



IN BRIEF

Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

OVERVIEW: WOMEN COUNT PHASE II CAMEROON

The issue

Despite progress on gender data in Phase I of Women Count, the following challenges persisted:

- Policy and financial environments were unstable. Despite numerous training sessions provided for the National Institute of Statistics (INS) and ministry staff, there were still many weaknesses in technical statistical skills, especially in the integration of gender in statistical operations and data analysis.
- Important gender data gaps remained in key thematic areas, including women's economic empowerment (WEE), women's political participation (WPP), violence against women (VAW), and gender and the environment.
- There were critical challenges in converting gender data into policies or using them for advocacy, research and informed decision-making, with poor dissemination of gender statistics at both national and local levels, insufficient dialogue between users and producers of statistics, and insufficient skills or interest in converting gender statistics information into programming by ministries or municipalities.

Our response

- **Create an enabling environment:** Address all priority areas, especially VAW, WEE, WPP and gender-responsive governance, in collaboration with other UN agencies and development partners; advocate for an engendered 2021–2030 National Statistical Development Strategy (NSDS) and a gender module of this NSDS and its implementation; and support the monitoring of all Cameroon’s gender-related commitments.
- **Increase data production:** Prioritize the production of gender data on VAW, time-use, decentralization and local development, to close existing data gaps in these areas, with special attention to administrative data, harnessing the existing network of gender statistics focal points in ministries and State institutions.
- **Improve data accessibility and use:** Prioritize all four thematic areas in producing and disseminating decision-maker-oriented policy briefs and knowledge products, via scientific events, media and other platforms; inform and strengthen collaboration between media professionals and statistical institutions; strengthen the network of journalists of gender data and the SDGs established in Phase I and build on its achievements to leverage the dissemination of gender data; make gender data more accessible and clear to all audiences, regardless of their level of knowledge on gender statistics; and strengthen relationships with and the capacities of journalists, civil society organizations (CSOs) and decision-makers at national and local levels to use gender data in their advocacy and other communication activities, using various channels.

Key results

Creating an enabling environment

- **Improved coordination on gender statistics resulted in integrating gender more systematically in Cameroon’s national policies and planning.** Through support to the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Gender Statistics and the Permanent Technical Group on Gender Statistics, Women Count helped strengthen coordination between data producers and users and align gender statistics more closely with national priorities. In partnership with the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF), UN Women supported the development of indicator frameworks for the National Gender Policy and National Development Strategy. The National Gender Policy’s results framework, together with its monitoring indicators and metadata, will enable the government to more systematically monitor and evaluate progress on gender equality and will serve as the main reference point for future reporting on gender equality and women’s empowerment in Cameroon.
- **Gender data are beginning to shape sectoral planning and budgeting through the rollout of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), helping ministries better identify gender gaps, revise programmes and allocate resources more equitably.** Following a 2022 Government decision to institutionalize GRB in all State budgets in Cameroon – which for the first time obliged all government bodies to collect and share gender data – UN Women supported training for government officials in planning and budgetary chains of 10 pilot ministries as well as workshops to use gender data to strengthen budget, monitoring and evaluation frameworks. This support helped ministries use gender statistics more systematically in programme design and review, including through producing gender situational analyses. Since then, several ministries now conduct gender situational analyses to inform programmes and support GRB, contributing to more evidence-based policy design. At least three-line ministries (Health; Decentralization and Local Development; and Social Affairs) produced gender situational analyses to inform their programming. The validation of the gender marker, an important tool for operationalizing GRB, will further help ministries assess whether gender is being effectively mainstreamed in sector plans and budgets. This is important because it moves gender data beyond reporting and into the

core of public decision-making, strengthening evidence-based planning, more targeted interventions and greater accountability for gender equality in public spending.

- **Through targeted training, at least 407 data users and producers strengthened their ability to analyse, communicate and apply gender statistics in policymaking and advocacy.** Throughout Phase II, these trainings equipped government officials, civil society, journalists and UN partners with practical skills in gender data analysis, reporting, communication and policy use. These new capacities were applied in concrete ways: In 2025, 66 people were trained, including 24 data producers who applied their improved analytical skills directly to writing the TUS report and 42 people who took part in an information and orientation workshop for the qualitative study on VAW, strengthened their ability on how to improve data collection, report validation and use the findings to inform policies. As a result of other trainings, INS staff used the knowledge and skills acquired on gender analysis in 2023 for the elaboration of a 2024 thematic report on gender and the labour market. Training of members of the Technical Committee under the Interministerial Committee on Gender Statistics also resulted in a repository of priority activities that now serves as a basis for communication and advocacy to mobilize partner support. According to Alain Matip, Women Count Focal Person at MINPROFF, the trainings in 2024 helped him speak with ease about gender sensitivity and produce programmatic documents in a gender-sensitive way, something he calls a *“positive change that has contributed to improving the production and use of gender statistics in my Ministry, and in other sectoral administrations.”* Similarly, Emmanuel Batake, Coordinator of the Gender Data Journalists Network, said the trainings helped media actors better understand gender statistics and manage gender-sensitive information in both humanitarian and non-humanitarian contexts, leading them to redefine their media trainings and *“develop a new vision for involving journalists in managing information on gender equality and the promotion and protection of women and girls.”*

Increasing data production

- **Improved availability of gender data has strengthened SDG monitoring and reporting on gender equality commitments.** In particular, SDG indicator 5.4.1 on the proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location, was produced for the first time in 2024 using national survey data, revealing that women spend 15.2% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work compared with 3.9% for men. In addition, data from the 2023 Labour Force Survey supported reporting on several other gender-related SDG indicators, further strengthening the evidence base for monitoring women’s economic participation and decent work. These data are already informing Cameroon’s mid-term SDG review, which began in August 2024 and draws on the most recent available evidence on SDG 5. Further gains are expected with the publication in 2026 of the *National Qualitative Study on Violence against Women and Girls* and the thematic report on *Gender and Time Use in Cameroon*, which will deepen analysis of gender inequalities and support national reporting under the National Gender Policy.
- **Gender is now systematically integrated into national surveys, expanding the collection of gender data on humanitarian needs and violence against women and girls.** With UN Women’s technical support, the Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment questionnaires were revised to become gender-sensitive, enabling the generation of more detailed gender-specific humanitarian data and analysis to inform decision-making. In parallel, a VAW module was added to the forthcoming Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey through a series of technical workshops and the development of data-collection tools. This will make it possible to generate nationally relevant data on VAW using existing survey infrastructure, while strengthening monitoring of the National Strategy to Combat Gender-Based Violence and informing broader gender-related policies and strategies.
- **Improved administrative data systems are expanding the availability of data on gender-based violence (GBV), strengthening routine reporting and more coordinated use across institutions.** For example, MINPROFF now has a national data-collection system on the

reporting and management of GBV cases based largely on administrative data, enabling more systematic tracking and analysis to inform policy responses. MINPROFF also began producing a Statistical Yearbook in 2023, with UN Women support, primarily based on administrative data from public institutions that deal with education, employment, health, women's participation, budgeting, etc. The Women Count programme also supported the establishment of a statistical information system that will collate information for the Yearbook and MINPROFF created a statistical unit to produce the Yearbook. MINPROFF collaborates with the INS, Central Bureau of Censuses and Population Studies, Bureau of Elections and several line ministries to produce the annual Statistical Yearbook, showcasing inter-institutional collaboration across the NSS.

Improving data use

- **Local governance frameworks now incorporate gender equality objectives.** A new Local Governance Strategy integrates gender equality priorities, including women's political participation and equitable access to services, supported by gender data analysis. The dedicated strategy, developed in 2023 by the Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development (MINDDEVEL) with UN Women support, was based on a 2022 diagnosis of the status of gender statistics at the local level. Supported by the Women Count project in Cameroon, that diagnosis found that only 24% of municipal councilors, 22.8% of regional councilors and 34% of mayors in Cameroon were women – below regional and global averages. To bridge these gaps, [Lydie Ella Meye](#), Minister Plenipotentiary and Head of the Studies, Statistics, Planning and Cooperation Division of MINDDEVEL, says the Local Governance Strategy includes an objective on fostering women's leadership and political participation, with actions ranging from capacity-building to gender mainstreaming in planning, budgeting and social services, to awareness-raising campaigns. *“With Women Count ... it's really something we've capitalized on to go beyond simple statistics. To integrate this into various indicators, and in the work we do on gender-responsive budgeting,”* says Meye. She says they've also managed to get local authorities in charge of staff censuses to use a gender perspective and count how many women are in charge. MINDDEVEL is working on implementing these activities with MINPROFF and the Cameroonian Chapter of the Network of Locally Elected Women in Africa (REFELA-CAM), which is led by Marie Angèle Meyanga, mayor of Afanloum, central Cameroon. She says the local governance strategy aims to aims *“to break down these barriers that weigh on Cameroonian women.”*
- **Gender data are increasingly being communicated and used by journalists and media outlets drawing on Women Count supported knowledge products to raise public awareness and amplify calls for action on gender equality.** Evidence generated through reports such as *The Power of Action of Women within Households*, the *policy brief on Gender and the Labour Market in Cameroon*, and the Labour Force Survey has enriched public understanding of the realities facing women and girls, while media coverage has helped translate these findings into accessible messages for wider audiences. For example, *Ladies News* used data from *The Power of Action of Women within Households* to raise awareness and advocate for stronger action in its July 2025 publication, while the *Cameroon Tribune* featured findings from the labour market policy brief, helping spotlight gender inequalities in employment and economic participation. This uptake was further reinforced through UN Women's Gender Data Journalists Network (GDJN), which has helped journalists interpret and communicate official gender statistics across topics such as labour, GBV, women in crisis settings, mining and agriculture, as well as through user-producer dialogues on reports such as *Gender and Time Use in Cameroon*. The establishment of a Gender Knowledge Centre in 2024 has further strengthened access to gender data and knowledge products by providing a dedicated physical and virtual space for dissemination and learning.

Future plans

UN Women Cameroon will continue to build on Phase II achievements to sustain progress in strengthening gender statistics systems. Specific interventions include:

- Supporting the implementation of the gender module within the NSDS and strengthening the role of national coordination mechanisms, including the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Gender Statistics.
- Expanding the production of gender data in priority areas such as women's economic empowerment and violence against women. This includes support for time-use surveys, administrative data systems, GBV data-collection and thematic studies to address persistent gender data gaps.
- Enhancing the dissemination and use of gender data for policies, programmes and accountability mechanisms.