



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission on the Status of Women

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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and  
to the special session of the General Assembly entitled  
“Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for  
the twenty-first century”

### Statement submitted by Wellesley Centers for Women, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.



## Statement

Opportunities for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the post-2015 development agenda will be accelerated by the employment of high-quality research at every stage of the process. One of the most important lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals is that collecting disaggregated data is a prerequisite for our collective ability to measure progress towards gender equality and other targets. Not only does data need to be disaggregated by gender, but also by such key dimensions of difference as age, race, ethnicity or cultural identity, nationality, socioeconomic status, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability status and education level, because only with good data can we make and test appropriate interventions. Additionally, vectors of difference that are important locally should be identified and defined locally, and then taken into consideration in national and international research efforts.

The Wellesley Centers for Women commends the efforts of the Global Gender Statistics Programme for its work that encompasses improving coherence among existing initiatives on gender statistics through international coordination; developing and promoting methodological guidelines in existing domains as well as in emerging areas of gender concern; strengthening national statistical and technical capacity for the production, dissemination and use of gender-relevant data; and facilitating access to gender-relevant data and metadata through a newly developed data portal. While research capacity, particularly research capacity related to the analysis of gender, is uneven globally, with some countries privileged to have many excellent research institutions of long-standing duration and others struggling to meet basic data collection and analysis needs, whether at the governmental level or within civil society, it is our view that research capacity sufficient to meet the needs of all demographic constituencies is a collective human right, and should be advanced universally by a variety of means.

Global partnerships linking well-established and less-established research organizations around the world, particularly to advance the collection and analysis of data related to gender equity and the status of women and girls, should be part of the post-2015 development agenda, and such partnerships should be both actively encouraged and supported with resources from inside and outside the United Nations system. Additionally, efforts to augment and enhance the availability and quality of research education and training programmes, especially those that increase the participation and success of women and people from other underrepresented populations in such programmes and facilitate the consideration of their perspectives and concerns in research, would greatly accelerate the role of research in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Furthermore, helping girls, as well as all children and youth from underrepresented backgrounds, to imagine themselves in research careers would help to ensure that, in years and generations to come, our ability to meet the most pressing global challenges with sound data and analysis will be a vested priority. Lastly, making sure that all funding for development programmes includes a budget line for research, whether basic, applied or evaluative, would also go a long way towards changing the culture of development work from one that considers research to be a luxury or an optional add-on, to one that considers research to be an integral part of efforts towards effective change, justice and well-being.

Small- and medium-sized research organizations, particularly those that are specialized in questions of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, will play an important role, alongside larger and more established research organizations and the United Nations itself, in the achievement of gender equality and empowerment targets for women and girls in the post-2015 era. We recommend increased attention to the participation of such “boutique” organizations in the development of the post-2015 development strategy. We close with the assertion that stands as our motto at the Wellesley Centers for Women: “A world that is good for women is good for everyone”.

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