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Programme Review: Gender Statistics*

**Report of Meeting of the Interagency and Expert Group on Gender
Statistics: Manila, Philippines 14 October 2010**

Prepared by UNSD

**MEETING OF THE INTERAGENCY AND EXPERT GROUP ON GENDER
STATISTICS
14 October 2010
Manila, Philippines**

Report

I. Opening

1. Mr. Paul Cheung, Director of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), opened the third meeting of the Interagency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS). In his opening remarks, Mr. Cheung recognized the importance of the creation of the new entity UN Women with respect to the work on gender statistics but emphasized that the Statistics Division will continue its gender statistics programme, under the guidance of the United Nations Statistical Commission. He stated that a coherent approach is needed to mainstream gender into national statistics and acknowledged that a lot of work needs to be done to bring a gender perspective into data collection and analysis at the country level.
2. Ms Lina Castro of the Philippines, host country and chair of the IAEG, welcomed members to the meeting. Putting the current meeting in the context of the purpose and history of the IAEG, she underscored the significant role of this group in advancing the global gender statistics programme and improving gender statistics at the international and national levels.
3. Ms Francesca Perucci of UNSD gave an overview and accomplishments of the IAEG-GS. In a 2006 meeting on the development of gender statistics, inter-agency and national experts expressed the need for agencies and countries to work together to establish synergies to advance gender statistics at country and global levels, and recommended the creation of the IAEG-GS. She reminded the group of the task of the IAEG-GS, namely: to provide guidance at the global level, review progress and propose actions. Since its establishment, the IAEG-GS has formed three advisory groups, each focusing on a specific area of work: (a) Global gender statistics and indicators database; (b) Gender statistics training activities and curricula; and (c) Statistical legislation for gender statistics.

II. Work of the advisory groups

4. For each of the three advisory groups, a short report by the chair of the work accomplished since the last meeting of the IAEG in Accra, Ghana (January 2009) and the subsequent discussion follows.

(a) Advisory Group on Global gender statistics and indicators database:

Report by the chair:

5. The chair of the Advisory Group on Databases reported that the work on the development of the core set of indicators is ongoing. However, with respect to the task of reviewing and proposing the content and plans for the development of a global gender statistics and indicators database, the work has not progressed as initially planned. The chair indicated that the scope of the work requires great effort by the group, given that there are many other databases that have not been reviewed, and that each database differs in objectives, content and utility. In addition, due to internal reorganization within her office and the consequent personnel shuffle, this task did not receive its due attention.

Summary of discussion:

6. The IAEG agreed that the Group should continue the work on developing a core set of indicators on gender statistics that countries can use to assess progress towards international commitments and goals relating to gender equality.
7. The idea of forming a small subgroup within the Advisory Group to develop this core set of indicators, first recommended in the last IAEG meeting, was brought up again. Several IAEG members reminded the group of the importance of consultation with data users (economists, national mechanisms for gender equality) in this activity as well as the need for consultation with users to determine 'desirable data' versus 'use of existing data'. Users to be taken into consideration include UN Women and its national counterparts.
8. It was reiterated that the development of a core set of indicators should take into account existing core sets of gender statistics indicators, including but not limited to those already developed by the UN regional commissions and by the gender subgroup of the IAEG on the MDG indicators. Related to this, it was suggested that as part of the development of the global core set, the existing core sets of indicators be made available on a website. It was suggested that UNSD explore this proposal.
9. Several ways were offered to arrive at the global core set that is applicable to all (or most) countries. Two of the options were to look at the intersection (commonalities) among different sets of indicators; and to give priority to indicators that are used by many users, etc. It was also pointed out that there is a need to consider not just indicators for which the data are readily available but also those that are necessary from a gender perspective or desirable to have.
10. The members of the IAEG acknowledged that the task of proposing and planning a global gender statistics database is an ambitious one that would be difficult to carry out given that countries and agencies have their own mandates and activities and can not actively carry on the work required. There appeared to be a consensus that this task should no longer be a priority of the present advisory group. Instead the focus should be to develop the core set of indicators that is applicable to all countries. Countries see indicator development as a more realistic approach; once the indicator list is determined, countries can work toward a database that will include those required indicators.
11. A suggestion put forward was to have a small group of 5-6 persons work intensively for a day to produce a first draft of the core indicators proposal to move it along. It was thought that UNSD and World Bank should at least discuss this possibility. In light of the on-going work on developing a regional programme on gender statistics and a core set at the regional level, ESCAP specifically expressed interest to contribute to the work of this advisory group. UN Women would also expressed interest to be involved in the process.

(b) Advisory Group on Gender statistics training activities and curricula:

Report by the chair:

12. The chair of this advisory group reported that some comments were received on the annotated outline presented at the last meeting of the advisory group for the revised “Engendering Statistics” manual and that these comments have been incorporated into said outline. The drafting of the manual, however, has been delayed. As for the proposal for the development of a common repository system for training materials, due to the unexpected departure of the major actors in the activity, the work has not progressed as planned.

Summary of discussion:

13. The group requested UNSD to push for the completion of the manual on gender statistics, given its value in training statisticians to collect, analyze and disseminate gender statistics. UNSD acknowledged that the advisory group has completed its task as far as the structure of the manual and it is now in the hands of UNSD to see to its completion.

14. India informed the group that its National Academy of Statistics is developing a training curriculum on gender statistics which is expected to be completed in six months, and that they would be happy to share with the group. India also offered its National Academy of Statistics to be the repository of training materials. However, participants felt that for logistical reasons it is most appropriate for the UN to host the repository.

15. UNSD raised the need for coordination among regional training activities or programmes. There are capacities for gender statistics training in the different regions, and a coordinated knowledge of their training materials and activities will be very helpful for agencies and countries. The need for the repository of training materials, activities and opportunities was reiterated. With this as a tool, the advisory group will be in a better position to advise the agencies on what kind of training regions or countries need.

16. Some training materials suggested for inclusion in the repository include the mapping of techniques and tools that already exist. Others suggested training materials or modules that can be easily developed, for training producers and users in setting the analysis and presentation of data from surveys like DHS or MICS in the context of gender issues. It was suggested that gender specialists can help in this activity. Also mentioned was the opportunity for the IAEG to capitalize on a UNFPA initiative to produce a manual on gender analysis of data from population censuses.

17. Finally, it was pointed out that training should be oriented to user needs, and that training programmes and modules be designed for both data producers AND data users.

(c) Advisory Group on Statistical legislation for gender statistics:

Report by the chair:

18. The terms of reference for the Advisory Group on Statistical Legislation (attached) were circulated to members. The main task is to compile statistical legislation specific to gender statistics in countries and highlight best practices. For the data gathering

phase, the group developed a short questionnaire on national statistical legislation (attached), which was also circulated for comments. The idea is to send the questionnaire to NSOs. This advisory group proposed to work until 2012.

Summary of discussion:

19. It was pointed out that the questionnaire as submitted to the group does not have provisions that will give us best practices. Another suggestion on the questionnaire was to include the date of the legislation.
20. The issue of non-compliance with the law and of adequate budgeting for implementation of the legislation were raised.. Apparently, in one of the countries represented in the meeting, although there is a law to provide data by various socio-economic variables, there is no guarantee that it will be followed by the official providers of statistics. Sometimes it is left to the national mechanisms for gender equality.

III. Agency updates on their work

21. Agencies that have not had the chance to present or mention their work during the Forum updated the IAEG on their ongoing work relating to gender statistics. The World Bank gave a presentation on their program on gender statistics, the three main components of which were: to increase the availability and use of gender statistics, to address data gaps in *inter alia*, women economic empowerment, access to assets, economic migration as well as tools for a gender perspective in infrastructure investments, and to build capacity to collect, analyze and use gender-relevant data. UNHCR reported that all data they collect and disseminate are disaggregated by sex, whenever possible; and that it systematically involved women in decisions related to data production.
22. UNSD, UN-ESCAP and UNICEF already mentioned their work activities in one way or another at the Global Forum on Gender Statistics and did not make a separate report to the IAEG.

IV. General discussion

On work modalities of the IAEG and its advisory groups:

23. It appeared from the discussion that there was great need to improve communication among members of the advisory groups and of the IAEG membership. A suggestion was that UNSD or another entity assumes a central coordinating function to ensure that IAEG members are able to contact each other whenever needed.
24. As for the advisory groups, the respective chairs should assume this function, with UNSD facilitating its realization.
25. Members of the IAEG were reminded that the chairs of the first two advisory groups (on databases and on training) are due for change, having served for more than two years. Because many country members were not present in this year's meeting, it was

decided that UNSD should circulate a call for volunteers to all member countries of the IAEG.

26. There was a proposal to enlarge the IAEG, both in terms of country members and the possible inclusion of national mechanisms for gender equality. It was noted that the attendance of members, both countries and agencies, was low in the current forum and that additional efforts should be made in future.
27. Finally, it was reiterated that terms of reference should specify the outputs clearly and include timelines for each phase of work as well as interim reporting to the IAEG-GS on the progress of each group's work.

On priorities for IAEG:

28. UNSD reminded the IAEG of the recommendations of the just-concluded Forum, both in general and specifically for health, to guide the group in developing its priorities for the next year.
29. Some of the topics suggested by members for consideration as themes of the next global forum include: time use surveys; care and/or unpaid work; valuation of unpaid work; disability as a result of conflict and disasters; how to use statistics and indicators to bring out their relevance to the issues; focus on adolescents—early marriage, education, etc.; IDPs; VAW (and women in vulnerable situations); poverty.
30. For the theme of the next forum, it was suggested that the IAEG engage the regional commission of which host country is member. UN Women and its national counterparts could also be involved.

Venue and date of the next Global Forum:

31. Jordan offered to host the next Forum, subject to confirmation by the leadership. The proposed dates are April or May of 2012 or October or November of 2011.

V. Next steps:

32. In general, there was agreement to reduce the scope of work of the advisory groups. As agreed, therefore, the advisory group's tasks are much simplified for the next year. The chair of each advisory group will develop the new terms of reference (TOR) in collaboration with UNSD and the World Bank, indicating for each phase of work, the timeline and actors. The TOR will be circulated to all members of the advisory group. The chair of each advisory group will make all effort to communicate actively with its members, with UNSD facilitating as needed.
 - a. For the Advisory group on databases, the work should focus on developing the core set of indicators.
 - b. For the Advisory group on training, the work should focus on developing and creating a common repository system of all existing training material on gender statistics.

- c. For the Advisory Group on statistical legislation, the work should focus on gathering and summarizing information on national legislation relevant to gender statistics.
33. UNSD, with input from the relevant members of the concerned advisory group, will identify new chairs for the advisory group on databases and on training.
34. The suggestion to enlarge the membership of the IAEG will be considered. UNSD will develop a proposal and circulate it to all members of the IAEG.
35. UNSD will consider the suggestions put forward in this meeting and discuss the theme of the next Global Forum with the World Bank, ESCWA and the host country and other relevant UN agencies. The theme will be communicated to IAEG members for information at least three months before the Forum.

Table 1: Attendance list of the Meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics

14 October 2010, Manila, Philippines

	Country/Organization	Represented by
Members		
1.	Ghana, Ghana Statistical Service (GSS)	Ethel Koney
2.	India, Central Statistical Organisation (CSO)	Satyabrata Chakrabarti
3.	Italy, Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (ISTAT)	Sara Demofonti Lidia Gargiulo
4.	Jordan, Department of Statistics of Jordan	Manal Sweidan
5.	Mexico, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI)	Marcela Eternod
6.	Philippines, National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB)	Lina V. Castro Jessamyn Encarnacion
7.	UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Holly Newby
8.	UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Khassoum Diallo
9.	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)	Margarita Guerrero Sharita Serrao
10	UN, Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)	Sylvie I. Cohen
11..	UN, Statistics Division (UNSD)	Paul Cheung Francesca Perucci Erlinda Go Linda Hooper
12.	World Bank	Sulekha Patel Masako Hiraga Lucia Fort
Observers		
12.	Japan, Cabinet Office Japan, Statistics Research Institute, Hosei University Japan, Kanazawa University	Shizuka Takamura Yoichi Ito Yayoi Sugihashi