

## WHEN TO USE INDICES OR SCALES VERSUS INDICATORS?

If you are measuring empowerment as a primary outcome, you will need an index or a set of indicators that capture the complexity of the concept. In Results Framework 1, you could use the WEAI to measure the primary and intermediate outcomes. Validated indices, scales and modules of indicators can be useful when you need to compare across contexts or have a few resources for formative research to develop context-specific indicators. However, it is likely that in many cases a set of carefully selected indicators may be more relevant than a pre-existing index or you may want to include some indicators that are tailored to the specific context in addition to a standardized index or scale.

### Indices and scales

There are some advantages to using indices or scales over individual measures. An index is a way of compiling one score from a series of questions or statements that reflects a belief, feeling, or attitude, for example the WEAI. A scale asks a series of related questions about a key issue, allowing you to aggregate, or combine, multiple indicators into a single score, and often helps to more accurately capture the complexity of an issue than through a single measure. By using a validated scale, you can also compare results across different settings and countries. However, because scales and indices include multiple questions you should weigh their benefits with the length they will add to your survey.

There are several scales and indices that can be used to measure different elements or dimensions of empowerment. While this is not a comprehensive list, these are some of the better-known scales and indices:

- The [WEAI](#) measures elements of: agency (decision-making, leadership) and resources (assets and time). It focuses specifically on agriculture and can be used for performance monitoring and impact evaluation. It includes men and women, and can also capture changes over shorter time periods (see [Appendix 4](#)).
- The [Gender Equitable Men \(GEM\) Scale](#) measures attitudes toward gender norms in intimate relationships or differing social expectations for men and women. It was developed to administer with men, but has also been used with women.
- The [DHS women's status and empowerment module](#) measures various aspects of women's empowerment, including the elements of: agency (decision-making), resources (financial and productive assets), and institutional structures (relations and attitudes). (See [Appendix 5](#)).
- The [Global Early Adolescent Study \(GEAS\) empowerment module](#) measures empowerment of girls aged 10-14, through two elements: resources (bodily integrity and critical consciousness) and agency (decision-making). The empowerment module is one of ten modules that comprise the Health Instrument.
- The [WHO measure for Intimate Partner Violence](#) is the internationally recognized gold standard for measuring women's experiences of emotional, physical and sexual violence by a male intimate partner. However, there are a number of ethical and safety issues to be cognizant of if using this measure in a survey and you should refer to '[Safety First](#)'.