

Measuring women's political participation using electoral administrative sources: The case of SDG indicator 5.5.1b

A side event at the 7th Global Forum on Gender Statistics, Tokyo, 14-16 November 2018

CONCEPT NOTE

Context. Women's political participation at local level is an undermeasured area of official statistics. Although a great deal of relevant data are produced by Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) or equivalent bodies tasked with organizing elections at local level, this administrative source of data has not been fully exploited by the statistical community. As a result, the global monitoring of women's political participation has been limited to the representation in national decision-making bodies whose small number of members are easier to count, including women in parliaments (SDG indicator 5.5.1a) and women ministries (an indicator in the United Nations Minimum Set of Gender Indicators). In the meantime, millions of women and men members of local governments have remained uncounted.

This major data gap is being addressed through the inclusion of the indicator 5.5.1b on women's representation in local government in the SDG global monitoring framework. The indicator is under the custody of UN Women and currently classified as Tier II. Its preferred source of data is the low-cost administrative data on election results supplied by EMBs. Using data produced by EMBs is rather straightforward: the conceptual framework used for electoral processes is the same as the conceptual framework used to generate statistics, therefore, unlike other administrative sources of data, no additional work is needed to translate information collected for administrative purposes into information needed for statistical purposes. The official election results disseminated by the EMBs must be reflected, unadjusted, in the calculation of the indicator SDG 5.5.1b.

However, institutional and technical challenges may exist in some countries. A successful monitoring of SDG indicator 5.5.1b as well as other dimensions of political participation requires that the EMBs have an explicit mandate and technical capacity to produce and disseminate simple statistical summaries on women and men voters, candidates and winners of elections. A strong partnership between the EMBs and NSOs is also needed, to ensure the integration of the production and analysis of data on political participation within the national system of statistics, data dissemination to a wide range of users, and data use for policy-making.

Objectives. This side event provides a forum to discuss these key aspects of measuring and monitoring women's political participation and the SDG indicator 5.5.1b, including (1) the national production of data using electoral administrative sources; (2) partnerships between National Statistical Offices and Electoral Management Bodies; and (3) institutional and capacity building activities needed to improve the availability and use of data.

Format of the event. The event will feature a background presentation on the topic, delivered by UN Women, and a set of interventions from a panel of specialists from the Statistics Divisions of UN Regional Commissions, National Statistical Offices and Electoral Management Bodies.

Date and time. Friday 16 November 2018, 7:00 - 8:45 AM.

Venue. Asakusa View Hotel, 3rd floor, Room "SHOUN I".

Details on the agenda will follow.