



Photo: UN Women/Carlos Ngeleka

WOMEN COUNT PHASE II

EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

The issue

Despite significant progress in phase I of Women Count, remaining challenges across East and Southern Africa include:

- Gaps stemming from a lack of political will, limited institutional capacity, poor coordination, inadequate normative frameworks, the absence of national minimum sets of gender indicators to enable reporting, as well as limited or non-existent data quality assurance frameworks.
- Substantial gender data gaps remain on issues such as women's economic empowerment (WEE), time use, violence against women (VAW), governance, land tenure and gender and the environment. Administrative data systems are generally of poor quality and underused for statistics and reporting. There is a dependence on donor funding to support household surveys for gender statistics, making them unsustainable.
- There is a need to approach gender data and statistics communication, advocacy and the promotion of data use in a more strategic and systematic manner.

Our response

Phase II will: scale up its support to more countries in the region.¹ Specifically, it will:

- **Create an enabling environment:** Foster greater collaboration between regional stakeholders implementing the Africa Programme on Gender Statistics; expand partnerships with regional economic communities; support more countries to identify constraints to mainstream gender into national statistics systems through national assessments; develop new National Strategies on the Development of Statistics (NSDS) and gender statistics sector plans; and improve the capacities of government, civil society organizations (CSOs) and other key actors.
- **Increase data production:** Strengthen quality assurance in all areas of data collection, including to produce or reprocess data in new areas, such as VAW, WEE and the gender-environment-humanitarian nexus; explore the use of non-conventional data sources; put gender indicator sets at regional and national level into practice to improve monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and modernize statistical operations and business processes, including to improve the use of administrative data to address gaps, through the Collaborative on Administrative Data (CAD).
- **Improve data accessibility and use:** Increase the accessibility and use of gender statistics by creating gender data portals and dashboards; improve international reporting;² strengthen outreach and communication; build partnerships with academic and research institutions to develop papers and statistical knowledge products.

Where we work



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Countries

Botswana, Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Thematic priorities

Phase II will: scale up its support to more countries in the region. Specifically, it will:



Gender and environment: Develop a toolkit on gender data production and use in humanitarian crises precipitated by climate change and measure gender-related climate-change impacts using tools developed by Women Count in Asia-Pacific.



Economic empowerment: Partner with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to assess gender data gaps in financial inclusion and asset ownership in the region, and build the capacity of national statistics offices (NSOs), ministries of women and finance, and other relevant stakeholders to measure women's financial inclusion.



Violence against women: Modernize and improve the quality of Somalia and Lesotho's crime and gender-based violence (GBV) administrative data systems, and test the [femicide statistical framework](#) developed by UN Women and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).



Women, peace and security: Conduct a joint study with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to collect Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and political participation data and identify related capacity gaps in IGAD countries.³

Results 2023

Creating an enabling environment

- **More countries and organizations in East and Southern Africa are developing gender statistics strategies and prioritizing gender data to address gaps in policies and national planning.** In 2023, [South Sudan](#), with support from UN Women and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), developed its first-ever Gender Statistics Strategy (2023–2033),⁴ which has already been used to highlight gender for the first time in various sections of the second NSDS, to be finalized and adopted in 2024. It will be used in the coming years to guide statistical work and resource mobilization for gender statistics. In early 2023, the [SADC's Gender Statistics Strategy](#) (whose development was supported by UN Women in 2022) was validated by SADC Member States. The first of its kind for regional economic communities in Africa, this strategy has already been used in 2023 for multi-year planning and resource mobilization.
- **New monitoring and reporting bodies and tools are being developed and becoming part of regular national reporting systems.** Women Count supported the local adaptation of the Africa Gender and Development Index (ADGI) framework in [Zimbabwe](#) and the subsequent production of the country's first-ever AGDI report – which measures gaps in the status of African women and men and progress on meeting gender equality commitments. This was done through a participatory and empowering process that included validation workshops in which the gender machinery ranked different indicators, improving understanding of the Government's gender equality priorities and key challenges. The report was developed by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) and UN Women. Reporting and monitoring Zimbabwe's performance through the index will become part of the regular reporting and monitoring system on gender

equality and the empowerment of women and girls, moving forward. In [Mozambique](#), UN Women also supported the Bureau of Statistics (INE) to establish its first-ever Gender Statistics Task Force to mobilize resources for gender statistics and more specifically the planned Time-Use Survey. It consists of UN agencies, CSOs and different government departments, and is jointly led by the INE and Ministry of Women and Social Action.

- **Three countries have improved skills and established road maps after training on gender data production.** Participants from the National Institute of Statistics of [Burundi](#) now know how to better mainstream gender in the NSDS, national plans and policies after the Head of the Department of Studies and Demographic Statistics was supported by UN Women to attend a 12-day training in October 2023. The training focused on developing the capacities of national and regional actors to better integrate gender into development policies, programmes and projects. In [Malawi](#), two Ministry of Gender staff and 34 NSO staff boosted their skills on the harmonized collection of gender data and discussed how to overcome reporting gaps in gender statistics thanks to a UN Women training in June 2023. And in [Kenya](#), updated and customized trainings on communicating gender data were developed and used to train 36 Kenyan statisticians and mid-level policymakers in September through interactive and peer-to-peer learning. In addition, 35 senior government officials from Kenya increased their understanding of the National Quality Assurance Framework and its use in administrative settings through a joint training organized by UN Women and the CAD, which culminated in the drafting of an Administrative Data Quality Assurance Road Map for Kenya, which will be used by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and Women Count to guide future collaboration and support for administrative data. This was the first time the [Toolkit for quality assessment of administrative data for official statistics](#), developed by Women Count in 2022, was used for capacity-building.
- **More than 100 users and producers of statistics from 37 African countries at the Africa Regional Gender Statistics Forum committed to measure emerging issues.** Participants identified and vowed to develop tools and methodologies over the next two years to measure emerging issues such as informal cross-border trade, technology-facilitated violence against women, and gender data in humanitarian settings, climate change and the environment. Participants also resolved to conduct a regional gender statistics assessment. The yearly forum, organized by UN Women, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) in November in Casablanca,

Morocco in 2023 also gave participants an opportunity to network, showcase recent developments and international best practices related to gender statistics, and engage in peer-to-peer and South-South learning and exchange.

Increasing data production

- **New partnerships to improve data production have resulted from assessments of GBV administrative data, bolstered by toolkits and statistical frameworks.** Assessments of the crime and GBV administrative data systems in [Lesotho](#) and [Somalia](#) conducted by UN Women in 2023 identified key interventions to improve the production and use of such data. The Somalia assessment noted challenges including: the lack of a consistent unique identifier of cases; information about perpetrators not being readily available or uniformly captured; a lack of readily available data on success rates of prosecution and convictions; and GBV cases not having a special registry or data system with profiles of perpetrators. Meanwhile, Lesotho's assessment, which was endorsed by the Lesotho Mounted Police Services and will be jointly published, recommends: developing systems to capture data on restorative justice and dispute resolution and mediation for GBV; including a special section on GBV data from administrative records in the annual crime statistics report; improving gender mainstreaming in all data collection by the Lesotho Bureau of Statistics (BOS) and government departments; testing the femicide statistical framework and developing measures to include it in the GBV statistical system. The recommendations of both assessment were used to design interventions and the first-ever partnership agreements between UN Women and BOS and between UN Women and the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) – both signed in November 2023 and aiming to improve the quality of national crime and GBV administrative data and their harmonization across different sources. Both countries' assessments followed the Women-Count-developed [Toolkit for quality assessment of administrative data for official statistics](#), which has also been used by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) in other regions to implement UNSD global guidance on administrative data quality that is currently being developed for adoption by the UN Statistical Commission in 2025. In Somalia, 38 government officials from 11 ministries, State entities and women's organizations⁵ have already gained basic skills in gender data literacy and a better understanding of gender and criminal justice concepts at a training workshop organized by UN Women in March.

- **Hard-to-get data on how women and men are being affected by the conflict in Sudan were collected and used to mobilize resources and adjust programming.**

The onset of conflict between military and paramilitary forces on 15 April 2023, leading to large-scale population displacements and the relocation of the UN Women Country Office (CO) in [Sudan](#), triggered an urgent need to generate data to shape the humanitarian response. But it was particularly challenging to collect data about the situation of women and men, as monthly displacement tracking by OCHA did not include information on gender. So, the UN Women CO undertook two rapid gender assessments (RGAs) and created a [gender data dashboard](#) to share the findings, with technical support from its gender statistics pool of experts and Women Count advisor. This significantly enhanced the quality of the data collected and analysed to respond to urgent humanitarian needs. Some of these RGA data were collected by two young rapporteurs, who were among the 30 human rights defenders trained at a 5-day gender statistics literacy workshop organized by the CO in collaboration with Nyala University in January 2023, where they improved their ability to collect and carefully listen to survey respondents. The RGAs have generated valuable sex- and location-specific data on how women, men, girls and boys have been affected by the crisis. For example, twice as many female as male respondents said they lack access to filtered water (13.3 versus 6.8%) and more than twice as many women as men agreed that there has been an increase in insecurity (48.9 vs. 21.0%). Following UN Women discussions, OCHA will start to collect and share sex-disaggregated data on displacement for the Humanitarian Response report in 2024.

- **More regional data are being produced to monitor progress on the SDGs in East and Southern Africa.** To generate data on SDG Indicator 5.4.1 (the proportion of time spent in a day on unpaid domestic and care work by men and women), UN Women provided technical and financial support for the testing of the International Labour Organization (ILO) time-use survey (TUS) module in [Malawi](#) and training for its roll-out, which should be completed in 2024. UN Women was also invited to lead a TUS task team convened by UNECA as part of a gender statistics mission to [Zimbabwe](#). The task team led discussions with ZIMSTATS, where they resolved to use the ILO TUS module as part of the quarterly labour force survey to be conducted in 2024.

- **Cognitive testing on mental health survey module questionnaires is helping improve the measurement of disability.** Ten individuals representing [Kenya's](#) KNBS, VSO-Kenya, Kenyatta University and the Kenya Human

Rights Commission attended a training organized and funded by UN Women and the Washington Group (WG) in early 2023 to test the WG mental health questionnaire survey module. It included with 35 interviews with volunteers, most of whom had been diagnosed with mental health problems, in early 2023. This work contributed to the methodological development of how disability is measured overall, as there is currently no international guidance on best practices on how to phrase questionnaire survey questions on mental health. The findings of this cognitive testing will be included in a global report on the development of the WG mental health module. KNBS is also planning to conduct a disability survey during 2024 and this module could potentially be included in this survey.

Improving data use

- **Women Count is increasing documentation of data use cases and lessons learned across the region.** To more systematically document gender data uptake and use, a [report](#) was completed for [Uganda](#) on gender data that were used to influence policy- and decision-making, providing valuable good practices for replication in the region. These learnings were also captured in two shorter briefs for a new “Learn from Uganda” series, to be published in 2024 to support South-South learning, communication and data uptake. Field visits were undertaken in 2023 to Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar for the same purposes, with findings and lessons to be produced in 2024.

- **Rwanda Census gender monographs, produced at district and community levels, and labour force survey data are impacting local and national planning.**

Women Count supported the [Rwanda](#) National Institute of Statistics to develop 15 [thematic reports](#) and 30 [district profiles](#) based on Census 2022 data for the first time, with most indicators disaggregated by sex and analysed with a gender lens. The gender monographs have so far been used to inform: the development of the Government’s mid-term “National Strategy for Transformation, (NST-2, 2024–2029)”, through evidence-based analysis in specific development areas and gender-data-based targets and baselines; the evaluation of the Government’s first National Strategy for Transformation NST-1, 2017–2024; the evaluation of the Rwanda United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2017–2024 and the development of the UNSDCF 2024–2029; the most recent Country Common Analysis; the production of

the Country Gender Equality Profile 2023 by the Gender Monitoring Office and UN Women; and reporting on SDG progress in Rwanda's Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2023. The data are also being used by local authorities for planning and programme implementation, especially by informing gender budget statements at the district level, which is a requirement for their approval by Parliament. Census monograph data were also used in advocacy for bridging the digital divide in campaigns by the Ministry of ICT and Innovation, which provided rural women with smartphones to use for accessing market information for their agriculture, produce, etc. Labour force survey (LFS) data in Rwanda were also [analysed in a thematic report on gender](#), with data showing the large proportion of women employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing (55.5% versus 39.8% of men). The data was used to establish different government programmes to create off-farm jobs for women and youth. Data on the amount of time spent on unpaid care and domestic work (showing that women were shouldering more than twice as much of this work as men, contributing to women's lower levels of paid employment), also resulted in advocacy to reduce and redistribute the care burden, which has led to the revision of the Family Law showing the time women spent on unpaid care work.

- **User-friendly data visualization tools and training are modernizing and enhancing the dissemination of gender data in more attractive formats.** UN Women, UNECA and the UK Office for National Statistics jointly developed a dashboard, toolkit and resource pack that can be used to develop data visualization and communication products. It includes a [dashboard and toolkit](#) developed by UN Women, with a set of analytical programmes that can be used by NSOs to automatically generate user-friendly and localized gender infographics, fact sheets and other tools, and adapt them as needed based on their census data and stakeholder needs. The toolkit, dashboard and resource pack were introduced to 40 participants at a three-day training workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, on how to develop user-friendly gender statistics into knowledge products that can be used for planning, policy formulation, resource allocation and programming. The workshop outlined how the programmes work and can be customized, how to produce data stories and use social media to disseminate census data, and how to repackage and strategically communicate gender statistics to promote their uptake and use for decision-making, advocacy and awareness-raising. Hailing from 13 countries,⁶ training participants included information technology (IT), gender statistics and communication specialists from NSOs, various government officials, UNECA and UN Women Country Offices (COs). The training included invaluable

hands-on practical exercises on using gender data to equip technical staff with data storytelling skills and facilitate peer-to-peer learning across areas of expertise (communications and statistics). One of the important outcomes of the training was an improved understanding of the role of communications in gender statistics, demonstrated by a commitment from NSO heads at the end of the training to regularly engage communications and IT experts in product or survey planning stages, which is expected to promote and improve gender data uptake and use. Examples shared by communications specialists at the Office of the Chief Government Statistician (OCGS) in Zanzibar on their information and communications around the recent census in Zanzibar served as tangible inspiration and peer-to-peer learning at the workshop. Since the training, UNECA has provided technical follow-up to support the use of the dashboard in [Namibia](#) and [Zimbabwe](#).

- **Communication plans and strategic messaging are increasing access to gender data.** In 2023, ESARO supported the launch of the Kenya TUS study by developing a communications plan, coordinating and managing communications for a joint high-level event that was later reported on by major media outlets, and developing visualizations and eight e-cards for the highly anticipated report findings and launch in Nairobi in early October, with social media messages on launch day contributing to at least 138 new followers on UN Women Africa's X (Twitter) channel and at least 16,000 impressions for the three-day duration of TUS messaging, becoming among the top tweets on the channel that week. In addition, 29 assets, including two video clips on the 5th Africa Gender Statistics Forum (AGSF), were developed and became the top three tweets on the channel that week, garnering approximately 8,200 views and 4,000 impressions on UN Women Africa's X channel on [this thread](#). Two social media [photo and infographic messages](#) developed on administrative data quality shared emerging findings from the training organized by UN Women, CAD and KNBS, which garnered 3,350 views. ESARO also developed, designed and produced new message-driven branding in large-format printing that has so far been used at the 5th AGSF in November and at the UN Women ESARO Knowledge Fair in December. ESARO social media messaging around seven key events in 2023 garnered approximately 45,000 views.
- **South-South cooperation on gender statistics is deepening through the ESARO Community of Practice (COP).** COP meetings have increased sharing between individuals and organizations on gender data best practices and lessons learned and the routine exchange of contact details among participating experts facilitates

future engagement. The four quarterly ESARO COP meetings in 2023 reached at least 441 participants representing a wide spectrum of users and producers of gender statistics from at least 35 countries. These fora for peer-to-peer learning and exchange have also shared regional and international statistical best practices. The second-quarter meeting, jointly organized with the Tanzania CO, focused on gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) and finance from a data perspective and discussions led to the inclusion of GRB activities in the ESARO Women Count 2024 workplan. This will include technical and financial support provided to the Ministry of Finance to implement GRB policies and tools in their planning processes as well as to provide training on GRB to national and subnational institutions. In South Africa, planning began to support 10 government departments to roll-out GRB in their Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) planning for 2024/2025 – work that is expected to be completed in 2024.

Plans for 2024

- **Creating an enabling environment:** Complete assessments of the gender statistics systems for: 1) the African Union Commission (AUC); 2) on WPS in eight IGAD countries;⁷ and 3) on administrative data sets on discrimination and inequality in five African subregions; launch the South Sudan Gender Statistics Strategy;

develop a technical toolkit on linking data in collaboration with UNECA and UNSD; conduct trainings on financial inclusion with SADC and on GRB with the Ministry of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities in South Africa; and develop a toolkit in partnership with UNECA and AfDB on gender data in humanitarian settings. Training will also be conducted in partnership with SADC on statistical best practices on measuring financial inclusion.

- **Increasing data production:** Support data collection and measure key indicators related to GBV through the Demographic and Health Survey in Rwanda, time-use surveys in Malawi and Zimbabwe, as well as by collecting data on financial inclusion in SADC Member States and developing a regional report; strengthen administrative data systems in Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mozambique and Somalia; offer targeted training on measuring disability in Ethiopia and Mozambique; and begin implementation of the partnership on GBV administrative data in Lesotho.
- **Improving data accessibility and use:** Develop four country case studies on gender data uptake and use (in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania); develop a practical toolkit on gender data uptake and use, which will be launched at the Africa Regional Gender Statistics Forum; and convene the COP on gender statistics quarterly.

1 Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, South Sudan and Sudan.

2 For example, on the SDGs/Voluntary National Reviews, Beijing+30 reviews, and periodic reports to the CEDAW Committee.

3 Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

4 The strategy's main objectives are to: a) establish the institutional framework for gender statistics development; b) review and update all statistics legal/programmatic frameworks to take into account gender mainstreaming objectives; c) enhance gender statistics production and use; d) establish quality assurance frameworks; and e) enhance advocacy, access and use of gender statistics.

5 From the Ministries of: Justice, Health, Education, Youth, Immigration, and of Women and Human Rights; as well as the Benadir Regional Appeals Court, Benadir Regional Court, Somalia National Bureau of Statistics, and Somalia's Office of the Attorney General.

6 Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania (Mainland and Zanzibar), Uganda, the UK, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

7 Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. The study could form the basis of a future joint programme and will provide a baseline of equal participation of women in peace and security governance.