Communicating Women Count

An outreach, advocacy and visibility strategy

1. Background

The objective of *Women Count* is that **gender statistics are available, accessible, analyzed and used to inform policymaking, advocacy and accountability for delivering gender equality and women's empowerment**.

The first Phase of Women Count has laid the critical groundwork and has equipped countries with the tools needed to build robust national gender statistical systems. Sustaining these important gains and continuing to strengthen investments in gender data will further contribute to our global efforts to ensure that all women and girls are counted and visible.

Building on Phase I, Women Count Phase II will contribute to driving results across the same three Outcome areas: i) creating an enabling environment, ii) increasing the production of gender data and iii) improving data accessibility and use. To achieve greater reach, Phase II will be guided by a more decentralized approach to improve and scale-up interventions on gender statistics.

2. Purpose

The **purpose of the communication strategy** is to serve as a catalyst for programme implementation. This is because the work of communication, engagement and advocacy involves reaching allies and multipliers, and convincing them of the importance of investing in, producing, and using gender statistics, to achieving the programme objectives. In particular, the communication strategy is essential to achieving outcome 3 of the programme, to improve gender statistics access and use.

In order for communications to be effective in achieving programme objectives, there must be investment (of resources, capacity and time) in communication activities. Crucially, communications must not be an afterthought; rather it must be considered from the inception of any programme activity.

3. Target audience

The following programme stakeholders were identified in Phase I but remain relevant.

Programme Stakeholders

- **National Statistical Offices (NSOs)** – these are the primary stakeholders for the programme, which aims to build their capacity for the improvement, coordination, prioritization, and production of gender statistics.
- **Member states/line ministries** – member states are ultimate decision-makers in the direction of the programme and should be aided in developing capacity for producing more and better gender data, and to prioritize data collection in the localization of the SDGs. Line ministries may

often be both data users and producers, and should be targeted by capacity-building efforts as well as advocacy for prioritizing and promoting gender data production.

- **Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)** – there are many partner agencies, such as Plan International and Data2X, who have similar objectives, and should be considered allies in promoting the programme. See more in the partnerships section.
- **Academia and training** – researchers and universities, as well as training networks must also be targeted in order to build capacity on gender data and create spaces for training of statisticians.
- **Donors** – the programme is made possible through the support of many donors, who should continue to be engaged through events and other opportunities to not only leverage their continued interest, networks and influence, but to invest in the sustainability of the programme.
- **UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations** – several UN agencies are invested in gender statistics, while many are not. This is an opportunity to advocate within the UN system to strengthen the call for more and better gender data in order to achieve the lofty goals set out in the SDGs. There are opportunities for partnerships with organizations such as the OECD and World Bank, not just for programme implementation but for joint outreach efforts.
- **UN Women colleagues** – UN Women staff worldwide are key beneficiaries from the programme, in building and leveraging relationships at the country level, increasing their own knowledge on the use and production of gender statistics and for promoting gender statistics at country and regional levels.

For the purpose of the communication strategy, the stakeholders categorized above can be considered **target audiences**, and grouped into three **relationship categories**, which can help identify specific ways to reach them.

> **Commented [MM4]:** Since Women Count has so many target audiences, we categorize them by function - how are we engaging them

Relationship categories of target audience

- **Agents of change** – These are influencers and drivers of change who can take the message of the programme to harder to reach audiences, such as member states who are unconvinced or on the fence about gender statistics. Agents of change can be decisionmakers in government, policymakers, statisticians, donors who can champion the programme, or civil society partners.
- **Allies** – these are strategic partners and collaborators who can help strengthen the programme's reach and support activities. This group includes civil society partners, such as Data2X, the University of Nairobi (for the Kenya project) and ESCAP's Statistics Division in the Asia-Pacific region. This group can include UN Women staff (not just in pathfinder countries and regional offices) because they are key conduits for improved use of gender statistics as well as for promoting it within their networks. Without the support of allies, the programme will not be able to gain the traction that is needed beyond the sphere of control.
- **Multipliers** – these are a broader group of stakeholders in mainstream and non-traditional media, especially data journalists; researchers and data users; advocates in other agencies; and training institutes, who can amplify the programme's messaging and generate greater visibility for its aims, and broadly promote the importance of gender statistics within the general public.

5. Communication outcomes

Outcome 1: Women Count speaks with one voice across the programme

Rationale: Since the programme is implemented in multiple countries, common branding and messaging ensures coherence and adherence to the programme goals.

How it is achieved: Communicating as one and increasing Women Count visibility
Sample activities (customized to the regional/country context)
- A common set of key messages (TBD)
- Use and uptake of brand identity, templates and other assets
- Awareness and use of the Women Count data hub

Responsible persons: List all parties (including vendors and partners) involved

Expected result: knowledge products and other assets (including social media) are created using Women Count branding, x number of stories are published on the data hub

Outcome 2: UN Women is regarded as an authoritative gender data leader

Rationale: Since there are a lot of actors in the gender data space, we must make sure Women Count stands out and our contribution is widely recognized

How it is achieved: Promoting awareness of Women Count initiatives and success stories
Sample activities (customized to the regional/country context)
- Women Count Data Hub has strong cross-linkages with UN Women website
- Coordination with UN Women Comms leverages social media channels and media partnerships such as Google ad campaigns
- Senior management is well-briefed to include messaging on gender data and promote the work of Women Count in speeches and public engagements

Responsible persons: List all parties (including vendors and partners) involved

Expected result: Women Count data hub increases views, is invited to share expertise at discussions on gender data innovations, including on time-use, violence against women and the gender-environment nexus.

Outcome 3: There is strong evidence that gender data can inform policy and advocacy

Rationale: In Phase II we will be emphasizing data use, looking for stories that show how data has been used to generate change, and making sure all knowledge production is purposeful, emphasizing use and uptake and use.

How it is achieved: Systematic monitoring and documenting of data use cases and dissemination to encourage use and uptake of knowledge
Sample activities (customized to the regional/country context)
- Initiate a process of commissioning use cases on what has worked, unexpected wins and new horizons, used for annual reporting and monitoring (connection with KM, M&E)

- Develop case stories and publish them on the Women Count data hub
- Ensure that dissemination strategies are built into publication plans, using a standardized outreach checklist to determine dissemination approaches (TBD)
- Organize dedicated briefings with key stakeholders are organized to share findings and encourage uptake and use

Responsible persons: List all parties (including vendors and partners) involved

Expected result: NSOs and other government stakeholders, donors and partners have access to key knowledge products and a robust evidence base showing how gender data use has brought about policy and programmatic change. Monitoring knowledge products will find increased downloads, citations and references to Women Count knowledge products.

Outcome 4: More people have the capacity to produce, access, use and communicate gender data

How it is achieved: Gender data training and resources made available internally and externally
Sample activities (customized to the regional/country context)
- Regional gender data repositories are developed and shared
- Conduct internal data clinics on data use, visualizations and communication
- Create a space on the Data Hub to easily share Women Count training modules

Cross-cutting levers

The following levers cut across all four outcomes and are catalytical to the success of the communication strategy more broadly. They should be considered in implementing each outcome.

1. **The Women Count data hub** – the data hub is key to promoting the successes and use cases of the Women Count programme, publishing knowledge products, generating a broader audience of users, and boosting gender data learning.
   Resources:
   - A quality assurance checklist will be provided for submitting stories
   - Detailed editorial and submission guidelines are available to guide the story submission process
   - A publication upload form and calendar request form will help ensure your publications and events are systematically uploaded

2. **Events and partnerships** – leveraging partnerships with key stakeholders and engaging in relevant events can serve as multipliers of Women Count messages to the right audiences, be useful avenues for sharing data and evidence, and increase visibility.
   Resources:
   - A calendar request form will be provided to request a new event to be uploaded onto the Data Hub
   - An advocacy calendar will be shared to highlight key advocacy moments each year

3. **Knowledge products** – New knowledge and data produced by the programme and disseminated strategically can ensure that Women Count is well-positioned as an authority in the gender data space, showcase a coherent brand and identity, and make important evidence available for decision-making and advocacy.
   Resources:
   - A quality assurance/KP checklist has been created to guide knowledge production
   - An outreach checklist will help to inform the dissemination strategy for each KP