



**Commission on the Status of Women  
Fifty-ninth session**

**Building the evidence and monitoring results—gender statistics and indicators**

**Tuesday, 17 March 2015  
10.00 am to 1.00 pm**

**ISSUES PAPER**

**1. Introduction**

In its resolution 2013/18, the Economic and Social Council decided that at its fifty-ninth session, in 2015, the Commission of the Status of Women (CSW) will undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, including current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as opportunities for strengthening gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda through the integration of a gender perspective.

As part of the review and appraisal at its fifty-ninth session, the Commission will hold a panel titled *“Building the evidence and monitoring results—gender statistics and indicators”* to assess the lessons learned and actions needed for the generation, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics in the context of monitoring and accelerating the implementation of the Platform for Action and the future post-2015 development agenda; how to strengthen the capacity of Member States to produce and disseminate adequate gender statistics to inform policymaking on gender equality and women’s empowerment; and what is therefore needed by the international community to strengthen the evidence base and increase national and international production of sex-disaggregated data to measure progress on the accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action in the post-2015 context. The outcome of the panel will be a Chair’s summary that should contribute to the accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action in the current context.

**2. Elements for discussion**

**A. Background**

The generation, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics was identified as a fundamental component for monitoring the implementation of the 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action. The Platform for Action underlined specific actions to be taken by national, regional and international statistical services and relevant governmental and United Nations agencies, such as to ensure the regular collection, compilation and analysis of data disaggregated by sex, age, socio-economic and other relevant factors to inform policy and programme planning and implementation as well as adopt measures to improve the collection of data in specific

areas such as on violence against women, time-use statistics and measuring poverty among women and men.

The past two decades have seen significant advances in the generation and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics and indicators. In February 2013, the United Nations Statistical Commission agreed upon a minimum set of 52 quantitative and 11 norms indicators as a guide for the national production and international compilation of gender statistics (see E/CN.3/2014/18). A core set of indicators to assist States in assessing the scope, prevalence and incidence of violence against women, was also agreed upon by the Statistical Commission. In the agreed conclusions of its fifty-eighth session, the Commission on the Status of Women stressed the need to strengthen the evidence base for gender equality and the empowerment of women through the regular collection and dissemination of the minimum set of gender statistics adopted by the Statistical Commission.

The Global Gender Statistics Programme<sup>1</sup>, which is mandated by the Statistical Commission, implemented by the United Nations Statistics Division and coordinated by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics, has provided significant impetus to the work on gender statistics. Another recent global initiative is the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) programme which brings together United Nations agencies and the Secretariat, feminist researchers and national statistical offices to develop new methodologies and approaches to measure asset ownership and entrepreneurship from a gender perspective.<sup>2</sup>

A review of 126 countries conducted in 2012 provided information on global trends in building capacity for collecting and using gender statistics (see E/CN.3/2013/10). The review found that focal points or desks for gender statistics in national statistical offices existed in over two thirds of countries. A review of national actions taken by governments to implement the Platform for Action also noted the increasing efforts of Member States to collect, disseminate and use gender statistics (E/CN.6/2015/3).

Despite these advances, several challenges remain. Due to capacity and resource constraints or the lack of prioritization, many areas of statistics that are of critical importance such as time use, asset ownership, women's experiences of poverty, women's participation in decision-making at all levels and violence against women are still not produced regularly by countries. As evidenced in the review of national implementation of the Platform for Action, even where "snapshot" data exists, there is often no trend data to enable monitoring of changes over time. Similarly, the lack of disaggregated data by sex, age, location, income and other relevant indicators is a significant challenge for monitoring progress for the most marginalized groups.

Data and statistical requirements for the post-2015 development agenda will be substantial, particularly for monitoring progress on gender equality, women's empowerment and the human rights of women and girls in the new framework. The often invoked "data revolution" must become a revolution in gender statistics to rectify the systematic underinvestment in the production, analysis and use of gender statistics and lead to increased availability of quality and regular data to monitor progress and inform policy-making. Unlike the MDGs, the choice of targets and indicators for the SDGs cannot be driven by current data availability. Rather, the new framework should focus on what we value – and is thus important and possible to measure – to drive the collection and analysis of new and existing data. There are also some areas where new standards and methodologies will need to be developed, as for example, in the area of women's participation in local governance, women's decision-making in the household as well as those related to women, peace and security statistics.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/default.html>.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://genderstats.org/EDGE>.

Effective tracking of progress in implementation of the Platform for Action and the post-2015 development agenda will require significantly increased investments in statistical capacity at the national, regional and international levels and for the production of gender statistics. There is a need to build the capacity of national statistical agencies and line ministries to integrate gender perspectives in their national survey instruments (for example, household, labour force and other surveys and censuses). In addition, country-level technical and financial capacity to produce high quality statistics through administrative sources, such as civil registration systems and business registries need to be developed.

#### **B. Questions for discussion during the dialogue**

The Commission should discuss the actions needed to improve gender statistics to effectively support the implementation of the Platform for Action and post-2015 development agenda.

The following issues should be considered:

- How can governments, donors and international organizations address the current gaps in gender statistics? What additional capacity-building measures are needed to increase the national production and international compilation of the minimum set of gender indicators?
- What are the priority areas that need immediate attention in terms of development of standards and methodologies, particularly in the context of accelerating the implementation of the Platform for Action and post-2015 development agenda? How should such priorities be pursued?
- How can we best collect, upscale and share good practices in the collection, production and analysis of gender statistics?

#### **3. Format**

The panel will be chaired by Ms. Christine Loew, Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women (Switzerland). The panel will be composed of four presenters who will speak for 7 – 10 minutes each, followed by an interactive discussion. A moderator will support the Chair in facilitating the inter-active discussions with representatives of Member States, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations.