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From Vision to Action: 10 Recent Gender Data Milestones Driving Progress for the SDGs





UN Photo/Mark Garten

As we pass the midpoint of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and gear up for the upcoming Summit of the Future, it's a pivotal moment to reflect on our collective progress. Gender data are now deeply woven into various facets of global development, including climate change, intersectionality, time use, and care work. In recognition of these collective advancements and our ongoing collaboration, Data2X is proud to present a selection of our shared achievements in partnership with Open Data Watch (ODW).



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Since the launch of the SDGs, gender data advocates have worked hard to close data gaps, integrate gender data into policymaking, and create partnerships that improve gender equality outcomes worldwide.

1. ELEVATING GENDER DATA IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Gender data are central to sustainable development, with significant progress made in tracking gender-related SDG indicators.



The SDGs feature over 100 gender-relevant indicators, a significant increase from the 60 under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), highlighting the essential role of gender perspectives. In 2022, **42 percent of the gender data needed to monitor SDGs were available**—up from 26 percent in 2016. While challenges remain, particularly due to global disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic, this progress is a testament to the growing global commitment to gender data.

2. SECURING SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR GENDER DATA

Improved insights into funding flows are helping build stronger gender data systems.



Advancements in our understanding of funding flows for gender data have offered crucial insights to enhance support for gender data systems. **Recent research briefs from Data2X and ODW** analyze trends in official development assistance

and how countries source and allocate resources through national statistical plans. Although we still have far to go, recent financing levels have improved. And with new tools like the **Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data**, well-coordinated, sustainable financing is within reach.

3. IMPROVING GENDER DATA OPENNESS

Open and accessible gender data are essential for informed, equitable policymaking.



Improving the disaggregation and accessibility of gender data ensures that crucial information can reach those who need it and inform data-driven policies that can benefit people of all genders. The **Gender Data Compass** provides a comprehensive guide to the gender data landscape, supporting national statistical offices in advancing gender equality. Countries like Djibouti and Uzbekistan are already using the Compass to make gender data more open and accessible.

4. INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO CLOSING GENDER DATA GAPS

New strategies and collaborations are filling critical data gaps.



To reach remote and marginalized communities where traditional data collection falls short, innovative gender data sources and approaches are increasingly being used. **The Collaborative on Citizen Data** enhances citizen participation and promotes transparency in statistics as it fills critical gender data gaps for SDG implementation.

And the revised **Global Digital Compact** has committed to mainstreaming gender in digital strategies and dismantling gender barriers to connectivity. These efforts underscore the shift towards leveraging collaboration to improve gender data.

5. MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN NATIONAL STATISTICS

Countries are increasingly integrating gender into national statistics, with new tools promoting a country-led, demand-driven approach.



Making gender an integral part of national statistical strategies enables nations to effectively identify gender disparities, design interventions, and monitor progress. The **Gender Data Network**, a collaboration between PARIS21, Data2X, and ODW with the UNECA and UNESCAP, is driving these efforts across 44 countries in Africa and the Asia-Pacific. Additionally, tools like **BRIDGE** are available to help countries strategize based on local priorities and demand for gender data.

6. MEASURING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

Innovative data collection methods are shedding light on women's vital yet often overlooked contributions to the global economy.



Time-use surveys that capture paid and unpaid work, gender-sensitive employment definitions, and efforts to better define and measure women's economic empowerment (WEE) have begun

to offer a more complete picture of women's contributions to the economy. Nations like Tanzania and Brazil have recently integrated time-use modules into household budget surveys to overcome cost barriers. This year, the **UN Statistical Commission updated guidance** for countries in gathering this critical data. Data2X and the Center for Global Development joined forces to **review existing tools for measuring WEE**, and the more recent **WEE Measurement Learning Collaborative** was set up to advance the use of WEE-related measures for research and action.

7. COMBATTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Improved data collection is supporting progress to end violence against women and girls.



Countries like Vietnam have conducted specialized surveys that uncover the prevalence, causes, and challenges survivors face. Organizations such as UN Women and the World Health Organization have standardized data collection methods, offering a clearer understanding of the issue's scale and impact. UN Women is now working on a global Violence Against Women Index, a tool designed to enhance data accessibility, track progress, and hold policymakers accountable, thereby strengthening advocacy and intervention efforts worldwide.

8. INCORPORATING INTERSECTIONAL DATA ANALYSES TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

New research is building on our understanding of how gender experiences are influenced by

intersecting identities such as race, ethnicity, and class.



Effective intersectional data collection benefits from participatory

approaches that respect the lived experiences of individuals and promote local data ownership. Data2X and ODW are actively working with partners to integrate **intersectional data principles into development data systems**. And many researchers, such as M.V Lee Badgett, are delving into the often-neglected areas of **sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC)**, exploring both the opportunities and challenges in collecting these critical data.

9. HARNESSING CRVS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems are unlocking essential services and opportunities for women and girls, driving gender equality forward.



Global conferences in 2018 and 2020 have highlighted the

interconnection of gender equality and CRVS. Subsequent knowledge briefs have identified progress, challenges, and key policy actions needed to strengthen CRVS systems. And under UNFPA's leadership, the **Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems** continues to advance this agenda, focusing on the importance of marriage and divorce registration for gender equality. Looking ahead, updated knowledge briefs and a global conference in 2025 will support these crucial efforts.

10. AMPLIFYING GENDER DATA THROUGH STRATEGIC FINANCING

New financial commitments are driving global efforts to enhance gender data and promote equity.



In 2024, Melinda French Gates pledged 1 billion USD to support **global**

gender-focused projects, including reproductive rights in the U.S. CRAF'd has committed 3 million USD to gender data projects aimed at enhancing crisis response efforts. UN Women is pioneering **a new index** to improve data and advocacy on violence against women. And the **Data 4 Health Global Grants Program** is focusing on improving health data systems with an emphasis on gender equity and public health decision-making.

As we enter the final five years of the SDGs, the achievements highlighted here reflect the collective effort of numerous partners and funders dedicated to advancing gender equality. With their continued support, Data2X remains committed to addressing the emerging challenges that lie ahead. Leveraging innovative data collection models, cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence, and robust partnerships with the private sector, government bodies, policymakers, and data users, we believe data-driven gender equality is achievable. Together, let's push forward with resolve and innovation—onward to 2030!

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Data2x is a civil society organization and gender data alliance, working with partners to improve the production and use of gender data through strategic partnerships, research, advocacy, and communications.

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