74.2%).

Figure 13: Percentage of individuals participating in at least one group, by Literacy and level of education

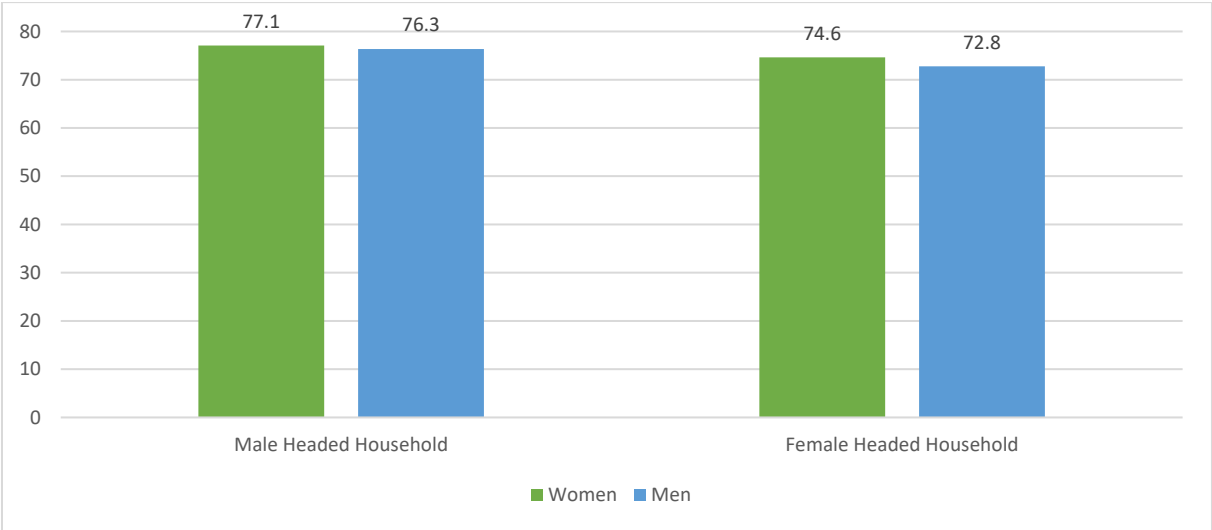


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.3.1.4: Results by Household Headship and Position in the Household**

Women living in male-headed households report the highest participation rate (77.1%), followed closely by men in the same household type (76.3%). In female-headed households, both women and men show slightly lower participation, at 74.6% and 72.8% respectively. This pattern suggests that individuals —particularly women—may benefit from broader engagement opportunities or more institutional connections in male-headed households. However, the narrow gap also indicates that the sex of the household head is not a major barrier to participation, and that both men and women living in female-headed households remain actively engaged in community or organizational life.

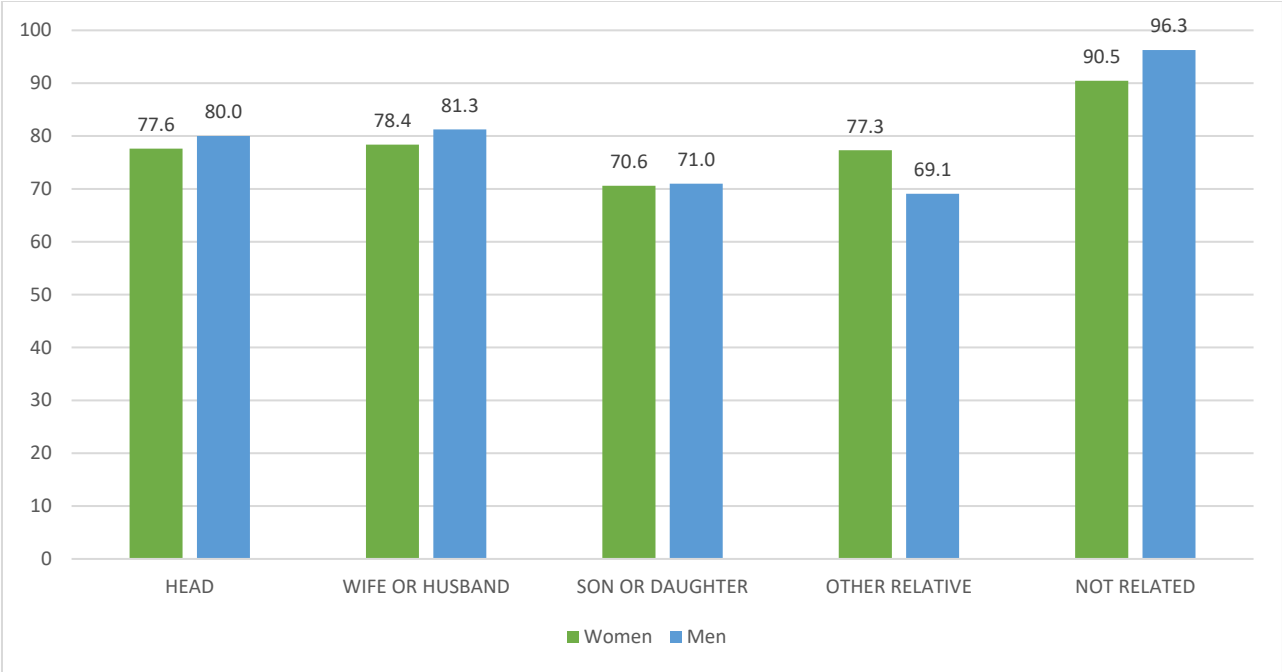
*Figure 14 Participation in at Least One Organization by Household Headship:*



*Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone*

More pronounced differences emerge when considering individuals’ relationship to the household heads. Participation among individuals not related to the head is exceptionally high, reaching 96.3% for men and 90.5% for women, possibly reflecting a greater reliance on external networks. Among other relatives, women participate at higher rates (77.3%) than men (69.1%), and a similar pattern is observed among sons and daughters, where 79.6% of women report participating in at least one organization compared to 71.0% of men. Among spouses, participation is slightly higher among men (81.3%) than women (78.4%), while among household heads, participation remains high for both sexes (80.0% for men and 77.6 % for women). These findings suggest that both men and women, regardless of their role within the household, engage actively in organizations and that women often show strong participation in organizations even when not in primary decision-making positions within the household.

Figure 15: Participation in Organization by relation to Household Head



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.3.2: Leadership in Organizations**

Beyond involvement in organizations, it is also important to understand the extent to which women and men have leadership roles in these organizations. Engagement in leadership represents increased agency and voice in exercising their agency. Additionally, diverse perspectives and experiences foster innovation, creativity and the quality of decision-making within these groups. However, women are not always fully represented at the levels of involvement, decision-making and leadership, as they are often unable to access leadership roles and key decision-making spaces.

As previously discussed, both women and men in Sierra Leone actively participate in a wide range of groups, with national-level participation rates reaching 76.6 percent for women and 75.8 percent for men. However, clear gender disparities emerge in leadership within these groups, particularly across different types of organizations and regional contexts.

Men are more likely than women to hold leadership positions across nearly all types of organizations. For example, in government councils and agencies, while 22.9% of men and 15.8% of women participate, leadership drops more sharply for women (5.2%) compared to men (9.9%). A similar pattern emerges in local service groups, where leadership is reported by 14.9% of men and only 10.6% of women, despite participation rates that are only slightly lower for women.

This trend continues in formal and informal saving groups, where participation is nearly identical for both sexes (42.5% women vs. 42.3% men), yet men remain more likely to assume leadership roles

(19.5% vs. 15.2%). In livelihood groups, the gap is even more pronounced (14.9% women vs 20% men), reflecting broader structural barriers to women’s influence in productive and economic spheres.

The only partial exception is found in “other” community groups (including religious, women, or sports groups) where women not only participate more than men (60.7% vs. 56.7%) but also report relatively higher leadership (25.2% vs. 29.1%). Still, men remain slightly ahead, suggesting that even in spaces where women are more engaged, leadership is not guaranteed. These findings underscore a critical insight: high levels of participation do not automatically translate into leadership or decision-making power for women.

### 2.3.2.1: Results by Region

Table 7: Individual acting as leader in different organizations

		Government Council/Agencies	Local Service	Formal/informal saving groups	Livelihood activities	Other groups	Leadership in at least one group
EASTERN	Women 18-64	7.8%	9.0%	14.4%	11.1%	17.9%	31.0%
	Men 18-64	11.1%	12.8%	18.3%	15.9%	21.4%	37.9%
NORTH	Women 18-64	7.1%	14.3%	16.4%	16.5%	25.1%	40.7%
	Men 18-64	10.8%	19.1%	21.2%	19.7%	30.7%	51.4%
NORTH-WESTERN	Women 18-64	3.0%	5.7%	13.8%	10.7%	15.9%	29.4%
	Men 18-64	9.1%	16.1%	14.8%	15.9%	26.3%	44.8%
SOUTHERN	Women 18-64	3.6%	13.6%	15.3%	19.8%	36.6%	47.2%
	Men 18-64	10.1%	15.1%	21.2%	26.6%	35.8%	51.9%
WESTERN RURAL	Women 18-64	1.9%	9.3%	21.3%	19.4%	45.4%	50.2%
	Men 18-64	0.0%	4.5%	30.1%	24.0%	43.2%	43.2%
Country level	Women 18-64	5.2%	10.6%	15.2%	14.9%	25.2%	37.9%
	Men 18-64	9.9%	14.9%	19.5%	20.0%	29.1%	45.9%

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

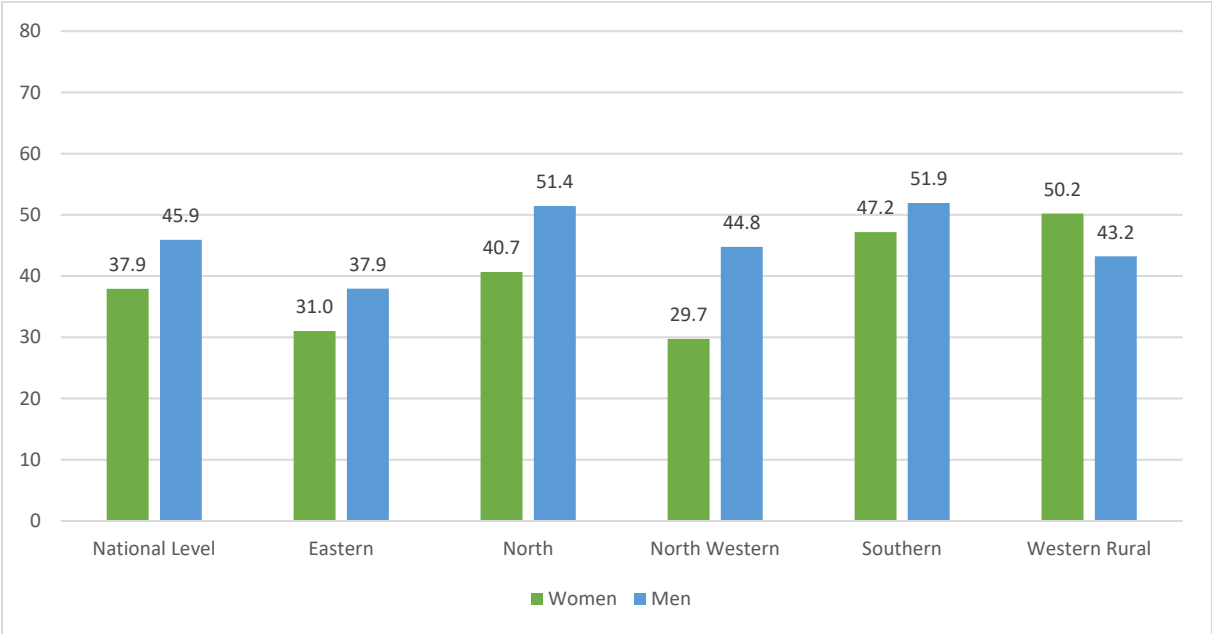
Leadership across organizational types varies significantly by both region and gender, reflecting broader inequalities in access to influence and decision-making.

The Eastern and Northern regions show moderately high participation in leadership roles for both genders, though men still lead by 6 to 10 percentage points. In the North-Western region, overall leadership levels are lower, particularly for women, who report the lowest rates across most organization types.

By contrast, the Southern and Western Rural regions stand out. In the Southern region, women report relatively strong leadership in other groups (36.6%) and livelihood activities (19.8%), narrowing the gender gap. The Western Rural region presents a notable reversal in overall leadership: 50.2% of women report having led in at least one organization, surpassing men (43.2%). Women in this region also show particularly high leadership in saving groups (21.3%) and community groups (45.4%), underscoring the critical role of informal and community-led spaces in promoting female leadership.

These results confirm that while women are participating across organizations, their transition into leadership roles remains uneven and particularly limited in formal, productive, and governance spaces.

Figure 16: Leadership in at least one Organization – National/Regional level

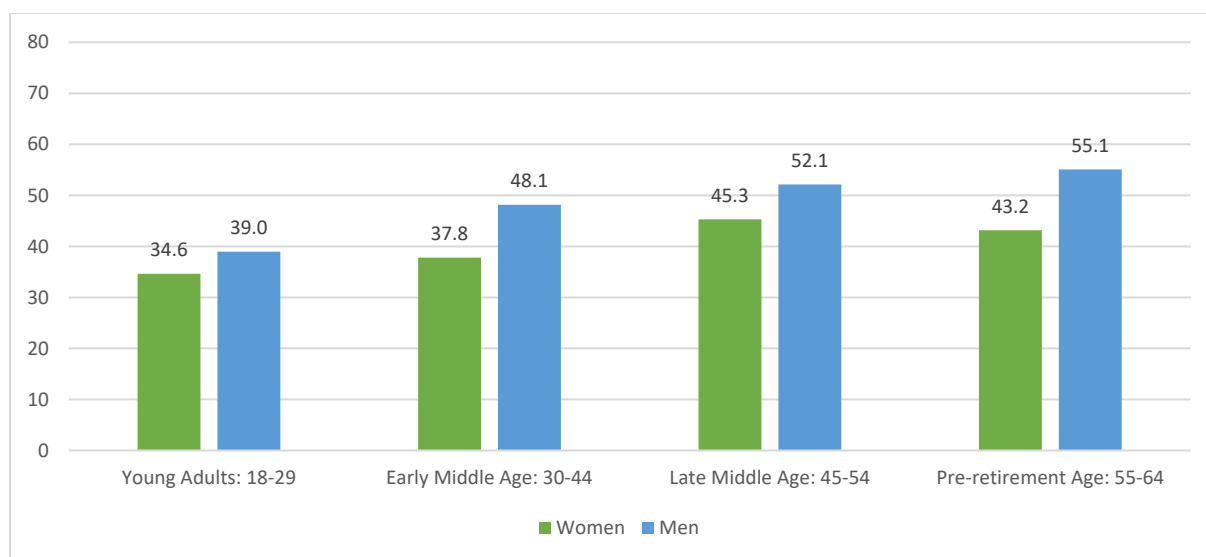


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.3.2.2: Results by Age Group**

Leadership in organizations by gender and age group shows that 55.1 percent men in the pre-retirement age group have leadership roles in at least one organization as compared to 43.2 percent of women. In the late middle age group, 52.1 percent of men and 45.3 percent of women have leadership roles. Early middle age also shows the same trend with 48.1 percent for men and 38 percent women in leadership roles, respectively. Among young adults, 39 percent for men and 34.6 percent of women are leaders in their organizations.

Figure 17: Leadership in at least one Organization - By age group

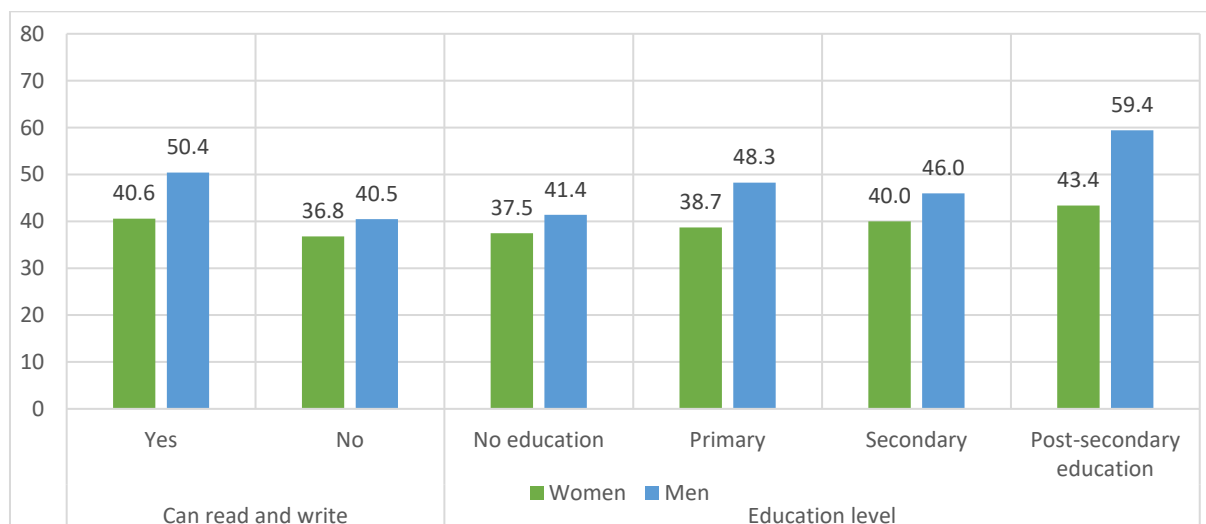


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

### 2.3.2.3: Results by Literacy and Education

Leadership disparities by education level show that men are more often group leaders across all education and literacy classifications. Among literate individuals, 50.4% of men report leadership roles compared to 40.6% of women.

Figure 18: Leadership in at least one Organization - By literacy and education level



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

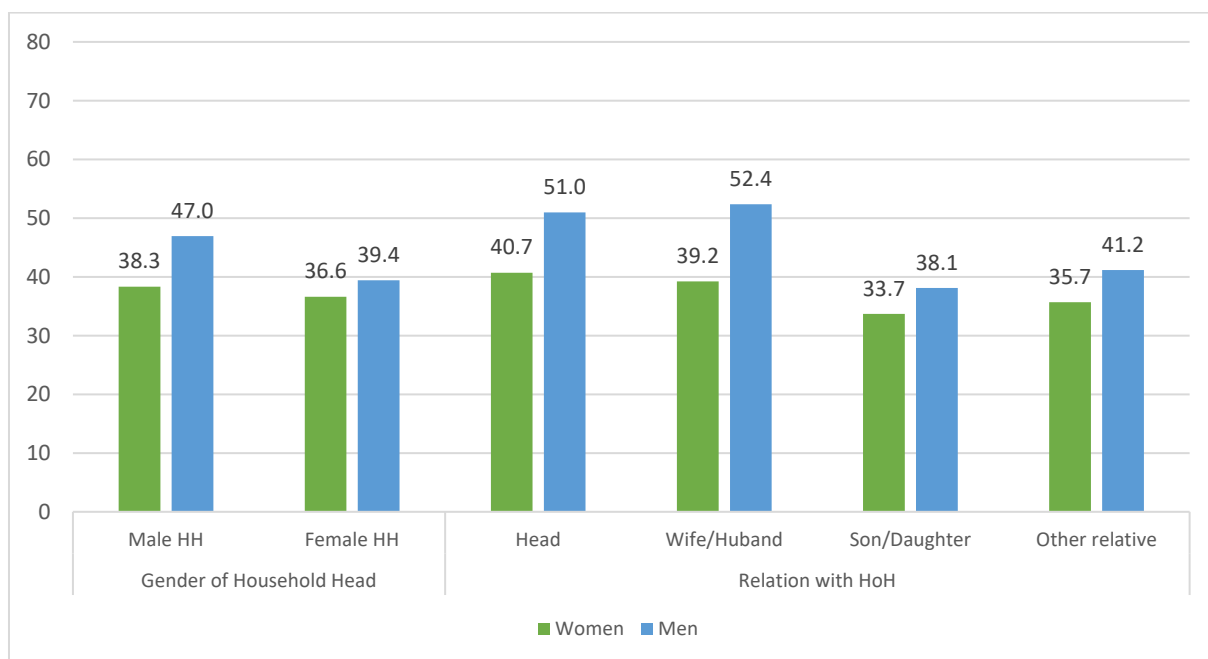
The gap becomes more pronounced at higher levels of education: at the tertiary level, 59.4% of men hold leadership roles versus only 43.4% of women. The difference is smaller at the secondary level, where 46% of men and 40% of women report leadership. At the primary level, 48.3% of men and 38.7% of women hold such positions. Even among those with no education,

men continue to report higher participation in leadership roles (41.4%) compared to women (37.5%).

### 2.3.2.4: Results By Household Headship and Position in the Household

Involvement in leadership varies by gender and the headship status of the households where individuals reside. Individuals living in male headed households more often report being group leaders, with 46.9% of men and 36.6% of women holding leadership positions. When further disaggregating by relationship to the household head, men who are unrelated to the head show the highest participation in leadership (85.1%), followed by women in the same category (60.1%). Among 'other relatives,' 41.2% of men and 35.7% of women report leadership roles. For sons and daughters, 38.1% of men and 33.7% of women are in leadership positions. Among spouses, 52.3% of men and 39.2% of women participate in leadership. Finally, among individuals who are themselves the household head, 51% of men and 40.7% of women report holding leadership roles.

Figure 19: Leadership Participation Among Individuals in Male- and Female-Headed Households, by Gender and Relationship to Head



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

### 2.3.3: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement

Looking beyond men's and women's participation and leadership in groups, the WEMNS survey also considers women's and men's confidence in their own gender's participation in

groups. This attempts to capture women’s ideas regarding whether they, as women, feel that they have the right to participate in community activities and feel heard in doing so.

Confidence in community engagement reflects how individuals perceive the capacity and willingness of women and men in their community to understand local dynamics, participate in activities and decision-making, and be heard by leaders. The indicator is constructed using a composite of responses to a set of statements, including whether women or men can understand what is going on in their community (e.g., social and political changes), whether they participate effectively in community activities and decision-making, whether they value engagement in gender-specific local issues, and whether community leaders listen to them. Responses range from “never” to “always,” with higher scores indicating stronger confidence in that group’s engagement and influence within the community.

Table 8 below presents responses from women and men regarding perceptions of women's and men's roles in community participation and decision-making. Questions about women were only asked to women, and questions about men were only asked to men, allowing for gender-specific self-assessments.

Among women, confidence community awareness and influence is relatively low. Only 26.6% of women believe women can really understand what is going on in their community, and just 24.6% feel they have the ability to participate effectively in decision-making. Similarly, 29.1% believe most community leaders would listen to women, and only 16.3% fully agreed with all positive statements about women's participation.

In contrast, men expressed much higher confidence in their own engagement and influence. Over half of men agreed with each of the key statements, and 34.4% fully agreed with all of them—more than double the share of women who said the same for themselves.

This contrast reveals a significant gender gap in perceived empowerment and influence at the community level. While men see themselves as active and listened to, women express much lower confidence in their ability to participate or be heard.

Table 8: Perceptions of Participation and Influence in Community Activities (Self-Reported), by statement

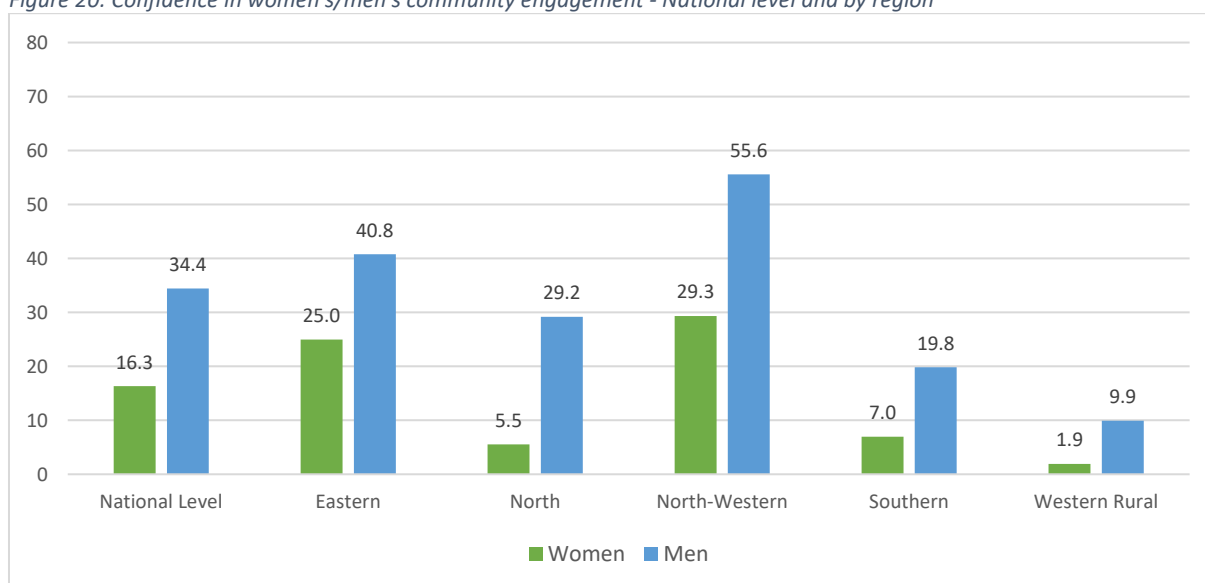
	Women can really understand what is going on with your community	Women have the ability to participate effectively in community activities	Women have the ability to participate effectively in decision-making	It is important to women that women actively participate in local women's issues	Most community leaders would listen to women	Fully agree in all the statement
<b>Women</b>	26.6%	27.8%	24.6%	37.1%	29.1%	<b>16.3%</b>
	Men can really understand what is going on with your community	Men have the ability to participate effectively in community activities	Men have the ability to participate effectively in decision-making	It is important to men that men actively participate in local men's issues	Most community leaders would listen to men	Fully agree in all the statement
<b>Men</b>	49.0%	53.1%	53.0%	56.6%	50.5%	<b>34.4%</b>

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

### 2.3.3.1: Results by Region

There are clear gender disparities in confidence in community engagement across all regions in Sierra Leone. Women feel significantly less confident than men in their ability to understand, participate in, and influence community affairs. In the Southern region, only 7% of women express confidence in community engagement versus 19.8% of men. Confidence, as well as the gender gap in confidence, is higher on the North-Western region, with 29.3% of women and 55.6% of men reporting confidence in engaging with their communities. Although still notable, the disparity is relatively narrower in the Eastern region, where 25% of women and 40.8% of men report confidence.

Figure 20: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement - National level and by region

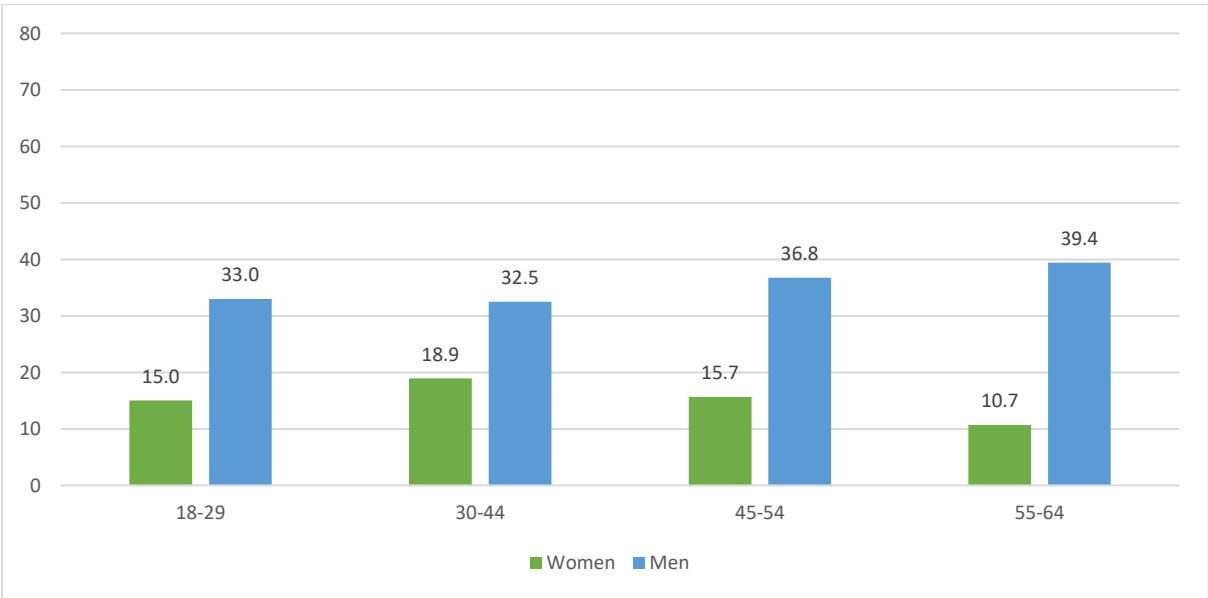


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.3.3.2: Results by Age Groups**

The survey findings reveal a clear gender gap in confidence in community engagement across all age groups. Among individuals approaching retirement age, 39.4% of men express confidence compared to only 10.7% of women. In the late middle age group 36.8% of report confidence versus 15.7% of women. This trend continues among those in the early middle age group, where 32.5% of men and 18.9% of women report feeling confident in their gender’s community engagement. Even among young adults, confidence remains markedly higher among men (33%) than among women (15%). These figures suggest that as age increases, so does confidence in community engagement, particularly among men, but older women may have been socialized to be less confident in women’s participation.

*Figure 21: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement - By age Group*



*Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone*

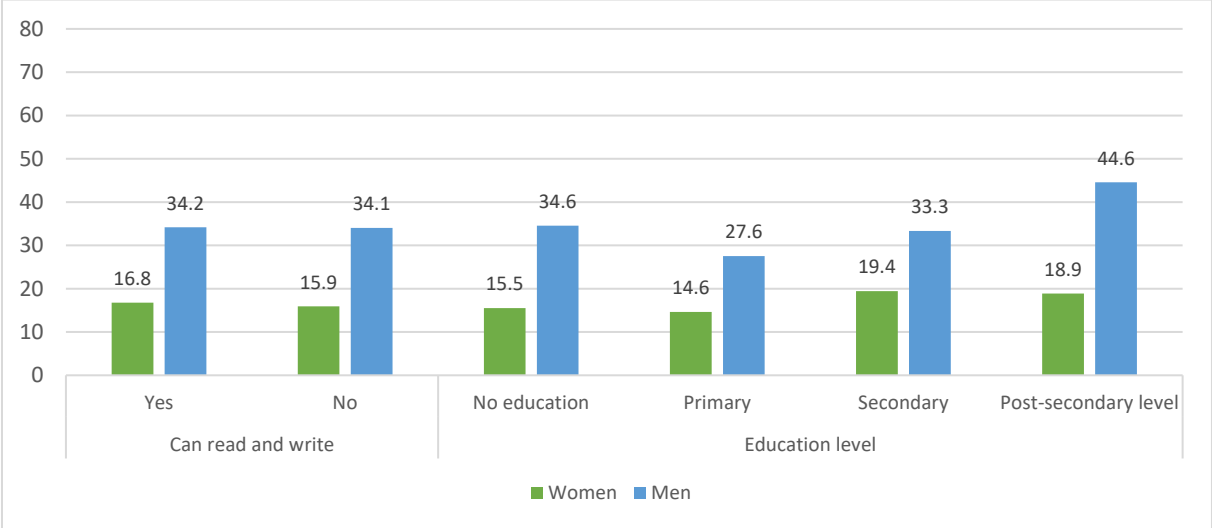
**2.3.3.3: Results by Literacy and Education**

Literacy and education are associated with increased confidence in community engagement, but the gender gap remains evident. Among literate individuals, 34.2% of men report confidence, nearly double the rate of women 16.8%.

When disaggregated by education level, men consistently report higher confidence in community engagement than women. At the tertiary level, 44.6% of men feel confident compared to 18.9% of women. At the secondary level, 33.3% of men express confidence versus 19.4% of women. For individuals with only primary education, 27.5% of men report confidence compared to 14.6% of women. Even among those with no formal education, men (34.2%) are

more than twice as likely as women (16.8%) to feel confident in their ability to engage in community affairs.

Figure 22: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement - By Literacy and education level

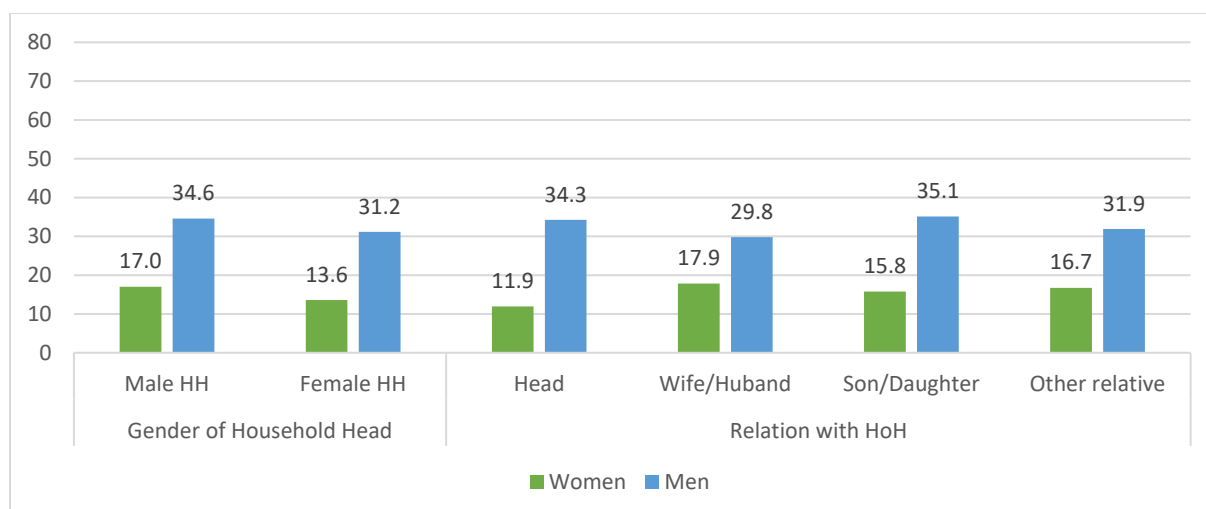


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.3.3.4: Results by Household Head and Position in the Household**

The data indicate that confidence in community engagement varies not only by gender but also by household dynamics. Individuals in male-headed households are more likely to report confidence, with 34.6% of men doing so compared to only 13.6% of women in female-headed households. Among individuals classified as "other relatives," 31.9% of men and 16.7% of women feel confident. Sons and daughters show a similar pattern, with 35.1% of men and 15.8% of women expressing confidence. Among spouses, 29.8% of men and 17.9% of women report feeling confident in community engagement. Finally, among household heads themselves, 34.2% of men and 11.9% of women express such confidence, underscoring a consistent pattern of gender disparity regardless of position within the household.

Figure 23: Confidence in women's/men's community engagement, by Gender and Relationship to Head



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

## SECTION 2.4: MOBILIZING RESOURCES

This section focuses on the external conditions and assets that enable individuals to make and act on choices—what we call agency. These enabling resources include access to information and communication technologies (ICT), financial services, credit, and secure rights to land and dwellings. While resources alone do not constitute empowerment, they are essential for sustaining it. They provide the foundation for women to exercise agency in a meaningful and autonomous way.

### MOBILIZING RESOURCES—KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Digital financial access is still unequal. Only 38% of women use mobile money or bank accounts, compared to 55% of men.
  - Young women (18–29) are more connected, but access drops sharply with age, falling to only 24% among women aged 55–64.
  - Access varies across regions: women in Western Rural are the most connected (57%), while women in the North lag (30%).
- Formal financial access is limited. Only 40% of women use mobile money, even fewer use bank accounts, especially in Southern and North-Western regions.
- Credit access looks equal—but isn't. Around 67% of both women and men say they can get a loan. But women depend more on informal sources like savings groups, while men access a wider range of formal lenders.
- Land and property rights are widespread but rarely documented. Most women and men say they have rights to land or housing—mostly through joint or customary arrangements. But very few women have their names on formal documents, and even fewer hold sole rights to sell or inherit property.

- Security matters more than paperwork. Despite low levels of documentation, most women feel confident they won't lose their land or home and are able to sell or pass it on—especially when rights are held jointly.

### 2.4.1: Use of ICT

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) play a transformative role. ICT can enhance women's access to health information, financial services, agricultural resources, and educational opportunities, ultimately improving their nutrition and overall well-being. Furthermore, access to digital tools—especially mobile-based services like digital wallets (e.g., Orange Money)—is essential for enhancing women's inclusion in financial systems, boosting their capacity to invest.

Table 9 highlights a clear gender gap in digital access and usage. While 54.2% of men report having access to a mobile phone, only 37.3% of women do. The gap widens further in internet usage: only 12.8% of women use the internet daily, compared to 20.3% of men. Finally, only 37.5% of women report having access to either the internet or a mobile phone, compared to 54.4% of men. This 17-percentage-point gap highlights a significant gender disparity in basic digital access, which has direct implications for women's ability to engage with financial services, information, and communication platforms. These figures underscore persistent digital inequalities that limit women's access to information, services, and opportunities—particularly in health, finance, and education.

*Table 9: Gender Differences in Digital Access and Daily Use of Mobile Phones and Internet*

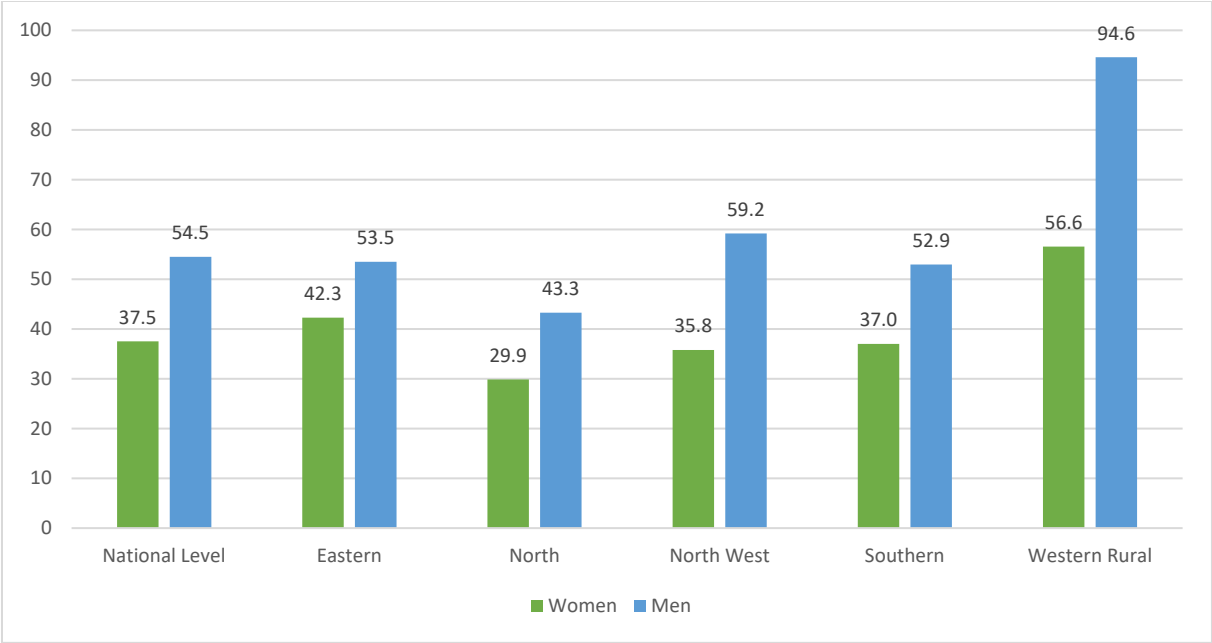
	Use of phone daily	Use of internet daily	Daily access to internet or mobile phone
<b>Women</b>	37.3%	12.8%	37.5%
<b>Men</b>	54.2%	20.3%	54.4%

*Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone*

#### 2.4.1.1: Results by Region

In the Eastern region, 42.3% of women use ICT compared to 53.5% of men. The Southern region shows a similar pattern, with only 37% of women using digital tools versus 52.9% of men. In the North-West, the gap widens further—just 35.8% of women report usage compared to 59.2% of men. The most striking disparity is in the Northern region, where fewer than 3 in 10 women (29.9%) report access, compared to 43.3% of men.

Figure 24: Percentage of individuals having daily access to either the internet or mobile phone - National and regional level

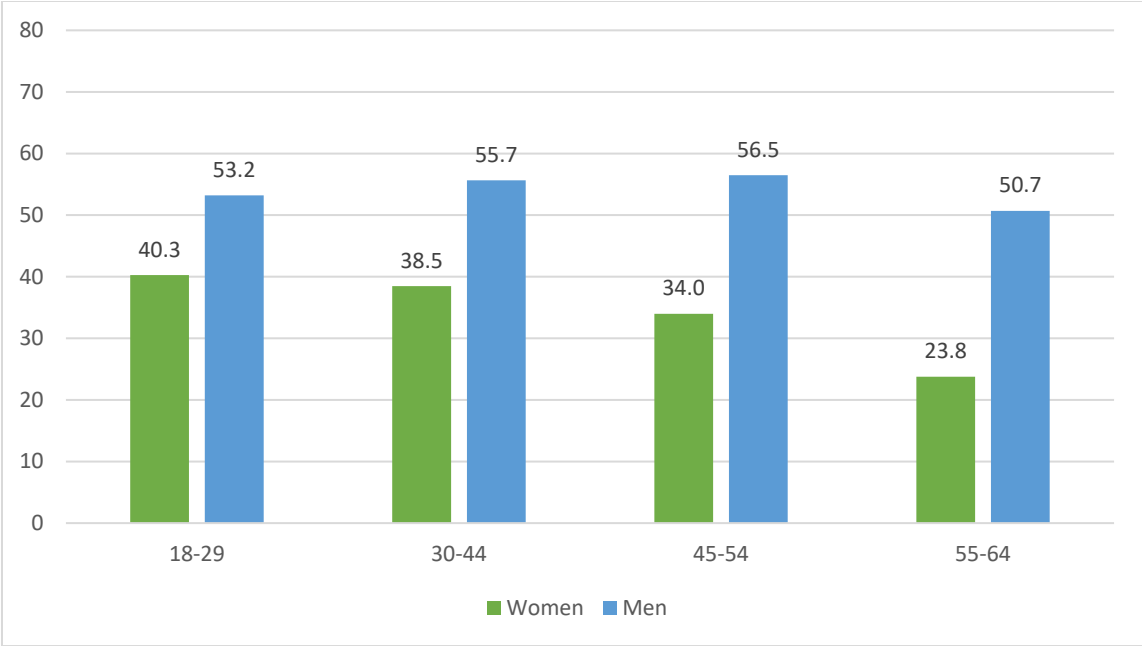


Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.4.1.2: Results by Age Groups**

Among young adults aged 18-29, 40.3% of women report using ICT, compared to 53.2% of men. Usage remains relatively high in the early middle age group (30–44), with 38.5% of women and 55.7% of men reporting use. However, ICT access declines among older age groups: 34.0% of women aged 45–54 and just 23.8% of women aged 55–64 use ICT, compared to 56.5% and 50.7% of men in the same age brackets, respectively. This pattern underscores that younger women are increasingly connected, though a significant gender gap persists across all age groups.

Figure 25: Percentage of individuals having daily access to either the internet or mobile phone - by age group



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.4.2: Use of Financial Services**

Financial inclusion, through tools such as mobile money, bank accounts, and credit, enhances women’s ability to exercise control over resources and make independent decisions, thereby supporting their broader agency and resilience. The WEMNS survey assessed both the extent and nature of financial service use among women and men across regions, highlighting key disparities and opportunities for targeted inclusion.

At national level, 39.9% of women reported using at least one financial service compared to 53.7% of men, reflecting a persistent gender gap (Table 10). The most commonly used service among women is mobile money (39.1%), followed by access to a bank account (10.8%). Usage of ATM or credit cards remains very limited for both women and men.

**2.4.2.1: Results by Region**

Regional patterns show that women in Western Rural have the highest level of financial inclusion, with 61.5% having used at least one financial service—driven primarily by high mobile money uptake. In contrast, Southern and North-Western regions report the lowest levels of financial service usage among women (34.8% and 38.3%, respectively). Men consistently report higher usage across all services and regions, with particularly high access in Western Rural, where 91% of men have used at least one financial service. These findings

underscore the importance of expanding digital and formal financial services as a pathway to strengthening women’s economic empowerment and agency.

Table 10: Percentage of individual using different financial service - National and regional levels

Region	Group	Mobile Money	Bank Account	ATM card	Credit Card	Used at least one
National	Women 18-64	39.1%	10.8%	1.8%	2.3%	39.9%
	Men 18-64	52.7%	14.5%	3.5%	2.9%	53.7%
EASTERN	Women 18-64	39.6%	10.6%	3.4%	4.2%	40.6%
	Men 18-64	49.6%	15.2%	5.1%	2.7%	50.8%
NORTH-	Women 18-64	43.5%	9.7%	1.8%	1.6%	44.1%
	Men 18-64	52.7%	16.6%	1.2%	0.9%	53.6%
NORTH- WESTERN	Women 18-64	37.8%	5.6%	1.3%	1.7%	38.3%
	Men 18-64	58.7%	8.3%	3.2%	2.4%	58.9%
SOUTHERN	Women 18-64	33.8%	14.8%	1.0%	1.8%	34.8%
	Men 18-64	45.9%	16.9%	3.7%	5.2%	47.5%
WESTERN RURAL	Women 18-64	61.5%	17.8%	0.0%	0.0%	61.0%
	Men 18-64	91.1%	12.9%	1.3%	0.0%	91.1%

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

### 2.4.3: Access to Credit

Access to credit is a key enabler of women’s economic agency and resilience. It goes beyond actual access, considering also the perceived ability to obtain credit from various sources— including formal banks, cooperatives, microfinance groups, informal savings networks, and NGO programs. Understanding gender differences in credit access helps identify the barriers women face in financial inclusion and highlights opportunities to expand equitable access to financial resources.

Nationally, access to at least one source of credit is nearly equal for women (67.4%) and men (67.5%). However, women tend to rely more heavily on semi-formal and informal sources, such as informal credit institutions (59.9%), cooperatives (40.6%), and microfinance groups (38.9%). Men, while also accessing informal credit (60.7%), report slightly higher use of formal banks (33%), cooperatives (45.7%), and NGO-supported credit (35.2%), suggesting more diversified access.

#### 2.4.3.1: Results by Region

Regional differences are notable. Women in the Northern region report the highest overall access (79.6%), with widespread use of microfinance (57.1%) and informal sources (72.5%). The North-Western region also shows relatively high access for women (72.2%), again driven by informal mechanisms. In contrast, the Southern region shows the lowest level of access among women (57.6%), with particularly low engagement with banks (18.3%) and microfinance services (26.5%).

Overall, while women participate in credit systems, they remain disproportionately dependent on informal and group-based mechanisms, which may offer flexibility but often lack the

security, scalability, and protections of formal financial institutions. These patterns highlight the need for targeted efforts to expand women’s access to a broader and more secure range of credit options, particularly in underserved regions.

Table 11: Percentage of individual reporting access to different credit platform - National and regional levels

Region	Group	Bank/formal institution	Cooperative	Micro-finance/Micro-credit	Informal Credit institution	Other (NGOs)	At least one source of credit
National	Women 18-64	30.2%	40.6%	38.9%	59.9%	31.4%	67.4%
	Men 18-64	33.0%	45.7%	40.6%	60.7%	35.2%	67.5%
EASTERN	Women 18-64	40.9%	45.8%	45.1%	59.2%	41.3%	65.1%
	Men 18-64	46.0%	53.1%	51.1%	62.8%	46.8%	66.8%
NORTH	Women 18-64	46.8%	52.0%	57.1%	72.5%	47.7%	79.6%
	Men 18-64	47.8%	55.4%	57.8%	72.8%	49.8%	78.8%
NORTH-WESTERN	Women 18-64	23.0%	30.6%	34.9%	69.9%	22.0%	72.2%
	Men 18-64	25.2%	37.3%	36.1%	71.1%	24.5%	74.5%
SOUTHERN	Women 18-64	18.3%	39.6%	26.5%	43.2%	23.1%	57.6%
	Men 18-64	20.2%	42.5%	25.9%	40.1%	26.5%	53.4%
WESTERN RURAL	Women 18-64	3.6%	13.5%	22.0%	68.6%	0.0%	69.0%
	Men 18-64	0.0%	13.4%	14.8%	87.8%	0.0%	88.0%

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

#### 2.4.4: Property Ownership

Secure rights to land and dwelling are critical agency-enabling resources that support women’s autonomy and long-term empowerment. The WENMS survey explored both legal ownership and perceived security of land and dwellings, looking at various rights such as use, sale, inheritance, and documentation. Property ownership is based on three key sub-indicators: having a legal document with one’s name on it, feeling secure from losing ownership or use rights, and having the ability to sell or pass on the land or dwelling. These measures help assess whether individuals truly have control and security over their property, which is essential for empowerment.

In terms of agricultural land, almost 90% of both women and men report ownership or usage rights. Joint ownership or use rights is the most common form for both women (79.6%) and men (77.1%), consistent with the predominance of customary collective systems of land ownership in Sierra Leone. However, men are more likely to report sole ownership (11.9%) compared to women (8%). Only 10–11% of respondents of either gender report having no access to land.

When asked about the right to sell land, 5.9% of women said they can sell land alone compared to 10.4% of men, and 62.8% of women reported joint selling rights versus 61.4% of men. Similarly, when it comes to transferring land after death, 7% of women reported having the right to do so alone compared to 11.1% of men. These results indicate that although access is

widespread, the nature of tenure remains predominantly joint, especially for women. The questions do not further specify whether the joint rights holders are within the household or the community.

Land documentation remains low overall. Around 20% of both women and men reported having formal documents issued by the Land Registry for agricultural land. Even fewer women (1.8%) have their names listed on land titles alone, and only 14.2% jointly, compared to 4.7% and 11% for men respectively.

Perceptions of tenure insecurity also reveal gender differences. While 54.2% of women and 58.8% of men feel “Not likely” to lose their land rights involuntarily in the next five years, around 23% of women still consider it “slightly likely,” with smaller proportions indicating moderate to high risk.

For dwellings, the gender patterns are similar. Joint rights are again more prevalent among women (77.8%) than men (71.1%), with men reporting more sole ownership (12.9% vs. 6.9%). About 23% of both women and men report their household has formal documentation for dwellings, and the inclusion of names on those documents is again lower for women (2% alone, 15.6% jointly) than for men (5.4% alone, 13.2% jointly).

Although reforms such as the 2022 *Customary Land Rights Act* have legally advanced women's rights, ensuring equal inheritance, access to land markets, and protection from eviction, implementation gaps remain. These include lack of awareness among women about their rights, persistence of patriarchal norms, and limited institutional capacity in rural areas where customary law still prevails.

Overall, the findings underscore a significant gender gap in legal ownership, documentation, and decision-making power, despite formal legal reforms. Women’s access to land and housing is widespread but remains largely informal or shared, highlighting the need for continued policy attention and support to secure women’s property rights in practice.

Table 12: Ownership and Tenure Security of Land and Dwellings

	Land		Dwelling	
	Women (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)	Men (%)
<b>Ownership or use rights (any form)</b>	87.6	89.1	84.7	84.0
<b>Sole ownership or use rights</b>	8.0	11.9	6.9	12.9
<b>Joint ownership or use rights</b>	79.6	77.1	77.8	71.1
<b>Right to sell (sole)</b>	5.9	10.4	4.9	9.8
<b>Right to sell (joint)</b>	62.8	61.4	59.1	55.1
<b>Right to transfer after death (sole)</b>	7.0	11.1	5.2	10.4
<b>Right to transfer after death (joint)</b>	64.1	63.2	59.8	55.8
<b>Formal document available</b>	20.3	20.1	23.2	23.3
<b>Name on document (sole)</b>	1.8	4.7	2.0	5.4
<b>Name on document (joint)</b>	14.2	11.0	15.6	13.2
<b>Likelihood of losing ownership</b>				
<b>Not likely</b>	54.2	58.8	55.8	58.3
<b>Slightly likely</b>	23.0	20.7	21.7	18.5
<b>Moderately likely</b>	3.8	4.4	3.0	3.9
<b>Very likely</b>	4.8	3.9	2.9	2.8
<b>Extreme likely</b>	1.3	0.9	0.7	0.4

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

To construct the WEMNS property indicators, land and dwelling are considered together, recognizing that individuals may hold rights to either type of asset. This approach reflects the practical reality that ownership and use rights are often split across different asset types. Each indicator is met if the person has either land or dwelling, with legal papers, secure use, or the right to pass it on, even if it's shared with someone else. This inclusive methodology ensures that diverse forms of property access and control, particularly those common among women, are fully captured.

#### 2.4.4.2: Results by Region

Table 13 below, highlights regional differences in legally documented ownership, secure tenure, and transfer rights of land and dwelling. Nationally, men and women report similar rates of documented ownership (22.3% vs. 21%), though regional gaps are evident. In the Southern region, women lead with the highest rate of documented ownership (35.9%), while the lowest is observed in the North-Western region (5.7% for women and 9.3% for men).

Table 13: Legally Documented Ownership, Transfer Rights, and Secure Tenure

	Legally documented ownership		Transfer rights		Secure Tenure Rights	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
<b>National</b>	21.0%	22.3%	77.8%	79.5%	62.1%	65.2%
<b>EASTERN</b>	23.9%	27.9%	77.5%	82.3%	64.1%	70.5%
<b>NORTH</b>	12.7%	13.3%	90.0%	89.4%	70.4%	66.2%

<b>NORTH-WESTERN</b>	5.7%	9.3%	66.0%	75.0%	83.4%	92.5%
<b>SOUTHERN</b>	35.9%	32.7%	84.7%	83.0%	38.9%	40.9%
<b>WESTERN AREA</b>	18.3%	9.5%	36.5%	17.2%	58.5%	66.8%

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

Low documentation does not necessarily translate into perceived tenure insecurity, especially in the North-Western region, where 83.4% of women and 92.5% of men feel secure despite low documentation rates. This may reflect confidence in the customary tenure arrangements. At the national level, 62.1% of women and 65.2% of men feel secure in their tenure. The Southern area is particularly insecure: only 38.9% of women and 40.9% of men report being confident that they will not lose their rights.

Transfer rights, which refer to the ability to sell or bequeath land or dwellings, are widely reported. Nationally, 77.8% of women and 79.5% of men report such rights. The North reports the highest rates (90% for women and 89.4% for men), while the Western Area shows the lowest, with just 36% of women and 17% of men reporting transfer rights—likely influenced by more formal statutory requirements and limited access to land.

**SECTION 2.5: EMPOWERMENT**

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT—KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- The empowerment results reveal a persistent gender gap in Sierra Leone.
- Women, on average, score 0.46 on the empowerment index, while men reach 0.56.
- This difference is mainly due to the higher share of women classified as disempowered—93 percent compared to 78 percent of men.
- Although both women and men who are disempowered face a similar number of overlapping constraints, women experience limitations across a broader range of domains.
- Women are particularly constrained in areas such as spending decisions, confidence in community participation, digital and financial access, and social norms related to autonomy and rights.
- In contrast, men’s disempowerment is more concentrated in specific areas like leadership and decision-making, with fewer barriers related to access or social acceptance.

This section introduces the Empowerment Indicator, a composite measure designed to assess individuals’ ability to make meaningful life choices across four domains: Awareness, Ability to Choose, Active in Society, and Access to Resources. The Awareness dimension is included only for women, reflecting the specific social and cultural barriers they face in endorsing and asserting their rights. The empowerment indicator equally weights the 12 component indicators for women and 9 for men. The composite indicator allows us to see the overall headcount of empowered and disempowered women and men. We can also build off the indicator to identify the primary contributors to disempowerment. These indicators highlight where gender gaps persist and where progress is being made. In doing so, the Empowerment Indicator serves as a powerful tool for communicating inequalities and tracking changes over time.

**2.5.1: WEMNS Results**

The table below presents the key results of the WEMNS methodology for women and men. The overall empowerment score, which ranges from 0 (no empowerment) to 1 (full empowerment), stands at 0.46 for women and 0.56 for men, confirming a clear gender gap in empowerment levels. This difference reflects two main components:

- The disempowerment headcount ratio (H) shows that 93% of women and 78% of men are classified as disempowered, meaning they are constrained in at least 30% of the indicators.
- Among those who are disempowered, the average intensity of disempowerment (A) is similar: 0.58 for women and 0.57 for men, suggesting that when individuals are disempowered, they tend to face multiple overlapping constraints, regardless of gender.

With over 1.5 million women and 1.1 million men in agricultural households estimated to be disempowered, these results carry significant implications for development strategies.

Table 14: Empowerment Results

Indicator	Women	Men
WEMNS score	.46	.56
Disempowerment headcount ratio (H)	92.6%	77.9%
Estimated disempowered population (N)	1,543,482	1,058,143
Intensity of disempowerment (A)	.58	.57
Total Estimated population	1,667,522	1,358,834

Note: WEMNS = 1 - (H x A)

### 2.5.1.1: Empowerment Indicators

Moving to a deeper analysis of the constraints faced by both men and women, the table presents the headcount ratio for each empowerment indicator. The results highlight gender differences in both the frequency and type of constraints faced.

For women, the greatest constraints are observed in:

- Confidence in community engagement (83.8%)
- Influence in spending decisions (79.2%)
- Lack of documented property rights (79%)
- Use of ICT (64.10%)
- Endorsement of freedom in family formation choice (62.8%)
- Use of financial services (62.8%)
- Leadership in organizations (62.1%)

Table 15: Headcount ratios (% of respondents constrained in each indicator)

Indicator	Women	Men
Endorsement of women's freedom in livelihood choices	57.8	
Endorsement of women's freedom in family formation choices	62.8	
Rejection of women's subjection to sexual harassment	33.1	
Influence over time allocation	49.7	46.8

Influence on spending decisions	79.2	67.1
Influence on own health decisions	60.6	48.6
Participation in organizations	23.5	24.1
Leadership in organizations	62.1	54.1
Confidence in women's/men's community engagement	83.8	65.9
Use of information communication technologies (ICT)	62.5	45.6
Use of financial services	60.0	46.2
Access to credit	32.6	32.1
Documented property rights	79.0	77.7
Secure transfer rights	22.2	20.4
Secure tenure rights	37.9	34.8
Observation (n)	2,146	1,707

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

The results show that women face many barriers in areas that are essential for having a voice, making decisions, and participating in the economy. Their biggest challenges are in decision-making and access to digital and financial tools, which limit their independence. Social norms also play a role, many women face restrictions on family and work choices, and on speaking out against harassment.

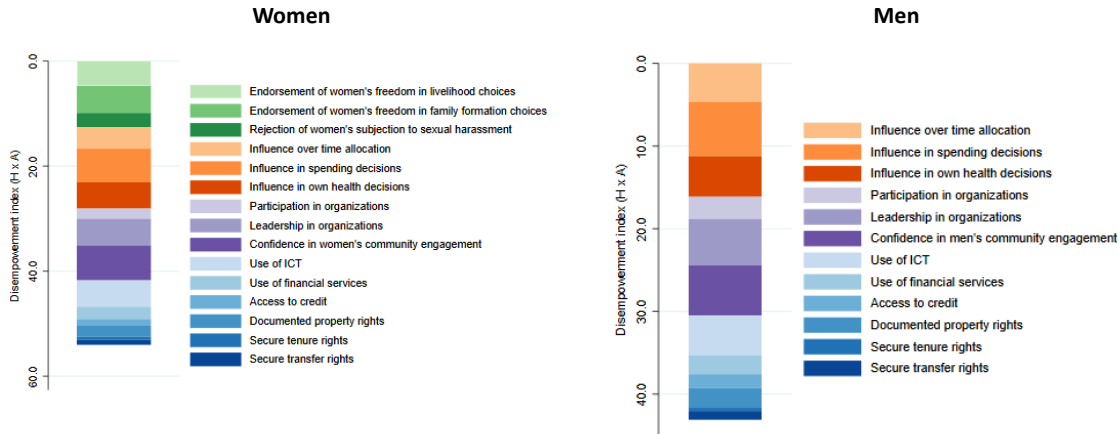
Overall, men report fewer barriers, but many still face limits in: Owning documented property (77.7%), Making spending decisions (67.1%), Feeling confident to speak in the community (65.9%). Men have fewer problems than women with digital access (45.6%) and financial services (46.2%), but both genders have similar challenges in getting credit or documented property rights. However, the data does not say if property is owned individually or jointly.

For both women and men, the lowest barrier is joining organizations (around 24%), but leadership roles — especially for women — remain hard to reach.

### 2.5.1.2: Contribution of Each Indicator to Disempowerment

The figure below presents the contribution of each indicator to disempowerment. Women face disempowerment across many areas. The largest barriers relate to low confidence in participation, spending decisions, and speaking in the community, often shaped by social norms. Limited freedom to choose work or family life and tolerance of harassment also weigh heavily. In addition, women have less access to tools like mobile phones, financial services, and land. Men's disempowerment is mostly concentrated in decision-making and participation. Fewer men are disempowered; they face barriers mainly related to leadership and financial roles.

Figure 26: Contributions of each indicator to disempowerment



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

Table 16, below, shows that the highest contributor to disempowerment for women is confidence in community engagement (12.3%). This is followed closely by spending decisions (11.9%) and freedom in family formation (9.5%). Other key contributors include:

- Leadership in organizations (9.4%)
- Use of ICT (9.3%)
- Health decisions (9.2%)
- Time allocation (7.6%).

For men, the largest shares of disempowerment stem from:

- Spending decisions (15.4%)
- Confidence in community engagement (14.5%)
- Leadership in organizations (12.5%)
- Health decision-making (11.6%)
- Time allocation (11.2%)

These top five indicators account for more than two-thirds of male disempowerment, pointing to a narrower but still significant set of challenges. Other domains, such as ICT (10.4%) and financial services (5.3%), contribute to a lesser extent. As with women, land and property rights indicators contribute only marginally, but this may mask important nuances related to joint versus sole ownership.

Table 16: Contributions of each indicator to disempowerment

Indicator	Women		Men	
	Value	%	Value	%
Endorsement of women's freedom in livelihood choices	4.7	8.8%		
Endorsement of women's freedom in family formation choices	5.2	9.5%		
Rejection of women's subjection to sexual harassment	2.7	5.0%		
Influence over time allocation	4.1	7.6%	5.0	11.2%
Influence on spending decisions	6.4	11.9%	6.8	15.4%
Influence on own health decisions	5.0	9.2%	5.1	11.6%
Participation in organizations	1.9	3.6%	2.6	6.0%
Leadership in organizations	5.1	9.4%	5.5	12.5%
Confidence in women's/men's community engagement	6.6	12.3%	6.4	14.5%
Use of information communication technologies (ICT)	5.0	9.3%	4.6	10.4%
Use of financial services	2.4	4.4%	2.3	5.3%
Access to credit	1.3	2.4%	1.6	3.7%
Documented property rights	2.1	3.9%	2.3	5.2%
Secure transfer rights	0.6	1.1%	0.7	1.5%
Secure tenure rights	1.0	1.8%	1.2	2.6%

Note: Calculated as a percentage of the disempowerment index ( $H \times A$ )

In summary, while women's disempowerment is broader and more evenly distributed across domains, men's disempowerment is more concentrated in public-facing and financial autonomy areas. These findings support the case for gender-specific policy responses: multi-sectoral efforts to expand women's empowerment across diverse domains, and focused strategies to strengthen men's participation and agency in leadership and decision-making spaces.

### 2.5.2: Results by Region

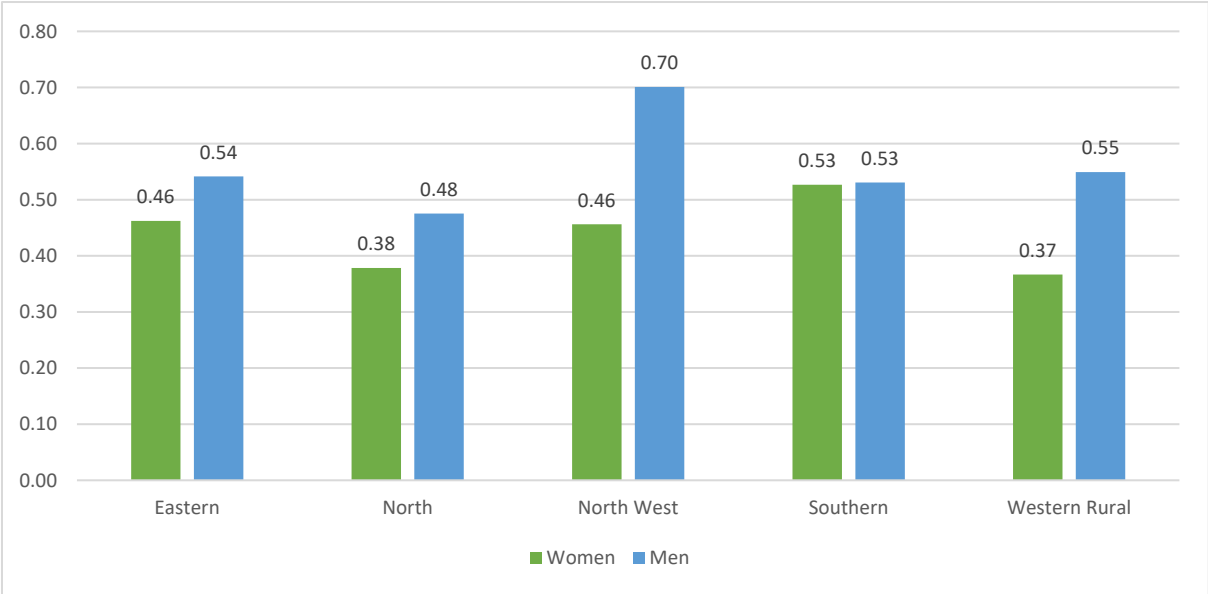
The Figure below presents the average empowerment score for women and men across the five regions of Sierra Leone. The data show that these disparities are not uniform across the country. In the North-Western region, the gap is most pronounced. While women's average empowerment score remains at 0.46, men's score reaches 0.70—over 50% higher than that of women. This suggests a significant imbalance in agency between genders in that area. A similarly stark contrast is observed in Western Rural, where men score 0.55 and women only 0.37. This 0.18-point difference reflects one of the lowest levels of women's empowerment nationally and one of the widest gender gaps.

In the North, women report the lowest average score overall at 0.38, while men in the same region reach 0.48. Although the absolute magnitudes are low for both, the relative difference remains notable. In the Eastern region, both men and women report scores slightly above the national average for women, with a gap of 0.08 points (0.46 for women and 0.54 for men), indicating more moderate but still present inequality.

The only region where parity is observed is the Southern region, where both men and women have an equal average empowerment score of 0.53. This outcome suggests more balanced gender dynamics in agriculture, at least in terms of the dimensions captured by the empowerment index.

These findings highlight not only the existence of substantial gender gaps but also the variation in their magnitude across different parts of the country. Addressing these disparities is essential for ensuring equitable participation in agriculture and for advancing the national development goals set out under the Feed Salone 2024 initiative<sup>3</sup>.

Figure 27: Empowerment score - Regional levels



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

**2.5.3: Disempowerment Headcount**

**2.5.3.1: Results by Region**

At the regional level, the gap is especially pronounced in the Northern region, where 95.4% of women are disempowered, compared to just 57.4% of men. This represents the widest gender

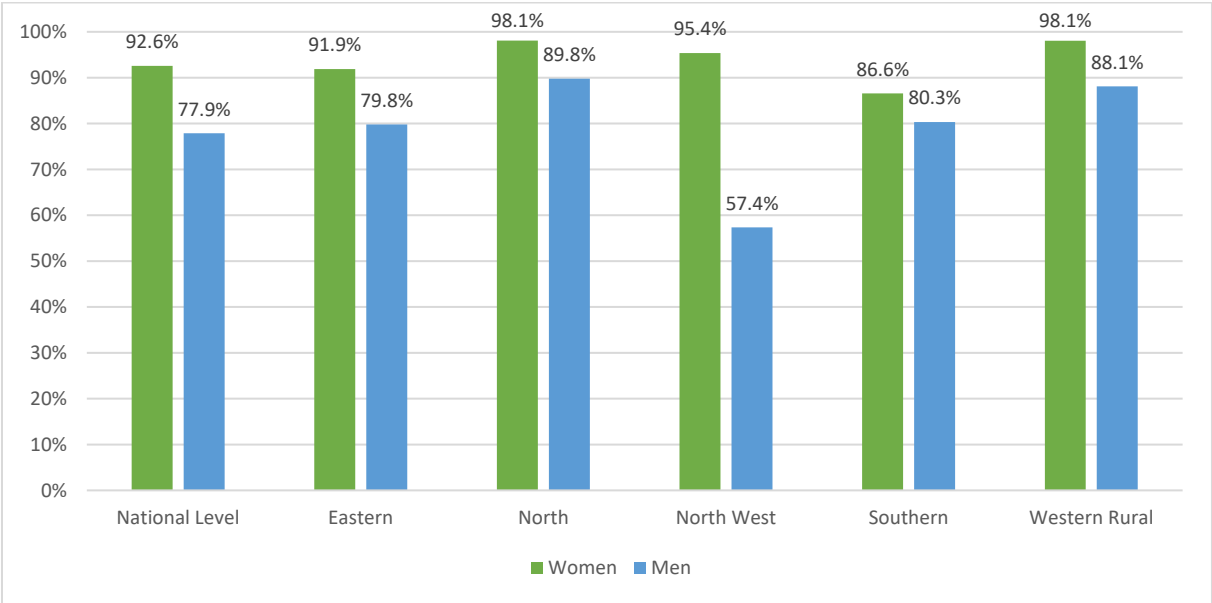
<sup>3</sup> For more info, please visit <https://feedsalone.gov.sl/>

gap observed across all regions, underscoring structural inequalities in access to resources, decision-making authority, and autonomy in agricultural contexts.

In the North and Western Rural regions, the incidence of disempowerment among women is highest, at 98.1%, indicating that nearly all women in these areas face overlapping constraints. Men's disempowerment levels in these same regions, 89.8% in the North and 88.1% in Western Rural, are also high, but the gap between genders persists.

The Eastern region shows similarly high rates of disempowerment, affecting 91.9% of women and 79.8% of men. In the Southern region, the gender gap is narrower, with 86.6% of women and 80.3% of men disempowered. This suggests relatively more balanced empowerment dynamics in the South, although the overall levels of disempowerment remain high.

Figure 28: Disempowerment Headcount - National and regional levels



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

These findings point to widespread disempowerment among both women and men, but particularly for women, who consistently face more severe limitations across all regions.

**2.5.3.2: Results by Household Headship and Position in the Household**

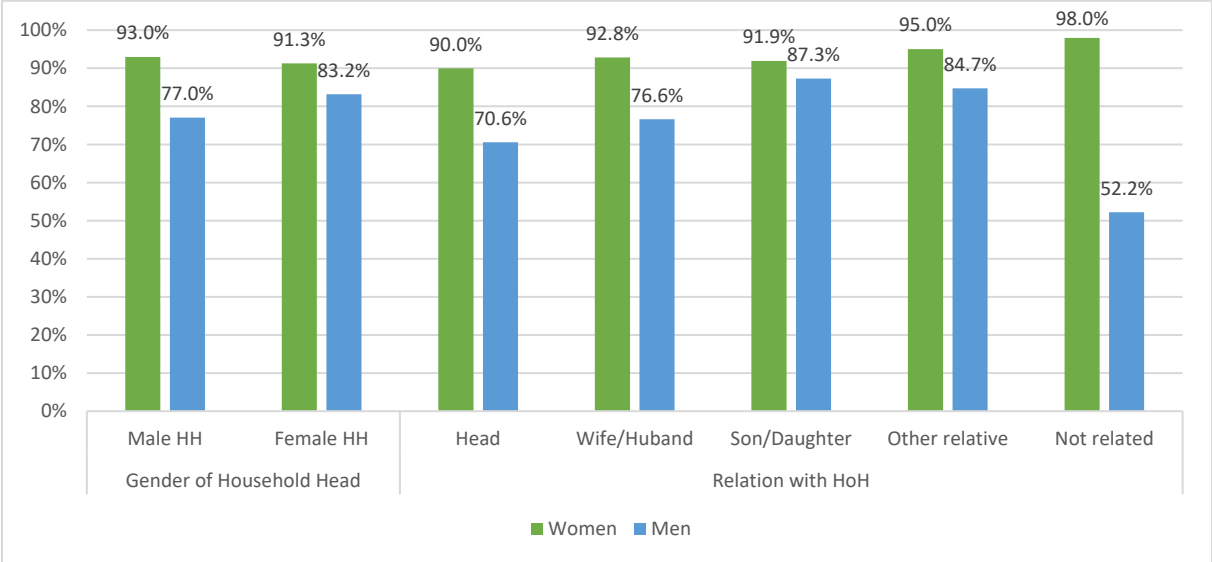
Widespread disempowerment is seen among both women and men, but with constant higher incidence among women across all household structures and relationships.

When examining disempowerment by gender of the household head, the results show that 93% of women in male-headed households are disempowered, compared to 77% of men in the same households

Disempowerment within households does not depend only on gender, it also varies according to the relationship to the household head. Women and men who are heads of household themselves tend to be the least disempowered, likely because they hold decision-making authority. However, being the spouse of the household head does not necessarily mean greater empowerment, especially for women, who still report very high levels of disempowerment.

Among sons and daughters, both women and men face high disempowerment, suggesting that younger household members may have limited say in important matters. Other relatives report high disempowerment rates, possibly meaning that the further an individual is from the center of household authority, the more likely they are to lack power, especially if they are a woman.

Figure 29: Disempowerment headcount relationship to the HH



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

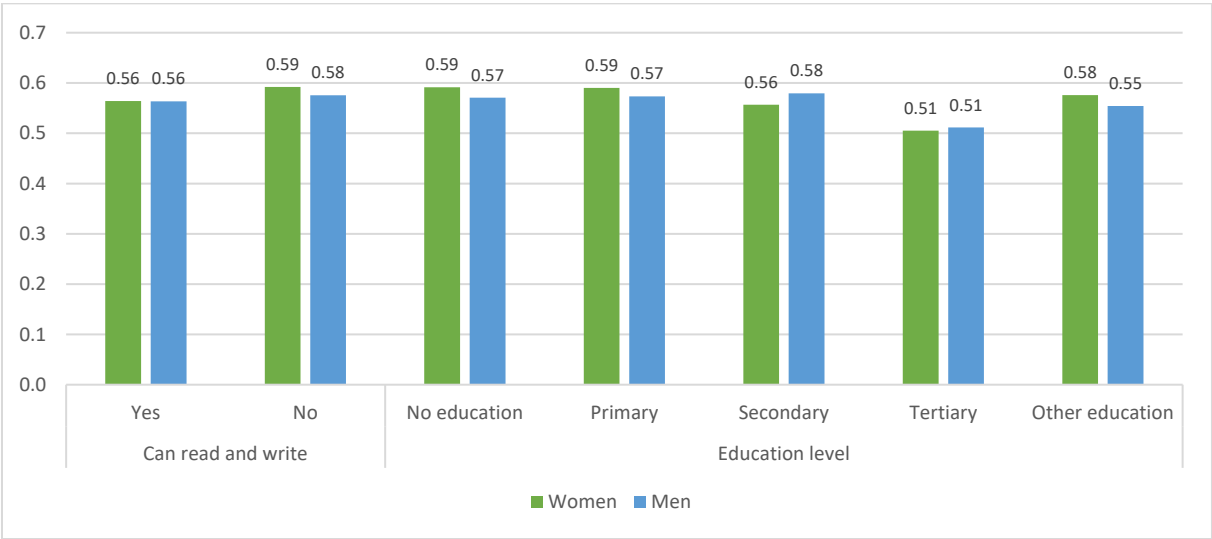
**2.5.4 Intensity of Disempowerment: Results by Education**

The intensity of disempowerment shows patterns across both literacy status and education level, with similar trends for women and men.

Among both women and men, individuals who cannot read and write report a slightly higher intensity of disempowerment than those who are literate. For women, the intensity increases from 0.56 among literate individuals to 0.59 among those who are illiterate; for men, the difference is from 0.56 to 0.58. Although the gap is modest, the pattern suggests that literacy contributes to reducing the severity of disempowerment, likely by enhancing individuals’ ability to access information, navigate services, and make informed decisions.

Similarly, the intensity of disempowerment decreases with higher levels of education for both women and men. Among those with no education, the intensity is 0.59 for women and 0.57 for men. It remains high among individuals with only primary education but begins to decline for those with secondary education—especially among women, where it drops to 0.56. The lowest intensity of disempowerment is observed among individuals with tertiary education, where the index drops to 0.50 for women and 0.51 for men. This confirms that higher education is associated with a lower burden of disempowerment, even among those still classified as disempowered. Education likely increases access to information, confidence, and influence in key decision-making domains. Women with “other education” (e.g., vocational or non-formal training) still experience a relatively high disempowerment intensity (0.58), suggesting that while alternative forms of education provide some benefits, they may not offset constraints as effectively as formal education.

Figure 30: Intensity of disempowerment by literacy and education level



Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

### SDG 5.a.1—KEY TAKEAWAYS

#### Proportion of Agricultural Population with Rights

- Nationally, only 12.9% of women and 20.4% of men report ownership or secure rights.
- Regional disparities are notable:
  - North shows highest inclusion (25.6% women vs. 26.8% men).
  - Southern and Eastern regions reveal wider gender gaps, with women significantly underrepresented.

#### Part (b): Share of Women Among Landowners

- Women constitute 43.7% of landowners nationally, showing underrepresentation but not total exclusion.
- The North leads, with women comprising 55.3% of rights-holders—the only region where women outnumber men.
- Southern region has the lowest share (36.1%), suggesting stronger male dominance in landholding structures.
- These figures show that when women do access land, they represent a meaningful share, though total ownership remains low.

Globally, gender equality in agricultural landownership remains far from achieved. Based on data from 2009 to 2023, in two-thirds of countries with available information (49), fewer than 50% of both women and men report ownership or secure rights over agricultural land.

These disparities reflect the structural barriers, including discriminatory inheritance practices, gender-biased customary norms, and limited access to documentation and legal redress for women.

Despite this, progress has been slow but not absent and women's landownership has increased in the last years, particularly in parts of sub-Saharan Africa. These incremental gains show that targeted policy reform, awareness campaigns, and improved data collection can contribute to meaningful change.<sup>4</sup>

Sierra Leone reflects many of the same challenges seen globally. Women's land ownership remains significantly constrained, especially in rural areas governed by customary tenure systems, where land is allocated through male-dominated traditional authorities. This

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals-data-portal/data/indicators/5a1-women-ownership-of-agricultural-land/en>

persistent inequality highlights the need to take a closer look at SDG Indicator 5.a.1, which helps to:

- Track both legal ownership and people’s perceptions of land rights.
- Spot gender gaps in who has access to land.

### **3.1 SDG 5.a.1 - Overview**

SDG 5.a.1 is a core indicator for monitoring gender equality in land ownership and tenure, particularly over agricultural land. It captures both the overall prevalence of land rights and the gender distribution among rights-holders, offering critical insight into women’s economic empowerment through land.

The indicator includes two components:

- **5.a.1(a):** Proportion of agricultural population with ownership or secure tenure rights over agricultural land, disaggregated by sex.
- **5.a.1(b):** Share of women among all agricultural landowners or rights-holders.

Both sub-indicators consider sole and joint ownership, and require data disaggregated by sex, tenure type (ownership, rental, etc.), and urban/rural residence. The focus is on whether the land rights are secure, documented, and respected—particularly critical for women, who often face de facto exclusion even when de jure rights exist.

### **3.2 Sierra Leone context**

In Sierra Leone, the land tenure system presents a unique challenge and opportunity for gender analysis. The country has a dual land governance system:

- Statutory freehold tenure applies mainly in the Western Area (including Freetown), where individuals, including women, can legally own, lease, and sell land.
- Customary tenure, prevalent in the provinces (most of rural Sierra Leone), governs land allocation through traditional authorities, often excluding women from ownership or inheritance due to entrenched patriarchal norms.

In applying the indicator these were considered:

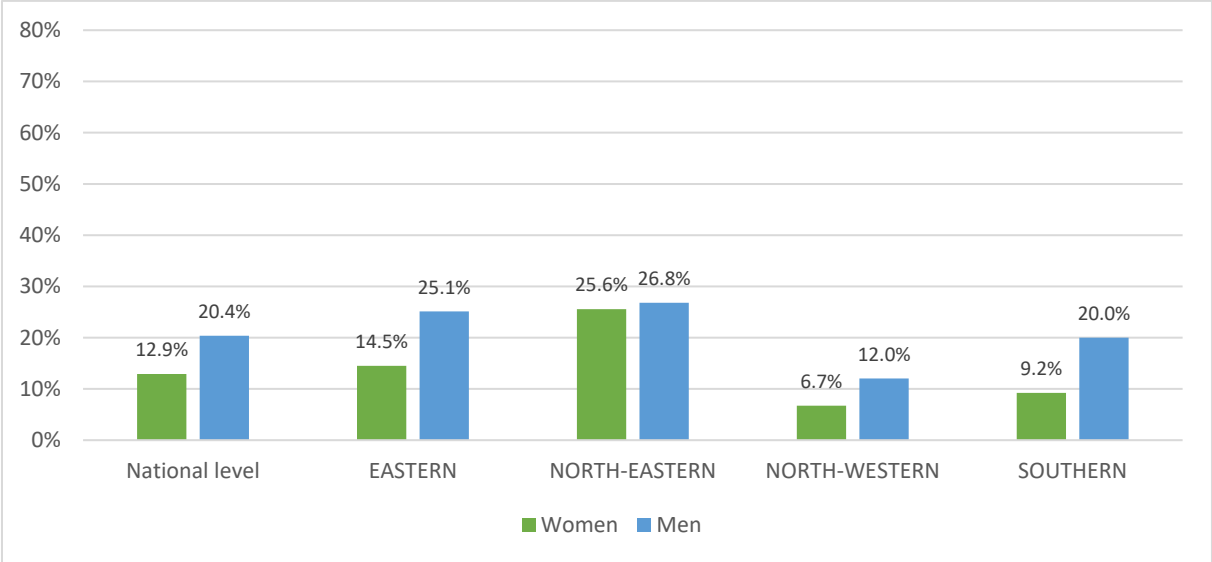
- Individuals who own land alone or both alone and jointly are counted as rights-holders.
- Joint ownership alone, without individual control, may not constitute secure tenure—particularly under customary norms where women may be excluded from effective land decisions.

### 3.3 Survey Findings

The figure below shows results for indicator SDG 5.a.1(a). At the national level 12.9% of women report ownership or tenure rights compared to 20.4% of men.

This reflects a 7.5 percentage point gender gap, reinforcing national-level inequalities in land access and control.

Figure 31: SDG 5.a.1(a) - National and regional disparities



At the regional level, North region shows the highest levels of ownership for both women (25.6%) and men (26.8%), with a relatively narrow gender gap. This may suggest greater inclusivity or stronger recognition of women’s rights in this area, despite being a predominantly customary tenure region. The Southern region presents a stark gender divide, with only 9.2% of women holding land rights compared to 20.0% of men, a gap of nearly 11 percentage points, suggesting possible persistent structural barriers for women. In the North-Western region, land ownership is low for both sexes (6.7% for women, 12.0% for men), but the relative gap remains significant, highlighting women’s exclusion in less developed rural settings. The Eastern region, with 14.5% of women and 25.1% of men reporting rights, also shows a pronounced gap, though both figures are above the national average for women.

Moving to SDG 5.a.1(b), table below highlights the gender distribution among those with rights to agricultural land, regardless of overall coverage. At the national level, women make up 43.7% of landowners or rights-bearers. This suggests moderate gender imbalance, with women underrepresented but not entirely excluded from ownership structures.

Table 17: Share of women among owners or rights bearers over agricultural land

**SDG 5.a.1(b)**

<b>National level</b>	43.7%
<b>EASTERN</b>	38.4%
<b>NORTH</b>	55.3%
<b>NORTH-WESTERN</b>	44.5%
<b>SOUTHERN</b>	36.1%

At the regional level, the North stands out with 55.3% of landowners being women, the only region where women outnumber men among rights-holders. This is a promising result and may reflect more progressive customary practices or effective programming efforts in that area. The North (44.5%) and Eastern (38.4%) regions are closer to gender parity but still fall short of full equality. The Southern region records the lowest share at 36.1%, indicating more entrenched gender disparities.

While women in Sierra Leone face widespread challenges in land access, these results show that where ownership exists, women are claiming a significant share in most regions. However, numerical presence doesn't imply equality: even when women make up 40–50% of landowners, they may have weaker tenure security, especially in joint or informal arrangements. Also, coverage remains limited: SDG 5.a.1(b) does not reflect how many women have access to land overall, just their share among those who do. When paired with the low absolute rates in 5.a.1(a), it becomes clear that many women are still excluded entirely

## CHAPTER 4: WOMEN'S DIETARY DIVERSITY

This chapter provides an overview of the diversity of diets consumed by women aged 18-64 years living in agricultural households in Sierra Leone. The analysis used the Food Group Diversity Score (FGDS) and the Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD-W) methodology developed by FAO to assess diet diversity among women of reproductive age<sup>5</sup>. Achieving MDD-W gives women a greater probability of obtaining adequate amounts of essential vitamins and minerals from their diets, alongside other important nutrients for better nutrition.

The chapter first presents the proportion of women who meet the Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD-W) threshold by consuming at least five out of the ten predefined MDD-W food groups. Then, it describes the consumption of the ten food groups as well as the consumption of other foods, such as savoury snacks and sugar sweetened beverages.

Results are disaggregated by basic socio-demographic variables like region, area of residence, age, educational attainment to highlight relevant associations<sup>6</sup>.

### WOMEN DIETARY DIVERSITY—KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 75% of women in agricultural households consume at least five groups out of ten, but over 420,000 women nationally still consume too few food groups for adequate nutrition.
- Younger women (18–49) have slightly better dietary diversity than older women (50–64), though both show similar patterns overall.
- Regional and urban–rural disparities exist: Eastern region has the lowest MDD-W rate.
- Literate women are more likely to achieve dietary diversity (81%) than illiterate women (72%).
- Cereals and tubers, meat/fish, and leafy greens are widely consumed; milk, eggs, and fruits remain under consumed.
- Nearly 1 in 3 women reported consuming savoury snacks or sugar-sweetened beverages, reflecting a shift toward processed food across all age groups.
- Rising intake of snacks and sugary drinks signals a nutrition transition, calling for targeted dietary interventions and awareness-raising programmes in rural areas.

<sup>5</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/dee8f29f-cf6c-4dcb-9cb9-05c263e7219b>

<sup>6</sup> It is important to note that only 24 women were surveyed in the Western Area Rural, which may affect the representativeness of findings for that region, as noted in Chapter 1.2

#### 4.1. Prevalence of MDD-W among women 18-64

Table 18 below presents the dietary diversity status of women aged 18–64 years living in agricultural households (disaggregated also by two different age group – one for women in reproductive age and one for older women), based on the Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) indicator. Data were collected on 2,146 women, representing a total population of approximately 1.67 million women in this age group living in agricultural households.

*Table 18 MDD-W achievement and Food Group Diversity Score for women 18-64*

Age group	MDD-W $\geq$ 5 food groups		MDD-W $<$ 5 food groups	
	% women	Average FGDS score	% women	Average FGDS score
18-64	74.6	6.3	25.4	3.5
18-49	75	6.3	25	3.5
50-64	71.9	6.4	28.1	3.4

Among the total population of women aged 18–64 years living in agricultural households, an estimated 1.24 million women (74.6%) achieved the MDD-W threshold, consuming at least five out of ten food groups in the 24 hours prior to the survey. These women have an average Food Group Diversity Score (FGDS) of 6.3 out of 10. However, 422,814 women (25.4%) did not meet this threshold and present a much lower average FGDS of 3.5, indicating more limited dietary diversity and potential risk of micronutrient deficiencies.

Looking at women aged 18–49 years, the standard reproductive age group for MDD-W monitoring, 1.09 million (75%) met the MDD-W threshold and have an average FGDS score of 6.3, while 362,961 women (25%) do not, showing an average FGDS score equal to 3.5.

For women aged 50–64 years, the dietary diversity outcomes are slightly lower. Only 71.9% (about 153,361 women) achieve minimum dietary diversity, while 28.1% (approximately 59,853 women) do not.

In summary:

- While three in four women (18-64) in agricultural households meet minimum dietary diversity, over 420,000 women still consume too few food groups to ensure adequate micronutrient intake.

- The largest at-risk group in absolute terms is women aged 18–49, due to their larger population size, but older women (50–64) also show relatively higher rates of inadequate diversity.

#### 4.1.1. Results by Area and Region of Residence, Age and Education

There are notable variations in dietary diversity across regions. The Southern (78.5%), Northern (77.4%), and North-Western (77.1%) regions all show relatively high MDD-W prevalence, with FGDS scores ranging from 6.1 to 6.6. In contrast, the Eastern region shows the lowest prevalence, with only 64.1% of women meeting the threshold.

Table 19: MDD-W achievement and Food Group Diversity Score for women 18-64 by region, education and age groups

	Percent of women 18-64 years who achieved MDD-W	Average Food Group Consumption Score among women reaching MDD-W
<b>National</b>	74.6	6.3
<b>Residence</b>		
Urban	79.3	6.1
Rural	73.5	6.4
<b>Regional</b>		
Eastern	64.1	6.4
North	77.4	6.6
North-Western	77.1	6.1
Southern	78.5	6.3
Western Area	90.7	5.8
<b>Education</b>		
None	72.6	6.3
Primary	79.9	6.3
Secondary	79.1	6.4
Post secondary	73.4	6.6
<b>Age</b>		
18-29	75.1	6.3
30-39	75.3	6.5
40-49	74.4	6.3
50-64	71.9	6.4

Disaggregation by age and educational attainment reveals further patterns. Women who are literate are significantly more likely to achieve MDD-W than those who are illiterate, with slightly higher food group scores (6.6 vs. 6.3). This suggests that education may play a role in dietary knowledge, food access, or decision-making power. Variation by age groups shows that MDD-W prevalence slightly decreases as age increases.

In summary these findings highlight the relatively high overall prevalence of dietary diversity among women aged 18-64 living in agricultural households, while also pointing to important sub-national and socio-demographic differences that can inform targeted nutritional interventions.

### 4.3. Consumption of MDD-W Food Groups by Age Groups

Table 21, below, compares the dietary patterns of women aged 18–49 years and 50–64 years, based on the ten food groups used to calculate the Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W). While consumption trends are broadly similar across age groups, a few distinctions are worth noting.

Table 20: Proportion of Women Consuming Each MDD-W Food Group by Age Group

Food Group	Percentage women consuming specific food groups		
	18-49 years	50 – 64 years	18 – 64 years
Grains, white roots and tubers, plantains	98.7	98.6	98.7
Pulses	48.2	46.8	48.0
Nuts and seeds	80.1	75.3	79.5
Milk and milk products	13.9	13.1	13.8
Meat, poultry and fish	92.7	92.3	92.6
Eggs	9.7	9.4	9.7
Dark green leafy vegetables	87.9	85.9	87.7
Other vitamin A-rich fruits or vegetables	51.6	55.6	52.1
Other vegetables	45.4	48.9	45.8
Other fruits	32.3	29.4	31.9

In general, women aged 18–49 years report slightly higher consumption across most food groups compared to those aged 50–64. The largest age gap is observed in the consumption of nuts and seeds, with 80.1% of younger women consuming them, compared to 75.3% of older women. A similar pattern is seen in pulses (48.2% vs. 46.8%) and dark green leafy vegetables (87.9% vs. 85.9%). These differences, while modest, may reflect generational or behavioral differences in food access, dietary habits, or health awareness.

Conversely, older women report slightly higher consumption of vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables (51.6% vs 55.6%). and other vegetables (45.4% vs.48.9%). This may reflect greater reliance on homegrown or traditional food sources among older women, or differences in regional distribution of these foods. Eggs and milk and milk products, however, show low consumption across both age groups, below 14%, with minimal differences between them.

In summary, while dietary diversity is relatively high for both age groups, especially regarding staple foods and vegetables, low intake of dairy, eggs, and fruits suggests key areas where nutrition programming could focus. The slight but consistent advantage in overall food group consumption among younger women may reflect improved access to diverse foods or evolving dietary patterns among younger generations.

### 4.3. Consumption of MDD-W Food Groups by Area of Residence

Women living in rural areas more commonly consumed pulses (49.7%), nuts and seeds (80.9%), and other vegetables (47.1%), whereas women in urban areas consumed far more vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables (70.1%).

Table 21: Consumption of the MDD-W food groups by residence type

Food Groups	Residence	
	Urban	Rural
Grains, white roots and tubers, and plantains	99.8	98.4
Pulses (beans, peas and lentils)	41.1	49.7
Nuts and seeds	73.9	80.9
Milk and milk products	15.8	13.4
Meat, poultry and fish	93.7	92.4
Eggs	9.2	9.8
Dark green leafy vegetables	88.5	87.5
Other vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables	70.1	47.8
Other vegetables	40.8	47.1
Other fruits	24.9	33.7

### 4.4. Consumption of Other Food Groups

Among all women surveyed, 30.3% reported consuming savory snacks, 29.8% consumed sugar-sweetened beverages, and 15.2% consumed sweet foods. These figures indicate that a substantial share of women regularly consume energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods, which may contribute to long-term health risks such as overweight, obesity, and non-communicable diseases, even in rural settings.

When disaggregated by age, the data reveal some variation in consumption patterns. Older women (50–64 years) reported the highest consumption of savory snacks (34.1%) and sweet foods (17.3%), while younger women (18–49 years) reported a slightly higher intake of sugar-sweetened beverages (30.0%). This suggests that while processed food consumption is prevalent across age groups, certain categories may be more commonly consumed by specific

cohorts, potentially reflecting differences in dietary preferences, access, or roles within the household.

In addition to processed foods, the table includes two traditional food categories to provide broader context. Red palm oil, a widely used cooking fat and key dietary source of vitamin A, was consumed by 77.2% of women, confirming its continued importance in local diets. Conversely, insects and other small protein foods were consumed by just 6.1% of respondents, indicating limited dietary reliance on these traditional protein sources, despite their nutritional value and cultural relevance in some regions.

Table 22: Consumption of other food groups

	Savory snacks	Sugar sweetened beverages	Sweet foods	Red Palm Oil	Insects and other small protein foods
<b>18-64</b>	30.3	29.8	15.2	77.2	6.1
<b>18-49</b>	29.8	30.0	14.8	77.9	6.2
<b>50-64</b>	34.1	28.4	17.3	73.1	5.3

Source: Stats SL/MAFS Women's Empowerment Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

Overall, the findings from the MDD-W point to the growing presence of processed foods in the diets of rural women, across both younger and older age groups. These patterns highlight the need for context-specific nutrition education and behavioral change strategies to promote healthier dietary practices, including the reduction of high-fat and sugary food consumption and greater integration of nutrient-rich traditional foods into everyday meals.

At the regional level, consumption of other food groups varied significantly. Notably, the North-Western region reported the highest consumption of savoury snacks (48.4%) and red palm oil (91.5%). In contrast, women in the Northern region showed higher consumption of sweet foods (23.1%) and insects and other small protein sources (17.8%). Although some food groups showed higher consumption levels in the Western Area, it is important to interpret these results with caution due to the small sample size in that region.

Table 23: Consumption of other food groups - Regional pattern

Region	Savory snacks	Sugar sweetened beverages	Sweet foods	Red Palm Oil	Insects and other small protein foods
<b>Eastern</b>	27.4	22.2	14.4	80.7	4.9
<b>North</b>	34.8	37.6	23.1	71.3	17.8
<b>North-Western</b>	48.4	32.9	14.2	91.5	0.1
<b>Southern</b>	13.7	28.8	7.8	66.3	4.8
<b>Western Area</b>	48.4	37.7	41.7	82.9	0

### 4.5: Comparative Analysis Across National Surveys

In the context of rural Sierra Leone, understanding the dietary intake of processed and non-core foods is critical for identifying emerging nutritional challenges among women. To assess how these patterns may be evolving over time, data from the WEN 2024 survey are compared with previous national surveys—SLNNS 2021 and DHS 2019, women in reproductive age are considered<sup>7</sup>.

Table 24: MDDW Prevalence and the FGCS Score across other surveys

	SLNNS, 2017	DHS, 2019	SLNNS, 2021	WEN survey 2024
<b>MDD-W Prevalence</b>	68.4	56.4	74.2	75.3
<b>FGDS</b>	5.4	5	5.8	6.3

Table 24 provides a comparative overview of women’s dietary diversity across four national surveys conducted between 2017 and 2024. The Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) prevalence shows an overall upward trend, increasing from 68.4% in 2017 (SLNNS) to 75.3% in 2024 (WEN/50x2030). Similarly, the Food Group Diversity Score (FGDS) also improved, rising from 5.4 to 6.3 over the same period.

These results suggest steady progress in dietary quality among women, with the most recent WEN 2024 data showing the highest diversity levels recorded. This positive trend may reflect improved food access, dietary awareness, or agricultural diversification in rural areas.

However, when these gains are considered alongside Table 25, a more nuanced picture emerges. While dietary diversity is improving, so is the consumption of processed and sugar-rich foods.

Table 25: Comparative Consumption of Savory Snacks, Sugar-Sweetened Beverages, and Sweet Foods (DHS 2019, SLNNS 2021, WEN 2024)

	Age group	Savory snacks	Sugar sweetened beverages	Sweet foods
<b>WEN 2024</b>	<b>18-49</b>	29.8	30.0	14.8
<b>SLNNS 2021</b>	15-49	23.8	25.2	23.5
<b>DHS 2019</b>	15-49	14.9	20.6	15

The findings suggest a clear upward trend in the consumption of processed and sugar-rich foods over time:

<sup>7</sup> In DHS and SLNNS (2017/2021), the sample includes women aged 15–49, while in the WEN survey, the age group is slightly different, covering women aged 18–49.

- Savory snacks: Consumption increased significantly from 14.9% in 2019 (DHS) to 23.8% in 2021 (SLNNS), and further to 29.8% in 2024 (WEN). This marks nearly doubling reported snack consumption over a five-year period.
- Sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs): Similarly, the intake of SSBs rose from 20.6% in 2019 to 25.2% in 2021, and reached 30% in 2024. This increase reflects greater availability and possibly the affordability of such drinks, even in rural areas.
- Sweet foods: In contrast to the other categories, consumption of sweet foods has declined—from 23.5% in 2021 and 15% in 2019 to 14.8% in 2024. This slight drop may be influenced by changes in household food environments, preferences, or survey reporting methods.

Overall, the WEN 2024 data indicate an increase in dietary diversity accompanied by a continued rise in savory snack and sugary beverage consumption, highlighting the progression of dietary transitions in rural Sierra Leone. These shifts toward more energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods underscore the need for targeted nutrition policies and awareness campaigns, particularly to address the health risks associated with increased processed food consumption among women of reproductive age.

## CHAPTER 5: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPOWERMENT AND DIETARY DIVERSITY

This study not only measures women’s empowerment but also explores its association with minimum dietary diversity (MDD-W), which is measured only for women. By comparing the average empowerment scores of women who met the MDD threshold ( $\geq 5$  food groups) with those who did not, the results reveal statistically significant difference: empowered women are more likely to meet minimum dietary diversity. Specifically, women with adequate dietary diversity had a mean empowerment score of 0.48, compared to 0.42 for those who did not, a difference that is statistically significant, suggesting a positive link between empowerment and dietary quality.

*Table 26: Mean Empowerment Scores by Women’s Dietary Diversity (MDD-W) Status*

	Observations	Mean Empowerment Score	95%CI		p-value
<b>Women with MDD &lt; 5</b>	608	0.42	0.41	0.44	
<b>Women with MDD <math>\geq 5</math></b>	1538	0.48	0.47	0.49	
<b>Combined</b>	2146	0.46	0.45	0.47	
<b>Difference (MDD&lt;5 -MDD<math>\geq</math>5)</b>		-0.06	-0.08	-0.04	< 0.001

*Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone*

To explore further the relationship between empowerment and dietary diversity, women are grouped into three categories (tertiles) based on their WEMNS score, which measures overall empowerment. These tertiles reflect increasing levels of empowerment: the first tertile (Low Empowerment) includes women with the lowest scores, the second (Medium Empowerment) with moderate scores, and the third (High Empowerment) with the highest empowerment levels. Food group consumption patterns vary across these groups, with differences for specific items. Women in the highest empowerment tertile tend to consume more pulses, meat/fish, eggs, and dairy compared to those in the lowest tertile, suggesting that empowerment may enhance knowledge, decision-making power, and resource access, factors that collectively support more diverse and nutrient-rich diets. For example, consumption of pulses rises from 44.8% in the low to 53.2% in high empowerment, and meat/fish from 90.7% to 96.5%. Eggs and dairy also show moderate increases across empowerment levels. Conversely, the intake of vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables declines slightly with greater empowerment, and cereals/tubers consumption remains high and stable across all groups. As women become more empowered, they tend to eat a wider variety of foods, including more nutritious ones like meat, dairy, and pulses.

Table 27: Percentage of Women Consuming Each Food Group by Empowerment Category (Low, Medium, High)

	Low Empowerment	Medium Empowerment	High Empowerment
Grains, white roots, tubers & plantains	99.0%	98.5%	98.4%
Pulses (beans, peas and lentils)	44.8%	47.9%	53.2%
Nuts and seeds	78.7%	77.7%	83.4%
Milk and milk products	13.2%	12.9%	16.1%
Meat, poultry and fish	90.7%	91.9%	96.5%
Eggs	10.0%	7.7%	12.0%
Dark green leafy vegetables	86.1%	88.8%	88.4%
Other vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables	54.8%	53.6%	45.8%
Other vegetables	47.3%	39.1%	53.5%
Other fruits	33.1%	27.0%	37.3%

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

Moving to consumption of other food, as empowerment level increase, women's consumption pattern changes. For example, savoury snack consumption is highest among women with low empowerment (34.4%) and drops at medium levels (27.1%), with a slight rebound among the most empowered (28.7%). Sugar-sweetened beverages, however, show a clear upward trend, rising from 24.7% in the low empowerment group to 36.6% in the high empowerment group. Sweet food consumption fluctuates slightly across groups without a strong pattern. Red palm oil, a staple in Sierra Leone's food culture and widely produced locally, shows consistently high consumption across all empowerment levels, reflecting its central role in the national diet. Meanwhile, the consumption of insects and other small protein foods declines sharply as empowerment increases, from 8.6% to just 3.8%, suggesting that more empowered women may shift away from these traditional protein sources. Overall, the results highlight how empowerment can influence dietary shifts sometimes positively, but also with increased access to processed or sugary foods.

Table 28: Consumption of other foods by Women's Empowerment Level (%)

	Low Empowerment	Medium Empowerment	High Empowerment
Savoury snacks	34.4%	27.1%	28.7%
Sugar sweetened beverages	24.7%	30.6%	36.6%
Sweet foods	16.6%	13.3%	15.6%
Red Palm Oil	76.7%	78.0%	76.9%
Insects & other small protein foods	8.6%	5.0%	3.8%

Source: Stats SL /MAFS Women's Empowerment and Nutrition Survey, Sierra Leone

The results suggest that more empowered women could have greater access to income, enabling them to purchase a wider range of foods, including packaged or processed items. Also being more empowered could allow them to make more independent decisions about what they eat or feed their families, without as much control from others. They may also have greater exposure to urbanized food environments, markets, or media, increasing their consumption of commercial or convenience foods like snacks and sugary drinks, meaning that as women gain autonomy and financial access, their dietary choices expand including both healthier and less healthy foods.

## CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the 2024 Women’s Empowerment and Nutrition (WEN) Survey present a compelling case for urgent and transformative action to address the systemic barriers limiting women’s full participation in Sierra Leone’s agricultural sector and their ability to achieve optimal nutritional outcomes. While the report highlights some progress, it also underscores deep-rooted gender disparities that continue to hinder women’s empowerment and well-being. The data reveals a troubling paradox: despite women’s central role in agriculture and household nutrition, they remain significantly disempowered, with limited control over critical resources, decision-making, and leadership opportunities. This disconnect between women’s contributions, and their level of empowerment is not just a social injustice but also a missed opportunity for national development.

The survey also shows that women are disempowered across all regions, with none achieving the 80% empowerment threshold. This suggests that existing policies and programs have been insufficient in dismantling structural inequalities. These findings point to the need for a more integrated approach that links women’s empowerment directly to nutrition and health outcomes.

Critically, the mild correlation between empowerment and dietary diversity signals that empowerment alone is not enough. Programs must explicitly address the intersection of gender, agriculture, and nutrition, ensuring that women’s increased agency translates into tangible improvements in their health and food security.

Moving forward, Sierra Leone must adopt a bold and holistic strategy that goes beyond superficial measures. This requires policy reforms that guarantee women’s land rights, access to credit, and leadership opportunities in agricultural organizations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Enhance Women's Leadership in Agriculture:** The report shows men dominate leadership roles, limiting women's influence in decision-making. Therefore, implementing targeted leadership training and mentorship programs for women in agricultural organizations, particularly in regions like the **North-Western (29.73% female leadership vs. 44.76% male)** and **Eastern (31.02% female vs. 37.04% male)** will bridge the gap.
- 2. Improve Financial Inclusion for Rural Women:** Financial access empowers women to invest in nutrition and agriculture, yet disparities persist. Expand access to mobile banking and microcredit programs, especially in the **Northern region (80% credit access for women), while addressing gaps in the Southern region (58%).**
- 3. Promote Gender-Sensitive Agricultural Policies:** The government should strengthen policies by ensuring women's land rights and inheritance laws, as documented property rights remain low across regions. Secure land ownership enhances women's economic agency and agricultural productivity.
- 4. Scale Up Regional Empowerment Programs:** Regional disparities hinder national progress toward gender equality. Action should be taken to prioritize interventions in the **North-Eastern region (lowest empowerment score: 37.8%)** and **Western Rural (36.7%),** focusing on **awareness of women's rights (23% endorsement in North-Eastern)** and economic opportunities.
- 5. Strengthen Women's Decision-Making in Households:** The result shows that there are power imbalances which limit women's autonomy over resources and health. We recommend therefore, to implement gender-sensitive training for **male household heads** to encourage shared decision-making on **health (39.39% female influence vs. 51.36% male)** and spending (17.70% young women vs. 41.98% young men).
- 6. Address Dietary Gaps Through Nutrition Education:** Low consumption of nutrient-rich foods persists despite availability. Conduct community-based nutrition workshops targeting **illiterate women (72.1% dietary diversity vs. 80.6% for literate women)** to promote consumption of diverse foods.

## GLOSSARY

**Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI):** A comprehensive measurement tool that assesses women's inclusion in the agricultural sector across five domains: decisions about agricultural production, access to productive resources, control over income, leadership in the community, and time allocation. The WEMNS metric builds off the WEAI but adopts a streamlined approach and goes beyond agriculture.

**Women's Empowerment Metric for National Statistical Systems (WEMNS):** a standardized metric designed to measure women's agency and empowerment using data from nationally representative household surveys. Developed by IFPRI and partners, it focuses on decision-making power in food, health, and nutrition, enabling cross-country comparisons and integration into official statistics. It supports SDG monitoring and helps governments track gender equality outcomes over time.

**Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W):** An indicator measuring whether women 15-49 years of age have consumed at least five out of ten defined food groups in the previous 24 hours. It is used as a proxy for micronutrient adequacy for women in reproductive age.

**Food Group Diversity Score (FGDS):** A quantitative measure ranging from 0 to 10 that counts the number of different food groups consumed by an individual over a reference period, with higher scores indicating better dietary diversity.

**Disempowerment Headcount Ratio:** represents the share of individuals who are not empowered. An individual is considered disempowered if they are constrained in more than 30 percent of the indicators.

**Agricultural Household (WEN Context):** For this survey, defined as households where at least one member participated in crop cultivation, livestock rearing, or fishing activities in the past 12 months. The WEN survey focused on women aged 18-64 and men aged 18-64 for empowerment indicators.

**Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture:** An approach that connects agricultural interventions to improved nutritional outcomes. The report analyzes how women's empowerment variables correlate with dietary diversity scores.

## REFERENCES

1. Statistics Sierra Leone (2024). Women's Empowerment and Nutrition (WEN) Survey Report 2024. Freetown
2. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (2024). Annual Agricultural Survey Technical Report.
3. Food and Agriculture Organization (2023). 50x2030 Initiative: Guidelines for Integrated Agricultural Surveys.
4. Alkire, S. et al (2013). Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI): Methodology Report.
5. Sierra Leone Ministry of Planning (2023). Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2024-2030.
6. World Bank (2022). Gender Dimensions in Agricultural Statistics: A 50x2030 Technical Handbook.
7. Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey (2019). Nutrition and Gender Analysis.
8. Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural Statistics (2020). AGRIS Methodology: Modules on Gender and Nutrition.
9. Feed Salone Implementation Framework (2023). Women in Agriculture: Policy Guidelines.

## ANNEX 1: SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

### 1. Reference population and estimation domains

The reference population of the WEN module were women and men between 18-64 years living in agricultural households at the time of the interview. The nutrition section of the questionnaire was administered only to women, as the MDD-W indicator is specifically validated for women of reproductive age.

Estimation domains are population categories and/or administrative areas for which accurate estimates are expected from a survey. Given the measurement objectives explained in chapter 1, the WEN survey adopted the following estimation domains:

- Women (18-49)
- Women (18-64)
- Men (18-64)

Two (partially overlapping) estimation domains have been created for women to ensure an adequate statistical precision for the population group concerned by the MDD-W indicator – i.e., women between 18 and 49 years old. The sample size of the WEN survey was calculated with the aim to generate the following indicators with an expected 5 percent error for each domain (reference group):

**Table 1: estimation domains**

Reference group	Indicators
Women 18-49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• individual empowerment indicators</li><li>• summary empowerment metric</li><li>• % consuming at least five of the MDD-W food groups</li><li>• Consumption of each individual food group</li></ul>
Women 18-64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• individual empowerment indicators</li><li>• summary empowerment metric</li><li>• % consuming at least five of the MDD-W food groups</li><li>• Consumption of each individual food group</li></ul>
Men 18-64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• individual empowerment indicators</li><li>• summary empowerment metric</li></ul>

### 2. Sampling design

**Sampling units** of the WEN module were eligible adult household members (aged 18-64) selected from the sample of agricultural households included in Sierra Leone national agricultural survey (hereafter referred to as ‘master sample’).

The adopted **sampling methodology** involved randomly subsampling a portion of households from the master sample and randomly selecting a fixed number of adults within the households. Although this approach resulted in a relatively high design effect (3.5), it generated a reasonable overall sample size. The subsampling of households was performed through a simple random selection in each stratum of the master sample. The subsampling of individuals within the selected households was performed through a simple random sampling stratified by gender and was performed in the field after having listed all household members<sup>8</sup>.

Hence, the sampling of the WEN survey adopted the same **stratification** criteria of the agricultural survey sample. In addition, adult members were stratified in the following strata before the intra household subsampling of individuals was performed: i) women 18-49; ii) women 50-64; iii) men 18-64.

### 3. Sample size

The procedure envisages calculating first a minimum sample size of adult individuals, then the minimum the number of households.

The **sample size of individuals** was calculated for each domain of interest (women 18-49, women 18-64 and men 18-64). Since the indicators informed by the WEN module can be expressed as proportions, the standard formula for proportions was used for each domain:

$$n' = \frac{1}{g} \times Deff \times Z_{\alpha/2}^2 \frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{\varepsilon^2} \quad (1)$$

Where:

- $\hat{p}$  is the value or estimation of a target population proportion
- $Z_{\alpha/2}$  is the z score for (1- $\alpha$ )100% confidence interval. It was set equal to 1.96.
- $\varepsilon$  is the maximal absolute error accepted. It was set equal to 5%
- $g$  is the expected response rate. It was set equal to 80 percent (after verification with similar studies)
- $Deff$  the design effect. A  $Deff$  of 3.5 has been considered.

Plus, a finite population correction (fpc) was applied as follows:

$$n = \frac{n'}{1 + \frac{n'-1}{N}} \quad (2)$$

---

<sup>8</sup> The individual sampling was automatically done by the CAPI application.

The following indicators collected in the Sierra Leone Demographic Health Survey 2019 were considered as good proxies of empowerment and dietary diversity and they were used as  $\hat{p}$  in the formula above.

**Table 2: Proxy indicators**

INDICATORS	DIMENSION
• Percentage of individuals with influence on spending decision <sup>9</sup>	• INSTRUMENTAL AGENCY
• Percentage of individuals with influence on health decisions <sup>10</sup>	• INSTRUMENTAL AGENCY
• Percentage of individuals aware of rights over sexual harassment <sup>11</sup>	• INSTRINSIC AGENCY
• Percentage of individuals using financial services <sup>12</sup>	• RESOURCES
• Percentage of individuals with access to credit <sup>13</sup>	• RESOURCES
• Percentage of individuals with legally documented land ownership of land <sup>14</sup>	• RESOURCES
• Percentage of individuals eating fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin A (Group closest to 50%)	• DIETARY DIVERSITY
• Percentage of individuals eating at least five food groups	• DIETARY DIVERSITY

The **number of households** ( $m$ ) for each population of interest was then calculated as below.

$$m = \left\lceil \frac{1}{1 - \rho} \frac{n}{m^*} \right\rceil + 1 \tag{6}$$

Where:

- $m^*$  is the fixed number of targeted adult individuals planned to be selected per household
- $\rho$  is the proportion of households without any of the targeted adult individuals

The final number of households to be subsampled for the WEN module was computed as the maximum of the sample sizes computed for each population of interest (domain). To limit sampling errors, the sampled households were allocated to the Enumeration Areas (EAs) of the master sample in a homogeneous way, ensuring all EAs were covered.

**Result** of the calculation can be found below. They suggested selecting at least 2,007 households. At the time of releasing fieldworkers an extra assignment was created for each EA, therefore the final sample size was equal to 2,525 households. In the selected households, adult individuals were stratified in i) women 18-49; ii) women 50-64; iii) men 18-64, and one individual was randomly selected in each stratum.

---

<sup>9</sup> Variable question [v739]: person who usually decides how to spend respondent's earnings  
<sup>10</sup> Variable question [v743a]: person who usually decides on respondent's health care  
<sup>11</sup> Variable question [v744d]: beating justified if wife refuses to have sex with husband  
<sup>12</sup> Variable question [v170]: has an account in a bank or other financial institution  
<sup>13</sup> Variable question [v169b]: use mobile telephone for financial transactions  
<sup>14</sup> Variable question [v745b]: owns land alone or jointly

**Table 3: Calculations**

Maximum rel error (eps)	5.0%
Design effect	3.5
Expected response rate	80%
Zscore	1.96
Final sample size of households	<b>2,007</b>

Proportion of households with no man (Age 18-64)	17.0%	FROM AG SURVEY 2023 + 5%
Proportion of households with no woman (Age 18-49)	17.9%	
Proportion of households with no woman (Age 18-64)	12.0%	

**Women Population (Age 18-49)**

Target Indicators	Proportions	Sample size (individuals)	number of women 18-49 to be selected per household	Sample size (households)
% with influence on spending decision	18%	992	1	1,209
% with influence on health decisions	31%	1,438	1	1,751
% with awareness of rights over sexual harassment	20%	1,076	1	1,310
% with use of financial service	7%	438	1	533
% with access credit	19%	1,035	1	1,260
% with legally documented ownership	30%	1,412	1	1,719
% eating fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin A (Group closest to 50%)	62%	1,584	1	1,929
% eating at least 5 food groups	57%	1,648	1	2,007
<b>Final sample size of households for women 18-49 (max)</b>				<b>2,007</b>

**Women Population (Age 18-64)**

Target Indicators	Proportions	Sample size (individuals)	number of women 18-64 to be selected per household	Sample size (households)
% with influence on spending decision	18%	992	1	1,127
% with influence on health decisions	31%	1,438	1	1,634
% with awareness of rights over sexual harassment	20%	1,076	1	1,222
% with use of financial service	7%	438	1	498
% with access credit	19%	1,035	1	1,176
% with legally documented ownership	30%	1,412	1	1,604
% eating fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin A (Group closest to 50%)	62%	1,584	1	1,799
% eating at least 5 food groups	57%	1,648	1	1,872
<b>Final sample size of households for women 18-64 (max)</b>				<b>1,634</b>

**Men Population**

Target Indicators	Proportions	Sample size (individuals)	number of adults men to be selected per household	Sample size (households)
% with influence on spending decision	39%	1,599	1	1,928
% with influence on health decisions	56%	1,656	1	1,997
% with awareness of rights over sexual harassment	8%	495	1	597
% with use of financial service	16%	904	1	1,089
% with access credit	34%	1,509	1	1,819
% with legally documented ownership	37%	1,567	1	1,889
<b>Final sample size of households for adult men (max)</b>				<b>1,997</b>

<b>Final sample size of households for the WEN module</b>				<b>2,007</b>
---	--	--	--	--------------

## ANNEX 2: WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND NUTRITION QUESTIONNAIRE

### Module A – Start of interview

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- GO TO THE HOUSEHOLD AND ATTEMPT TO START THE INTERVIEW.
- TO START THE INTERVIEW, SEEK OUT A COMPETENT RESPONDENT. A COMPETENT RESPONDENT MUST BE 15 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER AND MUST HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS. THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD SHOULD BE PREFERRED, IF POSSIBLE.
- FOR EACH HOUSEHOLD, MAKE AT LEAST THREE CONTACT ATTEMPTS. KEEP TRACK OF YOUR ATTEMPTS IN YOUR ASSIGNMENT LOGBOOK.

#### A01a. Time stamp

DD / MM / YYYY – HH / MM / SS

#### A01b. Is the household head or any other competent respondent present?

1 – Yes >> question A04

2 – No >> question A05

#### A04. ENUMERATOR: Please read the introduction and consent statement below.

Hello, my name is [ENUMERATOR NAME] from Statistics Sierra Leone and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. We are conducting a national agricultural survey, and your household has been chosen to participate in this survey. The survey includes a questionnaire on the capacity of men and women to pursue their own goals, to influence decisions in the household and in the broader community, etc.

First, I will ask you to list all the household members. Then, up to three **adult members** will be randomly selected and I shall interview them on the topics I just mentioned. This information will be used the Government and other organizations for planning purposes. The household will not receive any benefit because of this interview. The information is strictly confidential, and respondents may skip questions that make them feel uncomfortable.

#### Can I go ahead with the list of household members?

1 – Yes >> Module B

2 – No >> question A05

#### A05. ENUMERATOR: Reason why the household cannot be interviewed

1 – REFUSED

2 – NO COMPETENT RESPONDENT AT TIME OF THE VISIT

3 – NONE AT HOME FOR AN EXTENDED AMOUNT OF TIME

4 – HOUSEHOLD NOT FOUND OR MOVED ELSEWHERE

5 – DWELLING DESTROYED

6 – TIME IN THE EA IS OVER

9 – OTHER (SPECIFY)

>> GO TO END OF INTERVIEW (QUESTION O05)

**Module B - Household Member Roster - INTERVIEWER: The questions in this section are required for all household members. First list all the members of the household, then repeat questions from B02 to B05 for every member**

<b>B01</b>	Please tell me the names of all the individuals who normally lived and ate their meals together in this household during the past six months, starting with the head	
<b>B02</b>	What is [NAME]'s relationship to the household head?	HEAD .....1 WIFE OR HUSBAND .....2 SON OR DAUGHTER .....3 OTHER RELATIVE.....4 NOT RELATED.....5
<b>B03</b>	Age of [NAME] ( <i>Age should be in complete years</i> )	
<b>B04</b>	Sex of [NAME]?	MALE.....1 FEMALE .....2
<b>B05</b>	Is [NAME] currently present in the dwelling or will be back by the end of the day?	Currently present in the dwelling.....1 Not Currently present in the dwelling but will be back by the end of the day .....2 Not currently present in the dwelling and will not be back by the end of the day.....3

**Module C – Start of Individual Interview**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- **SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW WITH ALL THE INDIVIDUALS RANDOMLY SELECTED BY THE APPLICATION.**
- **INTERVIEW IMMEDIATELY THE SAMPLED INDIVIDUALS THAT ARE AT HOME. SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE ONES THAT ARE NOT AT HOME.**
- **MAKE AT LEAST THREE ATTEMPTS WITH EACH PERSON. KEEP TRACK OF YOUR ATTEMPTS IN YOUR ASSIGNMENT LOGBOOK.**
- **NEVER REPLACE AN INDIVIDUAL WITH ANOTHER ONE AND DO NOT ALLOW ANOTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBER TO RESPOND ON BEHALF OF THE SELECTED PERSON OR TO LISTEN TO THE INTERVIEW.**

**C01a. Time stamp**

DD / MM / YYYY – HH / MM / SS

**C01b. is [INDIVIDUAL] available for the interview?**

1 – Yes >> question C04

2 – No >> question C05

A04. INTERVIEWER: Please read the introduction and consent statement below.

Hello, my name is [ENUMERATOR NAME] from Statistics Sierra Leone and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. We are conducting a national agricultural survey, and your household has been chosen to participate in this survey. The survey includes a questionnaire on the capacity of men and women to pursue their own goals, to influence decisions in the household and in the broader community, the use of technology, property rights, etc. Further, we ask about women’s diet.

You have been randomly selected to respond to this questionnaire. The interview will last approximately 20 minutes. The collected information will be used by the government and other organizations for planning purposes. The household will not receive any benefit because of this interview. The information will be kept strictly confidential, and you may skip the questions that make you feel uncomfortable. Please let me know if I can go ahead with the interview.

1 – Yes >> Module D

2 – No >> question A05

**A05. ENUMERATOR: Reason why [INDIVIDUAL] cannot be interviewed**

1 – NOT FOUND AT HOME

2 – NO TIME TO PARTICIPATE TO THE INTERVIEW

3 – RESPONDENT REFUSED

4 – HOUSEHOLD HEAD DID NOT ALLOW HIM/HER TO PARTICIPATE TO THE INTERVIEW

5 – PERSON IS SICK OR PHYSICALLY / MENTALLY IMPAIRED

6 – TIME IN THE EA IS OVER

9 – OTHER (SPECIFY)

>> END OF INTERVIEW. INTERVIEWER MOVES ON WITH ANOTHER [INDIVIDUAL]

**Module D: Paid and unpaid activities**

**INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:** Now I am going to ask you about the activities you did over the past 7 days and how much influence you had over the time you spent on these activities.

**ACTIVITIES**

**NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: When examples are given, they should be read exactly as written and should NOT be skipped.**

**D01.** During the last 7 days, did you spend any time on [ACTIVITY], even if for one hour?

1 = Yes

2 = No >> NEXT ROW

[CAPI: IF D01A/B/C/D/E/F/G/H/I==1/Yes]

**D02.** During the last 7 days, how much influence did you have in deciding the amount of time you spent on [ACTIVITY]?

**READ RESPONSE OPTIONS**

1 = No influence

2 = Some influence

3 = A lot of influence

(97 = DO NOT READ: Don’t know)

(98 = DO NOT READ: Refused)

A. Household duties, such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, or collecting water or cooking fuel

B. Caring for household members, such as children or older family members

C. Going to the market to purchase essential items

D. Non-agricultural work activities, including: working for pay, in cash or in kind, for someone else; running or doing any kind of business or other activity to earn income; and helping in a family business

E. Commercial agricultural production, including: working on the household farm to produce crop, livestock or fish products, mainly for sale

F. Agricultural production for household consumption, including: producing crop, livestock or fish products for household consumption.

G. Leisure activities, such as taking a walk, spending time with friends, reading, watching TV, listening to radio, music

H. <u>Religious and cultural activities</u> , such as praying, participating in religious or traditional ceremonies or events		
I. <u>Learning</u> , such as attending trainings, classes		

Module E: Participation and leadership in community

<b>INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Now, I will ask you about your participation in different types of organizations during the last 12 months.		
<b>ORGANIZATIONS</b>	<b>E01.</b> In the last 12 months, have you participated in [ORGANIZATION]? Yes ..... 1 >> GO TO E02 No ..... 2 >> NEXT ROW (DO NOT READ: Refused...98 >> NEXT ROW) (DO NOT READ: Organization not present in this community 99>> NEXT ROW)	<b>E02.</b> In the last 12 months, have you acted in a leadership position in [ORGANIZATION]? Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 (DO NOT READ: Refused .....98)
<b>A</b>	<u>Government councils or agencies</u>	
<b>B</b>	<u>Groups that provide local services</u> , such as resource user groups, community health and education service groups, or mutual aid groups	
<b>C</b>	<u>Formal or informal savings or credit groups</u> , such as microfinance groups, village savings and loan associations, or merry-go-round savings schemes	
<b>D</b>	<u>Groups related to livelihood activities</u> , such as agricultural groups, cooperatives, and craft or trade associations	
<b>E</b>	<u>Other groups</u> , such as religious groups, women's groups, or sports groups, etc.	

**INTERVIEWER: The question below is asked only if the randomly selected individual is a female (B04==2)**

<b>E03. INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Please listen to the following statements and <b>indicate</b> how often this happens in your community		
<b>A</b>	Women in this community can really understand what is going on within their community (e.g., main social and political changes, etc.)	Never ..... 0 Sometimes ..... 1 Often ..... 2 Always ..... 3 DO NOT READ: Don't know ..... 97 DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98
<b>B</b>	Women have the ability to participate effectively in community activities	
<b>C</b>	Women have the ability to participate effectively in decision-making	
<b>D</b>	It is important to women in this community that they actively participate in local women's issues	
<b>E</b>	Most community leaders listen to women	

**INTERVIEWER: The question below is asked only if the randomly selected individual is a male (B04==1)**

<b>E04. INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Please listen to the following statements and <b>indicate</b> how often this happens in your community		
<b>A</b>	Men in this community can really understand what is going on within their community (e.g., main social and political changes, etc.)	Never ..... 0 Sometimes ..... 1 Often ..... 2 Always ..... 3 DO NOT READ: Don't know ..... 97 DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98
<b>B</b>	Men have the ability to participate effectively in community activities	
<b>C</b>	Men have the ability to participate effectively in decision-making	
<b>D</b>	It is important to men in this community that they actively participate in local men's issues	
<b>E</b>	Most community leaders listen to men	

**Module F: Life transitions and awareness of rights**

**INTERVIEWER: Module F is asked only if the randomly selected individual is a female (B04==2)**

<b>F01. INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Please listen to the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each statement. <b>READ RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>		
<b>A</b>	Every woman should be free to choose whether to complete secondary school.	Fully disagree ..... 0 Partly disagree ..... 1 Partly agree.....2 Fully agree ..... 3 (DO NOT READ: Don't know ..... 97) (DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98)
<b>B</b>	Every woman should be free to choose whether to work for pay.	
<b>C</b>	Every woman should be free to choose to prioritize her work for pay over domestic duties.	
<b>D</b>	Every woman should be free to choose what to do with any money that she earns.	
<b>E</b>	Every woman should be free to choose to purchase land, a house, or other valuable goods.	
<b>F</b>	Every woman should be free to choose when to get married.	
<b>G</b>	Every woman should be free to choose to divorce or end her marriage or relationship.	
<b>H</b>	Every woman should be free to choose whether and when to have children.	
<b>I</b>	Every woman should be free to choose not to have any more children.	

**Module G: Financial services and credit**

<b>INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Now, I am going to ask about your use of different financial services.		
<b>G01.</b> In the past 12 months, have you ever:		
<b>A</b>	Used any mobile money account, either yours or anyone else's, to make a payment, buy something, or send money to someone?	Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 (DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98)
<b>B</b>	Deposited or received money into or withdrawn money from any bank account, either yours or anyone else's?	
<b>C</b>	Used any bank card, ATM card or debit card, either yours or anyone else's, to make a purchase or pay a bill such as a utility bill?	
<b>D</b>	Used any credit card, either yours or anyone else's, to make a purchase or pay a bill such as a utility bill?	
<b>INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Now, I am going to ask you about loans from different types of lenders.		
<b>G02.</b> If you needed it, could you take a loan from:		
<b>A</b>	A bank or formal financial institution	Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 (DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98)
<b>B</b>	A cooperative	
<b>C</b>	A Group based micro-finance / micro-credit	
<b>D</b>	Informal credit / savings groups, such as private moneylenders, a village savings and loan group, merry-go-rounds, or funeral societies	
<b>E</b>	Other NGO program	

**Module H: Property ownership**

<b>INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Now I am going to ask you about your rights over agricultural land and your dwelling		
<b>H01</b>	Do you own or have the right to use <i>any agricultural parcels of land</i> , either alone or jointly with someone else? (agricultural land includes also backyard gardens) <b>READ RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>	Yes, alone..... 1 Yes, jointly ..... 2 Yes, both alone and jointly ..... 3 No ..... 4 >>H07 (DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98)
<b>H02</b>	Do you have the right, either alone or jointly with someone else, to sell <i>any agricultural parcels of land</i> ? <b>READ RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>	Yes, alone..... 1 Yes, jointly ..... 2 Yes, both alone and jointly ..... 3 No ..... 4 (DO NOT READ: Don't know ..... 97) (DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98)
<b>H03</b>	Do you have the right, either alone or jointly with someone else, to give any agricultural parcels of land, by oral or written will, to other persons after your death? <b>READ RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>	Yes, alone..... 1 Yes, jointly ..... 2 Yes, both alone and jointly ..... 3 No ..... 4 (DO NOT READ: Don't know ..... 97) (DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98)
<b>H04</b>	Is there a document for any agricultural parcels that is issued by or registered at the Land Registry/ Cadastral Agency, such as a purchase certificate or a lease or rental contract? <b>READ RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>  <b>NOTE:</b> Land documents can be: purchase documents (or certificates) or lease/rental contracts. Other forms of properties do not have a formal certification.	Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 >>H06 (DO NOT READ: Don't know ..... 97 >>H06) (DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98 >>H06)
<b>H05</b>	Is your name listed on any of these documents as an owner or rights holder, either alone or jointly with someone else? <b>READ RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>	Yes, alone..... 1 Yes, jointly ..... 2 Yes, both alone and jointly ..... 3 No ..... 4 (DO NOT READ: Don't know ..... 97) (DO NOT READ: Refused ..... 98)

<b>H06</b>	How likely are you to involuntarily lose ownership or use rights to any land you own, or have the right to use in the next 5 years?  <b>READ RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>	Not all likely.....1 Slightly likely.....2 Moderately likely.....3 Very likely.....4 Extremely likely.....5 (DO NOT READ: Don't know.....97) (DO NOT READ: Refused .....98)
------------	---	---

<b>H07</b>	Do you own or have the right to use the <b>dwelling</b> in which you live, either alone or jointly with someone else?	Yes, alone..... 1 Yes, jointly ..... 2 No .....4>> END MODULE (DO NOT READ: Refused ..98>> END MODULE)
<b>H08</b>	Do you have the right, either alone or jointly with someone else, to sell the dwelling in which you live?	Yes, alone..... 1 Yes, jointly ..... 2 No .....4
<b>H09</b>	Do you have the right, either alone or jointly with someone else, to give your dwelling, by oral or written will, to other persons after your death?	(DO NOT READ: Don't know.....97) (DO NOT READ: Refused .....98)
<b>H10</b>	Is there a document for the dwelling in which you live that is issued by or registered at a government agency, such as a purchase certificate, a site plan, a building permit or a lease/rental contract?  <b>NOTE: Documents for dwelling can be: purchase documents (or certificates), site plans, building permits or lease/rental contracts. Other forms of property do not have a formal certification.</b>	Yes ..... 1 No .....2 >>H12 (DO NOT READ: Don't know.....97 >> H12) (DO NOT READ: Refused .....98 >> H12)
<b>H11</b>	Is your name listed on any of these documents as an owner or rights holder, either alone or jointly with someone else?	Yes, alone..... 1 Yes, jointly ..... 2 No .....4 (DO NOT READ: Don't know.....97) (DO NOT READ: Refused .....98)
<b>H12</b>	How likely are you to involuntarily lose ownership to the dwelling in which you live, in the next 5 years?	Not all likely.....1 Slightly likely.....2 Moderately likely.....3 Very likely.....4 Extremely likely.....5 (DO NOT READ: Don't know.....97) (DO NOT READ: Refused .....98)

**Module I: Decision-making and control over income**

<b>INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Now I am going to ask you about how much influence you have in decisions and control over income.		
<b>I01</b>	How much influence do you have regarding the use of money earned or received by yourself or other family members?	No influence ..... 1 Some influence ..... 2 A lot of influence ..... 3 (DO NOT READ: Don't know.....97) (DO NOT READ: Refused .....98)
<b>I02.</b> Now, please tell me how much influence you have on:		
<b>A</b>	Making large household purchases, such as cars, motorbikes, boats, furniture, electric appliances. <b>READ RESPONSE OPTIONS.</b>	No influence ..... 1 Some influence ..... 2 A lot of influence ..... 3 (DO NOT READ: Don't know.....97)
<b>B</b>	Your own healthcare	(DO NOT READ: Refused .....98)

**Module J: Information communication technologies (ICT)**

<b>J01. INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Next, I am going to ask you <b>how often</b> you use <b>different types of technology</b> .		
<b>A</b>	How often do you use a Mobile phone?	Daily ..... 1 Weekly ..... 2 Monthly ..... 3 Less than monthly ..... 4 Never ..... 5 (DO NOT READ: Refused .....98)
<b>B</b>	How often do you use Internet (including WhatsApp, Telegram, Messenger, (X) Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Tik-Tok and other social media)?	

**Module L: Sexual harassment**

**INTERVIEWER: The module L is asked only if the randomly selected individual is a female (B04==2)**

<b>L00. INTERVIEWER DO NOT READ ALOUD: PLEASE MAKE SURE THERE IS NO PERSON 5 YEARS AND OVER WHO COULD OVERHEAR THE INTERVIEW.</b>		
<b>L01. INTERVIEWER READ ALOUD: Now, I will ask you some questions about experiences women in your community may have. In your opinion:</b>		
<b>READ RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>		
<b>A</b>	Is it acceptable that A man treats a woman as “lesser” because she is a woman, for example, speaks badly, interrupts, or ignores her?	Never acceptable ..... 1 Sometimes acceptable ..... 2 Usually acceptable ..... 3 <i>(DO NOT READ: Don't know .....97)</i> <i>(DO NOT READ: Refused ....98)</i>
<b>B</b>	Is it acceptable that A man prevents a woman from doing certain kinds of work, even if she wants to?	
<b>C</b>	Is it acceptable that A man spreads unwanted rumors about a woman's sex life?	
<b>D</b>	Is it acceptable that A man tries to have a romantic or sexual relationship with a woman when she doesn't want it?	
<b>E</b>	Is it acceptable that A man offers work-related benefits to a woman with the expectation of receiving sexual favours?	

**Module M: Food and Drinks Consumed in Last 24 Hours**

**INTERVIEWER: The module M is asked only if the randomly selected individual is a female (B04==2)**

<b>M01. INTERVIEWER, READ ALOUD:</b> Now I'd like to ask you about foods and drinks that you consumed yesterday during the day or night, either at home or somewhere else. Please think about yesterday, from the time you woke up through the night. Think about the first thing you ate or drank after you woke up in the morning, the food or drinks in the middle of the day, or consumed as evening meal, or late-evening, late-night and any other snacks or drinks you may have had between meals during the day or night. I need to know if you had food items I will mention even if they were combined with other foods. Please listen to the list of foods, and if you ate or drank any one of them, say yes. Yesterday during the day or at night, did you eat or drink:	
Porridge or pap, bread, rice, macaroni or noodles, maize, millet, or sorghum	YES.....1 NO .....2
Pumpkin, orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, carrots, squash, or red sweet pepper	
White potatoes, white cassava, gari, fufu, white yams, cocoyam or arrowroot, plantain or ebbeh	
Beans, soybean, black-eyed beans, oleleh, pigeon peas or konsho, lentils, or green grams	
Groundnut, peanut butter, cashew nut, sesame or benni, egusi soup, or kainda	
Milk or powdered milk	
Yoghurt or cheese	
Liver, kidney, heart, gizzard, intestines, or tongue	
Beef, goat, pork, game meat, or bush meat	
Sausages, luncheon meat, or corned beef	
Chicken, bush fowl or guineafowl, duck, turkey, pigeon, dove, or frog	
Fish, lobster, shrimps, crayfish, crab, or cockles	
Eggs	
Cassava leaves, pumpkin leaves, potato leaves, crain crain or jute leaves, peila/eggplant leaves, kalami, or kokodie leaves	
Spinach, amaranth, okra leaves, bitter leaves, or sorrel leaves	
Cucumber, tomatoes, eggplant, okra, cauliflower, cabbages, green peas, or mushroom	
ripe pawpaw or papaya, ripe mango, locust bean fruit, passion fruit, apricot or red palm fruit	
bananas, pears, orange, pineapple guava, grapefruit, or watermelon	
Cashew fruit, sweet or soup sop, plum, apple, dates, avocado, or tangerine	
Chips such as pringles or cheese balls, Popcorn	
Puff puff, bean or rice akara, fried potato, fried cassava, fried sweet potato or fried fish, chicken or meat	
Indomie	
Burgers, pizza, or shawarma	
Chocolates, candies, cookies or sweet biscuits, cakes, jam, sweet pastries, sweet akara, ice cream, or honey	
Soft drinks, fruit juices or 'juice drinks', ginger beer, tombi, chocolate drinks like milo, or energy drinks	
Tea or coffee with sugar	
Termite, crickets, grasshopper, African palm weevil, larva, snails or sea snails	
Foods made with red palm oil, red palm nut, or red palm nut pulp sauces	

**Module N: Information on respondent**

<b>N01</b>	<b>INTERVIEWER:</b> What is [NAME]'s sex?	MALE.....1 FEMALE .....2
<b>N02</b>	What is your age? ( <i>Age should be in complete years</i> )	
<b>N03</b>	Can you read and write in any language?	Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2
<b>N04</b>	Have you ever attended school?	Yes ..... 1 No..... 2>>MODULE O
<b>N05</b>	What is the highest educational level you completed?	Nursery/pre-school.....0 Primary.....1 Secondary .....2 Post secondary .....3 Adult informal education .....4 Arabic.....5

Module O: Result of interview

**INTERVIEWER:** DEAR INTERVIEWER, THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE FOR YOU. YOU DO NOT NEED TO READ THEM ALOUD.

<b>O01</b>	<b>INTERVIEWER:</b> Was the respondent interviewed alone?	Yes.....1>> O03 No, one person attended the interview 2 No, more than one person attended the interview.....3
<b>O02</b>	<b>INTERVIEWER:</b> Who attended the interview? <b>TICK ALL THAT APPLY.</b>	Children.....1 Adult males.....2 Adult females .....3
<b>O03</b>	<b>INTERVIEWER:</b> Was the interview with [NAME] completed or partially completed?	Interview completed .....1>> Q05 Interview partially completed .....2
<b>O04</b>	<b>INTERVIEWER:</b> Reason for incomplete interview	Respondent had to leave .....1 Respondent was busy .....2 Other (spec _____) .....9
<b>O05</b>	<b>END OF INTERVIEW DATE/TIME STAMP</b>	