

**25 February 2011**

**Co-Chairs' summary**

1. On 25 February 2011, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Statistical Commission held a dialogue between representatives of national statistical offices and national machineries for gender equality to discuss the state of gender statistics and exchange views on challenges and new directions. The dialogue was a continuation of an established good practice to exchanges views between the two commissions on gender equality indicators in 2007 and on indicators and data collection on violence against women in 2008.
2. The dialogue was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Garen Nazarian, Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women, and Ms. Anna Majelantle, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur of the Statistical Commission. Ms. Grace Bediako, Government Statistician, Ghana, made an introductory presentation, drawing from the programme review of gender statistics that had been prepared for the Statistical Commission by the Ghana Statistical Service, in cooperation with the statistical services of the Philippines (see E/CN.3/2011/3).
3. Collection and production of gender statistics has been advocated by the Statistical Commission since the 1980s through the promotion and support to national, regional and international gender statistics programmes, the development of resource materials (e.g. a guide for developing gender statistics, booklets and analytical publications), and capacity development efforts. Following the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995, which made a strong statement on gender statistics, expectations for substantial progress in this area were high. However, *'The World's Women: Trends and Statistics'*, published by the UN Statistics Division every five years, illustrates only reasonable progress in this area, falling short of the expectations raised in 1995 with weak achievements in some regions and countries. Lack of human and financial resources and insufficient support from international and regional organizations to national gender statistics programmes are among the causes for the slow progress.
4. In 2006, the United Nations Statistical Division established an Inter-Agency Expert Group (IAEG) on gender statistics to take stock, review progress, challenges and emerging needs and propose actions to advance gender statistics at the international, regional and national levels; in short, to help chart the path for further work in this field.
5. The 2010 programme review before the United Nations Statistical Commission, based on inputs provided by 20 countries and six regional and international organizations, gave examples of efforts to strengthen national gender statistics programmes. Some of those efforts were anchored in national statistical laws; or in separate sections within gender equality or equal opportunities legal frameworks. Other programmes were based in regional and international instruments and agreements. While in general the responsibility for gender statistics programmes is assigned to national statistical offices (NSO), in some countries the responsibility was shared with the national mechanism for gender equality. In some cases, primary responsibility was

assigned to the national mechanism, with support from the NSO. Multi-disciplinary approaches have been adopted and bilateral user-producer consultations undertaken between NSOs and gender equality mechanisms. Most countries have designated staff or a unit responsible for gender statistics.

6. The main outputs of national gender statistics programmes included statistical publications on the situation of women and men, gender statistics databases, methodological work, surveys of general purpose (e.g. population census, national demographic and health surveys, general social surveys and integrated household surveys), surveys on specific issues related to women and gender equality. International and regional programmes focused on promoting knowledge sharing, providing technical advice and capacity building, producing technical materials, compiling statistics and indicators, disseminating gender statistics, developing databases, and providing financial support to national programmes.

7. Other efforts undertaken by the Statistical Commission included the adoption of a set of statistical indicators on violence against women, and ongoing work on the development and testing of related methodologies and guidelines. A module for use in demographic and health surveys was prepared and has been pilot tested in a number of countries; and specific questions related to violence against women and girls have also been included in demographic and health surveys.

8. In response to the programme review on gender statistics, the Statistical Commission urged the United Nations Statistics Division to strengthen its leadership role in charting the path for the development of gender statistics globally. It acknowledged the strategic role of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on gender statistics and requested the expansion of its scope of work to include a review of gender statistics with the aim of establishing a minimum set of gender indicators, in co-operation with the Commission on the Status of Women. The Statistical Commission recognized that additional resources will be required for the gender statistics programme as proposed and requested the donor community to devote adequate resources in this important area (see decision 42/101, forthcoming in E/2011/4).

#### Recommendations emanating from the dialogue:

- The Commission on the Status of Women and the Statistical Commission were encouraged to continue this form of dialogue of exchanging experiences on gender statistics.
- The United Nations should require all countries to submit data disaggregated by sex as well as on gender-specific issues.
- The United Nations should build reporting capacity in areas of violence against women, and women and girls' access to education and employment.
- The Statistics Division is encouraged to collaborate with UNDP to improve the data used in the Gender Inequality Index.

- The Statistics Division and UN Women should collaborate to increase the financial resources available for gender statistics.
- Cooperation between the NSOs and the national mechanisms for gender equality need to be institutionalized at the national level to promote enhanced resource mobilization and use of existing resources, such as data portals, handbooks or indicators, and to encourage enhanced collaboration between producers and users of statistics.