

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Inter-Agency and Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Gender Statistics

Date:	12-14 December 2006
Place:	New York
Host:	United Nations Statistics Division
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INTRODUCTION

Over the last 30 years, substantial effort and resources have been invested towards the development of gender statistics worldwide. With the support of international organizations and other development partners, national statistics offices and counterpart women's machineries, as well as gender advocates and researchers, have initiated programmes to mainstream gender statistics into the work of national governments. Notable progress has been achieved yet substantial gaps remain. According to a recent assessment¹, the availability of basic gender statistics has improved, but unevenly at the national and regional levels. Moreover, there are still critical areas of concern for gender equality, such as violence against women, time-use, decision-making, and poverty, for which little or no gender-sensitive conceptual and methodological guidelines are available.

PURPOSE

The United Nations Statistics Division, in collaboration with The World Bank and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), is convening an Inter-Agency and Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Gender Statistics to explore ways of strengthening collaboration and promoting partnerships among stakeholders in the development of gender statistics, including the identification of data needs and indicators for emerging policy goals. The meeting will review some of the key initiatives and strategies that have been most successful; identify specific programmes and products that have enhanced capacities at national and regional levels in the collection, compilation and dissemination of gender statistics; and agree on a plan to improve the availability, accessibility and use of reliable gender statistics for planning, monitoring and evaluation, at various levels, in particular at the national level.

KEY ISSUES

1. Review of effective strategies and approaches

Programmes and support by various stakeholders for the development of gender statistics have had varying degrees of success in improving the availability, quality and use of gender statistics, particularly at national level. Identifying those strategies that have been most successful is critical for mainstreaming gender into official statistics.

- o What are the notable achievements? How are they sustained or how can they be sustained?

¹ *The World's Women: Progress in Statistics*. United Nations publications, Sales no. E.05.XVII.7.

- Which gender statistics programmes/projects have been institutionalized? What specific actions assured this outcome?
- Which tools and materials have been used for training?
- What data dissemination strategies are being implemented by agencies and national offices to enhance the accessibility of gender statistics?
- What can we learn from those experiences? What made them successful?

2. Defining initiatives for advancing gender statistics

Although considerable improvements have been made in the production of gender statistics, the demand for those statistics is not being adequately met. Statistics and indicators are not being compiled and disseminated regularly in formats and media that are suitable for the wide range of audiences. Moreover, gender statistics are not available for some fundamental policy goals, such as poverty reduction, which is currently a part of the development strategy of many countries. There are lessons to be drawn not only from past gender programmes but also from other statistics programmes, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Three main pillars in a plan for advancing gender statistics to be considered are:

Mainstreaming gender into statistics for a selected policy area

- What are the major issues on the national and international development agenda, e.g., MDGs, poverty reduction, etc.?
- How is gender being factored into the poverty reduction strategy programmes (PRSPs) for national development? What are the data needs? What technical materials and research on the related concepts and methods are required?

Increasing accessibility and use of gender statistics

- What are the challenges to providing quick and easy access to gender statistics for a wide range of non-technical users? How can these challenges be addressed?
- What data initiatives are international agencies currently implementing? In what areas can inter-agency collaboration and coordination enhance the expected results?
- How can the advantages of the DevInfo platform be best utilized to expand access and use of gender statistics? In what ways can the tool be used to meet data needs of key stakeholders and to build national capacity in the use of gender statistics?

Knowledge management and information sharing

- What are some effective ways of exchanging knowledge and information within and among countries, agencies and other stakeholders?
- How can the adoption and application of available tools and materials in national gender statistics programmes be realized?

3. The way forward

The conclusions of *The World's Women: Progress in Statistics* suggest that more needs to be done for gender to be mainstreamed into official statistics. The separate and often disparate efforts of the many national and international actors have generated numerous products (tools, materials and activities) but with limited impact.

- What can agencies do differently to ensure more far-reaching results and greater benefit to countries?
- What role should NSOs play in promoting the mainstreaming of gender statistics into national development planning?
- Would it be useful to agree on minimum set of goals and targets to be met for gender statistics?
- What types of partnerships should be established? Where do the comparative advantages lie? How should responsibilities be divided?
- What other considerations would be needed?