

CASE STUDY

**IMPROVING COORDINATION
WITHIN KENYA'S NATIONAL
STATISTICS SYSTEM**

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This case study is on improving coordination within Kenya's National Statistical Systems, highlighting the role of coordination mechanisms in building a supportive policy environment for gender data production and use. This case study was developed as part of the 2019 monitoring and reporting process of the Women Count programme. The case study series documents promising results from the programme, to distill critical lessons learned that can be applied, disseminated, and replicated.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Kenya, the establishment of the Inter-Agency Gender Statistics Technical Committee (IAGSTC) in October 2018 was a key initiative under Outcome 1 of the Women Count programme, which focuses on building a supportive policy and institutional environment for the localization and effective monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This country case study takes an in-depth look at the IAGSTC as an example of how to build an inter-agency coordination mechanism to improve collaboration in the production and dissemination of gender statistics.

Prior to the IAGSTC, a Gender Committee was in place, in line with requirements for National Statistical System (NSS) thematic committees. But an assessment noted that despite best efforts, gender statistics were fragmented, the systems needed to produce and use them were inadequate, and there was a deluge of unused data.

The entry of Women Count on the scene, and its subsequent letter of agreement between UN Women, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and the State Department for Gender Affairs (SDGA) in the Ministry of Public Service and Gender, provided impetus to refurbish the Gender Committee and expand its mandate to an inter-agency mechanism designed to address multidimensional challenges. These included a lack of coordinated approaches to the production, access to and use of gender statistics in Kenya and the limited involvement of non-governmental actors in the gender statistics ecosystem.

This case study relies on a literature review, internal meetings with experts and interviews with key informants to shed light on the Committee's activities, which have ultimately had a positive impact in the gender data and statistics space and have added value to the NSS.

Established as a mechanism to improve collaboration and coordination between KNBS and SDGA, the IAGSTC fosters partnership in the NSS and oversees implementation of the Women Count project in Kenya. With its expanded mandate and multi-stakeholder membership – the Committee has met quarterly. The IAGSTC has provided clarity on the roles and responsibilities of KNBS and SDGA with regard to gender statistics, which was previously lacking. Another major milestone has been its mapping of Kenya's gender statistics needs and usage, and the development of the soon-to-be launched Gender Sector Statistics Plan (the equivalent of a National Strategy for the Development of Gender Statistics) to help coordinate the efforts of all users and producers in the sector.

The IAGSTC has contributed to the production and reprocessing of quality gender data that better serve user needs, further stimulating demand for gender statistics.

Chaired by KNBS and SDGA, the IAGSTC works with State actors – such as line ministries responsible for health, agriculture, environment, finance and planning (Treasury) – as well as non-State actors, including: civil society organizations (CSOs) represented by GROOTS and the SDGs Kenya Forum¹; corporate partners through the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA); academic and research institutions such as the University of Nairobi (UoN) and the Kenya Institute for Public Policy and Research (KIPPRA); and media.

All respondents unanimously agreed that the Committee has been instrumental in bringing together valuable stakeholders, including previously excluded actors, most notably CSOs and academia. Through their active participation in the Committee, both groups have made valuable contributions to more inclusive gender data and a richer statistics space, which has also benefitted their respective organizations.

¹ SDGs Kenya Forum is a voluntary membership entity open to CSOs, government, academia, media and private-sector organizations that subscribe to Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals. It convenes 350+ diverse CSOs working across the 17 SDGs.

The Committee has also contributed substantially to ensuring that gender statistics are increasingly accessible to all users, including county governments, and that this data can be analysed to inform research, advocacy, policies and programmes.

Already, success stories are emerging from the improved access to this data. For instance, county gender data sheets² published by KNBS in partnership with the Council of Governors (CoG) and Women Count, with technical support from the Committee, have brought about three new gender-equality-related legislations in Kitui County, one of the pilot counties for this inaugural data. In addition, engagements by the IAGSTC led to an Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) study on women's access to agricultural finance in Kenya, which resulted in revisions of AFC's gender policy and financial commitments. Improved access to data has also driven quality graduate research by University of Nairobi students supported by grants.

The research is not only influencing public policy proposals but it has prompted KNBS to fill data gaps on femicide and other specialized areas of study.

Spillover impacts include increased accountability and coordination between participating agencies, such as UN Women, UNFPA and UNICEF, on gender-related initiatives, such as the upcoming development of a Gender Dimensions Monograph. In terms of sustainability, stakeholders have expressed confidence in the likelihood that IAGSTC funding and activities will continue well beyond the Women Count programme in Kenya.

In short, this case study concludes that the IAGSTC has proven to be an invaluable mechanism for improving coordination and the operations of the NSS in Kenya. Through its direct actions and fostered partnerships, the Committee is contributing substantially to creating an enabling environment for gender statistics and effective monitoring of the SDGs.

GENDER DATA STORY

In Kenya, committee makeover brings new players and more inclusive data



UNICEF/Adriano Ornesian

Read the story on the Women Count data hub: <http://tiny.cc/kenyacommittee>

² <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/county-gender-data-sheets>

INTRODUCTION

About Women Count

Women Count is UN Women's global gender data programme launched in September 2016. The programme aims to affect a radical shift in the availability, accessibility and use of data and statistics on key aspects of gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). It is a multi-year and multi-country programme, supported by global and regional activities linking normative and technical work on gender statistics at the global level to the regional and national levels through three interlinked areas:

- Building a supportive policy and institutional environment for the localization and effective monitoring of the SDGs;
- Increasing the quality, comparability, and regularity of gender statistics to address national data gaps and meet reporting commitments under the SDGs;
- Ensuring that gender statistics are accessible to users in governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector to strengthen demand for their production.

Women Count has a strong presence in East Africa, with a regional project for East and Southern Africa and pathfinder projects in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. In Kenya, Woman Count seeks to strengthen the capacity of State and non-State actors to produce and use gender statistics in to inform and monitor the implementation of their gender-related commitments in the 2030 Agenda. It equally aims to provide technical support to improve the country's production of gender statistics across all areas related to the SDGs. With support from UN Women, the KNBS is implementing the Women Count programme, operationalized through a Letter of Agreement.

Purpose

Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation (MLE) is a key component of UN Women's flagship Women Count programme towards generating knowledge on cost-effective ways to provide statistical capacity building in gender statistics in different contexts. Throughout the life of the programme, there has been an ongoing effort by UN Women to realize the three concrete key objectives contained within the Women Count MLE Plan:

- measuring effectiveness of the approach;
- learning through diversity of experiences; and
- monitoring sustainability.

The midterm of the Women Count programme conducted in 2019 provided an important opportunity to continue building on existing MLE efforts and respond to the needs of programme partners to improve how the programme captures results. The MTR document highlighted several important results of the programme but also pointed to some areas where improvements were needed. These include:

- refining reporting, learning, monitoring and evaluation tools to better capture and demonstrate the programme's impact;
- streamlining internal communications; and
- improving knowledge management to facilitate greater collaboration across the programme.

To respond, UN Women commissioned an initial set of multi-country/regional case studies to collect qualitative and quantitative data to better illustrate the real impact of the programme and feed into the organization's annual report. This is one of three case studies that aim to highlight country and regional best practices that can effectively demonstrate the impact of Women Count across its three outcome areas and distill critical lessons learned that can be applied, widely disseminated, and replicated within and beyond the programme.

Background and objectives

Coordination within a national statistical system is essential to ensuring that gender statistics are produced in an efficient way. One of Women Count’s approaches to creating an enabling environment for the production and use of gender statistics is to establish coordination mechanisms including inter-agency committees, technical working groups, and project steering committees to bring together different actors within the NSS.

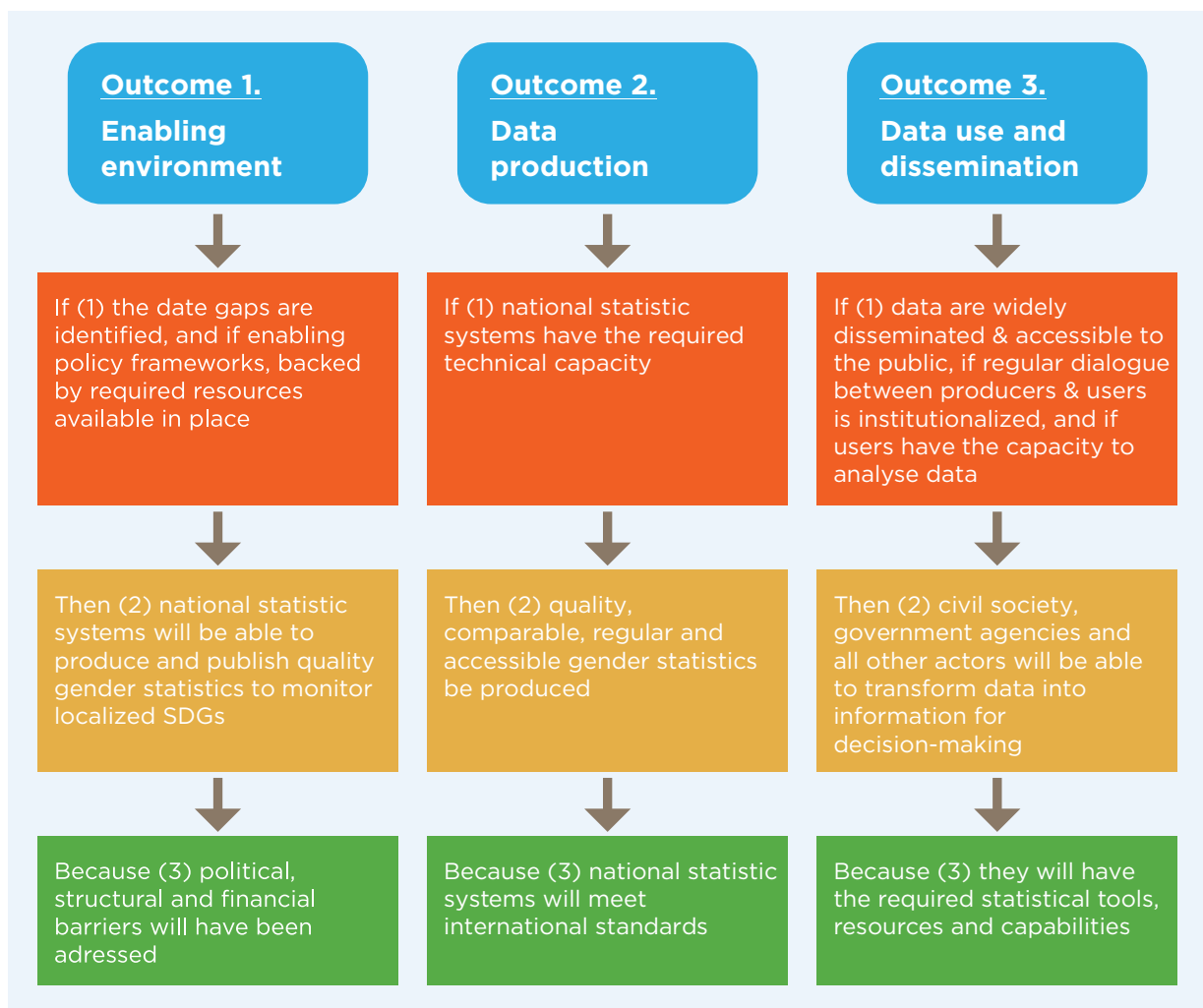
As such, as part of activities under Outcome 1 of the Women Count programme – on building a supportive policy and institutional environment for the localization and effective monitoring of the SDGs – Women Count has played an integral role in establishing and coordinating the IAGSTC.

The chart below illustrates how this outcome, and thus initiative, relates to the programme’s theory of change.

This case study aims to document the process and approach of establishing the IAGSTC and investigate the Committee’s influence on the functioning of Kenya’s NSS. This case study also seeks to assess the added value of building partnerships within the NSS to improve the production and use of gender data and demonstrate the impact on gender data as a result.

Overall, the case study documents whether Women Count has achieved the desired results of the IAGSTC, and what the process has entailed, while identifying the drivers of success.

FIGURE 1
Women Count Programme Theory of Change



METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

Data collection

1. Desk/document review

The desk review entailed identifying, collecting and reviewing available documents and secondary data to gain an understanding of the country context, gender and/or statistics priorities and trends, and identify any gaps and constraints towards making any necessary recommendations. This was carried out to:

- Gather both quantitative and qualitative information on the background, context, and rationale of the initiative;
- Establish progress to date and status of the initiative;
- Identify challenges and lessons in the process of establishing the mechanism; and
- Inform the development of data-collection tools by identifying areas to probe further;

Annexes 1 and 2 contain a list of reviewed documents and of key informants interviewed in the development of this case study.

2. Internal meetings/expert sampling

Through meetings with internal stakeholders selected using expert sampling, a form of purposive sampling, the research team captured expert knowledge from members of the Women Count Kenya technical team, who have been driving UN Women's participation in this initiative. The meetings leveraged the rich institutional memory presented by these stakeholders to provide background information on the identified research topic at the onset of the study. This early-stage research helped to shape the research design and inform research questions. Overall, the internal meetings were instrumental in:

- Identifying and accessing the relevant information materials;

- Clarifying the background, context, approaches, rationale and progress of the initiative beyond information gathered during the desk review; and
- Helping to identify and connect with proposed key informants (partners and other stakeholders).

3. Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews are useful for gathering qualitative in-depth data and information with people who are closely involved in an activity or initiative, such as IAGSTC. The interviews covered a range of stakeholders – seven in total – selected using purposive sampling. Key informants were members of the IAGSTC with first-hand knowledge of the context, work of the Committee, results, impact and sustainability. They comprised:

- The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (Chair)
- The State Department for Gender, Ministry of Public Service and Gender (Co-Chair)
- The Council of Governors of Kenya (Member)
- The Sustainable Development Goals Kenya Forum (Member)
- University of Nairobi (Member)
- UNICEF (Member)

Due to the need for social distancing during the global COVID-19 pandemic, the research team used telephone and online interviews to gather data and information for triangulation with information from the desk research and internal meetings. Researchers applied an open-ended questionnaire for a guided interview with each key informant. Each interview lasted between 30 minutes and one hour. A copy of the interview guide and questionnaire is provided in Annex 3.

Limitations

The study is confined to investigating the establishment of the IAGSTC in Kenya as a best practice to demonstrate how to operationalize an inter-agency coordination mechanism to increase coordination on the production, compilation and dissemination of gender statistics at national and county levels. As such, the study did not delve into broader issues of the Kenya NSS but restricted its investigations to how the IAGSTC was established, operationalized and implemented, and to its results and impact in building coordination and partnerships in the NSS to develop an enabling environment for gender data in Kenya.

The study faced several limitations, not least of which were time constraints. A period of only six weeks was available to undertake the study. Competing priorities of members of the research team limited time dedicated to the study and thus also impeded the depth and quality of the study. The pandemic-related social distancing requirements presented a further constraint as all interaction with internal constituents and key informants was limited to virtual meetings. As can be expected, this hindered the achievement of the desired level of interpersonal connection and rapport that often supports in-person interviews.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Using the investigative methods outlined above, the research team gathered data based on the following four criteria:

- **Relevance** – context and challenges; what necessitated the establishment of the Committee; the formation process; and challenges.
- **Impact on gender data production and use**; influence (positive or negative) on the functioning of the NSS; and added value.
- **Effectiveness** of the initiative in building partnerships within the NSS; effectiveness in improving the production and use of gender data; and innovations in overcoming any identified challenges in the implementation process.
- **Sustainability** in funding; level of activity and participation; and operations going forward.

Relevance

The production of gender statistics is a concern for the NSS, which garners data from different sources and statistical fields. The establishment of the Women Count programme in Kenya was informed in part by a national needs assessment in the form of a gender statistics survey carried out by SDGA and KNBS, in partnership with UN Women.

The Kenya National Gender Statistics Assessment 2018³ established that: current policy and legislative arrangements were not in tandem with constitutional requirements on the use of data and information; current legislative arrangements do not meet the key principles of the African data revolution, to which Kenya ascribes; county governments do not have a policy or legal framework to guide statistical activities, much less those specifically tied to gender; and there is still no policy or legislative bill on the implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities. As a result,

the systems necessary to generate and use data at the national and subnational levels are inadequate.

To improve the enabling environment for gender statistics, the Women Count programme has advocated the development of a national gender statistics plan.

According to National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Acting Chief Executive Officer Paul Kuria, the IAGSTC was established to “take leadership in the coordination and realization of very specific goals and objectives of the national gender statistics plan,” which he said should be based on measurable and time-bound broad objectives. “These include the development of sound policy and legal frameworks that really support the generation, utilization and appreciation of gender statistics for planning, policy formulation, budgeting and the design of development, and, most importantly, the involvement and meaningful participation of special interest groups such as vulnerable groups that are often completely left behind in the development agenda.”

Kenya’s national assessment also found that while several recent surveys capture relevant gender data, the richness of this data has not yet been exploited sufficiently for gender analysis, resulting in a deluge of unused data. Lack of training and awareness-raising were identified as the main factors behind inadequate demand and use of gender statistics, in addition to misconceptions around gender-related terms and misunderstanding of gender statistics. The assessment found that low data literacy and capacity to access, analyse and use data reflects an inability to effectively signal demand for existing data.

3 https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Kenya_national-gender-stats-assessment.pdf

Kuria said the IAGSTC was also established to facilitate access to and utilization of statistics. “Quite a lot of gender statistics are prepared but norms and standards within which these can be accepted by the national statistical framework are lacking. Access is also poor as some of these statistics are encrypted – some statistics exist in universities and research bodies, and others in civil society may even be conflicting and not meet minimum thresholds, for instance, of disaggregation by gender.”

The national assessment equally revealed that most data dissemination still relies on traditional non-digital distribution of printed material, and therefore falls short of upholding the key principles of an open data system. It also found that data-sharing between the various national and subnational statistical agencies is limited – signaling the need for greater cooperation.

Women Count Gender Statistics Programme Specialist Maureen Gitonga explained that the IAGSTC “was set up to ensure government coordination based on the different mandates carried out by various institutions. The national statistics office by itself could not deliver sector-specific statistics without close collaboration with the sector players – in this case the SDGA and other actors in the gender statistics space.”

Initially, the main role of the Gender Committee was to validate data on gender. With its rebirth as the IAGSTC in October 2018, its enhanced mandate included overseeing the Women Count programme’s three key outcomes: policy (creating an enabling environment); data production; and data use (by KNBS, administrative data producers, and other users).

SDGA, through the Head of its Central Planning and Projects Monitoring Unit, William Komu, confirmed that “one of the challenges identified in the assessment was poor coordination of gender research and statistics, so this informed the establishment of the Committee. Key institutions dealing with gender work are members of the committee, with involvement by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture, among the key players.”

Aimed at facilitating coordination between the SDGA and the KNBS, the key institutions responsible for gender statistics, and other sector actors, the expanded Committee included both State and

non-State actors – such as the SDGs Forum Kenya (a consortium of more than 40 NGOs), GROOTS Kenya (a national movement of grass-roots women-led community-based and self-help groups), UoN, and development partners including UN Women, UNFPA and UNICEF.

UoN Senior Lecturer in Economics Joy Kiiru emphasizes that “the idea was to bring together gender statistics stakeholders in their various characteristics – producers, users of gender statistics and the advocates of gender issues. A critical consideration was, ‘so, we are producing gender statistics – what for?’”

She describes the role and limitations of academia in the NSS: “we are good at deeper and more rigorous analysis and applying statistical methods of analysing data and complex models to tell deeper stories, such as, ‘who is likely to be poorer or left out from a gender perspective and why?’ This is critical information for informing policy. Unfortunately, we are not the best at advocacy, and we are not policymakers. But we can work with those who are good at advocacy to run with these messages, and with policymakers to act on them.”

Expanding the composition of the Committee also sought to broaden the reach of institutions that have a lot to offer in the sector, for example, non-traditional data producers responsible for administrative data and grass-roots and SDG-focused CSOs that could provide community and advocacy perspectives.

According to SDGs Kenya Forum Executive Director Florence Syevuo: “this initiative has been an eye-opener to bring together stakeholders and advance a conversation that has not previously been a priority and set the pace in Africa and other continents with concrete results.”

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Florence Syevuo
SDGs Kenya Forum Executive Director

Implementation

The IAGSTC is tasked with improving the production of, and access to, gender statistics in Kenya by: providing technical assistance in formulating and reviewing gender statistics-related policies, plans and strategies; monitoring progress in implementation of agreed actions at the sectorial level and assessing their impact; collaborating with other sectoral working groups to improve the production and quality of gender statistics; coordinating the work of its subcommittees to provide an enabling environment for data production and use; and engaging with all relevant actors on gender statistics.

At its inception, the Committee agreed on gender mainstreaming as the preferred approach in the production of gender statistics at all stages of data production – from planning to data collection, analysis and dissemination. Among the challenges to gender mainstreaming identified at the inception stage were difficulties in changing attitudes and values, lack of focus on gender in the operations of most institutions, and a general struggle to implement organizational, structural and attitudinal changes rather than merely changing operations.

Members identified numerous opportunities for gender mainstreaming, including: strengthening the policy and financial environment to enable gender-responsive national adaptation and effective monitoring of the SDGs; strengthening production of gender statistics for proper monitoring of national policies and reporting commitments – under the SDGs, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action – and ensuring that gender statistics are accessible to all users and analysed to inform policies, programmes, research and advocacy to promote accountability.

The Committee identified conditions that could open up gender mainstreaming opportunities, namely: leadership and political goodwill at all levels; legal cooperation between users and producers of statistics; a framework within which gender statistics are defined; collaboration with all relevant actors to develop and improve common understanding of concepts and methodologies; and building institutional capacities through continuous training – particularly of gender statisticians.

The IAGSTC also committed to coordinate among members and other sector actors and to incorporate the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and research institutions, including universities, in the IAGSTC – all of which it has accomplished.

NGEC's Kuria points to the Committee's potential to influence other statistical activities across the NSS, stating that "for the IAGSTC, it is step-by-step towards ensuring that we 'conquer' all the sectors and that they provide data and information that is completely specific and sensitive to gender issues; gender perspectives must be presented in all these sectors. That can only happen through this Committee because once we set the tone and priorities, then we are able to influence other sector committees."

During the Committee's quarterly meetings, members provide updates on ongoing and upcoming initiatives related to gender in their respective organizations, keep members apprised of developments in the sector and share information to allow benchmarking against like-minded organizations. In some instances, the Committee organizes capacity-building activities for members and stakeholders. For instance, personnel from UN Women, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), FAO and experts from the region (Uganda and Tanzania) trained members to harness gender statistics across thematic areas and sectors soon after the Committee's inception. This helped galvanize members in the same direction and encourage buy-in.

With these approaches, KNBS and SDGA as the co-leads, and numerous State and non-State actors as members and partners, the IAGSTC has been instrumental in providing linkages between members and building the gender statistics capacity of organizations in the NSS.

SDGA's Komu notes the positive influence of the IAGSTC on NSS functions through "capacity-building, especially for data producers, in dissemination of existing gender data to facilitate its effective utilization and strengthening key institutions that deal with gender statistics. These include the SDGA, the Gender Policy and Research Directorate, the Central Planning and Project Monitoring Unit, which monitors programmes on gender, KNBS statisticians to incorporate gender dimensions in their survey instruments, and county gender officers for better collection and packaging of gender data."

This case study also seeks to establish what, if any, has been the added value of the IAGSTC on the NSS and its functions in a broader sense. One important finding in this regard is that the NSS has embraced inclusivity in all its processes. For instance, for Kenya's first-ever Time-Use Survey, the Committee held extensive consultations on the study design, and administration, as well as data-collection tools and other important elements. Stakeholders such as GROOTS agree that the study's design was much improved from a gender perspective as a result of this collaboration.

KNBS Programme Specialist and Gender Statistics Adviser Joshua Musyimi says: "through the Committee we have really embraced the art of inclusivity and we are increasingly appreciative of other partners' inputs. For example, we actively engaged partners in designing the time-use survey and gender monograph from the recent Census."

Effectiveness

Among the key findings of this case study are that the IAGSTC has effectively built partnerships within the NSS, improved the production and use of gender data, and innovated in the face of challenges.

Strengthened partnerships

Beyond its varied membership, which includes key government bodies, civil society, academic and development partners, the IAGSTC also works in various capacities with the line ministries responsible for health, agriculture, finance and planning (Treasury), as well as with private-sector actors through the Kenya Private Sector Alliance, Kenya Institute for Public Policy and Research, and media organizations.

Such partnerships and cross-sector linkages have been extremely effective, leading to concrete research and gender data production, to be detailed below, as well as increased use of, and demand for, gender statistics.

According to KNBS's Musyimi, "through the Committee, we have managed to review and produce better gender statistics by getting other actors, including non-State actors, involved in every process we are undertaking."

In terms of technical assistance in the formulation and review of gender statistics-related policies, plans and strategies, the IAGSTC has provided critical support to various members and sectors, through their engagement on the Committee.

Notably, the IAGSTC has had a tangible impact in ensuring a more strategic approach to gender statistics in Kenya. One major milestone in this area has been achieved through mapping Kenya's gender statistics needs and usage and developing the soon-to-be launched Gender Sector Statistics Plan (GSSP) – the equivalent of the National Strategy for the Development of Gender Statistics – to help coordinate the efforts of all users and producers in the sector.

CoG Secretariat official Jackline Migide attributes some of the impact to the fact that "the Committee brings together different actors from various National Designated Authorities, which allows us to have an array of ideas. For example, we know what is happening in the agricultural sector and how to get the latest gender data in that sector due to MoA's participation in the IAGSTC. CoG's participation in the Committee provides other members with organized access to CECs and other key officials at the county government. Knowing that we have reliable data that stakeholders can rely on for decision-making also means that we can contribute to factoring in gender statistics in national planning, such as through spearheading the inaugural gender chapter in the Kenya Economic Survey 2020."

"Through the Committee, we have managed to review and produce better gender statistics by getting other actors, including non-State actors, involved in every process we are undertaking."

Joshua Musyimi
KNBS Programme Specialist and Gender Statistics Adviser

SDGA's Komu agrees, "the committee has been very successful with many effective initiatives and activities on gender statistics collection, dissemination and capacity-building taking off as a result of the Committee's work. We have a Genders Stats Strategy, a Time-Use Survey is in the works, and we have worked on ... initiatives championing GEWE."

As evidence of enhanced partnerships, Komu notes that "one of the agendas in each meeting is a slot for members to contribute developments in their respective institutions on gender work. This goes beyond the initial mandate of the Committee and has been instrumental in fostering information and knowledge exchange, as providing room to share lessons on what is working well in institutions' gender initiatives."

During Africa Statistics Week in November 2019, UN Women facilitated GROOTS Kenya to convene 35 women's rights organizations and socialize them on gender data ecosystems and data use for advocacy to accelerate achievement of GEWE. The participating organizations are now involved in generating and using citizen-generated data to monitor SDG 5, as complimentary data in Kenya. They were also supported to prepare their contributions towards Kenya's Voluntary National Review 2020 Report⁴ (VNR), in 2020.

According to UNICEF Social Planning Specialist Godfrey Ndeng'e, "triangulation of gender data and leveraging stakeholders' capacities to churn out products and evidence on gender was a key objective of setting up the Committee."

Informants note that ownership and appreciation of the national and subnational gender statistics discourse is high among members, including State actors. As a result of continuous meaningful engagement, collaboration and strategic capacity-building, the idea of credible gender statistics is no longer considered far-fetched or an enigma to stakeholders.

The SDGs Kenya Forum puts it powerfully: "The challenges that Kenya has experienced in monitoring

the gender-related SDGs due to lack of evidence and data will soon not be an issue," said Syevuo.

As a result of its work with the Committee, KNBS has also expanded its own partnerships, lending its technical support to KIPPRA as a panellist in the 'National Conference on Gender, the SDGs and Big 4 Agenda', and providing technical assistance to MED in integrating gender-related indicators in the Mid-Term Plan III Handbook 2018–2022.

The Committee has ensured accountability for stakeholders, for instance by evaluating the progress of initiatives under the Agreement between KNBS and UN Women, which constitutes 60 per cent of the Women Count programme, as well as by approving work plans, providing technical contributions and monitoring for effectiveness.

The Committee has also helped ensure accountability and assure quality across the NSS by providing a platform for members to make technical contributions and provide monitoring support. For instance, UoN and CoG provided monitoring expertise during the design and development of the Time-Use Survey, scheduled to launch in the coming months.

For the UN agencies involved in the IAGSTC, under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), one unintended impact has been increased accountability and coordination of gender-related initiatives through participation in the Committee.

A good example is the July 2020 IAGSTC meeting, during which Women Count presented its workplan for the next two quarters for the Committee's review and approval. This provided a valuable opportunity for UNFPA to reaffirm its commitment to carry out further analysis of the 2019 Census data to develop a Gender Dimensions Monograph in partnership with UN Women in the coming months.

The IAGSTC also provides a platform for increased accountability with the Government, not just through UNDAF commitments, but also within ministries, departments and agencies.

4 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2020>

GENDER DATA STORY

In Kenya, county gender data sheets are ushering in new laws and policies



UNICEF/Adriane Ohanesian

Read the story on the Women Count data hub: <http://tiny.cc/county-datasheets>

Improved data production

The coordination mechanism also provides a platform for partners to ensure data quality and that the data they produce actually responds to their needs, thereby promoting its use and stimulating demand for quality and relevant gender statistics.

Some examples of the Committee's involvement in producing, reprocessing and using gender data include:

- The first-ever gender chapter in the Kenya Economic Survey in 2020⁵, the result of consultations, reviews and proposals from the IAGSTC, which included provision of additional data for the section to develop and complete tables, etc. This effectively positions gender data squarely in Kenya's economic planning processes, a move that is expected to deliver tangible impacts in

policy development and resource allocation. More analysis on this is provided in a UN Women Op-Ed⁶ published to coincide with the launch of the Kenya Economic Survey 2020.

- Support for the development of the Women and Men in Kenya Booklet No. 2, which draws data from multiple sources, including the 2019 Census.
- Support for the development of the national gender data sheet, which shows different indicators with their respective data – IAGSTC reviews and validates the data contained before it is published.
- Support for the development of a Gender Monograph for the 2019 Census – through the Committee, KNBS has enhanced its capacity to review and produce gender statistics.
- Support towards the development of the Youth Dividend Index with the Futures Group, which is in the pipeline.

5 <https://www.knbs.or.ke/?wpdmprom=economic-survey-2020>

6 <https://data.unwomen.org/news/2020-economic-survey-kenya-now-includes-chapter-gender-equality>

- For the first time, monitoring of the Census process took place to establish the extent to which women are involved. Even with the standardized tools applied, the Committee was instrumental in pushing for even greater disaggregation throughout the data collection process to ensure that gender-relevant data was collected.

As a result of these efforts, the Committee has also taken significant steps to improve the quality of gender data by identifying gaps in the data that it has reprocessed for various new knowledge products. Identifying these gaps will help ensure that subsequent data adequately addresses required gender dimensions.

Due in part to the Committee's efforts to increase data production to monitor and report on SDG gender indicators, Kenya's SDGs reporting has vastly improved. In July 2020, following the launch of Kenya's VNR, the UN Development Coordination Office pointed to the report as a good practice because it covers the impact of COVID-19 on selected SDGs, including on gender, and identifies areas to help the Government of Kenya build back better.

The SDGs Forum's Syevuo added: "IAGSTC has made gender statistics a reality in Kenya. We are living that reality. The Committee is well placed to follow through and introduce some of the statistics that are critical for SDG reporting as well as implementation processes that influence our day-to-day engagements."

Moreover, under its analysis of interlinkages between goals and policy coherence, the VNR refers to the IAGSTC as being among "innovative ways of addressing the challenges to achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls through fostering partnership with research institutions and universities on gender research." The VNR also refers to the Women Count programme among special interventions for those left behind, recognizing its role to "stimulate the sustained production and dissemination of quality gender statistics for monitoring the 54 gender-related SDG indicators." The UN SDGs High-level Political Forum (HPLF) plans to discuss Kenya's VNR at a meeting scheduled for mid-July.

SDGA's Komu suggested that "other institutions and other key sectors, and even other countries, could adopt this approach to deal with the problem of monitoring the gender-related SDGs due to lack of evidence and data. In the near future, reporting on gender will no longer be a challenge for Kenya because of the effectiveness of this Committee."

The IAGSTC has certainly provided a platform for the cross-pollination of ideas across sectors, which has resulted in the production of critical gender data. As an example of this effectiveness, in 2019, engagements in the IAGSTC led to a joint baseline study on women's access to agricultural finance in Kenya⁷, commissioned by the Agricultural Finance Corporation of Kenya (AFC). The data resulted in the AFC revising its gender policy and financial commitments. Carried out under the guidance of KIPPRA and in partnership with KNBS, Women Count, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the European Union (EU), the baseline study recommended that access to finance be viewed beyond credit, and that more focus be placed on expanding accessible products, ease and timeliness of access, and quality of products to drive long-term transformation for small-holder farmers and small agri-based businesses, which are often women-driven. It also recommended that financial access programmes for women reduce emphasis on hard collateral such as title deeds as a basis for advancing credit, as such requirements often hinder women's access. The findings of the baseline study will guide the development of a strategy for programming interventions by AFC, national and county governments and other partners. The baseline data will also contribute to measuring achievements, and inform discussions on how to address challenges and build on identified sector success stories.

According to UNICEF's Ndeng'e, the Committee has been remarkably successful "in terms of building in-country capacity, not only at the KNBS level but also within other institutions. For instance, the AFC study had very interesting findings; supporting KNBS to generate such evidence speaks to the important role of the IAGSTC in leveraging partners' capacities to contribute meaningfully to gender statistics."

7 <http://agrifinance.org/uploads/downloads/SP%2029%20WAAW%20B-LINE%20REPORT%2020191202.pdf>

GENDER DATA STORY

Student research grants bolster gender analysis in Kenya



Read the story on the Women Count data hub: <http://tiny.cc/student-grants>

Improved data use

The IAGSTC has also bolstered access to gender data, and its use to inform policymaking, including through a student grants programme at UoN, which facilitated student access to KNBS data, which they analysed to formulate policy recommendations, in partnership with the Bureau. Students presented their Master's grantee research and recommendations based on this gender data at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in November 2019, where senior representatives from UNECA, UN Women and KNBS provided feedback.

KNBS's Musyimi lauded this partnership, saying: "working with UoN has been excellent. The institution has really picked up the data we have and carried out further analysis to develop interim policy recommendations in partnership with the Bureau, which has also peer-reviewed the emerging papers."

He adds that this data use has made an impact: "participants at ICPD 25 were impressed to see policy emerging from a different front – university students using KNBS data to showcase their potential in contributing to policy development – once data is readily available."

The student grant initiative has yielded several results so far: it strengthened KNBS' commitment to capturing femicide-related data and incorporating it in national crime reports and in the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey. It has also had the ripple effect of giving rise to more opportunities for the students to showcase and advance their work with national and global stakeholders and enhance their policy proposals.

Simultaneously spurring both gender data production and use, in 2019, the Committee drove the development of the first-ever county gender data sheets, for an initial 10 out of 47 counties in Kenya, in collaboration with the CoG. The inaugural data sheets

were welcomed by the counties, which previously relied on the county statistical abstracts that do not clearly reflect gender.

These quality gender data products have not only stimulated demand for similar data from other countries but have also heralded three new GEWE-related legislations in Kitui County, one of the pilot counties for this inaugural data. Specifically, the data has triggered the development of: a County Gender Policy; an Empowerment Bill – which will allow the county to deliberately target women in income-generating activities; and a Mainstreaming Bill – which will ensure that all action by the county takes gender into consideration, including in its allocation of resources.

CoG’s Migide describes the IAGSTC’s work as “greatly contributing to decision-making at the county level and informing accurate budgeting.” She illustrated the added value of this county gender data⁸ with an example: “The Kirinyaga County Executive Committee Member for Health confirmed that by using data from the Kirinyaga County Gender Data Sheet she could make a timely and well-informed decision on the quantity of contraceptives required for stock in the County, unlike previously where the data was not available.”

This impact also extends to policymaking at the national level. UoN’s Kiiru says “the IAGSTC addresses the issues of production, use and policy linkages, and is therefore critical in linking data, research and policy for evidence-based policymaking in gender and women’s issues.”

Innovating to overcome challenges

The IAGSTC has also proven its ability to innovate to overcome challenges to Women Count’s programme implementation, responding quickly to the new challenges in light of COVID-19, even launching a gender rapid assessment.

As the CoG’s Migide explained, “every time they have an intervention such as the ongoing COVID-19 gender rapid assessment, Women Count consults

with the IAGSTC, in this case to review the proposed assessment questions. As a member of the Committee representing the CoG, I had the opportunity to interrogate the assessment tools with the counties in mind to ensure that the questions posed are representative of our respective constituencies and will deliver the desired outcome.”

Noting the challenges of gathering certain data, the Committee has provided an invaluable platform for more inclusive data on gender by including non-State actors among data producers – new territory for Kenya. The IAGSTC has successfully promoted the use of innovative citizen-generated data, CSO data, and Big Data, among others, as complementary data in the

NSS, within agreed defined standards. Key informants have expressed the benefits of this inclusivity in enriching the breadth and depth of gender data in Kenya.

GROOTS Kenya, through its Executive Director Fridah Githuku, called the IAGSTC “a good case of how co-creation can bridge the gap between data producers and users and support in measuring the right things.”

The IAGSTC has not encountered any major challenges in implementing its mandate. However, minor hiccups have arisen in conflicting partner schedules, which in some instances hinders effective representation during quarterly meetings. In these cases, the member institution delegates an alternative representative to attend, if the key contact person/representative is unavailable, which may set discussions back as new representatives are brought up to speed in order to meaningfully participate. This challenge has been mitigated through fastidious minute-sharing, which enables any representatives absent to keep up with developments and make any necessary additions, clarifications, decisions, and follow-up actions based on the documented discussions.

8 <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/county-gender-data-sheets>

Sustainability

Stakeholders expressed high confidence in the likelihood of the IAGSTC continuing, in terms of funding and activities, well after the life of the Women Count project in Kenya.

KNBS, SDGA and UN Women provide much of the required resources, with all respondents agreeing that this includes in-kind contributions such as meeting venues – with the exception of product development, whose costs are typically borne by partners, and occasional residential meetings, whose cost is often borne by partners such as UN Women. While all respondents agreed that running the Committee has been a low-cost affair so far, they also expressed confidence that the GSSP will serve as a valuable resource mobilization tool, both for line ministries and other public entities.

NGEC's Kuria expressed this clearly, commending the IAGSTC for “contributions in kind, something that I have not seen in many other similar initiatives” and the confidence inspired by “having a Strategic Plan – the beginning of resource mobilization.” In his words, “this presents an opportunity to get commitment from GoK and county governments as well as UN agencies and other development partners to help ensure sustainability.”

Concerning operational sustainability, all respondents cited the high level of commitment and ownership demonstrated by members over the past two years as an indication of seamless continuity, which they expect to continue even after the conclusion of the Women Count programme in 2021. All respondents also appreciated that the IAGSTC is Government-led, which they consider a critical factor for its sustainability. Half of the respondents also cited the GSSP as an operational sustainability tool, which would provide a road map for gender statistics and thus the IAGSTC for the next few years, at a minimum.

Respondents further praised the current enthusiasm, willingness and participation from the KNBS Director General's office, senior management of the SDGA and the Ministry of Public Service and Gender, given their hands-on participation in the Committee's sustainability.

SDGs Kenya Forum's Syevuo put it this way: “The goodwill from the highest office of the KNBS has enabled the Committee to be operational and execute its mandate. Bringing partners together and demonstrating such goodwill is a success story. The Committee can thus be confident that whatever it does will get to the highest level – no one wants to be engaged in a process in which it is unclear where the results will go.”

Only one out of the seven key informants expressed cautious optimism on the sustainability of the Committee, clarifying that the initiative is still at a nascent stage and that continued success will hinge on remaining faithful to its principles and staying open to new ideas.

NGEC's Kuria explained this position, stating: “if the Committee maintains its momentum and principles that we have set for ourselves; if we obey the TORs and agree for amendments where needed; and remain amenable to new thoughts and ideas that may come from the region, then we are on the right track and even more impact will be felt going forward.”

Kuria also underlined the opportunity and importance of institutionalizing gender statistics: “if we coordinate this well, then gender statistics shall become completely institutionalized in all our government operations and become part of our international reporting and county and national government planning. At the moment, it is still in the nascent stages, but I am very optimistic that this will take the shape of what we have always aspired to have.”

This case study has also established that the Committee's location at KNBS will help ensure it continues to validate gender statistics work undertaken by KNBS and all members and partners of the IAGSTC at national and county level, beyond the Women Count project cycle.

KNBS's Musyimi acknowledged: “the Women Count programme has helped ensure that gender data is produced and is accessible for use, but the bottom line is the production and use of data and not really the Women Count programme. This means that if we can continue producing data that will inform policy, research, and non-State actors in their programmatic approaches, the Committee will be sustainable. I do not foresee a challenge where the mechanism will

grind to a halt once the Women Count programme comes to an end.”

As a result of the participatory and strategic approaches applied by this government-led multi-agency coordinating mechanism, it is expected that gender statistics will continue to be generated and used and that demand will continue to grow. Gaps have been identified to ensure that, as the IAGSTC carries on with its mandate, produced data will continue to reflect the necessary gender dimensions.

According to CoG’s Migide, “the gender agenda currently receives a lot of attention, especially from development partners, which is a good thing given that gender statistics has been an issue for so long. I do not think that the end of the Women Count project in Kenya will spell the end of the IAGSTC. We are really hopeful that partners are going to pick it up and the Committee is already brainstorming on how to move forward to avoid reverting to duplication of efforts and stalling the gender agenda. One of the things

that drags the gender agenda back is lack of gender statistics.”

In an apt parting shot, Migide adds: “we now have an opportunity to do things right in gender statistics and we need to take advantage of the opportunity, which may not be happening in many other countries. This opportunity can move us a step forward in empowering Kenyan women and girls.”

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Jackline Migide
CoG Secretariat official

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The IAGSTC has proven to be an invaluable mechanism for improving coordination in the NSS in Kenya. Through its direct actions and partnerships fostered, the Committee is making a substantial contribution towards creating an enabling environment for gender statistics and addressing the localization and effective gender-responsive monitoring of the SDGs.

Based on the findings gleaned in this study, there is great value in establishing an inter-agency coordination mechanism as a viable approach to improving gender statistics and achieving gender equality. Formal agreements in the form of Letters of Agreement and full integration of the coordinating mechanism within already-established member structures are instrumental to building robust, active membership and sustainability of the mechanism.

Lessons learned include the need for flexibility in meeting scheduling, to take into account intensive

seasonal engagements such as a national Census, is critical to maintaining member commitment and participation. The same applies for enhanced value offerings such as a slot for special presentations, training or discussions on topical issues such as the AFC baseline study. This approach enabled members to stay abreast of new information, initiatives, and products to keep up with trends benchmark their respective initiatives against like-minded organizations.

The experience in Kenya confirms that providing a platform for data producers and users to work together through inclusive multi-agency coordination mechanisms such the IAGSTC can bring about transformative change in the way gender data is produced and used, which can ultimately have greater impact in how the data is used to inform critical policies and programming.

ANNEX I: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

1. Kenya brief: <https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Kenya-brief.pdf>
2. Women Count Kenya Page: <https://data.unwomen.org/where-we-work/kenya>
3. Kenya 2018 Update Fifth Meeting of the Steering Committee: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/50th-session/side-events/documents/20190306-1L-Matthew-Collins-Omondi.pdf>
4. Copy of Women Count Quarterly updates 2019
5. Kenya Making Every Woman and Girl Count Project Document 2019
6. <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lfzonu2hh8ox4cv/AADoya6NvmFjuAhKA6upseeJa?dl=0>
7. Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) World Bank Group – Project Performance Assessment Report - Development of the National Statistical System Project. Report No. 110966, 14 December 2016: https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/sites/default/files/Data/reports/ppar_kenya_01042017.pdf
8. NCPD web page: <https://ncpd.go.ke/inter-agency-technical-committee-on-gender-statistics-established-in-kenya/>
9. Kenya on Voluntary National Review: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/kenya>
10. Kenya's National Gender Statistics Assessment 2018: https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Kenya_national-gender-stats-assessment.pdf
11. Kenya Voluntary National Review Report 2020: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26360VNR_2020_Kenya_Report.pdf
12. Women's Access to Agricultural Finance in Kenya: Baseline Report 2019: <http://agrifinance.org/uploads/downloads/SP%2029%20WAAW%20B-LINE%20REPORT%2020191202.pdf>

ANNEX II: LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS

Organization	IAGSTC Role	Key informant
Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS)	Chair	Joshua Musyimi
State Department for Gender Affairs (SDGA)	Co-chair	William Komu
UNICEF	Member	Godfrey Ndeng'e
National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC)	Member	Paul Kuria
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Kenya Forum	Member	Florence Syevuo
University of Nairobi (UoN)	Member	Joy Kiiru
Council of Governors (CoG)	Member	Jackline Migide

ANNEX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Purpose of the interview

As part of information collection for a case study and towards its annual reporting process, UN Women is seeking insights from experienced stakeholders in Kenya's NSS on the IAGSTC. Through this interview, we seek to gather your perspectives on the background, progress, impact, and sustainability of the coordination mechanism as a (Chair/Co-Chair/Member) of the IAGSTC.

Parties involved in the process (community partnership members)

- IAGSTC Chair, Co-Chair and Members, namely:
- Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS)
- State Department for Gender Affairs (SDGA)
- National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC)
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Forum – Kenya
- University of Nairobi
- Council of Governors (CoG)
- UNICEF

Self-introduction to establish credibility for the interview and as an interviewer

My name is Sylvia Maina. I'm working with the UN Women Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, providing communication and other support to the annual reporting process, including by liaising with the UN Women Kenya Country Office to undertake this study.

Importance of collecting the information

The interview, and ultimately the case study, is aimed at:

- highlighting best practices in operationalizing an inter-agency coordination mechanism for increased coordination on the production, compilation, and dissemination of gender statistics at national and county levels.
- highlighting country and regional best practices that can effectively demonstrate the impact of Women Count across its three outcome areas and distill critical lessons learned that can be applied, widely disseminated, and replicated within and beyond the programme.

How the collected information will be used and benefits to all parties

The case study is also aimed at assessing the added value of inter-agency technical working groups in building partnerships to improve its desired outcomes.

Seek participant's permission to record the interview

<p>Relevance: Context and challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What informed/necessitated the establishment of the Committee? (external stakeholders) • Internal perspective - UN Women/Women Count views on context, necessity of forming the Committee and background • How was the Committee formed? Member selection, process, and approach. • Were there any challenges in the formation process and how were these addressed?
<p>Effectiveness of Women Count initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the IAGSTC been successful in building partnerships within the NSS? • Is this a recommended approach going forward to help improve the production and use of gender data? Why/why not? • Are there any challenges the Committee has encountered in executing its mandate? • What, if any, adjustments/innovations have been applied to mitigate?
<p>Implementation modalities / results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the Committee do (activities)? • Who are the main actors in its work (beyond its constituting partners)? • What, if any, is the impact so far on gender data within Kenya to date as a result? • What has been the Committee's influence (positively or negatively) on the way the NSS functions? • What, if any, has been the added value? From your perspective, do you sense any added value to how the NSS functions?
<p>Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who funds the IAGSTC? • What are the funding plans going forward? • What level of activity/participation is anticipated from the member organizations and government departments, once the current funding arrangement expires?



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