



Overview

Information about women's and men's experiences is essential for gender mainstreaming, to identify problems and gaps, plan action and monitor change. Two of the principal mechanisms identified in the *GMS Handbook* – gender analysis and management information systems – relate to this need for gender information. The *Using Gender-Sensitive Indicators* manual provides an introduction to the use of indicators for this purpose

What's in this module?

This core module focuses on gender-sensitive indicators – their uses and limitations. It offers foundation activities relevant across sectors. The first two activities provide a general introduction to the topic (2.1 'Introducing gender-sensitive indicators' and 2.2 'Data collection systems'). 2.3 'Counting women's work' uses case studies to explore issues around data collection and 2.4 'Developing gender-sensitive indicators' offers a practical exercise.

Checklist

- Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the *Using Gender-Sensitive Indicators* manual before you start to deliver the training activities in this module.
- The Toolkit Action Guide Unit 5 'GMS mechanisms: information' will give you an overview and help you find out what's in the manual and where, and which sections will be most useful.
- Look through the 'To help you choose' table in the Introduction to this Trainers Guide for activities, topics, methods and handouts from other modules and sectors that you can adapt to fit your purposes.
- Always start planning your training with an analysis of your learners and their needs.
- Use the 'How to' briefings in the Introduction to this Trainer's Guide to help you design your training.

Background

Make sure too that you are familiar with the issues for your sector by working through the Toolkit Action Guide Unit 4 'Using the sector manuals' and your relevant sector manual(s).

ACTIVITY 2.1

Introducing gender-sensitive indicators

Aim To introduce a range of indicators and explain what makes them gender-sensitive

Outcomes

- Define indicators
- Explain the difference between indicators and statistics and between qualitative and quantitative indicators
- Assess whether chosen indicators are gender-sensitive

Time 45 mins

Materials Flipchart and pens, Handout 2.1 'Gender-sensitive indicators'

Steps

- 1 Explain the aim of the activity.
- 2 Make a presentation on indicators. Go through the composite indexes of gender equity (GDI and GEM), developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), bringing out their relationship to UNDP's human development index (HDI). (10 mins)
- 3 Explain the difference between qualitative and quantitative indicators. (10 mins)
- 4 Choose some examples of indicators from the appendix of the *Using Gender-Sensitive Indicators* handbook and go through them with the group. Ask whether the chosen indicators are gender-sensitive. If not, ask what would make them gender-sensitive. Note responses and ideas on flipcharts. (10 -15 mins)
- 5 Draw out common threads and sum up. (5 mins)
- 6 Give out Handout 2.1.

Notes

- To do the other activities in this module, participants need to understand indicators, the difference between indicators and statistics, and the need for both quantitative and qualitative indicators.
- For the presentation on indicators, draw on Handout 2.1 and the GMS handbook *Using Gender-Sensitive Indicators*. You could photocopy Figure 2 on page 35 of the handbook for an overhead slide to explain the relationship between HDI and GDI rankings.



What are indicators?

An indicator is an item of data that summarises a large amount of information in a single figure, in such a way as to give an indication of change over time, and in comparison to a norm. This comparison to a norm in their interpretation makes indicators different from statistics, which merely present facts.

A gender-sensitive indicator can be defined as an indicator that captures gender-related changes in society over time. Thus, whereas a gender statistic provides factual evidence of the status of women, a gender-sensitive indicator provides “direct evidence of the status of women, relative to some agreed normative standard or explicit reference group” (Johnson, 1985).

An example of a gender statistic would be: 60 per cent of women in country X are literate, as opposed to 30 per cent five years ago. An example of a gender-sensitive indicator would be: 60 per cent of women in country X are literate, as compared to 82 per cent of men, and compared to 30 and 52 per cent respectively five years ago. The norm or reference group in this example is men in the same country, but in other cases might be other groups of women.

National level gender-sensitive indicators are among the key means by which planners and policy makers measure gender inequality. They also provide information for policy-making for greater gender equality. Gender-sensitive indicators correct the bias inherent in many national level mainstream indicators such as gross national product (GNP), for example, which obscures the contribution made by women’s unpaid labour by not including it as work in national accounting systems.

Quantitative gender-sensitive indicators have their limitations. The major one is that they do not provide information on wider social patterns, revealing little about why gender relations have been shaped in particular ways and how they can be changed. Quantitative indicator systems should be complemented by gender analysis, which involves examining, often at a micro-level, social relations between women and men, and the structural features of society that reinforce gender inequality and inequity. This analysis will yield the qualitative indicators necessary to capture the quality of change, as perceived and experienced by women and men themselves. Because qualitative indicators are obtained through participatory and informal methods of information and data collection, they are more likely to reflect women’s situation and experience of change than formal quantitative surveys, in which women’s views are often invisible.

Thus while a **quantitative indicator** might measure the rate of employment and unemployment for women and men, over a period of time, expressed as percentages, a related **qualitative indicator** would look at how this affected gender relations in the household, sexual divisions of labour, and women’s status as perceived by both women and men.

ACTIVITY 2.2

Data collection systems

Aim To explore different national data collection systems and suggest improvements to make them more gender-sensitive

Outcomes

- Define the main data collection systems
- Illustrate the advantages and problems with these systems
- Recommend improvements

Time 1 1/2 hrs

Materials Flipchart and pens, Handouts 2.2a, b, c and d

Steps

- 1 Explain the aim of the session.
- 2 Tell participants that there are three main data systems that produce indicators. These are:
 - census surveys;
 - sample surveys of the population; and
 - the System of National Accounts (SNA).

The reporting process for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) also gives governments a chance to review their data bank and make good any shortcomings. Explain that data collection systems have to be sound, accurate and based on information disaggregated by sex in order to generate useful gender-sensitive indicators. Emphasise the importance of good baseline information about the situation of both women and men. If women's experience and the conditions of women's lives are invisible, this leads to policy and planning which is blind to gender differences. (10 mins)

- 3 Explain that the group will look at the main national systems of data collection. They will examine some of the problems that have arisen in collecting gender-sensitive information. Ask them to come up with recommendations for improving collection methods.
- 4 Briefly go through the data collection methods in Handouts 2.2a, b and c. (5 mins)
- 5 Divide the group into three and give each group one of the handouts.
- 6 Ask the groups to suggest creative ways of showing some of the advantages and problems in the data collection methods, in terms of accessing sex-disaggregated data and accurate information about women. They could do this through, for example, a role play, drawing, poem, rap song or story. (30 mins)
- 7 Back in the plenary, each subgroup presents for five minutes. (15 mins)
- 8 After the presentations, ask the members of group 1 to recommend improvements for the method they looked at. Note these on flipcharts. Take any additional suggestions from the other groups. Do this for each group. (15 mins)



ACTIVITY 2.2

- 9 Distribute Handout 2.2d. Go through it with the group, focusing on suggestions for improvements that have not emerged. Wrap up. (10 mins)

Notes:

- To prepare for this activity, read through Chapter 2 of the *Using Gender-Sensitive Indicators* manual, the sections on economic data collection (pp 24-27), and the case studies at the end of the manual. Other activities in this module cover these topics in more detail.
- This activity would work well using role playing, depending on your group. One group could be census data collectors, who ask traditional questions and do not access any information about women. Another could be a group doing a household survey, who have had training in asking gender-related questions, but don't access the women, come at the wrong time of day, etc. Another could be macroeconomists arguing about whether women's unpaid work should be counted within GNP or SNA calculations.

HANDOUT
2.2a

Censuses and labour force surveys¹

Censuses are the mainstay of the data gathering system and as such offer considerable opportunities for gathering gender-sensitive data. However, a UN review of the census and labour force survey practices of a number of countries uncovered certain problems in terms of concepts and definitions selected.

The review (UN, 1993), which covered the period 1970 to 1990, focused on gender differentials and included the Commonwealth countries of Botswana, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Lesotho, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as St Helena and Hong Kong. The findings were as follows:

- In a number of censuses, interviewers are not sufficiently trained to identify women who are primarily housewives but who nevertheless work in activities related to the production of goods and services. The principle that participation in any economic activity should be counted, irrespective of any other activity, is often not applied.
- The concept of 'usually active population' is unclear and not effectively articulated in national censuses. This concept is important for the inclusion of women's work, which may be seasonal and only captured through use of a longer reference period.
- The ways in which questions about work are asked can significantly affect census results. Words such as 'employment', 'job', 'work' or 'main activity' can mean different things to different people. For example, a national sample survey in Kenya in 1974 revealed that activity rates for married women ages 20 to 49 varied from about 20 per cent to about 90 per cent depending on whether the key word in the questionnaire was 'job' or 'work'. A 'job' was regarded as a paid wage or salary employment, whereas 'work' was more broadly interpreted to include virtually all time-consuming activities required for the family's survival.

Over the last ten years extensive work has been done on making censuses and labour surveys more gender-sensitive, particularly in the area of women's paid and unpaid work. This is a key area where governments can improve their performance. Questions in censuses and labour force surveys should be developed so that women's contributions are included wherever possible. Questions regarding economic activity should be carefully phrased and follow UN and International Labour Organisation (ILO) recommendations. Questions related to women's work should be framed so as to include both paid and unpaid work. Extensive education for enumerators and the general population as to the meaning of the term 'work' may be necessary before women's contributions can be fully captured.

¹ This section draws on CIDA (1996a, 1996b); World Bank (1994); Westendorff and Ghai (1993); and various UN documents.

**HANDOUT**
2.2b

Sample surveys

Household surveys

Household surveys are surveys of a sample of the population (usually more than 2,000 households) focusing on a particular subject or subjects and with the household as the focus of investigation. They can be carried out at frequent intervals, and in some cases are carried out quarterly. The size of these surveys makes them useful instruments for the generation of gender-sensitive indicators. In developing national level data sets, household surveys should focus specifically on areas where there are serious gaps in data. In particular, they should examine gender roles, household dynamics and decision-making, control of and access to economic and other resources, and violence against women.

Time-use studies

Time-use studies can be included as part of a larger household survey or carried out separately. They are a type of micro- or meso-level survey that it is becoming increasingly useful in providing gender-sensitive indicators related to women's and men's contributions. Two main, interrelated sets of concerns are usually investigated in these studies (UN, 1990b). The first covers the utilisation of human resources in the household, and the second covers improvement in the measurement of employment, unemployment and underemployment. There are four main types of time-use survey, all of which have their strengths and limitations (UN, 1988):

- observation;
- random instant measurement (a schedule of random visits that record what household members were doing just before the arrival of the investigator);
- diaries; and
- recall (usually based on a period of 24 hours).

As with any other approach, time-use studies have various limitations:

- "Surveys that examine only the allocation of time by women and men during workdays tend to underestimate the contribution of women to economic activity because their work continues unabated during 'days off'. The same is true with surveys of economic activities during the day, since a significant portion of women's work occurs at night" (UNDP, 1995: 91).
- "In developing countries, people do not think of their activities in terms of clock time, nor can they be expected to keep diaries listing their daily activities... Intensive observation and interview methods require well-trained and well-supervised interviewers and a great amount of interview time" (UN, 1990b: 57).
- There may be lack of participation in survey design by those being studied.

Despite these problems, time-use studies are particularly valuable in highlighting women's work and generating gender-sensitive indicators that can be used as part of a national database. They can also be useful in the generation of satellite accounts on unpaid work.

HANDOUT
2.2c

System of National Accounts

The United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA) is used to measure production and growth in most countries. Since 1945 has been one of the central tools used for policy-making related to the working of a country's economic system. Implementing changes to the SNA is a key area where governments can improve the way in which sex-disaggregated data is collected and used.

Measures such as the SNA and gross domestic product (GDP), with their concentration on measuring paid employment, have been strongly criticised for having a gender bias, and in particular for ignoring women's overall contribution to the economy and to society as a whole.

It has been widely noted that the focus of SNA and ILO definitions of work relate to economic activity. But as Anker et al (1988) have pointed out, 'economic activity' is often defined in an unclear or ambiguous fashion. For example, according to the SNA, processing of food for preservation, husking of rice and grinding of grain are considered economic activities while cooking is not, but the dividing line between these activities is a very thin one.

The 1993 SNA divides unpaid work into three types:

- 1 Housework, child-care and other family-related services (mainly carried out by women), which are not recognised by the SNA as economic activity.
- 2 Subsistence and non-market activities such as agricultural production for household consumption (much of which is carried out by women), to be valued in the SNA on the basis of market values of similar services that are sold.
- 3 Household enterprises producing for the market for which more than one household member provides unpaid labour. The income and production of these enterprises are quantified in the SNA using transaction values.



Selected recommendations for gendered data collection

HANDOUT
2.2d

(i) For improving census questions on economic activity:

- Consistent training and gender sensitisation of interviewers. Particular attention should be paid to training in asking the questions, since the possibility of introducing response and non-response biases is very strong when concepts are difficult to understand and/or interpret. For example, male interviewers may have difficulty with the concept that many of the activities carried out by women constitute work.
- Participation. Surveys need to be carried out in a participatory fashion or at least have a participatory element.
- Language in the census should be non-sexist. For example, questions in the census should focus on additional questions to 'main activity' in societies where women's place is considered to be in the home.
- Gender concepts. Instruction manuals should be developed so as to adequately inform the interviewer which concepts should be applied.
- The seasonal patterns of women's work should be taken into account.

Anker et al (1988) provide the following additional guidelines:

- Female interviewers. Male interviewers may have particular problems interviewing women. In order to establish the nature of women's participation, more women interviewers should be employed.
- Information on multiple labour force activities should be collected. Unless such data are collected, it is likely that the true extent of female labour force activity in rural areas of developing countries will continue to be grossly under-reported.

(ii) For successfully implementing household surveys:

- One or more persons with professional capacity and a personal interest in innovations to improve data on women should be involved.
- The possibility should be explored of carrying out small-scale trial interviews to adapt surveys to local conditions. Even 200 interviews, 50 each in an urban and three rural areas, could be sufficient.
- The planning committee should have a significant representation of women members from different ethnic, class/caste and age groups (including some with rural backgrounds) and strong participation by persons who can be expected to use the data.
- There should be a possibility of providing training to the interviewers and of developing a core of female interviewers (UN, 1988a).

(iii) For engendering the System of National Accounts:

- Much of the recent discussion about unpaid housework, including child-care, caring for dependants and providing voluntary services, has been in relation to developing a parallel or satellite account to the SNA.
- The World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen noted: "Efforts are needed to acknowledge the social and economic importance and value of unremunerated work... including by developing methods for reflecting its value... in accounts that may be produced separately from, but consistent with core national accounts" (UN, 1995a: para 46).
- The 1993 SNA gives detailed instructions for the setting up of satellite accounts, which should be developed in the same way as main accounts (Inter-Secretariat Working Group, 1993). However, the sections on satellite accounts in the SNA do not provide examples related to unpaid work, so this remains to be improved.

ACTIVITY 2.3

Counting women's work

Aim To understand the importance of measuring women's unpaid work

Outcomes

- Examine the experience of two Commonwealth countries in collecting census data on women's work
- Make recommendations for best practice in collecting data on women's work

Time 45 mins

Materials Flipchart and pens, Handouts 2.3a and b of case studies

Steps

- 1 Explain the aim of the session.
- 2 Give a brief input on women's work. Explain that one of the key areas where women's situation is invisible or underestimated in national statistics and indicators is the area of their work. This is particularly true of the informal sector and agricultural work, unpaid labour in the household or domestic sphere, and voluntary work at all levels. Lead a short discussion about women's work, capturing different views and attitudes. Ask why women's work should be a key gender issue. (5-10 mins)
- 3 Explain that in this session the group will look at experiences in India and Canada to capture elements of women's work more effectively through the census. Give each participant a copy of both case studies, and ask them to read through them. (5 mins)
- 4 Count the group off in pairs. Ask each pair to discuss the case studies and the questions, and come up with two recommendations for best practice in collecting data on women's work. (15-20 mins)
- 5 Ask each pair to read out their recommendations to the plenary, and write them on flipcharts. (10 mins)
- 6 Wrap up. Add points to the flipcharts if necessary from the case studies in chapter 5 of the *Using Gender-Sensitive Indicators* manual.



India case study

HANDOUT
2.3a

Background

Since 1951, Indian censuses have provided detailed sex-disaggregated data on population make-up and employment.

The labour force questions in the 1961, 1971 and 1981 censuses did ask questions about work and main activity, although not about unpaid work. However, because of biases in questionnaire content and organisation, "female labour force participation rates (for ages 5 or above) displayed abrupt and unlikely fluctuations... Most of these fluctuations were found to be concentrated among owner-cultivators, an activity category which is not always considered to be 'work' by respondents and even less likely to be the 'main activity' of Indian women, who have the major responsibility for domestic activities" (Anker et al, 1988: 139).

The 1991 Indian census

It was not until the 1991 census that a more detailed examination of female employment was considered. It was recognised that:

In the 1981 and 1971 censuses, only a few selected tables were prepared for 'marginal' workers [i.e., people who were economically active for less than six months in the reference year]...This has one undesirable consequence. Most of the marginal workers were females. In view of this the census could not bring out a complete picture of the total workforce in general and female workforce in particular...With the modifications proposed in the 1991 census relating to tabulation of marginal workers on a 100 per cent basis, a number of tables would be generated for marginal workers also. This, it is felt, would enhance the utility of 1991 census data on workforce (Nanda, 1995: 3229).

In order to capture women's work more fully, the census organisers took the following steps:

- Enumerators were educated to the fact that many activities carried out by women form part of general economic activities.
- In the instructions to the enumerators, there was special emphasis on what constitutes work. A list of activities in which women are normally engaged was included in the instruction booklet.
- Suggestions made by women's organisations were taken into consideration when drafting the instructions to enumerators and designing the training modules for them.
- With reference to women's activities, the instructions emphasised the need to ask probing questions regarding the work done at any time during the last year or any seasons in the reference period.
- The question in the census "Worked any time last year?" was supplemented by the phrase "including unpaid work in farm or family enterprise". The inclusion of this clause was the first such occurrence in Asia, and was considered by UNIFEM as a model to be followed.
- There was extensive publicity about the different types of activities carried out by women; this included 1.6 million posters and a documentary prepared by UNIFEM that was shown on the national TV network.

Problems with the 1991 census

Despite this attempt to capture the extent of women's unpaid work, it has been recognised that women's work was not fully represented in the 1991 census. A survey of enumerators found that the most problematic area for them related to economic activity, particularly justifying the inclusion of unpaid work. Although there were 26 pages of instruction as to what constitutes economic activity in the manual for enumerators, women's work appears to have been systematically excluded from the 1991 census.

HANDOUT
2.3a

Questions

- 1 What are the key problems highlighted by this case study?
- 2 What could be done differently to more effectively capture the extent of women's work?



Canada case study

HANDOUT
2.3b

Background

Statistics Canada has been working on the measurement of unpaid work since the early 1970s. In 1978 Statistics Canada published a discussion paper that covered several of the main methodological questions around women's work as well as actual empirical estimates for 1971. Several other publications appeared during the 1970s and 1980s on the value of household production, volunteerism, time-use and the nature of social support. In December 1995 Statistics Canada published a comprehensive report and state-of-the-art literature review entitled *Households' Unpaid Work: Measurement and Valuation*. The ongoing and in-depth discussion of unpaid work over more than two decades was a major contributing factor to the increased recognition of its importance.

Testing of questions

Before the 1981 and 1991 censuses, questions were tested relating to unpaid work. However, these questions were not included in the census prior to 1996 for several reasons, which highlight some of the main methodological difficulties relating to the measurement of unpaid work:

- the questions were considered too complex;
- there was a concern about 'respondent burden', that is, asking too many questions;
- more than one question was required. There is an upper limit to the numbers of questions that can be asked in the census, and if questions on unpaid work were included other questions would have had to be dropped;
- respondents had difficulty responding because of the lack of a uniform understanding of what should be included as unpaid work; and
- respondents had difficulty calculating the number of hours spent on unpaid work.

Questions on unpaid work were further tested in 1993. In this case questions on unpaid work were asked before other employment questions and three simply worded questions were included.

Public consultations

Public consultations were held concerning the inclusion of unpaid work in census questions prior to 1991 and in 1994. The relevant Statistics Canada document (1995b: 43) notes: "Generally, the consultation process revealed considerable confusion regarding the census's role in the measurement and evaluation of unpaid work. As noted, other sources, such as time-use surveys, are already providing estimates of the volume of unpaid work".

This document goes on to discuss the public consultation process and notes: "advocates for inclusion were in agreement that trying to collect such data would be a difficult task; some suggested a series of seven questions would be a minimum necessary for even rudimentary data, and there was considerable disagreement on the appropriate terminology to use" (1995b: 44).

Questions in the 1996 census

Despite the methodological difficulties involved, Statistics Canada decided to include the following questions in the 1996 census:

- "Last week, how many hours did this person spend doing the following activities:
 - doing unpaid housework, yard work or home maintenance for members of this household, or others;
 - looking after one or more of this person's own children, or the children of others, without pay; and
 - providing unpaid care or assistance to one or more seniors?"


HANDOUT
2.3b**Questions**

- 1 What are the key problems highlighted by this case study?
- 2 What could be done differently to more effectively capture the extent of women's work?



ACTIVITY 2.4

Developing gender-sensitive indicators

Aim To examine the ten key areas of national gender-sensitive indicators as recommended by the UN

Outcomes

- Review quantitative and qualitative indicators and ways of developing indicator questions
- Practise developing indicators

Time 1 hour

Materials Flipchart and pens, OHP slides, Handout 2.4, different coloured cards

Steps

- 1 Explain the aim of the activity.
- 2 Give a brief presentation about the ten key areas for gender-sensitive indicators that have been identified as international priorities in UN recommendations and the Beijing Platform for Action, using OHPs of two or three tables of indicators for illustration (e.g. Tables 3, 7 and 9 in the *Using Gender-Sensitive Indicators* manual). Explain the 'related indicator questions' as outlined in the handbook. Remind participants of the distinction between quantitative and qualitative indicators discussed in Activity 1.1 in this module, showing how the indicator questions in the tables can lead to the development of qualitative indicators. (10 mins)
- 3 Example: in Table 7
 - A quantitative indicator refers to the percentage of women who have access to credit, in relation to men.
 - The related indicator question asks whether access to credit translates into control over it.
 - A further question could be developed about whether women's decision-making over credit affects gender relations in the household, consumption patterns in the family and women's status in the community.
 - These issues can then be translated into qualitative indicators, for example, that women felt more confident and valued in the household and/or community.
 - Make it clear that in real life these qualitative indicators would be developed in the context of discussion, but participants can draw on their own field experience to develop ideas. (15-20 mins)
- 4 Tell participants they are going to look at indicators of gender-related violence, some of which are presented in Table 9. Read out the quotation from Handout 2.4, or ask one of the participants to do so.

ACTIVITY 2.4

- 5 Ask the group to break into buzz groups of three to four people with those sitting near them. Ask them to develop more indicator questions, three qualitative indicators on the basis of those questions, and three more quantitative indicators for gender violence and violence against women. Ask them to write the questions and quantitative/qualitative indicators on three different coloured cards. Distribute the cards and copies of Table 9 and Handout 2.4 to each buzz group. (25 mins)
- 6 As they finish, ask participants to stick the cards on prepared flipcharts, which will remain on the walls for a 'gallery walk'. (5 mins)

Notes

- Prepare the OHPs and handouts by photocopying the tables suggested (they are short, and deal with key areas often inadequately dealt with in national data surveys and analysis). Or choose other tables. In a group from a particular ministry or department it would make sense to use a table relevant to them.
- Prepare three sheets of flipchart for the indicator questions, and the qualitative and quantitative indicators.
- Allow time for the gallery walk before closing the session.



Indicators and violence against women

HANDOUT

2.4

“Currently the only quantitative data that most governments collect on violence against women are reported crime statistics on rape, assault and various other sexual crimes. These have serious limitations and should be complemented with data from other sources. Questions related to intimate assault and rape can be added to population based surveys... or crime victimisation surveys... [E]xperience has shown that disclosure of violence is greatly influenced by the content of the questions, [and] the context of the questioning. Questions and questionnaires must be carefully planned and interviewers carefully selected and trained to ask direct questions about violence” (UN, 1995a 164).



Use this space to make notes