



## **Better Data to Better Monitor the Status of Women in Informal Employment, Unpaid Work and Work in Rural Areas and Agriculture**

*Joint ILO-Data2X roundtable discussion to review actions underway and next steps*

*Meeting Summary: October 1-2, 2014  
ILO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland*

### **1. Summary**

A joint ILO-Data2X roundtable, held on October 1-2, 2014 in Geneva, brought together representatives from country statistical offices, key international and regional organizations, donors, NGOs, and users. The focus of the discussions was on gender data gaps to monitor the status of women in informal employment, unpaid work and work in rural areas and agriculture. The data sources covered included household surveys, including labour force surveys and time use surveys, administrative records, agriculture census and special agriculture and rural integrated surveys and employment-based establishment surveys. The roundtable was successful in highlighting various technical and operational issues that need to be addressed and identifying opportunities for data improvement. In its final action planning session, it agreed on the next steps taking note of many excellent suggestions made by participants both on what should be the priority areas as well as suggestions on how to proceed. The six main actions areas are:

1. Operationalizing the 19<sup>th</sup> ICLS Resolution on work statistics standards is a priority, and this will require technical assistance and additional resources tailored to country capacity and needs. The Roundtable recognized that although this will be a global effort, special attention for many African countries is needed.
2. Going forward will demand building strong partnerships, sharpening our collective vision and coordinating actions. No one agency can do this alone, including donors, TA providers, and main implementers. Partnerships should mobilize additional resources for providing TA and supporting implementation.
3. We need to increase the value of the data collected and make the case for better data use, including better tools for data repositories, open data, and data dissemination.
4. There is a need for better data coordination and harmonization to reduce the burden of data reporting on countries through better coordination of different surveys and questionnaires.
5. We should build on some of the tested and proven cases using innovative approaches, better use of technology and use of big data. Some examples presented at the Roundtable included using e-census, administrative and other big data sources, and innovations in survey data collection.
6. We need to continue to advocate for the importance of closing gender data gaps in informal and unpaid work, paying special attention to unpaid work in agriculture, and take advantage of the increased attention to development data as part of the Data Revolution and Post 2015 development agenda and opportunities for resource mobilization.

The ILO-Data2X team, in collaboration with FAO, will follow up on the suggestions made and welcomes collaboration with all agencies represented at the Roundtable.



## 2. Objectives of the Roundtable

Experts were brought together to look into ways to reduce existing data gaps to better measure and improve the condition of women in the world of work. This is an opportune time for taking action to improve gaps in these data. There is significant political attention being paid to gender data coming from the post-2015 Development Agenda, the call for a Data Revolution, and the 20-year follow up to the UN Beijing Conference. Also, there is global recognition among official producers of statistics of the need to measure all forms of work, paid and unpaid, as evidenced by the latest statistical standards adopted by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2013.

The purpose of this roundtable discussion was to engage the interest, draw from the national experiences, and support the further development of the work statistics programmes of countries and international organizations, as main producers and users of gender and work statistics. The roundtable brought together key stakeholders to review progress and agree on actions that could help to improve practices for producing and disseminating statistics in fundamental policy areas related to gender and the world of work, namely, informal employment, unpaid work, and work in rural areas and agriculture. The list of participants and meeting agenda are enclosed, and presentation slides can be accessed [here](#).<sup>1</sup>

## 3. Background

In October 2013 the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (19th ICLS) adopted a new resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization<sup>2</sup> that revised the previous international statistical standards used by countries to produce their official national statistics on employment and unemployment. The new resolution introduces a comprehensive framework on work statistics as well as a set of measures of labour underutilization to complement the unemployment rate that could have large implications for measuring women's participation in all forms of work, paid and unpaid, and for assessing differences in their access to full and productive employment.

The framework is an important contribution to the international standards to recognize all productive activities, paid and unpaid, as work. It further refines the definition of employment as work performed for pay or profit to better support monitoring of labour markets and identifies other forms of work on which to produce separate statistics. Particularly relevant for recognizing women's work is the new concept of own-use production work that includes both production of goods and provision of services intended for the household or family. Full and separate measurement of participation in these unpaid productive activities will pave the way for a more complete assessment of work performed mainly by women and of its contribution to the economy, to household livelihoods and wellbeing. It will also help shed light on differences in work patterns across urban and rural areas by providing a basis for the comprehensive

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<sup>1</sup> Link for presentations: [http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS\\_314061/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_314061/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>2</sup> *Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization* (19<sup>th</sup> ICLS, 2013) available at: [http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/resolutions-adopted-by-international-conferences-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS\\_230304/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/resolutions-adopted-by-international-conferences-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_230304/lang--en/index.htm)



measurement of subsistence activities, including in agriculture and fishing, which to date remain poorly accounted for in official statistics.

The new resolution expands the body of international statistical standards particularly relevant for addressing gender issues in the world of work, that include those on measuring informal sector employment and informal employment (1993, 2003) as well as on promoting gender mainstreaming in labour statistics (2003). Together, these standards are meant to contribute to strengthening the knowledge base on the world of work and to provide policy makers with more targeted labour market information that adequately reflects the situation of different population groups, including women, youth and persons living in rural areas, so as to support the formulation of inclusive development policies.

The ultimate goal of having better data to better monitor the status of women, however, requires sustained efforts by all stakeholders. A coordinated strategy, bringing together producers, users, regional and international agencies, and development partners will be required in order to promote the implementation of the new standards as part of the national strategies for statistical development and to ensure long-term sustainability. The ILO is now focusing on promoting the implementation of the adopted ICLS standards and guidelines through methodological tests that support the identification of good practices in data collection and technical assistance and training programs aimed at strengthening national statistical capacity. Countries have started to embark on a review of their labour statistics programmes in order to incorporate the new standards, which will require a review of their labour force surveys, and other household surveys, as well as population and agricultural censuses. Also, regional and international partners will play an important role in planning and supporting the implementation of the new standards and guidelines.

New resources, including technical and financial, are required for building awareness and implementation of the needed changes. A coordinated approach is required in order to promote their integration as part of the national strategies for statistical development and to ensure their long-term sustainability. Increased support is also needed to stimulate and encourage data use for policy and decision making processes.

#### **4. Roundtable format**

The roundtable was structured around panel discussions addressing some of the main challenges and opportunities. Welcoming remarks by Gilbert Hounbo, ILO Deputy Director General for Field Operations and Partnerships, set the stage for the meeting. An outstanding keynote address, delivered by Dr. Jayati Ghosh, Professor of Economics, Centre for Economic Studies and Planning at Jawaharlal Nehru University, India inspired the participants. She highlighted the sharp difference in recording women's work participation rates in India using the traditional versus the new definitions of work and employment and offered suggestions for modifications to national surveys to better address gender data gaps in the world of work. The panel sessions that followed covered national perspectives (with representatives from five national statistical offices), regional and international support systems, and the role of donor agencies, academics, and NGOs. A final planning session brought together the outcomes from each panel to agree on identifying concrete follow-up activities, as well as partnerships and modalities for collaboration. The



Roundtable also covered the Data Revolution in a special session, including a briefing on the status of work by the UN Secretary General's newly formed Independent Expert Advisory Group on Data Revolution.

## 5. Meeting outcomes and follow-up

The meeting identified key themes and areas for further elaboration and action in the months ahead:

### 1. Technical assistance and resources are needed for operationalizing the 19<sup>th</sup> ICLS Resolution on work statistics; implementation should be tailored to country needs and capacity

- Different strategies have been adopted to harmonize and standardize concepts, variables and classifications as well as address the needs for better gender statistics, e.g.: Brazil used an integrated continuous survey, and Albania used multiple surveys over a specific time period. Countries such as these can benefit further from implementation of the 19<sup>th</sup> ICLS Resolution on work statistics.
- Sharing such practices is important to foster cross-national learning. This can be done through skill-building/bringing in experts for advice or training the trainer.
- Piloting at country level should be done to test and compare implementation strategies with a focus on gender.
- Pilots should address transitions and ensuring consistent time series data going forward.
- Pilots could also look into mainstreaming data production and use through the NSDS guidelines and national processes.
- Local support to national statistical offices (NSOs) is key; the best household surveys and labor data exist where NSOs had specific and tailored support. There are many examples of well-funded but unsuccessful surveys, so more than financial support is required. Technical support from the ILO at the country level is needed.
- Building leadership within NSOs would facilitate this process. Statisticians are not usually trained in development, so a bridge must be made. This key point should be brought to attention within the Data Revolution.
- While this effort is global, a gender data program with special attention to Africa is needed. One approach suggested is to collaborate with the International Household Survey Network (IHSN) and have a forward-looking plan of HH surveys to guide TA support.

### 2. Partnerships

- Partnerships must be well specified, and funding built around those specifications.
- An important partnership focus should be on implementation of the 19<sup>th</sup> ICLS Resolution on work statistics and mainstreaming of gender in full labour force surveys or modules as part of household surveys.
- Cooperation between global, regional, and local actors is required.
- Includes bringing donors, TA providers, and recipients to one platform.
- Partnerships will demonstrate a shared agenda, and encourage cross-sector collaboration.
- Funding should focus on systemic changes rather than project-based or one-off.
- Donor funding should incentivize countries to adopt the new 19<sup>th</sup> ICLS Resolution on work statistics recommendations.
- Need to map and understand available resources and existing or newly established trust funds.
- UN Regional commissions may be good platforms for addressing common concerns.
- Consider how partnership is led, governed, and fed with resources.



- Political support is needed. Convince leaders that gender and work data is indispensable for policymaking.

### **3. Increase the value of the gender data that is collected: Make the case for better data use, data repository, and data dissemination**

- Gender data dissemination and stimulating use of this data makes the case for having it, and producing more of it.
- Improving coordination mechanisms between data users and producers (and between data producers themselves) is important.
- There has been some progress in these areas, but we need to do much better. We can build on the momentum of the Data Revolution.
- Can start by harvesting existing gender data (e.g. administrative data) and making better use of these data.

### **4. Need for better harmonization**

- We need harmonization both across surveys and questionnaires and across countries, while recognizing the importance of tailoring to local needs. Need to identify where to harmonize and where to localize.
- Requests from international organizations and users could also benefit from better harmonization to reduce reporting burden.
- Harmonization is needed within regional integration mechanisms such as the EU, ensuring consistency with ICLS statistical standards.
- There are many opportunities for Time Use data collection improvement, and improving operational guidelines on unpaid work.

### **5. Innovation and better use of technology**

- Tested and proven useful cases, for example Oman's e-census, are welcomed.
- New forms of data (big data, including administrative data) can be tapped alongside strengthening of official gender statistics.
- Yet, there is still significant skepticism about value of big data.
- However, we need to find ways of working with digital/new data sources to meet increasing demand for rapid/instant information on gender and different forms of work.
- We should continue supporting open data particularly for more access to micro level gender data.

### **6. Advocacy, communication, and resource mobilization**

- Political leaders should be persuaded of the importance of strengthening statistics in the world of work, with a focus on gender, informality, unpaid work and rural work, and especially the linkages with evidence-based policy to alleviate poverty.
- Communicate widely and advocate for the importance of gender data in the world of work.
- Take advantage of the Data Revolution, which is not only for monitoring the SDGs but also for the wider data agenda.
- Act on opportunities for resource mobilization: Proposals to existing or suggestions for any new trust funds to have a window for this area.



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**Attachments: agenda, list of participants, and link to copies of presentations**



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Informal Employment, Unpaid Work and Work in Rural Areas and Agriculture**

Joint ILO-Data2X Roundtable discussion to review actions underway and next steps  
Geneva, 1-2 October 2014, ILO Conference Room III

TIME	ITEM
<b>DAY 1</b>	<b>Wednesday, October 1</b>
8:30-9:30	Participant Registration
	<b>Opening session</b>
9:30-10:15	Welcoming remarks by Gilbert Hounbo, ILO Deputy Director General for Field Operations and Partnerships  Keynote address by Jayati Ghosh, Professor of Economics, Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, Jawaharlal Nehru University
10:15-10:45	Coffee break
	<b>Session 1: setting the stage for the roundtable discussion: What is the status of gender data to monitor informal employment, unpaid work, and work in rural areas and agriculture and what are the opportunities for improvements, partnerships, and innovations?</b>
10:45-12:30	<b>Chair:</b> Ruth Levine, Global Development and Population Program Director, Hewlett Foundation <b>Panelists:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayra Bunivic, Senior Fellow, UN Foundation</li> <li>• Manuela Tomei, Director of the Conditions of Work and Equality Department, ILO</li> <li>• Rafael Diez de Medina, Chief Statistician, ILO</li> <li>• Piero Conforti, Economist/Statistician, FAO</li> </ul> <p>Followed by open discussion and comments from all participants</p>
12:30-14:00	LUNCH
	<b>Session 2: National perspectives on data gaps on topics under discussion; examples of innovative or good practice activities underway; and examples of challenges faced to meet the demand for gender-disaggregated data in labour statistics and for gender-disaggregated data in agriculture and rural statistics.</b>



14:00-15:00	<p><b>Chair:</b> Pali Lehohla, Statistician-General, South Africa</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barbara Cobo Soares, Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), Brazil</li> <li>• Pranvera Elezi, Head of Labour Market Statistics Sector, Institute of Statistics, Albania</li> <li>• Khalifa Al-Barwani, Chief Executive Officer, National Centre for Statistics and Information, Oman</li> </ul> <p>Followed by open discussion and comments from all participants</p>
15:00-15:15	Coffee Break
	<p><b>Session 3: National perspectives on data gaps on topics under discussion; examples of innovative or good practice activities underway; and examples of challenges faced to meet the demand for gender-disaggregated data in labour statistics and for gender-disaggregated data in agriculture and rural statistics.</b></p>
15:15-16:15	<p><b>Chair:</b> Monica Castillo, Senior Statistician, ILO</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul Gérard Ravelomanantsoa, Director General, National Institute of Statistics, Madagascar</li> <li>• Agnieszka Zgierska, Director of the Demographic and Labour Market Surveys, Poland</li> <li>• Wafaa Maged, Senior Statistician in Gender Statistics, Egypt</li> </ul> <p>Followed by open discussion and comments from all participants</p>
16:15-17:15	<p><b>Special session to discuss the Data Revolution and latest news from the UN Secretary General’s Independent Experts Advisory Group (IEAG)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaida Badiee, Open Data Watch</li> <li>• Pali Lehohla, Statistician-General, South Africa</li> </ul>
17:30	Cocktail offered by ILO

<b>Day 2</b>	<b>Thursday, October 2</b>
	<p><b>Session 4: Regional and international support systems; what is the extent of demand for gender-disaggregated data on the topics under discussion in the organizations represented? What support is being provided to countries; are there opportunities for more innovative approaches, better coordination and partnership?</b></p>
9:00-10:30	<p><b>Chair:</b> Juraj Riecan, Director Statistics Division, UNECWA</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andres Vikat, Chief, Social and Demographic Statistics, UNECE</li> <li>• Francesca Grum, Chief, Social and Housing Statistics, UNSD</li> <li>• Monica Castillo, Senior Statistician, ILO</li> <li>• Kathleen Beegle, Lead Economist, Africa Region World Bank</li> </ul> <p>Followed by open discussion and comments from all participants</p>



10:30-11:00	Coffee Break
	<b>Session 5: Donor agencies and private sector perspective: what is the extent of demand for gender-disaggregated data on the topics under discussion in the organizations represented? What support is being provided to countries; are there opportunities for more innovative approaches, better coordination and partnership?</b>
11:00-12:30	<p><b>Chair:</b> Rafael Diez de Medina, Chief Statistician, ILO</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masako Hiraga, Senior Statistician/Economist, World Bank</li> <li>• Joann Vanek, Co-Director of Statistics Program, WIEGO</li> <li>• El Iza Mohamedou, Deputy Secretariat Manager, Paris21</li> <li>• Ruth Levine, Global Development and Population Program Director, Hewlett Foundation</li> <li>• Alice Nabalamba, Principal Statistician, Statistics Department, AfDB</li> </ul> <p>Followed by open discussion and comments from all participants</p>
12:30-14:00	LUNCH
	<b>Session 6: Action plan</b>
14:00-15:00	<p><b>Chair:</b> Misha Belkindas, Managing Director, Open Data Watch</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pali Jobo Lehohla, Statistician-General, Statistics South Africa</li> <li>• Juraj Riecan, Director Statistics Division, UNECWA</li> <li>• Rafael Diez de Medina, Chief Statistician, ILO</li> <li>• Ruth Levine, Global Development and Population Program Director, Hewlett Foundation</li> <li>• Monica Castillo, Senior Statistician, ILO</li> </ul>
	<b>Wrap-up session</b>
15:00-15:30	Closing remarks by the organizers and review of the agreed priority actions and timelines



List of Participants

<b>Country Participants</b>	
Pali Jobo Lehohla	South Africa
Agnieszka Zgierska	Poland
Barbara Cobo Soares	Brazil
Paul Gérard Ravelomanantsoa	Madagascar
Pranvera Elezi	Albania
Khalifa Al-Barwani	Oman

<b>Other Participants</b>	
El Iza Mohamedou	PARIS21
Andres Vikat	UNECE
Juraj Riecan	UNECWA
Kathleen Beegle	World Bank
Gbemisola Oseni	World Bank
Alice Nabalamba	AfDB
Joann Vanek	WIEGO statistics
Francesca Grum	UNSD
Masako Hiraga	World Bank
PIRELLA PACI	World Bank
Jayati Ghosh	Jawaharlal Nehru University
Carlotta Balestra	OECD
Ruth Levine	Hewlett
Lidia Bratanova	UNECE
Piero Conforti	FAO
Andrea den Boer	WomenSTATS
Fatouma Sissoko	UNECA
Elisenda Estruch	FAO
Moa Cortobius	UNDP/SIWI
Aphichoke (Andy) Kotikula	World Bank
Jordan Beecher	Development Initiatives



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Laura Addati
Susan Maybud
Manuela Tomei
Benedetta Magri-Short

**Link for presentations:** [http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS\\_314061/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_314061/lang--en/index.htm)