Gender Indicators and Statistics: Key to Achieving Development Goals

This Guidance Note functions to inform and advise United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Offices on the importance of understanding and applying gender statistics in development programming. Moreover, it provides examples of good practices across the Asia-Pacific region where gender statistics are assisting in the creation of effective and long-term development solutions. In encouraging awareness about gender statistics and their usefulness in gender mainstreaming, the Guidance Note aims to increase understanding and encourage advocating for systemic production of official gender statistics and indicators.

As defined by the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues (OSAGI), ‘gender’ refers to “the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female” as well as the relationships between these socially constructed identities. Because these categories are context-specific, time-specific and changeable, gender is an important criterion for socio-cultural analysis. The lack of sex-disaggregated data and statistics that make gender inequalities visible, especially around issues pertinent to inclusive and sustainable development, has resulted in an incomplete picture of women’s economic, political and social situations in the Asia-Pacific region. At a time when many countries are making extra efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, the importance of gender statistics and indicators cannot be overstated.

**What are Gender Statistics?**
Gender statistics are statistics that incorporate a combination of the following:
- Sex-disaggregated data;
- Data that reflect gender issues and inequalities;
- Data that highlight the realities and diversity of the lives of women and men;
- Data collected using methods and concepts that account for the gender biases present in traditional classification and collection methods.

of gender statistics needs to be re-emphasized as a tool by which MDG acceleration can be achieved. In regional and global discussions around the Post-2015 development framework, gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data have also been emphasized. Certainly, disadvantages that women and girls may face in various social, political and economic contexts are a major source of inequality, which is correlated with unequal human development.\(^4\) Sex-disaggregation of data is thus required for accurate reporting on MDG progress and is central to achieving all MDGs as well as addressing persisting and new gender inequalities.\(^5\)

As a result, statistics have been crucial to the work of the United Nations on gender equality since the organization’s inception. Specifically, in development programming, gender statistics are more important than ever, as they document the situation of women and men around the world, making it easier to raise awareness about inequalities between them and promote actionable change.\(^6\) The production of gender statistics is complex and entails disaggregating individual data by sex and other characteristics as well as collecting data on specific issues that affect one sex more than the other or that shed light on gender relations.\(^7\) Once produced, however, gender statistics are a necessary prerequisite for the systematic analysis of gender issues and the subsequent promotion of gender-equitable development processes.\(^8\)

The successful production of sex-disaggregated data is a first step in creating more efficient, effective and sustainable development programs on a global scale. In 2005 the Commission on the Status of Women’s (CSW) Report on the Forty-ninth Session noted that insufficient sex-disaggregated data was a barrier to measuring progress in achieving gender equality and promoting the empowerment of women as well as in ‘effective policy formulation and programme design’.\(^9\) While collection of sex-disaggregated data is a necessary, and often first, step toward providing gender-responsive statistics and data, on its own it is not enough to create gender-responsive statistics – further actions and changes are required. Gender sensitive content, definitions, data collection, compilation and analysis are also required in the planning and production of gender statistics.

Women’s contributions to the economy are often overlooked and not counted due to definitions of what counts as ‘productive’ labour, with women’s unpaid care and reproductive work and over-representation in the informal sector leading to a statistical bias against women. Moreover, in 2008, the CSW recognized the importance of developing gender-sensitive tools\(^10\) in building the capacity of various stakeholders for gender mainstreaming.\(^11\) In assessing the progress of gender mainstreaming efforts since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995,\(^12\) the lack of political will and commitment among governments and the scarce collection and usage of sex-disaggregated data, are seen as two of the main, persistent impediments to achieving gender equality.\(^13\) Gender inequalities often remain unaddressed because they are poorly defined and as a result are ignored by many policy makers and development planners. Prioritizing the collection and use of gender statistics, including sex-disaggregated data, is a critical step towards reducing these inequalities.

**International Minimum Set of Gender Statistics and Indicators**

In 2011, the United Nations Statistical Commission urged the Statistics Division to enhance its role in the development of gender statistics globally. As such, it recommended an expansion of the work of...
the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics to include: (a) reviewing gender statistics with the aim of establishing a minimum set of gender indicators; (b) guiding the development of manuals and methodological guidelines for the production and use of gender statistics; and (c) serving as the coordination mechanism for the global programme on gender statistics.14

In February and March 2013, following the recommendations of the Commission, an international minimum set of gender indicators was identified and started to be developed by experts from national statistical systems and international agencies, who intended it to be a common basic set of indicators across countries and regions, for the national production and international compilation of gender statistics. The international minimum set of 52 developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group is included here in the boxed text: Minimum Set of Gender Indicators, By Domain.15

The minimum set of gender indicators covers all of the areas highlighted in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, including economic structures, participation in productive activities and access to resources, education, health and related services, public life and decision-making, and human rights of women and girls.

The establishment of an international minimum set of gender indicators is a positive development. It is a testament to the increased recognition of gender statistics in evidence-based policy making. However, more can be done. For instance, in the minimum set of 52 indicators, there is no measure for women’s participation in local government or in the public sector, nor is there a measure for the kinds of positions held by women and men in the private sector. Moreover, measurement of violence other than physical or sexual violence is not included in the set, although this will be addressed with nine additional (forthcoming) indicators specifically designed to measure violence against women. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Statistics Division has a plan to develop a regional framework and core set of gender indicators in consultation with Asia-Pacific countries in 2014 so as to specifically address regional issues and needs.

The Beijing Platform for Action commits governments to mainstreaming a gender perspective into the work of national statistical systems and to producing gender statistics. Ensuring the development of an adequate database forms part of this commitment and is reinforced by the responsibility that states have for the systematic collection and publication of data under the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, adopted in 1992 in effort to promote appropriate and reliable baseline data. These include, among others, the commitment to support NGOs, academics and others engaged in such work.16 Integrating a gender perspective through this process will enable governments to formulate better and more gender-responsive policies. Countries in the Asia-Pacific region are at different stages in fulfilling these commitments. Clearly, a range of different actions and stakeholders as well as investments in capacity development of statistics producers and consumers are necessary to achieve them.
Minimum Set of Gender Indicators, by Domain

I. Economic structures, participation in productive activities and access to resources
1. Average number of hours spent on unpaid domestic work by sex
2. Average number of hours spent on paid and unpaid work combined (total work burden), by sex
3. Labour force participation rates for 15-24 and 15+, by sex
4. Proportion of employed who are own-account workers, by sex
5. Proportion of employed who are working as contributing family workers, by sex
6. Proportion of employed who are employer, by sex
7. Percentage of firms owned by women, by size
8. Percentage distribution of employed population by sector, each sex
9. Informal employment as a percentage of total non-agricultural employment, by sex
10. Youth unemployment by sex
11. Proportion of population with access to credit, by sex
12. Proportion of adult population owning land, by sex
13. Gender gap in wages
14. Proportion of employed working part-time, by sex
15. Employment rate of persons aged 25-49 with a child under age 3 living in a household and with no children living in the household, by sex
16. Proportion of children under age 3 in formal care
17. Proportion of individuals using the Internet, by sex
18. Proportion of individuals using mobile/cellular telephones, by sex
19. Proportion of households with access to mass media (radio, TV, Internet), by sex of household head

II. Education
20. Literacy rate of persons aged 15-24 years old, by sex
21. Adjusted net enrolment ratio in primary education by sex
22. Gross enrolment ratio in secondary education, by sex
23. Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education, by sex
24. Gender parity index in enrolment at primary, secondary and tertiary levels
25. Share of female science, engineering, manufacturing and construction graduates at tertiary level
26. Proportion of females among tertiary education teachers or professors
27. Net intake in first grade of primary education, by sex
28. Primary education completion rate, by sex
29. Graduation from lower secondary education, by sex
30. Transition rate to secondary education, by sex
31. Education attainment of population aged 25 and over, by sex

III. Health and related services
32. Contraceptive prevalence among women who are married or in a union, aged 15-49
33. Under-five mortality rate, by sex
34. Maternal mortality ratio
35. Antenatal care coverage
36. Proportion of births attended by skilled health professional
37. Smoking prevalence among persons aged 15 and over, by sex
38. Proportion of adults who are obese, by sex
39. Women’s share of population aged 15-49 living with HIV/AIDS
40. Access to anti-retroviral drug, by sex
41. Life expectancy at age 60, by sex
42. Adult mortality by cause and age groups

IV. Public life and decision-making
43. Women’s share of government ministerial positions
44. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament
45. Women’s share of managerial positions
46. Percentage of female police officers
47. Percentage of female judges

V. Human rights of women and girl children
48. Proportion of women aged 15-49 subjected to physical or sexual violence in the last 12 months by an intimate partner
49. Proportion of women aged 15-49 subjected to physical or sexual violence in the last 12 months by persons other than an intimate partner
50. Prevalence of female genital mutilation/cutting (for relevant countries only)
51. Percentage of women aged 20-24 years old who were married or in a union before age 18
52. Adolescent fertility rate

Gender Indices as Measurement Tools

The need to monitor and measure progress towards the realization of the commitments made under the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is one of the reasons why gender statistics have been increasingly generated in the areas of gender, education, employment and health. Cross-country, regional and global comparisons are also enabled by such measuring tools. An example of a major measurement index in this area is the Gender Inequality Index (GII).

The GII was launched by UNDP in 2010 to strengthen gender analysis and policy advocacy on issues of health, empowerment and employment. As an index it succeeds the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), which was developed by UNDP in 1995. The GEM focused primarily on evaluating political participation, decision-making power, and power over economic resources. As a tool for measuring empowerment it has been criticized for not including vital components such as participation in local governance, civil society, and broader government administration.

The GII is considered stronger in that it examines the consequences of gender inequality for human development and measures reproductive health, empowerment, and labour market participation. While income is left out of the GII, it focuses on evaluating and measuring the consequences of horizontal inequalities in three key areas:

a. Reproductive health (measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent fertility rate);
   b. Empowerment (measured by women and men’s percentage shares of parliamentary seats and levels of secondary and higher education attainment); and
   c. The labour market (measured by women’s participation in the workforce).

The GII provides a strong empirical foundation for policy advocacy efforts aimed at addressing gender inequality; though, it faces major data limitations by missing some key indicators of empowerment (including gender-based violence, participation in local governance, and time-use).

In all major gender-related indices, education, employment and health statistics are essential in assessing the presence or absence of gender equality. Yet, there are many other areas (such as sexual and gender-based violence, asset ownership, participation in natural resource management, unpaid work, trade, entrepreneurship, taxation, and capital flows) that are not covered explicitly by the MDGs and are not measured by these indices but are essential for achieving gender equality. For these areas, sex-disaggregated statistics remain scarce.

Gender-responsive Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important that gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) be used in all development interventions, not only those that primarily target women and girls. Such a process identifies to what extent a programme’s outputs benefit women and men at the same time that it evaluates their respective roles in addressing programme outcomes. Gender-responsive M&E also facilitates the formulation of corrective paths to address gender inequalities that stem from specific programmes as well as from broader social and institutional dynamics in countries. Gender-responsive planning in the design, situational analysis and initial stages of any programme/project is also essential, as this is when men and women are identified as actors, beneficiaries, victims and so on. These early characterisations are often maintained throughout the life of a project, especially if not analysed and challenged with...
good gender-responsive M&E practices.

Additionally, gender-responsive M&E drives greater sustainability of gender mainstreaming initiatives across diverse programme areas. By providing recommendations for follow-up initiatives and pointing to a programme’s substantial implications for other stakeholders, gender-responsive M&E is important for assessing how addressing gender issues are pivotal to a larger policy agenda.

As part of this process, sex-disaggregated indicators should be defined in a concrete manner, so that they measure the impacts of the programme on both men and women in addition to equitable resource distribution and transformation of power relations. Gender-responsive indicators surpass just sex-disaggregated indicators but they also include indicators that probe gender-equality-related aspects of specific development interventions. Indicators should also look at not just benefits to women and men but also whether development interventions have negative impacts on women (or men). For example, in the case of some micro-finance projects, there’s an increase in domestic gender-based violence (GBV) cases when women start earning more money. In addition to paying substantial attention to women’s empowerment and participation levels throughout the M&E process, defining important indicators can help with removing gender bias from data gathering systems and provide policy makers with the necessary tools to make evidence-based policy decisions.

By systematically engaging in gender-responsive M&E, gender mainstreaming initiatives can be effectively promoted as beneficial for the success and sustainability of programme outcomes.

**Gender-responsive monitoring** has three aspects:

1. **Levels of monitoring**: This encompasses monitoring of progress towards fulfilling substantive goals and objectives in addition to monitoring of the implementation process. Monitoring requires both developing SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based) indicators and setting targets to measure progress. Output indicators indicate or monitor immediate changes (intended or unintended, positive or negative) as the result of the project activities. Outcome indicators look at changes at a higher level as contributed by a collective set of outputs.

   - When monitoring progress towards substantive goals and objectives, example indicators might include: How many HIV tests were conducted in area X of country Y? How many men versus women appeared for these tests?
   - When monitoring the implementation process, questions to ask might include: Are men and women equally participating in decision-making? Are men and women treated with equal respect as decision makers, implementers, and participants?

2. **Gender-responsive monitoring plans**: These should be developed and included in the official document outlining the programme strategy, and they should include who takes responsibility for monitoring tasks to ensure gender-sensitive data collection has occurred, how other stakeholders will participate, when monitoring visits will take place (for example, the different schedules of male and female respondents/participants need to be taken into account to ensure comprehensive and gender-responsive monitoring), which tools will be used and what mechanisms there are to review progress.

   - An effective monitoring plan can generally use a matrix to assist with gender-sensitive programme/project planning, monitoring and evaluation. This matrix is usually separated into rows and columns that indicate outcome and output indicators, the various staff and
stakeholder responsibilities, the monitoring timeframe, performance indicators, the means of project evaluation and the various assumptions that have gone into project design.25

3. **Gender-responsive indicators and targets**: Effective targets help to keep programme goals in sight; they are progressive but realistic, time-bound and measurable. SMART indicators, which should be disaggregated by sex wherever possible, help to track progress towards achieving targets.

- Examples include: Male to female ratio of incidence of HIV; male to female unemployment levels; percentage of population that feels women should be primarily responsible for childcare.26

Similarly, **gender-responsive evaluation**, a vital process for establishing good practices and learning lessons from various initiatives, has three aspects:

1. **Evaluation of outputs**: Have objectives been met?
   - Example: How many women have gained an increased confidence in political participation after the political leadership training?

2. **Evaluation of outcomes**: To what extent has the development goal been achieved?
   - Example: How many women and men have been elected as local government officials since the project started?

3. **Evaluation of process**: How were outputs and outcomes delivered?27
   - Example: Did the stakeholder engagement process promote the full and meaningful participation of women and women’s groups?

In addition to these aspects, there are certain key questions that should be considered at all stages. These are generally clustered under ‘evaluation criteria’, ‘evaluation actors’ and ‘evaluation process.’ Some example evaluation questions are listed below.

1. **Evaluation Criteria**

   - What level of importance is afforded to gender equality considerations in each stage of programme design (for example, in the situational analysis, project implementation, and identification of beneficiaries)?
   - How relevant are the questions for identifying gender inequalities?
   - Are the questions based on a comprehensive gender analysis?
   - How efficient is the programme and how sustainable?
   - How effective are the methodologies used for ensuring participation of women and men from vulnerable groups (for example, from isolated geographic locations, with disabilities, the elderly and so on)?

2. **Evaluation Actors**

   - Will the views and experiences of both men and women be considered?
   - Do evaluators’ Terms of Reference specify the need for gender expertise?
• Does the evaluation team have a gender balance?
• Are all stakeholders involved in the evaluation process?
• Are all stakeholders aware of the importance of gender-responsive analysis and M&E?
• Are stakeholders experienced in gender-responsive M&E practices?

3. Evaluation Process

• Will participatory methods be used? Which methods?
• How are the participatory methods gender-responsive?
• How and to whom will results of the evaluation be disseminated?
• Will the data collection methodologies be gender-responsive? Have the differing schedules of women, men, girls and boys been taken into account?

It is important to note that in evaluating – and ensuring – the sustainability of gender mainstreaming efforts, UNDP initiatives should be aligned with and support broader country development goals so that follow-up activities can systematically take place. As long as gender considerations remain outside mainstream policy-agenda setting, progress towards greater gender equality outcomes will be static.

Good examples of gender-responsive M&E in the Asia-Pacific region can be found in a number of countries. In 2009, to understand the impact of Cyclone Nargis on women in the Ayeyarwady Delta and Yangon regions of Myanmar, the Women’s Protection Technical Working Group and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement actively promoted the use of gender-sensitive M&E in its assessment of women’s needs and challenges as a result of the Cyclone. A year earlier, in 2008, the Government of Myanmar, ASEAN and the United Nations conducted a joint assessment during which sex-disaggregated data were collected which identified a disproportionate share of women victims as a result of the disaster.

In Bangladesh, where the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) and Grameen Bank have used eight comprehensive sex-disaggregated indicators to measure women’s empowerment (these included economic security, ability to make larger purchases, and involvement in political campaigning). UNDP’s Rural Employment Opportunities for Public Assets (REOPA) Project in Bangladesh had, between 2005 and 2011, also made sure to develop gender-sensitive and sex-disaggregated variables and indicators that can mainstream women into development programs and ultimately contribute to Bangladesh’s long-term sustainable development.

Gaps and Challenges

Frameworks and methods that are often used in development work do not reflect the actual variation in men and women’s roles, opportunities, and preferences. Many of these can be classified as biased against men or women and therefore fail to reflect reality. The frequent use of the household as a unit for analysis is being revisited due to ample qualitative evidence that the unspoken assumption that the situation, needs and interests of all members of the household are the same is incorrect. Intra-household inequalities often negatively impact women and girls, but the lack of available statistics demonstrating these realities perpetuates the habit of using the household as a unit of analysis.

Common survey questions, about whether respondents did any ‘work’, or about their ‘main activity’, that are used to derive labour force participation rates, need re-working. Questions like these consistently result in low labour force participation rates for women as women often don’t perceive of
their household tasks as ‘work’ when in fact the tasks may be categorized as such. Activity diaries are one alternative to short-question surveys, as they allow for respondents to more independently and more broadly list all of their paid and unpaid activities.33

Since sex-disaggregation of statistics has the potential to result in more accurate descriptions and analysis of the activities and characteristics of the whole population, it is an important pre-requisite for evidence based gender-responsive policy making.

One often neglected step in efforts to improve gender statistics is to collate and compile existing data relating to gender issues in a systematic manner. Service-related data from health centers, police stations, banks, courts and public services such as housing, social welfare services and shelters can offer valuable contributions to understanding the sector response to issues and how far they meet the needs of women. The quality of such data may be flawed, inconsistent and not entirely representative of issues due to inadequate training of service providers, limited resources to compile data, as well as poor coordination between service providers and statistical agencies.34

However, despite such problems this information can highlight entry points for action or for further research. For example, a study by the Women and Development Unit of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) illustrated how basic data collected through routine household surveys on topics such as age, sex, economic status of household members could be combined with existing information on household size, composition and headship, to gauge gender differences and vulnerability in poverty.35 For example, the contraceptive prevalence rates from household surveys can be verified through materials dispensed by health clinics, doctors and NGOs as well as records on the number of births and fertility rates.

One of the strategic objectives of the Platform for Action of the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women is to ‘generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation’. The associated set of actions include an agenda for the development of statistics so that each country can ‘ensure that statistics related to individuals are collected, compiled, analyzed and presented by sex and age and reflect problems, issues and questions related to women and men in society.’


Strengthening gender statistics, and in particular the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data at the national level poses an array of challenges in addition to the human and financial constraints faced by most national statistical offices. Critical obstacles include institutional barriers (for example, a ‘gendered policy agenda’36), a lack of understanding of gender issues, the lack of user-producer interaction and lack of political will. This is particularly true in the Asia-Pacific region where many national systems require general strengthening to produce basic statistics in a timely manner. However investments in gender statistics, specifically sex-disaggregation and capacity for gender analysis, are more cost-effective and easier to accomplish at an early stage of institutional reform of statistics agencies rather than as an add-on at the end of a lengthy reform process.37 The main gaps and challenges that UNDP Country Offices in the region face when working on improving gender statistics include: the lack of a centralized database, removing gender bias from data gathering systems and increasing demand for sex-disaggregated data amongst others.

The collection of sex-disaggregated data on all topics – both those that are especially relevant to women as well as those that appear at first glance to be unrelated to gender – is vital. A systemic review of official statistics and data collection systems is required. For example, business surveys for
economic statistics can incorporate the sex of employees which can then be used in sector productivity and other analysis. Often policies and programmes that appear gender neutral actually affect the relative position, the status and the rights of men, women and children. Investigation into a particular gender aspect not initially articulated is often required. This has been seen in relation to violent crime policies. A hidden aspect of violent crime is violence in the home. Excluding such considerations from conceptual and/or measurement processes means that a significant proportion of violent crime is not acknowledged or measured, and therefore not considered in programming or policy development.

While the collection of data about both women and men can provide important insights into their status in society, sex-disaggregated data does not completely reflect the state of gender relations in any given society because they do not consider the different socio-economic realities women and men face. This means that the concepts and methods used data collection need to be adequately formulated to ensure that they reflect existing gender concerns and differentials. Additionally, social and cultural factors must be considered, as they can result in gender-based biases in data collection, analysis and presentation. If this is done, gender can be mainstreamed into data collection and analysis, producing gender statistics.

**Emerging Good Practices**

UNDP is increasingly addressing the gaps and challenges associated with improving the quality, quantity and availability of gender statistics. UNDP has been assisting national institutions to generate gender statistics that can inform policy and programme development through capacity building, institutional strengthening and support for innovative action. The following are examples of emerging UNDP good practices from the region in particular thematic areas.

**a) Studies on Gender-based Violence (GBV)**

There is a continuing need to generate more statistics that shed light on the extent and causes of GBV. GBV data clearly requires disaggregation not only by sex but also by other factors in order to pinpoint heightened vulnerability to GBV.

Partners for Prevention, a UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV regional joint programme for gender-based violence prevention in Asia and the Pacific, recently conducted a multi-country study on men and violence. The full report of this study, *Why Do Some Men Use Violence Against Women and How Can We Prevent it?*, was released in September 2013. The objectives of the study were to estimate the prevalence of men’s use of violence against women and understand the factors associated with such violence in order to be able to develop more effective violence prevention programmes and policies. Data on GBV prevalence remains a consistent challenge due to a lack of standardization of GBV terminology and incident classifications, as well as the problem of under-reporting of GBV by victims and sometimes by police. Analysis of crime statistics in many countries simply does not allow for a comprehensive picture of GBV to be drawn.

The cutting-edge methodologies used in the Partners for Prevention study included both quantitative...
and qualitative surveying and interviewing of participants, for example in utilizing audio-enhanced personal digital assistants (PDAs) respondents could easily input into the PDAs their answers to very sensitive questions, particularly around sexual crimes, rather than verbally answering an interviewer. Over 10,000 men and 3,000 women were surveyed across nine sites in six countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka. Knowledge from the study is already informing national-level programmes to prevent violence through the promotion of non-violent and gender-equitable masculinities. A toolkit for replicating the study has also been produced and is available online.40

There have also been other studies in this area. In 2012, UN Women commissioned research in Viet Nam whose aim was to estimate the costs of domestic violence against women and provide targeted recommendations to address them.41 Data for the study was collected using household as well as service provider surveys, and qualitative interviews of women affected by GBV provided more in-depth information about the behaviour of women seeking assistance. To estimate costs of intimate partner violence to households and communities the Viet Nam study collected data on both out of pocket costs (health fees, providing shelter, and court costs for example) and indirect costs (days lost from paid and unpaid work, and school days lost for children).42

Earlier, in 2005, WHO also conducted a Multi-Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence, where 24,000 women across 10 countries were carefully interviewed about their experiences of violence in effort to determine prevalence rates and thus strengthen national commitment and action on violence against women.43 New data collected included impacts of GBV on women’s health supporting efforts for more comprehensive health care sector responses to GBV. That it is health care providers and not necessarily police that are often first contacts for victims of GBV is significant when considering data collection methodologies for GBV studies.

Studies similar to these but focusing on under-researched topics would be valuable additions to a rapidly developing discourse on GBV in the Asia-Pacific Region. These may include an examination of different forms of GBV (other than intimate partner and sexual violence) as well as longitudinal studies which observe the same variables at regular intervals over a long period of time, useful for analyzing changes or consistencies over time, and studies that investigate the impact of social change, economic development and globalization on GBV. It would, moreover, be important to explore possible correlations between GBV and time-use or between increased levels of GBV and women’s increasing status as a substantial (sometimes primary) income earner in a household.

b) Studies and Reports on Women’s Political Participation and Involvement in Decision-making

As the issue of women’s political participation in the Asia-Pacific region has increased in visibility, it has become apparent that most public and private institutions with decision-making roles are not formally required to gather data on women’s participation. Beyond parliaments, state, and local governments, this situation applies to political parties, the private sector and NGOs. As a result, data on women at the lower levels of decision-making and on women candidates in politics (as opposed to elected officials) are largely lacking or are collected on an ad hoc basis, often in response to specific demands such as reporting for CEDAW or the Secretary General’s questionnaire on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Improved data collection could help to clarify trends and to compare the impact of strategies to increase women’s political participation. There is a need to move beyond the senior echelons of the Public Service and national politics collection when it comes to monitoring and analysis of sex-
disaggregated data. The UNDP’s 2010 Status Report on Women in Local Governance\(^4^4\) presents and analyzes a baseline measure of women’s representation in sub-national government structures in the Asia-Pacific region, and serves as a good example of efforts to understand the processes that provide access to positions of power and the obstacles women face.

Improved statistics are also needed to improve our understanding of women’s participation in political parties and in elections, both as organizers and as voters. For example, the report by the UNDP Electoral Support Project on Gender Mapping in the Field of Elections in Nepal presents statistics outlining the gender gaps that exist in the different stages of the electoral process (pre-voting, voting and post-voting), allowing for analysis on women in decision-making positions that is useful for efforts to improve and expand women’s roles in delivering democracy.\(^4^5\)

c) Sex-Disaggregated Reporting on HIV/AIDS

Efforts are underway to promote greater use of sex-disaggregated data on HIV/AIDS in policy-making where such data can show the gender differences in the transmission and the effect of the disease, thereby prompting gender-responsive action. Between 2008 and 2010, UNDP conducted studies on the socio-economic impact of HIV at the household level in India, China, Viet Nam, Cambodia and Indonesia.\(^6^6\) The sex-disaggregated data provided clear evidence that while more men than women are infected with HIV in the region, women shoulder a disproportionate burden of the disease. For example, the study revealed that an overwhelming majority of female widows from households impacted by HIV in Viet Nam, Indonesia, and India reported being denied a share of her husband’s property and assets. Additionally, girls from HIV-households were far more likely to drop out of school than boys from the same households. The studies have helped with evidence-based programming in these countries. Similar studies are currently being conducted in Myanmar and Papua New Guinea.

d) 2010 Asia Pacific Human Development Report on “Power, Voice and Rights”

In response to the absence of a consolidated repository that provides official disaggregated data for responsive policy making, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS), together with UNDP Thailand, launched Thailand’s first Gender-Disaggregated Data and Database Project in 2008. This now provides an integrated database that allows easy access and use of data disaggregated by gender, where information on comparison of women’s status by indicators across provinces was used as reference during preparation of the MSDHS development plan. The database and associated systems will help Thailand to meet its obligations to international commitments such as the Beijing Declaration and Action Plan, CEDAW, and the MDGs.

The collection of more complete and reliable data in addition to strengthened capacity for gender analysis was listed as one of eight vital points of the 2010 UNDP Asia-Pacific Human Development Report (APHDR) action agenda. These are essential steps towards formulating policy and programme interventions in the areas of economic power, political voice and legal rights that contribute to gender equality.\(^4^7\) The APHDR has set an impressive precedent for action by compiling data on a number of instrumental but lesser known gender indicators surrounding building economic power (including asset and property ownership, access to credit, and male-female differences in job sectors), promoting women’s political voice (not only the participation rates of women in parliaments, but also within political parties and party leadership roles) and progressing women’s legal rights (reservations to CEDAW, domestic violence legislation, and access to justice).
e) Time-use surveys

Unpaid work is normally not counted in GDP estimates, as much of this work takes place within the household and falls outside the official definition of ‘production’ according to the System of National Accounts (SNA). As a consequence, there is a shortage of data on unpaid work, even though it is evident that vast amounts of unpaid work take place, much of it performed by women. So there is a need to collect data, both qualitative and quantitative, on unpaid work, to allow for better understanding of its extent, importance, and characteristics.

Time-use surveys are a particularly important means to highlight the issue of women’s unpaid work in addition to illustrating the various issues of informal work and work that is done in tandem with other activities. These surveys need to be undertaken regularly with their results being analysed and strategically disseminated. Giving visibility to unpaid work is a step towards valuing this work and its important contribution to economies and societies. This will help to promote and reach agreement on measures towards a fair distribution of household and care-related tasks between women and men, and addressing the consequences of unequal distribution of unpaid work through national policies. Regional initiatives such as the South Asian Association for Regional Coopertaion (SAARC) Gender Info Base could be supported and replicated. The Gender Info Base is a repository for both qualitative and quantitative data, its objective being to act as a comprehensive database of regional gender-related information that anyone can access. Under this initiative, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India have each conducted time-use surveys, recognizing that many activities carried out by women both at home and in the informal economy fall outside the scope of conventional data-gathering. Such surveys have provided a more nuanced understanding of women’s economic contribution, enabling a higher level of gender analysis and allowing for improved monitoring of policy impact and thus improving the accuracy of predicting potential policy outcomes. Specifically, in the case of Pakistan, these surveys showed the macroeconomic implications of unpaid care work by comparing the time it took women and men to access public and private education and health services in urban and rural areas. National statistical organizations require further support to mainstream such surveys as a regular instrument.

Ways Forward

To fully realize the potential impact of gender statistics in the design, delivery, and monitoring of government services as well as development programmes, further efforts are needed to increase the quality, dissemination and use of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data. Areas where more data collection and analysis are needed include gender-based violence, the male-female gap in assets ownership, and measuring women’s unpaid work. In the case of cross-border migration, improved sex-disaggregated data collection requires the sharing of data between origin, destination countries and sub-national regions.

Further work is necessary in all of the thematic areas mentioned above. For example, in the Pacific a multi-country study was carried out with UNFPA funding based on the WHO research protocol on Domestic Violence and Women’s Health also covering sexual violence. UNDP could spearhead an analytical report that specifically examines the depth of violence against women in selected countries to highlight the severity of the situation as well as advocate for change. The findings of such reports could then be used to inform policy responses.

At the national level, all ministries should take responsibility for the collection, monitoring and analysis of sex-disaggregated data, especially but not limited to matters that are of particular concern to
women. Ministries such as agriculture, commerce, education, finance, health, industry, infrastructure and labour should promote the availability and use of sex-disaggregated data and feed the resulting data into official statistical systems. This will require prioritization and political will by the whole of government, especially by departments responsible for fiscal matters. Additionally, the sustainability of such data projects is essential. Training for responsible government organizations and strengthening institutional capacity needs to be supported with long-term financial commitment so that sex-disaggregated data are used to underpin gender mainstreaming activities with sustainable results.

For such institutional changes to be sustainable, attitudes must also change, both among officials within institutions and in society at large. Assessing gaps and change through measurement is part of building and strengthening results-oriented attitudes, because sex-disaggregated data reveal whether development efforts have had and are having positive results for both women and men. If women and girls benefit less from development than men and boys due to the persistence of discrimination and bias, then MDG achievement is likely to suffer. Advocacy efforts are therefore also an important aspect in developing an understanding as well as demand for resources to be channelled towards improved sex-disaggregated data.

In addition, a general trend can be observed whereby offices and organizations collect data and use gender statistics to justify and support women-focused activities, without engaging in analyses of such data that improve our understanding of underlying gender issues (that cause gender inequalities) and can stimulate new approaches. There have been a number of commendable efforts to mainstream gender issues in UNDP’s five thematic areas and in specific regional and country programmes as detailed in the ‘Emerging UNDP Good Practices’. However, these tend to be somewhat isolated successes that depend on individual efforts rather than on a systematic and sustainable approach. In addition to training, networking between different Country Offices, National Statistical Offices, Ministries and other organizations is a valuable tool, allowing individuals to draw on a range of experiences in order to improve their gender mainstreaming efforts.

It is evident from these activities that improved and expanded collection of sex-disaggregated data through national statistical systems needs to go hand in hand with improved reporting, analysis, dissemination and active use of the resulting analysis. Capacity development of statistical literacy among policy makers is critical and should be built into all actions to advance corporate priorities. Gender statistics are also most beneficial when incorporated across a country’s policy framework. They help to support sustainable policy and programme design, monitor the achievement of equitable results for women and men from all backgrounds, as well as strengthen our understanding of the position of men and women from different backgrounds.
Notes

1 Gender mainstreaming is the process of integrating a gender perspective into all aspects of institutions and programmes, with the aim of achieving gender equality. For more information see: UNDP RBEC (2007). Gender Mainstreaming in Practice: A Toolkit (Part I), pp. 11-12.


3 In this note, we mostly use the term sex-disaggregated data, since sex is a constant category that lends itself to statistical break-down, whereas gender is a concept that by its very definition changes through time as well as across cultures and hence is not static. However, when quoting other agencies, we have respected their use of the term gender-disaggregated statistics.

4 More information about the correlation between gender inequality and human development, and about the purpose, strengths and weaknesses of the GII can be found at http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/gii/.

5 MDG 3 is to ‘promote gender equality and empower women’. The target is to ‘eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015’. The indicators for measuring progress include: 3.1 Ratios of girls to boys in primary secondary and tertiary education; 3.2 The share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector; 3.3 The proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments; and 3.4 The ratio of literate females to males if 15-24 year olds. See United Nations, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Special Report. Last accessed on 30 July 2013 at http://www.un.org/special-rep/ohrlls/lldc/MDGs.pdf.


7 Note that only a few countries currently include a third gender option when collecting data. For an example see UNDP (n.d.), Nepal Census Recognizes Third Gender for First Time. Last accessed on 16 December 2013 at http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/hiv-aids/successstories/Nepal_third_gender_census_recognition/.


10 Practical tools that are gender-sensitive, as defined by the 52nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, include guidelines, checklists and indicators. These tools can supplement organizational development campaigns.


12 A number of other important documents and reviews have reiterated these issues, including The Beijing +15 review; the Global Review; and the Bangkok Declaration.


See, for example, Mayoux, L. (2006). *Women’s Empowerment through Sustainable Microfinance: Rethinking Best Practice*.


Disease burden is a measure used to assess and compare the relative impact of different health conditions (for example, diseases or injuries) on populations. In the context of this note, GBV (particularly domestic violence) makes up five percent of the total disease burden of women aged 15 to 44 in developing countries. See Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (n.d.). *Burden of Disease*. Last accessed on 31 July 2013 at http://www.aihw.gov.au/burden-of-disease/.


42 Ibid.


48 There is unpaid work counted in SNA and not counted in SNA. For instance, unpaid work for production related fields (e.g., subsistence farming) will be SNA while household chores (reproduction) is non-SNA. See UNDP APRC Gender Team (2012), Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiative Asia and the Pacific: Training Module 3: Unpaid Work, pp. 3-4.


50 UNESCAP and UNDP produced a guidebook on integrating findings on unpaid work into national policies. See UNESCAP and UNDP (2003). Integrating Unpaid Work into National Policies. New York. Further examples can be seen in Republic of Korea, India, Mongolia and Fiji.


### Acronyms and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGDI</td>
<td>The African Gender and Development Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIT</td>
<td>Asian Institute of Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>APEC</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation</td>
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<td>APHDR</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Human Development Report</td>
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<td>APRC</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Regional Centre</td>
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<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>The Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<td>CLGF</td>
<td>Common Wealth Local Government Forum</td>
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<td>CO</td>
<td>Country Office</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Central Statistics Office</td>
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<td>ECLAC</td>
<td>Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>EMB</td>
<td>Environmental Management Bureau</td>
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<td>ESCWA</td>
<td>Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia</td>
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<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<td>GDI</td>
<td>Gender-related Development Index</td>
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<td>GEM</td>
<td>Gender Empowerment Measure</td>
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<td>GPECS</td>
<td>Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>GID-DB</td>
<td>The OECD Gender, Institutions and Development Database</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDR</td>
<td>Human Development Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILOLEX</td>
<td>The International Labour Organization’s Database of International Labour Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>MSDHS</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Development and Human Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>NWEC</td>
<td>New World Engineering Construction</td>
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<td>SAARC</td>
<td>South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation</td>
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<td>SDD</td>
<td>Sex-Disaggregated Data</td>
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<tr>
<td>SGIB</td>
<td>South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Gender Info Base</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCLG ASPAC</td>
<td>United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNECE</td>
<td>United Nations Economic Commission for Europe</td>
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<td>UNESCAP</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<td>UNIFEM</td>
<td>United Nations Development Fund for Women</td>
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<td>UNSD</td>
<td>United Nations Statistics Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN WOMEN</td>
<td>United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women</td>
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<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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<td>WIDNET</td>
<td>Women in Development Network</td>
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Data and Statistics - Definitions

Data

A collection of observations that can be used to represent the attributes of something that is witnessed and of interest to the observer: household income and education levels, for example.

Types of Data:

- **Quantitative** data, usually numerical in form, commonly are drawn from a large number of cases of units of analysis to compare and analyze the widest possible range of values across the cases. In this way, the structure of the data can be inferred, as well as homogenous generalizations produced that answer descriptive questions.

- **Qualitative** data, usually non-numerical in form, consist of words, text, photographs, videos, sound recordings and the like. Although they are commonly drawn from a small number of cases, emphasizing the complexity and heterogeneity of the data to produce answers to explanatory analytical questions, qualitative data can cover whole populations, and so can be representative.

The distinction between quantitative and qualitative data can however be very arbitrary. Numbers can convey quality as well as quantity; words can convey quantity as well as quality. Moreover, all quantitative data are based upon qualitative judgments and all qualitative data can be described and manipulated numerically.

Data Set

A data set consists of a number of units of analysis, a number of variables, and the set of values that links the units of analysis to the variables.

Sex-Disaggregated Data

Data that is cross-classified by sex, presenting information separately for women and men, girls and boys. Sex-disaggregated data is collected on the basis of concepts and methods that take into account women's and men's roles, realities, conditions and situations in all spheres and aspects of society.

Statistics

Quantitative data often compresses evidence into a form that summarizes the evidence so that inferences can be drawn. This is the tool of analysis known as statistics. Qualitative data can also be expressed numerically as a **categorical variable** and once completed, can be compressed into a form that allows statistical inferences to be drawn.

Data Analysis

There are many ways of analyzing data. Both quantitative and qualitative evidence presented numerically can be analyzed to understand how a variable varies. Variation can be numerical, but it can also be categorical, as variations across groups of variables are brought together on the basis of qualitative of criteria.
**Indicators**

Indicators are evidence constructed from statistics or a data series. They are assembled to monitor and enable comparisons (between countries or across time) of selected areas of social and economic life. Indicators are standardised or have clear reference points.

SMART indicators are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime-bound; they can come from quantitative sources (censuses, labour force surveys, and administrative records) and from qualitative sources (focus groups, participant observation, qualitative fieldwork, and attitude surveys/interviews).

**Composite Indices**

Composite indices are numbers derived from a combination of various indicators, on the basis of an underlying model a multi-dimensional concept being measured. One important index is the Human Development Index (HDI).


**Useful Resources and Additional Information**


For additional information contact: registry.th@undp.org.