



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
13 December 2010

Original: English

Statistical Commission

Forty-second session

22-25 February 2011

Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda*

**Items for discussion and decision: programme review:
gender statistics**

Report of the Ghana Statistical Service on Gender Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Ghana Statistical Service, containing a programme review of gender statistics.** Based on a wide consultation process, it presents a review of gender statistics programmes based on the information provided by selected countries and international and regional organizations. It summarizes the challenges faced by countries and the types of support provided by institutions for the development of gender statistics. The report proposes new directions in programming gender statistics and draws up a list of proposals for discussion and consideration by the Commission.

* E/CN.3/2011/1.

** The programme review was prepared in collaboration with the statistical authorities of the Philippines.



Report of the Ghana Statistical Service on Gender Statistics

I. Introduction

1. In the lead-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, many statistical offices around the world, including regional and interregional organizations, conducted programmes that focused on compiling and disseminating sex-disaggregated statistics in a range of publication formats. Since the conference, many more countries have embarked on gender statistics programmes. While the fundamental aim of these national and international gender statistics programmes is generally the same — to facilitate the assessment of gender gaps in various aspects of development by making the relevant gender-sensitive statistical information accessible to a wide range of audiences — the programmes vary significantly in their features, i.e., structure, orientation, scope and output. Many of these national gender statistics programmes have recorded successes, but many still need some direction from the international community to attain a basic level of development in this area of statistics programming.

II. Purpose and scope of the review

2. The purpose of the present review is to assess the state of development of the field of gender statistics and recommend ways of advancing the process by drawing on the experiences of various countries as well as international organizations. The framework for the review is derived from the broad recommendations set out in the Beijing Platform for Action, which is currently the most comprehensive set of guidelines for the development of gender statistics at all levels, national, regional and global.

3. For the purpose of the programme review, a questionnaire was sent to selected countries and international organizations soliciting information relating to the type, content and scope of arrangements in place for the production of gender statistics. In all, 20 country/area statistics offices¹ and six international (or regional) statistics programmes² responded to the questionnaire. The analysis of the responses focuses mainly on (a) establishing the current state of development of gender statistics, with reference to what is outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action; (b) identifying key factors that have accounted for the successes and achievements of some gender statistics programmes; and (c) proposing ways to accelerate progress in the area of gender statistics, drawing on the experiences of countries and international bodies. In the presentation of the results of the survey, the responses are synthesized and not associated with any specific country except when a unique situation is being highlighted. It should be noted that the review reflects the experience of the countries and institutions that responded to the questionnaire.

¹ Armenia, Australia, Belarus, Botswana, Burundi, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Japan, Lithuania, Mauritius, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Suriname, Puerto Rico and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

² Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS STAT), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), International Telecommunication Union (ITC) and World Bank.

4. The remainder of the report is organized in six main parts. Part III describes the current state of national gender statistics programmes. It reviews the institutional framework within which national gender statistics programmes are set up, including the legal framework and collaborative arrangements with key stakeholders; the programme elements such as the objectives and outputs; examples of major accomplishments; and challenges faced by countries. Part IV focuses on regional and international gender statistics programmes and discusses the content of the programmes with respect to the institutions' own work in the compilation and dissemination of gender statistics. Part V examines the nature of the support that is being provided to national gender statistics programmes and how it has influenced those programmes. Part VI presents perspectives on new directions and orientations for programming gender statistics within national and international organizations. Part VII presents the conclusions of the report and part VIII proposes some points for discussion by the Statistical Commission.

III. Overview of national gender statistics programmes

A. Institutional framework

5. The main requirements for an institutional set-up for gender statistics, according to the Beijing Platform for Action, is (a) for statistical services to “designate or appoint staff to strengthen gender-statistics programmes and ensure coordination, monitoring and linkage to all fields of statistical work, and prepare output that integrates statistics from the various subject areas” (para. 206 (d)); and (b) for Governments “to ensure that producers and users of statistics in each country regularly review the adequacy of the official statistical system and its coverage of gender issues” (para. 207 (b)).

6. While most countries have designated staff or a unit that is responsible for gender statistics, a few still do not have any institutional arrangements for the production of gender statistics. The different aspects of institutional arrangements are summarized below with respect to the institutional responsibility, the number of persons or units designated, the type of unit designated and the level of cooperation between the responsible institutions.

7. In general, the institutional responsibility for gender statistics rests with the national statistical office. In a few isolated cases, other agencies, such as the women's or equal opportunities bureau, have shared responsibility with the national statistical office. For example, in the Republic of Korea, there are four institutions³ involved, each with a very distinct set of responsibilities in the production of gender statistics in accordance with the broad institutional mandates. In a few other cases, the women's/equality bureau has the primary or sole responsibility⁴ and may be supported by the national statistical office. This situation exists primarily when the main focus of the programme is the production of a gender statistics publication. In yet other systems, there is no clear designation of responsibility to any particular institution. In most of these cases gender statistics is viewed as an issue of sex

³ Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Statistics Korea, Korea Women's Development Institute and Korean Institute for Gender Equality Promotion and Education.

⁴ For example, in Puerto Rico the Information Section of the Oficina de la Procuradora de las Mujeres is responsible for gender statistics.

disaggregation, generally fundamental in demographic analyses and to be managed as a matter of course.

8. Systems with a focal point/unit are further differentiated in terms of location within the organizational structure, with arrangements ranging from a dedicated person or unit, to having a specific division/section of the national statistical office to cover gender statistics. The most prevalent arrangement in national statistical offices is for an entire division (or a unit⁵ within it) to deal with gender statistics, for example a demographic and/or social statistics division, a population statistics division, etc. In other cases the unit covers cross-cutting fields such as living conditions, information and marketing, scientific research and planning, technical methods, etc. The rationale for the designation of multidisciplinary units is that gender statistics, being a cross-cutting subject, requires coordination and sharing of information across fields. Under other arrangements, no particular division is assigned, but rather several divisions within the national statistical office are responsible for dealing with the different aspects of gender statistics that may be related to their respective areas of work.

9. Apart from situations where a division is responsible for work on gender statistics, in most cases only one or two persons are designated focal points and the work is not necessarily conducted on a full-time basis.

Legal framework

10. Although the Beijing Platform for Action does not stipulate that a law or act should govern the production of gender statistics, a number of countries have some legal provisions for gender statistics. The legal contexts for the production of statistics are also quite diverse. Almost all national statistical offices have an act or law governing the production of official statistics. However, in some cases there is only one law encompassing all areas and sources of data, while in others, there are several laws. For example, in some countries the population census is covered under the general statistics law while other countries have a separate law; there are also laws covering how administrative statistics should be organized.⁶ In a similar vein, gender statistics is dealt with in some national laws, while in other countries it is addressed in legal instruments applying to other disciplines. In the Philippines, the provisions for gender statistics cut across all domains.⁷

11. In some countries gender statistics is addressed in the statistical law. Others have a separate law governing gender statistics, commonly under the gender equality or equal opportunities legal framework, as in Lithuania, or as a stand-alone instrument, such as Venezuela's convention on "collection of statistical data and their disaggregated analysis incorporating the gender perspective". A third category of countries has no law for gender statistics. In this case, gender statistics, more

⁵ "Unit" is used here to represent the different ways in which entities within the divisions, such as branches or sections, are referenced in the national organizational structures.

⁶ In Ghana, the Civil Service Act calls for each civil service entity to have a Directorate for Research, Statistics and Information.

⁷ In the Philippines, Act 9710, otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Women, enjoins all Government agencies to develop and maintain a gender and development database containing gender statistics and age- and sex-disaggregated data that have been systematically produced/gathered and regularly updated to serve as inputs or bases for planning, programming and policy formulation.

specifically the requirement of sex disaggregation of data, is viewed as an integral part of the production of statistics or is not dealt with as a distinct area of programming.

12. Where no explicit national legal framework exists, some countries have drawn their programme mandates from international⁸ and regional⁹ instruments. Countries with gender equality as a core national value and with an act on equality between women and men, such as Finland, have long considered the production and dissemination of gender statistics as a logical outcome and necessity. In other countries where the law on statistics does not expressly require gender statistics, it is implied in some statutory requirements for certain Government-funded programmes¹⁰ in order to differentiate between males and females. In the absence of a specific law on gender statistics, many countries have drawn from the action plans for gender equality programmes to develop gender statistics.¹¹

13. In general, however, the existence of specific provisions in the legislation on statistics is not seen as a necessary condition for gender statistics programming. Only a few of the recent reviews of national statistical acts have led to the introduction of a gender dimension in the law; the other reviews focused on various aspects of statistics production not specifically related to gender.

Collaborative arrangements with key stakeholders

14. In view of the interdisciplinary nature of the field of gender statistics, many national programmes have found it necessary to confer within a multiagency group. Various types of working relationships exist, ranging from the situation where the national statistical office takes full responsibility for the production of gender statistics and works with other agencies through producer-user consultations, to one where several institutions have well-defined responsibilities and must cooperate to fulfil their respective objectives and functions.

15. In addition to any bilateral consultations between the national statistical office and the women's machinery, various coordinating mechanisms are established to ensure the participation of and input by key stakeholders. Examples are a task force on gender-related indicators; an expert group to develop the way in which gender equality is depicted in statistics; a steering committee comprising all ministries and producers of official statistics; an inter-agency committee on gender statistics; and a gender statistics advisory group to advise the national statistical office in this field.

⁸ Including the Beijing Platform for Action; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 3; and a number of conventions of the International Labour Organization, such as the Convention concerning Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (No. 100).

⁹ For example, the European Social Charter and the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men.

¹⁰ Such as the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the evaluation of employment practices under the Civil Rights Act and a variety of educational programmes in the United States of America.

¹¹ Other national instruments that have provided frameworks for gender statistics include legislation on the protection of women's rights and equal opportunities for women; national action plans on gender equality or for improving the status of women (Belarus, Armenia, Lithuania); national strategies for the reduction of violence against women; national anti-discrimination programmes; plans for gender equality and plans for the development of official statistics (Burundi).

B. Programme elements

16. The Beijing Platform for Action states that statistics related to individuals should be “collected, compiled, analysed and presented by sex and age and reflect problems, issues and questions related to women and men in society” (para. 206 (a)). It describes (a) what the work should entail; (b) the scope of coverage; (c) the main outputs; and (d) the manner in which the information generated might be disseminated and used.

17. In addition to stating that gender statistics should be regularly disseminated, in a form suitable for a wide range of non-technical users, the Platform for Action notes the need to conduct regular reviews of the adequacy of the official statistical system and its coverage of gender issues; strengthen the basic data sources required for some gender-specific indicators, in particular vital statistics systems; and improve concepts and methods for traditional areas of study as well as emerging topics, such as violence against women.

General objectives

18. Many gender statistics programmes are focused narrowly on compiling and disseminating sex-disaggregated data. Some programmes, however, have a broader orientation and a more far-reaching objective of influencing the national statistical office and the wider statistical system in specific directions. Such programme goals tend to include a combination of the following:

- (a) Supporting national equal opportunity or equality programme goals with the provision of gender-relevant statistics;
- (b) Advocating for and facilitating the integration of gender issues within the national strategies, work programmes and action plans for statistics, with respect to:
 - (i) The production of gender-specific data;
 - (ii) The collection of data through surveys specifically addressed to gender issues and concerns, such as time use and unpaid work, gender dimensions in the quality of life, gender issues in poverty and violence against women;
 - (iii) Maintaining databases and disseminating gender statistics and indicators through a variety of media and products;
- (c) Directing the review and further development of a set of gender-specific indicators and/or managing a central access point for gender statistics on the website;
- (d) Fostering linkages between the national statistical office and other entities in the production of gender statistics, including establishing an advisory or coordinating mechanism, and strengthening capacities in gender statistics; and
- (e) Monitoring the implementation of global and international standards and goals for the advancement of gender equality.

Main outputs

19. The key outputs of national gender statistics programmes fall under four main categories:

(a) *Publications on women and men.* Many countries produce at regular intervals a “Women and Men” series of statistical publications. Some of the reviewed countries publish it on an annual basis, others every two years and still others at intervals of more than two years or at irregular intervals. Other publications are focused on women, such as *Women’s Life in Statistics* (Republic of Korea) and *Mujeres Cubanas 1958-2008: Estadísticas y Realidades* (Cuba), or on particular topics of concern to women. Press releases with statistical information for users are issued by some countries. Publications on surveys, such as time-use surveys, are also among the outputs of some gender statistics programmes.

(b) *Gender statistics databases.* Some countries have developed a database on women and men covering topics such as employment, education, health and population, for the analysis of issues relevant to gender. Others compile statistics and indicators in the context of the Millennium Development Goals with emphasis on women and on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and a few countries maintain a registry of cases of violence against women. In addition, online dissemination of a system of statistical indicators on gender is increasingly becoming a standard component of gender statistics, as is web dissemination of a wide range of statistics from surveys and administrative records;

(c) *Methodological work.* Some reviewed countries have done methodological work such developing methods for measuring poverty with a gender focus; preparing guidelines on the production and use of gender statistics; and redesigning forms for the national survey of households with a gender perspective;

(d) *Surveys on gender statistics.* Gender statistics derived from survey data are obtained from regular or established data collection exercises conducted by national statistical offices and other authorized institutions, or from special, issue-oriented surveys. Gender-oriented survey programmes encompass three types of surveys:

(i) Surveys of general purpose, but which have some bearing on gender and the results of which are tabulated and disseminated disaggregated by sex. Examples are population censuses, national demographic and health surveys, general social surveys and integrated household surveys. Country-specific surveys include quality of life surveys; surveys of employment arrangements, retirement and superannuation; earnings surveys of households and businesses; and personal safety survey;

(ii) Surveys on topics of concern to women dealing with gender issues, with results presented, analysed and disseminated disaggregated by sex. Examples are surveys on work and family balance; time-use surveys; and modules of gender-specific topics in standard surveys;

(iii) Surveys on topics/issues specific to women, such as pregnancy and employment surveys, and violence against women surveys.

20. National programmes have dealt with the collection of data in different ways. In some cases there are only the traditional surveys and as sex is a standard variable

in household surveys, the data collected are appropriate for dissemination with sex disaggregation. In others, specialized topics are incorporated into the standard surveys. For some gender issues, such as the pay gap, paid parental leave and violence against women, more specific and detailed data are collected to meet user requirements. These topics are prioritized within the overall household survey programme, which is regularly reviewed in consultation with key external stakeholders.

C. Examples of major accomplishments

21. In addition to the production of the standard outputs of the respective programmes, many gender statistics programmes of national statistical offices have branched out in innovative ways and have recorded varying degrees of success. Some programmes have had high-level political participation. For instance:

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics advisory arrangements generally cover the wider statistical work programme. The Bureau has made submissions to parliamentary inquiries, such as the one on the gender pay gap.
- Statistics Finland has worked with different branches of the administration, including the Council for Equality, the Ombudsman for Equality and the Equality Unit, as well as international organizations.
- In Germany, the Conference of Ministers on Equalization decided in 2006 to develop a system of gender-related indicators, and set up a task force comprising both politicians and statisticians.
- In Colombia, a convention was established between the Presidency and the National Administrative Department of Statistics aimed at the collection of statistical data and their disaggregated analysis, incorporating a gender perspective.

22. Some national programmes have provided expert support to other national and regional programmes. For example:

- A staff member from the national statistical office of Germany has provided technical assistance to Tajikistan and other countries.
- The planner of gender statistics of Statistics Finland is a statistical correspondent of the Helsinki Group on Women and Science who also contributes expertise to the ECE Task Force on Gender Statistics and its database, the ECE gender-sensitization training for statisticians and the working group of the Gender Equality Barometer 2008 project.
- The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has designed and implemented an international course on statistics with an emphasis on gender and with both theoretical and practical components, which is directed at both national statistical offices and national statistical systems.
- Colombia offers an annual diploma course in gender statistics and indicators, with the participation of both national and international officials from the countries of the Andean Community and other countries in the Latin American region.

- In the Philippines, the Statistical Research and Training Centre, in collaboration with the Philippine Commission on Women, developed a training manual and conducted training programmes on statistics for gender-responsive local development planning and has hosted several study tours on gender statistics for participants from China, Timor-Leste and Bangladesh.

23. Some national programmes are seen to have established standards to be emulated by other countries, including the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI), Colombia, Statistics Sweden, Statistics Finland, Statistics Canada and the gender statistics programme of the Republic of Korea.

D. Challenges

24. Four major areas of challenge identified by the review are:

(a) *The level of cooperation among stakeholders.* Given the multithematic and inter-agency nature of gender statistics, a major challenge is to strengthen the links between producers of statistics in various fields at the national level. There is in some cases a lack of recognition of and knowledge about gender statistics on the part of the officials in charge, and/or a lack of willingness on the part of high-ranking officials to support programme initiatives and meet the resource requirements;

(b) *Availability of quality data and capacity of producers to generate gender statistics.* Availability and timeliness of data is another major source of difficulty; the quality of the data is also a source of concern. The viability of the data dissemination system depends on the continuous feeding and updating of the information available in the database(s) and regular updates of websites. Yet, much of the data required for gender statistics publications, regular compilation and updating of the databases come from sources external to the national statistical office and are often released very late. For some, the challenge is to establish a programme to systematize the production and dissemination of gender statistics and strengthen the capacity of the different producers of statistics in this area. For others, it is to strengthen the internal coordination and data-sharing agreements between the national statistical office and other agencies of the national statistical system and forge stronger collaboration in the supply of statistical information. The most important challenge is to convince producers that gender statistics are a continuous and never-ending task;

(c) *Availability of users to maximize the use of information.* A major challenge for some offices is to regularly explain to users that a simplistic interpretation of differences in sex aggregates is often misleading in terms of the nature of the difference. Some of the women's ministries that lead the effort in the compilation of gender statistics with the support of the national statistical office lack capacity and need substantial technical assistance;

(d) *Resource constraints.* Emerging themes relating to gender perspective are also challenging and require a great willingness to incorporate them into the system regularly and systematically. There is also a problem in maintaining survey programmes and conducting new surveys on such issues as time use, owing to the scarcity of resources.

IV. Overview of regional and international gender statistics programmes

25. This section highlights some of the programme content and achievements reported by the regional and international organizations that responded to the questionnaire. Three categories of international agencies, with different levels of programming, are presented:

- Regional organizations: CIS STAT, ECA, Eurostat and ECLAC
- Specialized agency: ITU
- International organizations with global-level programming: United Nations Statistics Division and World Bank

26. Most regional and international organizations with gender statistics programmes have contributed immeasurably to the development of this field through a combination of activities including promoting knowledge-sharing, development of concepts and methods for the collection of data, dissemination of gender statistics and indicators, technical advice and funding of programmes.

A. Promoting knowledge-sharing and capacity-building

27. Not all agencies have capacity-building and knowledge-sharing components in their programme, but in general, the United Nations regional commissions, the World Bank and the United Nations Statistics Division have some activities that address this area of need. ECA and ECLAC have periodically conducted workshops to exchange and build knowledge. In addition, ECLAC plans to develop a series of e-learning courses in the coming years. The World Bank has worked with ECE to develop audio-visual materials and a manual for training officers. Plans are under way to develop external courses on different aspects for the Middle East and North Africa, in partnership with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Islamic Development Bank, and for sub-Saharan African countries in partnership with AfDB and AFRISTAT.

28. With respect to knowledge-sharing, Eurostat compiled an inventory of gender-related information in 2008-2009. Technical workshops are carried out at the national and regional levels to exchange experiences and discuss methodologies, definitions, survey vehicles and other issues related to the collection of information communication technology (ICT) statistics. ECA has established an African gender statistics network to provide a framework for knowledge-sharing, peer learning and networking among all stakeholders dealing with issues of gender statistics. ECA also maintains an African Women's Rights Observatory.

29. The United Nations Statistics Division, in collaboration with the World Bank and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), has convened three Global Forums on Gender Statistics over the last four years. It also serves as secretariat to an inter-agency and expert group to promote the sharing of experiences and chart the course for gender statistics.

B. Technical materials on the production of gender statistics

30. All the agencies that responded to the questionnaire have developed some technical materials on various aspects of the production of gender statistics. Some focus on methods of data collection, some on the compilation of statistics, some on analysis and the presentation of data. The materials from CIS STAT include an analysis of gender statistical indicators based on population census data (2001) and approaches to studying violence in the family and against women (2008). ECLAC has made methodological contributions on the measurement of poverty from a gender perspective.

31. An inventory of Eurostat's gender-related information was drawn up in 2008-2009, with plans for further inclusion of a gender dimension in data collection and other activities being considered. The United Nations Statistics Division has produced the *Guide to Producing Statistics on Time Use: Measuring Paid and Unpaid Work*¹² and a corresponding international classification of time-use activities, which is being updated. ECA has developed *A Guidebook on Mainstreaming Gender Perspectives and Household Production in National Accounts, Budgets and Policies in Africa* and supported selected countries on a trial basis to conduct a time-use survey for this purpose. ITU develops standards and methods related to ICT statistics, including gender-related indicators. ITU has reoriented its data collection to include household survey data, making more data now available on use of ICTs by sex.

C. Compilation of statistics and indicators

32. CIS STAT maintains an extensive gender statistics database covering a wide range of topics, drawing from national population censuses, sample surveys (including labour force, household budget and time-use surveys, etc.) as well as administrative sources. ECLAC plays an important coordinating role in defining gender indicators, outlining appropriate methodologies for their measurement and strengthening national capacities to collect data on emerging issues such as time use and unpaid work, violence against women and political participation by women. ECLAC has also defined gender and poverty indicators to complement indicators to measure the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Another important advance is the establishment of the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, a strategic tool to enable Governments to monitor the economic, political and physical autonomy of women. ECA has developed and tested the African Gender and Development Index, a monitoring mechanism to support policymakers in the assessment of their own performance and in the implementation of gender-balanced policies and programmes.

¹² United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.04.XVII.7.

D. Presentation and dissemination of gender statistics

33. The work of CIS STAT on indicators involves harmonization of the system of indicators based on the international recommendations. It regularly publishes gender statistics on thematic areas and analytical materials, which are circulated to the heads of State and Government as well as to various ministries and departments. The ECLAC programme activities in this area have been oriented towards the construction of an integrated and flexible system of gender indicators in Latin America and the Caribbean and the maintenance of the Gender Equality Observatory. In addition, since 2001, a regional system of gender indicators has been developed to support the periodic dissemination of data on the ECLAC website (www.eclac.cl/mujer). The ECLAC subregional office for the Caribbean is also carrying out activities with a view to completing the information for the Caribbean countries.

34. The latest publications and papers of Eurostat on gender statistics include: *The life of women and men in Europe — A statistical portrait* (2008); “Employment gender gap in the EU is narrowing: labour market trends 2000-2007” (2008) and *Reconciliation between work, private and family life in the European Union* (2009).

35. The United Nations Statistics Division compiles indicators on women and men and disseminates them online.¹³ It also publishes an analytical report, *The World's Women*, at five-year intervals. Although ITU does not have a separate gender statistics programme, gender-related (or sex-disaggregated) statistics are being collected as part of the Union's regular data collection of ICT statistics. The World Bank has flagship publications to disseminate gender statistics, including *The Little Data Book on Gender* (a biennial publication) and *Equality for Women: Where Do We Stand on Millennium Development Goal 3?* (2008), which monitors progress on the official targets.

E. Databases

36. Outputs on gender statistics produced by the ECLAC Division for Gender Affairs include an online database, the statistical information of the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, the knowledge produced in the framework of expert group meetings and by the Working Group on Gender Indicators of the Statistical Conference of the Americas as well as the publication of a wide range of studies and documents.

37. The Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean provides official and comparable statistical information from the countries of the region on a few selected strategic indicators in the area of women's physical autonomy, economic autonomy and autonomy in decision-making. It is disseminated in the four main languages of the region (Spanish, English, French and Portuguese) (<http://www.cepal.org/oig/>). ECA is considering developing a gender statistics database and further strengthening the capacity of its member States in the compilation, storage, harmonization and dissemination of gender statistics.

38. The World Bank has developed the ADePT software which has a gender module that produces tables with sex as the first level of analysis, showing

¹³ <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm/default.htm>.

characteristics of individuals' and households' poverty, education, employment and use of services (<http://go.worldbank.org/6MXNV6HFT0>).

F. Technical advice

39. The technical cooperation activities of ECLAC have contributed to progress in a growing group of Latin American countries in developing an independent system of gender indicators and enabling others to carry out the collection of information on gender inequalities and/or systematically disaggregate their official data by sex. Support has been provided since 2000 through technical assistance at the national level in the organization of the annual international meetings on gender statistics, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and INEGI. ECLAC technical assistance missions have contributed to establishing, in the majority of its member States, institutional cooperation between producers and users of gender statistics, especially the national statistical offices, the national women's machinery and sectoral ministries. ITU provides technical assistance to developing countries to help them collect ICT data, including gender-related statistics, through household surveys, and assists Governments of developing countries in their ICT data collection and dissemination efforts. ECA provides technical cooperation, implemented through meetings, workshops, advisory services and materials in the various areas of statistical development, at the request of African Governments, subregional and regional institutions, as well as technical assistance and materials to conduct statistical operations and advocacy.

G. Financial support for programmes

40. Using the World Bank's Development Grant Facility funds, ECE and the Bank developed multimedia presentations and a manual on gender statistics, *Developing Gender Statistics: A Practical Tool*, that have trained a critical mass of national trainers to sensitize users and statisticians on the production, use and updating of gender statistics.

41. The World Bank has two mechanisms for financing statistical capacity-building within countries, the Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building and STATCAP, for large-scale investment loans and credits for statistical capacity-building. Funds have not, however, been used exclusively for strengthening gender statistics within countries.

V. Support for the development of statistics

42. Many of the gender statistics programmes currently in existence have benefited and continue to benefit from various forms of assistance and cooperation from international, regional as well as national institutions. The different forms of assistance include:

(a) *Programme support.* The United Nations Development Programme has provided technical support to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in relation to the development of a register of complaints in cases of violence against women,

including the acquisition of equipment as well as the provision of a counselling consultant for the national implementation of the registry;

(b) *Technical cooperation.* Lithuania dates the beginning of its gender statistics programme from 1997, with a technical mission sponsored by Statistics Sweden and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Colombia has received some support from the Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development, while Peru has received support from Mexico;

(c) *Training and knowledge-sharing.* Participation in international workshops and expert meetings on gender statistics is cited by many countries as being extremely beneficial to their programme development. For example:

(i) Gender statistics workshops organized by the United Nations regional commissions have provided information on international trends in gender statistics and imparted practical knowledge;

(ii) The Global Forums on Gender Statistics organized by the United Nations Statistics Division and its development partners provided opportunities for countries and other entities to share knowledge and experiences;

(iii) The meetings on gender statistics that are held annually in Aguascalientes, Mexico, have contributed to developments in some countries in the ECLAC region;

(d) *Regional or regionally coordinated programmes.* Several countries have benefited from the ECE programme on gender statistics, which was supported by the World Bank, while others cite the ECE work sessions. The INEGI annual conference, a regionally coordinated initiative, has contributed to the training of personnel working in the area of gender who have acquired knowledge or experience of peer programmes within the region. Regional programmes of the Caribbean Community and AfDB have also assisted some countries in the respective regions;

(e) *Documentation and technical resources.* Several methodological documents and materials were cited as having been beneficial to country programmes in the course of the development of national gender statistics. The materials include, but are not limited to: *Engendering Statistics: a tool for change* (Statistics Sweden); *Developing Gender Statistics: A Practical Tool* (ECE); "Technical assistance guide for the production and use of gender indicators" (UNFPA, UNIFEM, ECLAC); and *Training manual. Democratic governance and gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean* (ECLAC). Materials on electronic media and on the Internet have also become increasingly available.

VI. New directions in programming gender statistics

43. The United Nations Statistics Division led many of the technical developments in the field of gender statistics, mainly during the period from 1975 to 1995. Like many other international organizations, the Division actively supported gender statistics programmes around the world, providing leadership particularly in the production of technical materials and the compilation of statistics.

44. With the significantly scaled-down programme of the last decade (i.e., from 1996 to 2006), many national programmes have stagnated owing to an absence of

coordinated assistance to countries. On the other hand, advances in some regions, such as the ECE and ECLAC regions, have been associated with sustained momentum in the coordination of primarily technical support and guidance.

45. In an effort to revamp gender statistics programmes around the world, in 2006 the United Nations Statistics Division, in collaboration with UNFPA and the World Bank, established the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and convened three Global Forums on Gender Statistics to help chart the path for further work in this field. The pace of development of the gender statistics field has generally been determined by users of statistics who have made demands on the statistical agencies to which the agencies have responded. The respondents to the questionnaire clearly recognize the role of users in this respect and call for arrangements that will facilitate producer-user cooperation.

46. The United Nations Statistics Division is called upon to assume a leadership role in charting the path for the development of gender statistics. In addition to urging the Division to lead the process, the respondents highlighted the need for:

(a) Renewed emphasis on training of staff assigned to gender statistics, system-wide capacity development and training of users, including:

- (i) Establishing producer-user dialogue and cooperation;
- (ii) Mainstreaming gender statistics in national statistics development strategies;
- (iii) Collecting data reflecting gender issues and concerns on standard and emerging topics such as time-use surveys, measuring violence against women, environment and climate change;
- (iv) Compiling statistics and indicators reflecting gender equality concerns;
- (v) Analysis of gender statistics;

(b) Production of audio-visual materials and use of ICT in training of national statistics officers, including further development and adaptation of existing materials, such as:

- (i) World Bank/ECE audio-visual materials;
- (ii) ECLAC virtual courses;
- (iii) Incorporating a gender statistics component into the World Bank Virtual Statistical System;

(c) Production and updating of manuals and reference materials on:

- (i) Collection of data on emerging and non-traditional topics, such as violence against women, time use, crime and victimization, ageing and social security, environment and climate change, poverty and indigenous populations;
- (ii) Improvement of systems of civil registration and vital statistics at national level, for more reliable information on topics such as fertility, mortality, maternal mortality and nuptiality;
- (iii) Development of methodological materials;

(d) Compilation of statistics on gender issues not currently collected systematically, for example:

- (i) Statistics to better assess the impact of ICT on women's empowerment;
- (ii) Statistics on political participation at all levels of public life;
- (e) Strengthening of capacity in gender statistics programming, including:
 - (i) Analysis and dissemination of gender statistics;
 - (ii) Developing, planning and effectively implementing plans for the advancement of gender statistics;
 - (iii) Establishing a network for knowledge-sharing;
 - (iv) Cataloguing information on each country about the state of gender statistics to promote better consolidation of best practices from the wide range of experiences;
- (f) Fostering the establishment of inter-agency cooperation agreements between national statistical offices and national gender equity/women's machinery;
- (g) Supporting international cooperation between countries at different stages of statistical development, with the more advanced countries assisting the least developed ones.

VII. Conclusions

47. There is a wide range of perceptions about what constitutes a gender statistics programme. While some of these views are in conformity with the provisions of the Beijing Platform for Action, too many still focus narrowly on the routine dissemination of sex-disaggregated data. The Statistical Commission provided strong direction for the development of gender statistics leading up to the Beijing conference, which accounts for the comprehensive framework contained in the Platform for Action. However, several of the path-breaking technical publications are either no longer in circulation or have not been updated.

48. It is nevertheless evident that a great deal of commitment has been sustained in several regions, notably the ECE and ECLAC regions where methodological work has been undertaken, and in several countries. Yet, for a variety of reasons, including lack of technical direction and financial constraints, too many countries still have not embarked on a gender statistics programme that meets the minimum expectations outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action, despite commitments to do so. Even though funding opportunities are limited, those which are available, such as the World Bank's STATCAP, are not being fully accessed, a situation that has further slowed progress in this field. In view of the different stages of national development and the variety of needs, efforts by regional and international agencies need to be consolidated and disseminated in a coordinated manner to increase the chances of success.

49. The leadership that the United Nations Statistics Division¹⁴ provided in the pre-Beijing era has been well acknowledged and was well appreciated. The

¹⁴ Various components of the gender statistics programmes were funded by the Government of Norway, the Gender in Development Programme of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the International Development Research Centre.

technical leadership provided the foundation for many programmes and accounts for the successes of several national, and some regional, programmes. It is also one of the reasons for the strong emphasis given to statistics in the Platform for Action. Many national, regional and international programmes that benefited from the work of the Division have evolved into strong programmes and are supporting burgeoning programmes in other countries. The need for such leadership continues to be felt and ought to be revisited.

VIII. Points for discussion

50. The Commission is invited to reflect on ways of directing the United Nations Statistics Division towards assuming the leadership role in the development of gender statistics. This function should be greatly facilitated by the consolidation of women's programmes within the United Nations under one umbrella, UN-Women. The Commission may wish to consider the following proposals:

- (a) **To comment on the proposals included in paragraph 46;**
- (b) **To agree on follow-up action to be taken in the light of the present programme review, which would be in the form of:**
 - (i) **Undertaking a more comprehensive review of the gender statistics programmes within and across regions, leading to the development of a prototype for a model gender statistics programme to be used to guide countries;**
 - (ii) **Regional reviews conducted by regional commissions with the collaboration of regional statistical organizations, based on an agreed outline to be developed by the United Nations Statistics Division in consultation with the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics;**
 - (iii) **A global synthesis of the regional reviews and a catalogue of national experiences in the field of gender statistics, to be produced by the Division with the support of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics;**
- (c) **To collaborate with the Commission on the Status of Women to establish a minimum set of gender indicators for international compilation and dissemination to facilitate global comparisons of the state of gender statistics and the capacity of countries in this regard;**
- (d) **To expand the terms of reference of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics to include periodic inventory of technical materials and other resources and to identify gaps, complementarities and areas where the gains and synergies in gender statistics programme activities and outputs can be consolidated;**
- (e) **To recommend that the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics meet annually to review the state of development in the field of gender statistics and that the Global Forum on Gender Statistics be convened biennially as a forum for the sharing of experiences;**

(f) To encourage regional commissions and other regional/subregional bodies to support the development of gender statistics programmes within the national statistical system;

(g) To recommend that the United Nations Statistics Division strengthen its gender statistics programme to offer better technical support to countries and to promote technical and methodological developments in the field.
