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**Interagency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics  
13 December 2007  
Rome, Italy**

**Report of the Interagency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics\***

## Summary of Discussion

1. UNSD started the meeting with a presentation on the Global Programme on Gender Statistics. The group expressed support for the Programme and welcomed the plan to bring gender statistics to the attention of the Statistical Commission in 2009. It was noted that the Global Programme presents an opportunity to forge partnerships between UNSD, other UN agencies and regional commissions, as well as other development partners and promote the harmonization of activities in the area of gender statistics worldwide. It was also agreed that a broader Global Programme, taking into consideration the work of other organizations and emerging topics such as economic characteristics, will be developed following a survey of activities in the area of gender statistics to be conducted by UNSD.
2. Participants discussed the importance of surveying existing initiatives in the area of gender statistics to better tailor the activities to be carried out as part of the Programme and to help avoid duplication of efforts. Such a survey could also be used to collect best practices and harmonize activities globally.
3. Participants also supported the idea of a virtual library or portal to serve as a depository for statistics and other materials related to gender statistics. ESCWA described their virtual library and agreed to share their framework with the group.
4. The second agenda item was gender statistics training and curricula development. UNDP, World Bank Institute (WBI) and ECE presented their training programmes which were well received by the group. The UNDP project focuses on educating government staff and civil society to use statistics, particularly microdata, for policy advice and advocacy. The importance of protecting confidentiality in the release and use of microdata was acknowledged. The WBI and ECE joint programme focuses on training national trainers in various aspects of the production and dissemination of gender statistics.
5. UNSD gave a brief presentation on its activities in training and proposed future directions. Participants recognized the centrality of training to build capacity in gender statistics and welcomed UNSD's proposed activities in this area. The ensuing discussion focused on the importance of assessing training needs, identifying the target audience, and modalities for training and curricula. It was pointed out that training should be geared towards high-level decision-makers and whole departments to promote gender mainstreaming and to limit the loss of knowledge as a result of staff mobility or turn-over. In this regard, some members noted that global training activities should be geared at training trainers who can, in turn, train more people in their offices and/or countries.

6. Participants noted that legislation for the development of national gender statistics is needed to create an enabling environment for the development of national gender statistics.
7. India offered their academy in New Delhi as a repository for training material and as a facility to provide training. Malawi noted the importance of training on gender analysis, a sentiment that was echoed by other participants. Jordan suggested distributing a questionnaire to all countries to determine what their training priorities are.
8. The third and final agenda item was the global gender indicators database. OECD presented their work in developing an indicator on social institutions, and on a wiki interactive webpage for discussion of topics related to gender equality including gender statistics. The group recognized the potential of such an interactive platform for exchanging ideas. At the same time, some participants expressed concern over the idea of using a wiki approach for the dissemination of official statistics.
9. UNSD gave a brief presentation on the background of the global database and key decision points for the group to address. Some of the areas addressed in the discussion included the importance of establishing a minimum set of gender statistics and indicators that countries should be able to produce and for which agencies can be identified as official providers, as well as the importance of establishing data exchange protocols with data providing agencies to ensure the long-term sustainability of the global database.
10. Participants also noted the need to carefully consider the key data sources to be used, bearing in mind the distinction between international and country data, as well as the need for a transparent data selection and representation process.
11. DAW submitted a statement supporting the Global Programme on Gender Statistics and emphasizing the importance of linking gender statistics to CSW and CEDAW. Specifically DAW encourages active participation of the IAEG in CSW through the organization of side events and/or the contribution of a position paper on gender statistics. DAW also suggests the IAEG take into consideration the priority themes of CSW in planning and implementation of the Global Programme. DAW also recommends the development of a gender statistics manual for parliamentarians in collaboration with IPU.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **General**

12. The Group welcomed the UNSD proposed Global Programme on Gender Statistics, noting the importance of strengthening the collaboration among

stakeholders in order to advance gender statistics at the global, regional and national levels.

13. The World Bank suggested that a policy-led approach to determining new priority areas should be considered. This would involve identifying the key policy areas first and then determining the types of data needed to inform policy. A good example of this is recent developments in the area of gender based violence in light of the recent General Assembly resolution on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women (A/RES/61/143). The Group also noted that for the 2008-2009 period, the Global Programme on Gender Statistics should focus on key areas highlighted at the Forum, such as gender-based violence and time-use, for which activities are currently being conducted at the national and/or regional levels. In this regard, some members of the Group recommended that global guidelines be developed for collecting data on gender based violence.
14. It was agreed that UNSD should conduct a survey of current and future planned activities in the area of gender statistics to inform planning for the activities in the Global Programme on Gender Statistics. This survey would also be a means of identifying good practices, avoiding duplication of efforts, and improving international collaboration and harmonization of activities.
15. The group agreed that “Engendering Statistics: A Tool for Change” is a useful tool for international harmonization of gender statistics and that a revised version of it should be issued as a UN publication. Statistics Sweden offered to contribute to its revision and production.
16. The Group considered the request by the United States and the Conference of European Statisticians to avoid the use of the words “engendering” and “sensitization” in relation to the Global Programme on Gender Statistics. It was agreed that Sweden would draft a response and circulate it to the Group.
17. UNSD agreed to circulate a draft of the Global Programme on Gender Statistics for input by the IAEG members.

### **Training and Curricula**

18. The Group agreed to form an advisory group on training and curricula. The advisory group is to provide guidance to UNSD on the development and conduct of training activities at the global, regional and national levels in order to promote gender mainstreaming into official statistics. The group welcomed the proposed terms of reference for the advisory group.
19. The Group supported continuing training on thematic issues such as access to resources, time use, and other emerging topics. The group suggested that an

assessment of training needs be conducted among NSOs in order to ensure that training activities address country needs.

20. The Group also proposed the drafting of a “code of conduct” or Guiding Principles of Statistical Training as a means to promote gender mainstreaming into regular statistical training.
21. India agreed to chair the advisory group for a 2-year term. The group also includes the United States of America, Sweden, Ghana, the World Bank, UNDP, UNIFEM, ESCAP/ECE and ECOWAS.

### **International Gender Database**

22. The group agreed to form an advisory group on developing and maintaining an international database on gender statistics. Mexico tentatively agreed to chair for a two-year term. Membership also includes Canada, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Philippines, World Bank, ESCWA, ECLAC, and UNIFEM.
23. It was also recommended all the data compilers i.e, UNESCO, ILO, IPU, ITU, etc, be incorporated into the group and that data exchange and update protocols be established with all data providers.
24. Some of the areas to be addressed by the advisory group as suggested by the IAEG-GS include:
  - a. Review the selection of indicators, keeping in mind that data availability may not be sufficient criteria to include or exclude an indicator.
  - b. Review similar initiatives at the regional level and explore possible linkages with the global database.
  - c. Explore the possibility of including qualitative indicators (UNIFEM volunteered to work with DAW to explore a pilot study of extracting legislative information from CEDAW reports)
  - d. Explore possible links to the CSW and CEDAW.

### **Next Steps/Follow-up**

25. The IAEG called for the second Global Forum on Gender Statistics to be held the first week of November 2008 in Ghana. Ghana agreed to chair the IAEG for a 2-year term. The IAEG agreed to consult prior to the Forum on the concept note and agenda and meet again following the Forum. The following topics were suggested for the next Forum:
  - a. Statistics (including economic statistics) for responding to monitoring requirements especially the demands on gender networks, for MDG,

PRSPs, Financing for Development, fiscal space and national sustainable development strategies

- b. The implications for gender analysis and advocacy of not having data.
  - c. Mainstreaming gender in NSOs.
  - d. Time use surveys.
26. The IAEG will present key issues in gender statistics to the Statistical Commission in 2009 for support and action.
27. UNSD will provide terms of reference to the chairs of the two advisory groups for consideration.