MAKING EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL COUNT

Data and statistics are indispensable tools for devising evidence-based policies to achieve gender equality, assessing their impact and promoting accountability.

With 17 goals, 169 targets and 232 indicators (of which 54 are gender-specific), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a historic global commitment to achieve gender equality by 2030. However, the challenges for gender-responsive monitoring of the SDGs are daunting. Currently, 14 of the 54 indicators, (increase of 4 since 2017) can reliably be monitored at the global level. Established methodologies exist for another 31 indicators (increase of 6 since 2017) but country coverage is insufficient to allow for global monitoring. The remaining 6 indicators (decrease of 12 since 2017) still require some conceptual elaboration and/or methodological development and 3 indicators are considered multi-tiered (see Figure 1).
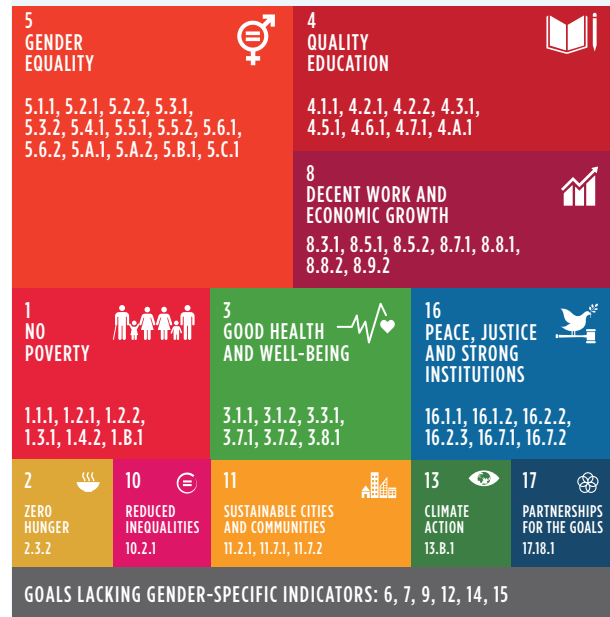
1. Creating an enabling environment

At global level, the challenges for gender statistics are related to the limited funding for gender data production and use, lack of internationally accepted standards in many areas of critical importance for gender equality and women's empowerment, lack of guidance on the integration of gender statistics in national statistical strategies and businesses processes of national statistical systems, and low levels of technical capacity and data literacy that prevent the use of gender data in international reporting, including to international treaty bodies and similar mechanisms. These challenges are exacerbated by the lack of coordination at the global level, particularly by development partners that provide support for statistical capacity-building, which means that the already meagre technical and financial support for gender statistics being provided to countries is often highly fragmented and, in some cases, duplicative.

FIGURE 1

Gender data across the SDGs

54 Gender-specific Indicators Across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals

5 GENDER EQUALITY
5.1.1, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.4.1, 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.A.1, 5.A.2, 5.B.1, 5.C.1

4 QUALITY EDUCATION
4.1.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3.1, 4.5.1, 4.6.1, 4.7.1, 4.A.1

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
8.3.1, 8.5.1, 8.5.2, 8.7.1, 8.8.1, 8.8.2, 8.9.2

1 NO POVERTY
1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.3.1, 1.4.2, 1.B.1

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.3.1, 3.7.1, 3.7.2, 3.8.1

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
16.1.1, 16.1.2, 16.2.2, 16.2.3, 16.7.1, 16.7.2

2 ZERO HUNGER
2.3.2

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
10.2.1

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
11.2.1, 11.7.1, 11.7.2

13 CLIMATE ACTION
13.B.1

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
17.18.1

GOALS LACKING GENDER-SPECIFIC INDICATORS: 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15

Note: See UN Women. 2018. Transforming Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Women Count response: In response to these challenges, UN Women will develop guidance to integrate gender statistics in national strategies for the development of statistics (in collaboration with PARIS21), provide operational, programmatic and technical guidance to UN Women's national and regional offices to develop and implement Women Count projects and advocate for increased funding for the production and use of gender data.

2. Increasing data production

Due to resource and technical constraints in most developing countries, the production of gender statistics is still quite limited and gender data gaps are pervasive. This is particularly true in areas that are sensitive or where the technical and financial requirements are significant (e.g., violence against women and time-use surveys) and in new and emerging areas where significant methodological work is needed in order to develop innovative measures and internationally accepted standards for the measurement of gender equality and women's empowerment (e.g., gender and poverty, gender pay gaps and women's participation in decision-making).

Women Count response: UN Women will support monitoring of the SDGs through methodological work, data compilation and dissemination and working with partners, such as the World Bank, ILO, and WHO, to improve data on unpaid care and domestic work, violence against women and other relevant thematic areas.

3. Improving data accessibility and use

Gaps in gender statistics are compounded by the low dissemination and communication capabilities of the NSS to make the existing data available in user-friendly formats. Failure to build the capacity of policy makers and other stakeholders to use the data to inform evidence-based advocacy in decision- making exacerbates this problem.

Women Count response: UN Women will develop a gender data portal to serve as a unique entry-point for all things related to gender equality and the SDGs, produce statistical briefs and brochures on gender statistics in various thematic areas and organize/participate in panel discussions on gender statistics for decision making during major global and regional events.

4. Monitoring, learning and evaluation

In addition, a key component of Women Count is monitoring, learning and evaluation. Activities include measuring effectiveness, documenting lessons and learning through diversity of experiences and measuring sustainability of the Women Count approach.

Key Achievements in 2018

- Through technical, programmatic and operational support, five pathfinder countries (Bangladesh, Kenya, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Nepal) and three regional offices in Africa, Europe and Central Asia and Asia and the Pacific conducted gender statistics assessments, developed detailed strategies and began implementation of activities. In addition, five other pathfinder countries (Cameroon, Colombia, Jordan, Morocco and Senegal) were also supported to begin conducting national assessments. The Women Count global programme's reach beyond the current pathfinder countries was enhanced through UN Women's support to non-pathfinder countries such as Egypt, Ethiopia and Georgia, leading to those countries developing and implementing projects inspired by the Women Count model.

- An assessment framework and guidelines to identify gaps in gender statistics at the national level was developed collaboration with PARIS21. The gender statistics assessment tool is intended to provide a comprehensive framework to review different dimensions of gender-sensitivity within national statistical systems, thereby generating information that makes it possible for an NSDS to integrate a gender perspective.

- Completion of methodological work for SDG Indicator 5.1.1 on legal frameworks, which means that all three Tier III indicators for which UN Women is custodian or co-custodian have now been reclassified as Tier II and data compilation for SDG monitoring for all three indicators will be reported for the first time in 2019 in the UN Secretary-General's annual report, contributing to the global SDGs review process.

- Global monitoring of gender equality was further enhanced through data compilation to monitor SDG indicator 5.4.1 (time spent on unpaid domestic and care work), new data for 88 countries on labour force participation by sex and marital status was produced through a collaboration with ILO, and data on poverty by sex produced in 2017[1] were updated to include more countries and further disaggregation. The findings will inform the forthcoming edition of UN Women's flagship report "Progress of the World's Women: Families in a Changing World", to be launched in June 2019.

- UN Women significantly contributed raising global awareness about the importance of gender data and organizing or participating in 20 global events, regional workshops and trainings to present the Women Count programme and promote work on gender data at global fora on statistics, gender and development.

FIGURE 2

Measuring Progress in 2018

91%

0%   100%

Progress made at the global level was driven by strong technical and operational support to all Women Count projects however there was some delay in the development of UN Women's gender data portal, now expected to be launched in 2019.

Plans for 2019

In 2019, the Women Count global project activities will include:

Enabling environment

- Continued provision of technical, programmatic and operational support to pathfinder countries and regions to develop and implement Women Count projects;

- Developing guidance and support establishment of gender statistics units and national statistical coordination mechanisms; and the development of national sets of gender indicators and National Strategies for the Development of Statistics;

- Organizing and participating in user-producer events including the CSW63 Expert Data Panel and relevant events at the High-Level Political Forum and Women Deliver.

Data production

- In partnership with the World Bank, assess household surveys and census questionnaires for six pathfinder countries using the new Gender Data Navigator assessment framework with SDG gender-relevant questions;

- SDG monitoring, including data collection and reporting on indicators for which UN Women is custodian, and contributing to the 2020 global review of SDG indicators;

- Collaborating with international agencies, including the UN Statistics Division, World Bank, ILO and UNICEF to improve the analysis and disaggregation of existing gender data to address the "Leave no one behind" principle of the 2030 Agenda.

Data accessibility and use

- Build, manage and launch the UN Women gender data portal and produce periodic data stories and country fact sheets;

- Producing gender data-related print material for major events such as CSW and the High-Level Political Forum.

ENDNOTES

1 UN Women. 2017. "UN Women and the World bank unveil new data analysis on women and poverty." http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/11/news-un-women-and-the-world-bank-unveil-new-data-analysis-on-women-and-poverty