

"HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS EXPECT TO LOSE THEIR HOMES" - PRINDEX LAUNCHES FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

July 2019

Launch at World Bank's Land and Poverty Conference sets the stage for an ambitious year ahead

Hundreds of millions of people – one in four – across 33 countries surveyed during 2018 expect to lose their homes or other property, data published by Prindex has shown for the first time. The finding was one of several unveiled at the Land and Poverty conference in Washington DC in March.

A CRISIS HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

Data revealed by Prindex showed:

- One in four people interviewed feel insecure in their homes or other property. That indicates that 178 million adults in 33 countries think it is 'likely' or 'very likely' that they will lose their home or other property against their will in the next five years.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, nearly 32 million adults in urban areas in the countries we surveyed feel insecure in their rights to home and land. Based on urban population growth projections, this means that by 2050, across the whole sub-Saharan African region, there could be over 210 million people experiencing tenure insecurity.

- Women have much less confidence than men that they will retain access to their homes if they divorce or their spouse dies. Women were, on average, over 12 percentage points more likely than men to express worry in the event of divorce or spousal death.
- West and Central Africa are the regions where people have the highest rates of concern for the right to retain access to their homes, while Latin America has the lowest regional average rate.

Within the sample of countries surveyed, Prindex presented the findings in two papers delivered by Prindex's co-directors, Malcolm Childress and Anna Locke, at sessions during the conference, as well as at a well-attended evening reception hosted in the offices of Gallup, Prindex's long-time polling partner.

Increased awareness of Prindex and its data sets the stage for an ambitious year. We will be collecting data for most of the rest of the world, bringing our total coverage to 140 countries, representing 95% of the world's population, as well as developing an in-depth research programme.

GLOBAL INTEREST

Prindex's data generated media interest internationally, with coverage in outlets around the world, including the BBC Africa service, Voice of America, and Radio France Internationale.

The findings also had great engagement on social media, tapping into the growing interest in property rights insecurity. Prindex's results continue to be the subject of media interest, and in the coming weeks and months we will be exploring new ways to tell stories about the data.

How Prindex amplifies women’s hopes and fears

Renée Giovarelli of Resource Equity argues that Prindex not only tells us something about how we can improve women’s land rights, but helps us to think in a new way about development. This is an edited version of a blog originally published on From Poverty to Power.

How do we recognize and work with (let alone measure) issues like love, shame, fear, solidarity?

As an advocate for women’s land rights, this question is key. Whenever I hear from women about the fragility of those rights and their efforts to strengthen them – as I’ve done across 16 countries and two continents – these facets of the human condition are ever present.

Fear and hope – attitudes to the future – matter because they determine how we behave. They might inform decisions about investment in land, and about families: decisions that can shape lives, communities and economies. As for measuring these qualities, I might have the beginnings of an answer, found in Prindex’s new survey.

Prindex found that 1 in 4 people fear losing their homes or other land. What’s more, it found that women were, on average, over 12 percentage points more likely than men to express fear for their right to retain their home in the event of divorce or the death of their spouse. This is a land rights gender deficit. That matters for women, and for their societies.

It is so often women who remove rocks from land, plant, fertilize, weed, and harvest crops, care for children, care

for the elderly, cook, clean, carry water and wood, and all the rest without earning any money. Women are less likely to invest sweat equity in land that does not belong to them and over which they have no ultimate control.

If their contribution is not valued in a divorce, they are likely to receive much less than their husband, who is usually the traditional money earner. This affects many more women than those who actually divorce. It includes women that are toughing it out. How many women are in abusive or harmful relationships who cannot leave because if they leave, they leave with nothing – no land and no money?

So, where does this leave us? Prindex’s gender report shows that there is no one single solution, and that the long-term work of changing norms is key. But one finding in particular caught my eye. Women who contemplate divorce in countries that take into account women’s non-monetary contributions to the marriage – including unpaid work on the land and caring or “reproductive” labour – when dividing property at the time of divorce tend to be less fearful than women in countries that do not count non-monetary contributions.

Countries where women display relatively low rates of tenure insecurity in divorce scenarios (30% or below) are

all countries in which the division of property benefits both spouses at the time a marriage is dissolved. There are countries such as Liberia, Mozambique and Burkina Faso in which divorce legislation is gender-equal but women anticipate more insecurity in divorce scenarios. This may reflect differences over whether women know of their legal rights, and whether their personal and social circumstances along with the de facto operation of courts allow them to enforce that right.

That’s another reason why Prindex asks – and we should all ask – about perceptions: because they may reflect the reality more than the laws as written in statute books.

Asking about fear and hope becomes a way to recognise that what appears to be a land law issue is also a family law issue and an issue of norms, courts, and citizen awareness. If we don’t ask about perceptions, and if we don’t make sure that we collect data from women as well as traditional heads of household, we risk neglecting a large part of the picture, and at least half of the population.

Read our full report on women’s perceptions of tenure security: prindex.net/reports

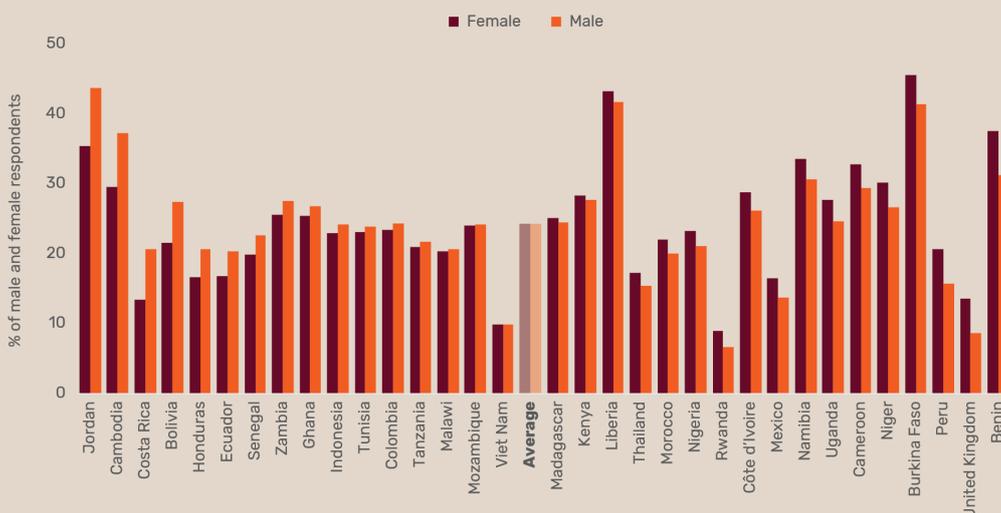


FIGURE 1: PERCEIVED TENURE INSECURITY BY GENDER AND COUNTRY

Comparison of tenure insecurity of women in a divorce scenario and whether the law provides for equal access to nonmonetary contributions (purple = yes; orange = no)

Six things you need to know about how Prindex works

Researcher Joseph Feyertag gives a behind-the-scenes look at Prindex, explaining how our survey is breaking new ground in measuring how secure people feel in their rights to stay in their home or on their land.

How many people around the world fear they will lose their home? That's the question Prindex was set up to answer. In 2019, we're expanding our dataset from 33 to 140 countries, representing 95% of the world's population. By the end of the year, our polling partner Gallup will have interviewed at least 160,000 people using Prindex's questions, as part of the Gallup World Poll.

But what matters isn't just who we survey, how many people, or where, but how we ask the questions.

As we wait for the results of our new round of surveys, we have reviewed other studies of 'tenure security' – how likely it is that a person will lose the right to stay in their home or property against their will – to see how Prindex's results measure up. Here, I sum up what makes Prindex's approach different, and why it matters.

1. PUTTING FACTS TO ONE SIDE: FEELINGS MATTER

Traditionally, tenure security has been measured by reviewing government records. But facts don't tell us everything. Prindex asks people to tell us how secure they feel in the right to stay in their home, because feelings paint a fuller picture than facts alone. For instance, although a piece of paper might say that I own my home, a neighbour, relative, company, or government official might disagree.

What's more, our feelings influence our behaviour. If a farmer fears their land could be seized, they will be less likely to invest in looking after the land. Understanding how secure people feel in their right to stay on their land or in their home helps us to understand how property rights and other policy issues – like deforestation or gender inequality – overlap.

2. GETTING THE QUESTION RIGHT

We ask people how *likely* they think it is that they will lose their home against their will in the next five years. Other surveys might ask how much a person *fears* losing their property. It's a subtle difference, but one that can make a big difference to our results. Someone living in an informal slum settlement or renting an apartment could be more likely to move home on a regular basis. So they might consider the risk of losing their home to be high but, as a result of moving often, may be less fearful of it happening.

3. KNOWING THE OPTIONS

How we frame the answers matters, too. In answer to the question asking how likely a person thinks it is that they will be forced to leave their home, respondents can choose from one of four options: "very likely", "somewhat likely", "unlikely" and "very unlikely".

We chose to give four possible responses because it allows for nuance: you might behave differently if you thought it was "very unlikely" that you would lose your home than you would if you thought it was "unlikely". It also produces a clear picture overall, classing everyone as either "secure" or "insecure".

4. FOCUSING ON REPRESENTATION

For each country we survey, we will ensure our survey sample is nationally representative across regions and groups: from renters to homeowners, young people to older people, those living in the countryside to the city, farmers to business owners, and women and men. Few other surveys consider the whole population, concentrating instead on specific groups or regions.

5. MAKING WOMEN'S VOICES HEARD

Reflecting women's voices equally alongside those of men is crucial for Prindex and makes our survey unique from others. We achieve this through randomisation: when we knock on a door, we ask for a list of all the residents over 18, and pick one at random. This ensures we hear from both men and women. Other surveys often will identify the 'most knowledgeable' member of the household, or the head of household, meaning men's perspectives dominate.

6. CONSISTENCY IS EVERYTHING

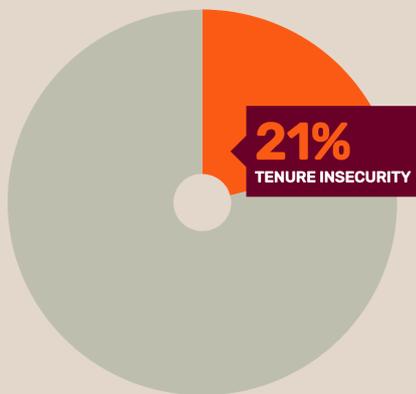
The only way to track and compare how much people fear losing their homes from country to country is to make sure we are consistent. Other approaches are valid, but small differences in how we ask a question can have a big impact on the answers.

Prindex isn't designed to replace existing surveys or sources of data, such as in-depth national or regional surveys, administrative data or multipurpose household surveys. Rather, our data is a starting point for further localised research into tenure security and its causes and acts as an independent check to see how citizens' feelings line up with other data. Together, through better understanding why people fear losing their home, we can create a strong foundation for land and property policies fit for our time.

Find out more about our methodology: prindex.net/data

Spotlight on Tanzania: policymakers consider Prindex findings

On 3 May, over 120 policymakers and members of civil society met in Dodoma, Tanzania to discuss data Prindex collected in the country last year. Supported by the Tanzanian Bureau of National Statistics and addressed by the Deputy Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlement Development, Dr Angelina Mabula, the event represents Prindex's commitment to ensuring national policymakers have access to our data and the opportunity to discuss it with their peers.



Overall, the top three reasons given for tenure insecurity were that the owner/renter may ask me to leave (24%), disagreements with family or relatives (18%) or the government may seize the dwelling (18%).

GREATER INSECURITY AMONG RENTERS

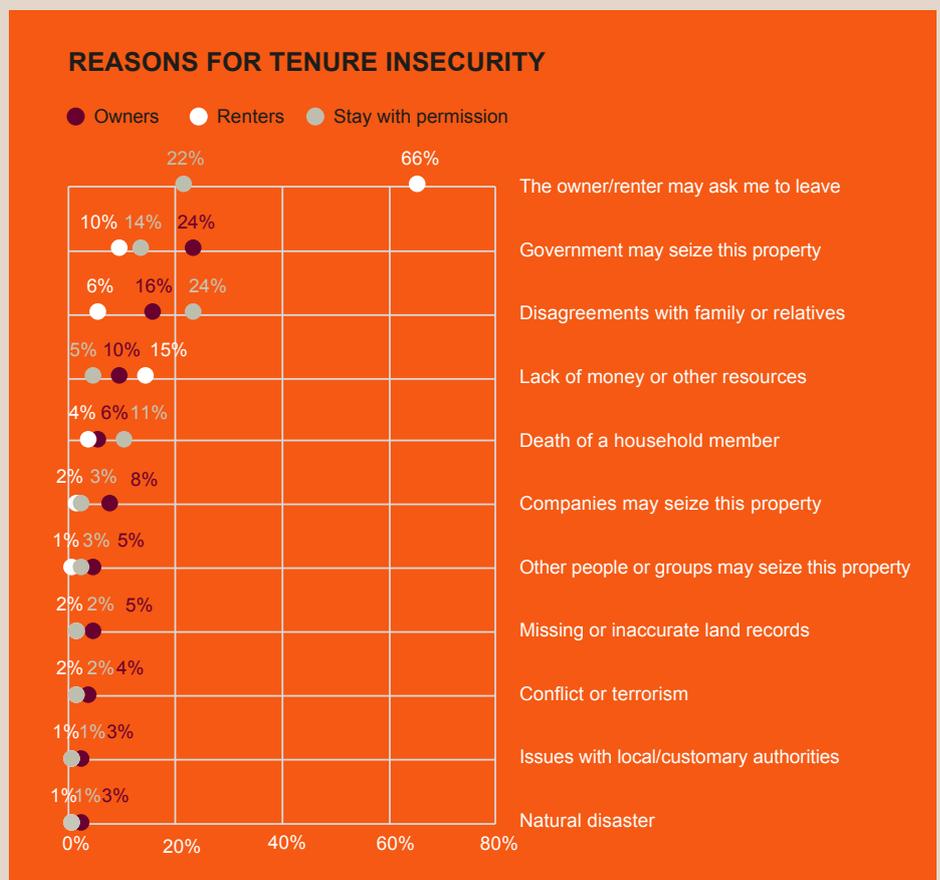
We found no difference in levels of tenure security between those living

in urban or rural areas. However, there was significant variation depending on tenure type. Renters were considerably more likely to fear losing their home (37%), compared to those staying with permission (22%) or owners (16%).

MIND THE GENDER GAP

Overall, women and men reported the same levels of tenure insecurity. However, we found a gender disparity

elsewhere in the data: women said they were significantly more worried than men that they would be forced to leave their home in the event of divorce (25% vs 8%) or spousal death (25% vs 9%). As Renee Giovarelli's article (see page two) discusses, this is a trend that we observed across the 33 countries we surveyed, revealing that there is a long way to go to meet the aspiration of equal economic rights for women.



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