



IN BRIEF: NEPAL

MAKING EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL COUNT

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Through the development of a 15-year roadmap to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Government of Nepal has demonstrated a strong commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The roadmap focuses on four areas: identification of Nepal's SDG priorities; decision on necessary policy interventions; estimation and investment of resources and institutional readiness. The report also updated the indicators for monitoring the SDGs in Nepal, identifying a list of 415 indicators.¹

To kickstart the project, an assessment was conducted between December 2017 and March 2018, using desk review and conducting key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders. The findings informed the development of the Nepal Women Count project.

1. Creating an enabling environment

Although there is political will to monitor and report on gender equality commitments, the implementing mechanisms for gender statistics are either weak

or lacking. The Statistics Act of Nepal mandates the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) to play a coordinating role within the national statistics system. However, due to ever-increasing demands for data and statistics and recent reforms, including the transition to a federal system, the mandate to produce statistics has been extended to several other institutions, rendering CBS less effective as a strategic leader and coordinator. Financial constraints also affect the operation of the statistical system. The CBS budget has gradually decreased since 2011/2012 and the situation for other ministries and government agencies is even worse, with many having no specific budgets for statistical activities and finding it difficult to even maintain their official records. Another key challenge in Nepal is that the most recent National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), developed in 2018 and expected to be approved in 2019, does not specifically mention gender statistics.



Women Count response: UN Women has identified a set of priorities to be implemented in partnership with CBS, the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen (MOWCSC), including supporting exploration of how local governments can generate and use data as part of SDG implementation and monitoring linked to local planning, budgeting and service-delivery; assessing the resources and capacities needed at local level; support coordination mechanisms among local governments and with provincial and federal levels, while ensuring that the implementation of the Statistics Act integrates a gender perspective and that the NSDS explicitly includes a gender statistics action and financial plan. The project will explore the possibility of establishing a coordination mechanism and build the capacities of dedicated gender statistics units in relevant offices.

2. Increasing data production

Nepal lacks mechanisms to generate data for many SDG targets, meaning that the availability of gender data to monitor the SDGs is relatively scarce (see Box 1). Most data for monitoring progress against the SDGs are extracted from national censuses and surveys which are undertaken only every 5 or 10 years, limiting their effectiveness. Census and survey results are usually disaggregated by sex but often not disaggregated to subnational levels and therefore not useful for subnational governments or for identifying pockets of poverty or inequality. Key data gaps have also been identified in important areas such as time use, violence against women and girls and nontraditional surveys such as perception surveys.



Women Count response: UN Women will support the processing of existing censuses and surveys to determine whether these sources can produce information on the same indicators at subnational levels of disaggregation; assess data sources for suitable data production to report indicators at national and subnational levels; and rationalize and examine consistencies in different data sets which need to be combined for particular gender-related SDG indicators, such as on violence against women

(VAW). The Government will be supported to conduct a time use survey and CBS' capacity to conduct a VAW prevalence survey will be strengthened.

3. Improving data accessibility and use

Data accessibility is a key challenge for non-government users, which many of the stakeholders consulted as part of the assessment indicating that they rely on personal and informal contacts to access gender data. Even when data is available, there are difficulties in using it. Information like metadata may be missing, analytical capacities may be weak and data accesses unpredictable due to the lack of a data dissemination policy and up-to-date data release calendar by CBS.



Women Count response: UN Women will improve gender data dissemination through data portals; support the regular publication of statistical reports on gender across the SDGs to develop capacities for utilizing gender statistics; establish and institutionalize user-producer dialogue mechanisms; and promote the increased use of gender statistics by supporting gender-data-based research.

BOX 1

Gender data gaps in Nepal

- Nepal has data for only 37% of all gender-related global SDG indicators.
- Nepal has data for only 6 out of 14 indicators on SDG 5.

Source: Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission (2017). *Nepal SDG Status and Roadmap 2016-2030*.

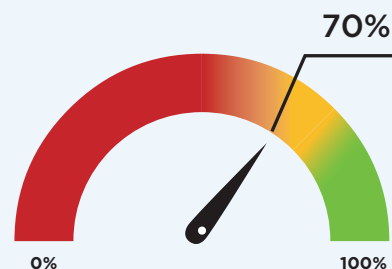
Key Achievements in 2018

In Nepal, a change in government and a new focus on transitioning to federalism, coupled with capacity challenges in the Central Bureau of Statistics, mean that as of December 2018, the MoU approval with the Government and signature of the LOA was delayed and as a result, activities planned for 2018 have been significantly delayed. Nevertheless, several activities took place as part of the preparations for project implementation, including:

- The national gender statistics assessment and project document was completed and endorsed by several key government stakeholders including CBS and the NPC. The results were further validated at a workshop attended by 31 participants, including parliamentarians, NPC members, government officials and civil society representatives from seven provinces.
- UN Women and CBS initiated plans to conduct the first dedicated Time-Use Survey in Nepal in 2019. UN Women held several consultations with CBS and the NPC and helped to facilitate the Nepal Time Use Survey Workshop to advocate the importance of quality time-use data, currently missing in Nepal. Previously, Nepal collected time-use data in one of the modules of the Nepal Living Standards Survey. However, the module and stylized questionnaires had difficulty registering simultaneous activities, so a dedicated time-use survey will yield more accurate data, enabling the Government of Nepal to track SDG indicator 5.4.1 (time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location).
- Three CBS representatives were supported by UN Women to participate in several capacity-building workshops, including the Regional Workshop on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) for Asian countries which was jointly organized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in December 2018. The workshop reviewed requirements for developing common data repositories across national statistics systems and presented innovative software and tools for data and metadata sharing and exchange, with an emphasis on gender-related SDG indicators. As a result of CBS participation, the Government of Nepal will convene a country-specific SDMX workshop in 2019 to share lessons learned.
- UN Women partnered with the World Bank to facilitate session on global time use methodologies during the Nepal Time Use Survey Workshop, which was co-organized by the Central Bureau of Statistics and the World Bank. The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to enhance their knowledge and skills on how to use global methodologies to conduct time use surveys, opportunities and challenges, and provided a platform for exchanging experiences on different data collection methods from different countries.

FIGURE 1

Measuring Progress in 2018



Some progress was made in Nepal, however, severe challenges persist caused by significant delays in finalising a Letter of Agreement with the Central Bureau of Statistics and MoU with the Government.

Plans for 2019

In 2019, Women Count Nepal will focus on several key activities:

Enabling environment

- Helping CBS integrate gender statistics in the implementation of the Statistics Act, including by designating core/official gender statistics and providing budgetary resources to institutionalize functions related to gender statistics coordination, production, dissemination and use;
- Supporting the establishment of a coordination mechanism for producing and disseminating gender statistics;
- Assisting CBS, NPC and the MoWCSC to revise and adopt a minimum set of gender indicators as a guide for the federal, provincial and local production and compilation of gender statistics;
- Supporting systems-design to generate gender statistics from alternative sources, including citizen-generated, administrative and private-sector data. The project will support key agencies, identified via mapping, as well as provincial and local governments in developing and/or strengthening data production.

Data production

- Supporting the development of a capacity-building plan for the regular production of Tier I gender-related indicators from census/surveys and alternative data sources;

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- Supporting data collection and production of VAW-related SDG indicators and time-use-related SDG indicators with disaggregation at provincial and local levels, where possible;
 - Supporting the reprocessing of Tier I/II gender-related SDG indicators from existing census/survey data with disaggregation at provincial and local levels, and publishing these for SDG reporting.

Data accessibility and use

- Providing small grants for the analysis and use of gender statistics, (on policy research, policy briefs and knowledge products produced from VAW and time-use surveys and other gender data);
- Supporting a capacity-development course for sub-national government units to integrate the use and analysis of gender statistics in their planning, budgeting, policymaking and decision-making, as well as preparing training curricula and training materials;
- Assisting the design of national and subnational web-based dashboards presenting a minimum core set of gender indicators and gender-related SDG indicators;
- Providing technical and financial assistance to CBS, NPC, and MoWCSC to design a database for storing and sharing a core set of national gender indicators and gender-related SDG indicators.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Government of Nepal. 2017. Nepal's Sustainable Development Goals Status and Roadmap: 2016-2030. <http://www.greengrowthknowledge.org/sites/default/files/downloads/policy-database/NEPAL%29%20SDG%20-%20Status%20and%20Roadmap%202016-2030.pdf>