

**Inter-Agency and Expert Group Meeting on the  
Development of Gender Statistics  
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**A user's perspective on key gaps in gender statistics and gender analysis \***

Prepared by  
Maria Jose Alcala  
UNFPA Technical Support Division

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**Key Points**  
**UNFPA Presentation - A User's Perspective on Key Gaps**  
**in Gender Statistics and Gender Analysis**

Presentation is **focused on a user's perspective on key data gaps and needs for gender analysis in the context of leading policy dialogues on poverty reduction and development.**

**Different uses and users** imply different dissemination strategies, formats, and levels of what and how data and data analysis is presented:

- For advocacy, to raise public awareness through the media;
- To influence policy development, legal reform and budget allocations in context of poverty reduction/MDGs;
- For programming, including to identify **especially vulnerable groups** – especially important within a human rights-based approach since it's often these groups who, though they live in poverty and exclusion, and have least opportunities to exercise their rights, tend to remain invisible/overlooked; and,
- **Accountability**, to monitor trends and fulfillment of commitments to gender equality.

UNFPA has been working at country levels to develop national data collection and systems capacities for decades, focused on population, gender equality, RH and development issues. This has included support to census exercises, DHS and other surveys, integrated Management Information Systems, and ongoing support to national statistics offices; as well as knowledge-sharing workshops among practitioners and development of some tools, in collaboration with other partners and UN agencies. In several countries we have support the publication of booklets based on census data, to make statistics on the situation of women and men easily available. And we're trying to build our own staff capacities: For example, we recently developed a knowledge-asset that includes a section on how to engender censuses.

We are looking at ways to systematically strengthen our role in improving availability of data for gender analysis in context of poverty reduction efforts. We are looking forward to the conclusions of this meeting, which will feed into our workplanning and strategies in this regard beginning in 2007.

**KEY GAPS – SELECTED ISSUES AND POPULATION GROUPS**

For the sake of brevity, focus is on **selected thematic areas and groups**. These are **key for the achievement of the MDGs**, poverty reduction and development, though they tend to be neglected or invisible in leading policy dialogues.

**Poverty:** An obvious priority is the need for data that will permit **gender analyses of poverty and mapping of especially vulnerable groups** at national, but especially sub-national levels. In the new aid environment, we need to have compelling gender statistics and analyses on hand to effectively influence the leading policy and budget frameworks – for example, Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAPs) in education, health and agricultural sectors, and Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS). Otherwise, gender issues will continue to be left out or receive only marginal support from national and donor budgets.

**Political and Economic Participation:** I will not expand on this area (covered by panelists), but reiterate the need for data on women's participation in decision-making (politics, corporate boardrooms, businesses/private sector, etc.); and issues of employment, pay, hiring and promotion, access and control

over economic assets, including credit/land/property/ inheritance rights; and issue of time use, to make visible women's multiple roles in unpaid work, household, reproductive and caretaking tasks.

**Gender-Based Violence:** Need for reliable, consistent and comparable data is well-known. And we need it to make a compelling case of what we already know: GBV cuts across the MDGs because of its multiple social and economic impacts. So we need more data, for example, that enables an analysis of how women's lack of economic autonomy and number and age of child (or other dependents in the household), correlate with situations of domestic abuse.

We also need data on the various forms of violence for evidence-based advocacy and progress on the policy front. For example, in India, UNFPA's and other partners' support to engendering the census enabled the launch sustained efforts on the issue of missing girls and prenatal sex selection, including through the media – by packaging analysis and advocacy materials on the topic. We need more data on sexual violence against young women and how it correlates with HIV in high-prevalence countries. These are just some examples.

**Boys and Men:** The role of boys and men in order to achieve the MDGs has received very little attention. It may seem obvious, but they are central across the MDGs, since they are the 'other half' of the gender equality equation. They impact on HIV, family planning and decisions at household levels that relate to maternal mortality and morbidity. They may impact on girls' and boys' access to education, but we don't necessarily have data to show this. Data on men has been especially absent in the area of population studies, with one exception – the analysis by AGI of DHS data on male sexual behaviour, including some alarming statistics on just how little access or knowledge of condoms men have in some of the poorest corners of the world. Socio-cultural qualitative indicators are needed across a range of issues.

In Latin America, UNFPA has recently been supporting some surveys on the perspectives of adolescent boys and men surrounding fatherhood, gender equality and sexual and reproductive health. They have included for example cross-tabulation of data and analysis according to men's educational status, age, and how these correspond to modern or traditional gender norms.

**Adolescents (10-19):** This is a priority group for poverty reduction, gender equality and the rest of the MDGs, including the targets on education, HIV and AIDS, and maternal and infant mortality. I understand progress is being made on this front, for example, at global UN inter-agency levels, in terms of developing social indicators on youth development. In Ecuador, for example, UNFPA helped to set up the 'SIJOVEN' data system on social indicators on youth, which facilitates gender analysis of the situation of this age group. We have also supported The Population Council's preparation of DHS analyses and reports in several countries focused on this age group, with a strong gender perspective. These are examples of how existing data can be packaged in useful ways for furthering policy dialogue.

A critical need is for more data and gender analysis on **early adolescents – the 10-14 age group**, including as it relates to maternal mortality, child marriage, and labour, among other issues. It is at this stage of life that gender-differentiated roles and opportunities can bifurcate sharply for girls and boys. We also need more data **disaggregated by age sub-groups**, that is, 10-14, 15-19, 20-24 for gender analysis.

**Other Especially Neglected Groups:** Improving data collection for gender analysis as it relates to specific groups, such as **migrants, indigenous peoples, and older women**. For example, in preparing UNFPA's State of World Population Report 2006 on **women and international migration**, we found

abysmal availability of comparable cross-country updated data and gender analyses, including, for example, relating to migration, gender and HIV. We should recall rights of migrants were part of the Millennium Declaration and their role in development has been widely recognized, including of women migrants, in the high-level General Assembly session on the topic earlier this year. Overall, there is limited availability and access to reliable data and analyses on the feminization of migration, including key issues in countries receiving large numbers of immigrants such as on sexual and reproductive health.

In Central and South America, where UNFPA has supported the creation of information systems and surveys focused on migrants, data is now available that is useful for gender analysis. For example, it helped provide comparative data on fertility patterns and family planning use; it showed that in several countries, a majority of migrant domestic workers within countries of the region were married women with children left behind in their countries of origin – a key policy issue but for which data elsewhere is very hard to find.

**Conflict and Post-conflict Settings:** Achieving the MDGs means investing in conflict and post-conflict countries. A good number of least developed countries are in or emerging from conflict and are priority countries for reducing extreme poverty. These are also countries in which half of the world's out of school children reside. The fact that many households will be headed by widows or young single mothers requires data analyses to understand their situation and challenges; their access to continued education, employment and income-earning options; and the number of dependents, disabled, ill, young or elderly, relying on them for survival. Data and gender analyses on these variables and groups are critical inputs for effective policy-making. Engendering census exercises in these countries is critical if proper policies are to be put in place, especially given women's roles as the backbone of reconstructing their societies and economies and building lasting peace.

**Emergency situations** in terms of **natural disasters** also require this type of data and gender analysis, to understand the gender-differentiated profiles of the population in crisis, bring out critical gender issues and draw attention and responses to address them. We know there are gender-differentiated impacts and burdens when disasters strike, but most evidence is anecdotal and we have little hard data.

**Balancing Productive and Reproductive Roles:** In our view, this is one of the most neglected gender issues. As women have entered the workforce in record numbers over the past few decades, little has been done to strike a better balance between productive and reproductive roles and a fair distribution of rights and responsibilities between men and women. This is highlighted by the fact that according to the Millennium Project's Gender Task Force, no country in the world – rich or poor – provides adequate day care support. This relates to data regarding both men and women, and the lack of policies, practices and supportive attitudes that would enable a better balance, as well as knowledge-base on the implications of the current situation for poverty reduction and development. For example, data that permits gender analysis based on sex of head of household, number of dependents under 5 years of age, occupational status, income level, and access/need for day care. UNFPA is working with partners in Latin America to support pioneering gender analysis and policy development in this area.

The above are some of the priority needs we feel as users of gender statistics. Some of these may already have data available, but not accessible; for others, entry points are available, but which are not systematically made use of. Existing census and surveys, such as DHS and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys/MICS, among several others, also provide valuable opportunities for collecting data on gender issues, including gender-based violence. Improving gender statistics implies involving gender experts from questionnaire design through to the development of gender-sensitive approaches and training and write-up of the analyses if the data and information is to be of good quality, reliable and useful. Where we have supported the application of the DHS module on domestic violence, for example, it's made a big difference in terms of being able to use the data in the press to raise public awareness and move the policy agenda forward. Recently, for example, a DHS module on fistulae has been developed by a global working group of partners working on the Campaign against fistulae.

In other cases, the solution may lie more in making existing data available – through its dissemination, how it is packaged for users, and taking into account whether it provides user-friendly gender analyses. It might also be interesting to look into how to make data analyses more widely available as reports focused on specific population groups, which facilitates advocacy, policy and programming.

The conclusions of this workshop should enable us all to respond more effectively in the countdown to the MDGs, and in particular, to the needs and rights of neglected groups of women and girls.

*Maria Jose Alcala*  
*Technical Advisor,*  
*Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*  
*Culture, Gender and Human Rights Branch*  
*Technical Support Division*  
*UNFPA – New York*