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IN BRIEF

## WOMEN COUNT PHASE II

# WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

### The issue

During Women Count phase I, regional collaboration to improve gender statistics resulted in significant progress. Despite this, several challenges remain in the West and Central Africa (WCA) region:

- The production and use of gender statistics remain underdeveloped, with substantial gender data gaps in the region, specifically on time use, violence against women (VAW), gender and the environment, and administrative data use to generate gender-related Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators.
- Technical gender statistics capacities at all levels (production, analysis, communication and use) need to be strengthened among national partners, including national statistical offices (NSOs) and ministries of gender.
- Data uptake needs to be improved and abilities need to be strengthened to communicate gender statistics among national partners, civil society organizations (CSOs) and media.

### Our response

Building on phase I, phase II will continue to support activities in Cameroon and Senegal but will further develop Women Count projects in countries not covered, or only partly covered, in phase I. Specifically, it will:

- **Create an enabling environment:** Enhance partnerships with regional actors such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and African Development Bank (AfDB) through strengthened capacity-development, with an emphasis on joint regional training programmes on gender statistics under the new the Africa Programme on Gender Statistics (APGS) 2022–2025; assess the gender statistics systems in various new countries to identify weaknesses and propose activities to address them.
- **Increase data production:** Provide financial and technical support for new surveys in key priority areas, namely: environment and climate change (in Senegal), violence against women (in Senegal and Sierra Leone), women's economic empowerment (WEE) and unpaid care and domestic work, with time-use surveys (in Nigeria, and potentially in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia).
- **Improve data accessibility and use:** Support the development of gender data communication plans at regional and country levels; create, develop, promote and maintain web pages, gender data portals and dashboards to support reporting mechanisms; and collaborate with academic and research institutions to produce gender statistics reports, policy briefs and associated products.

## Where we work



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### Countries

Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.

## Thematic priorities



**Economic empowerment:** Conduct Nigeria's time-use survey (TUS) in Kaduna, Lagos, Cross River and Borno states; include Liberia's TUS as an activity in Women Count's proposal for 2024; and develop a concept note for a TUS in Côte d'Ivoire, in partnership with the NSO.



**Violence against women:** Support the analysis of the first-ever VAW survey in Senegal implemented through its Women Count country project; support the inclusion of modules on domestic violence and women's economic participation in the Multi-Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) of Sierra Leone and Cameroon, with technical guidance and support on questionnaire review, training and analysis; finalize the development of a Women Count project in Central African Republic (CAR) in which the implementation of a national VAW survey will be one of the main activities (subject to the availability of funds).



**Humanitarian action:** Develop Gender Alerts and other assessments on emerging crises affecting women, peace and security and humanitarian action (WPS&HA), such as on the impacts of the coup d'état in Niger.

produces and disseminates sufficient gender statistics to meet the monitoring and evaluation needs of public policies and development plans. The strategy seeks to: reorganize the gender statistics ecosystem, improve the thematic and geographical coverage of gender statistics; strengthen the supply of gender statistics; and make gender statistics more accessible through the use of user-friendly media, channels and means of communication. Unfortunately, due to the military coup in Niger in July 2023, all statistical operations, including the Census, have been halted. In **Nigeria**, UN Women also supported the integration of gender in the third NSDS, focusing on how to promote gender equality, bridge gender data gaps, and ensure the inclusion of diverse perspectives.

- **Training is increasing awareness of the importance of developing household satellite accounts to measure the value of unpaid work.** High-level participants from seven West African countries now have a better understanding of the care economy and the importance of producing household satellite accounts to measure the value of unpaid work in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), thanks to a workshop held in May 2023, in Lomé, **Togo**. The training, organized by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) Commission in collaboration with UN Women, brought together 20 staff from NSOs and ministries of gender and planning from seven WAEMU countries (**Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte D'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Senegal** and **Togo**) as well as experts from the AfDB, and was effective in raising awareness. Most participants from ministries of planning had never been exposed to such concepts and there has been a subsequent increase in their demand for time-use surveys and satellite accounts. Participants discussed challenges faced by NSSs in the WAEMU region in recording economic production; noted the contribution of the development of household production satellite accounts to a better understanding of national economies; discussed issues related to measuring unpaid work; and identified strategies to systematically develop household production satellite accounts in national accounts.

## Results 2023

### Creating an enabling environment

- **More countries are adopting gender statistics strategies, boosting the mainstreaming of gender statistics in development planning.** Niger's Institut National de la Statistique (INS) drafted its third National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), in which gender statistics figure prominently as information needs. To better ensure gender mainstreaming in **Niger's** national statistical system (NSS) and NSDS, Women Count in WCA developed its first dedicated Gender Statistics Strategy, to be annexed to the country's NSDS, with the goal of enabling a gender-sensitive NSS that

- **More stakeholders in WCA countries have improved skills and are making use of Women Count training materials to improve their production of gender data.** UN Women shared four modules of the Women Count training on gender statistics that were translated into French, as well as land tenure indicators presented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) at a regional gender statistics workshop in Nairobi in 2022, with the Deputy Director of Social Statistics and Households of the Côte d'Ivoire INS to support its annual training on gender and agricultural statistics. Thanks to a series of trainings conducted in [CAR](#) and in [Mali](#) based on modules developed by UN Women's Regional Office for Asia-Pacific, nearly 60 journalists and representatives of CSOs have boosted their knowledge and skills on gender data. Supported by CAR's NSO and UN Women, the trainings covered gender statistics basics, communicating gender data, participating in user-producer dialogues, and how to use gender statistics in advocacy and policymaking. At the end of the two-day training, one of the participants, who was particularly enthusiastic after the NSO presentation on gender data, said: *"In fact, information is easy to find and use, if you know it exists, where it is located and if the meaning is explained/understood"*.

## Increasing data production

- **Data on the gendered impacts of the military coup in Niger were produced, revealing a dire deterioration in living conditions and lack of access to basic social services, especially among rural women.** UN Women, in collaboration with the Gender in Humanitarian Action Thematic Group, conducted a [perceptions survey](#) between 23 August and 19 September 2023, one month after the coup in [Niger](#), among 8,933 respondents. The results of the survey are presented in a [Gender Alert](#), highlighting the effects of the coup on women and girls in an environment already weakened by multiple crises. The Gender Alert aims to raise awareness about gender inequality and serve as an advocacy tool for taking gender into consideration in response plans for the current crisis, using a humanitarian nexus approach, combining humanitarian assistance, development and peace. Its recommendations – such as to increase the participation of women in Niger in the current peace process, and as agents of change and conflict resolution – are expected to be used by the UN Women Niger Office to contribute to a better application of the WPS/HA agenda.
- **Awareness of the importance of collecting citizen-generated data (CGD) is increasing, fostered by South-South collaboration and the development of guidelines.** UN Women organized a webinar to inform [Senegal's](#)

NSO and 16 relevant CSOs about the importance of CGD. Organized as a South-South collaboration, with contributions from [Ethiopia](#), [Ghana](#), [Kenya](#) and [Uganda](#), the webinar demonstrated how CSOs can collect CGD data to monitor the SDGs and how NSOs can support them to improve the quality of their data, and complement their own SDG reporting. In collaboration with the Praia City Group and its Task Team on Non-Discrimination and Equality, UN Women also contributed to a study to identify current and potential administrative data sources that can be used to produce statistics on discrimination and inequality in the region, as well as the associated data and capacity gaps that need to be addressed through the development of guidelines in [Cameroon](#), [Côte d'Ivoire](#), [Gabon](#), [Ghana](#), [Mali](#), [Nigeria](#) and [Senegal](#).

- **Preparations for Nigeria's time-use survey (TUS) are underway.** Throughout 2023, UN Women provided technical assistance to the [Nigeria](#) Bureau of Statistics (NBS) for the preparation of its TUS. The TUS questionnaire was revised to include a disability module, with Washington Group questions added, with additional questions pending on access to and quality of care. Recommended questions on supervisory care were also shared with the NBS. Data collection was originally scheduled for 2023 but was ultimately postponed until 2024, after UN Women raised concerns about the sample size being too small to accommodate multi-level disaggregation and to allow more time for resource mobilization. The decision was also made to reduce the survey coverage to four states due to insufficient funding. NBS is assessing whether the budget and time allocated for data collection will allow it to increase the number of respondents from two to four (half female) per household.

## Improving data use

- **The Nigeria Country Gender Equality Profile (CGEP) was launched by the Minister of Women's Affairs, with wide dissemination across all 36 states.** Drawing on more than 217 sources, the CGEP identifies gender gaps in areas including the economy and its various industries, education, health, agriculture, transport, water, sanitation and hygiene, and assesses the implementation of national sectoral policies and strategies on gender. Findings include the dire rate of women's participation in politics and decision-making in [Nigeria](#) (at just 6.7%, far below the 15% average for West Africa and the 22.5% global average); as well as huge gaps in access to reproductive health, with 84% of urban women receiving antenatal care from a skilled worker compared to just 56% of women in rural areas. The report lays out recommended actions on each thematic area, aimed at

government, CSOs and development partners. Since its launch in May 2023, at least 30 states have committed to use the findings and 24 of them have already developed action plans to further disseminate and use the report findings. UN Women and AfDB are following up to track and document the level of uptake.

- **A new WCA Community of Practice (COP) on gender statistics has been established.** To strengthen knowledge on gender statistics, a COP was established with the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officers of UN Women Country Offices (COs) in the region. This COP is intended to be a space for exchange and dialogue composed of a group of people who share a common concern and passion for gender statistics, and who want to deepen their knowledge and expertise. The COP seeks to promote a culture of continuous learning and knowledge-sharing on gender statistics, and to increase UN Women CO's knowledge, understanding and use of gender statistics. The COP will produce regular (and initially internal) statistical bulletins. Three have already been produced on: girls in school (September), gender and work indicators (October) and on VAW prevalence (November). In December 2023, at a consultative review of the COP, participants decided to produce these bulletins every two months on topics chosen by COP members. In the month following the publication of these bulletins, a regional COP meeting will be organized to discuss that topic with partners and other stakeholders (for example, in February 2024 the topic will be FGM and a regional COP will discuss this topic in March 2024).
- **Advocacy for gender statistics capacities in gender ministries gained steam with a UN Women study presented at a high-level regional gathering.** UN Women, in collaboration with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), organized a high-level forum in Libreville, [Gabon](#), in May, entitled "Building a Common Agenda for the Promotion of Women's Rights and Empowerment in Central Africa". Hosted by Gabon's First Lady, the forum was attended by the Ministries of Gender of all 11 Central African States. To support this initiative, UN Women carried out a study on the mandate (including to increase access to gender statistics), budget, status and staffing of these Ministries, entitled ["Ministries of Gender of Central Africa: from shadow to light"](#).

## Plans for 2024

1. **Creating an enabling environment:** In 2024, the regional project will extend its interventions and support to five new countries: Chad, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria and Mauritania. First, an assessment of the gender statistics system will be carried out in each of these five countries to help determine the activities to be undertaken to achieve the three objectives of the Women Count programme. Gender Statistics Steering Committees will be established to strengthen national commitment to gender statistics. Regional capacity-building will be expanded, with training on communicating gender statistics and the organization of two regional workshops (The African Conference on Gender Statistics (ACGS) in July and Gender Observatories Conference in October 2024).
2. **Increasing data production:** Data collection will be scaled up to fill critical data gaps on key issues, including conducting a TUS in Nigeria (and potentially Liberia), and the first gender and environment survey in Senegal. Support will be provided for the analysis and reporting of the first VAW survey in Senegal. The implementation, training and analysis of the 2024 MICS will be supported in Sierra Leone and Cameroon, where modules on domestic violence and WEE were added. The analysis of the Rapid Gender Assessment (RGA) on the increase in the cost of living in Senegal, funded by the remaining UNICEF RGA COVID-19 funds, will also be completed.
3. **Improving data accessibility and use:** Develop a gender statistics communication strategy and organize events, such as the Conference of Parity Observatories and the 6th ACGS, in collaboration with the AfDB, UNECA and PARIS 21. Develop three national gender snapshots in Chad, Mauritania and Senegal, and Country Gender Equality Profiles in Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali and Senegal.