

# A Gender Data System Maturity Model



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## Introduction

Gender data is an essential tool for tracking and improving economic, political, and social progress. Gender data—or data that is disaggregated by sex and reflects gender roles, relations and inequalities—helps identify issues, pinpoint solutions and monitor progress. Put simply, gender data can help us better understand and improve our world. But this potential can only be reached when national statistical offices (NSO) and policymakers prioritize gender data’s production and use throughout the national statistical system (NSS).

To evaluate the state of gender data in the NSS, and to equip governments with the information needed to improve and strengthen their gender data systems, this brief proposes a gender data system maturity model. A maturity model is a tool used to evaluate an organization’s ability to achieve its goals, outlining strengths and weaknesses that can be used to measure progress across one or multiple areas. A gender data system maturity model is a tool used to assess the NSS’s ability to produce a robust set of gender data.

This brief summarizes 1) the six principles used to guide the establishment of the gender data system maturity model; 2) the potential applications of the maturity model; and 3) the proposed gender data system maturity model itself, including the four maturity levels across five dimensions used to assess the gender data system.

This brief, while applicable to all audiences involved in gender data production, use and advocacy, is directed towards actors working at NSOs.

# Guiding Principles

## Establishing the Gender Data System Maturity Model

### PRINCIPLE 1

The ambition of the maturity model is to be intuitive, actionable and comprehensive.

### PRINCIPLE 2

The maturity model is built on UN Statistics Division's [definition of gender data](#).

### PRINCIPLE 3

The principal actor responsible for building a stronger gender data system is the NSO. While financing, coordinating and leading data collection and dissemination are not the responsibility of the NSO alone, the NSO plays a pivotal role in generating resources, coordinating across the NSS, and building technical capacity for better gender data systems.

### PRINCIPLE 4

The proposed maturity model is explicitly focused on gender data, not broad statistical systems. Gender data systems and national statistical systems do not operate in silos. Strengthening each system improves the functioning of the other.

### PRINCIPLE 5

The maturity model is outcome and results focused, but some elements of the maturity model describe processes, as they are paramount to building effective data systems. The model is used in a prescriptive manner to help NSOs and NSSs develop a vision of a strong gender data system.

### PRINCIPLE 6

The maturity model is designed to be flexible and adaptive to NSOs in their respective contexts. While its primary use is to assess gender data systems, it can also be adapted to other sectors of interest by using different indicators to measure outcomes and processes.



# Applications

## How the Gender Data System Maturity Model Can Be Used

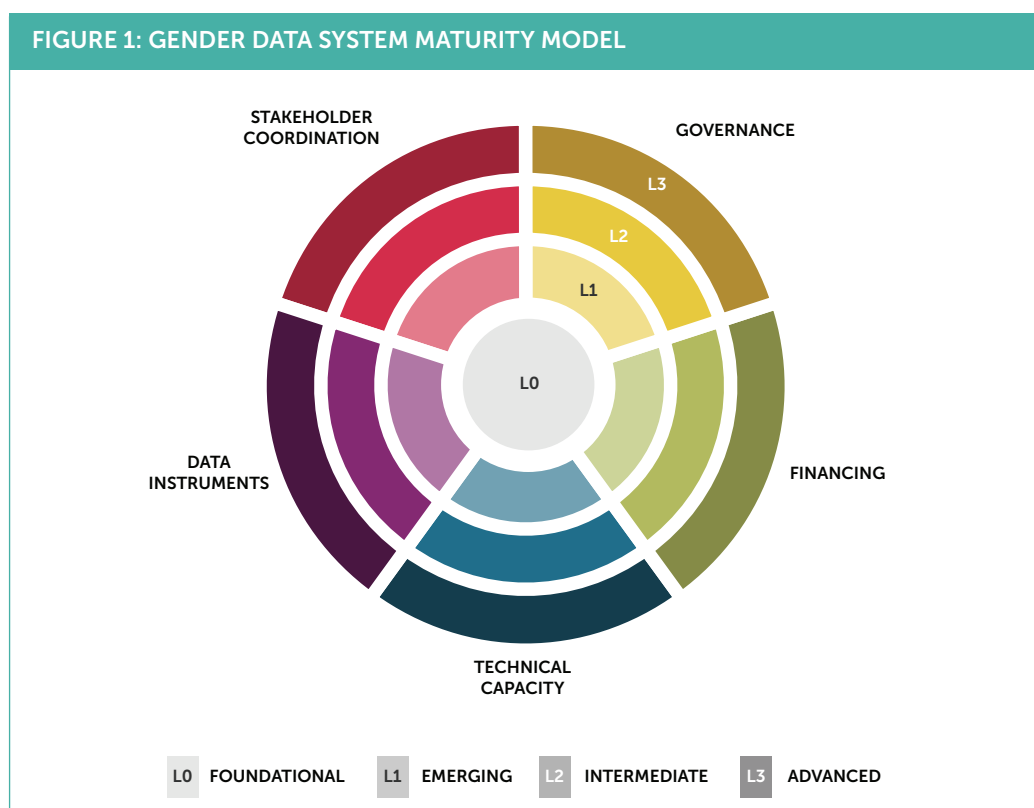
When used by NSOs to assess their capacity to produce and use gender data, the gender data system maturity model highlights the state of gender data within an NSS. But the model can be applied in other ways as well.

First, by identifying the weakest and strongest dimensions of a gender data system, the model can be used to develop an **assessment tool** that would help build the case to improve gender data financing. It would also outline specific actions an NSO needs to take to progress to the desired maturity level. As a whole, the assessment tool could contribute to global efforts to monitor the statistical capacity of countries, but with a much-needed focus on gender data.

Second, the maturity model can be a critical resource for informing gender data advocacy efforts. By providing valuable insights into the gaps and opportunities within gender data systems, the model may enable and incentivize NSOs, governments, donors and other actors to address obstacles to building effective gender data systems.

## Proposed Gender Data System Maturity Model

The gender data system maturity model (Figure 1) is made up of five dimensions: 1) governance, 2) financing, 3) technical capacity, 4) data instruments and 5) stakeholder coordination. Each dimension has four maturity levels: foundational, emerging, intermediate and advanced. Within the maturity model, each step to the next level is defined by measurable indicators of gender data outcomes and processes.



# Dimension 1 – Governance

Governance includes institutional structures and the policies, strategies, political support, laws and regulations needed to cultivate and support gender data.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF THE MATURITY LEVELS WITHIN THE GOVERNANCE DIMENSION**

<b>Foundational</b>	A statistical law exists as the bedrock of production and collection of official statistics.
<b>Emerging</b>	A national strategy for the development of statistics (NSDS) exists, as might other development plans and they include at least one mention of gender data-related topics.
<b>Intermediate</b>	In terms of frameworks, an NSDS exists with a detailed section on gender data. There is high-level political support, and there are gender equality policies and other policies supporting gender data.
<b>Advanced</b>	Statistical laws – the bedrock of official statistics – include the production and use of gender data. Additional national development plans exist that thoroughly integrate open gender data throughout the plan and strong high-level support for gender data exist with meaningful impacts.

To view the full explanation of each maturity level within this dimension, [click here](#).

# Dimension 2 – Financing

Financing focuses on the budget, sources of financing, and the financial stability and independence of a gender data system.

**TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF THE MATURITY LEVELS WITHIN THE FINANCING DIMENSION**

<b>Foundational</b>	A national-level budget exists to fund statistical activities.
<b>Emerging</b>	NSO budget for statistical activities includes mention of gender data and existing funding for gender data draws almost exclusively on external financing.
<b>Intermediate</b>	Domestic financing for gender data receives specific allocation within financial documents. Broader financial support for gender data is stable and relies on both domestic and external financing.
<b>Advanced</b>	Financing for gender data is incorporated throughout all NSO and NSS statistical activities, receiving the full amount of the budgetary funds to meet gender data needs over the long term. Financial support for gender data draws primarily on domestic resources.

To view the full explanation of each maturity level within this dimension, [click here](#).

## Dimension 3 – Technical Capacity

The technical capacity of a gender data system refers to the capacity of staff to collect and produce gender data, along with the necessary technological capabilities needed to produce gender data and to promote greater gender data use. This includes analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting, and presenting data for use by policymakers, journalists, researchers, and other identified users.

<b>Foundational</b>	Sufficient staff with adequate training and infrastructure to support broad statistical activities.
<b>Emerging</b>	Capacity exists in the NSO and other ministries for the collection and publication of gender data. Traditional data collection methods are employed with acknowledgement of gender bias issues.
<b>Intermediate</b>	Capacity exists in the NSO and other ministries to provide sex-disaggregation on most relevant indicators and collect data on most gender-specific issues. Innovative methods for data collection and use are being pursued while gender bias is starting to be addressed in existing data collection instruments.
<b>Advanced</b>	Capacity to collect and publish sex-disaggregation and gender-relevant data to address all gender issues, with steps in place to address gender biases in collection and publication practices across the entire NSS with key gender data focal points. Demonstrated capacity exists to explore methodological innovations in gender data collection and publication.

To view the full explanation of each maturity level within this dimension, [click here](#).

## Dimension 4 – Data Instruments

Data instruments are the tools and processes for collecting data. They include administrative data systems such as civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS), education management information systems (EMIS), health management information systems (HMIS), and the censuses and surveys used to collect information on households and individuals.

<b>Foundational</b>	Data Instruments are in place to collect biographical information, such as sex, but instruments are conducted irregularly.
<b>Emerging</b>	Instruments with some frequency collect sex disaggregation for many indicators along with collecting data for some gender-specific indicators.
<b>Intermediate</b>	Instruments with some frequency exist to collect sex disaggregation for most relevant indicators and data for most gender-specific indicators are created and published.
<b>Advanced</b>	All necessary data instruments with regular frequency are available for all gender-specific indicators, and gender biases are corrected in the instrument design stages. Innovative data sources are in use to close gender data gaps.

To view the full explanation of each maturity level within this dimension, [click here](#).

# Dimension 5 – Stakeholder Coordination

Stakeholder coordination involves mechanisms set in place for gender data producers and users to coordinate and communicate, with the NSO acting as a data steward in the center. The goal is to unify activities of all stakeholders engaged with gender data from production to use along the data value chain.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF THE MATURITY MODELS WITHIN THE STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION DIMENSION

<b>Foundational</b>	Different producers of statistics within the national statistical system have some coordination mechanism.
<b>Emerging</b>	Gender data user needs are discerned through some instance of direct engagement and producers of gender statistics communicate and coordinate with each other.
<b>Intermediate</b>	Engagement with gender data users occurs regularly and all producers of gender statistics coordinate with each other. Gender data intermediaries, such as gender data focal points, within the system are included.
<b>Advanced</b>	Systematic involvement of gender data users and gender data producers: All gender data stakeholders are consulted and support for gender data intermediaries result in impact as measured by increased collaboration across NSS on gender data initiatives.

To view the full explanation of each maturity level within this dimension, [click here](#).

