



PHASE 1

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## IN BRIEF:

# MAKING EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL COUNT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

## THE ISSUE

A regional assessment on gender statistics in Asia-Pacific, conducted in 2018, revealed three interrelated challenges:

- Only a quarter of countries in the region had a law on gender statistics or explicitly covered gender data in a general statistics law. The subregion with the lowest availability of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) gender data was the Pacific, which lacked data for more than half of gender indicators.
- Specialized surveys in important areas, such as time use, were not carried out regularly in most countries, either due to limited financial resources, lack of technical skills or both.
- National statistical systems often had limited capacity to disseminate and communicate data. This constrained the ability of media, governments, women's organizations and other stakeholders to use gender statistics to inform decisions, research, advocacy, policies and programmes.

## WOMEN COUNT RESPONSE:

- **Creating an enabling environment:** Regional coordination to support countries' production and use of gender data has improved. Working with

organizations such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Pacific Community (SPC), Pacific Island Countries were supported to mainstream gender in national plans and coordination mechanisms through a Roadmap on Gender Statistics.

- **Increasing data production:** The technical capacities of national statistical systems have been strengthened, with quality data generated on the gender and environment nexus, climate change, women's land ownership and the gendered consequences of COVID-19. In partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the first ASEAN flagship publication on gender statistics was produced, aimed at improving SDG monitoring.
- **Improving data accessibility and use:** Training on gender statistics has been standardized across the region. Through work with the UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), users' capacities have been strengthened to conduct gender data analysis, while the accessibility of gender statistics has increased, fuelling better reporting. Training has also improved capacities to communicate and share gender data and metadata between regional and global SDG-related databases and to organize user-producer dialogues effectively.

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*“Our partnership with UN Women resulted in the creation of the Training Curriculum on Gender Statistics in 2020, lead by the Subgroup on Gender Statistics Training, within the Asia-Pacific Network for Statistical Training Institutes. Through its 11 modules, it covers a wide variety of gender statistics topics. Using these materials, we have also trained numerous trainers across the region and started a certification programme for those who completed it. Building the capacity of trainers has been essential to ensure institutionalization of the training and sustainability of the initiative. The materials have also been used to create an e-learning course, which is now freely available to continue building the capacities of statisticians and data users on gender statistics.”*

## **Makoto Shimizu, Deputy Director, SIAP**

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### **KEY RESULTS**

Since 2018, UN Women has made significant efforts to improve the production and use of gender data across Asia and the Pacific. Key results include:

#### **1. Creating an enabling environment**

- **Strengthening regional coordination has led to system-wide action on gender data.** As a result of UN Women’s advocacy, technical support and partnerships, in 2020, the Committee on Statistics agreed to mainstream gender across all of its work-streams. As a result of this decision, UN Women, in collaboration with ESCAP, has been enhancing gender mainstreaming in disaster statistics, economic statistics and civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS). Following the preparation of two briefs and a side event on CRVS, a ministerial conference’s outcome document called for more comprehensive registration of life events for both women and men across their life cycles. In the area of environment and disaster statistics, UN Women and its partners – International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), ESCAP, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) – have developed indicators and a model questionnaire, that was field-tested in Bangladesh and fully implemented Mongolia in 2021. Furthermore, through the use of data integration techniques and geospatial analysis, UN Women has generated empirical evidence on the connections between climate change and gender outcomes, leading the global conversation in this area of statistics.
- **A Pacific Roadmap on Gender Statistics is paving the way for more and better gender data.** The Pacific Roadmap, developed in partnership with SPC and Member States, has helped jumpstart the national production of gender data in at least 11 Pacific Island Countries. In Fiji, the National Statistical Office (NSO) in partnership with various other government agencies conducted an assessment of gender data gaps, prepared a gender data profile and set out a series of steps to fill gaps in the future. Tonga set up a Gender Statistics Taskforce and promoted inter-ministerial dialogue to identify key areas for gender data production (such as women’s leadership, gender and the environment). Palau used the Roadmap to identify 40 National Priority Gender Equality Indicators (NPGElis) as a first step towards a centralized gender data repository and is reprocessing existing SDG data.
- **Increased coordination has enabled Pacific Island Countries to prioritize gender data.** A Pacific Gender Statistics Coordination Group was established together with SPC and Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It has been a useful space to support the implementation of the Roadmap, for example to identify interests/needs and share lessons on collecting data in Roadmap priority areas (such as gender and the environment, women’s economic empowerment, big data, etc.). Gender Statistics Coordination Group meetings have improved collaboration between data users and producers. In Samoa, for instance, the Ministry of Women is now coordinating closely with the NSO to identify data needs to better measure the consequences of COVID-19 as well as environmental hazards. This conversation began through group sessions and has now been institutionalized for planning for data collection in the country.

## 2. Increasing data production

- **For the first time, countries are now able to collect data on the gender and environment nexus.** A model questionnaire to measure the gender-environment nexus was developed in partnership with SPC, UNEP, IUCN, ESCAP, FAO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). It aligns with international standards and helps countries collect internationally comparable data in this area with traditionally low gender analysis, while contributing to measuring various SDG indicators. The world's first nationally representative survey on gender and the environment was conducted in Mongolia in 2021, which aims to inform the implementation of Mongolia's Vision 2030 and will generate over 100 indicators. The new estimates showcase large gender differences in numerous environmental indicators, ranging from land ownership to animal husbandry and preparedness and vulnerability to disasters. In Bangladesh, the same survey was implemented in select disaster-prone provinces and UN Women is working with the NSO to use lessons learned to pave the way for a nationally representative survey on this topic. Another three countries<sup>1</sup> plan to roll out surveys based on the model questionnaire in 2022. The development and testing of the model questionnaire, and the analysis of the connections between gender and the environment undertaken by UN Women, fed into the 2022 Agreed Conclusions of the 66th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which call for countries to enhance the availability and quality of data on gender and the environment.
- **More countries are now able to monitor more SDG targets and fill data gaps.** UN Women has led the development of international guidance to better measure the time women allocate to supervising children and other dependents through Time-Use Surveys (TUS) – the frequency of which is growing across the region. Indonesia has approached UN Women to test the methodology, as a first step towards the country's implementation of a full TUS in 2023. The methodology is expected to improve measurements that currently undervalue women's contribution to unpaid work and contribute to reporting on SDG indicator 5.4.1 on unpaid care and

domestic work. As a result of UN Women's support, the Government of Viet Nam identified a set of NPGEIs, now publishes related data periodically to monitor progress towards these priorities (including the SDGs) and has actively encouraged policymakers across ministries to use this publication to inform their decisions. In Mongolia, data reprocessing has resulted in the regular publication of disaggregated data on child marriage rates, the proportion of people with access to basic water services, improved sanitation facilities, clean cooking fuels, etc., which are being used to monitor progress on the SDGs and Mongolia's Vision 2030.

- **The Asia-Pacific Training Curriculum on Gender Statistics has standardized statistical training across the region and beyond.** The curriculum, developed by UN Women and SIAP, was institutionalized by training institutions across the region, with 15 universities integrating these materials in the course work for journalism, economics and statistics degrees. Nearly 300 students have increased their knowledge on gender data as a result. These institutions have created gender statistics programmes and regularly provide related training to students and statisticians. For instance, based on the Training Curriculum materials, the National University of Mongolia developed a post-graduate course on Gender and Economics. Statisticians from national statistical training institutions are also using the curriculum to train an increasing number of new recruits to produce and use gender data. Furthermore, through a virtual training-of-trainers, educators in 10 countries, whose details are included in a repository, are now certified to implement further gender statistics training. UN Women, SIAP and ESCAP have also created an e-learning course, openly available online, for those who wish to take this training at their own pace. Several countries outside of Asia and the Pacific are benefiting from these materials as well.<sup>2</sup> Through the Gender Statistics Coordination Group, SIAP, SPC and UN Women also designed a training programme adjusted to the needs of Pacific Island Countries and Territories that will be implemented later in 2022. In 2021, regional training was delivered virtually to further develop big data analysis skills among national statisticians, not just within NSOs but also in other line

<sup>1</sup> Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

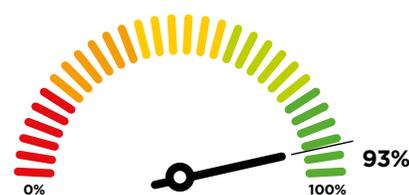
<sup>2</sup> Government institutions and universities in Central African Republic, Germany and the United States of America are now using curriculum materials in their coursework.

ministries, to help fill gender data gaps in areas such as violence against women, environment-related displacement and the use of early warning systems, among others.

### 3. Improving data accessibility and use

- **Gender data analysis is being used to promote gender mainstreaming in national and regional strategies in ASEAN.** In partnership with the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC), its Committee on Women, its Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children, and NSOs across the region, UN Women has supported all 10 ASEAN Member States to reprocess existing data, disaggregate it at multiple levels, and identify those population groups lagging the furthest behind for each of the SDGs, from a gender perspective. These data were then published in the first edition of the *ASEAN Gender Outlook* in 2021. ASEC is already using the findings to shape future regional strategies, such as the ASEAN's Complementarity Initiative and ASEAN Cares. Statistics from the Gender Outlook were also used to inform the ASEAN Regional Framework On Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management 2021–2025 (ARF-PGI), which is expected to inform national policies in this regard. UN Women has also been working with all 10 Member States to promote the use of these data to formulate strategic policies and decisions in line with the publication's findings. In Brunei Darussalam, the Minister of Culture has utilized Gender Outlook data to highlight women's role in responding to the COVID-19 crisis and the need to continue supporting their participation in the labour market, including through flexible arrangements.
- **Big data analysis is fuelling advocacy on climate change and violence against women (VAW).** Survey data were integrated with geospatial data in five countries to assess the connections between climate change and gender-related outcomes, showing clear connections with aridity, drought episodes, temperatures, floods and other factors. As a result of the climate change analysis utilizing geospatial data finalized at the end of 2021, evidence-based contributions were made to expert groups in preparation for CSW66 and to the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) in 2022. Big data from search engines and social media were also

**FIGURE 1**  
**Measuring Progress during Phase I**



Strengthening regional partnerships on gender statistics (including with ESCAP, FAO, ILO, IUCN, SIAP, SPC and UNEP), led to increased data availability to monitor SDGs and influenced global advances in gender and the environment. In 2021, 100% of targets were met by the Asia and the Pacific project.

analysed to understand trends pertaining to VAW since the onset of COVID-19 in eight countries.<sup>3</sup> The analysis has helped CSOs and other service-providers better target their online strategies to reach survivors more efficiently, after a series of discussions with service-providers organized by UN Women in each of the eight countries. As a result, some CSOs are already starting to see higher online engagement, which may open doors to reach more survivors. This analysis also informed similar big data analysis conducted under in the Building Back Better programme for four Pacific Island Countries,<sup>4</sup> which showed that VAW-related searches and posts also increased in times of overlapping crises (COVID-19 and floods, typhoons, volcanic eruptions, etc.). The results of this research will be published in 2022 and are expected to inform the behaviour of service-providers in those countries.

### PLANS FOR PHASE II<sup>5</sup>

Plans for Phase II in Asia and the Pacific will focus on: strengthening and expanding partnerships in Pacific Island Countries and ASEAN to ensure greater coordination on gender statistics; continuing to roll out the Gender Statistics Training Curriculum to different regions and subregions; increasing data production on the gender and environment nexus and women's economic empowerment; and scaling up efforts to improve data accessibility by collaborating with policymakers to ensure that gender data inform policies

3 Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore

4 Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

5 Plans for Phase II are in the process of being finalized.

and programmes across Asia and the Pacific. Specific interventions include:

- Continuing to support Pacific Island Countries with the implementation of the Pacific Roadmap on Gender Statistics and through the Pacific Gender Statistics Coordination Group.
- Continuing to expand methodological work on gender and the environment and support related data collection.
- Supporting more countries to analyse and reprocess existing data to fill SDG data gaps.
- Utilizing innovation and non-conventional data sources to fill data gaps on care entrepreneurship and women's contribution to natural resource and waste management.
- Producing flagship publications for subregions to inform intergovernmental processes.