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GENDER SENSITIZATION TRAINING AS A PROCESS IN SERBIA

Invited paper submitted by Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia*

A B S T R A C T

1. This paper illustrates the gender sensitization training for statisticians at the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS), which was made during the Gender workshop in Vienna, February 2004. It was reconstructed following occurrences in the Serbian gender process through establishing the Council of gender equality by the Serbian government and prepared and published in Serbian gender publication in 2005.

2. The main idea of this paper is that Gender sensitization training shouldn't be the particular act but the follow-up of the process. This paper also includes future steps through independent work of the SORS and collaboration with above mentioned Council or any other governmental or nongovernmental organizations, representatives of mass media or university.

* This paper has been prepared at the invitation of the secretariat.

PART I

3. The first step of the gender sensitization training for statisticians of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) was made during the Gender workshop in Vienna, February 2004.

4. This was the first time we presented data on gender statistics, reflecting the differences between women and men. We realised that so many sources could be used as the source of statistics that deal with data related to gender issues.

5. At first, it is important to begin with the information that SORS conducted a census in 2002. Many of the data that were collected in the census could be presented stratifying gender dimensions. Since the census collected national data on populations, households and dwellings, many books/monographs have been published on the basis of these census data. For example, twenty books/monographs were published up to 2006.

6. It is also very important to note that a large number of social statistics could be produced by gender stratification. An especial example can be taken by using vital statistics, considering the events of newborn child, deaths, negotiated marriages and divorces. Besides these, producing and presenting gender statistics in relation to education and justice are equally important.

7. Labour force survey and Household budget survey are very important sources of data, which can reflect the economic life of individuals and also of households. From these data, we can identify the levels and trend of employment status by sex. These data, for example, provide information on which members of the households are unemployed, what is the income of the household, what is the age and sex distribution of the unemployed and employed members in the households and what education level they have achieved etc.

8. Indeed, we learnt a lesson from the Gender Statistics Workshop in Vienna that we could prepare and publish publications related to gender statistics in short time. We could also present some gender statistics, which were published in the past to observe the historical pattern of gender dimensions. Unfortunately, we did not realise until we got back from Vienna workshop that some publications reflecting the issues of women and men were already prepared by Federal Statistical Office of SFRY, some 30 years ago.

9. Exercising during GS Workshop about developing a plan of action for national GS project, we concluded to form a task force to implement GS project once we will get agreement from the management to do so.

10. In the mean time, representatives of UNECE and UNDP visited us. They appreciated the intention of SORS in being proactive for gender related publications. Appreciating their instructions in order to collect data on gender statistics, SORC started to collect data and also made an agreement immediately with the UNDP office in Belgrade for support.

11. UNECE Work Session on Gender Statistics was held in October 2004 in Geneva. One representative from SORS was also invited to take a part in it. SORS very much benefited from the participant's experience and energised role to be proactive for forthcoming work on gender related issues.

PART II

12. Compiling data on gender issues, SORS started to make a frame of the publications such as books reflecting the dimensions of women and men. SORS also conducted some in-house working progress meetings. During such meetings the team took decisions for outlining the content and also for framing tables viewing the availability of gender related data. These meetings were very useful for the office of national statistics in conceptualising the ways of disseminating data in gender statistics even in the future.

13. SORS highly acknowledge the comments by UNECE representative on the first draft of SORS 's outline and general concepts regarding the gender related data structure and publication.

14. At the same time, Government of the Republic of Serbia had decided to form the *Council for Gender Equality* (CGE), consisting the representatives from the Republic Ministries and other related offices and NGO sectors. The President of the Council is the Minister of the Labour, Employment and the Social Policy of Republic of Serbia. It is also worthwhile to mention that there is very active and visible network with women and established non-government organizations all over Serbia.

15. Almost at the same time, the Serbian Government also established a *Task force for the evaluation of the realisation Millennium development goals* (TFERMDG). As it is well known, the third MDG goal is to *promote gender equality and empower women*, the Council had the obligation to prepare the National MDG report by the spring 2005.

16. After the first consultation with the representatives of the CGE and TFERMDG, the goal was settled - gender publication should be completed and published by the 8 of March 2005. SORS wishes to thank for the support of the UNDP office in Belgrade and their support for publication. With additional efforts SORS made the publication: *Women and men in Serbia*, which was presented at the press conference in the Government of the Republic of Serbia on 8 March 2005.

17. The publication was produced in two languages - Serbian and English. These reports were placed on the Internet site of the Republic of Serbia (www.statserb.sr.gov.yu). Interested individuals can download the documents which consists of eight sections as described below:

1. General Indicators
2. Population
3. Health
4. Education
5. Social Welfare
6. Crime
7. Employment and Earnings
8. Decision Making.

18. Sources of all gender data were census or annual surveys of SORS. Each part of the Gender publication starts with the definitions of the indicators and follow up with the data related to indicators, tables and graphs.

19. Public reaction on the gender publication was very positive. There were numerous TV and newspaper reports during the following days. Publication was provided/circulated to each member of the *Serbian parliament* by the *National committee for gender equality* formed by members of Serbian parliament. Also, many of the users from the universities, *Council for children rights* (CCR), UN organisations and many other institutions were interested in the publications.
20. As a proof of use of the publication it should be mentioned that TFERMDG insisted on getting the data during the preparation. This is because they wanted to use them for the National MDG report. Also, author of the third section was favourable to gender publication. It is the pleasure of SORS to share with you that *Women and men in Serbia* is the most frequently mentioned source of the data in the Serbian MDG report.
21. This publication have also been using by some of the faculties of Belgrade University as the pedagogic book to teach for students. Some of the independent researchers, academicians or professionals have been using it for their own reference or analysis to gender related work.
22. Furthermore, managers of the SORS use to distribute this publication to visitors to SORS office as an advertisement of our collective achievement and also to promote gender equality. Our circulation is gaining momentum since it is published in two languages.
23. SORS also produced two annual reports based on the Labour force survey (LFS) 2004, which were analysed keeping gender dimensions in mind. The results in these reports show that the status of women and men in Serbian labour market is quite different. So, the data in the tables are very useful for making appropriate gender comparisons.
24. Also, the final CGE report based on LFS 2004 shows the facts of women and men in Serbian society and labour market. In 2005, SORS also conducted MICS (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey). As it is well known that it was the periodical survey prepared in the financial assistantship of the UNICEF, especially intending to improve the positions of women and children in the society. Currently, it has already been completed its preliminary analysis for MICS report for Serbia while the final report will be completed and published up to autumn.

PART III

25. There are some outlines about nationalisation of 8 MDGs in Serbia. TFERMDG aims to plan for forming some five working groups to complete the task. The plan is to define national indicators for national sub-goals with the active contributions of different representatives of government and non-government organisations. In each group, a representative of SORS will be facilitating in determining indicators and potential sources to them.
26. Despite of visible and remarkable progress in gender statistics, CGE and SORS decided to conduct a survey in order to assess the users satisfaction on gender statistics that have already been produced. Statistics Sweden (SCB) have made some models for this survey. Similar surveys were conducted in Serbia two or three years ago and were called *Living condition index* and *Children condition index*. The questionnaire is in the preparatory phase. During the summer 2006, questionnaires will be finalised and SORS will use them to collect data, and publish reports prepared from gender related data.

27. There were also some plans with the SCB about gender training for the SORS employees and other producers and users of the statistical data. But they never been materialised although the gender project of SCB is still under-way with very slow progress. Only two countries have so far been targeted, but Serbia could not be among them. The main reason for this is that consultant to work in gender aspects became a scarce resource at SCB.

28. Having a great experience in publishing gender related materials, SORS have a plan to make similar publications reflecting the realities of women and men in rural Serbia. The main point for the users of planned publications is the size and structure of the labour force in the country and concerns for the country's development in the future. This segment of the society could be very interesting for decision makers and potential investors.

29. Importantly however, SORS is still unknown whether or not support for producing such publications on gender statistics will be continuous from external donors and communities. Nonetheless, workshop on the gender sensitization training will be very useful not only for the statisticians but also for other producers and users of such data - Governmental or nongovernmental organizations, representatives of mass media or university.
