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WOMEN COUNT PHASE II ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The issue

Since 2019, Women Count has supported countries in the Asia-Pacific region to produce and use quality gender data. Nonetheless, gaps remain in areas of key policy relevance:

- Data to inform gender-sensitive environmental policies are very scarce, yet crucial, considering the region's extreme vulnerability to disasters, the devastating consequences of climate change, sea-level rise and the disproportionate dependence of women on climate-sensitive sectors as a main source of income.
- Similarly, data on women's care work, both paid and unpaid, are critical for women's economic empowerment (WEE), yet still not available in every country. This became even more palpable amid the COVID-19 pandemic and multiple climate-related hazards that have worsened women's burdens.
- Given the region's high Internet and mobile phone penetration, there is enormous potential for the use of non-conventional data sources to fill important data gaps. Despite countries' interest, there is a dearth of capacity to produce gender statistics using sources such as big data.
- The use of data for evidence-based decision-making is still not consistent across the region. Investments are needed to enhance access, understanding and the capacity of policymakers to use gender statistics.

Our response

To address these remaining issues, in phase II, Women Count will seek to:

- **Create an enabling environment:** Support the mainstreaming of gender statistics across all workstreams of the Asia-Pacific Committee on Statistics; strengthen subregional coordination mechanisms in the Pacific, in partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC),

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the ASEAN Secretariat; and bolster the capacities of data users and producers, together with the UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) and the Centre of Excellence on Gender Equality (COE).

- **Increase data production:** Support national statistical offices (NSOs) to develop and implement new gender and the environment surveys (GES), and involve Indigenous Peoples in this process; support NSOs to use non-conventional sources to fill gender data gaps; reprocess data to generate Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) estimates disaggregated at multiple levels; and produce time-use data and measure the value of care work, including through national accounting systems.
- **Improve data accessibility and use:** Provide technical and financial support to countries to improve the regular dissemination and communication of gender statistics through demand-driven and user-friendly publications and tools; disseminate timely evidence and knowledge on relevant topics through thematic reports and interactive tools following surveys or data reprocessing exercises; promote data use for policy design and monitoring, including to track national efforts towards global commitments, such as the SDGs and the many environmental conventions.

Where we work

26
countries

including two subregions of the Pacific (covering 14 Pacific Island countries with a special focus on Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa and Tonga), and Southeast Asia (covering 11 countries, with a focus on Cambodia), in addition to a full country project in Bangladesh.

Thematic Priorities

- **Gender and the environment:** Increase the availability, quality and use of statistics on gender and the environment by supporting countries to conduct specialized surveys, use non-conventional data sources, including geospatial information systems (GIS) and big data to fill data gaps, and collaborate with data users and producers to inform environmental decision-making and monitor environmental commitments.
- **Economic empowerment:** Support data collection on time-use and measuring care, and engage with national statisticians and relevant line ministries to promote their use and inform national accounting.
- **Innovation:** Increase collaboration with experts and networks while building the capacity of stakeholders across the region to leverage innovative non-traditional data sources to fill other gender data gaps.

Results in 2024

Creating an enabling environment

- **UN Women efforts are helping define global standards to mainstream gender across environment statistics.** The UN Statistical Commission's [55th session report](#) encourages countries to use tools – such as the UN Women and UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) [Asia-Pacific set of gender and environment indicators](#) – to mainstream gender across climate change statistics. This is due in part to the advocacy

and methodological joint contributions by UN Women, partners, and national governments in Asia and the Pacific. Adding to the existing [data-collection tools](#) developed under Women Count ([Model Questionnaire on Gender and the Environment](#), [Enumerator Manual](#) and [Sampling Guidelines](#)) in 2024, a list of [100 Gender and Environment Indicators](#) provided a new resource for NSOs to produce related statistics as per national priorities. UN Women's technical guidance and advocacy efforts have since contributed to some of these indicators and their metadata being considered for inclusion in global monitoring frameworks, such as the [Global Set of Climate Change Statistics and Indicators](#), the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the monitoring framework of the Paris Agreement's Global Goal on Adaptation – to better mainstream gender across environmental statistics.

- **ASEAN and Pacific countries are strengthening coordination and capacities to produce and use gender statistics.** A workstream on gender statistics for the ASEAN Technical Working Group on SDG indicators (TWGSDGI) has been established and endorsed by ASEAN Member States. Co-lead by UN Women and the ASEAN Secretariat, the group will work to enhance the capacities of ASEAN Member States to produce gender statistics across all SDG topics. In August 2024, the Group's first knowledge-exchange enhanced Members' knowledge of the gendered impact of pollution on health, building their technical capacities to produce related data. The Group's work was officially incorporated into the 2025 workplan of the ASEAN TWGSDGI. In addition, together with SIAP, UN Women continued to steer the Sub-group on Gender Statistics Training (SGGST), culminating in the 2024 update of the [Gender Statistics Training Curriculum](#). The enhanced modules focus on effectively communicating gender-disaggregated data, leveraging big data for SDG reporting, and fostering gender equality in statistical leadership. Input from SGGST members ensured that the curriculum aligns with emerging priorities identified by data users and producers across the region and promotes its uptake for training across statistical institutes and universities in Asia and the Pacific. Finally, UN Women and SPC continued to chair the Pacific Gender Statistics Coordination Group and collaborate with countries to drive the implementation of the [Pacific Roadmap on Gender Statistics](#). For instance, as gender and the environment was identified as a key priority area by the Roadmap, UN Women has continued working with partners to support the production of related data, such as GESs in three Pacific countries and priority indicators in Fiji (see section II).
- **Institutions in the region, and beyond, are building strong capacities to produce and use gender statistics among students, government officials and journalists.** As a result of UN Women's coordination and training-of-trainers for SGGST members, at least nine institutions autonomously built their capacities using the UN Women and SIAP Gender Statistics Training Curriculum. For example, the NSO and the inter-institutional group on gender statistics in **Albania** used the curriculum to train government officials on SDG monitoring through multi-level gender data disaggregation; the **Bangladesh** NSO equipped its officials with skills in survey and census data processing; **Kazakhstan** NSO included the curriculum in its data literacy hub and expanded its access to neighbouring countries by translating it into five languages. In addition, with UN Women support to the Philippine Statistical Research and Training Institute, 51 data users and producers comprising government officials and researchers from across the **Philippines** enhanced their skills in collecting, analysing and using gender statistics during a 4-day training-of-trainers using the updated [Gender Statistics Curriculum](#). By the end, 98% considered that the training was "very useful" or "quite useful" for their work. As stated by a participant, beyond building their skills to roll out the curriculum, "the training motivated us to do research and analysis using gender data".
- **At least 504 data producers and users now understand the importance of gender statistics and have strengthened skills for collecting, analysing, utilizing and communicating gender data.** Among them, 99 enumerators and staff from the **Cambodia** National Institute of Statistics gained expertise in collecting gender-environment data

using the UN Women-developed Model Questionnaire as part of the Cambodia GES. Twenty-three senior government officials from national ministries representing the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Committeesⁱ improved their capacity to collect and use disaggregated sex, age and disability data in disaster risk management and emergency response at a 2-day training in Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Increasing data production

- **UN Women provided technical support to 18 countriesⁱⁱ in the region to improve their production of gender statistics in 2024.** This included support to: **Bangladesh**, to create a household satellite account to link unpaid care and domestic work to national accounts, and produce related statistics included in the country's picture of economic activity; **Cambodia, Kiribati and Mongolia** to implement GESs and analyse resulting data; **Fiji, Indonesia and the Philippines** to identify priority indicators to measure climate change statistics from a gender perspective and produce estimates with both available data and non-conventional data sources; and **India** to strengthen the annual *Women and men in India* publication, and identify other gender-statistics priorities, including the feasibility of conducting a GES in the country.
- **ASEAN Member States launched estimates for over 100 indicators assessing the status of women and girls in ASEAN across all SDGs.** By integrating and disaggregating multiple data sources, the second [ASEAN Gender Outlook 2024](#) examines those being left behind to identify key opportunities for gender equality investments. At launch events in [Malaysia](#) and at the [79th session of the General Assembly, ASEAN Member States reaffirmed](#) their commitment to use of evidence-based policy to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda and the [ASEAN Community Vision 2025](#). For example, Penny Wong, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia, said: "Investing in gender equality is an investment in peace, security and prosperity. The ASEAN Gender Outlook provides essential data to inform regional policy. Data impacts our decisions about how best to respond, and with better data, we can count women in." In addition, Ekkaphab Phanthavong, Deputy Secretary-General of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, said: "The Second Edition of ASEAN Gender Outlook is dedicated to track progress towards gender equality and SDGs in the ASEAN region. It further advocates for enhanced investment in gender data and evidence, which is critical to guide decision-making policies." Gender Outlook data were cited in [Bangkok Biz News](#), [The Nation Newspaper](#) and [Malay Mail](#). They were also disseminated at a regional youth forum led by the Centre of Excellence in Seoul, reaching over 90 youth from government agencies, the private sector, youth organizations and academia, and at a media workshop during the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review in Bangkok, reaching 30 journalists.
- **Countries are generating new gender and environment statistics, enabling monitoring and reporting on national and regional climate and environment priorities as well as relevant global frameworks.** The NSOs of **Cambodia** and **Kiribati** received technical and financial support from UN Women to implement national GESs in 2024 (ongoing), which will generate their first national statistics on women's and men's experiences with managing natural resources, dealing with hazards, coping with the consequences of climate change, promoting environmental conservation, and other environmental issues. Both surveys are implemented following the methodology developed by UN Women and partnersⁱⁱⁱ and are a result of NSO's improved capacity to generate gender statistics, facilitated by UN Women's technical support. Cambodia and Kiribati surveys add to the evidence base of the **Mongolia**, [Tonga](#) and [Samoa](#) GESs – the latter two launched nationally in [May](#) and [October](#) 2024, respectively. The launch in Samoa was strategically timed to coincide with the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, held there, to catapult advocacy on gender and environment statistics. The Samoa survey found a number of disaster and climate-related impacts disproportionately affecting women, including: mental health (affecting 23% of women, versus 20% men); displacement (5.6% women, vs. 4.9% men); decreased personal income (19% vs. 15% men); lost jobs (5%

women vs. 3% men; reduced food intake (28% women vs. 10% men in single-parent households with children); and increased time spent on domestic work (24% women vs. 16% men) and on childcare (20% women vs. 13% men). In Tonga, GES findings are [informing relevant priorities, plans and reporting](#) (see section III). The region's leadership in this regard helps fill key data gaps and contribute to global standards and frameworks. UN Women also finalized a list of [100 Gender and Environment Indicators](#) to support countries in measuring the gender-environment nexus. The metadata for each of the indicators are expected for 2025.

- **Critical evidence of how women with disabilities are impacted during crises is equipping policymakers with tools to drive gender-responsive solutions.** The brief on [Disability and Women and Girls in Displacement](#), developed with UNHCR, highlighted socioeconomic differences – such as the fact that more displaced women with disabilities lack education (55%) compared to displaced men with disabilities (50%), which may thwart their livelihoods opportunities. It also revealed the disproportionate care burdens faced by displaced women in [Myanmar](#), which are higher for single and elderly women, and affect those living with disabilities or caring for those with disabilities. The brief calls for the protection of women and girls with disabilities from violence, abuse and exploitation, care strategies and policies to address the needs of women with disabilities in humanitarian contexts, as well as enhanced data production and financing, to promote more inclusive programming and humanitarian action. The evidence triggered discussions on strengthening the identification of persons with disabilities through effective application of the Washington Group Questions and other ways to improve planning and programming within UNHCR. In response, the regional office is planning relevant consultations and webinars in 2025.

Improving data use

- **UN Women is producing new and timely data products on the gendered impacts of biodiversity loss, which are informing key global discussions and advancing the mainstreaming of gender in monitoring frameworks for the three Rio Conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification.** At the 16th United Nations Conference of the Parties COP16^{iv} (Biodiversity), parties advanced gender considerations in the negotiations building on new evidence on the interlinkages between gender and biodiversity produced by UN Women. This evidence was included in a new UN Women [Gender and Biodiversity data brief](#) launched at a [Gender and Environment Data Conference](#) co-organized at COP16 by Women4Biodiversity, UN Women, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Evidence on, for example, how habitat loss affects women's subsistence activities, increases care burdens due to disease spread, and impacts food security and income for those practicing onshore fishing, provided important insights on how gender and biodiversity are intimately intertwined. *El País*, the world's most-read newspaper in Spanish, published an [article](#) on the brief, and UN Women released an explainer [article](#). The conference's key resulting [recommendations](#) highlight the vital role of inclusive, innovative and local-level data collection to ensure gender indicators are integrated in the implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. At COP16 (Desertification), parties made [explicit calls](#) for the use of gender-specific indicators for monitoring progress and assessing the differentiated impact of desertification, land degradation and drought. During negotiations, parties used key findings from the data brief presented by UN Women at the Women Caucus Session, contributing to this result. At COP29 (Climate change), UN Women, partnered with the Gender and Environment Data Alliance, IUCN, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Women's Environment & Development Organization and the COP28 Presidency of the United Arab Emirates, to deepen understanding among governments and other actors of available gender-environment statistics and tools to enhance gender-responsive planning and reporting on progress towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement, including through Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) reports (due in 2025) and in the upcoming Biennial Transparency

Reports. The side-event [workshop](#) built on the Global Conference on Gender and Environment Data's Call to Action and helped identify gaps for further capacity-building.

- **The Government of Tonga is leveraging [GES data to shape](#) key policies and initiatives and to report on gender equality frameworks.** The survey's findings are enabling intersectoral dialogue to address key challenges for women and girls. For example, the Women's Affairs and Gender Equality Division (WAGED) is using the findings to shape a women's empowerment initiative in collaboration with the Ministry in charge of climate change; to enhance implementation of the Disaster Risk Management Policy with the National Disaster Risk Management Office, including by facilitating joint trainings on gender and protection to better address the needs of vulnerable populations during disasters; and for [national reporting](#) for the 30-year anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action. At the official report launch in May 2024, Minister of Internal Affairs Lord Vaea described the GES as a "call to action" that "urges us to confront the gendered vulnerabilities exposed by environmental crises," adding: "This entails investing in early warning systems, bolstering infrastructure, and championing sustainable practices. Moreover, it necessitates recognizing and amplifying the voices of women and men in environmental decision-making processes."
- **Six products generating and disseminating knowledge on key gender statistics were produced with UN Women support in 2024.** In addition to the aforementioned brief on disability and displacement in Myanmar, the ASEAN Gender Outlook 2024, Gender and biodiversity brief and Gender and the Environment Indicators, a new interactive online regional [dashboard](#) '*Building Climate Resilience: The Role of Gender-Focused Investments to Tackle Climate Change Challenges*' communicates estimates and projections on the gendered effects of climate change across development indicators, such as extreme poverty and food security. Through interactive visualizations, it provides decision-makers with clear regional scenarios on the potential mitigating effects of gender-focused investments. The [Samoa GES report, launched](#) by the Minister of Women at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting hosted in October, in Apia, also introduced the country's first official statistics on the gender-environment nexus.
- **User-producer dialogues are shaping national priorities, both for data collection and use.** For example, in **Cambodia**, 60 representatives from key ministries, CSOs and development partners ensured the GES questionnaire aligned with national priorities in a consultation that paved the way for stakeholders' use of GES data. National consultations in **Fiji, Indonesia and the Philippines**, with representatives from line ministries and civil society, enabled countries to identify priority gender-responsive indicators aligned with national climate change priorities. Throughout the production of the **ASEAN Gender Outlook**, several consultations were held with **ASEAN Member States**, which actively contributed to the conceptualization of the analyses, provided data as needed and validated the estimates. To address challenges in the measurement of technology-facilitated violence against women (TFVAW), UN Women, the Centre of Excellence Korea and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), led an initial consultation to assess key challenges faced by users and producers in this field, with the aim of establishing a regional expert group that guides methodological advancements in 2025. Finally, UN Women led a roundtable on data-driven approaches for gender-responsive disaster risk reduction action during the 2024 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), organized by UNDRR. With UN Women's support, the **Tonga** NSO and **Cambodia** Ministry on Women's Affairs showcased how GES data can support reporting on the Sendai Framework for DRR. The dialogue promoted coordination between data users and producers in the region while encouraging GES data uptake and use in Tonga and Cambodia.

Plans for 2025

1. **Enabling environment:** Continue joint work within the ASEAN TWGSDGI and organize subsequent South-South knowledge-sharing sessions; steer the Pacific Gender Statistics Coordination Group with a view to review its links with the Pacific Methods Board and support the implementation of the Pacific Roadmap on Gender Statistics; establish and steer a Technical Advisory Group on Big Data and data science, and develop training on big data for gender statistics with SIAP and the COE; continue to advocate for the adoption of gender indicators within monitoring frameworks for global commitments, including CBD, CCD and CCC; develop a conceptual framework for applying the System of Environmental Economic Accounting at the individual level; finalize and publish metadata and guidelines on calculating the 100 SDG indicators; and establish a regional Expert Group on measuring TFVAW.
2. **Data production:** Support the implementation of GESs in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Kiribati, including data collection, analysis and report launches; in partnership with SPC, continue to support countries in the Pacific to reprocess data for multiple Roadmap priority areas and establish a Pacific expert group for developing a methodology for collecting time-use data in existing surveys; and with ESCAP, support Fiji and the Philippines to reprocess existing microdata to produce estimates on gender-climate change indicators; produce data to inform discussions on ocean conservation and sustainable use (SDG14) from a gender perspective building on the successes from gender and biodiversity efforts; and forge partnerships with Indigenous Peoples organizations to address emerging needs identified at COPs working closely with the Collaborative on Citizen Data on reflecting the priorities of Indigenous Peoples in GESs.
3. **Data accessibility and use:** Promote the use of data on gender and the environment in Cambodia, Kiribati, Mongolia, Samoa and Tonga for decision-making, in partnership with environment policy experts; promote the use of gender-environment data to inform discussions across the three Rio Conventions, as well as to inform national policies on climate and the environment, report on NDC progress; promote the use of ocean data to inform discussions at the Global Ocean Conference based on the good practices with gender and biodiversity, and at the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development; continue working with the ASEAN Secretariat to promote uptake of ASEAN Gender Outlook estimates, including in the new ASEAN sectoral strategies; and create a dashboard collating and showcasing all available gender and environment data within UN Women's Data Hub.

ⁱ ASEAN Committees on the Disaster Management Working Group on Prevention and Mitigation, and on the Women and Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development.

ⁱⁱ Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Tonga and Viet Nam.

ⁱⁱⁱ Including; ESCAP, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), ILO, IUCN, SPC, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

^{iv} COP 16 refers to the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD).