REPORT
SECOND REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON GENDER STATISTICS IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES
Amman, 8-11 November 1999

United Nations
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References have, wherever possible, been verified.
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I. THE WORKSHOP

A. OVERVIEW

1. The Second Regional Workshop on Gender Statistics in the Arab countries was hosted by the Department of Statistics of Jordan and opened by the Jordanian Minister of Planning. The Workshop was organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) as part of the regional project on the Development of National Gender Statistics Programmes in the Arab Countries, funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Development Research Center (IDRC) of Canada.

2. The regional project, which is aimed at strengthening national capacities in the production, use and dissemination of statistics related to gender issues, is presently being implemented in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen. All these countries and areas, with the exception of Algeria and Oman, are in the last stages of preparing national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait), either in draft or in published form.

3. The Second Regional Workshop was preceded by the first Regional Workshop on the Development of National Gender Statistics Programmes in the Arab Countries, which was held in Tunis from 9 to 14 June 1997. The first Regional Workshop was aimed primarily at familiarizing statisticians and users of statistics with the steps and requirements for developing a gender statistics programme; providing guidance on assessing data availability and quality; reviewing methods of compiling, analysing and presenting gender statistics for a wide audience; and preparing national work plans for the development of a gender statistics programme. The main objectives of the Second Regional Workshop were the following:

(a) To facilitate the exchange of national expertise regarding data compilation from available national sources and the identification of problems encountered in the preparation of the national databases on women and men;

(b) To facilitate the exchange of experiences among the countries participating in the project relating to the preparation of the national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait) and related outputs such as booklets, flyers, brochures and wall charts;

(c) To encourage discussion on methods of developing national gender statistics systems in order to create national mechanisms, in cooperation with users, for the production of reliable statistics that reflect priority gender issues at the national and regional levels;

(d) To provide a forum for proposing strategies for the improvement of national gender statistics in the respective countries, developed to address the deficiencies and gaps identified during the stage of data compilation;

(e) To agree on a regional programme of action aimed at strengthening regional cooperation in this area in order to improve gender statistics as an important tool for promoting change and ensuring equality between women and men.

B. PARTICIPATION

4. The participants of the Workshop were from the nine project countries and areas (see annex I). They represented statistics-producing institutions, including the national statistical offices of health and other sectoral ministries, and user institutions such as the planning departments, the national women’s machinery and research institutions. With the exception of Algeria, which had one representative, each country and area had at least two representatives. Jordan had five representatives, three of whom were from the national statistical office; Oman had three statisticians; and Tunisia had two representatives from the Ministry of Women and Family Affairs. Of the 21 national representatives, eight had participated in the first Regional Workshop.
5. Representatives from United Nations and other international organizations who participated in the Workshop were from the country offices of UNDP in Algeria, Jordan, Morocco and Yemen: the country office of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in Jordan; the Western Asia Regional Office of United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); the United Nations Statistics Division; the European Union (EU) and the Mediterranean Programme (MEDATEAM) in Belgium.

C. STRUCTURE OF THE WORKSHOP

6. The four-day Workshop was organized in both plenary and group sessions. At the plenary sessions, participants presented and discussed reports on the gender statistics production process, covering activities undertaken, problems encountered and output(s) produced in their respective countries. They reported the results in two working group sessions. In the first session, the working groups reviewed the national reports on the national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait) and made suggestions for the improvement of the reports. In the second session, the working groups discussed national plans for furthering the development of gender statistics at the country level. In the final plenary session, the main elements of the national plans and the needs expressed by the project countries were consolidated into (a) a prototype national strategy and (b) a regional strategy for regional cooperation in gender statistics (see annex II: organization of work).

7. The Workshop was conducted mainly in Arabic; English interpretation was provided for non-Arabic-speaking participants.

D. DOCUMENTATION AND OUTPUT

8. The documents provided to the Workshop participants included:

(a) Country papers reflecting national experiences in implementing the project activities and final reports of the first and second national workshops;

(b) National reports on the publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait) and related outputs such as booklets, flyers, brochures and wall charts;

(c) A draft of the Arabic version of the Handbook for Producing National Statistical Reports on Women and Men.

Annex III provides a complete list of documents distributed to the Workshop participants.

9. The main output of the Workshop is a set of strategies for improving gender statistics at the national and regional levels, presented in chapter IV of this report.

II. OPENING AND CLOSING SESSIONS

A. OPENING SESSION

10. The representative of ESCWA welcomed the participants to the Workshop and observed that the United Nations had, for more than two decades, called for the enactment of legislative instruments and a conceptual and socio-economic framework for safeguarding the role of women in development. There had been notable developments with respect to women’s rights and status in society. At the beginning of the twentieth century, women did not have the right to vote in many countries. However, women had not only secured the right to vote, but their participation had extended to different levels of authority at the national and global levels. December 1999 marked the twentieth anniversary of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and in June 2000 the fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action would be observed. He pointed out that, in spite of those apparent achievements, there was still a lot to be done. In practical terms, the goals of the international conferences had not yet been attained and the challenges, both old and new, were numerous. In statistical terms, although indicators reflected the serious efforts made by Arab countries in the realm of development, they also
showed that progress in some areas, including women’s participation in the public sphere was still in its infancy. For example, women comprised 25 per cent of the labour force in 1995, but their share in the legislative assemblies did not exceed 5 per cent. One of the major tasks to be carried out was the assessment of the effects of globalization, privatization and restructuring of the national economies on women.

11. The Director General of the Department of Statistics of Jordan said that the primary goal of gender statistics, in a broad sense, was to represent statistical facts on the status of women and the vital role they played in all aspects of the development of society. He explained that gender statistics were a means through which gaps were revealed and on the basis of which recommendations for policy formulation and programme reforms were made. Existing statistical databases showed that disparities persisted in basic areas, in particular economic life. In Jordan, for example, one in eight women aged 15 and above was economically active in comparison with two in three men of the same age group. Unemployment figures also presented striking disparities whereby women’s rate of unemployment, at 18 per cent, was almost double that of men. Similarly, the rates of illiteracy for women was more than double the men’s rate, at 18.8 and 7.5 per cent respectively. Moreover, women appeared to be virtually absent from the social and political spheres, and hardly visible in the executive, legislative and other high offices in civil organizations such as local councils, unions and political parties.

12. On the theme of the Workshop, the Director General stressed the importance of exchanging national experiences and encouraged the identification of common ground with respect to problems of data collection and the development of gender statistics databases. He concluded that the comprehensive upgrading of gender statistics at the national level would bring about a positive change and promote advancement and equality between women and men.

13. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning of Jordan, in her opening address, underscored the role of statistics in guiding and steering decision-making. She noted that statistics were used to judge accomplishments and assess efficiency in utilizing resources. In the present era, characterized not only by problems and socio-economic challenges, but also by determined efforts to achieve greater equality and equity in society, the need for accurate and disaggregated statistics could not be ignored. International conferences had, in recent years, called upon Governments to collect data and compile indicators that were relevant to both women and men.

14. The Minister affirmed that the Jordanian Government was giving the concept of “women’s empowerment” due attention. Based on its belief in the equality of rights and duties among all Jordanians, the Government had supported women’s participation in all aspects of society, including social, political and economic spheres. The Jordanian National Committee for Women was established in 1992, chaired by one of the princesses of the royal family, and had members from both the government and private sectors. Following extensive consultations and a review of studies that culminated in a major national conference in June 1992, a national strategy for upgrading and glorifying the role of Jordanian women had been adopted. Furthermore, consistent with the Government’s aim of integrating women into the mainstream in all sectors, the 1999-2000 socio-economic development plan recognized the women’s cause as pivotal for achieving sustained development and human rights.

15. The Deputy Prime Minister noted that the objectives of the Workshop, and in particular its expected output, a strategy for regional cooperation, would properly orient capabilities for deepening the roots of democracy in the Arab countries. She hoped that such capabilities would be used to accomplish that which was necessary for improving gender statistics for the development and welfare of the countries in the region.

B. CLOSING SESSION

16. At the closing of the Workshop, the Director General of the Department of Statistics of Jordan thanked ESCWA for choosing Jordan as the venue of the Workshop and expressed his willingness to maintain cooperation with ESCWA and other United Nations and Arab organizations. He also commended the participants of the Workshop on the endorsement of a set of national and regional strategies to guide the improvement of gender statistics in the Arab countries.
17. On behalf of the participants, the Palestinian representative thanked the Statistics Division of ESCWA, in particular the former Chief of the Division, for the determination and effort invested in developing gender statistics in the region. The direct technical support provided by ESCWA through workshops and advisory missions had been indispensable in advancing the work in this field.

18. The ESCWA representative and regional coordinator of the project on the Development of Gender Statistics Programmes in the Arab Countries thanked the participants for their active involvement in the Workshop, for preparing the national reports and for their contributions to the production of the national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait). He encouraged the participants to pursue their work with the dedication that they had demonstrated to date and to complete the project activities. He called on them to contribute to the execution of the national strategies, which he noted were certain to improve gender statistics and promote regional cooperation.

19. The ESCWA representative thanked the Department of Statistics of Jordan for hosting the Workshop and the Minister of Planning for her patronage. He expressed gratitude for the technical support provided by the representative of the United Nations Statistical Division, both in the preparation and the holding of the Workshop. He acknowledged with appreciation the financial support provided by the UNDP and IDRC (Canada) for the project, as well as the participation of United Nations agencies (including UNDP, UNICEF and UNIFEM) and the MEDATEAM in Belgium.

III. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES LEADING UP TO THE PREPARATION OF NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS AND RELATED OUTPUTS

20. The session began with an overview of the project and its objectives, presented by the representative of ESCWA. Representatives of the nine participating Arab countries and areas then reported on the activities leading to the drafting or production of the national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait). The issues addressed in the national publications included the legal status of women, the participation of women in political and public life, population, housing and human settlements, health and reproduction, education and training, and work and economy. The presentations included brief accounts of the main problems encountered during the data collection and production of the national publications.

21. The presentations showed that all of the participating countries and areas, with the exception of Algeria and Oman, which had only recently joined the project, had followed the action plan proposed by ESCWA to produce the publications. Each country and area had formed a steering committee and a national working group and had conducted two workshops for both producers and users of statistics in the 18-month period since the first Regional Workshop.

22. The main activities carried out by each country and area were as follows:

   (a) The formation of a steering committee, whose role was to ensure that the project received high-level support and cooperation from all concerned. The committee provided direction, advice and guidance to the working group in planning, coordinating and implementing the activities of the gender statistics project.

   (b) The establishment of a working group, whose responsibilities included the following:

      (i) Identifying the most urgent concerns regarding the situation of women relative to that of men;

      (ii) Identifying the statistics and indicators necessary to address those concerns and determining a priority set;

      (iii) Organizing workshops to facilitate the exchange of ideas on priority gender concerns and to promote interaction and awareness among producers and users of data on gender issues;
(iv) Producing a statistical publication that provided an overview of the situation of women relative to that of men in the country;

(v) Preparing and publishing a report on the weaknesses and deficiencies in existing data on gender issues and making recommendations on how the situation could be redressed.

23. In each country and area, the working group provided support to the steering committee and facilitated the process of developing a plan to improve the statistical system and to secure the necessary funding for its implementation.

24. Two national workshops for producers and users of gender statistics were organized in each of the seven project countries and areas following the ESCWA plan of activities. The main objectives of the first set of workshops included the following:

(a) To increase awareness of the social roles of men and women in society;
(b) To support the efforts of those active in promoting gender equality;
(c) To participate in the development of a national gender database;
(d) To foster interest on the part of policy makers in encouraging a dialogue between those working in the field of gender and development and the producers of statistical data;
(e) To evaluate gender statistics and emphasize the need for development within the national statistical system with a view to meeting the needs of users of data related to gender issues;
(f) To establish a list defining priority gender issues in society.

25. The second set of national workshops had the following objectives:

(a) To review and assess the draft national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait);
(b) To gather feedback from producers and users of gender statistics with regard to the format and content of the publication and possible ways of enhancing them;
(c) To evaluate the extent to which the publication succeeded in defining and addressing priority gender issues and identifying areas for policy intervention and formulation;
(d) To propose possible means of updating the ESCWA gender statistics database to make it more accessible to end-users.

B. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

26. The participants noted that the main problem encountered during the compilation of data and the preparation of the national publications was the lack of awareness, among both producers and users of statistics, of the concept and relevance of gender. Although much of the sex-disaggregated statistical data required for the report were available, most data remained scattered and therefore difficult to access. Some countries, such as Lebanon and Algeria, had special circumstances that limited the availability of data in general. There was a paucity of data on certain gender issues such as time use, violence, poverty and the informal sector. Another problem encountered was the deficiencies or weaknesses in the reporting of vital events and reproductive health activities, which made it difficult to obtain accurate information on those topics, particularly in Yemen.

27. In the discussions, participants noted the following:

(a) National capacities in collecting, compiling and disseminating gender statistics should be strengthened;
(b) Gender should be mainstreamed into the entire statistical process including administrative records, censuses and surveys;

(c) National statistical systems including civil registration and vital statistics system should be strengthened;

(d) New methodologies for studies and researches in this field should be developed;

(e) Gender indicators that reflect priority gender issues should be identified and the gaps measured and analysed to develop relevant policies;

(f) Data from all governmental departments as well as data on special target groups should be compiled;

(g) Concepts, definitions, methods and classifications should be developed for compiling data on violence against women.

C. REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

28. Reviews of the draft national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait) were conducted in group sessions. The participants were divided into seven groups, each reviewing one of the seven national publications. Each group comprised one representative from the country whose publication was being reviewed and others from at least two countries and international institutions.

29. The assignment of the groups was to assess particular aspects of their respective publications, including (a) the use of data (b) graphical presentation, and (c) layout and user-friendliness of the format. The following questions were to be addressed:

(a) Use of data: Are the data conclusive, consistent, relevant and sufficient? Are the data presented according to geographical distribution? Are tables gender-sensitive, and are data on women and men presented side by side? Do the data show the gender gap?

(b) Graphical presentation: Is there sufficient use of charts/graphs? Are they appropriate and effective for illustrating the indicator and identifying the gender gaps? Do the charts/graphs give a clear picture of what is being represented or clearly reflect the analysis? Are there boxes highlighting the main messages, citing international conventions or national programmes of action?

(c) Layout and user-friendliness: Are the charts simple, clear and easy to understand, or are they cluttered and confusing? Are the titles given, axes of charts labelled, and lines of tables appropriate? Is there an overuse of grids, ticks, frames and patterns? Are numbers rounded off to tens, hundreds or thousands, and are percentages rounded to integers? Are the sources complete?

1. National publications

(a) Egypt

30. The publication entitled Women and Men in Egypt: Statistical Portrait included a number of chapters. This designation of parts was not considered appropriate for such a publication, given its size and length; it was felt that it should be divided into sections rather than chapters. The comments made regarding the improvement of the publication included the following:

(a) Full references for sources of data or information, including specific dates, should be cited. The group noted that some data on page four of the publication were attributed to the recent cabinet reshuffle, but the date of that reshuffle had not been specified. Cross references in the text using “as mentioned before”, were potentially confusing and, therefore, need to be carefully reviewed; for example, on page 22, reference was made to the information in the summary section, but the relevant information was placed in a box.
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(b) The titles “the population within the Republic” should be changed to “the population residing in Egypt”;

(c) A list of definitions of terms such as dependency ratio for men and women, parity indicators, and size of the family should be presented in an annex;

(d) Tables should be placed close to the text in which they are analysed;

(e) The size of tables should be scaled according to the amount of information being presented. An optimum amount of space should be left between columns and rows, as required, to make tables more compact;

(f) The line graphs should be reviewed to ensure that the scales for horizontal axes are proportional to those for vertical axes and the implied span of time is presented correctly and precisely throughout the graph.

31. In the publication no data were available on a number of areas of concern including professions (such as physicians, police officers, lawyers and engineers); crimes (especially crimes committed against women); certain diseases (such as anaemia and cancer); households headed by women or men (classified by the availability of public utilities, such as sewerage system, safe drinking water and electricity); central heating and type of residence; and house rents.

(c) Lebanon

32. Comments on the draft publication on *Women and Men in Jordan: Statistical Portrait* included the following:

(a) Concepts and definitions should be presented at the beginning of each chapter;

(b) The use of terms such as males/females and men/women should be consistent throughout the report;

(c) The topics presented should be consistent and their relation to other, related variables and indicators should be analysed;

(d) Tables should reflect a gender perspective (such as gender gap);

(e) Sources and references should be included for all tables;

(f) The use of absolute numbers should be minimized.

(c) Lebanon

32. The publication entitled *Women and Men in Lebanon: Statistical Portrait* covered most of the sectors and provided a sufficient statistical basis for all the suggested topics except poverty and the informal sector. Although the topics covered were consistent with the situation in Lebanon, ad hoc topics dealing with the repercussions of war in the country could be accommodated as well. On the presentation of statistics, the tables showed gender-specific distributions and provided differentials between women and men to highlight the existing gaps.

33. The distribution in some tables was at the governorate level and in others at the country level. Owing to the small size of the sample, a further breakdown to cover smaller administrative divisions was not possible, and due to the difficulty of applying the gender concept in Lebanon urban-rural breakdown was not included. A map of the country showing the administrative divisions should be included in the report to clarify the names and locations of the perspective areas. A special section should be introduced to explain concepts and terminology used in the publication. Some remarks and highlights should be presented in the margins of some of the paragraphs (using the publication of Tunisia as an example).
34. There were enough graphs to indicate the disparity between men and women. A few of them, however, needed to be redesigned in order to reveal differentials between the two genders, such as chart Nos. 6-5 and 4-5. The population pyramid needed some amendment as well.

35. The captions used for the tables and graphs were concise, clear and easy to understand, and the sources were clearly mentioned in a special section and at the end of each table or graph. There was, however, a need to improve upon the presentation of data in the tables with respect to the alignment of data in columns.

(d) Palestine

36. The publication *Women and Men in Palestine: Statistical Portrait* was considered distinctive, covering certain topics that were not included in the other national publications. In addition to the standard topics covered by all countries, it dealt with incidents induced by the *Intifada* (the Palestinian uprising), the physically disabled, and involvement in political movements or parties -- topics that were pertinent to the history and prevailing situation of the area. However, the publication overlooked topics such as housing, human settlement and the environment; migration; public utilities; training; and poverty, as they related to gender.

37. Additional comments on the content of the publication emphasized the need to reassess surveys relevant to the specified topics and to provide more comprehensive analysis of issues related to reproductive health. The need for consistency in the use of terminology (avoiding the use of two different terms to indicate the same phenomenon, the use of both male/female or man/woman in different parts of the document and the excessive use of pronouns in place of proper nouns) was also mentioned.

38. The distributions in some tables were given in absolute numbers rather than in proportions or percentages; some of the analyses were too elaborate. The analytical interpretation of the data and the main conclusions should be concise to avoid repetition.

(e) Syrian Arab Republic

39. The publication *Women and Men in the Syrian Arab Republic: Statistical Portrait* covered all the chapters proposed by ESCWA in addition to a chapter that reviewed the legislation regarding women. The publication included table of contents, tables and charts. A summary of the publication was included at the end, and all sources and references were provided. Some of the positive aspects of the publication were as follows:

   (a) Sufficient data showing trends and a statistical description of each topic were incorporated;
   (b) Concepts and definitions were presented in the text as needed.

40. Some topics, such as violence and poverty, were not covered, however. The format of the present publication resembled a general reference document. Further work was needed to bring out the major gender issues. The data gaps and difficulties encountered were presented in a separate report, in which a strategy to improve the status of gender statistics in the country was proposed; some of these data gaps should be discussed in the publication.

41. To improve the readability of the charts in the publication, the following suggestions were made:

   (a) Two-dimensional charts should be used instead of three-dimensional charts, which were difficult to read;
   (b) Charts should be clear, simple and complete and should not attempt to present all the information in the tables; they should emphasize a specific message;
   (c) The scale of the horizontal axes in line charts should be proportional, otherwise, bar charts should be used and the font selected to present numbers should be consistent throughout the document;
(d) Absolute numbers are difficult to compare and should therefore be converted to proportions or ratios.

(f) **Tunisia**

42. The scope of the statistical database used for the publication *Women and Men in Tunisia: Statistical Portrait* was considered sufficiently and comprehensive for the needs of users. New topics such as culture, sports, media and unions were introduced, and basic terms were defined. However, there was a need for consistency in the use of terms; the terms male and female were used as nouns in some cases and as adjectives in others (for female pupil and male pupil, for example).

43. The publication was gender-sensitive and clearly revealed gender disparities in various fields. The figures used in the tables were correctly rounded off. Although a sufficient number of graphs was provided in the publication, a clear message highlighting gender gaps and disparities was not given and sources of information were not always indicated.

44. Additional topics and issues suggested for consideration included the following:

   (a) Analysing the relative responsibilities of women and men in domains such as media, culture and associations;

   (b) Probing further into the underlying causes of domestic violence in all its forms, as well as into differences among specific groups;

   (c) Investigating the underlying causes of divorce and women’s post-marital sustainable education.

45. Some of the issues requiring further data collection included sex distribution in cases of divorce (the number of women and men filing for divorce); the distribution of women and men in jails; characteristics of decision makers at the family level, taking into consideration the number of children and sex distribution; post-marital employment among women; and time use, giving due consideration to woman’s unpaid domestic chores, and with particular reference to time spent inside and outside the home in comparison with corresponding figures on working men.

(g) **Yemen**

46. The overall format of the publication *Women and Men in Yemen: Statistical Portrait* was impressive, especially the cover page. The format used in the first chapter was unique, and each subject was supported with the ad hoc laws. The analyses were greatly enhanced by the presentation of the main highlights in boxes. A special summary on the rounding off of figures was provided. Features such as indexes and graphic diagrams at the beginning of each chapter were used effectively to enhance the publication. However, the topic in general lacked focus, and a number of important issues were not covered including the role of women in mass media, the diplomatic corps, culture and the informal sector; gender aspects of youth and sports and unpaid employment for women within the family.

47. Some improvements were needed in specifying titles writing out the source of data in full instead of using the notation “as in previous source” and explaining of symbols such as the hyphen (-) and dots (…) used in the publication. The analyses and inferences presented as boxed text should be simple and concise, and in a font different from that used in the main text. The terms “women” and “men” should be maintained consistently throughout the document; references to females/males were used in some chapters and women and men in others.

48. Other recommendations to improve the publication included the following:

   (a) One or two pages highlighting the major points of the publication should be added for the benefit of policy makers and planners;
(b) Definitions of terms should be provided either at the beginning or at the end of the report or even below the table in which the terms appear;

(c) A map for each State should be displayed at the beginning of the publication;

(d) A descriptive analysis should be presented for drawing conclusions with respect to gender issues, gaps and disparities;

(e) Definitions of certain statistical concepts used in the publication should be clarified.

2. General recommendations

49. In addition to specific comments made on each of the national publications produced by the project countries and areas, general recommendations included the following:

(a) All national publications should be produced in attractive formats to engage the interest and attention of the reader;

(b) All national publications should standardize the inclusion or non-inclusion of a section on the methodology of the work;

(c) The use of gender terms such as males and females, men and women, and sex or gender should be consistent throughout each publication;

(d) Concepts and definitions should be presented in the publication. Views about where those explanations should be placed varied. Some suggested placing them at the beginning of each chapter and others at the beginning or the end of the publication;

(e) Tables should be presented to highlight gender-specific distributions and differentials between women and men in order to bring out the existing gaps;

(f) Some remarks and definitions should be presented in the margins of relevant paragraphs throughout the publication (as was done in the publication of Tunisia).

50. Considerable effort has been exerted in the preparation of the national publications. To maximize the value of those efforts, representatives should strive to upgrade the standard and formats of the publications. Since funds allocated for the preparation of the publications were insufficient, requests should be made for the reasonable allocations from the State budget. Such allotments could be used for the publication but could also provide more generally funds in the various fields of work for the advancement of the status of women. Areas to be supported should include the production of gender statistics on specific topics; the carrying out of special surveys, ensuring analysis, quality and training; and the establishment of a gender unit to address poverty-related matters and other gender issues. The need to identify and define mechanisms to provide data on topics such as violence and poverty was also reiterated.

D. INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN THE AREA OF GENDER STATISTICS

51. The representative of the United Nations Statistics Division updated participants on the activities being undertaken to improve gender statistics worldwide. She informed the participants that the main objectives of the international work on gender statistics had been defined on the basis of a view of gaps and deficiencies in national and international statistical systems. The general assessment had been that despite major achievements in the development of gender statistics since the 1985 World Conference on Women, held in Nairobi, progress had been very slow. Many countries did not yet have a gender statistics programme, and

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national statistical publications were still largely addressed to a limited audience of technical users. Gaps existed in the coverage of women’s economic participation in national data collection exercises, and international standards were non-existent for concepts and methods related to some particular gender concerns such as violence against women, poverty and unpaid work.

52. The United Nations Statistics Division was collaborating with others in the United Nations system to address problems related to the production and dissemination of gender-related statistics. Issues of particular concern included the under utilization of existing data; data gaps; biased or inadequate concepts, methods and classifications; and poor linkages between producers and users of gender-specific statistics.

53. With regard to improving the utilization of existing data, the United Nations Statistics Division had sought to make data more accessible to users by:

(a) Updating its database on gender statistics; with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the fourth revision of the Women’s Indicator and Statistics (Wistat) Database would soon be released on compact disc;

(b) Disseminating statistics and indicators on selected gender issues on the web site of the United Nations Statistics Division;

(c) Preparing, the third edition of The World’s Women for publication in June 2000 for the special section of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century” in collaboration with the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women and with inter-agency and intergovernmental support.

54. The Division was also cooperating with United Nations regional commissions, such as ESCWA for the Arab region, with the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM) for the Caribbean region, and with the other organizations and countries to develop gender statistics programmes. In addressing specific areas in which data gaps existed, the United Nations Statistics Division was cooperating with UNDP and IDRC (Canada), on a project on gender issues in paid and unpaid work. The project comprised three main components:

(a) Developing time-use statistics;

(b) Improving the measurement of paid and unpaid work in labour force statistics;

(c) Compiling statistics on specific groups of workers, including informal sector workers, home-based workers and street vendors.

55. The project also sought to improve concepts and methods of classification related to the place of work (with particular reference to home-based workers and street vendors) and time-use statistics.

56. In cooperation with the International Labour Office, the Division was preparing a handbook on the collection of data on economic characteristics in population censuses, to be published next year. For better communication and linkages between producers and users of gender statistics, the Division was promoting producer-user workshops, and was working with expert groups of both producers and users in the development of gender statistics publications, the database and related technical materials.

E. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING GENDER STATISTICS

57. The participants were divided into three groups including representatives from the following: (a) Algeria, Jordan and Tunisia; (b) Egypt, Oman and the Syrian Arab Republic; and (c) Lebanon, Palestine and Yemen. The groups discussed the individual national plans. Then, the representatives of each country worked on their own to adjust and summarize the proposed strategies for their respective countries and areas.
58. To provide the necessary orientation and encourage the sharing of experiences, the group discussions revolved around the following questions:

(a) What are “gender statistics” and what are their uses?

(b) What are the activities that can be carried out to achieve the desired goal of equal opportunities for women and men?

(c) What are the institutional arrangements to be made? For example: (i) Should a gender statistical unit be established in the department of statistics or in the ministry of planning? Or, as in Lebanon and Tunisia, should a gender focal point be designated in each ministry? (ii) Who should review the status/role of the steering committee and the working group?

(d) What is the most appropriate mechanism for ensuring cooperation between the producers and users of statistics?

59. It was noted that the countries and areas participating in the project can be classified into three groups according to the stage of execution of project activities.

(a) Algeria and Oman were recent entrants to the project and were at the preparatory stage of preparing their national publication. Each planned to form a steering committee, convene a national working group, and conduct initial sensitization and training workshops;

(b) Egypt, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia, had prepared drafts of their respective national publications, which had been reviewed during the national training workshops and were expected to be finalized shortly based on the comments of both the national workshops and the Second Regional Workshop;

(c) Jordan, Palestine and Yemen, had published their national reports. Their immediate concern included disseminating the publication and raising support for the further development of gender statistics, which would involve identifying concepts and methods for data collection that would allow data gaps and problems to be more effectively addressed.

60. The elements of the national plans for completing the project and the national strategies for improving gender statistics presented and discussed in the Workshop are in annex IV. A synthesis of those inputs was prepared as one of the main outputs of the Workshop (see section IV of the present report).

61. Several features of a national gender statistics programme were identified by participants in the ensuing discussions; emphasis was placed on the need to develop well-defined strategies for the dissemination of the publication. One suggested strategy was to translate the national publications from Arabic into other languages to publicize the efforts and achievements of the project and to raise the required support from the international community. Such a strategy should address the question of how to reach donors, policy makers and the general public. To that end other outputs, such as pamphlets on specific topics covered in the publications (similar to those produced in connection with the Palestinian publication) could have a wider outreach. Another suggested dissemination strategy was to identify an exhaustive set of target groups, including students (at an early stage) and professional associations, to be sensitized to gender issues and concerns. As for training, a strategy was needed to introduce gender statistics and gender issues in general into school curricula.

62. Some activities proposed in the plans of the participating countries and areas included the following:

(a) Promoting the formulation and adoption of legislation that would require the institutions and bodies to ensure equality between women and men;

(b) Activating the role of the existing national statistical advisory committee as liaison between departments to support other activities related to gender statistics;
(c) Producing educational and promotional materials and incorporating the gender issue in educational curricula at all levels;

(d) Encouraging the national working group to produce various types of publications and other outputs, including reports and media programmes that provide an in-depth examination of education, health, work and other gender related issues;

(e) Conducting a time-use survey to identify the contribution of women in the informal sector and women’s unrecognized activities;

(f) Working towards improving concepts and methods for dealing with gender issues such as violence in general and, more specifically, violence in the domestic sphere;

(g) Encouraging and developing cooperation with international organizations, especially ESCWA and UNICEF, in the area of gender statistics.

IV. MAIN OUTPUTS OF THE WORKSHOP

A. NATIONAL GENDER STATISTICS PROGRAMMES

The participants agreed to focus on the following main outputs in connection with the national statistics programmes:

(a) Publicizing and raising support for gender statistics programmes:

   (i) Finalizing and issuing the national publication (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait);

   (ii) Producing supporting materials (such as brochures, pamphlets, fact-sheets, and wall charts) for wide dissemination among target groups including students, planners, economists and professional associations;

   (iii) Producing additional publications that address specific topics related to gender statistics;

   (iv) Organizing a media briefing and dissemination seminars to present the main findings of the national report;

   (v) Developing project proposals for fund-raising based on the national plan of action for the development of gender statistics;

   (vi) Establish a web site on gender statistics;

(b) Improving the use of existing statistics in the following areas:

   (i) Training and sensitization:

      a. Sensitizing producers and users at different levels (including heads of organizations, senior staff members and programme officers) to gender issues, promoting user-producer cooperation;

      b. Training users (including, planners, economists, professional associations and students) in the use of gender statistics;

      c. Training producers in the production and dissemination of gender statistics.

   (ii) User-producer cooperation:

      a. Finding out from users what their needs are and in which form they require statistics;
b. Informing users of problems related to the production of gender statistics;

c. Developing a network of producers and users of gender statistics, for the exchange of ideas and experiences and the pooling of resources to avoid duplication;

(iii) Tabulation and analysis:

a. Disaggregating all statistics relating to individuals by gender;

b. Ensuring that all analyses are conducted from a gender perspective, showing the gender gap;

c. Determining and incorporating additional gender issues and relevant statistics and indicators that have not been addressed in previous publications or reports;

d. Drawing gender-relevant conclusions and policy implications from the analyses;

(iv) Presentation:

a. Presenting existing statistics in a more user-friendly way;

b. Reviewing reports on censuses and surveys to ensure that the tables, graphs and analyses are prepared from a gender perspective;

c. Incorporating gender statistics into regular publications;

d. Ensuring the regular production (every three to five years) of a gender statistics publication suitable for a wide range of non-technical users;

(v) Dissemination:

a. Identifying different users of gender statistics (including planners, economists, researchers and students);

b. Informing users about available gender statistics and forthcoming statistical products;

c. Determining ways of disseminating those statistics, such as the use of mass-media communication tools, press briefings, seminars and workshops;

d. Maintaining an inventory of data sources and available data sets, indicating whether the variables are disaggregated by gender;

e. Making raw data available for research purposes according to prevailing concepts, maintaining the anonymity of respondents.

(c) Standardizing and improving concepts and definitions:

(i) Reviewing existing concepts and definitions (of for example economic activity and the informal sector) to identify conceptual problems related to gender issues;

(ii) Updating definitions in the light of revised international standards and national requirements;

(iii) Modifying definitions in consultation with users and experts in specific statistical fields;

(iv) Updating manuals to reflect modifications;

(v) Promoting the use of standardized definitions in national data collection;

(vi) Training producers and users to apply the different concepts and their definitions.
(d) Improving measurements:

(i) Updating the content and design of data collection instruments:

   a. Reviewing the coverage and quality of existing data;

   b. Reviewing existing questionnaires to identify problems related to the application of relevant concepts and definitions;

   c. Involving producers and key users, in particular gender experts, in designing questionnaires;

   d. Reviewing administrative forms and questionnaires with concerned authorities and making any revision necessary to capture the realities implied in the concepts and definitions and to reflect gender issues;

   e. Adapting standardized questionnaires to national situations and testing them through pilot studies.

(ii) Training staff in data collection and processing:

   a. Informing enumerators and processing staff about the objectives of data collection and the concepts and definitions to be captured through the questionnaires.

   b. Training enumerators to collect data on sensitive issues and to avoid prejudice and cultural biases;

   c. Training the processing staff to enable them to generate gender-specific outputs and to make the analyses reflect a gender perspective;

   d. Sensitizing trainers and field supervisors to gender issues and means of improving measurement-related problems;

   e. Organizing interdepartmental seminars to discuss means of improving administrative records and data compilation;

(iii) Conducting a publicity campaign for data collection activities:

   a. Briefing users and other producers on the main findings of the data collection exercises;

   b. Informing the public about the forthcoming statistical activities through media, local meetings and posters;

(iv) Collecting new data:

   a. Identifying new sources of data;

   b. Convening a user-producer group to identify data used (the new data required) with regard to emerging priorities in gender issues;

   c. Include new questions in the existing questionnaires or design new questionnaires to capture data on gender concerns.

(e) Making institutional arrangements:

   (i) Establishing a gender statistics unit with full-time staff within the national statistical office;

   (ii) Establishing statistical units or improving the existing statistical units to enable them to play a more effective role;
(iii) Designating focal points on gender statistics in each statistical unit within and outside the national statistical office, in the various sectors, to ensure coordination of gender statistics production;

(iv) Forming a gender advisory committee at the national level comprising producers and users of statistics at relatively high decision making levels;

(v) Maintaining close cooperation between producers and users of statistics through ad hoc meetings, seminars and training workshops on gender statistics;

(vi) Revising the national statistical systems to enhance the collection of gender statistics.

B. STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION

Regional cooperation strategies included the following:

(a) Maintaining the coordinating role played by ESCWA, in cooperation with various regional and international agencies, in the development of gender statistics in the Arab region in order, particular attention should be given to the following:

(i) Facilitating networking and the exchange of information and experiences among participating countries;

(ii) Providing technical advisory services for the implementation of national strategies;

(iii) Disseminate regional comparative gender statistics;

(b) Organizing producer-user training workshops at the regional and subregional levels to review progress and best practices in national gender statistics programmes;

(c) Developing and implementing a curriculum for the training of trainers in gender statistics;

(d) Distributing training materials and other publications on gender statistics;

(e) Arranging study or training tours, or exchange programmes for national officers to learn from their counterparts in the region;

(f) Undertaking a comprehensive review of the concepts, definitions and methods used in the collection of data on areas such as economic activity, unpaid work, and the informal sector;

(g) Designing standardized questionnaires for data collection as a model basis for national use;

(h) Convening various expert group meetings to develop methods of measuring time use, poverty, violence and other issues with a gender component;

(i) Reviewing and updating the regional database on gender statistics in line with users’ needs and priority gender classification for the region;

(j) Publishing a regional gender statistics publication on a regular basis (every three to five years, addressing specific development themes);

(k) Establishing a web site on gender statistics.
Annex II

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Monday, 8 November 1999

8.30–9.30 a.m. Registration
9.30–10 a.m. Opening ceremony
10–10.30 a.m. Break
10.30–11.10 a.m. Introduction and orientation: presentation of the programme, information on the Workshop, and introduction of participants and resource persons
11.10 a.m.–1 p.m. Plenary: presentation of national reports, part A:
   (a) Presentations on national activities, covering the period from the formation of national steering committees and working groups to the preparation of national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait) and related outputs such as booklets, flyers, brochures and wall charts
   (b) Identification of problems encountered during the compilation of data from available national sources and in the preparation of the national databases on women and men (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen).
1–1.30 p.m. Break
1.30–2.30 p.m. General discussion

Tuesday, 9 November 1999

9–9.30 a.m. Plenary: organization of working groups
9.30–11 a.m. Working group discussions, part A: review and assessment of the national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait)
11–11.30 a.m. Break
11.30 a.m.–1 p.m. Working group discussions (continued)
1–2.30 p.m. Plenary: presentation of group work (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, and Yemen)
2.30–3 p.m. Break
3–3.45 p.m. General discussion
3.45–4.15 p.m. Presentation on international experience in the area of gender statistics
**Wednesday, 10 November 1999**

8.45–9.15 a.m. Plenary: presentation and organization of group work

9.15–10.45 a.m. Working group discussions part B: national strategies for improving national gender statistics, developed to address the deficiencies and gaps identified during the data compilation stage

10.45–11.15 a.m. Break

11.15 a.m.–noon Working group discussions, part B (*continued*)

Noon–1.30 p.m. Plenary: presentation of national reports, part B: (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen)

1.30–1.45 p.m. Break

1.45–2.45 p.m. General discussion

**Thursday, 11 November 1999**

9.45–11.15 a.m. Adoption of the strategies for improving on gender statistics in the Arab countries

11.15–11.45 a.m. Closing
Annex III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

A. ESCWA DOCUMENTS

Information note
Provisional organization of work
Outline for group discussions on the national publications (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait)
National report of Palestine (in Arabic)
National report of Yemen (in Arabic)
National report of Lebanon (in Arabic)
National report of Jordan (in Arabic)
National report of Oman (in Arabic)
National report of Syria (in Arabic)

B. DOCUMENTS PREPARED IN COOPERATION WITH ESCWA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS


C. ARABIC PUBLICATIONS

E/ESCWA/STAT/1999/WG.4/L.2
E/ESCWA/STAT/1999/WG.4/3
E/ESCWA/STAT/1999/WG.4/CP.1
E/ESCWA/STAT/1999/WG.4/CP.2
E/ESCWA/STAT/1999/WG.4/CP.3
E/ESCWA/STAT/1999/WG.4/CP.4
E/ESCWA/STAT/1999/WG.4/CP.5
E/ESCWA/STAT/1999/WG.4/CP.6
Annex IV

NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING GENDER STATISTICS

A. GROUP ONE: COUNTRIES AT THE INITIAL STAGE OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

1. Algeria

There is a significant lack of information on gender issues in Algeria; several of activities for improving gender statistics in the country are to be conducted. A high-level national committee was established to supervise those activities. The committee’s main responsibilities include the following:

(a) Executing the regional project on the Development of National Gender Statistics Programmes in the Arab countries;

(b) Training staff on project format and information dissemination strategies;

(c) Forming a national working group;

(d) Conducting a second national workshop;

(e) Producing a national publication (Women and men in Algeria: Statistical Portrait);

(f) Updating the data and analyzing differences and gaps;

(g) Communicating and working with United Nations bodies to conduct other surveys;

(h) Continuation of the establishment of the database;

(i) Encouraging the formulation and adoption of legislation that would require the institutions and bodies to ensure equality between women and men.

2. Oman

In Oman, the main components of the national strategy for improving gender statistics include the following:

(a) Improving the use of existing statistics:

   (i) Training users and sensitizing them to issues related to women and men:

      a. Conducting national workshops and study group meetings on advanced statistical techniques, especially as they relate to gender statistics, and ensuring a wide representation of producers and users at different levels, including statisticians, planners and decision makers;

      b. Facilitating international training for social statisticians in the area of gender statistics;

      c. Supporting the participation of women in sustainable social development;

   (ii) Analysing data obtained through surveys, studies and censuses conducted in Oman to show the gender gaps and weaknesses in society and the different roles women and men play in sustainable development;

   (iii) Presenting data in statistical reports in order to show the social roles of women and men.
(b) Improving the organizational structure:

(i) Strengthening contacts and cooperation between representatives from the Government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to facilitate work on gender statistics issues;

(ii) Establishing a gender statistics unit in the Department of Social Statistics at the Ministry of National Economy;

(iii) Activating the role of the existing national statistical advisory committee as liaison between departments to support other activities related to gender statistics;

(iv) Encouraging different parties to develop a mechanism to improve coordination between users and producers of gender statistics;

(c) Documenting and exchanging data:

(i) Developing a national database on gender statistics, ensuring that users have easy access to the information and creating a mechanism to update and disseminate the data;

(ii) Producing the national publication (Women and Men in Oman: Statistical Portrait);

(iii) Producing educational and promotional materials and including gender issues in the educational curricula at all levels;

(iv) Encouraging and developing cooperation with international organizations, especially ESCWA and UNICEF, in the area of gender statistics;

(v) Producing a regular newsletter on social development and statistics, to be disseminated within the private and public sectors and among non-governmental organizations.

B. GROUP TWO: COUNTRIES AT THE STAGE OF REVISING AND FINALIZING THE DRAFT PUBLICATIONS

1. Egypt

Proposed activities include the following:

(a) Producing a regular publication (Women and men in Egypt: Statistical Portrait);

(b) Conducting seminars for users and producers of gender statistics to review the concepts and definitions used in measuring the work of women and its contribution to development projects;

(c) Conducting a specialized survey to measure contributions of women and men to sustainable human development;

(d) Conducting a time-use survey to identify the contributions of women in the informal sector and the women’s unrecognized activities;

(e) Developing a database on gender statistics;

(f) Establishing a gender statistics unit at the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics and similar units within concerned ministries;
(g) Ensuring the continuity in the collection, classification, dissemination and use of gender statistics in all statistical tasks;

(h) Conducting training workshops on gender statistics;

2. Lebanon

Relevant activities are to be undertaken are as follows:

(a) At the government level:

   (i) Identifying specific issues and problems related to women in Lebanon;
   (ii) Proposing surveys and studies to be conducted;
   (iii) Preparing technical materials for surveys and studies;
   (iv) Conducting field surveys and entering data on the computer;
   (v) Compiling existing regular statistical data;
   (vi) Analyzing and disseminating data reflecting a gender perspective;
   (vii) Qualitatively analyzing statistical data in the light of specified issues and problems;

(b) At the institutional level:

   (i) Improving the structure and organization of the Department of Statistics and establishing statistical units in all ministries, with a branch unit to deals with gender statistics;
   (ii) Enhancing the role of the National Commission on Population which includes representatives from most ministries as well as specialists and experts on population studies;
   (iii) Enhancing the role of the High-level Steering Committee on Gender Statistics expanding membership possibilities and increasing its and its responsibilities.

(c) At the public and media levels:

   (i) Providing training and raising awareness about gender issues and problems and about the important role of gender statistics;
   (ii) Producing qualitative and quantitative (statistical) analysis in the form of publications, reports, and media programmes social, educational, health, economic and other issues related to gender.

3. Syrian Arab Republic

The following activities are proposed:

(a) Updating concepts and definitions used in data collection, especially those related to women’s participation in economic activities;

(b) Modifying the content of the questionnaires used in regular data collection to reflect gender issues;

(c) Introducing the gender perspective in the design of the questionnaire used in field surveys and disaggregating data by sex;

(d) Promoting cooperation and organizing regular meetings between producers and users of statistics in order to identify their goals, the nature of their needs, and statistics required to analyze gender issues;
(e) Establishing a gender statistics unit within one of the relevant departments at the Central Statistical Bureau;

(f) Conducting training workshops for those working in institutions producing and using statistics in order to introduce concepts and definitions related to gender statistics;

(g) Conducting specialized surveys on time use, women’s unpaid work and women in the informal sector;

(h) Developing and maintaining a database on gender statistics and disseminating data among users on a continuous basis;

(i) Continuing to conduct analytical studies to reflect the success achieved in the empowerment of women;

(j) Institutionalizing the work of the Supervisory and Coordination Committee and the national working group in the area of developing, improving and updating gender statistics;

(k) Focusing media, education and communication programmes on the awareness of the targeted categories (students, youth, women and men) about gender issues;

(l) Adopting a definition for the concept of violence against women in general and within the context of the household in particular;

(m) Facilitating the exchanging of data, publications and experiences between parties concerned with gender statistics.

4. Tunisia

The main activities envisaged are as follows:

(a) Ensuring the continuity in the production and modification of gender statistics by:

   (i) Sensitizing users and producers to the concept of gender;
   (ii) Incorporating the concept of gender in all national activities;
   (iii) Instituting a joint technical monitoring mechanism;

(b) Developing and improving the database on gender statistics:

   (i) Disseminating gender statistics among all sectors;
   (ii) Improving national and sectoral indicators to reflect gender issues and promote the achievement of equality.

Activities envisaged for the period 2000-2003 as follow:

(a) Developing the database on gender statistics and making it available to users who are in decision-and policy-making positions;

(b) Activating a network of bodies concerned with gender issues, specifically governmental and non-governmental organizations;

(c) Translating the national publication (Women and Men in Tunisia: Statistical Portrait) into French;

(d) Preparing a manual on the production of gender statistics and related technologies;
(e) Conducting training workshops for producers and users of gender statistics in concerned ministries and departments in Tunisia, targeting 25-30 participants in each case;

(f) Organizing meetings between users of statistical data and the National Institute for Statistics to encourage discussions about the concepts and definitions used in data collection in order to improve and develop the tools used to measure the participation of women and men in the development process;

(g) Producing regular publications on the concepts of gender, showing the changing roles of women and men in Tunisia;

(h) Establishing a web site on the Internet for the Ministry of Women and Family Affairs in order to disseminate information on all the national activities related to women in general and to gender issues in particular;

(i) Reviewing administrative forms and collecting available statistics;

(j) Conducting the third and fourth national workshops for users and producers to evaluate the project;

(k) Conducting quantitative and qualitative surveys and studies to provide data on gender issues that have not been addressed, such as violence and the informal sector;

(l) Issuing publications on women and men in Tunisia focusing on particular themes:

   (i) Women and men in the economy;
   (ii) Women and men: health indicators;
   (iii) Women and men in decision-making positions;
   (iv) Women and men and the use of time.

A. GROUP THREE: COUNTRIES/AREAS THAT HAVE COMPLETED THEIR NATIONAL PUBLICATION

B. (WOMEN AND MEN: STATISTICAL PORTRAIT)

1. Jordan

The main activities envisaged are as follows:

(a) Promoting cooperation between parties concerned with gender issues in developing and analysing indicators;

(b) Establishing the concept of gender as part of the issue of comprehensive development:

   (i) Organizing a media campaign for the public;
   (ii) Organizing workshops and conferences to promote gender issues;

(b) Providing the needed gender statistics:

   (i) Identifying the bodies involved in compiling gender-related data;
   (ii) Ensuring the regular collection and compilation of gender data;

(c) Improving the use of existing gender statistics:

   (i) Updating definitions in accordance with international and classification standards;
   (ii) Training staff on definition in measurement;

(d) Providing additional support:
(i) Establishing a steering committee to coordinate the tasks of the working groups;
(ii) Conducting surveys to rectify deficiencies in the available data.

2. Palestine

The main activities envisaged include the following:

(a) Improving the use of available statistics:

   (i) Disseminating and publicizing gender-disaggregated statistics;
   (ii) Producing analytical brochures based on the (ownership and access to resources) survey carried out by the Central Bureau of Statistics in August 1999;
   (iii) Conducting analytical studies on women’s participation in the informal sector;
   (iv) Conducting a study on female-headed households;
   (v) Analyzing and disseminating the data on time use;
   (vi) Providing national and international organizations with data on the status of women and men in Palestine.

(b) Training and raising awareness on issues related to women and men:

   (i) Conducting training workshops for ministries and civil society institutions, and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics;
   (ii) Conducting training workshops for the Central Bureau of Statistics staff in the area of data production;

(c) Enhancing user-producer cooperation:

   (i) Promoting continuous contact;
   (ii) Organizing workshops to identify and prioritize needs;

(d) Improving statistical concepts and definitions after reviewing those currently used in surveys and censuses, based on international recommendations;

(e) Improving measurements:

   (i) Reviewing existing questionnaires;
   (ii) Training field researchers or enumerators;
   (iii) Presenting data in regular statistical reports.

3. Yemen

The main activities include the following:

(a) Improving and developing the production and use of statistics:

   (i) Raising awareness among producers and users and training them in the production of gender statistics;
   (ii) Creating and maintaining a continuous dialogue between users and producers;
(iii) Improving and developing the dummy tables used during the project in accordance with the
country’s changing needs in policy and programme formulation;

(iv) Producing a regular national publication on women and men updating it every five years;

(v) Coordinating with government organizations specializing in women’s affairs to establish
specialized units for dealing with gender issues and connecting the working mechanism in
those units with the gender unit in the Central Statistical Organization.

(b) Strengthening institutional arrangements so that gender statistics can be managed within the
Central Statistical Organization in particular through the following means:

(i) Providing rehabilitation and regular technical training;

(ii) Establishing a high-level advisory body made up of both users and producers of statistics;

(iii) Supporting the continuity of the national working group on gender statistics;

(iv) Encouraging the national working group to produce many publications and in-depth issues
such as education, health, and work.

(c) Improving statistical concepts and definitions:

(i) Conducting meetings for statistical experts and users of statistical indicators to review
concepts and definitions;

(ii) Applying gender concepts and definitions of developed by experts;

(iii) Improving tools for measuring the different indicators used in the area of gender;

(d) Disseminating information and promoting awareness:

(i) Disseminating and promoting publications and studies related to gender issues;
(ii) Producing materials for the media to raise awareness about gender issues.
(iii) Improving raw data to make it available for researchers.
PARTICIPANT EVALUATION OF THE WORKSHOP

The Second Regional Workshop on Gender Statistics in the Arab Countries was held over a period of four working days. Of the 28 participants, 20 completed the evaluation questionnaires. The results are provided below:

A. OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE WORKSHOP

All of the participants who had completed the evaluation questionnaires indicated that they had benefited from the Workshop. Of those participants, 40 per cent had not received any gender training prior to the Workshop.

By the end of the Workshop 100 per cent of the representatives believed that they would be able to revise, modify and issue a national publication (Women and Men: Statistical Portrait) and to mainstream the gender perspective into the national statistical system. All expressed their readiness to adopt a plan of action for the improvement of gender statistics at the national level and to strengthen regional cooperation in the area of gender statistics.

The majority (95 per cent) rated the level of the Workshop “just right” and 5 per cent found it “too simple”. As for the duration of the Workshop, 65 percent found it “just right”, 20 percent “too short”, 10 per cent thought a shorter Workshop would have been more appropriate, and 5 percent made no mention of the duration.

B. PROGRAMME OF THE WORKSHOP

In rating the content and quality of the documents provided for the Workshop, a range of 1 to 5 were used (1 = poor; 5 = very good). The mean scores are shown in annex table 1.

Annex TABLE 1. CONTENT AND QUALITY OF RESOURCE MATERIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National reports</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final reports of national workshops</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National publications</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants commented on the time allocated to each component of the sessions, including presentations and group discussions (see annex tables 2 and 3).

Annex TABLE 2. ASSESSMENT OF TIME ALLOCATED TO THE WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Too long (percentage)</th>
<th>About right (percentage)</th>
<th>Too short (percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National reports</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National publications</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional programme of action (5 per cent did not specify)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annex TABLE 3. ASSESSMENT OF THE TIME ALLOCATED FOR GROUP DISCUSSIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Too long (percentage)</th>
<th>About right (percentage)</th>
<th>Too short (percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National reports</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Publications</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Programme of Action (5 per cent did not specify)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. PARTICIPANT SUGGESTIONS

Participants made a number of suggestions regarding the Workshop programme. It was proposed that one specific format might be adopted by all members for the publication, maintaining consistency in the
presentation of basic topics/sections and using the same methodology to present analyses, definitions and concepts, as standardizing to some degree would bring out the differences and similarities between the countries with respect to gender gaps in all sectors. One participant wrote: “Even though there are differences in the situational analysis between the countries, I still expect that all countries will prepare their reports (country reports) in the same format”.

One suggestion was to have a presentation on general experience in the developed countries, highlighting the areas of work relevant to the topics discussed in this Workshop primarily in order to improve the strategies related to gender statistics.

Another suggestion was to provide training in areas in which countries had limited experience with particular attention given to (a) methods for preparing gender reports and handbooks, (b) introducing gender disaggregation in different sectors, and (c) applying the principles of gender in order to facilitate the implementation of the national strategies. It was noted that the inclusion of an agenda item dealing with gender concepts and definitions in the Workshop programmes would have prevented any misunderstanding among the participants. Other issues to be considered related to the connection between gender and development processes.

A few of the participants suggested that the concept of regional coordination should be clarified. A few others thought that providing a regional forum for exchange of the experiences and for consultation among participants at least once every year could contribute to the achievement of the desired coordination goals. Some participants pointed out the need for technical assistance and expert advice on gender presentations including the issuance of gender reports in the most attractive manner possible. Countries could also benefit from regional coordination focused on the process of discussion and dialogue leading to general agreement on classifying of violence with emphasis placed on the domestic/home violence.

D. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORKSHOP

The participants rated different aspects of the organization of the Workshop on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = poor; 5 = very good); the mean scores were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall organization</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparatory/introductory work</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel arrangements¹</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration formalities</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodations²</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference facilities</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants made positive comments about the Workshop in general and about the topics covered in particular. The topics were thought to be very important for all Arab countries. The need to organize other workshops on gender statistics and to exchange experience was reiterated. The participants appreciated many aspects of the Workshop organization, including the pre-workshop preparation materials and the high quality of presentations. Some participants made specific mention of the working group discussions, which they found to be beneficial; one participant noted that sitting around the tables with flip charts facilitated discussion and the exchange of views. Another participant envisaged adopting such a format in organizing and preparing the guidelines for the working groups in the national workshops.

Some participants felt that the translation of the documents in the three languages of Arabic, English and French was absolutely necessary; some of the interventions of international experts were not translated. One participant thought it would have been useful if simultaneous interpretation had been provided, especially for the presentation on international work in gender statistics. Several mentioned that the country reports should have been sent to all of the participating countries to allow sufficient time for more specific comments in their revisions. One person thought that a single break per day would have been adequate.

¹ Travel arrangements did not apply to 20 per cent of the participants.
² The question relating to accommodations did not apply to 20 per cent of the participants.