Interactive expert panel

<u>Review theme: Participation in and access of women to the media and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women (CSW Agreed Conclusions 2003)</u>

Innovative data approaches for measuring progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Friday, 16 March 2018, 3.00 - 6.00 p.m., United Nations Headquarters

Overview

At its sixty-second session, the Commission on the Status of Women will evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusion from its forty-seventh session (2003), on the "Participation in and access of women to the media and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women," as its review theme. In addition to the voluntary presentations of Member States, scheduled to take place on 15 March 2018, the evaluation will include an interactive discussion on the need to enhance availability of gender statistics and their use in regard to the review theme at the national, regional and global level (16 March, 3.00 pm to 6.00 pm).

The need to enhance availability of gender statistics and their use are also a key element in the priority theme of the Commission, as well as in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially as currently, information is available for less than one quarter of the indicators to monitor the gender-specific elements of the SDGs. The greater interoperability of different data sources, including through the development and use of new technologies, can provide important opportunities for addressing gender data gaps.

The interactive expert panel will provide an opportunity to address data gaps and challenges for improving the collection, reporting, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and gender statistics. Due to rapid advances in computing, reduced budgets and greater demand, alternative data sources such as Big Data – which refers to large amounts of data coming from mobile phones, social media, geospatial information etc. – are increasingly used in all fields, including by national statistical agencies, governments, businesses and civil society organizations to generate real time information, improve analytics, study people's behaviours and provide more timely and relevant statistics. In an area such as gender statistics where relevant and timely data is often missing, Big Data is increasingly being explored as a way to close gender data gaps.

The interactive expert panel will highlight how conventional data sources combined with non-conventional data sources can be used to fill gender data gaps and improve understanding on key aspects of girls' and women's lives. The panel will also discuss the potential uses and misuses of Big Data from a gender perspective, explore the conditions under which Big Data can contribute to accelerate action for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and discuss the role that State and non-State actors can play to improve data governance in the digital age. Good practices in fostering partnerships and creating an enabling environment for the integration and use of new and traditional sources of data will be discussed.

Format, topics and proposed questions

The interactive expert panel will start with short presentations (8-10 minutes) by five experts from national gender equality mechanisms, academia, civil society organizations and national statistical offices, followed by questions and contributions from Member States and other stakeholders addressed to the panelists.

The panel will focus on two key areas, namely:

> *Topic 1: Closing gender data gaps for effective monitoring and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals for women and girls, the role of Big Data*
>
> *Topic 2: Opportunities and challenges for using information and communication technologies (ICTs) in monitoring the implementation of global, regional and national commitments around gender equality and women's empowerment*

Suggested questions to guide the discussion:

- How can national gender equality mechanisms, academia, civil society organizations and national statistical offices use information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a tool for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment?
- How can non-conventional data sources such as Big Data be used to fill gender data gaps and improve understanding on key aspects of girls' and women's lives? How can official statistical systems at global, regional and national level adapt to this new reality? What are the challenges they face? What are some of the good practices in the use of non-traditional data sources?
- Under what conditions can Big Data contribute to accelerating action for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls? How can data governance in the digital age be improved in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and what is the role of State and non-State actors?

Outcome

The outcome of the discussion will be in the form of a summary by the Chair of the Commission, prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau, and will include steps and measures that can be taken, by different stakeholders, to strengthen the availability and use of data and gender statistics.