

**United Nations Secretariat**

**Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

**Statistics Division**

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14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics

Virtual 3-4 and 7 December 2020

**Meeting Report\***

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\* This document was formulated without formal editing.

## **Background, objectives and organization of the meeting**

Established in 2006, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS) is composed of subject-matter experts from national, regional and international statistical offices, gender policy experts and other stakeholders. Mandated by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) to guide and coordinate the Global Gender Statistics Programme, the IAEG-GS holds annual meetings to take stock of international methodological developments to fill in gender data gaps; assess data availability and progress towards gender equality in countries; harmonize/align existing international gender statistics programmes; and improve coherence among ongoing and planned initiatives geared at advancing gender statistics, through international coordination to avoid duplication of efforts.

The members of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS) convened for the 14<sup>th</sup> annual meeting virtually on 3-4 and 7 December 2020. The meeting was organized by the Social and Gender Statistics Section of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). The specific objectives of the meeting were to:

- a. To inform IAEG-GS members and get their feedback on advances in international methods and standards to produce gender statistics in time of crises, namely in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- b. To update IAEG-GS members on progress made by the Advisory Groups on their respective workstreams and discuss about future steps;
- c. To facilitate (i) country-country exchange of good practices and lessons learned and (ii) country-agency understanding of needs and priorities;
- d. To inform IAEG-GS members about and improve coherence among existing and/or planned global initiatives in gender statistics;
- e. To take stock of improvements in communicating gender data and statistics and brainstorm on the use of geocoded data to tell gender stories;
- f. Report and discuss some of the key findings from *The World's Women 2020*;
- g. Review ongoing initiatives implemented by regional and international organizations and plans for future work relevant to the Global Gender Statistics Programme to enhance coordination; and
- h. Agree on the IAEG-GS' annual work plan for 2021.

The meeting brought together 92 national, regional and international experts working in the area of gender statistics. Participants included 34 experts from 19 national statistical offices (Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Finland, Georgia, Ghana, India, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, South Africa, Switzerland, Uganda, United States, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe), 10 experts from five Regional Commissions (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA), 39 experts from 14 international organizations (FAO, ILO, OECD Development Centre, OECD/Paris21, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO-UIS, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNPD, UN Women, WHO and the World Bank), one expert from Data2X/UN Foundation, and one expert from the University of Bristol. In addition, 7 experts from UNSD, the Secretariat of the IAEG-GS, participated in the meeting. See Annex 1 for the full list of participants.

The meeting was held virtually and in accordance with the sequence listed on the agenda (see Annex 2), and it was facilitated by UNSD and the IAEG-GS' co-chairs, Mr. Akira Tsumura from the Ministry of

Internal Affairs and Communications of the Government of Japan and Ms. Marjut Pietiläinen from Statistics Finland, who also delivered opening and closing remarks, respectively.

## **I. Methodological developments in gender statistics in the context of COVID-19**

1. Statistics Canada presented the work of the Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time-Use Statistics (EG-TUS) regarding the Assessment of Time Use during COVID-19. The presentation summarized the work of the Expert Group in developing a tool to assess time use in time of crisis, the limitations of the tool and work that remains before it is finalized. It was indicated that although measuring the impact of COVID-19 is important, there are no prior tools and experience on how to and what to measure. The tool is intended to gather information, such as, on the impact of teleworking, and homeschooling, as well as to assess additional time spent on unpaid care activities especially childcare. The instrument targets a minimum list of activities and the amount of time spent on each and assesses whether it was the same/more/less compared to prior to the pandemic. When finalized, the instrument will be available, as a module or stand-alone, for use by countries to adapt to their requirements in measuring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic but will not replace existing tools for regular time use surveys. It was also indicated that data that are collected through this tool, which is intended to provide a rapid assessment of the COVID-19 impact on daily activities, is not comparable to what is typically collected through time use surveys that rely on dailies over an extended time period. The Expert Group, which is working towards finalizing the instrument and will include guidelines on collection of data and their dissemination, is looking for partners, particularly national statistical offices to pilot the instrument in different collection modes and countries.
2. During the discussion that followed, it was indicated that to differentiate between time spent on employment, own-use production of goods and provision of domestic and care services (referred as unpaid domestic and care work) the proposed instrument will comprise of a background questionnaire and a set of stylized questions. It was further clarified that volunteering is also covered in the instrument to gather information on what unpaid work is being done outside of the house. The recommended tool is a stylized question-type instrument, which has questions with answer categories rather than open-ended questions. It was suggested also that the expert group circulate the draft questionnaire to members of the IAEG-GS from national statistical offices for input.
3. ECLAC presented on time use survey guidelines for Latin America and the Caribbean. It was noted that although at least 19 countries in the region have conducted time use surveys, the methodology used varies across countries, as do the frequency and coverage of the surveys. The Guidelines being developed by ECLAC have five main chapters and take advantage of the minimum list of activities developed by the Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time-Use Statistics (EG-TUS). The next steps in the development of the guidelines include cultural adaptation, going from a minimum list to a more disaggregated list, piloting, and incorporating lessons learned from COVID, in particular from Mexico and Colombia who have collected data during the pandemic.

4. The World Bank presented on Assessing gender-differentiated impacts of COVID-19 in high-frequency phone surveys. The presentation covered the results of telephone surveys that were conducted to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and were implemented in over 100 countries (over a period of 4-8 weeks) in 2020. While the questionnaires and guidelines for the household surveys were coordinated at the global level, WB country offices had the flexibility to adjust them to suit national context. The presentation also covered sampling approaches and requirements, including that the sample needed to be representative of the national population. The presentation also drew attention to the effect of respondent selection on the ability to assess gendered impacts of the COVID-19 through one household respondent (proxy). For example, having the head of household as the only respondent leads to misleading information because heads are more likely to be working individuals compared to other household members. This applies also to female headed households with no male spouse. As a potential solution it was suggested that telephone numbers be collected for all household members, and that a randomly selected household member from the household roster be selected for interviewing instead of the head of the household.
5. UN Women Asia and the Pacific presented on rapid gender assessment surveys (RGAs) and gender data collection efforts during COVID-19. It was indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic poses challenges for the collection of data on gender by traditional methods as face-to-face interviews may not be feasible. Aiming to shed some light on the gender differentials of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, UN Women developed guidance on RGAs and by December 2020, has implemented them in 47 countries in collaboration with national and international partners. The RGAs, conducted through telephone and web-based surveys, use a random sampling technique to select respondents from a list of mobile phone subscribers. Reference questionnaire used included questions on: i) core topics such as employment and livelihood resources, knowledge on COVID-19, access to basic goods and services, and unpaid care and domestic work; and ii) thematic topics like feelings of safety and coping mechanisms. The RGA questionnaire is translated into national languages and takes, on average, 15 minutes to complete. While the RGAs are simple, low-cost, and quick to use, it was stressed that the results focus on relative changes (that is, not on exact measures) and the survey has limited reach to populations subscribed to a phone service or those with access to the internet. Regardless, RGAs enable countries to be very agile in terms of meeting data needs in a timely and responsive manner and in shedding light on the gendered impacts of the pandemic for gender-responsive informed response. The RGAs also provide opportunities for partnerships with the public and private sector towards improving collaboration in the gender data ecosystem in the post COVID-19 period. To date, results of the surveys have informed gender-sensitive policy responses of at least seven countries to the COVID-19 pandemic (i.e., Albania, Georgia, Jordan, Maldives, Pakistan, Philippines, and Ukraine).
6. Ethical and safety challenges around collecting data on violence against women by interviewing women remotely (e.g., phone call or online survey) was raised during the discussion session. Specifically, issues associated with privacy challenges when questions relating to violence against women (VAW) is asked in a telephone interview and the telephone is on speaker was raised. In response, UN Women indicated that based on the experience in piloting a VAW module in Ethiopia's RGA, it added an additional section to explicitly ask if the respondent is using a speakerphone, and respondents would be excluded from the survey if they were using a

speakerphone. From placing this safeguard, it was found that fewer than 10% of participants were excluded at this question, which was approximately the same percentage gained through interviewers' self-evaluation (10%). It was also noted that collaboration with national statistical offices was important and should be promoted and overall strengthened, as it would improve the quality of the survey.

7. The UN Population Division presented on estimates of the Impact of COVID-19 on access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and on reproductive health outcomes. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns are associated with disruption to SRH supply chains and the provision of services, difficulty visiting health care facilities, as well as changes in family dynamics and an increase in reported cases of domestic violence. The reduction in access to SRH services includes reduction in maternal healthcare services, family planning services, as well as access to safe abortions or assisted reproduction technologies. Some of the consequences include an expected increase in maternal deaths and unsafe abortions, unrealized fertility intentions, and unplanned pregnancies. Estimating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on SRH outcomes relies on assumptions-based scenarios, early impact surveys, big data, administrative data, vital statistics, and demographic and health surveys. It is expected that the COVID-19 pandemic will add to the uncertainty of achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services. COVID-19 is anticipated to have a different impact on high- and low-income countries, where in high income countries the fertility is predicted to decline, while in low/middle income countries the impact could be mixed because of lack of access to contraceptives. The importance of looking at women's diversity within a country population by age, migratory status, race etc. was also noted.

## **II. IAEG-GS Advisory Groups**

8. UNSD reported on the progress made by the Advisory Group on Gender Indicators, on behalf of Statistics Finland, the chair of the group. The presentation listed the current members, which include only four countries, and several agencies, underscoring the need for more country representatives. The mandate of the Group is to identify SDG indicators that are relevant from a gender perspective, taking into account the updated SDG indicators that was approved at the 2020 session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, as well as differences with the UN Women list of gender indicators. The advisory group will seek feedback on the proposed list from the IAEG-GS and is expected to make a final recommendation in February 2021. The group will ensure that the list of indicators under discussion relates to the most recent SDG one that was approved by the Statistical Commission.
9. ESCAP presented on their on-going activities on measuring the environment-gender nexus in Asia and the Pacific, and e-learning modules on gender data use, in terms of what has already been done and the expected focus for 2021. Priority indicators have been reviewed through a consultative process and, as a starting point, 35 indicators under six domains based on the SDGs framework and regional frameworks, e.g., the Sendai framework, have been identified. Consultations have also highlighted gaps in the area of gender and the environment, including on climate change-induced gender migration. In collaboration with relevant agencies, ESCAP plans to undertake methodological and analytical work in order to address the persistent data gaps –such as with regard

to climate-change induced migration and displacement as well as gender based violence in the context of the environment – and to update the indicator list. ESCAP is also collaborating with SIAP and UN Women to develop an e-learning platform on gender data use. It is self-paced learning, with the content developed by a range of experts including from national statistical systems, national training institutes, and academic institutions, and targets a wide range of uses. The e-learning platform is expected to be available in early 2021.

10. UNICEF presented on the workstream of the Advisory Group on Strengthening Administrative Systems to Close Gender Data Gaps that was established in 2019. The objective of the advisory group is to build upon the limited evidence base of the potential of administrative data for gender statistics and to provide guidance to countries on how administrative data systems can be maximized to produce gender data for global, national and sub-national policy making and monitoring and reporting on gender equality. The focus of the guidance is on monitoring gender disparities and outcomes for children and adolescents. UNICEF also talked about a gender responsive administrative data system and key barriers to use of administrative data for gender analyses. It was noted that administrative data can be well suited to monitor gender equality because they are updated on an ongoing basis and have a granularity that allows for intersectional analysis of vulnerable sub-populations. Key challenges identified include lack of demand for gender data in the absence of a national gender policy, and a lack of clarity on gender data needs. Other issues include the fact that there is limited data capacity, , lack of coordination across sectors and institutions, lack of correspondence with statistical definitions, coverage and inclusion, limited access to administrative data files, and a lack of trust in using administrative data. The recommendations for improving the use of administrative data for gender analysis include digitalization, strengthening capacity on gender statistics across statistics infrastructure, and establishing a national coordination mechanism to support the production of gender statistics across relevant administrative data systems. It was indicated that UNICEF is soliciting additional input from the IAEG-GS before finalization of guidance in early 2021. During the discussion it was suggested that a collaboration and better integration between different kinds of administrative data would have tremendous benefits for all data users.

### **III. Country practices in measuring and monitoring gender equality [during/after COVID-19]**

11. Colombia presented on the Challenges in generating information with a gender perspective and obtaining timely responses to surveys in times of crisis. The presentation covered the Social Pulse Survey that was undertaken with support from UNICEF. The survey had five modules: consumer confidence, subjective well-being, household support care networks, well-being of households with children and adolescents, and knowledge of and access to national and local policies to support households. According to the results of the survey, women were more likely than men to report being overloaded with household chores, while the reverse was true for paid job tasks. There were, however, no significant gender differences in feeling safe, and in the likelihood of children to engage in educational activities during the time of school closure. Several actions were undertaken in order to improve the responsiveness to the survey, such as raising awareness through brochures and presentations, prior communication with administration of residential complexes, and offering the option of responding over the phone for those concerned with getting infected. The NSO will soon release guidelines for differential and intersectional gender mainstreaming in the national

statistical system, which includes guidelines on avoiding stereotypes and using gender neutral language. The importance of using alternative data sources, such as administrative records, to obtain additional statistics was also noted.

12. Morocco presented their Survey on the social, economic and psychological impacts of the Covid-19 on women and men. The survey methodology used stratification by urban/rural environment and used both the head of household and all household members as the observational unit, depending on the module. The objective of the survey was to explore the impact of the pandemic on gender equality between women and men, i.e., changes in behavior in the context of the pandemic and its implications in term of access to basic goods and services, education, healthcare and information, and implications of these changes on income and living conditions of women and men. The data was collected using CATI assisted by CAPI, and the response rate was over 90%. The survey included topics such as budget, job and business loss, work-life balance, opinion on lockdown measures and the COVID vaccine, and traveling. Results showed that women spend six times more time in housework than men although the latter were more involved in housework during, than before, the pandemic. Although men reported spending four times more time on childcare than before lockdown, women reported a higher increase, than men, in their overall daily workload (including both paid and unpaid work). Also, mothers reported being primarily responsible for their children's online learning, and women have also suffered more job loss and are at greater risk of working in an unsafe (from COVID perspective) environment. In addition, girls reported devoting less time to learning than boys, and the risk of domestic and conjugal violence against women also increased.
13. Switzerland made a presentation on practices and challenges of gender statistics in the country. The presentation provided a broad overview of the legal national and international frameworks that provide the framework for statistics that shed light on the principle of equal rights of men and women, including CEDAW and Agenda 2030. It was indicated that gender statistics are produced from various data sources, including an integrated system with data from administrative registers and a variety of surveys. Further Switzerland publishes statistical information on current trends, progress and gaps on gender equality in various forms, including through interactive diagrams. It was reported that there are limited personnel resources for gender statistics on the one hand, coupled with a need to meet the growing demand for gender statistics efficiently, on the other hand. Other challenges that exist in terms of generating gender statistics include data gaps related to violence against women that are generated mainly from police records, the need for innovation in data collection, analysis and dissemination, and being able to produce relevant, reliable, and timely data, particularly during crisis. The Survey on income and living conditions (SILC), undertaken during COVID, measured the impact of the lockdown due to COVID on living conditions and shows that the trust in the political system has increased for both men and women during the crisis compared to before the lockdown, though women have a lower trust level compared to men. On the other hand, the subjective assessment of job security has declined during the crisis, for both men and women.
14. The USA presented the U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey that was designed to understand the impact of COVID-19 on American families in areas such as employment, food security, housing, health and educational disruption. The Census Bureau partnered with several federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the National Center for Health Statistics, the National Center for Education Statistics, and the Housing and Urban Development. The survey

was designed to be deployed as quickly and efficiently as possible and leveraged existing infrastructure and data assets for current surveys. They engaged with other federal agencies to solicit questionnaire content, which resulted in content that was relevant to multiple federal and state programs, while also having minimum public burden. The survey included basic demographic questions such as sex, marital status, and age, as well as questions on employment status, food security, health (including mental health), housing (e.g., being able to pay rent), and education (e.g., children's access to computers). As it was not possible to mail survey invitations due to the closure of the national processing center, respondents were reached through email and text invitation to take an online survey. Results of the survey are presented through a variety of online interactive tools, including through maps and tables. For example, some preliminary results on teleworking, mental health, income loss and spending, by age and gender showed no apparent difference between females and males in terms of changes to teleworking during the pandemic and in experienced income loss. However, women were more likely than men to seek mental health counseling, and women were more likely than men to engage in online shopping.

15. During the discussion, Statistics Canada indicated that two new initiatives have been implemented to gather information in a more timely fashion: The Canadian Perspectives Survey Series (web-panel-based data collection on LFS respondents), which is aimed at understanding social issues more rapidly, while reducing the cost of collecting data; and use of crowdsourcing as new innovative way of capturing information. The latter is used to supplement data obtained from more traditional sources, particularly due to its relatively low implementation cost and ability to increase the granularity of data in a timely manner. México also informed participants that they too have used, for the first time, the National Registry of cell phones and built up a frame to collect a specialized survey on Labor Market and COVID-19.
16. Ghana made a presentation about citizen generated data, which are intended to address data gaps for monitoring progress towards achieving the SDGs in an effort to better produce gender statistics that could support evidence-based decision-making. Motivated by the fact that gender-based violence is globally underreported both in administrative data and in surveys due to its sensitive nature, the Ghana Statistical Services has devised innovative ways to collect that data. Citizens can report gender-based violence through either an app, "Let's Talk", or through a designated code for those that have no smart telephones.
17. Commenting on the use and sharing of microdata related to sensitive issues like violence against women, UNFPA drew attention to the fact that some Governments are under pressure to make such data available. From the point of view of both women's safety and confidentiality, and the fact that such data can be misused and – especially - the fact that women/respondents have not given consent to have the micro data disclosed when consenting to an interview, due care is critical to safeguard the confidentiality of respondents. UNFPA advised that such microdata could be made available for research, but only under the strictest of controls, but should never be put on a public website or made readily available. Furthermore, procedures must be in place to ensure that such data would not be used for anything other than statistical purposes. UNFPA referred to their forthcoming guidelines that promotes a safe and ethical approach to sharing microdata with researchers and provides a template for countries to adapt their own microdata access procedures.

#### **IV. Coordination: On-going/planned activities in gender statistics –who is doing what?**



18. UN Women reported on recent collaboration with national and international partners through its “Making Every Woman and Girl Count” (Women Count) programme, which involves working directly with countries, and regional and global entities to foster sustainable development of gender statistics. It was mentioned that working with more than 11 countries, one of the key achievements of the programme is the creation of an enabling environment where statistical systems have become more responsive to the gender data requirements of national development plans. For example, the Government of Cameroon has invested USD 700,000 on the development of gender data and continue the implementation of the Women Count programme in the country. In Kenya, production of subnational gender indicators brought about at least three new women’s empowerment-related legislations at the county level. In the area of gender data production, UN Women has supported 14 surveys – four of which are on time use and two on VAW. The surveys have resulted in increased data availability especially for monitoring how countries are doing regarding SDG 5 (achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls). UN Women has also formed catalytic partnerships with various international agencies. For instance, the partnerships with ILO and UN Habitat resulted in new data and analysis on women’s economic empowerment including two new global data sets supporting monitoring of progress towards SDG 8 (promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all) and SDG 11 (making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable). As a result, both ILO and UN Habitat will continue to regularly update the databases as part of their regular work. As part of the efforts on institutionalizing capacity development of gender data producers and users, the training curriculum on gender statistics was developed in Asia and the Pacific through the Sub-Group on Gender Statistics Training and in partnership with the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific. Towards bridging the gap between data production and data use, improved data on violence against women is catalyzing advocacy and legal change in Albania, Georgia and Morocco. As part of its agile response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UN Women has conducted rapid gender assessment surveys in 47 countries, with 23 additional surveys underway or being planned and produced various data-driven reports and COVID-19 and gender data dashboards. Some key activities planned for 2021 at country, regional and global levels were presented, including the RGAs focusing on VAW and upcoming advocacy and outreach opportunities for gender data development in the Generation Equality Forum.
19. Following the presentation, OECD informed the meeting that in partnership with UN Women, they are working with national authorities for effective gender-responsive policies and interventions. As part of this initiative, data collection processes will start during the first quarter of 2021. It was also indicated that the partnership with UN Women had unpacked new gender data, specifically in the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.
20. Paris-21 presented about the importance of financing for gender statistics and informed the meeting that in their tracking of financial support for statistics in response to the COVID-19 pandemic only 11% of the supported data projects had a gender dimension – mainly related to reproductive health, emergency response, and disaster. An assessment of support for gender statistics among donors, however, reveals that funding for projects where gender is one of the components (but not the main) have increased. The core message of the presentation was that financing for gender statistics remains low, which has implications for the production and availability of statistics. It was suggested that there is a need for a strategy about how to mobilize resources for genders statistics at the country level by leveraging partnerships to close gender data gaps, and through strengthening

gender statistics communication and advocacy. At the global level, there is a need to improve coordination and knowledge sharing around financing for gender statistics.

21. UNODC presented their preliminary statistical framework on gender-based killings/femicide/feminicide, considered the most extreme form of violence against women and girls. The presentation highlighted the existence of different concepts, definitions and connotations of the word femicide/feminicide, and the resulting need to develop common comprehensive definitions. The starting point for this work is the international classification of crimes for statistical purposes (ICCS), which the countries are still in the process of adopting. UNODC has identified 33 criteria for when a killing can be considered gender based - including the type of victim, perpetrator, modus operandi, etc. UNODC is currently undertaking consultations with NSOs, gender empowerment institutions, law enforcement and criminal justice institutions, to review the suggested criteria.
22. In the discussion that followed, INEGI noted that the actual application of a general criteria is contingent on institutional capabilities of justice institutions, in particular, whether or not they register or can register disaggregated data at the most basic level: police agencies, public prosecutor agencies, and so on. UBOS asked if, due to limited resources, it would be feasible to explore the concept of gender related killings as a module/set of questions to be included in a VAW/G or in a Demographic and Health Survey rather than as a stand-alone survey. UBOS further proposed to consider a format for administrative data, for example police forms, given that they are a key institution in collection of such data. In response, UNODC indicated that often the issue is about sharing of information by the police/judiciary rather than capacity and that there is a need to raise awareness about the importance of these data. Regarding the lack of capacity, UNODC pointed out the need for simple and objective features to identify gender related killings: (i) is the intimate partner the suspected offender?, (ii) is there a sign of sexual violence?, etc. UNFPA-APRO noted that mandating the collection of data on femicide could drive the development of better registration systems, taking into account the challenges of collecting such information given that women who are killed, as well as those that are institutionalized, or are in shelters but are too scared to talk, do not show up in surveys. UNODC clarified that indeed, data on gender-related killings can be sourced from administrative data and not from surveys.
23. ILO presented on their on-going efforts to improve global availability of gender-relevant labour statistics and on collaboration with the private sector through a joint ILO and LinkedIn initiative. Through this initiative, ILO presents information about women in managerial positions as well as on digital skills. The outcome of this research shows that it takes a shorter time for younger women than it does for their male counterparts to advance in their careers and to reach managerial positions. On the other hand, women continue to lag behind in digital skills compared to males. ILO also presented on their gender microdata initiative that is generating new harmonized datasets. In addition, as reported above, ILO has a partnership with UN Women and produced new gender indicators on the impact of marriage and children on labour market participation using these harmonized datasets. ILO indicated also that they have published some COVID-19 related guidance on rapid surveys related to work, and guidance on measuring remote work. Some of the findings from recent surveys include the fact that women tend to work in sectors that are severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and also the unequal distribution and increased care demands affecting women disproportionately. Consequently, in the area of work, the COVID-19 pandemic seems to be affecting women more disproportionately than men.

24. UNFPA presented their work on the population data portal, and a global dashboard on VAW/IPV. UNFPA indicated that reliable and comparable data on VAW is essential for prevention and response efforts. The dashboard on intimate partner violence is intended to fill in gaps not covered by other similar dashboards, such as subnational data. It has the highest data coverage and has disaggregation by age, employment, education and household wealth. In terms of their future work aimed at strengthening VAW/IPV data collection and use, UNFPA identified increasing data coverage, addressing ethical/safety issues in VAW/IPV data collection, standardizing survey methods for comparable data quality, providing capacity building, proper data interpretation, research e.g., on why younger women are more likely to be victims,. UNFPA invites the group to visit IPV dashboard, and to provide feedback.

#### **V. Featured Session: The World's Women 2020: Trends and Statistics (WW2020)**

25. UNSD presented on the innovative approach of the World's Women 2020 in terms of being a completely virtual and interactive publication with geo-spatially enabled data based on an extensive partnership with Member States and UN agencies. The presentation also provided a detailed analysis of data availability, gaps, and related capacity development needs, with a view of guiding decisions by members on potential areas of investment.

26. UNSD also informed that WW2020's data infrastructure was integrated into UNSD's federated information system for SDGs (FIS4SDGs) and thus interlinked with additional individual data hubs. The Minimum Set of Gender Indicators was indicated to be added to the common interface in the near future. In addition to presenting how data in WW2020 was geospatially enabled and providing an illustrative example for intuitively creating a gender story map with geospatially enabled data, UNSD introduced its vision to establish with partners a "Global Hub of Gender story maps" that builds on the gender data infrastructure behind WW2020, which is interoperable with other geo-coded databases maintained by UNSD. Members of the Group were warmly invited to participate within a flexible timeline with their own gender story maps that highlight their gender concerns and achievements towards gender equality and emphasize the space dimension. For those countries in developing regions who decide to collaborate and join the FIS4SDGs, UNSD would be able to obtain ArcGIS licenses for three years, if needed.

27. Mexico shared their experience in developing gender story maps and highlighted the distinct challenges of integrating data across areas and sectors, communicating statistical messages through stories, and the fact that particular skills are needed to be able to disseminate these.

28. Mexico and Switzerland expressed interest in participating in the project "Global Hub of Gender story maps".

29. ECE presented the Guidance for Communicating Gender Statistics, recently launched in June 2020, together with its good practice repository. ESCWA presented the Arab Gender Gap Report 2020, based on about 200 indicators that were integrated to the UN Data Hub for the Arab Region. It is planned that the publication will be recurrent every five years. ESCWA also presented work on the second revision of the VAW Toolkit. ECA presented the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators in

Africa with the objective of enhancing harmonization and standardization of gender statistics on the continent.

30. During the ensuing discussion, the Group took note of the prospective contribution of India to the ongoing methodological developments in ESCAP in the area of statistics on the gender-environment nexus. Several members of the group including UN Women have congratulated and expressed their appreciation of the work done by UNSD, Regional Commissions as well as national statistical offices in the latest edition of *The World's Women* series as well as initiatives in communicating gender data and statistics and development of gender stories and maps.

## **VI. Guest Speaker Session**

31. The Gender Equality Unit of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of Finland presented on gender equality programs in the country, which include the action plan on gender equality, the equal pay program, the Government report on gender equality, and building a monitoring system on gender equality. The government action plan is a program containing over 50 measures, for all ministries, with each section having a situation assessment combining information from various sources to draw a picture of the current gender situation, cross cutting themes, and intersectionality and sustainable development, as well as to strengthen the production of gender analyzed data, as well as its use as an input for decision making. The main themes in the action plan include equality in working life and financial decision-making, reconciling work and family life, and distributing care duties more equitably. Based on the long-term strategic objectives on gender equality, Finland plans to build a monitoring system on gender equality. Finland indicated that they recently introduced a non-binary gender, which is important because of more vulnerable groups. It was indicated that Statistics Finland and the Center for Gender Equality are the major producers of data, with registries and surveys as the main source.

## **VII. Priorities for the IAEG-GS members and conclusions of the 14<sup>th</sup> IAEG-GS Meeting**

32. Switzerland gave a short presentation regarding the 8th Global Forum on Gender Statistics, and the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IAEG-GS, in the context of the road to Bern and the 3<sup>rd</sup> UN Data Forum. It was noted that the focus on gender will enhance visibility of the subject area. In addition, there will be several planned events on gender at national level in Switzerland. It was noted that an alternative plan, e.g., a virtual meeting should be kept in mind just in case it is not possible to hold a face-to-face meeting.
33. UNSD provided a summary of what was accomplished during the meeting as well related action plans. See section VIII for details. Also, it was announced that Switzerland would replace Finland as co-chair of the IAEG-GS together with Japan. The outgoing chair, Finland, expressed appreciation for the contributions of members of the IAEG-GS and for their strong support and commitment to improving gender statistics.

## **VIII. Summary of discussion and related action points**

The Group was informed about the latest **developments in terms of methods and instruments** to collect gender relevant data during COVID-19 at the international level, including rapid assessment surveys (RASs) developed by UNSD and the Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time Use Statistics (EG-TUS), ILO, the World Bank and UN Women.

While, some level of ongoing collaboration among international partners on these initiatives was noted, the Group requested to **further involve national** statistical systems, in particular national statistical offices, before collecting national data. This would improve collaboration at all levels, maximize available resources and would strengthen data quality, data trust and overall data use.

The Group also took note of various efforts and initiatives undertaken by **national statistical offices** to gather almost “real time” data during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to measure and monitor quickly and efficiently fast changing circumstances. Innovative measures developed by national statistical offices to respond to the challenges of the pandemic included new partnerships within and across organizations, accelerated investments in IT, switching to data collection modes and updating frames that rely on technology, further exploration of non-traditional and complementary data sources such as administrative records and increased flexibility in planning. The Group also took note of challenges faced by national statistical offices to meet demands for relevant and timely data for gender analyses, including data gaps on pertinent areas, e.g., VAW and entrepreneurship. Another challenge related to limited personnel resources for gender statistics, and in this regard, the Group noted the need for increasing statisticians’ awareness of gender issues, collaborating with other units in the NSO, cooperating with other government agencies and with international entities.

**Phone interviews** and web applications were reported as the retained methods adopted by both international and national statistical offices to collect information during the pandemic. The Group noted the importance of developing and/or maintaining master sampling frames for emails and phone numbers, to be complemented with mailing addresses and other lists, particularly in developing countries, in order to be able to randomly select individuals, households and enterprises. In this context the ability to leverage existing infrastructure in order to deploy quickly and efficiently was noted.

The collection of data on **violence against women** during the pandemic was considered particularly complex. The Group took note of a proposed initiative by UN Women to use rapid gender assessments (RGAs) to collect information on this sensitive topic and highlighted potential challenges. In particular, the Group acknowledged the issue of ensuring that ethical and safety protocols are in place during data collection through phone interviews, as potential victims may be not alone when answering questions due to lockdown periods. UN Women likewise recognizes this concern and have put in place mechanisms to address these, benefitting from recent experience by Ethiopia in its RGA that included a module on VAW. The group also highlighted the potential for misuse of data such as micro-data related to VAW and cautioned against their release as this could endanger the lives of the respondents, particularly women. The Group called for adequate procedures and safeguards to ensure women’s safety and for micro data releases that are used for statistical purposes only.

The Group took note of progress made in developing a provisional framework to measure **femicides** and gender related killings of women and girls, based on the International Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes (ICCS). To enhance sharing of data and information by the police/judiciary, it was suggested that more should be done to raise awareness about the importance of these data, and the development of the classification is believed to be of benefit in this regard. It was further noted that

raising awareness could be a catalysis for the development of better registration systems particularly given that surveys may not suffice.

The Group agreed that the current crisis presents an opportunity to explore and use **complementary as well as non-traditional data sources** that could also be used in post-pandemic times. For instance, the Group took stock of efforts made by national and international entities to establish **new partnerships**, including with other governmental agencies and the private sector to respond to the increased demand for fast data and fill in important data gaps during the pandemic. In this regard, UN Women reported working with UNFPA, ILO, and Quilt.ai (private sector) to utilize big data from eight countries based on their online searches on Google, Bing, Facebook, Instagram regarding support for victims of violence during COVID-19; ILO presented their experience in working with a non-traditional data partner, namely LinkedIn, to compile and analyze information regarding women, compared to men, in managerial positions and in digital skills; USA reported working closely with several partners, including the National Center for Education Statistics, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Group welcomed these new experiences and acknowledged the potential of further exploring new sources of data and partnerships for collection and analysis. In this context it was noted that simplified access to administrative records during the pandemic, for example, was a very welcomed opportunity to better understand the nature and availability of information in administrative systems, and as a first step to ensuring improved data integration across different ministries in the post-Covid context.

In the UN Women's report of its Women Count programme implementation, the Group, particularly representatives from national statistical offices and international agencies – such as Uganda, South Africa, OECD and UNFPA Asia and the Pacific, expressed their appreciation of the support provided by UN Women as well as its significant contribution in gender statistics development. This includes, among others, country assessment of gender data and capacity gaps, production of new data on social institutions and gender index for more effective gender-responsive policies and interventions. UN Women underscored that these were accomplished and made possible by the partnerships with, commitment and hard work of national and international partners, particularly the NSOs.

In the context of **financing for gender data** and the importance of monitoring allocation and composition of funds (international/donor vs domestic resources for sustainability of gender statistics programmes) the group took note of an assessment of financial support towards gender statistics, by Paris21. The group further noted that financing for gender statistics remains low, with implications for availability of these data, and requiring action on resource mobilization and leveraging partnerships for coordination and knowledge sharing.

The Group welcomed new initiatives about **microdata analysis and dissemination** including to improve data disaggregation and granularity to better capture intersecting inequalities. ILO and UN Women's efforts to produce indicators on labor force participation and related dimensions, disaggregated by household composition and presence/absence of children was much appreciated. The group took note of ILO's recent guidance related to measuring work and employment in the context of COVID-19. The Group was also informed and took note of the latest analysis and estimates by DESA/Population Division on the impact of COVID on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

The Group welcomed **The World's Women 2020** recently launched online platform, developed by UNSD and presenting a compilation of 100 short gender data stories covering progress towards gender equality since 1995. The new user-friendly and easy to navigate platform was developed with the overall objective of improving data availability and access through an integrated geospatially enabled data infrastructure linked to other existing data hubs via a federated architecture. UNSD presented a detailed analysis of data availability, gaps, and capacity development needs, with a view of guiding decisions by members on potential areas of investment.

The Group was also presented with the project “Global Hub of Gender story maps” to be part of the gender data infrastructure, which includes WW2020, the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators and is interoperable with other geo-coded databases maintained by UNSD. The new gender data hub will (i) maximize users’ accessibility to available data with datasets tagged with keywords for query; (ii) facilitate data analysis with combining data from different sources; (iii) improve communication of gender data with storytelling through maps; and (iv) promote new collaborations and partnerships among national and international data producers and users. The Group welcomed the data hub as a good example of the role of data experts in facilitating the use of data assets and in maximizing their value. The Group congratulated UNSD for the development and launch of the platform and acknowledged the critical and central role of UNSD in improving global gender data.

The Group acknowledged the importance of developing a strong **communication strategy** and strengthened skills of NSOs for effective and contemporary approaches for dissemination of gender statistics. In times of crises such as the current pandemic, a strong strategy is key to informing data users and the broad public about changes adopted by NSOs and international entities in the methodology used to collect data during COVID. A clear and targeted communication campaign should also be adopted when releasing survey results. In particular to highlight that data collected during COVID may not be comparable with pre-COVID ones, due to data quality limitations or changes implemented in the data collection instruments used.

The Group welcomed recent dissemination efforts and products launched by Regional Commissions, including the Guidance for Communicating Gender Statistics, together with its good practice repository, the Arab Gender Gap Report 2020, and the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators in Africa. The Group reviewed progress made by the *advisory group on gender indicators* and on *strengthening administrative systems to close gender data gaps* and agreed to consult for input/comments regarding the updated list of gender indicators and to solicit further input from IAEG-GS members.

Finally, the Group noted with appreciation the **increased level of collaboration on gender data initiatives** between international entities and between national, regional and international statistical offices.

#### **Summary of agreed activities:**

1. Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time Use Statistics (EG-TUS) to share the COVID-19 instrument with the IAEG-GS, for feedback;
2. International agencies to consult with National statistical systems, in particular NSOs, for the planning and implementation of rapid assessment surveys (RAS);

3. UN Women to share their proposal for a VAW/GBV module in their rapid gender assessments with the IAEG-GS, for feedback. In particular to address concerns raised about the protocol to use when collecting data on VAW by phone during lockdown.
4. *Advisory Group on Gender Indicators* to share latest proposal with IAEG-GS for feedback, particularly from Member States; The Chair of the Advisory Group took note of exercising due care to ensure that the list of SDG indicators used is the latest version available.
5. UNFPA to circulate *draft guide and recommendations on a safe and ethical approach to sharing microdata on VAW*, which provide a template for countries to adapt their own microdata access procedures.
6. *Advisory group on strengthening administrative systems to close the gender data gaps* to finalize proposed guidance. Feedback, in particular from Member States, on the draft guidance and draft journal article is encouraged; member countries in the advisory group (Brazil, Canada, Ghana, Jordan, Morocco, Uganda, Zimbabwe) to be invited to be part of UNSD collaborative on the use of administrative records for statistical purpose;
7. UNODC to circulate the provisional framework to measure gender related killings of women and girls;
8. The Secretariat will compile questions raised by panelists during their interventions, with a view of collecting inputs/answers from IAEG-GS members, in order to identify priorities that will guide future work of the Group;
9. UNSD and Statistics Switzerland, under the guidance of the co-chairs of the Group, will organize the 8<sup>th</sup> Global Forum on Gender Statistics and the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IAEG-GS in 2021.



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## Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS)

### 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting

3–4 and 7 December 2020 (virtual meeting)

#### Annex 2. Meeting Agenda

##### IAEG-GS co-chairs

Ms. Marjut Pietiläinen, Statistics Finland

Mr. Akira Tsumura, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Government of Japan

##### Thursday, 3 December 2020

07:30 – 08:00 **Test WebEx connection** (audio, video and file sharing)

08:00 – 08:20 **Opening remarks and objectives of the meeting**

- Mr. Akira Tsumura, Office of Director General for Policy Planning on Statistical Standards, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Government of Japan
- Ms. Francesca Grum, Social and Gender Statistics Section, UNSD

#### 1. Methodological developments in gender statistics in the context of COVID-19

08:20 – 10:00 Session chair: Ms. Francesca Grum

**Objective:** To inform IAEG-GS members and get their feedback on advances in international methods and standards to produce gender statistics in time of crises, namely in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- a. UNSD and the Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time-Use Statistics – Assessment of time use during COVID-19 (Ms. Patricia Houle, Statistics Canada)

Intervention from ECLAC: Time use survey guidelines for Latin America and the Caribbean (Ms. Iliana Vaca Trigo)

- b. The World Bank – Assessing gender-differentiated impacts of COVID-19 in high-frequency phone surveys (Mr. Daniel Halim and Ms. Divyanshi Wadhwa)


- c. UN Women Asia and the Pacific – Rapid gender assessment surveys and gender data collection efforts during COVID-19 (Ms. Cecilia Tinonin)
- d. UNPD – Impact of COVID-19 on access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights (Ms. Vladimira Kantorova)

Discussion and Q&A

10:00 – 10:05 **Physical activity break**

## 2. IAEG-GS Advisory Groups

10:05 – 11:00 Session chair: Ms. Maria Isabel Cobos Hernandez

 **Objective:** To update IAEG-GS members on progress made by the Advisory Groups on their respective workstreams and discuss about future steps.

- a. Advisory Group on Gender Indicators (Ms. Marjut Pietiläinen)

Intervention from ESCAP: The environment-gender nexus and e-learning on gender data analysis (Ms. Sharita Serrao)

- b. Advisory Group on Strengthening Administrative Systems to Close Gender Data Gaps: Update on workstream (Ms. Lauren Pandolfelli and Ms. Karen Carter)

Discussion and Q&A

**Friday, 4 December 2020**

## 3. Country practices in measuring and monitoring gender equality [during/after COVID-19]

08:00 – 09:15 Session chair: Mr. Mehmet K. Sökeli

**Objective:** To facilitate (i) country-country exchange of good practices and lessons learned and (ii) country-agency understanding of needs and priorities.

- a. Colombia – Challenges in generating information with a gender perspective: timely responses in times of crisis (Ms. Karen Andrea Garcia Rojas)
- b. Morocco – Survey on the social, economic and psychological impacts of the Covid-19 on women and men (Ms. Bouchra Bouziani)
- c. Gender statistics in Switzerland: practices and challenges (Ms. Katja Branger)



d. U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey: Data for Men and Women (Ms. Amy Smith)

Intervention from Ghana (TBC) (Ms. Dieudonné Ankamah)

Discussion and Q&A

09:15 – 09:30 **Virtual coffee break**

#### **4. Coordination: On-going/planned activities in gender statistics – who is doing what?**

09:30 – 11:00 Session chair: Ms. Francesca Grum

**Objective:** To inform IAEG-GS members about and improve coherence among existing and/or planned global initiatives in gender statistics.

- a. UN Women – (Mr. Papa Seck)
- b. Paris21 – Gender data financing landscape (Ms. Lauren Harrison)
- c. UNODC – Preliminary statistical framework on gender-based killings/femicide (Mr. Enrico Bisogno)
- d. ILO – Efforts to improve global availability of gender-relevant labour statistics (Mr. Kieran Walsh) / Women in managerial positions and digital skills: ILO-LinkedIn collaboration 2019 (Ms. Emanuela Pozzan)
- e. UNFPA – Intimate partner violence dashboard (Ms. Mengjia Liang)

Discussion and Q&A

### **Monday, 7 December 2020**

#### **5. Featured Session: *The World's Women 2020: Trends and Statistics (WW2020)***

08:00 – 09:15 Session chair: Mr. Akira Tsumura

**Objective:** To take stock of improvements in communicating gender data and statistics and brainstorm on the use of geocoded data to tell gender stories.

- a. UNSD – WW2020 achievements in numbers (Ms. Margaret Mbogoni and Ms. Lubov Zeifman)
- b. UNSD – WW2020 evolution: gender story maps and integrated data models (Mr. Mehmet K. Sökeli)

Intervention from INEGI: Mexico's gender story map on care facilities (Ms. Adriana Oropeza Lliteras)

Intervention from ECE: ECE Guidance on Communicating Gender Statistics (Ms. Kristen Mary Jeffers)

Intervention from ESCWA: Arab Gender Gap Report and ESCWA data portal (Ms. Neda Jafar)

Intervention from ECA: Minimum Set of Gender Indicators in Africa (MSGIA) (Ms. Fatouma Sissoko)

Discussion and Q&A

09:15 – 09:30 **Virtual coffee break**

## **6. Guest Speaker Session**

09:30 – 10:00 Session chair: Ms. Marjut Pietiläinen

- Ms. Tanja Auvinen, Gender Equality Unit, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland
- Discussion and Q&A

## **7. Priorities for the IAEG-GS members and conclusions of the 14<sup>th</sup> IAEG-GS Meeting**

10:00 – 10:50 Session chair: Ms. Francesca Grum

- 8<sup>th</sup> Global Forum on Gender Statistics in 2021: Ms. Katja Branger, Swiss Federal Statistical Office
- Summary of work priorities: Ms. Francesca Grum, Social and Gender Statistics Section, UNSD
- Concluding remarks: Ms. Marjut Pietiläinen, Statistics Finland
- IAEG-GS virtual family photo