

## Partnership Expert Meeting on Gender and ICT Indicators

3 December 2013, 14.00 – 18.00  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mexico City, Mexico

### Summary of the meeting

The Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development organized an Expert Meeting on measuring gender and ICT. The meeting discussed the proposals in the report entitled “Stocktaking and Assessment on Measuring ICT and Gender” commissioned by the Partnership Task Group on Gender and ICT (TGG), which is co-chaired by ITU and UNCTAD. The report was supported financially by the Government of Sweden.

Experts from international organizations and selected countries examined the policy relevance and feasibility of measurement of proposed gender-related indicators on ICT household access and individual ICT use, ICT-related employment, ICT business use and entrepreneurship, ICT in education and e-government. The indicators discussed are just proposals subject to further discussion and will not necessarily become core indicators.

#### On household access and individual use

The Expert Meeting acknowledged the existing Partnership core ICT household indicators that can be disaggregated by sex. Participants mentioned that it will not be a problem collecting the data for those indicators from a methodological point of view. However, participants mentioned that resources remain an issue in most national statistical offices from developing countries and collecting ICT indicators therefore remains a challenge. The meeting noted the proposed new indicators on mobile phone ownership, barriers to Internet use by individuals, and proportion of individuals using a mobile phone by type of activity. Clarifications on the purpose of mobile phone use by activity indicator were discussed at length during the meeting. Some participants mentioned that there is some difficulty in collecting data on mobile phone ownership. The meeting further noted that the sex of the household is another useful indicator identified by the report. However, discussions on how to properly identify/define the head of the household followed, as it is an issue for many countries. In most cases, the question on who is the head of the household is left to the respondent. This could affect the results if the operational definition of household head is not properly tackled.

One participant suggested that the indicator “proportion of victims of cybercrimes who are women” could be another useful indicator to measure while others thought that measuring those using multiple devices from different places could be another interesting indicator.

Finally, participants asked whether the new proposed indicators will eventually be included in the core list of ICT indicators. ITU highlighted that the objective was not to expand the core list, but the ultimate goal was to encourage countries to collect the data for those indicators that currently exist. It was highlighted that if countries collect ICT household data, then usually sex-disaggregated data were also collected.

## **On employment**

The Expert Meeting acknowledged the need to collect ICT employment indicators and discussed some of the challenges and best practices in measuring these indicators. Such measurement is motivated by the need to capture and analyse employment effects associated with the production and deployment of ICT, as well as by the increasing importance of ICT user skills for employment opportunities.

The Expert Meeting discussed three complementary approaches to measuring ICT employment: employment in the ICT sector (jobs in establishments that produce ICT goods and services), employment in ICT occupations (jobs that require skills in the production of ICT goods and services – both within and beyond the ICT sector), ICT-skilled employment (jobs that require ICT user skills). Each of these approaches can be used for generating sex-disaggregated ICT employment data.

Under ICT sector employment – which is an existing Partnership core indicator - it was proposed that the current data collection be disaggregated by sex and that the denominator be changed from total business employment to total employment. This would facilitate comparability with the proposed indicator on ICT occupations as well as with widely available statistics on total employment.

With respect to employment in ICT occupations, it was proposed to identify groups of occupations involved in the production of ICT goods and services as an alternative or thematic view of ISCO-08. The ISCO-08 sub-major groups for ICT professionals and ICT technicians would be included. Agreement will be needed on the other occupation groups to be included as there were some grey areas. For example it was not clear whether occupations such as graphic and multimedia designers, and ICT trainers should be included. Countries that have employment data, for example from labour force surveys, classified by or linked to ISCO-08 categories at four digit level would be able to compile this indicator.

The third approach discussed aimed at measuring the larger pool of jobs that require skills in the use of ICT. These jobs would also need to be identified on the basis of ISCO-08 categories, probably at 4-digit level. Identification of the occupation groups to be included would be more challenging, however. As the range of occupations that require ICT skills is constantly increasing, it would be difficult to interpret time series on this indicator.

The meeting also discussed the pros and cons of different data sources such as household surveys, labour force surveys, establishment surveys and administrative records.

Two additional measurement areas were brought to attention: (1) the use of data on job-seekers and job vacancies sourced from employment agencies, classified by occupation and possibly also by skill, could provide information on supply and demand for ICT skills and (2) the policy relevance of measuring types of job such as online jobs and website designers/developers, which are less specialized in ICT but have thrived in developing countries.

## **On education**

Sex disaggregation on ICT usage in schools could be examined through proxies, such as learner-to-computer ratios for schools with high male enrolment versus female enrolment. The meeting noted the desirability of population-based indicators in order to better reflect digital divide in society, since current enrolment indicators ignore out-of-school children.

The UIS wishes to collect more sex-disaggregated statistics on usage and on outcomes; however it is difficult to accomplish this through much of the administrative data currently available. Sample based studies in a number of countries would be invaluable to shedding light on gender disparities; however this would be very costly.

The UIS recognises the need to be strategic with newly proposed indicators and will need to further consult with countries in order to identify, which indicators to include. UIS also will consider how to include the core tertiary level indicator in UIS data collections.

The meeting looked forward to the outcome of a technical advisory panel planned in 2014 to further discuss data collection on ICTs in education, including additional exploration of the topic of gender. The results of a first global survey on ICTs in education will be conducted in 2015.

### **On business use and entrepreneurship**

The meeting discussed the feasibility of introducing sex disaggregation in the data collection of existing core indicators on ICT use by businesses, in particular on whether indicators could be produced per the gender composition of the workforce. The discussion noted that the main challenge to obtaining information on whether an enterprise's workforce is female or male dominated, if conducted through business surveys, is that it would require an additional respondent. The general information on the gender composition of the workforce might be better obtained from an economic census rather than from a specific ICT survey. This kind of data has yet to be collected and would require a trial run.

Proposed indicators on entrepreneurship would gather information on the proportion of micro or small business owners/entrepreneurs using the Internet and mobile phones by type of activity and by sex of owner. The meeting recognized the desirability of such indicators, but also the difficulties in measurement.

It was noted that small business owners and entrepreneurs are not the same; not all small business owners are entrepreneurs, and not all entrepreneurs are small business owners. This should be better defined. In addition there might be difficulties in identifying business owners in large businesses. In addition, the survey vehicles that gather information on micro and small enterprises, often in the informal sector, are not business surveys and require a different methodology. The ILO Manual on informality issued on October 2013 can be used as reference when discussing such methodology. It seemed likely that results would not be comparable between countries, and since one of the Partnership's objectives is to promote the international comparability of ICT indicators, it might be that these are out of its scope. It was suggested that the Partnership look deeper into the feasibility of dealing with these indicators by making an inventory of what's available.

### **On e-government**

Supply side data on government employees using ICT are not yet available. Sex disaggregation on these indicators could be collected, but no further discussion took place in the Expert Meeting.

A general suggestion was made that the Partnership documents and disseminates good practices in ICT data production, so that all developing countries can refer to them as guidance.

### **Overall conclusions and way forward**

The TGG report was made available in advance of the meeting on the main website (<http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/events/wtis2013/documents.aspx>) of the ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS). The outcome of the Expert Meeting was reported during the WTIS Partnership session on “Measuring Gender and ICT”; country delegations and international experts were invited to submit written comments on the report by 10 January 2014. Comments received on the first report will feed into a second phase of the TGG work focusing on methodological aspects of the proposed indicators.