Bridging the Gap: Mapping Gender Data Availability in Asia and the Pacific

GENDER AND DATA POLICIES | SAMOA

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Samoa's strategy for improving its gender statistics is embodied in three policy documents: *Samoa Strategy for the Development of Statistics 2011–2021* (SBS 2012); *Samoa National Policy for Gender Equality 2016–2020* (MWCSD 2016); and the Spotlight Initiative (United Nations Samoa 2020). Each of these plans or programs requires a broad range of indicators to support the formation, implementation, and monitoring of policies to improve the wellbeing of women and children in Samoa.

The *Samoa Strategy for the Development of Statistics from 2011 to 2021* (SSDS) sets goals for delivering statistics in four priority areas: economic statistics; demography, population, and vital statistics; social and environment statistics; and sector statistics. Recommendations for specific datasets are drawn from Samoa's Development Strategy, the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs), the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS), and a regional meeting of Pacific Islands economic ministers. These datasets include many gender-relevant indicators or specify disaggregation by sex. Although published in 2012, the list of indicators, in its length and breadth, anticipates the later SDG indicator set.

Samoa's Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD) has recently implemented its *National Policy for Gender Equality from 2016 to 2020* with the goal of "All women and girls [having] equal access to opportunities that guarantee their full participation in, and [benefiting] from, the sustainable development of Samoa" (MWCSD 2016). The policy is organized around six priority outcomes corresponding broadly to the domains of human security, health, economic opportunity, public participation, education, and the environment. The National Policy for Gender Equality does not specify measurable indicators to monitor the success of the plan, however many of the gender indicators included in the SDGs and assessed in the *Bridging the Gap* study are relevant to the first six policy outcomes. The seventh policy outcome includes a strategic action of completing a gender statistical framework with Samoa's Bureau of Statistics.

In 2019, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) member states, including Samoa, conducted a national review of their implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In the national review, one of the key challenges include insufficient collection and availability of sex-disaggregated data to monitor progress towards policies, plans, and programs (ESCAP 2019).

In March 2020, the Spotlight Initiative—a United Nations-European Union partnership focused on ending all violence against women and girls—was launched in Samoa. In Samoa, part of the initiative is geared towards forming evidence-based programs. As the Spotlight Initiative follows the timeline of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SDG indicators—particularly under Goals 5 and 16—are of great importance. These indicators are found under the Human Security domain of *Bridging the Gap.*
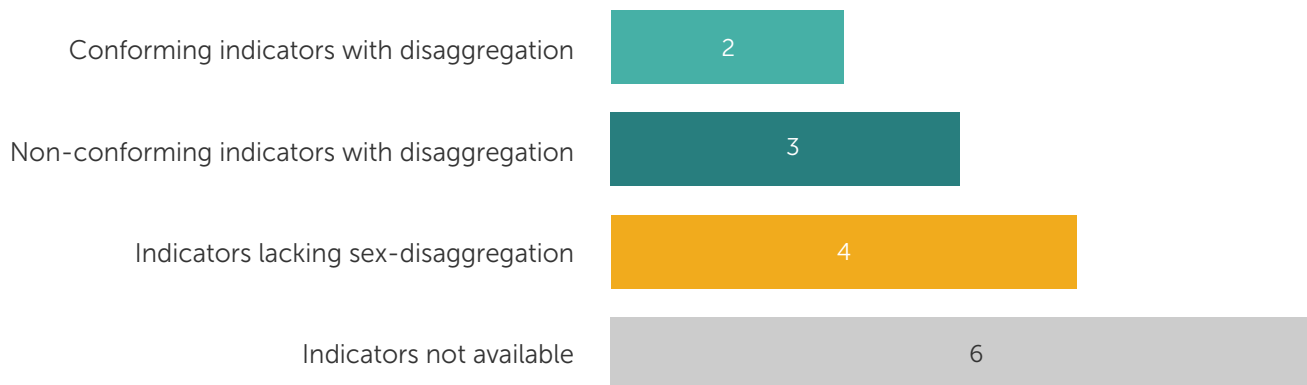
Data to Support Policies and Strategies

Samoa has recently completed its second *National Policy for Gender Equality from 2016 to 2020*, and so this is a timely moment to assess the availability of statistics for measuring progress toward its policy outcomes. Although the policy does not detail the indicators needed to support the policy process, many of the gender indicators (which includes SDG and non-SDG indicators) included in the *Bridging the Gap* study can be matched to the six policy outcomes.

POLICY OUTCOME 1: SAFE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

The objectives of this policy include fostering a safe society and preventing all forms of violence. The Spotlight Initiative addresses a similar set of issues. The *Bridging the Gap* gender indicators include 15 SDG indicators of specific relevance to this policy outcome: three come from SDG 5 (Gender equality); ten from SDG 16 (Peaceful and inclusive societies); and one each from SDG 10 (Reduce inequality) and SDG 11 (Safe cities). All 15 indicators come from the 19 gender indicators in the human security domain of this report.

Figure 1: Indicators for policy outcome 1

Indicator	Value
Conforming indicators with disaggregation	2
Non-conforming indicators with disaggregation	3
Indicators lacking sex-disaggregation	4
Indicators not available	6

Only five of the indicators that support the goals of this policy are available with sex-disaggregated data in Samoa's national databases, two of which conformed to the SDG definition and methodology. Timely and disaggregated data are essential to forming evidence-based programs. Only one indicator, 11.7.2 (Proportion of persons who are victims of physical or sexual harassment) has more than two observations over the period and is one of two with an observation as recent as 2018.

Sex-disaggregated (or female-specific), conforming indicators:
- 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18
- 16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age

Sex-disaggregated (or female-specific), non-conforming indicators:
- 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age
- 5.2.2 Proportion of women (aged 15–49) subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, since age 15

- 16.2.1 Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month

Lacking sex disaggregation indicators:

- 11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status, and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months
- 16.1.4 Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live
- 16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms
- 16.3.3 Proportion of the population who have experienced a dispute in the past two years and who accessed a formal or informal dispute resolution mechanism, by type of mechanism
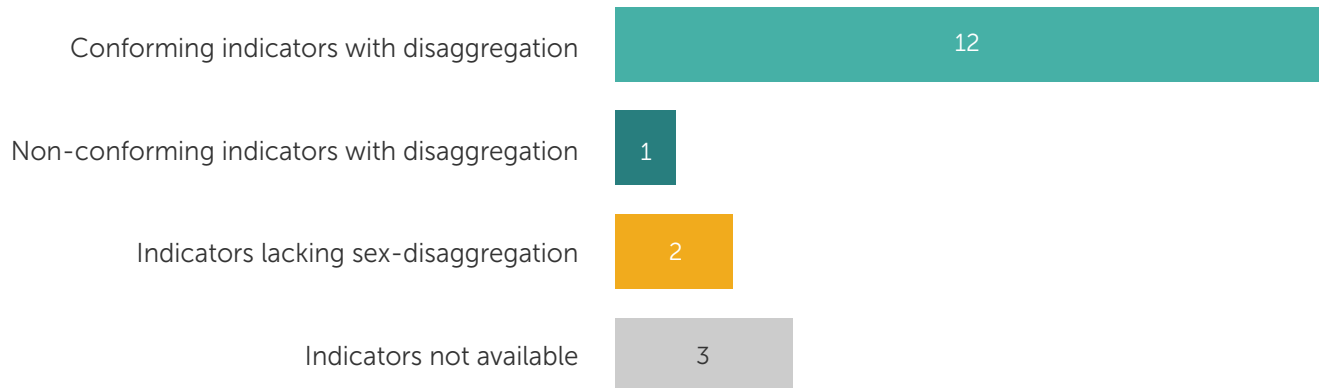
Data not available:

- 10.3.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law
- 16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause
- 16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months
- 16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation
- 16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18
- 16.10.1 Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months

POLICY OUTCOME 2: HEALTHY WOMEN AND GIRLS
The key objectives of this goal include the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and the reduction of women's risk to non-communicable diseases and the development of sex education programs. Data supporting this goal are more widely available, although there is no SDG indicator that directly measures the development of sex education programs.

Of the 28 health indicators included in this study, 18 were identified as applicable to this policy outcome (indicators excluded from this assessment were chiefly those pertaining to communicable diseases). Sixteen of the 18 indicators are from the SDGs, and the remaining two indicators are supplemental indicators from UN Women's *Turning Promises into Action* (2018).

Figure 2: Indicators for policy outcome 2

Category	Value
Conforming indicators with disaggregation	12
Non-conforming indicators with disaggregation	1
Indicators lacking sex-disaggregation	2
Indicators not available	3

Timeliness and density are issues for all these indicators. Twelve have only one observation, all before 2015. One indicator has two observations in 2009/10 and 2010/11. And two indicators have three observations, but the most recent are from 2016.

Sex-disaggregated (or female-specific), conforming indicators:

- 2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting (height for age < -2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age
- 2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height > +2 or < -2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age, by type (wasting and overweight)
- 2.2.3 Prevalence of anaemia in women aged 15–49 years, by pregnancy status (percentage)
- 2.2.y Share of women aged 15–49 whose BMI is less than 18.5 (underweight)
- 3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
- 3.2.1 Under-five mortality rate
- 3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate
- 3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods
- 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group
- 3.a.1 Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older
- 5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care
- 8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status

Sex-disaggregated, non-conforming indicators:

- 3.5.2 Alcohol per capita consumption (aged 15 years and older) within a calendar year in liters of pure alcohol

Lacking sex-disaggregation indicators:

- 2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)
- 3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease
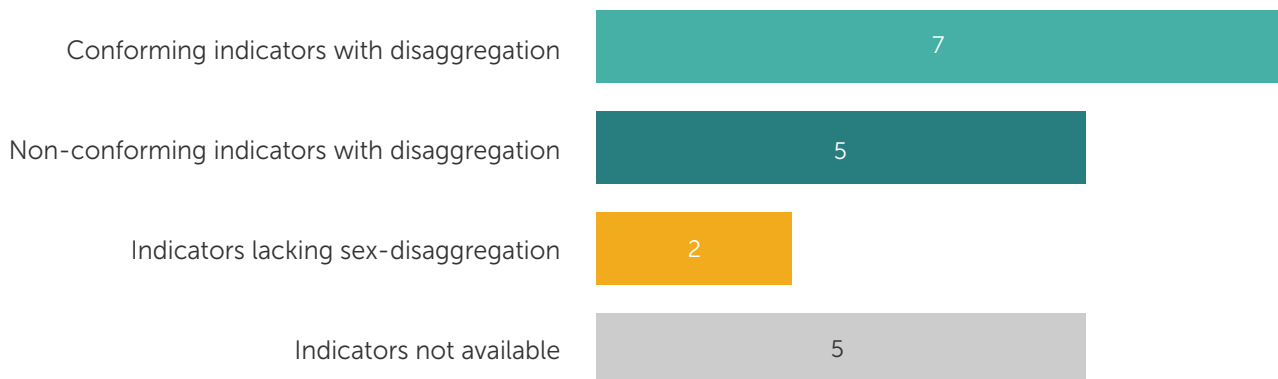
Data not available:

- 2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment
- 3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio
- 5.6.X Proportion of women who have an independent/joint say in own health care

POLICY OUTCOME 3: EQUAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

The objectives of this policy outcome include reducing economic vulnerability of women and other vulnerable groups, along with providing technical or vocational programs to enhance the skillsets of women and other groups. Nineteen indicators of relevance to this goal come from the education and economic domains, where 18 indicators are from the SDGs and the remaining indicator is from UN Women's *Turning Promises into Action* (2018). Twelve of the 19 indicators are available with sex-disaggregated data, seven of which conform to SDG definitions and standards.

Figure 3: Indicators for policy outcome 3

Only two of the twelve sex-disaggregated indicators have more than two observations: 4.3.1 (Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training) for which there are annual observations between 2010 and 2019; and 9.2.2 (Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment). Another four labor market indicators have two observations. The six remaining indicators have only one observation, two of which have observations from 2017 and the others are from 2013 or 2014.

Sex-disaggregated, conforming indicators:

- 1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age
- 1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work- injury victims, and the poor and the vulnerable

- 8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex
- 8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities
- 8.5.X Labor force participation rate, by sex
- 9.2.2 Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment
- 17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using the Internet

Sex-disaggregated, non-conforming indicators:
- 1.2.2 Proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
- 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex
- 5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age, and location
- 8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age, and persons with disabilities
- 9.5.2 Researchers (in full-time equivalent) per million inhabitants

Lacking sex disaggregation indicators:
- 1.4.2 Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure
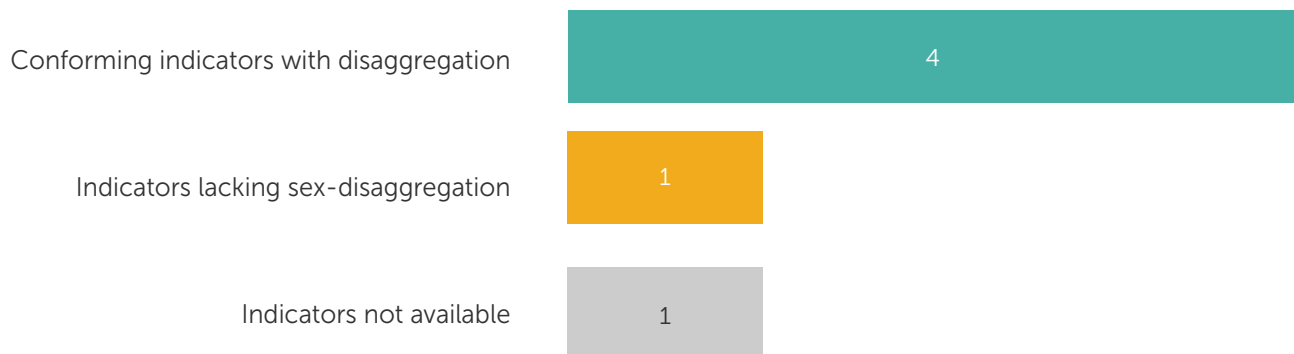- 8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training

Data not available:
- 2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status
- 4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill
- 5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure
- 8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider
- 8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labor, by sex and age

POLICY OUTCOME 4: INCREASED PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

The objectives of this outcome include increasing the representation and participation of women in decision-making, in all settings—from public life to family. There are six SDG indicators from the Public Participation domain that support this goal.

Figure 4: Indicators for policy outcome 4

The timeliness and data density of these indicators is somewhat better than indicators from other domains. Data for indicators 5.5.1 (Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments) are available for seven years between 2011 and 2018, and data for 16.7.1, which compares the characteristics of public office holders to their shares in the general population, are available for ten years between 2009/10 and 2019/20. There are four observations on indicator 5.5.2 (Proportion of women in managerial positions)—the most recent from 2018—but only one observation from 2014 on indicator 16.9.1 (Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority), an important measure of the functioning of the civil registration system.

Sex-disaggregated, conforming indicators:
- 5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments
- 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions
- 16.7.1 Proportions of positions in national and local public institutions, including (a) the legislatures; (b) the public service; and (c) the judiciary, compared to national distributions, by sex, age, persons with disabilities, and population groups
- 16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age

Lacking sex-disaggregation indicators:
- 16.6.2 Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services, specifically a) healthcare services, b) education services and c) government services
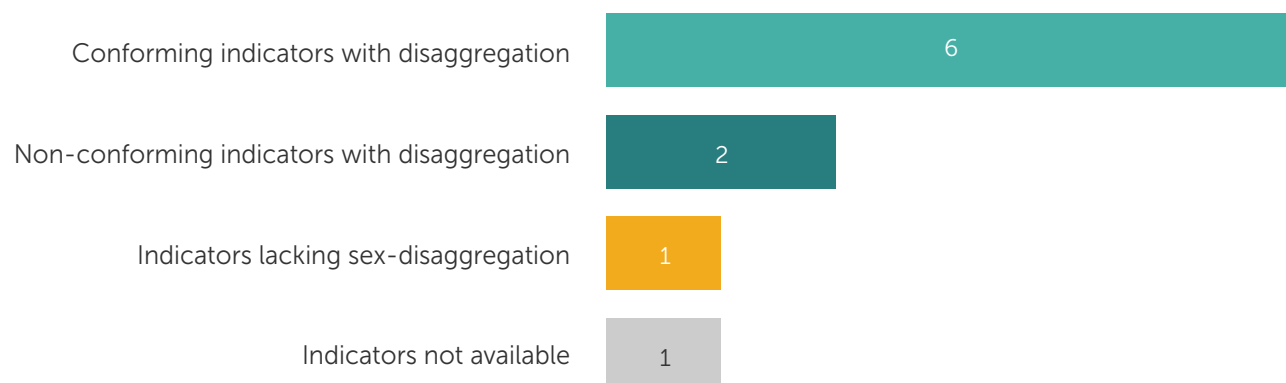
Data not available:
- 16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group

POLICY OUTCOME 5: INCREASED ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND GENDER SENSITIVE EDUCATION CURRICULA
The objectives of this outcome include support for participation in schools and for gender analysis of education programs and resources. Ten indicators from the Education domain support these goals; seven come from SDG goal 4 (Inclusive education) and three supplemental indicators have been

suggested by UN Women. Seven of the ten indicators are from the SDGs, and the remaining three are from UN Women's *Turning Promises into Action* (2018).

Figure 5: Indicators for policy commitment 6

Four of the eight indicators with sex-disaggregated data have observations in 2018 or 2019; the remaining indicators with available data are from 2016 or earlier. No indicator has more than three observations from 2010 through 2019. The lack of annual observations on these indicators is surprising because most can be derived from regularly kept administrative records.

Sex-disaggregated (or female-specific), conforming indicators:
- 4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
- 4.1.2 Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)
- 4.1.X6 Education inequality indicators: (a) Proportion of women with less than 4 or 6 years of education; or (b) proportion of women with less than secondary education
- 4.5.1 "Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated
- 4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex
- 4.c.1 Proportion of teachers with the minimum required qualifications, by education level

Sex-disaggregated, non-conforming indicators:
- 4.1.X4 Illiteracy rates, by sex
- 4.3.X Primary and secondary out of school rates, by sex

Lacking sex disaggregation indicators:
- 4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to single-sex basic sanitation facilities

Data not available:

- 4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex

POLICY OUTCOME 6: COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS INFORMED BY GENDER SENSITIVE INFORMATION AND APPROACHES
The objectives of this policy outcome include efficient government involvement in climate resilience and natural disaster preparation. There only two SDG indicators with a gender dimension that potentially contribute to monitoring these objectives: 1.5.1 (Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters) and 7.1.2 (Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology). There are no data for indicator 1.5.1 in Samoa's national databases. Indicator 7.1.2 is not disaggregated by sex, although the use of dirty fuels (wood, charcoal, animal wastes) for cooking are an important cause of illness among women and children.

- 1.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population: Data not available
- 7.1.2 Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology: Non-conforming indicator without sex disaggregation available

Aside from the National Policy for Gender Equality from 2016 to 2020, the Government of Samoa has other national development plans. For example, the Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2016/17–2019/20 is closely aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SMOF 2016.

Samoa's Gender Statistics in Regional and Global Perspective
The review of indicators to support the recently completed National Policy for Gender Equality has found some data gaps, but even when indicators are available, they are often out-of-date and lack sufficient observations to monitor progress over time. The Open Data Inventory (ODIN) provides a broad assessment of the coverage and openness of national statistics in Samoa that confirms these findings.
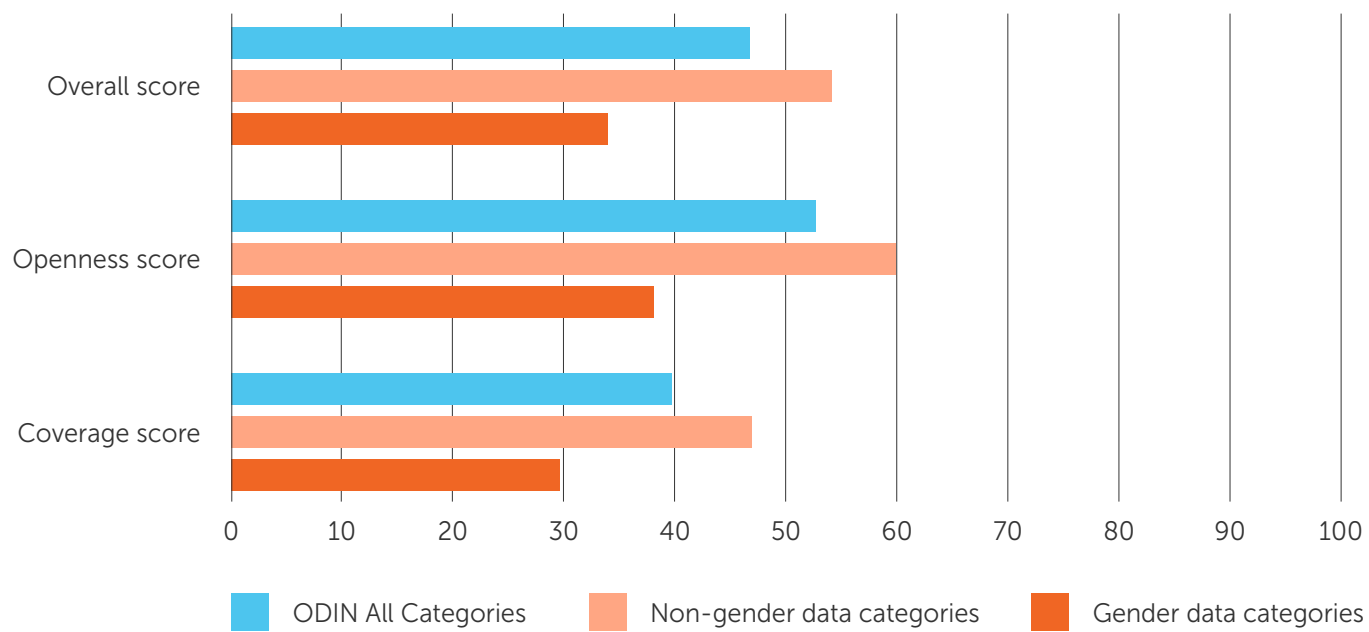
ODIN assesses the coverage and openness of statistics produced by national statistical system in 22 statistical categories. Its ratings provide a comparative index of a statistical system's ability to provide open access to the data and statistics needed to monitor social, economic, and environmental development. For Samoa, the ODIN categories are broadly representative of the priority datasets included in the SSDS.

In 2020, Samoa with an overall ODIN score of 46.6 ranked first among the eight middle-income Pacific Island countries (ODW 2020). Globally it was ranked 109th out of 187 countries and 19th out of 43 lower-middle-income countries. Samoa scores better on the measure of data openness (52.6) than on the coverage of its official statistics (39.6). And while Samoa generally scores well on the availability of indicators at the national level, it does not provide data for sub-national administrative units and it lacks historical data needed to make comparisons over time for most indicators. More frequent data collection and regular publication of data from administrative systems would raise Samoa's overall ODIN scores and strengthen Samoa's ability to plan, implement, and monitor its plans for gender equality.

Gender data are less available and less open than other categories of statistics in Samoa. ODIN includes ten data categories that are of particular relevance to monitoring the wellbeing of women and children. These include health, education, poverty, and labor force statistics. On average, these

categories have an overall score of 33.8. The non-gender data categories include most economic and environmental statistics. With an overall score of 54.2, these categories exceed the gender data categories by more than 20 points.

Figure 6: Samoa gender and non-gender data categories, 2020

Source: Open Data Inventory 2020/21

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