

International Experts' Workshop

Measuring, Managing and Evaluating Progress in Gender Equality
The Role of Statistics and Indicators

Background Note

Stockholm, Sweden
Thursday, 20th November 2008
(Welcoming Dinner on 19th November 2008)

Organised by



With the support of



Government of Norway
Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Government of Sweden
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Background Note

Context

Gender equality is a key policy objective that has become increasingly important in recent years. As being part of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) it receives regular attention when progress in development is discussed. Increasingly, gender equality is also seen as providing a double dividend: realisation of a fundamental human right and boosting economic growth. The two aspects are closely linked: policy makers recognise that the discrimination against women has great economic and social costs, while gender equality contributes to stimulating economic growth. With the increased interest in gender equality there has also been an increased focus on gender statistics and composite indicators of gender equality.

The OECD is constantly looking to improve measures of gender equality. In May 2007, the OECD Development Centre organised the Experts' Workshop "Measuring Gender Equality", which focused on methodological issues, questions of data aggregation and improved data collection, with a particular focus on the Gender, Institutions, and Development Database (GID-DB). The OECD also plays an important role in the international gender equality debate through its Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Network on Gender Equality (Gendernet). In July 2008, Gendernet organised the event "Managing for Development Results: a workshop on achieving and measuring gender equality and women's empowerment results", which aimed at sharing good practices in collaborating with partners and achieving results in the area of gender equality.

At the global level, the UN Statistics Division has organised a series of meetings about gender statistics in the context of its "Global Gender Statistics Programme". The Rome "Global Forum on Gender Statistics" in December 2007 for example, has put emphasis on the importance of the notion of measurement in gender quality. On 6-8 October 2008, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) organized a Work Session on gender statistics in Geneva, which looked at measurement of gender equality, the use of statistics for gender analysis at national and international levels, and economic indicators for gender analysis.

With the growing focus on development effectiveness, as emphasized in the Paris Declaration and the recent Accra High-Level Forum, appropriate measures of gender equality is increasingly important. Gender statistics and indicators are essential to target and monitor progress towards gender equality goals, as well as broader development goals. Moreover, achieving results in gender equality is dependant not only on the availability of statistics, but also on effective use of statistics in evaluation, policy formulation and the management of development results.

In the context of Sweden and Norway's "Partnership on Gender Equality, Democracy and Development", and recognising the increasing importance of development effectiveness, the OECD Development Centre, with the support of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, is organising a one-day workshop on the role of statistics and indicators in measuring, managing and evaluating gender equality results. The workshop will bring together stakeholders to exchange views and experiences on innovations in gender statistics and indicators at both the global and national levels. It will also be an opportunity to focus on evaluation and managing for development results, with a final aim to identify problems, formulate policies, monitor progress and improve performance of policies and programs. Participants include experts from international organisations such as UNDP, UNIFEM, the World Bank Group, UNECA, research institutes, non-governmental organisations, bilateral agencies, as well as statistical offices. The workshop will be an opportunity to highlight the political priorities of respective governments, and to strengthen resources for gender equality through coordinated efforts.

Workshop objectives

Following the previous workshop on “Measuring Gender Equality” organised by the OECD Development Centre in May 2007, with a focus on taking stock of existing knowledge and data aggregation, the current workshop will focus on the role of statistics and indicators in measuring, managing and evaluating progress in gender equality.

Structure of the workshop

The workshop is organised in three sessions. The first two sessions will focus on recent development initiatives to measure, manage and evaluate progress in gender equality, with a focus on bringing global work to the national level. The last session will aim at synthesizing the debate from the previous sessions and enlarge it to the use of gender statistics in enabling effective policies and programmes.

Session I, “*International Initiatives: The Role of Gender Statistics in Managing and Evaluating Results*”, will introduce gender statistics initiatives at the global level, and review their role in managing and evaluating development results in gender equality. This session will also allow participants to reflect on the meaning of gender equality results and the definition of progress.

Session II, “*Evaluating Gender Equality on the Ground: Case Studies*” will centre the debate on National Statistics and their relevance for an effective evaluation at the national level. This session will also insist on the need to take into account both donor countries’ and partner countries’ perspectives by examining country case studies. Finally, it will discuss ways to improve gender statistics for evaluation and the process of managing for development results at the national level.

On the basis of the preceding discussions, Session III will debate how good evaluations can be transformed into good policies. The debate will be organized in the form of a round-table, with a focus on the way forward for using statistics and indicators for measuring gender performance, as well as for an effective implementation of new policies and programmes.