WORKING PARTY ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING & GOVERNANCE

SYMPOSIUM

ON STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT CAPACITIES FOR GENDER-SENSITIVE DATA & EVIDENCE

Thursday, 16 June

1.30 pm – 4.45 pm (CEST)

Zoom

OECD

BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

Strengthening Government Capacities for Gender-sensitive Data and Evidence

OBJECTIVES OF THE SYMPOSIUM

Data and evidence are an integral part of policy design and action, and are core to effective gender mainstreaming. They are a strategic asset for inclusive policy-making and service delivery, thus helping democracies deliver on people's needs and expectations. This is in line with the OECD vision statement and Public Governance Committee's Reinforcing Democracy Initiative, particularly its Pillar 2 on Representation and Participation in Public Life.

Yet, the 2022 Report on the Implementation of OECD Gender Recommendations[1] presented at the OECD's Ministerial Council Meeting in June 2022 highlighted the lack of gender-sensitive and intersectional data as a key barrier to gender-sensitive and inclusive decision-making, including gender mainstreaming. In addition, it revealed the absence of relevant data as a core barrier for gender-sensitive and inclusive emergency and recovery measures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Today, gender-disaggregated data is mainly available in areas such as labour markets, education and social protection, but often lacking in many others such as economic recovery policy, environmental protection and other sectors seen as "gender neutral" (e.g., banking, infrastructure, and agriculture). Data that captures multiple sociodemographic variables such as age, income level or education, thus reflecting the intersectional nature of individual situations is particularly scarce.

OECD Members reported a range of barriers for collecting gender-sensitive data, including limited financial and human resources, limited understanding of data gaps and needs in different sectors and areas of governance, uneven infrastructure and coordination mechanisms for data collection across stakeholders, privacy and ethical concerns, frequent absence of demand for data from line ministries, central agencies and other government bodies, etc. Broader governance challenges with ensuring the collection and access to the right data were also reported.

In parallel, in recent years, there has been a gradual yet steady expansion in the data types, sources, and methods used to drive data-driven policy-making, such as open data, social media data, data mining, crowdsourcing, data linking, and so on. New technologies and data science methods using Machine Learning, Web Scraping, etc. continue to present new opportunities for data to support evidence-based policymaking. If carefully designed, these alternative data sources may help expand the availability of evidence to advance gender equality and drive inclusive policy-making for better outcomes. However, these opportunities often also come with a fair share of challenges including the security and privacy of datasets, interoperability challenges, and lack of data literacy and skills amongst public officials.

In this context, this Symposium aims to offer a platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue on enhancing gender-sensitive and intersectional data and evidence to support better policy- and decision-making across OECD countries.

The environment, tax and trade sectors will be used as specific areas of focus for discussions where possible to offer concrete examples of sectoral approaches to develop gender-sensitive data. Where relevant, examples from other sectors (e.g., labour market and social policy) would be highlighted as good practice. Horizontal policy areas such as tackling gender-based violence will also offer insights into good practices and lessons learned.

The Symposium invites policymakers, experts, and private actors to explore three core questions:

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[1] OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship [OECD/LEGAL/0398] and the OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life [OECD/LEGAL/0418].

(a) What are the data and evidence needs for inclusive and gender-sensitive policy-, decision-making and service delivery?

(b) What are some of the key types and sources of gender-sensitive and intersectional data and evidence? How can new technologies and data sources help close the gaps in the availability of data to support inclusive policy-making? What are the related risks and opportunities?

(c) What are the core elements of the data ecosystem (*e.g., coordination mechanisms, infrastructure, capacities, privacy and ethical considerations*) that need to be in place for producing and using relevant data and evidence?

13:30 – 13:45

Opening Remarks & Scene Setting

Keynote:
- *Anna Thompson, Deputy Director, Strategy, Communications & International, Government Equalities Office, United Kingdom; Vice-Chair of the Working Party on Gender Mainstreaming and Governance*
- *Elsa Pilichowski, Director of Public Governance, OECD*

13:45 – 14:45

Session 1. Building a 'portfolio of evidence': Identifying gender-sensitive data needs

Gender-sensitive and inclusive policy-making rely on a wide range of data types and evidence to inform government decision making and action, as underlined in the OECD Policy Framework for Gender-sensitive Public Governance.

This session will aim to consider the different data and evidence (both qualitative and quantitative) needs of decision-makers to support inclusive and gender-sensitive policies and services. It will also aim to identify the types of data needed to build a "portfolio of evidence" to accelerate gender mainstreaming across the whole-of-government, especially in selected policy areas where such data gaps are most pronounced (i.e., environment and trade).

More specifically, the session will aim to highlight sector-specific examples (.e.g., trade, tax and environment) as well as horizontal policy examples (e.g., gender-based violence) to help identify country examples, good practices and challenges, and consider the following questions for discussion:

- When do policy-makers *need* gender-sensitive and inclusive data & evidence for decision-making (e.g., designing legislative proposals, service delivery, policy evaluation, across sectors), and who are the *main stakeholders* who require the data?

- What are the main *types of data and evidence needed to support inclusive decision-making?* What are the challenges in identifying, collecting and using gender-sensitive and inclusive data for policy-making and government action? What are the examples of sectoral differences in the types of required data?

- What are the examples of successful measurement frameworks, including in specific sectors, for identifying collecting and using gender-sensitive and inclusive data and evidence? How can government institutions find a balance between the need for data and resource constraints?

Speakers:

- *Lauren Emerson, Senior Women's Economic Empowerment Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Lead, Programs Team, US Department of State, United States*

- *Lucie Morin, Senior Advisor, Treasury Board Secretariat, Canada*

- *Paul Williamson, Head of Analytical Team, Government's Equality Data Programme, United Kingdom*

14:45 – 15:30

Session 2. Expanding the types of sources and technologies for gender-sensitive data and evidence

Policy makers have a variety of data and evidence sources at their disposal to tap into for integrating gender and intersectional lens in policy-making. These include, but not limited to, official statistics, surveys administrative data (produced by a broad range of public institutions), research data, or information generated by policy, program and service evaluators. A structured approach to identifying the availability of and using these data sources can facilitate more inclusive-policy decisions.

In addition, recent years have seen an expansion in the possibilities offered by data science for evidence-driven policymaking. There has been a growth in the types of data generated due to new technologies and digitalisation, such as social media data, (real-time) sensor data, mobile phone data, etc. This has been accompanied by advances in techniques for data collection and analysis (such as crowdsourcing, predictive analytics, data mining, text and image analysis, etc.) as well as techniques for data integration and reuse. In parallel, progress has been made in the tools and standards used in data analysis, namely through open-source programming languages, data visualization, cloud computing, reproducible research, as well as data collection and storage infrastructure. There is an opportunity to explore the relevance of these advances to expand the collection, accessibility, availability and use of gender-sensitive and intersectional data for evidence-driven policymaking, while ensuring the ethicality and security around the use of these innovations.

In this context, this session will consider the following issues for discussion, with specific attention to examples across different sectors (.e.g., trade, tax and environment) and horizontal policy examples (e.g., gender-based violence).

- What are the sources of data for gender-sensitive and intersectional policy making across sectors? How can policy makers tap into the potential of administrative data in this regard and facilitate its enhanced use?

- What are the challenges and opportunities for collecting intersectional data? What can we learn from works?

- How to explore the potential of alternative sources of data and evidence where needed to support inclusive decision-making? What is the relevance of new technologies to expand the availability and use of data and evidence for inclusive decision-making? What are some practical examples and associated risks (e.g., privacy and ethical considerations)?

Speakers:

- *Phil Mellor, Lead Economist, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, New Zealand*

- *Mohan Reddy, Co-founder and Chief Technical Officer, SkyHive*

- *Luca Villamaina, Official, Department of Finance, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Italy*

Moderator:

- *Jeff Latimer, Director General, Statistics Canada, Canada*

15:30 – 15:40 Short Break

15:40 – 16:30

Session 3. Strengthening governance & capacities for gender-sensitive and intersectional data and evidence

Across governments, gender-sensitive and intersectional data and evidence are often collected, used or managed by a range of actors across different sectors. While these arrangements create many opportunities, they also raise challenges in coordination and governance such as the capacities and skills needed, especially across sectors, interoperability of systems and technologies used, ways to ensure data privacy and security. The challenge is also to ensure that the right data and evidence are available to the right decision-makers at the right time. Improving the production, availability, accessibility, quality, and usage of gender-sensitive and intersectional data and evidence thus calls for developing a whole-of-government approach and data ecosystem, which is aligned with the gender equality goals while being integrated into the broader data governance infrastructure.

This session will reflect on the necessary building blocks for the data ecosystem for gender equality and inclusive decision-making, including coordination mechanisms for improving gender-sensitive data and evidence, roles and responsibilities across relevant stakeholders (e.g., national statistical offices, central gender institutions, line ministries, etc.). The session will also explore ways to deal with the challenges such as access costs, legacy issues in systems, inherent biases in data, granularity and interoperability of datasets, data privacy and security, etc. Finally, it will touch upon the capacities and skills needed by public officials for effectively collaborating for better data and evidence governance to meet gender equality and inclusiveness goals.

More specifically, this session will consider the following issues for discussion. To the extent possible, it will use sector-specific examples (.e.g., trade, tax and environment) as well as horizontal policy examples (e.g., gender-based violence) to identify good practices and challenges.

- What are the building blocks of an efficient data governance ecosystem for gender equality and inclusiveness? What is the role and required capacities of different institutional actors (e.g., line ministries, central gender institutions, national statistics offices, parliaments, courts and other data producers)?

- How can coordination between different actors, such as line ministries, gender institutions, national statistics, non-governmental stakeholders, academia and holders of administrative data such as service providers in different areas be enhanced? What are the promising practices emerging in this regard? How can cross-sectoral collaboration between public and private entities facilitate the use of data sources in policymaking?

- What is the role of user engagement in the statistical value chain? What role data users can play in increasing the demand the availability of gender-sensitive data, such as parliamentarians, media or civil society gender equality advocates?

- What are the key challenges in ensuring interoperability and privacy of datasets between different administrative bodies and institutions to enable reuse and linking of gender-disaggregated and intersectional data?

Speakers:

- *Giuseppina Muratore, Senior Researcher, National Statistics Institute ISTAT, Italy*

- *Jahanara Saeed, Program Manager, Open Data Watch*

- *Joshua Taylor, Research Analyst, Evaluation and Analysis, Safe Lives Initiative*

16:30 – 16:45

Conclusions and wrap up

Keynote:

- *Daniel Pettersson, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the OECD*