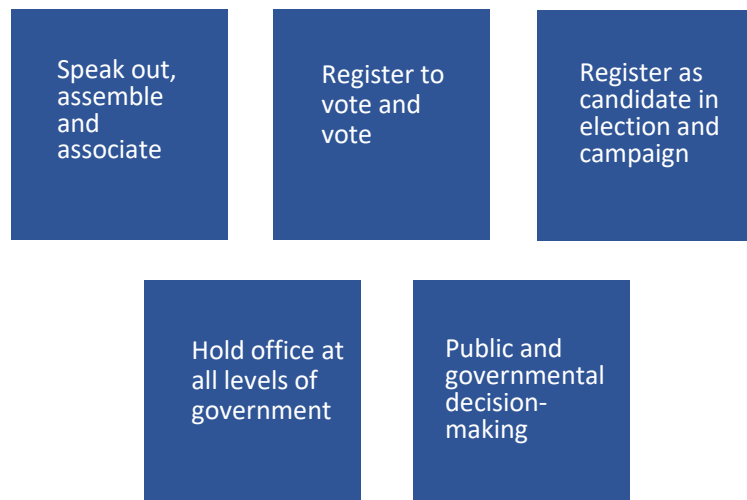# Introducing SDG indicator 5.5.1b
on women's representation in local government:
rationale and methodology

Ionica Berevoescu

UN Women

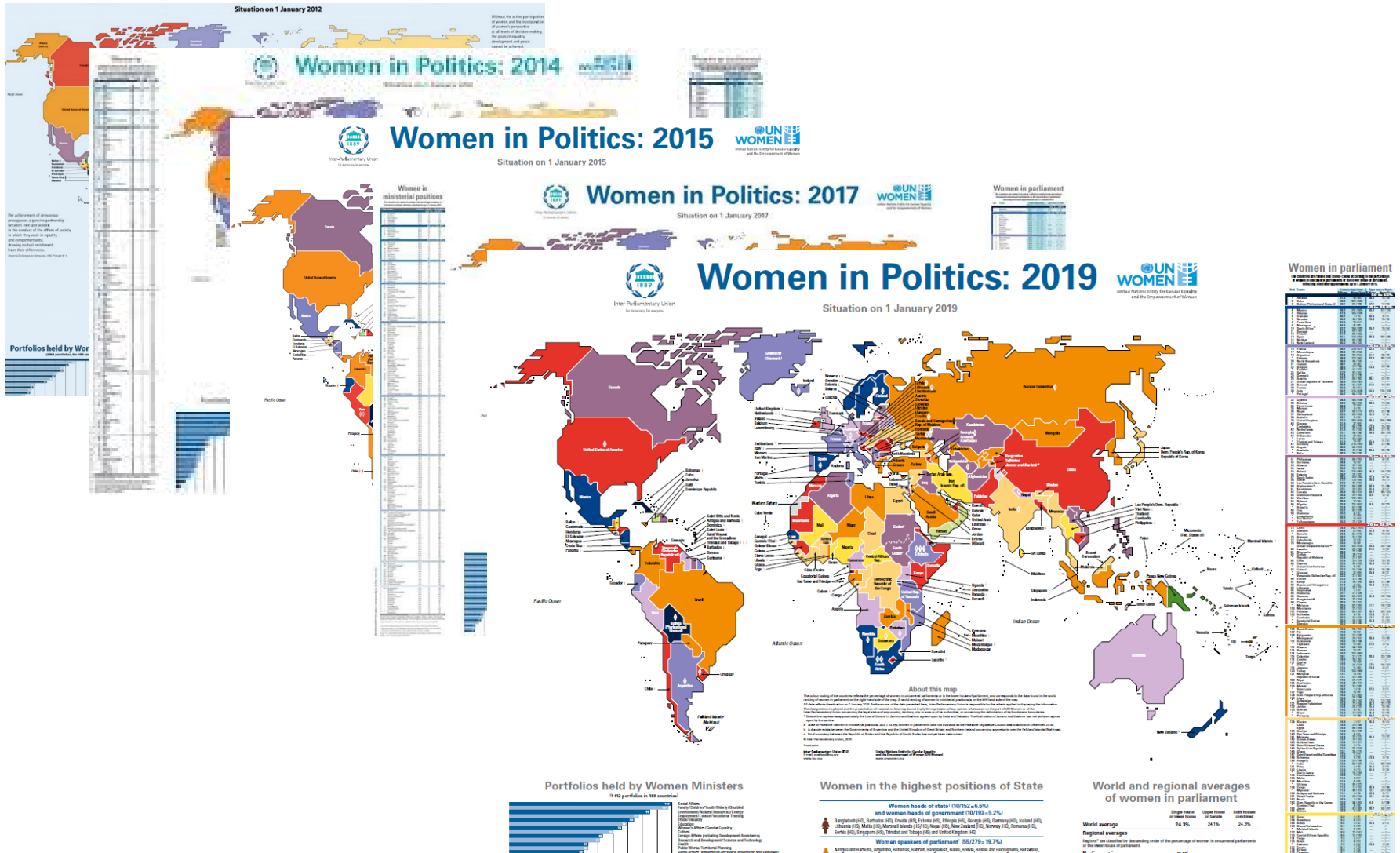# Women's political participation is a human right

Dimensions of political participation

Speak out, assemble and associate

Register to vote and vote

Register as candidate in election and campaign

Hold office at all levels of government

Public and governmental decision-making

Normative framework for women's political participation: KEY MILESTONES

1995: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

1979: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

1966: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

1952: Convention on the Political Rights of Women

1948: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

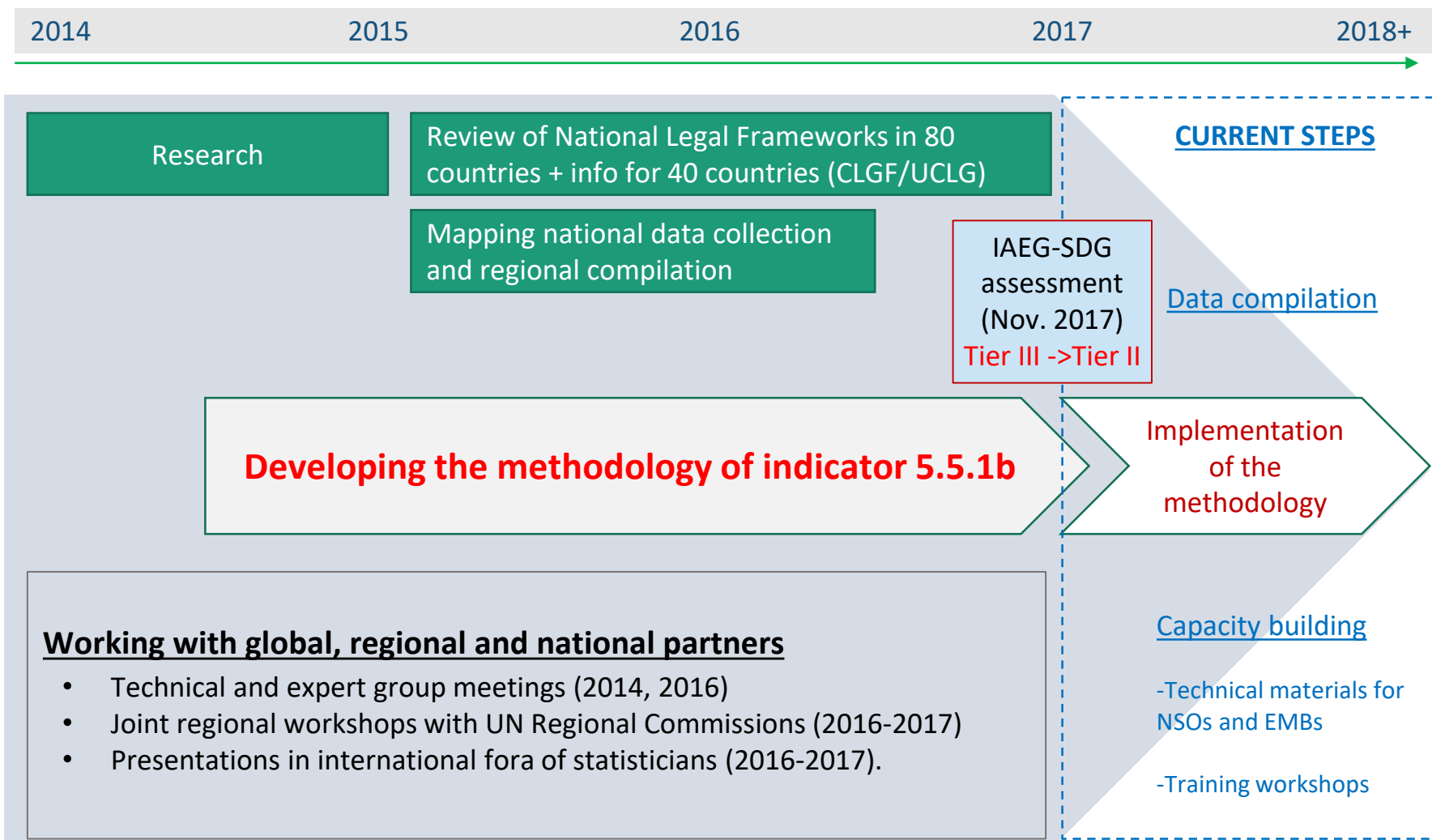# The case for an indicator on local government

Where SDG indicator 5.5.1b fits into the SDG monitoring framework

- **SDG 5:** "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"

- **Target 5.5:** "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life."

- **Indicator 5.5.1:** "proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local government"

Steps undertaken by UN Women
to develop the methodology of indicator 5.5.1b

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018+

Research

Review of National Legal Frameworks in 80 countries + info for 40 countries (CLGF/UCLG)

Mapping national data collection and regional compilation

CURRENT STEPS

IAEG-SDG assessment (Nov. 2017) Tier III ->Tier II

Data compilation

Developing the methodology of indicator 5.5.1b

Implementation of the methodology

Working with global, regional and national partners
- Technical and expert group meetings (2014, 2016)
- Joint regional workshops with UN Regional Commissions (2016-2017)
- Presentations in international fora of statisticians (2016-2017).

Capacity building

-Technical materials for NSOs and EMBs

-Training workshops

5

The methodology of SDG indicator 5.5.1b,

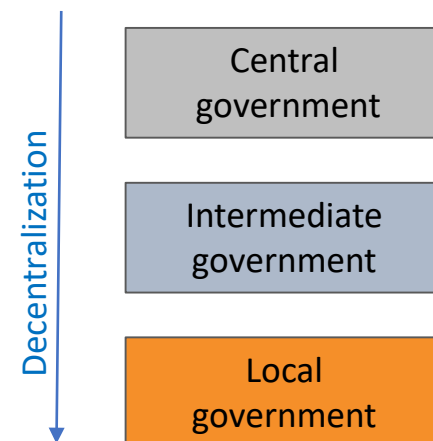"proportion of elected seats held by women in deliberative bodies of local government"

1. Terms and definitions

2. Scope of indicator

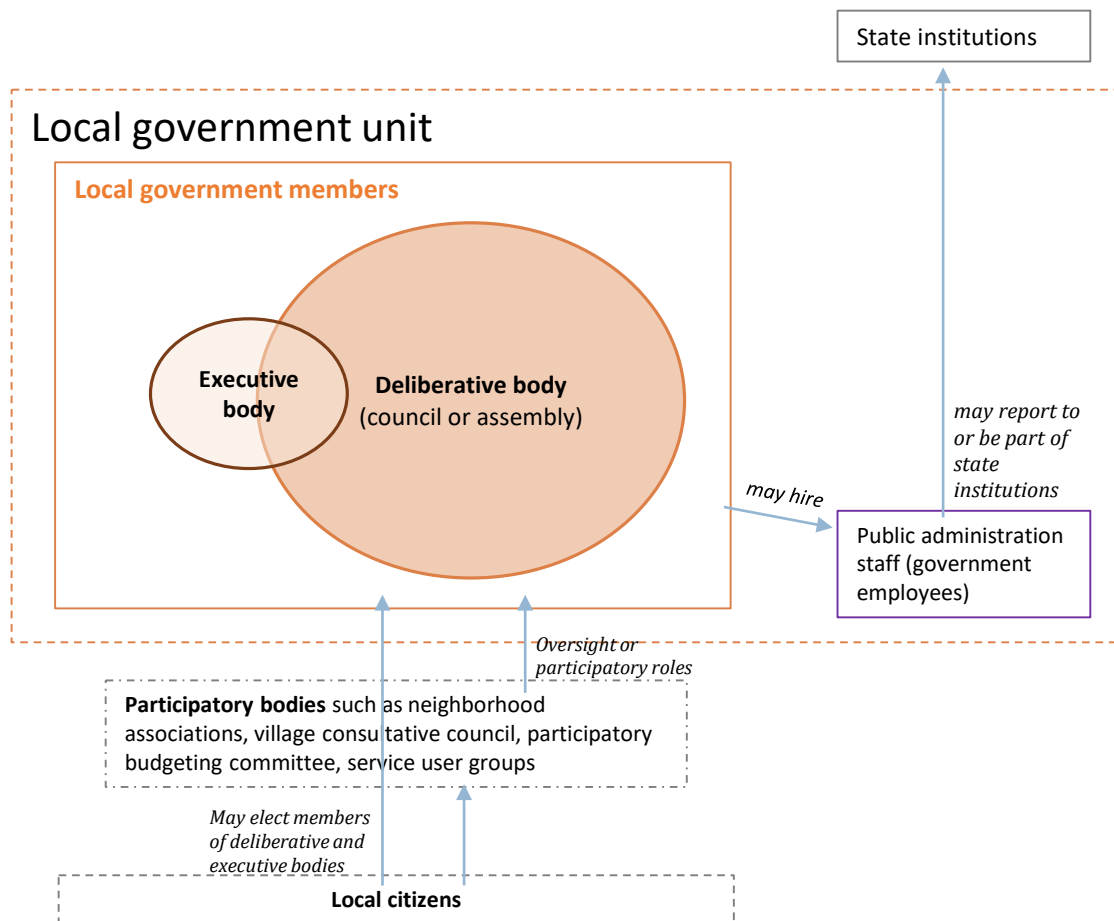3. Data sources

1. Terms and definitions
What is local government

Three spheres of government

- Local government is a result of decentralization.

- **Statistical definition of local government**: 2008 SNA (System of National Accounts):
  - distinction between central, state and local government (para 4.129).
  - local government consists of local government units, defined by SNA as institutional units with fiscal, legislative and executive authority over smallest geographical areas distinguished for administrative and political purposes (para 4.145).

- <u>In a given country</u>: identification of local government and its organization is based on the national legal framework.
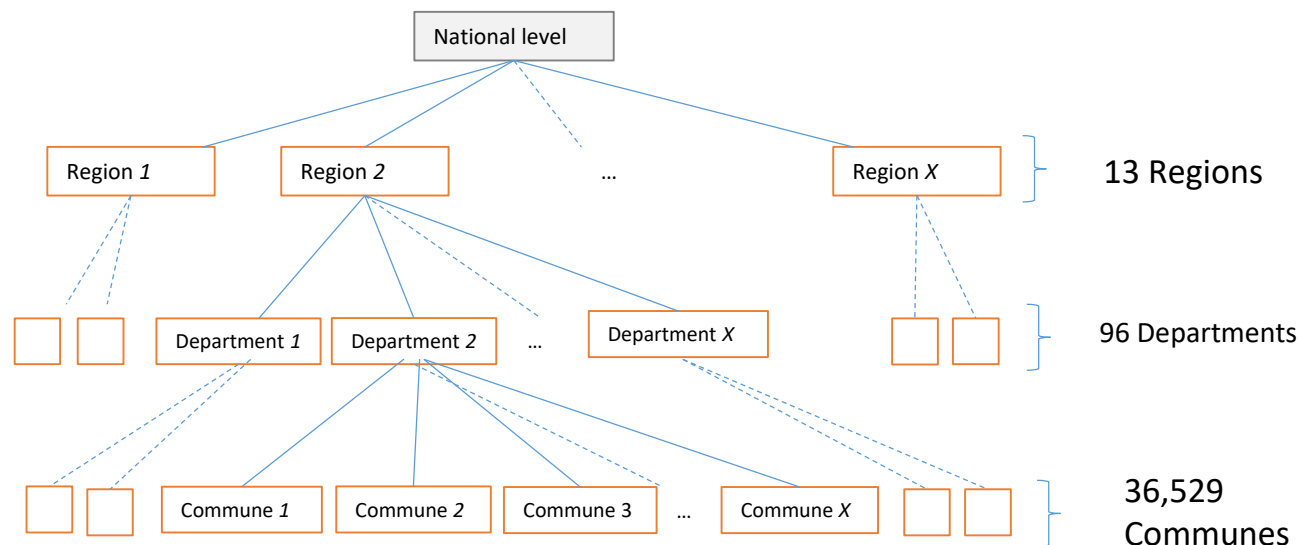
Decentralization

| Central government |
| Intermediate government |
| Local government |

The composition of local government units

State institutions

Local government unit

Local government members

Executive body

Deliberative body (council or assembly)

may hire

may report to or be part of state institutions

Public administration staff (government employees)

Oversight or participatory roles

Participatory bodies such as neighborhood associations, village consultative council, participatory budgeting committee, service user groups

May elect members of deliberative and executive bodies

Local citizens

Source: Adapted from concepts discussed at the Technical Meeting on Women's Political Participation at the Local Level, UN Women, New York, 24-25 November 2014.

Local government organization by tiers

- Local government may be organized in 1 or more tiers/levels; each tier contains multiple local government units.

- For example, local government in France is organized in three tiers:

Source: UN Women Review of Local Government Organization.

Some examples of local government organization by tiers

Some examples:

El Salvador

Central government

Local government
Municipalities

Burkina Faso

Central government

Local government
Regional councils
Municipal councils

Jordan

Central government

Local government
Governorate councils
Municipal Councils / Amman Council
Local councils

India

Central Government

Intermediate sphere of government					
24 States and 2 Union territories	3 States and 2 Union territories	2 States	1 State and 1 Union territory	1 Union territory	1 Union territory

Local Government

Zilla Panchayats / Urban gov.	Zilla Panchayats / Urban gov.	Urban gov.	Urban gov.	Panchayats Samitis / Urban gov.	Zilla Panchayats
Panchayats Samitis					
Gram Panchayats	Gram Panchayats	Gram Panchayats		Gram Panchayats	Gram Panchayats

United States of America

Central Government

States	States	States	States	States

Local government	Local government	Local government	Local government	Local government
County / City-county	County	County	Municipalities / Town or townships	Municipalities
Municipalities	Municipalities / Town or townships	Municipalities		

2. Scope of indicator 5.5.1b

The indicator covers:

- All tiers of local government as specified by national legal frameworks.

- Positions in deliberative bodies
  - Mirrors existing indicators for national government;
  - The great majority of local government members.

- Elected positions only
  - Most positions in local government
  - Persons elected on openly contested seats, reserved seats or through a candidate quota.
  - Captures political participation and accountability to citizens
  - Low cost data sources

Calculation of the indicator

- The indicator:

$$= \frac{Number\ of\ positions\ held\ by\ women}{Total\ number\ of\ positions\ held\ by\ women\ and\ men} \times 100$$

- Calculated as:

$$= \frac{\begin{array}{c} Sum\ of\ elected\ positions\ held\ by\ women \\ in\ deliberative\ bodies\ of\ local\ government \end{array}}{\begin{array}{c} Sum\ of\ elected\ positions\ held\ by\ women\ and\ men \\ in\ deliberative\ bodies\ of\ local\ government \end{array}} \times 100$$
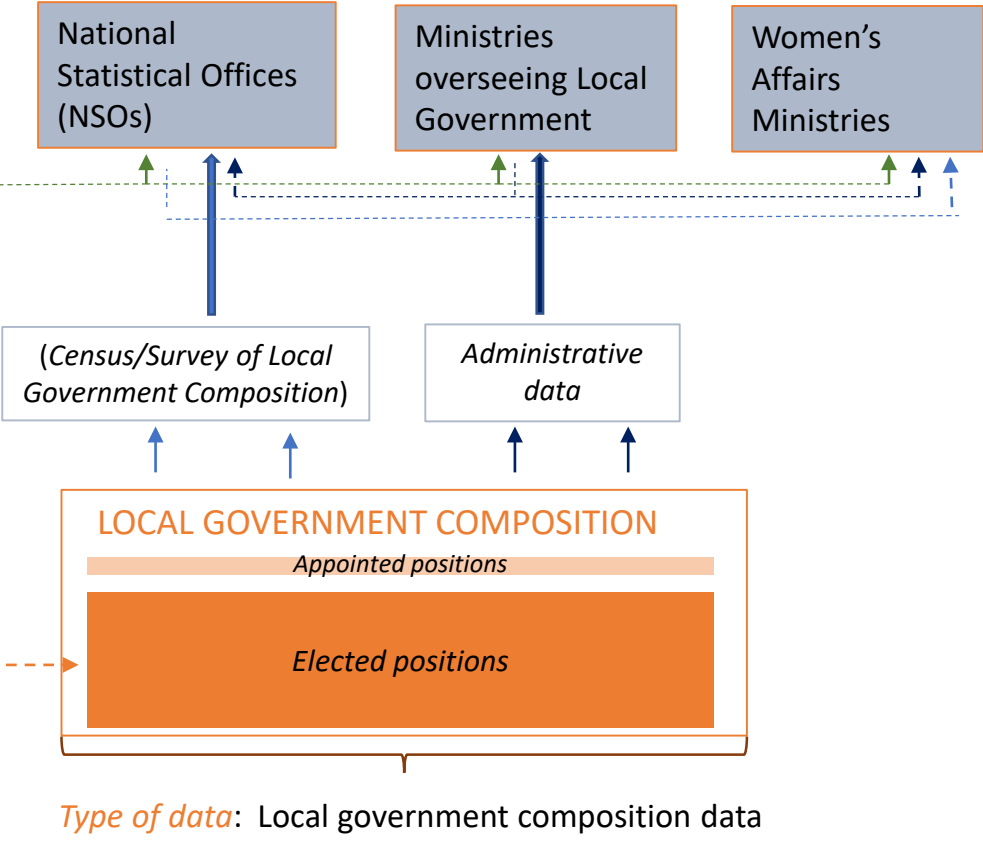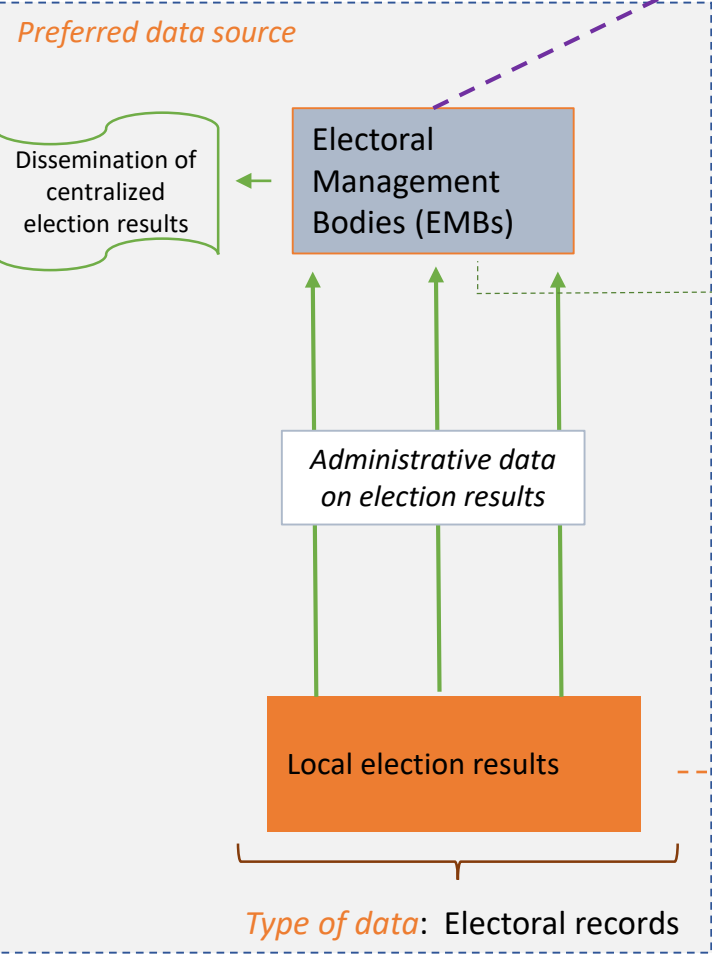

An example of a country with two tiers:

- Upper tier: 10 women in elected positions out of 100 total women and men in elected positions

- Lower tier: 500 women in elected positions out of 2000 total women and men in elected positions

Indicator calculated as:

$$= \frac{10 + 500}{100 + 2000} \times 100 = 24\%$$

3. Sources and flow of data for SDG indicator 5.5.1b

UN WOMEN — United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

UN Women & UN Regional Commissions

Preferred data source

Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs)

Dissemination of centralized election results

National Statistical Offices (NSOs)

Ministries overseeing Local Government

Women's Affairs Ministries

Administrative data on election results

(*Census/Survey of Local Government Composition*)

Administrative data

Local election results

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPOSITION

Appointed positions

Elected positions

Type of data: Electoral records

Type of data: Local government composition data

EMBs as recommended data source

- Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) as preferred data source
    - EMBs are part of the National Statistical Systems
    - Low-cost existing data: collection and dissemination of electoral information are essential tasks for EMBs

- Well-placed to ensure the integration of variable "sex" in the information collected on political participation, including on:
    - Voter registration
    - Voter turnout
    - Candidacies in local elections
    - Seats won

- **Challenges** :
    - Collection of data disaggregated by sex and/or dissemination not yet institutionalized in all countries.
    - Centralization of data difficult in some countries (federal systems in particular).
    - Information is not stored and/or transmitted electronically.
    - Need to improve technical capacity to produce and disseminate simple statistical summaries on women and men voters, candidates and winners of elections
    - Data produced by EMBs may not be integrated by NSOs with other statistics

Institutionalizing data collection and dissemination in EMBs

- Clear statistical mandate of EMB (integrated in electoral laws, rules or regulations).

- Assessment on existing potential dimensions of disaggregation in electoral registration forms and electronic information system, covering:
  - GIS integration in the information system of the EMBs (consistency with geo-spatial standards used by NSSs).
  - Voter registration and candidate registration paper forms and electronic formats should include, at minimum, information on sex and age.
  - Ensuring disaggregated data on voter turnout and winners of elections (through linkages of information on registered voters and actual voters and between candidates and elected candidates, or separate data storage).

- Implementation of suggested changes in the system of collecting and storing information on registered voters, voters, candidates and elected candidates.

- Ensuring post-election dissemination of results in a statistical format that is easily accessible, to prevent that data generated by EMBs remain an underused public good.

- Developing data sharing agreements to ensure that EMB data can easily be accessed by NSOs and other entities of the NSSs.

Other sources of data

- When sex-disaggregated data on election results not available, two other data sources to be considered:
  - **Public administration data** available to line ministries overseeing local government
    - Additional processing of information may be necessary (information on women and men in elected positions mixed with information on appointments or public administration employees)
    - Elected positions may not be covered in the records maintained (if administrative records restricted to paid positions)
  - **Surveys or censuses using local government units as units of observation**
    - May be undertaken by National Statistical Offices and/or line ministries
    - Three types: (a) local government censuses or surveys; (b) establishment surveys; and (c) municipality surveys.
    - Would need to distinguish between elected positions of local government vs. appointed positions vs. public administration employees.

Thank you.