2020

© UN Women Europe and Central Asia/Rena Effendi

IN BRIEF:

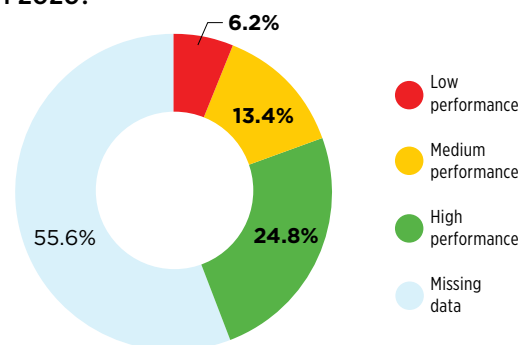# MAKING EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL COUNT IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

THE ISSUE

A regional assessment on gender statistics, conducted in 2017 in Europe and Central Asia (ECA), revealed three interrelated challenges:

- The low priority given to gender data within national statistical systems (NSSs) is evident in organizational structures, budget allocation, and the absence of a strong commitment to gender monitoring and reporting in national statistical strategies and plans. A weak policy space, limited resources, and a lack of coordination mean gender statistics are not adequately mainstreamed in statistical production.

- Technical challenges limit the effective and efficient production of gender statistics. Although data production is relatively strong in the ECA region, ongoing issues related to data sensitivity and transparency result in data either not being collected or not being released.

- Ineffective use of gender statistics is the most problematic issue in the region. The demand for support to improve dissemination, communication and use of data seems to outweigh the supply of funding and technical assistance.

FIGURE 1

How is Europe doing on gender data in 2020?

- 6.2% Low performance
- 13.4% Medium performance
- 24.8% High performance
- 55.6% Missing data

Source: Women Count Data Hub. Note: Central Asian countries are note included in this calculation.

WOMEN COUNT RESPONSE:

- **Creating an enabling environment:** Regional coordination is improving, by working with organizations such as the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Regional UN Coordination Group on Data and Statistics. Countries are being supported to

identify and address institutional, legal and financial constraints to gender mainstreaming in their national statistical systems and to establish an efficient system for monitoring and evaluating the SDGs.

- **Increasing data production:** The technical capacities of national statistical systems are being strengthened and quality data on violence against women and unpaid care work are being produced to improve SDG monitoring.

- **Improving data accessibility and use:** The capacities of users are being strengthened through training on how to analyze gender data and improve how gender data are communicated. Meanwhile, the accessibility of gender statistics to all users is increasing through better reporting.
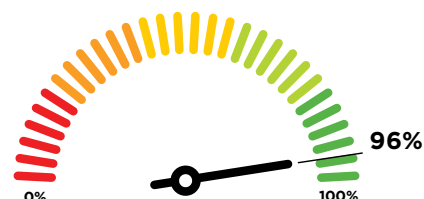
RESULTS

In light of the pandemic, adjustments to meetings and trainings aided project implementation, and a regional rapid gender assessment (RGA) was conducted on the gendered impacts of COVID-19, collecting timely data that have informed responses, policies and programmes in 16 countries. Beyond this, several countries in the region have been supported to improve planning of gender statistics, conduct surveys and improve the availability of gender statistics for SDGs monitoring. Key results in 2020 include:

1. Creating an enabling environment

- **Kyrgyzstan is prioritizing gender statistics by developing the first National Gender Statistics Strategy (GSS) and establishing an inter-agency working group.** The National Statistics Committee of Kyrgyzstan (NSC) is building a gender-responsive statistical system through the development of the GSS and an Inter-Agency Working Group on Gender Data (IAWG-GD), which is a national mechanism for cooperation and coordination on gender statistics established in October 2020. UN Women, in cooperation with PARIS21, supported the NSC to conduct three national consultations to assess the need for data to inform gender equality policies and programmes and to identify the strategic priorities for the GSS for 2021–2024. A Gender Assessment of the National Statistics System of the Kyrgyz Republic was finalized in May 2020, which served as the basis for Kyrgyzstan's first-ever National Gender Statistics Strategy. The GSS will also inform the priorities of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics until 2030 (both strategies will be finalized and

FIGURE 2

Measuring Progress in 2020

96%

0%   100%

Significant progress was made in Europe and Central Asia as a result of strong country support, SDG monitoring, capacity-building on violence against women, data production on gendered COVID-19 impacts and regional coordination on gender statistics.

approved in 2021), and concrete activities to be undertaken by the Government under the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2021–2023. The NSC also developed a plan to improve the communication of gender statistics and embedded it in its annual action plan on disseminating official statistics.

- **Eight new gender indicators strengthened Albania's NSS through inter-agency cooperation.** The National Human Rights Institution and Office of the Ombudsperson increased their capacity to mainstream gender into data-collection processes, stemming from cooperation within the framework of the IAWG on Human Rights Data. As a result of one training and four coaching sessions delivered by UN Women in partnership with the National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), the Office of the Ombudsperson reviewed and published eight new priority gender equality indicators for the first time as part of the annual statistical publication *Women and Men in Albania, 2020 edition*. The new indicators compile statistics about a number of complaints of alleged human rights violations disaggregated by sex, including from imprisoned persons. This also boosted user-producer dialogue as a regular exchange format on data issues within the established Inter-Agency Working Group on Human Rights Data, led and coordinated by INSTAT.

2. Increasing data production

- **RGAs in 16 countries1 informed national COVID-19 response and recovery plans.** UN Women supported RGAs to assess the gendered impacts of COVID-19 on women and men across the region. National results have been incorporated in COVID-19 national

response and recovery plans in several countries. At least two countries (Georgia, Ukraine) used the findings as part of their advocacy for additional resources to mainstream gender into recovery programmes and policymaking. In Albania, the RGA findings supported discussions with Parliament and line ministries to expand the coverage of government subsidies and support packages to self-employed women farmers, small businesses, and jobseekers. The regional RGA has also been widely used by international organizations to deepen analysis on the impact of COVID-19 on gender equality. For example, the findings were used by the OECD to develop a data-based Gender Gap analysis in Eurasia. UN Women also provided support to UN Country Teams from Georgia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) and Kazakhstan to review survey tools for a second wave of RGAs in December 2020.

- **The availability of gender-related SDG indicators increased across seven countries.** With UN Women's support, the NSOs of Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Armenia, Belarus and Tajikistan have increased availability of SDG gender-related indicators through the production and reprocessing of available data. The national capacity to produce gender-related SDG indicators now ranges from 50% in Tajikistan to 70% in Kazakhstan. The produced and published indicators will feed into national reporting mechanisms on the SDGs and will also inform data-driven policies on gender equality and women's empowerment. In 2021, at least two countries (Albania and Georgia) will start producing new indicators to inform their 'Leaving no one behind' national policy agenda.

- **New data on time use patterns and measuring unpaid care and domestic work was produced in Georgia and Armenia.** UN Women supported the NSO of Georgia to implement its first ever time use survey in September 2020, and NSO of Armenia developed time use survey methodology to be piloted in 2021.

- **Eighty-five data producers are better equipped to produce and analyze gender data after two virtual regional trainings and eight national workshops tailored to countries' specific needs.** For example, more than 40 data producers and users from 17

countries[1] improved their skills and shared knowledge on how to harmonize, collect, analyze and report data on violence against women and girls at a three-day training in December, organized by UN Women in partnership with UNFPA and the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Based on the workshop outcomes and increased demand for administrative data in the region, UN Women in partnership with EIGE will develop a guidance and provide further support on violence against women data for Western Balkans countries. In Georgia and Armenia, UN Women built the capacity of 18 statisticians by delivering trainings on time-use statistics' design and methodology ahead of the first-ever time-use survey in Georgia in September 2020, and in Armenia in 2021. The trained personnel will generate internationally comparable time-use data and will inform the baseline indicator for SDG target 5.4 (on unpaid care).

3. Improving data accessibility and use

- **Access to gender data has increased in Belarus thanks to a one-stop-shop gender data portal.** UN Women supported Belarus in improving access to gender-related indicators through the development of a dedicated gender data portal to be launched in 2021. It is intended to become the "one-stop-shop" for gender data as part of the official statistics dissemination strategy. The portal aims to adopt modern tools such as Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) to standardize and modernize data-exchange processes among national gender statistics producers.

- **Regional report took stock of status of gender equality in Europe and Central Asia 25 years after the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) to inform policy and advocacy.** A regional data-driven snapshot *Keep the promise, accelerate the change* was produced and launched in October 2020 and has increased awareness on progress towards gender equality in ECA, 25 years after the BPfA. Based on national reviews conducted by 53 countries, the report highlights key achievements and challenges, serving as a reference point for activists, policymakers and other decison-makers. It issues a clarion call for stepping up progress to realize the promises of

---

[1] Georgia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Albania, Serbia, Turkey, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), North Macedonia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Montenegro, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Beijing. Three factsheets[2] were also developed and peer-reviewed with national stakeholders, to provide key issues and relevants facts on progress towards gender equality.

- **A datathon produced innovative communication materials on RGAs for advocacy.** UN Women, in partnership with ForSet, a Tbilisi-based creative enterprise in data, design and technology, organized a Datathon on the margins of the 4th DataFest Tbilisi 2020 to produce innovative communication products on gender statistics. The event brought together up to 60 participants who developed six visual products in teams using microdata from the RGAs in 13 countries across ECA. The winning two products (infographic and animated video) have been widely used for advocacy and outreach on the gendered impacts of COVID-19 on women and men lives.

PLANS FOR 2021*

- Supporting the finalization and adoption of a gender-responsive NSDS in Kyrgyzstan.

- Conducting agender assessment of the Armenian NSS;

- Finalizing the guidance note on the minimum set of suggested questions for data producers, in partnership with the UNECE Steering Committee on Gender Statistics, to capture the gendered impacts of COVID-19;

- Supporting Kazakhstan's NSO to launch the second round of a violence against women and girls survey in 2021–2022 and Armenia's NSO to launch a pilot survey of their first ever TUS;

- Supporting Georgia's NSO and Albania's INSTAT to increase the availability of gender indicators and providing additional levels of disaggregation based on available data sources at the national level;

- Continue building capacity for CSO representatives in Albania on gender data and analysis in partnership with INSTAT and for policy makers in Kyrgyzstan in partnership with NSC;

- Finalizing two gender statistics training curriculums: 1) Communication of Gender Statistics for Media in partnership with American University for Central Asia (AUCA) and School of Data Kyrgyzstan, and 2) Gender Statistics and Analysis for Gender-Responsive Budgeting;

- Supporting Kyrgyzstan's NSC and Georgia's NSO to develop their national priority gender equality indicators;

- Supporting Kyrgyzstan's NSC to implement a plan of action on the communication of gender statistics through the development of a gender data portal and launching new publications on Gender and the SDGs;

---

* Plans for 2021 may be further adjusted to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

---

2 Regional snapshot on Women and Families in Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia