ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Session 1: Introduction to gender statistics

Regional perspectives on mainstreaming gender in official statistics in Asia and the Pacific

Rachael Beaven

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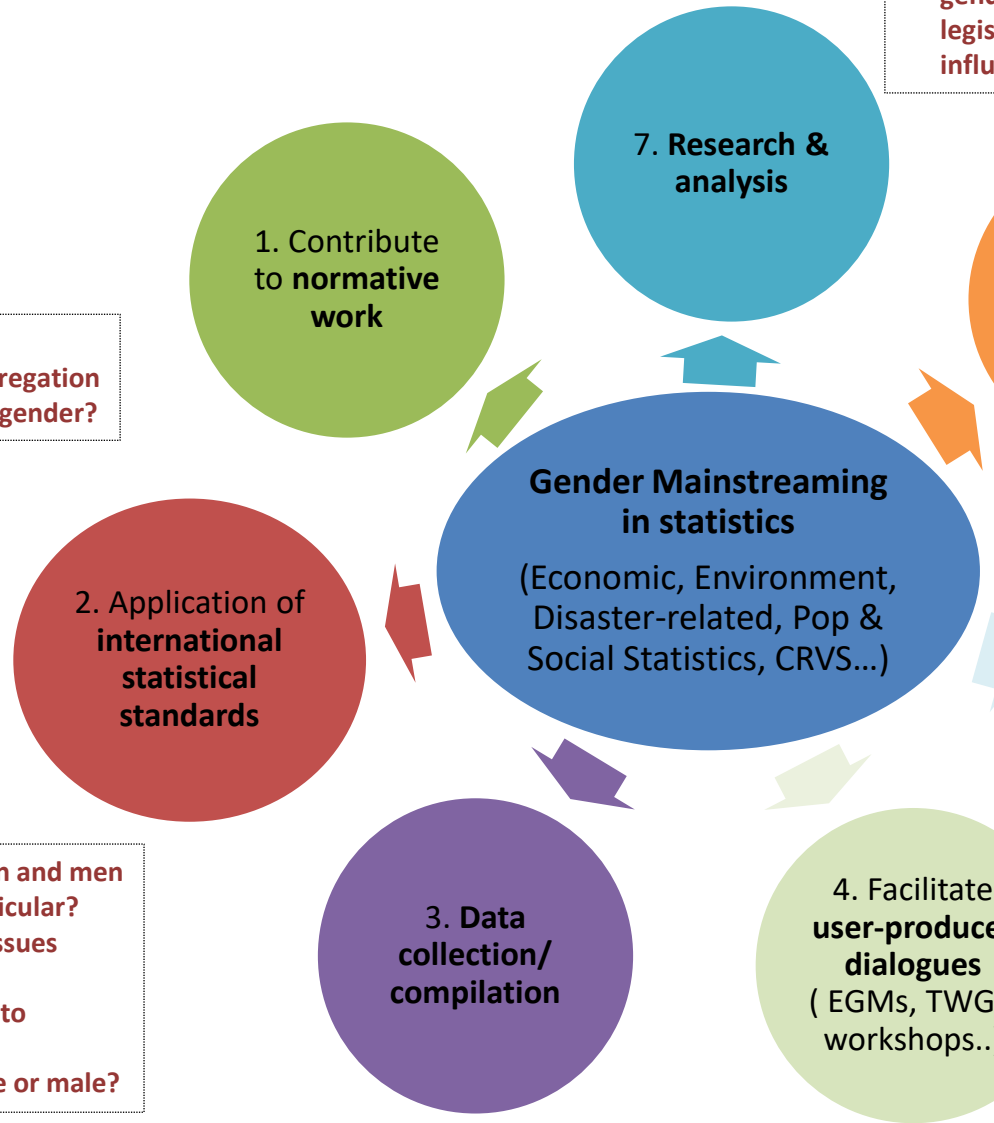
Institutional policies, leadership commitment, accountability mechanisms, resource allocation

- ESCAP integrates a gender perspective into strategic planning, programme design, budgeting, M&E processes
- Guided by Gender Equality Policy and implementation plan
- From overarching institutional commitment to sector-specific objectives, activities, indicators, and outcomes that address distinct gender dimensions:
  - Subprogramme on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
  - Statistics Division, guided by Committee on Statistics -- Enhance national statistical capacities to produce, disseminate and communicate statistical products and services, **including but not limited to gender-sensitive and sex-disaggregated data and statistics**
- Consistency, coherence, and accountability to meet broader gender equality goals

Operationalizing gender mainstreaming in official statistics in Asia-Pacific



- ✓ What sector and sector classifications and disaggregation elements are relevant to gender?
- ✓ What types of issues affect women and men differently/women or men in particular?
- ✓ Are there any underlying gender issues (even if not explicit)?
- ✓ Who should be interviewed in HH to capture these issues?
- ✓ Should the enumerators be female or male?
- ✓ Think about possible social and gender norms, stereotypes, existing legislative frameworks that may be influence the findings and analysis
- ✓ What are the gender-relevant disaggregated variables of interest?
- ✓ What gender-sensitive messages can be disseminated for policy?
- ✓ What is the demand for gender data from policy-makers/users
- ✓ What are the target groups of interest and their intersectional identities?
- ✓ Who are the gender actors - that should be engaged?

Mainstreaming gender in data use: generic approach

User-producer dialogues to identify gender-relevant priorities (existing policy documents/common knowledge)

Corresponding gender indicators

Existing data: At the minimum disaggregated by sex; also capturing gender norms/stereotypes/relations etc.

Analysis that reflects gender differences, unique issues faced by women/men, or underlying gender issues though not explicit

Gender-sensitive policy implications/recommendations

Gender-responsive policy/programmatic interventions

Mainstreaming Gender in Environment and Climate Change Statistics

Countries

- Fiji
- Philippines
- Indonesia

Challenges

- Data availability gaps
- Fragmented data sources
- Limited data sharing/ coordination hurdles
- Capacity constraints

Approach

- Multistakeholder consultation engaging gender-relevant actors
- Unpacked gender considerations in relevant national policy
- Identification of relevant gender indicators from international/regional sets
- Integrated analysis using existing data (household survey data/admin data)
- Production of knowledge resource highlighting gender-relevant policy messages

Indicators

- Aisa-Pacific regional core set of gender-environment indicators, UN Women & ESCAP 2023
- UN Women 100 indicators on measuring the gender-environment nexus
- SDG framework
- Global Set of Climate Change Indicators
- Sendai framework
- Etc.

Gender-Environment-Climate Change Nexus: Fiji

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Aim

How energy choices for household use affect women, men, and vulnerable groups in Fiji

Approach

- Structured mapping of environmental, social, economic and gender issues in the national goal on "Cut emissions, provide clean energy, and phase out fossil fuels"
- Integrated analysis of existing data, using particularly the 2019–2020 Household Income and Expenditure Survey.

Findings

1

OVER HALF (53%) of women live in households using unclean fuels, such as kerosene and firewood.

2

URBAN-RURAL DIVIDE: only 20% of rural households use clean fuels compared to 80% of urban households

3

WEALTH DISPARITIES: Only 8% of poorest households use clean fuels compared to 34% among the richest households.

Implications for gender policy

- Women's access to and affordability of clean cooking fuels
- Women/girls' disproportionate vulnerability to indoor air pollution
- Intra-household decision-making dynamics on energy use choices
- Unpaid labour burden of women

Use of existing civil registration data towards gender-sensitive policy in Fiji and Bangladesh

Aim

- Intersectional identities of adolescent mothers (10-19 years) and insights into implications on child well-being, including timely birth registration of their children
- Highlight the consequences of child marriage and burden on health systems due to adolescent pregnancy
- Understand contraceptive behavior among married female adolescents and unmet need among them
- Insights on autonomy of young women and girls in decision-making about the timing of motherhood

Mainstreaming Gender in CRVS: E2A

Approach

Fiji

- Unit record birth registration data for 2016-2019 (by year of birth) obtained from the Civil Registry
- Synthesized with MICS 2021 data for access to modern methods of contraception and adolescent motherhood by urban/rural area and by wealth quintile
- **INDICATORS:** (1) Number of births to adolescent mothers (10-19 years); (2) Adolescent fertility rates (15-19 years, disaggregated by ethnicity and marital status

Bangladesh

- Data from the Sample Vital Registration System (SVRS) 2022 was used
- Birth module and contraceptive use module administered to ever married women aged between 15 to 49 years and from among them, adolescent women aged 10-19 years were considered for the analysis
- **INDICATORS:** (1) Age Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR) among married female adolescents aged 10-19 years (2) Unmet need for family planning among married adolescent girls, aged 15-19 years

Mainstreaming Gender in CRVS : E2A

Policy briefs highlighting the gender-relevant aspects and policy implications

Fiji

1. **ETHNICITY:** Adolescent fertility steadily increased among girls in both ethnic groups (iTaukei and non-iTaukei)
2. **WOMEN'S LOCATION & WEALTH QUINTILE:** It was higher for the indigenous iTaukei group in the poorest wealth quintile and in rural areas
3. **MARITAL STATUS & UNMET NEED:** Most adolescent mothers of iTaukei children were single or unmarried and there was unmet need for contraception among unmarried sexually active adolescent girls

Bangladesh

1. **RURAL-URBAN:** Fertility rate among rural adolescents was almost double that among urban adolescents
2. **AGE: A**dolescents (aged 15-19 years) had a higher unmet need for family planning (34%) compared to adult women (aged 20-49 years)
3. **GEOGRAPHICAL VARIATION:** in fertility rates, unmet need as well as no unmet need for family planning among adolescent mothers from different administrative divisions

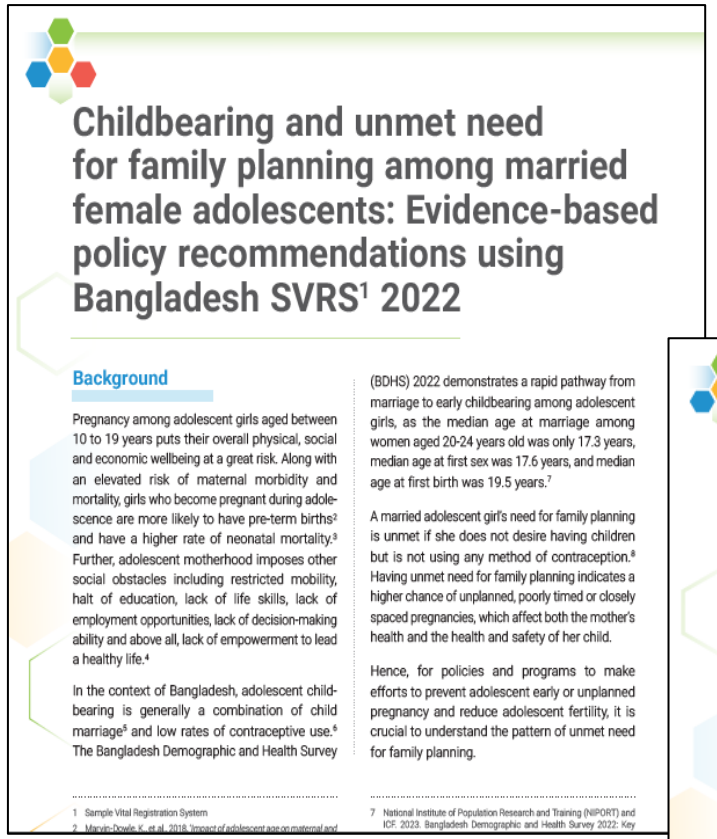
Intersectional identities of mothers, beyond age disaggregation

-> insights into barriers to timely child birth registration and unmet need for family planning

Mainstreaming Gender in CRVS : E2A

Gender policy implications

- Strengthening content and quality of sexual and reproductive health curriculum for high school students
- Organizing awareness campaigns on the negative impact of child marriage and adolescent pregnancy e.g. through family planning workers at the grassroot level and pre-marital counselling services
- Training healthcare workers on providing non-judgmental/confidential reproductive health services and access to family planning
- Mobile registration facilities for better access by young mothers



Childbearing and unmet need for family planning among married female adolescents: Evidence-based policy recommendations using Bangladesh SVRS[1] 2022

Background

Pregnancy among adolescent girls aged between 10 to 19 years puts their overall physical, social and economic wellbeing at a great risk. Along with an elevated risk of maternal morbidity and mortality, girls who become pregnant during adolescence are more likely to have pre-term births[2] and have a higher rate of neonatal mortality.[3] Further, adolescent motherhood imposes other social obstacles including restricted mobility, halt of education, lack of life skills, lack of employment opportunities, lack of decision-making ability and above all, lack of empowerment to lead a healthy life.[4]

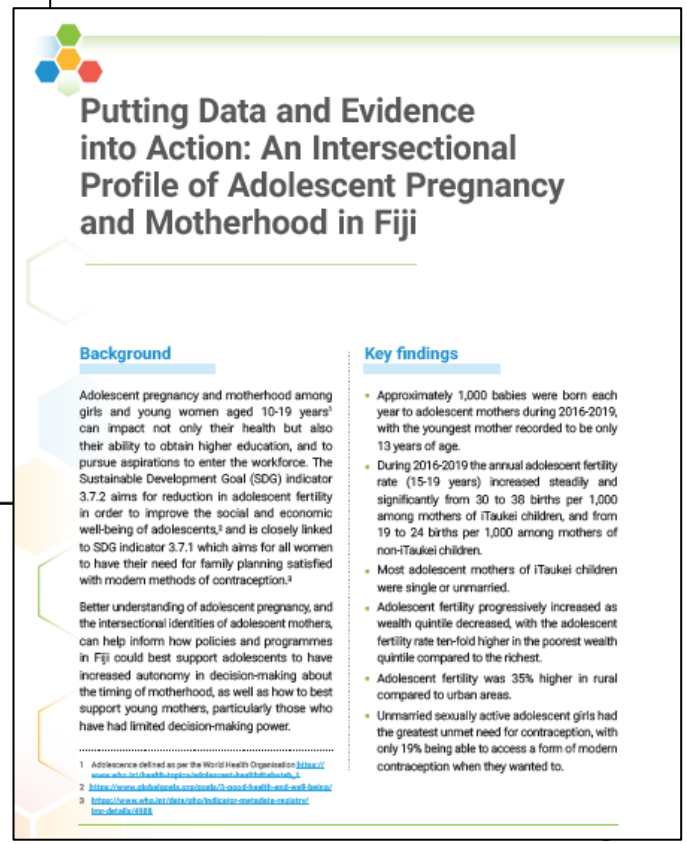
In the context of Bangladesh, adolescent childbearing is generally a combination of child marriage[5] and low rates of contraceptive use.[6] The Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS) 2022 demonstrates a rapid pathway from marriage to early childbearing among adolescent girls, as the median age at marriage among women aged 20-24 years old was only 17.3 years, median age at first sex was 17.6 years, and median age at first birth was 19.5 years.[7]

A married adolescent girl's need for family planning is unmet if she does not desire having children but is not using any method of contraception.[8] Having unmet need for family planning indicates a higher chance of unplanned, poorly timed or closely spaced pregnancies, which affect both the mother's health and the health and safety of her child.

Hence, for policies and programs to make efforts to prevent adolescent early or unplanned pregnancy and reduce adolescent fertility, it is crucial to understand the pattern of unmet need for family planning.

1 Sample Vital Registration System

7 National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT) and ICF. 2023. Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2022: Key



Putting Data and Evidence into Action: An Intersectional Profile of Adolescent Pregnancy and Motherhood in Fiji

Background

Adolescent pregnancy and motherhood among girls and young women aged 10-19 years[1] can impact not only their health but also their ability to obtain higher education, and to pursue aspirations to enter the workforce. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 3.7.2 aims for reduction in adolescent fertility in order to improve the social and economic well-being of adolescents,[2] and is closely linked to SDG indicator 3.7.1 which aims for all women to have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods of contraception.[3]

Better understanding of adolescent pregnancy, and the intersectional identities of adolescent mothers, can help inform how policies and programmes in Fiji could best support adolescents to have increased autonomy in decision-making about the timing of motherhood, as well as how to best support young mothers, particularly those who have had limited decision-making power.

1 Adolescence defined as per the World Health Organization https://www.who.int/health-topics/adolescent-health#tab=tab_1

2 https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/3-good-health-and-well-being/

3 https://www.who.int/data/gho/indicator-metadata-registry/imr-details/4988

Key findings

- Approximately 1,000 babies were born each year to adolescent mothers during 2016-2019, with the youngest mother recorded to be only 13 years of age.
- During 2016-2019 the annual adolescent fertility rate (15-19 years) increased steadily and significantly from 30 to 38 births per 1,000 among mothers of iTaukei children, and from 19 to 24 births per 1,000 among mothers of non-iTaukei children.
- Most adolescent mothers of iTaukei children were single or unmarried.
- Adolescent fertility progressively increased as wealth quintile decreased, with the adolescent fertility rate ten-fold higher in the poorest wealth quintile compared to the richest.
- Adolescent fertility was 35% higher in rural compared to urban areas.
- Unmarried sexually active adolescent girls had the greatest unmet need for contraception, with only 19% being able to access a form of modern contraception when they wanted to.

Mainstreaming Gender in CRVS : Other initiatives

- **CRVS inequality assessments:**
  - Groups of children are most likely to be left unregistered by examining disparities across factors such as sex, geography, ethnicity, disability, household wealth, and maternal characteristics.
  - Examines how gender-related barriers - including the characteristics and status of mothers, female-headed households, and intersecting vulnerabilities affecting women and girls - can influence birth registration outcomes and access to rights and services.
  - Bhutan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Samoa,

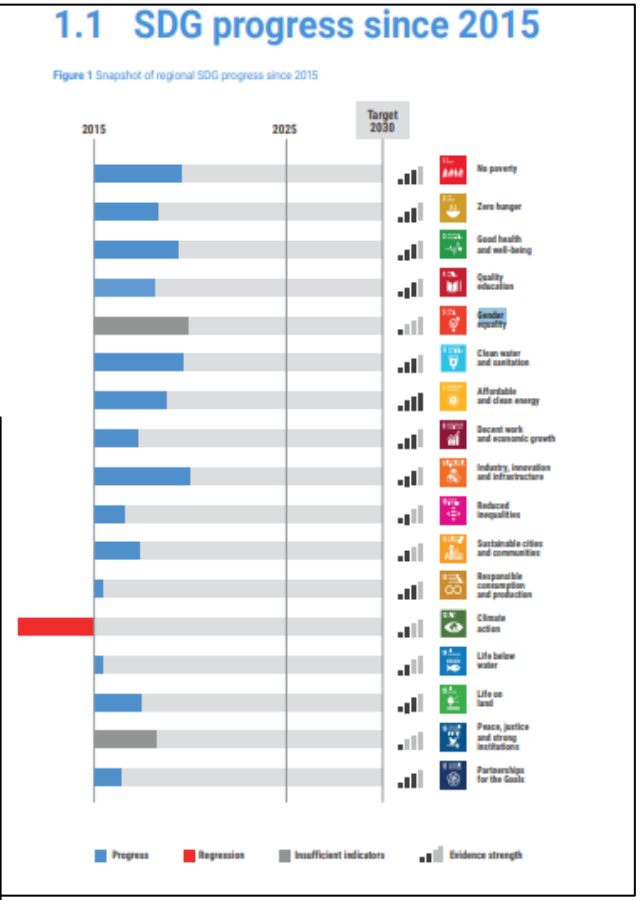
- **CRVS Applied Research Training (CART) Initiative:**
  - Building national research capacity to analyse gender specific barriers to birth, marriage and death registration and to generate policy relevant evidence

- **CRVS Research Forum (annual):**
  - Convened researchers and practitioners globally to share findings on inclusion, gender norms and administrative barriers affecting women and girls

- **Collaboration with global experts and national stakeholders:**
  - Ensure research leads to practical CRVS reforms that strengthen women's legal identity, access to services and visibility in official statistics

Gender-relevant messaging in the Asia-Pacific SDG report 2026

- Assesses progress across the 17 SDGs and identifies persistent gaps and inequalities.
- Specifically notes that Gender Equality (SDG 5) remains an area with significant data gaps.
- Highlights widening inequalities in the region and calls for more inclusive development pathways.
- Examines key development transitions - such as education, social protection and digital connectivity - that have important implications for gender equality.



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