

Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators
6th Gender Indicators Sub-group meeting
New York, 26 September, 2005
United Nations / Conference Room 2330

Minutes of Meeting

I. Introduction

Francesca Perucci of the United Nations Statistics Division opened the meeting and moderated the first half of the agenda (attached). She reviewed the conclusions of the meeting held on January 24th, 2005 which focused on the education, reproductive health and employment aspects of MDG 3.

The agenda was to review the indicators that pertain to MDG 3.

II. Employment indicators

Presentation: Ralf Hussmanns presented ILO's work analyzing the possibility of an expanded measure of current indicator #11. Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector. Proposals for an expanded measure were outlined to address the following shortcomings of indicator #11: 1) In many developing countries, wage employment in the non-agricultural sector is only a small percentage of total employment; 2) The indicator is difficult to interpret; unless information is provided on the share of women in total employment, 3) The indicator does not distinguish between the different types of non agricultural wage employment which may vary in terms of earnings, social protection, etc.; 4) The indicator does not measure the various dimensions of women's employment that are relevant to women's status and empowerment—such as status in employment, wages, benefits, labour regulations and policies.

ILO presented four proposals based on the “share of women in employment by type” (which includes the current indicator). ILO has initiated work to collect data from MDG countries for this expanded indicator. So far, 37 countries have sent valid replies, 11 of which provided complete information. The weak response is due in part to real lack of data in countries. In other cases, however, the data are collected but not tabulated and systematically reported to the international agencies. To obtain data for more countries, major efforts in technical cooperation are needed to assist countries in the collection and/or processing of the information.

Discussion: The framework of Version 2 (see Annex III) was agreed upon and was chosen as a base for further work. This version provides the sharpest distinction between female and male employment and breaks down agricultural and non-agricultural employment by status in employment and by formal and informal employment. It was noted that contributing family workers and domestic employees, which are very relevant to gender analysis and often overlooked, are identified separately by the classification.

For the time being, this presentation however does not lend itself to global monitoring as the number of countries, for which data are available for all of the different sub-categories of the matrix, is still too small.

The power of an indicator to show progress towards empowerment was discussed. It was agreed that it was difficult to judge the direction of trends and what would constitute empowerment. It is not necessarily empowering to move to non-agricultural wage employment in all countries. It was also highlighted that it was important to note the share of agriculture in an economy and that figures for men are important for comparison purposes. The two necessary elements from a gender perspective are to identify and acknowledge women's participation in the agriculture sector and give them credit for their contribution, thus ensuring their visibility and acknowledging the degree of their contribution.

Conclusion: It is difficult to qualify a positive trend by looking at indicator #11 alone. Although for global monitoring the indicator cannot be expanded at this stage, it will be necessary to consider other dimensions in the analysis, as done in the previous reports. To develop a background indicator ("gender differences in the structure of employment") for monitoring at the national level, it should be recommended that countries obtain data on status in employment, employment in agriculture and non-agriculture sectors, formal and informal employment, and that countries share these data with international agencies.

Next Steps:

- ILO to lead a plan of action on proposed country capacity-building for the development of statistics based on the framework of Version 2 which contains all relevant dimensions.

III. Education indicators under MDG 3

Presentation: Alison Kennedy presented UNESCO's position in support of using the Gender Parity Index (GPI) of the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER). She noted that it is important to promote access to education for everyone and not just pupils of the right age and that the inclusion of children of older age does not necessarily change the Gender Parity Index (GPI) greatly. In fact, at the primary level, most countries which are judged to have achieved parity using the GER would also be judged to have achieved parity using the GPI of the Net Enrolment Rate (NER). In fact, only 7 countries which have achieved parity according to the GER have NOT done so according to the NER. Whereas by contrast, approximately 20 countries which are regarded as still needing to make progress according to the GER, HAVE achieved parity according to the NER (i.e. for children of the official age for primary education).

Difference between using NER and GER data: 20 more countries appear to have reached gender parity when using NER rather than GER; while seven more countries appear to have reached parity when using GER rather than NER. A similar comparison for secondary enrolment had not been done.

Edilberto Loaiza presented UNICEF's position in favour of the NER which includes children of older ages in secondary education and works against the reality of girls. He mentioned what UNICEF defines as the "improved" definition of the NER, which includes pupils of primary school age attending secondary school. Even if percentages may be small, this has large policy implications once this is translated into an absolute number in large countries. A downside of the GER was also that it is difficult to interpret ratio greater than 100 and that the necessity to use GER reflects the lack of good data. He expressed a preference to use the NER where available (primary and secondary school enrolment), as the figure is closer to reality. There is no NER for tertiary education.

Discussion: Definitions for the NER and GER were outlined as the following: NER = pupils of official age in correct level/ population of official age; GER = all pupils in correct level / population of official age.

It was noted that the GER and NER measure two different components. It was suggested that if both the NER and the GER were reported in the monitoring of MDGs, the recommendation would be to compare both measures disaggregated by sex. Using both indicators would give a better indication as to a country's range of policies in measuring two dimensions: enrolment of girls at the right age and return of older girl pupils to school.

UNICEF highlighted the need and importance of using data obtained from Household Surveys as a complement to data from administrative records when the latter are not appropriate. This also allows analysis by socio-economic background. It was also noted that it is important not to assume that girls always have the disadvantage as boys do in some cases.

Conclusion: No trend analysis for tertiary enrolment is available and no agreement was reached on whether NER and GER should be used in monitoring the gender goal.

Next Steps:

- Continue to work on the analysis of what the data shows by comparing NER and GER results and offer alternatives as to possibilities with trend analysis. UNESCO and UNICEF are to provide recommendations for both regional and country-levels with illustrations of these results to be presented at the IAEG meeting in Rome.
- Provide analysis of data disaggregated across poor and regional groups where more discrepancies are apparent in comparison to national figures.

IV. Reproductive Health Indicators

Presentation: Griffith Feeney presented his work on MDG Indicators on Reproductive Health and Gender Equality. Two indicators were reviewed: the age specific fertility rate (ASFR) for the age group 15-19, and the unmet needs and Proportion of Demand Satisfied (PDS).

One advantage of using the ASFR is good data availability in terms of geographic coverage and number of time points, with 173 out of 191 countries with data as compiled by the United Nations Population Division. One disadvantage of using ASFR is that the indicator does not provide a straightforward interpretation and is difficult to be presented in a user friendly way to a non-technical audience. Also, the ASFR 15-19 covers a wide age range, including ages 18 and 19 when reproduction does not pose particular health risks and women are considered to have reach adulthood. However, single year age-specific rates are not available, and ASFR 15-19 is shown to be a good proxy for ASFR 15-17.

Unmet needs and PDS were also discussed as potential indicators. It was noted that unmet need indicators require data less widely available than that required for ASFR15-19.

Discussion: It was noted that the indicator on "Unmet needs" better addresses the empowerment of women than CPR and is a necessary measure to complement CPR. Moreover, "Unmet needs" was favoured over PDS as it is a better established indicator. However, it was noted that there are only 39 countries that have two data points for unmet needs.

Conclusions: It was determined that ASRF was preferred to unmet needs as a reproductive health indicator due to data availability. It was also decided that unmet needs would be used as a background indicator to supplement the analysis on maternal health under goal 5, based on global figures, given the limitations in data availability at this stage.

Next steps:

- The group concurred in recommending the age specific fertility rate (ASFR) as an additional indicator to MDG 3 at the IAEG meeting in Rome. The ASFR 15-19 years was agreed to be used as a proxy for 15-17 years based on the availability of data.
- The United Nations Population Division assumed ownership of the new proposed indicator under MDG 3. This entails a commitment to track the indicator, provide country data and regional and global aggregates, and to provide metadata versus strict deadlines.
- The group also recommends further work to strengthen data on the unmet need indicator (data coverage, availability, analysis).

Annex I: List of Participants

Annex II: Agenda

Annex III: ILO proposal on Employment indicators

Annex IV: Ralf Hussmanns's Summary on the Employment indicators

Annex I: List of Participants

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
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Annex II: Agenda

**Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators
Meeting of the
Gender Indicators Sub-group**

**New York, 26 September, 2005
United Nations Statistics Division
DC2-2330**

Provisional Agenda

- 9:00 – 9:15** **Opening and adoption of the agenda**
- 9:15 – 10:00** **Outcome of the Meeting held in New York, 24 January 2005**
- 10:00 – 11:30** **Review of indicators for Goal 3**
- **Employment indicators**
Presentation by ILO
- 11:30 – 13:00** **Review of indicators for Goal 3**
- **Education**
Presentations by UNESCO and UNICEF
- 13:00 – 14:00** ***Lunch break***
- 14:00 – 16:00** **Review of indicators for Goal 3**
- **Reproductive health**
Presentation by Griffith Feeney
- 16:00 – 17:00** **Conclusions and recommendations of the sub-group to the IAEG**

Annex III: ILO proposal on Employment indicators

Gender differences in the structure of employment

Row		Women	Men
0	Share in total employment (Both sexes = 100.0 %)	%	%
1	Total employment	100.0%	100.0%
2	Agricultural employment	%	%
2.1	Own-account workers, employers & members of producers' cooperatives	%	%
2.2	Contributing family workers (informal)	%	%
2.3	Employees	%	%
2.3.1	Formal	%	%
2.3.2	Informal	%	%
3	Non-agricultural employment	%	%
3.1	Own-account workers, employers & members of producers' cooperatives	%	%
3.1.1	Formal	%	%
3.1.2	Informal	%	%
3.2	Contributing family workers (informal)	%	%
3.3	Non-domestic employees	%	%
3.3.1	Formal	%	%
3.3.2	Informal	%	%
3.4	Domestic employees	%	%
3.4.1	Formal	%	%
3.4.2	Informal	%	%
3.I	Formal non-agricultural employment (3.1.1 + 3.3.1 + 3.4.1)	%	%
3.II	Informal non-agricultural employment (3.1.2 + 3.2 + 3.3.2 + 3.4.2)	%	%

Annex IV: Ralf Hussmanns's Summary on Employment indicators

(i) As long as the problem of obtaining the information for a sufficiently large number of countries continues to exist, we shall not propose to the interagency expert group to replace the current indicator by an alternative indicator 'Share of women in employment by type'.

(ii) For the time being, we shall propose to maintain the current indicator for the regular, international monitoring exercises. However, we shall also make a recommendation to supplement, for monitoring at the national level, the current indicator with an additional (or background) indicator on the percentage distribution of employment by type for women and men. The purpose of the additional indicator is to facilitate interpretation of the current indicator by users of the information.

(iii) I suggest to call the additional indicator 'Gender differences in the structure of employment'. The additional indicator will correspond to Version 2 of the tables that I presented to the Gender Subgroup. I believe, however, that it would be useful to include two additional rows for the totals of (i) formal non-agricultural employment and (ii) informal non-agricultural employment.

(iv) A plan of action for capacity-building in labour force statistics will be drafted. The aim is to attract donor funding for technical cooperation activities that will enable more countries to collect and/or process the data needed for the additional indicator. Once these data have become available for a critical mass of countries, the additional indicator can be proposed as an alternative to the current one.