

## Preface

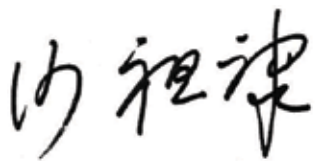
The Beijing Platform for Action – the pre-eminent international guideline for improving the status of women – lists, among others, specific activities related to increased availability of sex-disaggregated data. It was expected that these activities would start showing results with the passage of time. Indeed, in some areas of statistics, we are witnessing an increased stock of available statistics, such as on work and education. However, the availability of gender statistics is still sporadic and weak in many countries and areas of the world, thus limiting the comprehensive statistical analysis of social phenomena and the status of women and men.

The conceptual approach of *The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics* is in line with those published since 1991 – to present and analyse statistics on the status of women. It highlights the differences between the status of women and men in various areas of contemporary life; statistics on men figure as prominently as statistics on women.

Eight key areas are covered: population and families, health, education, work, power and decision-making, violence against women, environment and poverty. In each of these areas, statistics were identified, compiled, processed and analyzed, bringing to light findings on the differences between the status of girls and boys, women and men. All efforts were made to make these findings easy to interpret, with the extensive use of graphical presentation and non-technical language.

*The World's Women 2010* is accompanied by a comprehensive website hosted by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The website displays the full range of statistics used for preparing the present publication, as well as links to numerous sources of gender statistics and references to international, regional and national compilations of relevant data.

It is my hope that the present publication will be used to advance an enabling social and economic environment that will ensure equal treatment of all women and men and significantly improve the status of women in the world. It should also serve as a model for similar statistical profiles for countries, areas, regions and provinces, thus supporting the development of policies to implement a basic United Nations principle: gender equality.



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