

Land Tenure Module

Integrating land tenure issues in multi-purpose household surveys

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This note discusses why the integration of land tenure issues needs more attention in the design of multi-purpose household surveys. To facilitate this integration, a basic structure for a land tenure module is proposed and for which a generic questionnaire is developed. Guidance via a "source book" is provided for integration of the land tenure module in household surveys and adjustment of the questionnaire to country level settings.

Rationale

- Land is a key productive asset for many households and government policies on the tenure types under which land can be held or ways in which it can be exchanged among users will have a major impact on the productivity of land use, the cost of providing credit and functioning of credit markets, and the local governance structure. The debate on this issue, however, is often quite polarized, conducted in stereotypes, and complex (Holden et al., 2013; Deininger et al., 2012).
- A recent systematic review of studies of impacts of property rights interventions and agricultural productivity in developing countries (Lawry et al. 2014) started out with 27600 quantitative studies but ended up with only 20 of these giving reliable impact assessments due to the methodology used.
- Adding a structured land tenure module (LTM) to the Living Standard Measurement Surveys (LSMS) (and other multi-purpose household surveys) will provide reliable data on the most important land tenure issues, such as the distributional impact of land tenure policies. Data analysis will help identify the areas where policy action can have the most significant and/or immediate impact, and help in sequencing and prioritizing policy interventions.
- Developing survey standards to generate globally comparable land data is important also for generating data to be used in global and regional land governance monitoring initiatives (LPI – UNECA, GLTN/ GLII; VGGT; SDG etc).
- A generic LTM has been developed for integration in household surveys, like the Living Standard Measurement Surveys (LSMS). Relevant sections of the generic questionnaire could also be used for questionnaires used for impact evaluations on land.
- Having a Land Tenure Module added to each LSMS survey and other multi-purpose surveys will be a big step forward in terms of providing new and better nationally representative land tenure data that have not existed before for most countries, and thus contributing to the generation of globally comparable data.

Generic questionnaire for land tenure module

- A generic format for a questionnaire facilitates standardization in data collection and is essential for comparability of the data collected on land tenure over time and across countries.
- The generic questionnaire is based on an assessment of existing tenure modules in close to a 100 household surveys and lessons learned from surveys on land tenure. It introduces a basic structure to ensure that the most essential information on land tenure is covered, which include: (i) ownership

and use of agricultural and non-agricultural land and immobile assets on the land, (ii) sources of land acquisition including inheritance, (iii) land transactions, (iv) formal and informal property rights, (v) investments on the land, (vi) land conflicts, (vii) legal knowledge, (viii) gender and property rights, (ix) perceptions of tenure security and (x) trust in land-related institutions.

- The questionnaire also introduces standard formulations and methodological approaches, like on perception of tenure security and land conflict, for gender data and parcel based information.
- The generic questionnaire for land tenure will be programmed in CAPI (Computer Assisted Personalized Interviewing) and made available to country teams using tablets for surveys. These teams will subsequently make the country specific adjustments.

Land Tenure Module: Standard and Extended

- The Standard Land Tenure Module (Standard LTM) contains the most basic land tenure-related questions that should be asked in all countries. It is closely related to the Agricultural Module in the LSMS.
- The LTM also has a non-agricultural land module that will be the major component in urban and peri-urban areas.
- The tenure/ownership information is collected only for immobile assets such as land and buildings. Movable assets are captured in other parts of the LSMS survey.
- The Extended LTM version will generate more extensive and detailed data, such as on gender and at the plot level, that can facilitate analysis of a larger variety of issues. The Extended LTM version is also more demanding to implement. The choice of the Extended LTM version depends on policy interest and resource/funding and capacity availability, and is likely to be used only in a small number of countries. However, the standard version is to be applied in all countries.
- Careful integration and adaptation of the generic questionnaire and training of the survey teams is crucial for the successful implementation of both the Standard and Extended versions.
- The Extended LTM requires more fine-tuning to the country conditions as it goes further in collecting gender-disaggregated data and divides parcels in plots with uniform land management to facilitate more detailed gender-disaggregated and plot level analyses.

Parcel based analysis in LSMS

- The goal of land policy analysis is to identify how different tenure types affect land use and/or the (private or social) benefits derived from a parcel of land. The most appropriate way of isolating these effects is to have information at parcel level.
- A parcel is defined as a single connected land unit linked to a specific owner and/or user of the land unit, and under a single tenure system.
- In countries without reliable documentation of parcel sizes it is important to measure parcels as part of the survey to get reliable data on land productivity, input use intensity and investment intensity. Farmers' own estimates of parcel sizes are often subject to large measurement errors.
- The LTM integration in the overall LSMS needs to be customized. Traditionally, questions on land tenure in LSMS surveys have been included only in the agriculture module, implying that information on parcels that are not used for agricultural cultivation or on parcels that are owned by non-agriculturalists who reside in towns or urban centers (rather than the village where the land is located) is often not collected.
- Another issues to be addressed is that in several countries the agriculture LSMS module continues to have a commodity-based approach although the good practice is to move towards a parcel-based approach, which will also facilitate matching of input, output, and investment data with tenure data.

Adaptation of the generic questionnaire to the local context

- Respecting the generic format for the land tenure module is essential for the establishment of comparable land tenure data at the country, regional and global levels. The questionnaire, however, has to be adapted to the country context. This is essential for the land tenure systems, which depend on contextual conditions at the local level, such as specific institutional, economic and biophysical conditions that vary also within countries.
- Using the tenure typology and other classifications of land rights for the coding of possible answers to questions on the range of land tenure regimes is an important aspect of the adaptation of the Land Tenure Module to the local environment.
- Another step is to have a good national overview of the tenure systems in place, how they are distributed and how this matches with the distribution of Enumeration Areas/Primary Sampling Units.
- Codes should be consistent and take into account the local conceptual understanding and terminology. This will be more challenging in countries with more ethnic, language and agro-ecological variation. This requires carefully reviewing and translating all of the relevant general and local concepts and terms used and replacing the example codes in the generic questionnaires with the appropriate local terms.
- Skipping questions/ skip codes: Some questions are only relevant for certain types of tenure systems or tenure categories and can be skipped when not relevant, which will be programmed in CAPI for ease of survey administration.

Sections in the Standard Land Tenure Module

Parcel roster

- Households are asked to provide an overview of all parcels belonging to the household, including cultivated, rented and fallowed land, as well as non-agricultural parcels of land. It is important that the same system for parcel identification is used in the agricultural module to enable parcel level matching of the land tenure data with the parcel level input, output and investment data collected in the agricultural module.

Part A: Inheritance

- How land is transferred between generations and distributed among children within families has large implications for the future land distribution, the extent of concentration of land including by gender. Inheritance may be guided by statutory law in some countries and by customary norms in others.

Part B: Non-agricultural land holdings

- Non-agricultural land is particularly important in urban and peri-urban areas. Many of the key policy issues in the area of land (e.g. the need to regularize informal settlements, the scope for converting land use, the ability to use land as a collateral, the level of tenure security, the extent of compensation in case of expropriation, or biased access to land) are at least as relevant in the case of non-agricultural land as they are for agricultural land.

Part C: Agricultural land holdings

- In most countries farmers undertake agricultural activities on different parcels of land. Parcels usually differ in terms of types of tenure (e.g. leasehold, freehold, customary); under which system they are held, the mode of acquisition (e.g. purchased, inherited, cleared, etc.), types of

documentation used for asserting rights (title, certificates, sales deeds, tax receipts, etc.), land quality, degree of land degradation /erosion, and other physical characteristics.

Part C1: Land holding: Land owned and farmed by the household

- This part identifies the type of land tenure system on each parcel of land owned and operated by the household. It also identifies the mode and time of acquisition, the perceived land value, current land use, and basic land characteristics (such as soil type, slope, soil depth, land quality). It is an essential part to link land tenure to land use and productivity analyses.

Part C2: Land holdings: Rented or borrowed in parcels

- This part provides information on the extent of land renting in and borrowing and can give indications of the level of activity in the land rental market, who participates in the market and what contractual arrangements are used. This may also be used to analyze factors associated with land rental market participation, access, partner choice, rental contract choice and production efficiency.

Part C3: Land holdings: Rented or lent out parcels

- This part will identify which types of households are renting out or lending out their land. Such data may potentially be used to assess factors affecting the willingness to rent out land and how much is rented out. It may help to examine whether secure property rights encourage households to supply more land for rental purposes. It also provides additional information on the scope and nature of the rental market.

Part D: Land title or certificate for agricultural land

- This part gathers information on the existence of formal documents that confirm ownership or user rights to land. It also assesses the demand for a formal title or certificate and different households' willingness to pay for the document of their choice. It may also indicate something about the ability to pay in countries where it is very expensive to get such documents.

Part E: Investments on agricultural land

- Investments on the land may be used to increase tenure security but may also be a result of improved tenure security. This part may help to establish the direction of causality and quantifying the impact of tenure security on different types of investments. It requires knowledge of the local practices, as the types of land-related investments to be considered should be customized to the circumstances of the country.

Part F: Land rights on owned and rented in agricultural land and knowledge of the law

- This part collects information on household members' awareness of formal rights to acquire, hold and transfer land rights. Questions on the knowledge of the law have to be developed specifically in each country given the land-related laws that exist there.

Part G: Land conflicts on non-agricultural and agricultural land

- This part seeks to establish (i) the relationship between perceptions of risks of land conflict and productivity at the plot level as well as its impact on the value of land; and (ii) personal experiences of land conflicts and households' choice between the available institutions for conflict resolution. Land conflicts are quite rare phenomena and may only affect directly a small share of the sample who are personally involved in such disputes. There may also be within-family competition for land that leads to intra-household/family disputes. Conflicts in the neighborhood or external threats may affect perceptions and the feeling of tenure security and thus investment behavior. This also relates to the next part on tenure security.

Part H: Tenure security on non-agricultural and agricultural land

- This part analyzes perceptions of tenure security that can have strong effects on land use as well as investments and land transactions. There can be both private and public sources of tenure insecurity and perceptions of such (in-)security may vary across parcels of land that households own or rent. There may also be within-household variation in such perceptions and threats and women may often be more tenure insecure than men.

A “source book”, training and other forms of capacity building is available on the use of the Land Tenure Module, integration in multi-purpose household surveys, adaptation to country- specific conditions and analysis.

References

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