

## IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF GENDER STATISTICS

Prepared by Mexico

*The present note is an in-depth review of gender statistics. The purpose of the reviews by the CES Bureau is to improve coordination of statistical activities in the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), identify gaps or duplication of work and address emerging issues.*

*The note summarizes international activities related to gender statistics, and identifies issues and challenges. **The conclusions and recommendations from the review are presented in sections V and VI. The Bureau is invited to discuss the issues in gender statistics and how to address them.***

### I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In the past ten years, attention to gender statistics has been renewed. The momentum generated by the Beijing Platform for Action, the Millennium Development Goals, the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators, as well as the statistical activities and projects promoted by international organizations and United Nations regional commissions and conferences, and by individual countries, have translated into progress in the development of gender statistics at all different levels in the world.

2. Now, the goals and indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development bring a new impetus for statistics and progress towards gender equality. In order to deal with inequalities and so that no one is left behind, there is an increased demand for detailed and abundant information. In addition to the requirements of goal number 5, ‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’, it is necessary to mainstream gender into the other objectives and indicators.

3. There is, as a result of this new impetus, already a better institutional, methodological and data access infrastructure to facilitate progress in gender statistics. The unresolved conceptual and methodological aspects of Tier II and III indicators have been distributed among the international agencies according to their competences, so that they can be resolved more quickly, and in almost all cases these agencies have already incorporated these themes into their activities. Likewise, the role of the National Statistical Offices as coordinators of statistical work has been defined and the existence of focal points and mechanisms for dialogue with users has been identified.

4. There are particular challenges relating to the set of indicators for goal 5. In the case of time-use surveys and surveys of violence against women, even when methodological standards already exist, it is necessary to update them and establish parameters that promote standardization of statistics and indicators. The advances and interests of the countries of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region make it pertinent to give attention to economic statistics with a gender approach, to entrepreneurship and to decision-making in households.

5. The development of capacity-building is needed to produce and promote knowledge. Also, the use of gender statistics is an area requiring strategic attention.

6. It is stressed that UNECE has defined its Road Map for Sustainable Development Statistics, and therefore gender statistics and indicators should be harmonized with this framework.

## **II. INTRODUCTION**

7. The Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) regularly reviews selected statistical areas in depth. The aim of the reviews is to improve coordination of statistical activities in the UNECE region, identify gaps or duplication of work, and address emerging issues. The review focuses on strategic issues and highlights concerns of statistical offices of both a conceptual and a coordinating nature. The current paper provides the basis for the review by summarizing the international statistical activities in the selected area, identifying issues and problems, and making recommendations on possible follow-up actions.

8. The CES Bureau selected gender statistics for an in-depth review at its meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, 14-15 February 2017. Mexico, through the National Institute of Statistics and Geography, volunteered to prepare the paper. The current paper provides the basis for the review by summarizing the international statistical activities in the area of gender statistics, identifying issues and problems, and making recommendations for possible follow-up actions.

9. This in-depth review of gaps in gender statistics has as background the paper ‘Gender statistics: progress being made by international organizations’ prepared by Italy and presented at the CES Bureau meeting in Helsinki, Finland, 18-19 October 2007<sup>1</sup>.

## **III. SCOPE OF THE STATISTICAL AREA COVERED**

10. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was agreed to in September 2015 by Heads of State and high-level representatives, and sets out a set of goals for combating inequalities and leaving no one behind. This 2030 Agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 associated targets and 232 unique indicators. The 14 indicators of goal 5 ‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’ are the scope of this review.

11. Follow-up of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires a solid framework of indicators and statistical data to monitor progress, inform policy and ensure accountability of all stakeholders. Hence, SDG indicators should be broken down,

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/bur/2007/mtg1/3.e.pdf>

where appropriate, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographical location, or other characteristics, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

12. The 2030 Agenda is a major challenge for National Statistical Offices and for national statistical systems more broadly, not only because of the demands created by the large number of indicators, but also because the proposed indicators present challenges of varying difficulty, both in the methodological aspects and in the availability of the data to calculate them. For this reason they are grouped into three tiers, as can be seen in the annex with specific reference to the indicators of goal 5. The methodological development and/or the design of the collection instruments is assigned to ‘custodian agencies’, international agencies with responsibility for specific indicators.

#### **IV. OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA**

##### **A. United Nations Statistics Division**

13. The United Nations Statistics Division has launched the Sustainable Development Goal indicators website, which is the dissemination platform of the Global SDG Indicators Database<sup>2</sup>. This platform provides access to data and metadata compiled through the UN System in preparation for the Secretary-General's annual report on ‘Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals’. It includes information about the work of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on the SDG Indicators. There are global data and metadata, the official list and tier classification of indicator.

##### **B. The Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS)**

14. The IAEG-GS is the coordinating and guiding body of the Global Gender Statistics Programme. It is serviced by the United Nations Statistics Division. It meets annually and functions through advisory groups. Products whose development it has overseen include *Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women*<sup>3</sup> published in 2014, and the *International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics*<sup>4</sup> published in 2016.

15. The IAEG-GS coordinates the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators<sup>5</sup> that serves as a guide for national production and international compilation of gender statistics. The Minimum Set of Gender Indicators is a collection of 52 quantitative indicators and 11 qualitative indicators addressing relevant issues related to gender equality and/or women's empowerment in five domains: Economic structures, participation in productive activities and access to resources; Education; Health and related services; Human rights of women and girls; and Public life and decision-making. The indicators are classified into three tiers, with the same criteria as those used for the SDG indicators.

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<sup>2</sup> Available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>

<sup>3</sup> Available at [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/docs/Guidelines\\_Statistics\\_VAW.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/docs/Guidelines_Statistics_VAW.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Available at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/time-use/icatus-2016/>

<sup>5</sup> The website for the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators is <https://genderstats.un.org/#/home>

16. The indicators of the Minimum Set were selected to monitor gender equality and women's empowerment. They were initially developed with reference to the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals and targets; as a next step they are being reviewed by an advisory group to assess their coherence with the SDG gender indicators and determine any need for changes. At the same time, their tier categorization is being reviewed. For example, the indicators related to time-use may soon be moved from tier II to tier I.

### **C. UN Women**

17. UN Women was established in July 2010 to lead and coordinate United Nations activities on gender equality issues. It merges and builds on the important work of four previously distinct bodies of the UN system, which focused exclusively on gender equality and women's empowerment: the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW); the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW); the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI); and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). UN Women works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls, empowerment of women, and achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

18. UN Women is designated as the responsible agency for monitoring several of the goal 5 indicators, either solely (indicators 5.c.1 and 5.5.1b) or in collaboration with other agencies (indicators 5.1.1, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.4.1, 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.a.1 and 5.a.2).

19. As one of the designated custodian agencies to monitor three tier III SDG indicators, UN Women works with its partners to develop methodological standards for those indicators. The indicators are the following:

- Indicator 5.1.1: Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex (with OECD Development Centre and World Bank);
- Indicator 5.5.1: Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments;
- Indicator 5.c.1: Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment (gender budgeting).

20. To develop methodological standards for each of these indicators, UN Women is taking the following steps: (i) commissioning a discussion paper on the concepts being measured; (ii) organizing a global workshop with national and international subject matter experts; (iii) developing guidelines and survey instruments; (iv) piloting data collection instruments; (v) conducting global and regional consultations to seek feedback from countries and ultimately validate the approach and results; and (vi) presenting the results to the IAEG-SDGs for approval and possible reclassification into tier II.

21. As of July 2017, steps (i) to (iv) have been completed for all three indicators. Between August and October, the consultations (i.e. step v) will take place. In November 2017, the results for all three indicators will be presented to the IAEG-SDGs (step vi). If the IAEG-SDGs is satisfied with the process and decides to reclassify the indicators to tier II, UN Women will work

with its partners to provide technical support to countries, including to produce technical notes and training packages to support the production of those indicators.

#### **D. International Labour Organization (ILO)**

22. The ILO Policy on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming supports a two approaches of gender mainstreaming: analyzing and addressing in all ILO initiatives the specific needs of both women and men; and targeted interventions to enable women and men to participate in and benefit equally from development efforts.

23. As mandated by the policy, the Action Plan seeks to help achieve, through a mainstreaming strategy, women's equality in work and their empowerment. These objectives are reflected in the cross-cutting nature of gender equality in accordance with recent ILO policy documents, such as the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the 2009 International Labour Conference (ILC) resolution on gender equality at the heart of decent work. Decent work, gender equality and non-discrimination also feature prominently in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its goals, targets and indicators.

24. In addition, it is important to highlight the relevance of the *Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization* issued at the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2013<sup>6</sup>, which extended the concept of work to include domestic and unpaid care work and to address the concept of total work. This Resolution is already providing a strong basis for the promotion of statistics that make unpaid household work visible.

#### **E. EUROSTAT**

25. The gender equality dataset published by Eurostat are one of two main strands of equality data (the other strand being those relating to age issues). The datasets: a) show how women and men are located in areas such as education, the labour market, earnings and social inclusion, childcare, health and information society; b) present a selection of Eurostat's sex-disaggregated data and link to further statistics, and c) were chosen based on European Union (EU) policy documents such as the strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015), the women's charter (2010) and the roadmap for equality between women and men (2006-2010).

26. The EU SDG indicator set was developed by the European Commission to monitor the Sustainable Development Goals in an EU context. This EU SDG indicator set received a favourable opinion by the European Statistical System Committee at its meeting on 17-18 May 2017.

#### **F. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**

27. The OECD Gender Initiative<sup>7</sup> examines existing barriers to gender equality in education, employment, and entrepreneurship. The OECD Gender Equality website monitors the progress made by governments to promote gender equality in both OECD and non- OECD countries and provides good practices based on analytical tools and reliable data.

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<sup>6</sup> Available at [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms\\_230304.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms_230304.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> More information is available at <http://www.oecd.org/gender/resources>

28. The OECD Gender Data Portal<sup>8</sup> includes selected indicators shedding light on gender inequalities in education, employment, entrepreneurship, governance, health and development, showing how far we are from achieving gender equality and where actions are needed. The data cover OECD member countries, as well as partner economies including Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, and South Africa.

#### **G. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

29. Gender equality and women's empowerment is central to FAO's work in eradicating hunger and poverty. FAO is the custodian agency for 21 SDG indicators, across SDGs 2, 5, 6, 12, 14 and 15, and a contributing agency for six more. Specifically in relation to goal 5, it is the custodian for indicators 5.a.1(a) (percentage of people with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land (out of total agricultural population), by sex); 5.a.1(b) (share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure); and 5.a.2 (percentage of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control)<sup>9</sup>.

30. The methodology for indicator 5.a.1 is based on the UN Methodological Guidelines on the Production of Statistics on Asset Ownership from a Gender Perspective, developed as part of Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) project<sup>10</sup>. FAO is working alongside partner agencies, in particular the custodian agencies for SDG indicator 1.4.2 concerned with secure land tenure rights, to ensure harmonization of the methodology of these two indicators and to develop a survey module that would permit collection of data for both indicators, which could be incorporated into internationally-sponsored surveys.

#### **V. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

31. The topics requiring the most immediate attention in order to improve the availability of data for the goal 5 indicators are:

- a) Time-use and unpaid work
- b) Violence against women

32. Topics which also merit further consideration in order to deepen the degree of gender mainstreaming throughout statistics include

- a) Economic statistics with a gender perspective
- b) Decision-making in the home

33. It is necessary to evaluate the relevance of the proposed disaggregations for the SDG indicators since the current availability of information, in general, seldom goes beyond the total national data.

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<sup>8</sup> Available at <http://www.oecd.org/gender/data/>

<sup>9</sup> Information about the work being done by FAO on these indicators is available at <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/5.a.1/en/> and <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/5.a.2/en/>, respectively.

<sup>10</sup> Information about the EDGE project can be found at <https://unstats.un.org/edge/>

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

34. The extent of development of statistics with a gender perspective since the 2007 review for the CES Bureau is remarkable. However, in light of the SDG indicator framework, a **strategy for further conceptual and methodological development** is needed.

35. It is advisable to **carry out a diagnosis of the statistical capacities of the countries**, since, given the commitments made by member countries with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals, it could be expected that improvements have been made in their production of statistics with a gender perspective.

**ANNEX: TIER CLASSIFICATION FOR GLOBAL SDG INDICATORS FOR GOAL 5 (AS OF APRIL 2017)<sup>11</sup>**

Target	Indicator	Possible Custodian Agency(ies)	Partner Agency(ies)	Tier Classification (by IAEG-SDG Members)	Notes (including timing of review and explanation for change in Tier)
<b>Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</b>					
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex	UN Women, World Bank, OECD Development Centre	OHCHR	<b>Tier III</b>	
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age	UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC	UNSD, UNDP	<b>Tier II</b>	
	5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence	UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC	UNSD, UNDP	<b>Tier II</b>	
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	UNICEF	WHO, UNFPA, UN Women, DESA Population Division	<b>Tier II</b>	IAEG-SDG 3rd meeting: Lack of sufficient data coverage

<sup>11</sup> Source: [https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/Tier%20Classification%20of%20SDG%20Indicators\\_20%20April%202017\\_web.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/Tier%20Classification%20of%20SDG%20Indicators_20%20April%202017_web.pdf)



Target	Indicator	Possible Custodian Agency(ies)	Partner Agency(ies)	Tier Classification (by IAEG-SDG Members)	Notes (including timing of review and explanation for change in Tier)
	5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age	UNICEF	UNFPA, WHO	<b>Tier II</b>	IAEG-SDG 3rd meeting: Lack of sufficient data coverage
5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate	5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location	UNSD UN Women		<b>Tier II</b>	
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	5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments	IPU, UN Women	World Bank	<b>Tier I (a)/ Tier III (b)</b>	
	5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions	ILO		<b>Tier I</b>	
5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care	UNFPA	UN Women	<b>Tier II</b>	IAEG-SDG 3rd meeting: There is an established methodology for the indicator
	5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education	UNFPA	UN Women, DESA Population Division	<b>Tier III</b>	UNSC 48 Refinement, Reviewed at 5th IAEG-SDG meeting; Internationally agreed methodology and standard to be developed (indicator in piloting stage of methodology development)

Target	Indicator	Possible Custodian Agency(ies)	Partner Agency(ies)	Tier Classification (by IAEG-SDG Members)	Notes (including timing of review and explanation for change in Tier)
5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure	FAO, UN Women, UNSD	UNEP, World Bank, UN-Habitat	Tier II	Fast Track; Reviewed at 5th IAEG-SDG meeting
	5.a.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control	FAO, World Bank, UN Women		Tier III	
5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women	5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex	ITU		Tier I	IAEG-SDG 3rd meeting: There is broad, global data coverage for this indicator
5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels	5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment	UN Women, OECD		Tier III	