
**Technical meeting to strengthen gender indicators and related data production
and use in response to policy demands in Viet Nam**

19 – 22 March 2019

Hai Phong, Viet Nam

Concept Note

I. Background

Recognition of the importance of women’s roles in the economy and society is being increasingly reflected in development policies in all sectors in Viet Nam. It is therefore essential that official statistics provide comprehensive information on the activities, needs and situations of women as well as men, to allow for adequate and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of corresponding policies and commitments, including the 2006 Gender Equality Law and the 2011-2020 National Strategy for Gender Equality.

The first list of National Statistical Indicators on Gender Development was adopted in 2011 (with a total of 105 indicators), to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of the 2006 Gender Equality Law, the 2011-2020 National Strategy for Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals.

Based on this indicator set, several challenges for the production, collection, compilation and use of gender statistics were identified by national stakeholders:

- Since their adoption, only about a quarter of these 105 indicators have been collected with sex-disaggregation; and 40 indicators have not been collected at all.
- Many indicators on gender and development have not been integrated in the national statistical indicator system because of challenges in data collection and compilation methods.
- Many of the indicators were not compliant with the global and regional gender indicators and international standards related to data use and management.

Subsequently, following two decisions by the Prime Minister in 2016 and 2017,¹ the General Statistics Office (GSO) of Viet Nam was mandated to review and revise the first set of National Statistical Indicators on Gender Development, in line with the 2015 Statistical Law and other national and international developments, including the UN Global Minimum Set of Gender Indicators (2013), the Core Set of Gender Indicators for Asia and the Pacific (2015) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This was decided in order to monitor and evaluate more effectively the implementation of the 2006 Gender Equality Law and the 2011-2020 National Strategy for Gender Equality. A preliminary draft of the second National Statistical Indicators on Gender Development is now available, which will be submitted to the Ministry of Planning and Investment for approval by June 2019. The approved set of National Statistical Indicators on Gender Development will constitute the legal basis to develop reporting systems, add additional questions/modules in current statistical surveys and organize new statistical surveys to collect information on gender-sensitive variables to meet planning needs of governmental agencies.

In light of these developments and to strengthen relevant capacities, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), and the UN Women’s

¹ Decisions No. 178/QĐ-TTg (28/01/2016) and No. 668/QĐ-TTg (16/05/2017).

Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific are co-organizing the meeting, which falls within two complementary programmes, with multiple synergies, aiming to improve gender data and statistics in Asia and the Pacific:

- 1) The **UNESCAP Gender Policy-Data Integration Initiative (GPDI)**² was launched in 2018 based on the approach adopted by the Regional Steering Group on Population and Social Statistics (RSG-PSS).³ It aims to strengthen data and statistics on gender equality and women's economic empowerment, specifically via systematic user-producer engagement to identify data and information needs (goal 1 of the RSG-PSS), and via the promotion of improved dissemination, analysis and use of existing gender-sensitive data for advocacy (goal 3 of the RSG-PSS).⁴ To achieve these two objectives, UNESCAP is proposing and experimenting two distinct tools:
 - The generic Policy-Data Integration Tool (EPIC),⁵ which facilitates the identification of information needs through policy content analysis for strengthening the responsiveness of national statistical systems to policy demands for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
 - The draft template and guidelines for progress assessment and gender analysis on issues related to women's economic empowerment, which assists in the conceptualization and production of data-driven products using gender-sensitive data in the context of women's economic empowerment.

The activities conducted under the GPDI focus on the thematic of women's economic empowerment (WEE), which gained momentum with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015 (women's empowerment being captured in several goals such as 1, 5, 8, 10),⁶ the first report of the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment (2016)⁷ and the 2017 Commission on the Status of Women.⁸

- 2) The **UN Women flagship programme initiative on statistics "Making Every Woman and Girl Count"** (2016-2020) (MEWGC)⁹ was endorsed to support the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs through better production and use of gender statistics. Its objective is also to provide assistance to countries for the creation, dissemination and use of gender statistics. Its implementation should lead to three main outcomes: (i) enabled policy and institutional environment for gender data production; (ii) increased quality, comparability and regularity of gender statistics; (iii) increased dissemination

² <https://www.unescap.org/events/unescap-gender-policy-data-integration-initiative-inception-workshop>

³ <https://www.unescap.org/events/first-meeting-regional-steering-group-population-and-social-statistics-and-expert-meeting>

⁴ https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP_CST_2018_2_Progress_in_implementing_existing_regional_initiatives.pdf

⁵ https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP.CST_2018.CRP_1_EPIC_a_generic_tool_for_policy_data_integration.pdf

⁶ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

⁷ <http://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/hlp%20wee/attachments/reports-toolkits/hlp-wee-report-2016-09-call-to-action-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1028>

⁸ <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/previous-sessions/csw61-2017>

⁹ https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP.CST_2018.INF_1_Strengthening_gender_for_gender_perspective.pdf

of gender data and improved communication for better use of gender data to inform policy-making and advocacy.

II. Objectives

The primary objective of the technical meeting is to enhance the capacity of the General Statistics Office, National Women's Machinery and relevant line ministries (i) to identify national gender indicators that are responsive to gender policy demands, in line with the SDGs and with a specific focus on WEE; (ii) to identify related data sources and production cycles; and (iii) to identify ways forward on related data production, dissemination and use.

This technical meeting is expected to:

- Advocate for a common platform for effective user-producer dialogue to improve gender statistics and indicators in Viet Nam.
- Enhance understanding of information needs, including disaggregation requirements, as outlined in the relevant policy documents in the context of gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) in Viet Nam, with a focus on WEE.
- Enhance knowledge on quality aspects and necessary considerations for the formulation of national gender indicators for WEE.
- Develop recommendations towards strengthening the second draft of National Statistical Indicators on Gender Development, especially in the context of WEE.
- Initiate identification of existing/potential data sources for the indicators.
- Assess further needs for capacity development on gender-related data production, analysis, dissemination and use, including in the context of supporting SDG monitoring.

III. Technical meeting approach and format

This technical meeting will run over four days with a mix of presentations, hands-on exercises and plenary sessions:

Part 1: Setting the scene on the policy-data landscape for GEWE in Viet Nam (0.5 day):

- 1) Viet Nam's progress on integration of the SDGs in national planning, especially on goals and targets pertaining to GEWE; the VNR process for gender equality-related goals and targets (to be presented by the Ministry of Planning and Investment).
- 2) Understanding the policy landscape for GEWE in Viet Nam: Gender Equality Law, National Strategy on Gender Equality as well as gender mainstreaming in sectoral development policies and plans, including related institutional set-up and monitoring mechanisms (to be presented by the Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs).
- 3) Understanding the data landscape for GEWE in Viet Nam: data gaps to monitor SDGs targets pertaining to GEWE, degree of inclusion of gender-related considerations in Viet Nam's strategy for the development of statistics, existing data sources and key stakeholders responsible for producing gender data, including related institutional set-up and monitoring mechanisms, and update on the draft National Statistical Indicators on Gender Development (to be presented by the GSO).

Part 2: Applying the Policy-Data Integration tool (EPIC) on selected policy document/s pertaining to GEWE in Viet Nam, with a focus on women's economic empowerment (2 days)

- 1) Objectives, rationale and modalities of the tool.
- 2) Experimenting with the tool.
- 3) Hands-on exercises to identify issues for action and target groups as contained in the policy document and map against national, regional and global indicator sets.

The documents that will be used for this EPIC exercise are:

- Main policy documents: (i) the 2006 Gender Equality Law; and (ii) the 2011-2020 National Strategy for Gender Equality;
- Corresponding planning logic/log-frame and national indicators sets to be used: (i) the draft National Statistical Indicators on Gender Development; and (ii) Viet Nam's SDG indicator set;
- Other supporting documents (for reference if needed): the 2011 National Statistical Indicators on Gender Development; the 2016-2020 National Action Plan on Gender Equality; the 2017 National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for SDGs; Viet Nam's strategy for the development of statistics.

Part 3: Aligning indicators to data sources and production cycles (0.5 day)

- 1) Integration of a gender perspective in data collection and compilation.
- 2) Linking existing data sources to the indicators and identifying needs for new data collection, compilation or integration of sources.
- 3) Assessment of data production plans and existing gaps and challenges to data production from a gender equality perspective.

Part 4: Gender data dissemination, analysis, communication and use (1 day)

- 1) Communicating gender data: assessing needs, identifying opportunities and establishing strategies for systematic gender data dissemination and use in Viet Nam.
- 2) Opportunities and challenges for long term collaboration and dialogue between data users and producers in the context of gender equality and women's empowerment.

IV. Target participants

Lead national agency: General Statistics Office (GSO) of Viet Nam

Other core national agencies:

- Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI); and
- Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA);

Other participating agencies:

- Vietnam's Women Union (VWU);
- Ministry of Health (MoH);
- Ministry of Education and Training (MOET);
- Ministry of Home Affairs;
- Ministry of Information and Communication;
- Ministry of Public Security;
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development;
- National Assembly Agency in charge of Social Affairs;
- Civil Society Organizations; and
- Academia.
