ADVOCATING FOR A STRONGER EVIDENCE BASE FOR GENDER EQUALITY:
AN ANALYSIS OF GENDER DATA AND KNOWLEDGE GAPS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gender equality is a key ingredient to the successful implementation of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, at the current pace, there are no countries on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, and it will take another 100 years to reach gender equality.[1,2] Related to these trends, there are a myriad of global, national, and sub-national gender data and knowledge gaps. **To address deep-seated gender inequities, countries need intersectional data to focus efforts and track progress.** When the diverse perspectives of girls and women are incorporated into data and evidence collection, and then translated into action, the resulting policies and programs are more effective and their implementation can be more effectively monitored.

Advocates, academic and research organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector, donors, and governments can advocate for, collect, analyze, and use gender data to build the case for gender equality. Together, efforts to fill gender data and knowledge gaps can be leveraged to make bigger and bolder commitments to improve the lived realities of all people, including girls and women.

In an effort to collate and document these unknowns, Women Deliver conducted a desk review of existing gender data gaps with an intersectional lens. The findings are based on Women Deliver's own work and the work undertaken by other organizations in this space. This working paper contains more than 150 gender data and knowledge gaps across nine thematic areas. The gaps demonstrate where the collection of new data, or the expansion of an evidence base, is necessary to advance gender equality efforts.

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[1] Equal Measures 2030, *Harnessing the Power of Data for Gender Equality: Introducing the 2019 EM2030 SDG Gender Index* (Surrey: Equal Measures 2030, 2019). https://data.em2030.org/2019-global-report/.

[2] World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2020* (Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2019). https://www.weforum.org/reports/gender-gap-2020-report-100-years-pay-equality.

Examples of the topics covered under each of the nine thematic areas are listed below:

MATERNAL, NEWBORN, AND CHILD HEALTH

TOPICS: demographically dissaggregated data, respectful care, maternal morbidities, mortality in humanitarian settings, local capacity, and service delivery

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

TOPICS: abortion, self-care, political and socio-cultural barriers, services for youth and marginalized populations, quality and accessibility of services, and comprehensive sexuality education

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH SERVICES

TOPICS: universal health coverage, utilization of services, care across the lifespan, noncommunicable and infectious diseases, funding, and governance frameworks

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES

TOPICS: conflict-based violence, gender norms, systems of protection and redress, multi-sectoral interventions, and data on various forms of gender-based violence

QUALITY EDUCATION

TOPICS: educational outcomes, technological advances, education for out-of-school children, efficiencies in the educational system, and biases in science and technology

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

TOPICS: unpaid care and the informal economy, decent work and social protections for workers, gender-sensitive work environments, financial inclusion, and agency over assets

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND DECISION-MAKING POWER

TOPICS: violence in politics, representation at local levels, leadership and impact across sectors, civic and online spaces, and women's movements

ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

TOPICS: governance over natural resources, land security, disaster risk management, resource-related violence, agency and use, and environmental impacts on women

CLIMATE CHANGE

TOPICS: local knowledge and practices, clean energy technologies, feminist action in adaptation strategies, gendered impacts, and leadership and representation

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the analysis, two key overarching trends emerged. First, it is the full acknowledgement that girls' and women's experiences are not one-dimensional, and thus, the gaps that need the most urgent attention are those that break down silos and capture intersectionality. Second, across the thematic areas, there were similarities in gaps that pertain to various issues, including youth, male, and community engagement, the impact of women's leadership and movements, the emerging role of technology and innovation, private sector and donor responsibilities, the effect of migration and forced displacement, legal frameworks, and the need for cost-benefit analysis.

The gaps noted represent learning opportunities that advocates, academic and research organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector, donors, and governments can leverage to better fight for and address the needs of girls and women. To ensure findings will propel the transformative change envisioned in the SDGs, efforts to address these gaps must:

1. **Accurately capture intersectionality and the effect of sociocultural and political environments.** Gender, age, race, ethnicity, education level, and economic standing (among others) are all factors in a person's identity. These factors must be accounted for when designing policies and programs to address the unique needs of underserved populations.

2. **Actively gather data on the needs and experiences of marginalized populations** to ensure no one is left behind. This requires concerted efforts to capture data on, and the perspectives of, girls and women in humanitarian settings, migrants, girls and women outside of the reproductive age range, unmarried women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) people, people with disabilities, and indigenous people.

3. **Meaningfully engage girls and women in the collection and use of gender data and knowledge** to reduce and prevent bias in data collection, generation of evidence, and policy development.

4. **Leverage multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder partnerships** to fill gender-related data gaps in innovative ways, with an emphasis on collaboration, consultation, and transparency, and support governments in their efforts to build sustainable civil registration and vital statistics systems.

5. **Use evidence for advocacy, accountability, policy, and programmatic efforts** by continuously incorporating data, knowledge, and evidence throughout development and implementation.

For more information, visit the full report: Advocating for a Stronger Evidence Base for Gender Equality: An Analysis of Gender Data and Knowledge Gaps.