

**Issues Paper**  
**CSW Interactive Panel Discussion on**  
**“Remaining challenges in relation to statistics and indicators, building on the discussions at**  
**the High-level round table organized by the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission 2004 as well as**  
**available data from the World’s Women: Trends and Statistics (2005) and the World**  
**Survey on the Role of Women in Development (2004)”**  
**8 March 2005, 3-6 p.m.**

**Background**

The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) called upon national, regional and international statistical services and relevant governmental and United Nations agencies, to, inter alia, collect, compile, analyze and present on a regular basis data disaggregated by age, sex, socio-economic and other relevant indicators, for utilization in policy and programme planning and implementation (paragraph 206 b). The outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly called on Governments to provide national statistical offices with institutional and financial support so that they may collect, compile and disseminate data disaggregated by sex, age and other factors, as appropriate, in formats that are accessible to the public and to policy makers for inter alia gender-based analysis, monitoring and impact assessment, and support new work to develop statistics and indicators, especially in areas where information is particularly lacking (77 a).

At its 48<sup>th</sup> session in 2004, the Commission on the Status of Women, in collaboration with the Statistical Commission, held a high-level round table on gaps and challenges in measuring progress in implementation, in the context of the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session in 2005. The round table provided a unique opportunity for an exchange of views and experiences among users and producers of statistics in regard to measuring progress towards the goal of gender equality. Participants agreed on the importance of good, reliable, timely and readily available sex-disaggregated statistics for measuring progress towards the goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the implementation of gender equality policies and strategies for the identification of areas requiring further attention. In addition, participants recognized the importance of increased cooperation and communication between statistical offices as producers of statistics, and as policy-makers and national machineries for the advancement of women as users of statistics, to ensure the successful collection and use of relevant information.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that States parties should make every effort to ensure that their national statistical services responsible for planning national censuses and other social and economic surveys formulate their questionnaires in such a way that data can be disaggregated according to sex so that the relevant users can easily obtain information on the situation of women in the particular sector of interest (General Recommendation No. 9, 1989). The CEDAW Committee continues to pay attention to the availability of data disaggregated by sex in the reports of States parties and recommends, where appropriate, that State parties comply with the General Recommendation on the issue.

The adoption of the Millennium Declaration and development of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has highlighted the need for sex-disaggregated data and information on gender equality, in particular because of the importance of incorporating gender perspectives in implementation and monitoring of all MDGs. Goal 3 of the MDGs is to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. It calls for elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015. The four indicators

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associated with Goal 3 concern the ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; the ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years old; the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector; and the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments. Providing data disaggregated by sex and qualitative information on gender issues across goals and targets, in the Millennium Development Goals country reports is an effective approach to ensuring attention to gender equality in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The importance of sex-disaggregated data for effective monitoring has also been recognized in efforts at global level.

#### **Achievements and challenges identified**

Based on the responses from the questionnaire sent to Member States for the ten-year review and appraisal, many countries recognized the importance of developing gender-sensitive indicators and collecting data disaggregated by sex in order to set priorities, formulate policy and design programmes. Countries reported that data disaggregated by sex were available in some of the critical areas of concern, including education, the economy, and political participation, but there was limited data in sectors related to the environment, information and communication technologies, women in power and decision-making; rural women and violence against women.

Some countries created databases that enhanced possibilities to monitor and evaluate progress in areas such as violence against women, health and the labor market. To meet the demand for gender statistics, a number of countries prepared statistical publications and training manuals. Institutional arrangements were also improved. Some countries reported that the national machineries had been instrumental in facilitating the collection of gender statistics, including through collaborative efforts at the national and regional levels. Remaining challenges, however, hindered development of effective policies, programmes and projects and prevented effective monitoring and evaluation of progress. Some countries reported insufficient human and financial resources and lack of coordination between central and local authorities on the collection of data disaggregated by sex.

#### **Issues for consideration**

The objective of the panel is to build on the discussions of the high-level round table of the Commission on the Status of Women on the gaps and challenges in measuring progress in the context of the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the special session. It also provides an opportunity to examine the statistical issues highlighted in the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development as well as in relation to the preparation of the publication on *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics* (See attached Annex). Expert panelists and participants will share experiences and identify good practice examples as well as priority areas for further action.

Discussions should include inter alia progress and required future actions in relation to enhancing the collaboration between the producers of statistics, in particular the national statistical offices, and the users of statistics, including national machineries for the advancement of women and non-governmental organizations. The experience in using databases as monitoring tools and establishing greater accountability for policy goals could also be discussed.

There should be a focus in discussions on areas where over the last ten years specific challenges have been identified, such as violence against women, property rights, migration and trafficking. Attention should be given to the challenges and required strategies for production and use of sex-disaggregated data and gender-specific information in implementation and monitoring of all the Millennium Development goals. Ways and means of enhancing the use of statistics to effectively implement gender mainstreaming in different policy areas should also be considered.

## **Annex**

### ***The World Survey on the Role of Women in Development***

In its resolution 35/78 of 5 December 1980 on effective mobilization and integration of women in development, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive and detailed outline for an interdisciplinary and multisectoral World Survey on the role of women in development. The *World Survey* is prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Since its first publication in 1986, the *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* has been prepared every five years and focused on selected emerging development issues that impact on the role of women in the economy at national, regional and global levels. Updates to the first *World Survey* were prepared in 1989, 1994, 1999 and 2004. The 1999 *World Survey* covered the issue of globalization, women and work. The 2004 *World Survey* focuses on women and international migration.

The need for research and collection of data disaggregated by sex was pointed out in the 2004 *World Survey*. It was noted in the survey that data on international migration are lacking in terms of availability, quality and comparability. Statistics on international migration are far from reaching universal coverage and are often published without classification by sex and age. Governments collect most data as part of their administrative management of migration. Most administrative data refer to inflows, and not outflows. Census data are another important source of information about foreign nationals. These data generally provide information about the stock of foreigners, that is, the persons who are residing in a country at the time of the census. Since migrants generally constitute a small portion of the population, censuses often contain only minimal information about them. Special surveys may be needed that allow an over-sampling of migrants in order to learn about the intersection of characteristics such as sex, age, nationality, education and occupation.

It was also recognized in the survey that data on certain categories of migrants, for example those who cross borders without the authorization of host countries, are particularly difficult to collect. Many of the migrants without legal status are fearful of participating in censuses and surveys. Also, often the data on departures from source countries do not match the data on entry into destination countries that makes it difficult to determine the movement of persons and it is difficult to determine the reasons for the disparities. Difficulties have also been encountered in the collection of statistics on persons trafficked for prostitution and forced labour.

Difficulties exist in obtaining accurate demographic breakdowns of the migrant populations in order to assess the situations of migrants by sex and age. It was recognized that gender-based analysis of migration policies and programmes may help stimulate collection of sex and age disaggregated data.

In view of these observations, Governments were called upon to undertake research and collect data on international migration and disseminate them in appropriate ways, particularly by disaggregating all statistics by sex and age, in order to improve understanding of the causes of female migration and its impact on women, countries of origin and countries of destination so as to provide a solid basis for the formulation of appropriate policies and programmes.

## *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics*

The publication *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics* has been prepared since 1991. It is a useful resource that provides information on the situation of women and men worldwide. The Beijing Platform for Action called on the United Nations to promote the further development of statistical methods to improve data that relate to women in economic, social, cultural and political development (208 b) as well as prepare a new issue of *The World's Women* at regular five-year intervals and distribute it widely (208 c). An update was prepared in 2000 and the next publication is due at the end of September 2005.

*The World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics* highlighted indicators on women's conditions world-wide, in a form that non-specialists could readily understand. It provided numbers and analyses to inform people everywhere about how much women contribute to economic life, political life and family life. *The World's Women 1995: Trends and Statistics* provided information and analyses to highlight the economic, political and social differences that still separated women and men. It traced changes that had taken place in the last two decades in the situation of women in the areas of health, education, family life, work and public life. New topics included migration and refugees, reproductive health, women in the media and violence against women. Detailed indicators on women's conditions worldwide were highlighted. Work needed to further develop gender statistics was underlined.

The most recent publication, *The World's Women 2000: Trends and Statistics*, comprehensively examined the status of women through the lens of statistical data and analysis. It highlighted the main findings of statistical analysis on women's situation as compared to men's worldwide in a broad range of fields, including families, health, education, work, human rights and politics.

General Assembly resolution 58/148 requested the Secretary-General to provide, by the end of 2004, a compilation of updated and substantiated statistics from Member States and other relevant sources on the situation of women and girls, including older women, in countries around the world, including by issuing a new volume of *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics*.

To monitor progress and guide policy, it is crucial that quality statistics be available. Yet official national data on basic demographic and social topics relevant to gender equality are at times deficient – inaccurate, unreliable, out-of-date, fragmented, inconsistent, incomparable- or simply unavailable. Reliable and comparable data on new and emerging gender issues is scarce. Even when national data are available, its quality may be doubtful or unknown. Much of the trend analysis in the past three issues of *The World's Women* was either limited its coverage to a small number of countries that had reasonable data over time or relied on national and regional estimates prepared by the international statistical system.

*The World's Women 2005: Progress in Statistics* will analyze the current state of gender statistics at national level, focusing on official statistics relevant to monitoring progress towards achieving gender equality, as mandated by the Beijing Platform for Action and Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The statistical review and analysis of *The World's Women 2005* will assess the availability and quality of statistics for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals from a gender perspective. Improvements in the state of statistics over the years will be highlighted, and areas where data are particularly deficient will be identified and suggestions made on the way forward.