

MODULE 11

USING GENDER DATA FOR POLICYMAKING

TRAINING SYLLABUS

Curriculum on Gender Statistics Training

This product was developed under the guidance of the Subgroup on Gender Statistics Training, within the Asia-Pacific Network of Statistical Training Institutes.

Introduction

This syllabus has been designed to guide trainers on how to conduct related training. The syllabus can also be used by learners who wish to know more about this topic and people who are generally interested in gender statistics.

This syllabus is part of a wider module on this area of gender statistics. Other materials within this module might include exercises, PowerPoint presentations and example quizzes. Please refer to the additional set of materials for a comprehensive and effective learning experience.

Who is this module for?

- **Policymakers and decision-makers** in general, who are looking to use gender statistics to design evidence-based policies
- **Academics** who wish to enhance their knowledge on integrating gender statistics in policymaking or who wish to understand how to write gender policy briefs
- **Civil society organizations** who wish to enhance their knowledge on using gender data to advocate for policy solutions
- **Anyone** who wishes to find out how to use gender statistics to designing effective and evidence-based policies for gender-related issues

What do I need to know before going through this module?

This module includes introductory information on how to use gender statistics for policymaking. Data users can benefit from this module by learning how to understand gender data and consider data analysis and findings for policy formulation. No advanced knowledge of statistics is necessary.

Learning objectives

The expected learning outcomes for this module include:

- Becoming familiar with how to integrate a gender perspective throughout all stages of the policymaking process.
- Understanding the need and rationale for using gender statistics in policymaking.
- Learning the basic concepts of data and policy integration for evidence-based policymaking.
- Learning key tips for writing evidence-based gender policy briefs.

Note to trainer: Depending on the pace of trainer and trainees, it is expected that training for this module can be delivered in 1-2 hours

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1. Mainstreaming the use of gender data throughout the policymaking process

Policymaking is the practice of making tangible written rules that govern a group of people or society at large¹. The policymaking process includes a wide range of activities. In some cases, these might start with identifying policy issues, followed by gathering the necessary evidence to understand these issues fully. In others, data analysis might actually be the first step, revealing inequalities or other concerns and thus policymaking follows as a result. Either way, data should play a central role in policy formulation.

Making data-informed decisions helps promote policy effectiveness by supporting the creation of targeted responses to issues. Therefore, the quality of statistics and statistical procedures can affect policy outcomes; good statistics lead to good policies and result in better development². More often than not, however, statistics are only used after a policy is designed, to monitor and evaluate the impact it has on the target population. This approach is insufficient, as it fails to guarantee that the policy addresses the needs of all population groups to begin with.

In line with meeting the SDG promise of leaving no one behind, gender statistics should be used at all different stages of policymaking, from identifying needs and priority policy areas, to designing responses to such needs, informing monitoring processes and advocating to mobilize support for gender-responsive policies. Although no silver bullet exists for policymaking (the effectiveness of policies depends highly on the country context), the following steps could guide policymakers in making informed decisions and formulating more responsive policies³:

Figure 1: Steps for policymaking



¹ <https://oecd-opsi.org/guide/public-policy/>

² <https://paris21.org/sites/default/files/1509.pdf>

³ Ibid.

1. Identifying the issue

The first stage in the process of policy formulation occurs when the appearance of a statistic or a fact reveals an aspect of social or economic life that had until then remained hidden from the general public and from policymakers⁴. Mainstreaming gender at this stage can be concerned with understanding what the statistics indicate about specific groups of women and girls (refer to Modules 1, 2 and 3 for tips on how to understand and interpret gender data, and to Module 9 if you wish to conduct basic analysis) .

2. Gathering evidence

To support the formulation of a policy, it is important to assess the status of different population groups on the particular issue of concern. This requires the compilation and examination of related gender data, including that which is disaggregated by age, race, ethnicity or other socioeconomic characteristics. Throughout this process, it is important to assess the quality of the data by looking at related metadata and ensuring the correct interpretation of the figures (refer to Modules 2 and 3 for details on how to interpret data correctly, and where to find metadata for official statistics). If policymakers find it difficult to locate the necessary data to inform decision-making, or to interpret the available data, user-producer dialogues might be necessary at this stage (refer to Module 4 for details on how to organize User-Producer dialogues).

3. Identifying and defining outcomes

To identify the desired outcomes of a policy, the following questions must be answered:

- What is the issue that this policy should resolve?
- What are the population groups for which the policy should create change?
- What is the status of these groups in relation to the desired goal?
- Are women and men equally disadvantaged on this issue?
- Are any of these population groups (e.g. specific groups of women or men) particularly at risk/disadvantaged?
- What degree of change is realistic for each group given the current status and the time frame?
- Are there any gender-specific factors that might hinder the achievement of the outcome? (e.g. pregnancy, safety in public spaces, caring responsibilities, etc.)

Gender data might help answer many of these questions (refer to Modules 6 and 7 to understand how to perform this kind of analysis. Although these modules are meant for statisticians, you may wish to understand why this analysis is important and work with national statisticians in your country to generate the necessary estimates).

Multiple policy outcomes may be needed to tackle the specific needs of each of these population groups. If the expected outcomes are different for women and men, these should be given equal

⁴ <https://paris21.org/sites/default/files/1509.pdf>

consideration. Outcomes for women should not be an add-on to a policy, but rather gender issues should be considered throughout.

4. Planning

A policy draft must include specific measures that detail how the outcomes will be achieved. Thus, it is important that the policy objectives are clear and align well with the outcomes. It is also paramount that the outcomes are measurable and achievable.

When selecting policy responses to achieve the desired outcomes, keep in mind the following issues:

- Will the same policy approach work for women and men? Will it work for all population groups in need? Policies should be universal, so even the harder to reach are able to see change. Utilizing gender data to identify who these people are, and to measure related change is essential to ensure effective implementation (again, please refer to Modules 6 and 7 and engage national statisticians for this work).
- Could there be any negative externalities as a result of this policy? Will it affect other people or natural resources negatively? While gender statistics can be useful to measure the effectiveness of policy responses and the impact on target populations, further analysis of gender data is needed to ensure policies aren't detrimental to other people and the planet (refer to Module 6 to understand how correlation and regression analysis can support a broader understanding about how variables are connected. Involve national statisticians to perform this type of analysis prior to implementing policies).

Selecting appropriate indicators for monitoring policy implementation is also part of policy planning. Usually, indicators can be designed at the output, outcome and impact levels:

- Output indicators are concerned with 'what' a policy produces to achieve its objectives. These can be directly determined by the policy and are usually very explicit and certain in nature⁵. For instance, a policy designed to reduce women's unemployment rates might include activities such as computer literacy training for young women professionals. An output indicator for this policy might be: 'proportion of young professionals that are skilled on computer literacy, by sex.'
- Outcome indicators are concerned with the conditions that are supposed to be altered by a policy. These can be affected only after the policy outputs are achieved but, unlike the output indicators, can be less certain⁶. For the policy example above, an outcome indicator could be: 'Unemployment rate, by sex'.
- Impact indicators often aim to measure the long-term direct or indirect effects of the policy outcomes. They are hard to measure since they may or may not occur or, even if they do occur, it may take a long time to see the impact⁷. For instance, for the policy on unemployment, an impact indicator could be: 'Gross domestic product'.

⁵ <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/5jm5cgr8j532-en.pdf?expires=1581483316&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=6EA70A4ADD3FC429AA223B1557F91BB5>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/inputs-outputs-outcomes-impact-what-s-the-difference-2502227>

Indicators to monitor policy implementation should therefore align with the policy's expected outputs, outcomes and impact. Gender data should be used consistently for those indicators. In practice, this can be achieved by using:

- Indicators disaggregated by sex
- Indicators that capture gender specific issues even without disaggregation (e.g. maternal mortality ratios, or proportion of households that use clean cooking fuels)

(To understand the different types of gender indicators that exist, and which you should select, refer to Module 1 and Module 3)

5. Communication

Communication of a policy goal is key to convincing stakeholders to take appropriate action. Communication strategies must be tailored to different groups of stakeholders, their level of expertise and prior knowledge of gender issues. Most importantly, these strategies must highlight the potential impact of the policy. Gender data can be a powerful tool in communicating these messages, as statistics provide hard evidence of population needs and impact of policy responses (refer to Module 10 on communicating gender data to learn how to craft data-driven communication messages).

6. Implementation (and monitoring)

Policy implementation should take gender bias into consideration. At the planning stage, contingencies must be put in place to ensure that those in charge of implementation are aware of any potential bias and receive gender-sensitization training as needed. At the implementation stage, adequate monitoring can prevent and help address any existing bias. It is important to use gender data to monitor the pace and results of policy implementation. Often, the use of aggregates (e.g. monitoring with statistics for the total population as opposed to disaggregated data) hides inequalities and potential issues associated with policy implementation that might be affecting a select population group only.

7. Reporting

Policy reports must be publicly available and easily accessible in different media and formats. It is important that national statisticians and policymakers collaborate for the production of these reports. As such, statisticians must remain engaged through all steps of the policymaking process: from providing the necessary data to inform decision-making at the design stage, to supporting data production for monitoring and implementation, to producing progress reports and final reports (refer to Module 4 for details on user-producer engagement, and to Module 10 for details on report production using gender data).

2. How to use gender statistics for policymaking

Gender statistics must be used through all stages of the policymaking process. The three sections below include advice on using gender statistics for the different stages. For ease of reference, the seven stages described above have been grouped into three components of the policy process⁸. These are: setting the agenda (stage 1 & 2), policy design (stages 3, 4 & 5) and monitoring and evaluation (stages 6 & 7).

⁸ Based on Pollard and Court. 2005. in ODI. 2006. <http://www.pointk.org/resources/files/tools-policy-makers.pdf>

2.1. Using gender statistics to set the agenda

The policymaking process starts with an analysis of the existing situation in the relevant policy area. This is often guided by information from a variety of sources, including insights from experts in ministries, gender focal points, civil society representatives, existing research and data. The use of existing gender data is essential for understanding the significance of the issue and related needs and challenges for men and women. For example, population census data on the ratio of females to males (FMR) in India has played an important role in giving recognition to gender inequalities in the country⁹. In some cases, data must be disaggregated beyond sex to reveal further inequalities between groups of women and between groups of men. For instance, while sex-disaggregated data on child marriage could be used to identify the extent to which women are disproportionately affected, disaggregating also by other factors (such as location, religion, ethnicity etc.) can highlight specific population groups where the practice is more pervasive. As evidence shows¹⁰, women who experience multiple forms of discrimination are more likely to be deprived in development outcomes. Data disaggregated at multiple levels can hence guide inclusive policy designs that reach even the most deprived groups and subgroups of the population¹¹.

It must be noted that the extent to which data guides policymaking decisions depends on how credible the data is and how well it is communicated. Thus, at this stage, it is of particular importance that policymakers engage national statisticians, interpret the data correctly and understand the difference between official and non-official statistics, representative vs. non-representative estimates and quality vs. non-quality data¹². It is also important that, once identified, the target population groups are consulted to gather evidence that will inform policy formulation. The checklist¹³ in Box 1 can help integrate this information.

⁹ <https://paris21.org/sites/default/files/1509.pdf>

¹⁰ UN Women. 2018. *Turning Promises into Action*. <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/sdg-report-gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018-en.pdf?la=en&vs=4332>

¹¹ For more information on identifying groups of women and girls who experience multiple forms of deprivation, refer to Module 7 of this training curriculum.

¹² For more information on statistical literacy around gender data, refer to Module 2 of this training curriculum.

¹³ Based on Policy Development Handbook

https://www.ipa.government.bg/sites/default/files/narchnik_za_razrobotvane_na_politiki.pdf and Status of Women Canada <https://www.oecd.org/gov/toolkit-for-mainstreaming-and-implementing-gender-equality.pdf>

Box 1: Checklist for identifying policy issues from a gender perspective

- Does the key issue consider the different experiences of women and men?
 - Have both men and women been consulted for identifying the issue?
 - What was the level of participation of the affected and disadvantaged groups of women and men in identifying the issue?
 - Were different gender-sensitive stakeholders involved in identifying the issue?
 - Has data disaggregated by sex and other dimensions simultaneously been used to identify the needs of the target groups?
 - Is the data used of high quality?
 - Is the analysis objective and unbiased?
 - Are the estimates used representative? Are differences significant?
 - Does the evidence include all possible factors that may drive the issue?
 - Does the analysis account for externalities of a potential policy into other population groups or natural resources?
-

After the situation analysis, it will be possible to define the rationale, objectives and target outcomes of the policy more precisely.

2.2. Using gender statistics to design key policy components

Once the policy issue has been identified and assessed (e.g. rationale and objectives of a policy have been identified), empirical research findings can help shape policies¹⁴. For instance, they can be used to decide who will be the primary beneficiary of the policy or to identify the different benchmarks that need to be met in order to achieve the policy's objective. Thus, data producers and policymakers must collaborate to design potential scenarios based on existing data and identify how a policy can alter the status quo. **Regression analysis** can inform this exercise and **correlations** with multiple variables can identify potential negative externalities of the policy over population groups and natural resources. In addition, **statistical projections** should be used to identify a time frame for the policy and assess what is realistic given resources available (Refer to Module 6 for more information on these types of analysis).

The quantity and quality of available data can influence the methods policymakers use to make assessments and decisions. For example, policymakers might be bound by existing data to make reliable predictions¹⁵, but some issues might not be captured by existing statistics. If this is the case, users and producers must work together to generate new estimates, either through reprocessing existing data, or by planning new data collection processes (See Module 4 for more information on how to organize user-producer dialogues).

While in some instances it might not be realistic to wait for new data to be produced to inform new policies, it is important to use the opportunity to influence future data-collection exercises. This can be

¹⁴ <https://paris21.org/sites/default/files/1509.pdf>

¹⁵ Ibid.

achieved through **user-producer dialogue**¹⁶, and **advocating** for more resources to be invested in gender data production.

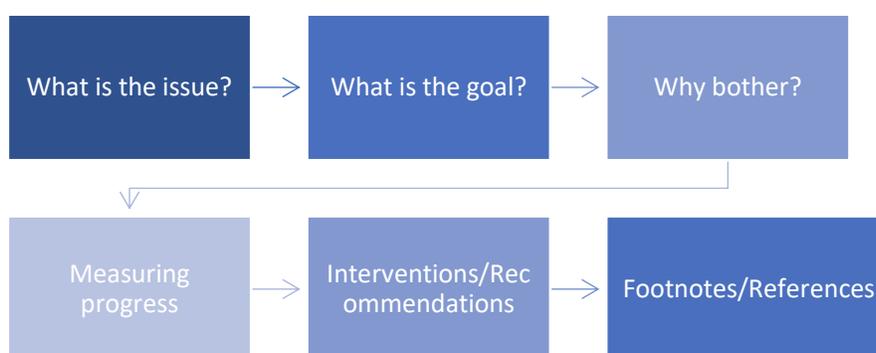
When planning policies, it is also important to identify indicators to monitor progress. **Indicators should be selected based on relevance**, in connection with policy outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is important to refrain from selecting indicators based only on ease of data collection or data availability. When data for relevant indicators is unavailable, advocacy for their production should accompany policy implementation. Indicator design for policy monitoring is beyond the scope of this module, but multiple resources¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹ are available to guide this process, in case of need.

2.2.1. Writing gender policy briefs

Policy briefs are particularly relevant between the policy design and implementation stages. A policy brief can be defined as a document that outlines the rationale for choosing a particular course of action in a policy debate. It is often produced to support or justify action upon an issue: to convince the target audience of the urgency of the problem and outline the preferred course of action.

A gender-related policy brief can be structured in six sections, as shown in Figure 2²⁰:

Figure 2: Structure of a policy brief



1. What is the issue?

This section of the brief provides a quick snapshot of the policy area, including status and trends, and highlights the connection to gender equality.

2. What is the goal?

Making use of gender data and qualitative evidence, this section highlights the main goal or goals of the policy (i.e. what are policymakers striving to achieve?).

¹⁶ See Module 4 for more information on how to organize user-producer dialogue.

¹⁷ <https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-develop-indicators>

¹⁸ https://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/poverty-reduction/poverty-website/indicators-for-policy-management/Indicators_for_Policy_Management.pdf

¹⁹ <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/post-2015/activities/egm-on-indicator-framework/docs/Indicator%20Workshop%203-5%20December%202014%20Final.pdf>

²⁰ By Josefina Almeda, Philippine Research and Statistics Training Institute. 2019.

3. Why bother?

This section presents arguments for why policymakers should adopt a policy course, and why a gender mainstreaming approach is relevant. Gender data can also be used to make the case, for instance by including forecasting and measuring potential outcomes with and without the policy in place.

4. Measuring progress or stagnation

Data for select gender indicators is used in this section to showcase status or progress towards the policy goals (including at the output, outcome and impact levels²¹). For each of the three levels, three types of indicators are suggested for progress assessment:

- Boolean indicator: Shows whether or not a certain mechanism, policy or action is in place. These indicators' values are usually 'yes' or 'no'.
- Numerical indicator: These are 'traditional' indicators, that measure changes using statistical data.
- Qualitative indicators: provide qualitative information but often require undertaking specific sociological surveys.

For comparability purposes (e.g. to assess progress over time), it is crucial that specific and replicable methodology is developed for each of the indicators utilized, regardless of the type.

5. Possible interventions and recommendations

The final section of the brief outlines possible solutions on the policy issue from a gender perspective. Interventions that fall within the mandate of governments should be highlighted, but cooperation with non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders should also be noted where appropriate.

Box 2: What makes a good policy brief? ()*

- *Focused: all six aspects of the policy brief need to be present and strategically focus on convincing the target audience*
- *Professional, not academic: the audience is typically interested in the problem and potential solutions, so statements regarding new evidence should be insightful and highlight results rather than methods of analysis*
- *Evidence-based: gender data should be used to highlight the problem and potential consequences of pursuing different interventions*
- *Limited: the focus of the brief needs to be limited to one particular problem or area of a problem, which should be analysed in a comprehensive but targeted manner*
- *Succinct: policy briefs do not exceed two to eight pages in length (i.e. usually not longer than 3,000 words)*
- *Understandable: briefs provide a well-explained and easy-to-follow argument targeted to the audience's knowledge and skills.*

²¹ Depending on the release date of the policy brief (e.g. if released immediately after policy design but prior to implementation), it is possible that output indicators are irrelevant because no progress would have been achieved yet.

(*) See FAO'S recommendations on writing policy briefs as well <http://www.fao.org/3/i2195e/i2195e03.pdf>

6. Footnotes and references

At the end of the policy brief, relevant references and footnotes should be added to clarify concepts or point to information sources.

Refer to some examples of key components of policy briefs in Figures 3 and 4.²²

Figure 3: Example of a policy brief: UN Women. 2016.



SUMMARY

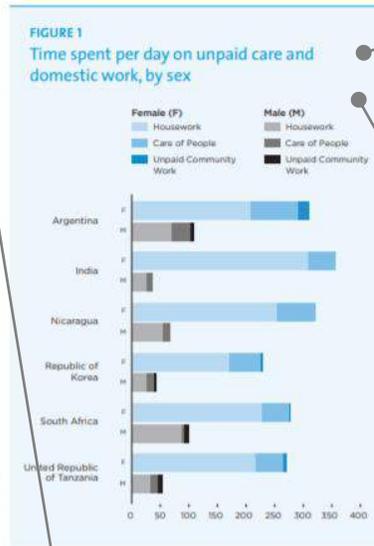
The centrality of care to sustainable development and its relevance for gender equality are now widely recognized by the global community. In "Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"—also referred to as "Agenda 2030"—unpaid care appears as one of the targets under Sustainable Development Goal 5 ("Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"), and policy actors are increasingly recognizing it as a critical issue for sustainable development. Given the consensus on the importance of care—and references to its recognition, reduction and redistribution—this brief delves into key policy issues and dilemmas about how to reduce the drudgery of unpaid care and domestic work, as well as redistributing it more equally between women and men, and between families and broader society.¹ It aims to bridge the gap between the emerging consensus on the importance of care and the not-so-clear policy options for supporting care without reinforcing it as an exclusively female domain.

What is care, who cares, and why does it matter?

Care refers to the provision of personal, face-to-face services to meet the physical and emotional needs that allow a person to function at a socially acceptable level of capability, comfort and safety.² Caregiving is complemented by the daily domestic tasks of cooking, cleaning and laundering that provide its necessary preconditions.

A significant part of care and domestic work in all societies takes place through relations of family, kinship and friendship, and is done on an unpaid basis. Although this unpaid care and domestic work is not counted as "economic activity" in labour-force surveys, nor incorporated in calculations of gross domestic product (GDP), it has enormous economic value: it contributes to human well-being, builds stronger social ties, and enables economic dynamism and growth. Without this work the economy would grind to a halt.

Yet the costs of providing care are borne disproportionately by women and girls who take on the lion's share of unpaid care work (see Figure 1). For most women—especially those at the bottom of the wage distribution—caring, for a young child for example, can weaken their labour market attachment, lower the quality of jobs they can access, and often results in a wage penalty (referred to as the "motherhood penalty").³ Opportunities for education, training and political participation may also be lost.



As policymakers often have to make quick decisions, policy briefs should be succinct and short. Summarizing the content at the beginning can better engage the reader.

Replacing texts with visuals can convey the message quickly. Level of complexity should be tailored according to the audience.

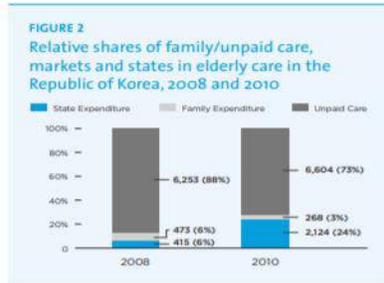
Women/girls-men/boys data visuals can convey messages around disparity in a quick and engaging way.

Set the stage by justifying why the issue is important. Substantiate the justification with evidence.

²² <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/3/redistributing-unpaid-care-and-sustaining-quality-care-services>

Figure 4: Example of a policy brief, UN Women. 2016 (continued)

Evidence from the Republic of Korea suggests that by putting in place a long-term care insurance policy that finances domiciliary and institutional care services for the elderly, it is possible to reduce the relative share of regressive "out-of-pocket" payments made by the elderly to hire care assistance through the market. Equally significant, in just two years since the policy was enacted, the policy has also reduced the share of care that family members (predominantly women) provide on an unpaid basis by 15 per cent (see Figure 2).



Building "high road" strategies in the care sector that provide decent working conditions and produce quality care services requires appropriate regulations (e.g., specifying the number of persons cared for per carer), adequate public funding to reduce

labour turnover and create opportunities for staff training, unionization and building links among care workers to ensure decent wages and work conditions, and emphasizing the common interests of care providers and care users (see Box 1).³⁶

BOX 1

Caring Across Generations

Caring Across Generations (CAG) is a national grassroots movement of families, caregivers, people with disabilities and elder persons working towards a care system that better reflects and supports the realities of 21st century families in the United States. By 2050, the number of elderly persons who will require some form of long-term care and support will double to 27 million. A robust long-term care system and greater investments in the caregiving workforce will be essential to support this unprecedented growth in the elderly population. CAG aims to: develop policy at the local, state and federal levels to expand access to quality care services,

affordable long-term care coverage for seniors and people with disabilities, and adequate standards and benefits; increase awareness of the need to alleviate the burdens of family caregiving; and ensure quality caregiving jobs with adequate training, living wages and benefits. Through on-line campaigning and grassroots organizing, CAG has had many successes to date, including securing changes to the Fair Labor Standards Act, which after decades of exclusion, finally granted home care workers the right to minimum wage and overtime protections as of October 2015.

Source: www.caringacross.org

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Sustain public investment in accessible infrastructure, especially water and sanitation, and provide basic guarantees where there is private provision, as a priority for low-income countries
- Put in place flexible family/care leaves with high income replacement (in countries with formal labour markets) and family/child allowances that encourage men to share care responsibility (in all countries)
- Invest in affordable and quality care services; few families can care for their dependents entirely on their own, without accessing some form of paid care
- Create "high road" strategies in the care sector through appropriate government regulations, adequate public funding, and strategies that build on the common interests of care workers and care users; without such deliberate measures, paid forms of care are prone to low pay, high labour turnover and low quality outcomes
- Not all care can, or should, be pushed out of the family; those who shoulder heavy care responsibilities need infrastructure, affordable care services, respect, and the time and financial resources (through regulated work hours, decent wages, paid leave, child and family allowances, and care credits in pensions) to at least temporarily withdraw from paid work
- To make unpaid care visible and to monitor the impact of policies and investments, national statistical offices should produce time-use surveys at regular intervals

The policy brief series synthesizes research findings, analysis and policy recommendations on gender equality and women's rights in an accessible format. This brief was written by Shahra Razavi, Chief of the Research and Data section. To see the full bibliography visit: <http://goo.gl/JSJfNk>

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Elson 2008.
- ² Himmelweit 2007.
- ³ Budig 2014; Cook and Dong 2011; Heymann 2006.
- ⁴ Razavi 2007.
- ⁵ Folbre 2006.
- ⁶ England et al. 2002.
- ⁷ Himmelweit 2007; Razavi 2011; Kidder et al. 2014.
- ⁸ Budlender 2010.
- ⁹ Kidder et al. 2014.
- ¹⁰ UN Women 2015, Chapter 3.
- ¹¹ Fontana and Elson 2014.
- ¹² Van Housweling et al. 2011, cited in Fontana and Elson 2014.
- ¹³ Fontana and Elson 2014.
- ¹⁴ UN Women 2014; Prasad 2007.
- ¹⁵ Giulian and Lewis 2005.
- ¹⁶ Haas and Kostgaard 2011.
- ¹⁷ Budlender and Lund 2011.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Ilkarcacan et al. 2015.
- ²⁰ England and Folbre 2005.
- ²¹ Folbre 2006.
- ²² Himmelweit 2007.
- ²³ Budig and Mitra 2013.
- ²⁴ Esquivel 2010.
- ²⁵ Pearson and Elson 2015.
- ²⁶ Folbre 2006.

Give examples of contexts where a similar policy has worked. Success stories can motivate decision-makers to take action.

Evidence of success stories to back the justification for a policy suggestion

- Policy recommendations:
- Focused
 - Professional
 - Evidence-based
 - Limited
 - Succinct
 - Understandable
 - Accessible
 - Flashy

Include key references at the end

2.3. Using gender statistics to monitor and evaluate policies

After the policy has been designed and during the implementation phase, policymakers need to monitor the inputs, outputs and outcomes associated with the policies²⁵. This requires having a set of related indicators, and access to relevant data in an understandable and easy to interpret format (refer to Module 10 for details on data communication).

2.3.1. Using EPIC to develop an indicator set for policy-monitoring

Developed by ESCAP and the Regional Steering Group on Population and Social Statistics (2017), EPIC (Every Policy Is Connected to People Planet and Prosperity) is a tool that facilitates dialogue between data-producers and policymakers to identify indicators (and related data gaps and needs) through content analysis of existing policy documents. The overarching stages of conducting this analysis are^{26,27}:

- Identify potential members to form a team for analysis: A range of data users and producers must come together to have a dialogue on data needs and priorities²⁸. Members can include policymakers, planning and budgeting organizations, data-producers and gender experts or gender-sensitive stakeholders such as women's rights groups, NGOs, etc.
- Identify a policy document for the analysis: Policymakers need to lead the review of existing policy documents of interest (e.g. national development strategy, national gender equality strategy, etc.) to identify key priority areas and target population groups. This conversation can also be an opportunity for stakeholders to request further data disaggregation and for identifying inherent gender biases in the policy document²⁹.
- Map with relevant existing indicators at national/regional/global levels: By looking at key words in the policy text, key issues are identified and matched with indicators (e.g. SDG indicators), as are the target population groups, which are matched with disaggregation variables.

For further information on using EPIC, please refer to Module 7³⁰.

3. Overcoming barriers to evidence-based decision-making

Although using gender statistics for making gender-sensitive policies seems like a rather obvious choice, this practice does not take place consistently³¹. This results in policies that aren't backed with statistics and thus don't reflect the realities of the target groups they intend to affect. Reasons may range from misalignment between data availability and data needs, to limited analytical skills on the part of users and lack of data communication strategies on the part of producers. Institutionalizing dialogue between the

²⁵ <https://paris21.org/sites/default/files/1509.pdf>

²⁶ For more information on EPIC, refer to Module 7 of this training curriculum

²⁷ For more information on user-producer dialogues to enhance the use of gender statistics, refer to Module 4 of this training curriculum

²⁸ https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/EPIC%20Overview%20%28EPIC_V1.1_Final%29.pdf

²⁹ https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/SD_Working_Paper_no.9_Sep2019_EPIC_tool.pdf

³⁰ Also see: https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/EPIC%20Overview%20%28EPIC_V1.1_Final%29.pdf

³¹ See https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/SD_Working_Paper_no.9_Sep2019_EPIC_tool.pdf

data-producers and policymakers can be a good starting point to address this problem (refer to Module 4 on user-producer dialogues).

In particular, the following recommendations can help overcome barriers to evidence-based decision-making³²:

- Policymakers need to understand the value of evidence, become more informed as to what evidence is available³³, know how to gain access to it and be able to critically appraise it³⁴. Statistical literacy trainings can be conducted for policymakers to enhance their understanding of gender data and how to use it for policymaking. For instance, the Philippines Statistical Research and Training Institute conducts occasional trainings on statistics for policy analysis³⁵, wherein officials responsible for preparing, analysing, monitoring and improving government policies are trained on basic statistical concepts (see Modules 1 and 2 for this).
- Institutional bridges must be built to strengthen the integration of policy and evidence in a sustainable manner. Putting in place discussion forums, joint trainings and coordination groups can sustain the engagement between data producers and policymakers, leading to an environment where data producers are seen as collaborators rather than ad-hoc suppliers in the policymaking process (see Module 4 on user-producer dialogue).
- Data needs to be better communicated to facilitate use in decision-making. This includes making data easily available and understandable to users and communicating it in an engaging way, tailored to the expertise of the audience (see Module 10 on communicating gender data).
- Incentives must be put in place to encourage the use of evidence. For instance, the Government of Tanzania reformed health policies based on data coming from household disease surveys. This contributed to over 40% reduction in infant mortality between 2000 and 2003 in two pilot districts³⁶. Incentivizing evidence-based policymaking, can therefore result in better policies for sustainable development. In the UK, this has been achieved by delegating the control over budget to frontline agencies and decision-making bodies such as hospital trusts, primary care teams, local education authorities and school governors, encouraging them to use sound evidence in resource allocation and service development³⁷.

Putting in place some of these mechanisms can help promote the use of gender data for decision-making in the long term. Tracking how much data is used and how it changes the lives of women and girls is also paramount. If you have any good practices or examples on how using gender data for policymaking has changed the lives of women and girls, please send them to gender.statistics.apro@unwomen.org

³² Based on <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/3683.pdf>

³³ For more information on gender data literacy, please refer to Module 2 of this training curriculum

³⁴ For more information on where to find the right gender data and how to analyse it, please refer to Module 9 of this training curriculum

³⁵ <http://psrti.gov.ph/home/training-on-statistics-for-policy-analysis/>

³⁶ <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/3683.pdf>

³⁷ <https://www.eldis.org/document/A18705>

4. Key takeaways

- *Gender data needs to be integrated at all stages of the policymaking, including identifying the issue, gathering evidence, identifying and defining outcomes, planning, communication, implementation and monitoring and finally, reporting.*
 - *Gender statistics can be used to decide on priority thematic areas and populations of interest in countries. This is especially important when competing priorities exist, as gender data can highlight the urgency of a gender-related issue.*
 - *The extent to which gender data is used for policymaking depends on the availability, reliability accessibility and user-friendliness of the data. Communication strategies targeting policymakers are of particular importance to ensure use.*
 - *A good gender-focused policy brief must highlight the trends and gender issues, summarize the main goal or goals to be achieved, argue for the importance of the issue and highlight why gender should be mainstreamed in the policymaking process.*
 - *The EPIC tool can be used to develop a gender-specific set of indicators for policy monitoring.*
 - *Policymakers need to understand the value of evidence and become more engaged in interpreting and using evidence.*
 - *Gender data needs to be better communicated and tailored for policymakers and other stakeholders to ensure its widespread use for policymaking.*
 - *Incentives must be put in place to encourage the use of gender data for policymaking.*
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