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IN BRIEF:

MAKING EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL COUNT IN AFRICA

THE ISSUE

A regional assessment on gender statistics in Africa was conducted in 2018, revealing three inter-related challenges:

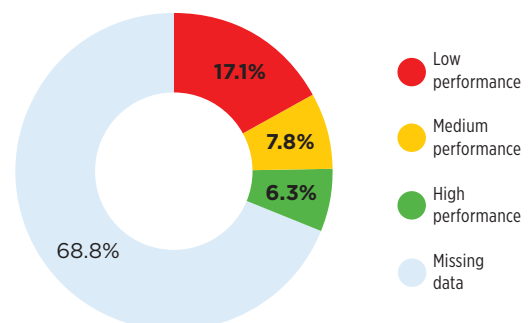
- Despite regular censuses and surveys conducted by National Statistical Offices (NSOs), there are huge gaps in data to track gender-related SDG indicators across Africa. Regional stakeholders acknowledge that lack of coordination and poor communication has been a major drawback, leading to duplication of efforts and missed opportunities to leverage resources.
- Technical challenges limit the production of gender statistics and the ability to inform regional and country-level interventions – on economic empowerment, violence against women and girls, political participation, and peace and security.
- NSOs and other producers of statistics are still using outdated or ineffective methods of dissemination and communication, which results in the limited use of gender-sensitive data to influence policy dialogue, planning and budgeting.

WOMEN COUNT RESPONSE:

- **Creating an enabling environment:** Regional coordination is being improved, working with organizations

FIGURE 1

How is Africa doing on gender data?



Source: [Women Count Data Hub](#)

such as the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), and countries are being supported to identify and address institutional, legal and financial constraints to mainstream gender into national statistical systems and establish an efficient monitoring and evaluation system for the SDGs.

- **Increasing data production:** Technical capacities of national statistical systems are being strengthened and quality data on violence against women, unpaid care work, gaps in access to decent work and pay,

participation in public life and decision-making, and access to/use of information and communications technologies produced to improve SDG monitoring.

- **Improving data accessibility and use:** Capacities of users are being strengthened to conduct gender data analysis, accessibility of gender statistics to all users is increased through better reporting, capacities to communicate gender data are increased through training, and data and metadata sharing encouraged to facilitate data flows, including to regional and global SDG-related databases.

RESULTS

The full Africa regional project began in 2019, as funding became available. In 2019, a joint regional project document was developed to ensure that regional activities were complementary and two regional gender statistics advisors were recruited to begin implementation of the regional projects in coordination with a continent-wide approach. Key results in 2019 include:

1. Creating an enabling environment

- **A Minimum Set of Gender Indicators for Africa (MSGIA) was developed – an important step towards harmonizing gender statistics in the continent.** In collaboration with UNECA and AfDB, UN Women led a continent-wide consultative process with NSOs, Gender Machineries, UN Agencies, Civil Society Organizations to inform the development of the MSGIA. The consultation resulted in the identification of 52 indicators across six domains, aligned with the global Minimum Set of gender indicators agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013. The MSGIA, which will be submitted in 2020 to the Africa Statistical Commission for formal adoption, will make a significant contribution towards the harmonization of gender statistics and indicators across the continent.
- **African Group on Gender Statistics (AGGeS) was strengthened, providing a platform for regional action on gender statistics.** Since 2012, the AGGeS has been inactive due to technical and financial constraints. UN Women supported UNECA in facilitating coordination and kickstarting the work in organizing meetings of the AGGeS. Improving the functioning of the AGGeS will ultimately result in greater coordination on gender statistics across the continent and strengthen advocacy efforts in the Africa Statistical Commission.

FIGURE 2
Measuring Progress in 2019



Progress in Africa was a result of strong engagement and coordination with regional partners to develop a minimum set of gender indicators, and improved coordination and technical support provided to countries.

- **Six non-pathfinder countries were supported to undertake national assessments of gender statistics.** A review of the status of gender statistics in six non-pathfinder countries – Mozambique, Malawi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire – was carried out during a November 2019 training workshop in Dakar, Senegal, organized by UN Women and PARIS21. All six countries are conducting gender-sensitive national assessments as a result to inform their upcoming National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) and strengthen the production and use gender statistics.

2. Increasing data production

- **Training strengthened the capacities data producers in Malawi and Rwanda to collect and analyse gender data.** In Malawi, UN Women trained 70 representatives from the Malawi National Statistics Office on how to analyse household survey data from a gender perspective to inform reporting on SDGs indicators. Rwanda was supported to collect data on VAW, through the inclusion of a domestic violence module in the Demographic and Health Survey. Building the capacity of the DHS enumerators in interviewing female and male respondents, particularly about the ethical considerations and confidentiality, significantly improved the reporting of domestic violence. The survey will provide information on two Tier II SDG indicators, namely indicators 5.2.1 and 5.2.2. The data collected will also be used to inform policy and strategy formulation in Rwanda related to violence against women.

- **UN Women study shows how administrative data can be used to produce gender statistics for monitoring SDGs.** UN Women produced a study to examine the potential of administrative systems in Africa to filling gender-specific SDG data gaps looking at the experiences of three pathfinder countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda) and three non-pathfinder countries (Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda) in East and Southern Africa. The findings will inform UN Women's support to countries to overcome challenges in producing relevant gender indicators in SDG monitoring framework from administrative data.
- **Guidelines on citizen-generated data developed to encourage use of alternative data sources to fill gender data gaps.** UN Women developed regional guidelines on how NSOs can harness the potential of citizen-generated data (CGD) to improve the quality of the statistics to track progress on the SDGs. The guidelines will contribute to strengthening the capacity of National Statistical Systems to utilize non-official data sources for SDGs monitoring and will be used to strengthen collaboration between NSOs and civil society organizations in the region to develop country specific CGD plans. As a result of the inclusive process of developing the guidelines, UN Women is partnering with Data4SDGs to further expand on these guidelines.
- **A regional roster of experts on gender statistics was established and is being used by countries to source specialists to carry out gender statistics activities.** UN Women developed a vetted roster of experts on gender statistics as an important resource for countries seeking technical support for gender statistics activities. Currently, the roster consists of 25 experts across 14 different countries in ESA and 13 experts in WCA. The roster has been used to recruit experts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire to conduct national gender statistics assessments.

3. Improving data accessibility and use

- **Regional workshop on gender statistics identified solutions to improve the availability of gender statistics in Africa.** UN Women, in partnership with UNECA, AfDB and Data2X, organized a regional workshop on 18-23 November in Accra, Ghana which brought together National Statistics Offices of 23 countries discuss how to improve capacity and strengthen gender data including the development of a minimal set of gender statistics in Africa. A result of the workshop is commitment to standardize

gender statistics across the continent through the MSGIA led by UN Women.

- **Training data users resulted in increased capacity to disseminate gender data.** The Dakar training equipped 6 UN Women statistics focal points and 6 Ministry of Women delegates to do an assessment of the gender statistics systems in their countries. The training increased the appreciation of the participants of the importance of knowing the gender data ecosystems, gender data gaps and forging relationships with stakeholder groups in their countries as the basis for the successful dissemination and uptake of gender statistics.
- **Data competition encouraged students to use gender data to raise awareness on gender equality for Africa Statistics Day.** UN Women in collaboration with the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) organized an infographic competition to commemorate Africa Statistics Day where over 258 students from 15 universities participated to design infographics using gender data as a tool to increase awareness around the role of statistics in economic and social development. The winning infographics have now been made public on the NISR website and will be used as advocacy and dissemination tools to promote increased data use.

PLANS FOR 2020*

- Providing direct technical support to countries promote and implement plans to localize and monitor the SDGs and ensure adequate implementation of the Women Count programme;
- Conducting regional rapid gender assessment surveys to measure the impact of COVID-19;
- In collaboration with UNECA, supporting annual technical meetings of the AGGeS, and organize regional and national workshops on strengthening coordination within the NSS to improve gender statistics;
- Training data producers, in partnership with UNECA, on specific gender statistics domains that are of priority to the African region;
- Preparing national and regional gender factsheets, policy briefs and other publications on the status of women and men, and compile gender thematic reports from surveys, including on COVID-19.

* Plans for 2020 may be further adjusted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.