

**Strengthening national statistical capacities for bridging gender data gap for sustainable development**

After the adoption of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979, there has been a concerted effort on the part of countries to remove discrimination against women. To measure the effect of policies and programmes, the committee to monitor the implementation of CEDAW recommended that all censuses and surveys should collect gender-related information. Later, UN Statistical Commission in 2013 came up with a minimum set of 52 quantitative indicators and 11 qualitative indicators on five domains: economic structures and access to resources, education, health and related services, public life and decision making and human rights of women and children.

Many of the minimum set of indicators got included for tracking progress on the achievement of MDGs. Now with SDG monitoring being an important agenda for the statistics community, there has been an emphasis on the need for quality statistical information on a wide range of issues including gender disparity. Indicators for measurement of gender disparity are spread across many goals.

Capacity development of the countries to produce and use gender-related statistics has been improving over the years. There has been collection, compilation and analysis of most of the data from censuses and surveys. However, there are areas where there is still a need to develop capacity to undertake some specialized surveys. Most important of these may be related to time use, human rights of women and specially violence against women and also related, with a gender focus, to environment and climate change. There are many similar topical issues on which there is a need for a regular flow of information.

Data collection on many gender-related issues requires adequate sensitivity on the part of data collection agencies. Cultural context of a country plays an important role in the collection of gender-related data.

Communication of gender-related statistics has an important role for policy formulation and consensus building. Effective communication with policy makers, civil service organizations, citizen's groups is crucial.

There are two important issues for capacity development. First, statistical offices will have to bridge the data gap by adopting suitable statistical processes. Secondly, there is a need to sensitize and train all the concerned parties in use of statistical information.