

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Workshop on disseminating, communicating and using gender statistics
Astana, Kazakhstan, 29-31 May 2017

17 July 2017

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

I. Organization and attendance

1. The Workshop on disseminating, communicating and using gender statistics was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) with the Committee on Statistics of Kazakhstan (CS), as part of the Gender Statistics and Indicators component of the United Nations Development Account project 'Statistics and Data 2016-2019'.
2. The target audience groups were producers and users of gender statistics in Kazakhstan. They included CS staff working in gender and in communications; specialists in health and in issues related to labour and employment; and users in need of basic training in using statistics with a gender perspective.
3. Participants came from ministries and other state bodies, NGOs, research institutes, universities and media outlets. Representatives of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women also participated. There were 52 participants, of whom 41 were women.

II. Purpose

4. With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, gender equality and women's empowerment occupy an increasingly important place among global policy concerns. The specific Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (Goal 5), as well as the broad and deep inclusion of gender concerns throughout the Agenda, is creating growing demand for high-quality gender statistics that provide solid evidence on the status of women and men. To meet this demand, the CS expressed a need for capacity-building to ensure that their gender statistics products are known, accessed, used and understood by diverse user groups.
5. The primary purpose of the workshop was to enhance the capacity of CS staff to produce and communicate their gender statistics products in ways that meet the needs of users. At the same time, the workshop aimed to enhance the capacity of various user groups to access and interpret such statistics.
6. The expected outcome was improved use of gender statistics by policymakers in support of evidence-based policymaking and policy monitoring.

III. Summary of proceedings

7. The workshop consisted of three parts over two and a half days: capacity-building for CS staff; improving gender statistics literacy among users in the fields of health and employment; and improving gender statistics literacy among users with less specialized knowledge of gender topics and/or of statistics.

8. In the first part, UNECE introduced the Toolkit for Training Users of Gender Statistics¹ and explained how CS staff could adapt and use this for their own training activities. Representatives of UN Women and UNFPA provided context about the role of gender statistics within the SDG-monitoring processes in Kazakhstan, and informed participants about the planned Generations and Gender Survey to be undertaken in the country. Invited experts from Germany and Georgia provided guidance on best practices for communicating gender statistics, especially via flagship ‘Women and Men’ publications, and the CS presented current plans with regard to Kazakhstan’s ‘Women and Men’ publication. Participants engaged in practical exercises and discussions to reinforce their learning.

9. The Toolkit’s modules on health and employment were applied in the second part of the workshop. The modules demonstrated the main concepts, data sources, and key indicators. The invited expert from Germany guided participants in the essentials of using and interpreting gender statistics. Participants undertook practical exercises and discussed the outcomes. CS staff thus had the opportunity to learn first-hand about the needs and challenges of these user groups.

10. In the third part, users with less familiarity with gender and statistical concepts were given an introduction to these areas. Three presentations focused on basic skills in gender statistics; identifying and conveying key messages from statistical materials; and the importance of demographic indicators for gender analysis.

11. The second and third parts of the workshop each ended with a producer-user dialogue, in which participants worked in small groups to review their learning, formulate and share ideas, and make proposals for concrete future actions (on the part of users or the CS) that could aid in improving users’ ability to access, use and interpret gender statistics. Participants were invited to write on cards one new thing they had learned, and one action that they could take personally based on their learning from the workshop. These cards were left anonymously with the organizers.

12. At the end of the workshop, participants were invited to visit the premises of the Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, where they learned more about the Committee’s gender statistics work and data products.

13. The agenda and presentations are available on the meeting page of the UNECE website².

¹ Available at <http://www.unece.org/stats/gender/toolkit.html>

² <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2017.5.gender.workshop#/>

IV. Conclusions

14. The workshop highlighted the good progress made in gender statistics in Kazakhstan, while also drawing attention to the fact that production alone is not sufficient without effective communication.

15. The workshop also highlighted the fact that close and regular contact is necessary to keep some user groups, such as the media, engaged. The opportunity to engage in dialogue with users, to see first-hand the challenges faced by them and hear about their needs and wishes was valuable for CS staff.

16. Furthermore, the action cards left by participants and the outcomes of the small group discussions could provide a basis for deciding on priorities, since some frequently-recurring themes were evident among the actions users called for:

- a. visual display of statistical findings and key messages
- b. increased dialogue and interaction between users and producers
- c. more frequent training for users, whether in-person or online.

17. Some of the many other suggestions included:

- a. 'open days' and increased use of call centres
- b. simplified navigation of the CS website and/or improved instructions for locating material, especially for a topic such as gender where data fall under many domains
- c. more easily-accessible metadata, footnotes and explanations of missing values and outliers
- d. exploring possibilities for collaboration with non-official data producers, such as NGOs, in hard-to-measure gender topics
- e. sex-disaggregated data on specific topics of interest to some users: surrogate maternity, medical insurance coverage
- f. increased disaggregation by ethnic group.

18. The feedback from participants confirmed that the workshop had enhanced capacities among users. Users commented on the cards, for example, that they had learned about measuring unpaid activities; about sex differences in life expectancy; the fundamental information to be presented in a graph; how to name and label a chart; the value of simplicity in presenting information; and the ways in which the choice of graphical display can allow different perspectives to be emphasized from the same data. Several participants mentioned specific ways that they intend to use gender data in the near future, including a strategic plan for a government institution and an article on the gender specifics of migration.
