UNDERSTANDING GENDER STATISTICS

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The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed on 230 individual indicators to monitor the 17 goals and 169 targets of the SDGs.

The SDGs, also known as the 2030 Agenda or the Global Goals, will inform significant policy and programmatic interventions and resources up to 2030. Implementation of the SDGs has begun in earnest, as have significant monitoring efforts, which accompany and enable implementation. Within the SDGs, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is both upheld through a standalone goal (Goal 5), and mainstreamed throughout the other sixteen goals. Gender data is critical for monitoring progress on gender equality and ensuring successful implementation of the entire SDG agenda.

The historic opportunity offered by the SDGs to transform the critical issues of poverty, inequalities, and climate change coincides with increased attention and momentum around gender data—not entirely coincidentally, as many recognize that gender data is an essential lever for achieving the Agenda. However, on SDG monitoring overall, and especially on SDG gender monitoring, there is much more work to be done: more than 80% of SDG 5 indicators cannot be measured, and fewer than one-quarter of the key gender indicators across the SDGs have adequate information for tracking. In addition, only 13% of countries worldwide dedicate a regular budget to collecting and analyzing gender statistics.

Considering this we are proposing to form the ‘Gender Statistics Network of Bangladesh - GSNB

The Gender Statistics Network of Bangladesh - GSNB

For promoting the concept of gender statistics the National Network of Gender Responsive Statistics, Bangladesh – GSNB - works with the aim to;

I. Enhance understanding and importance of user friendly gender statistics for all data suppliers and users

II. Incorporate gender statistics in different national level plans such as the five-year plan, SDGs etc. and also at the institutional level.

III. Work as a pressure group, through collective as a gender statistics network, to different major data suppliers and users

In order to achieve the afore mentioned purposes, it is imperative that the related institutions are made aware and sensitized about the importance of the use of user friendly gender statistics in national policies. Thus the GSNB network will pivotally use this ‘Understanding Gender Statistics’ booklet, to strengthen the awareness of data suppliers and users, and identify the existing gender data gaps by the relevant institutions of Bangladesh. The network GSNB will continue to communicate with the relevant data suppliers and policy makers (BBS, SDG cell, Ministry of Planning, Education watch, etc.) through lobby meetings, publications and policy brief.

One of the main tenets of the GSNB is to motivate all relevant actors to come together to build a strong political will and take the movement forward. The GSNB will coordinate with the

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related stakeholders to organize dialogues, discussions, workshops and other capacity building processes – in the hope that the related institutions will be capacitated and motivated to be gender responsive in developing and using gender statistics as we move forward towards a gender responsive Bangladesh.

**What is Gender Statistics?**

Gender is a reference to the relatively fluid socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender statistics are defined as statistics that adequately reflect differences and inequalities in the situation of women and men in all areas of life. This definition closely follows the Beijing Platform for Action, which was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995 - in paragraph 206 (a) of which it was recommended that; national, regional and international statistical services should ensure that statistics related to individuals are collected, compiled, analyzed and presented by sex and age and reflect problems, issues and questions related to women and men in society. The Gender Statistics database is a comprehensive source for the latest sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics covering demography, education, health, access to economic opportunities, public life and decision-making, and agency - a definition from the World Bank.

As the World Bank said a policy-oriented approach rather than the simple disaggregation of data by sex is at the core of gender statistics.

Gender statistics is a field of statistics, which cuts across the traditional fields to identify, produce and disseminate statistics that reflect the realities of the lives of women and men and policy issues relating to gender equality.

Gender statistics are statistics that incorporate a combination of the following:

- Sex-disaggregated data;
- Data that reflect gender issues and inequalities;
- Data that highlight the realities and diversity of the lives of women and men;
- Data collected using methods and concepts that account for the gender biases present in traditional classification and collection methods.

As Hedman et al. have already established, the main steps include: a development of data collection methods that take into account stereotypes and social and cultural factors that might produce gender based biases, development of analyses, and presentation of data that can reach policy makers and the largest audience possible.

Gender statistics is not a discrete or isolated field. It relates to all fields of statistics and is a tool to facilitate the change needed to address gender issues. Identifying the information required

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2 Documents of World Bank, World Health Organization, UNESCO and UN
4 UN (2006)
5 UN (1996)
6 World Bank (XXX) Developing Gender Statistics: A Practical Tool
7 UN (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/genderstatmanual/What-are-gender-stats.ashx)
to inform and understand the problems and goals connected with gender issues is essential to the production of gender statistics. Therefore, a policy-oriented approach rather than the simple disaggregation of data by sex is at the core of gender statistics. Existing gender statistical work has mostly focused on areas and issues such as population, health, education, employment—both formal and informal—gender-based violence, political participation and time-use⁹.

**Why gender inclusive data helps in decision-making?**

Data-driven decision making is crucial for a holistic improvement of a situation. The data should be inclusive, covering all possible identities of a human being – their gender, sexual orientation, age, rural-urban, education, religion, ethnicity, ability, race etc.

Inclusive data can give a better perspective for making the right decision. Knowing the number (of women and men) is necessary, however, all women and men are not a homogenous body; they vary in ethnicity, age, ability, education, sex, class, geographic locations and so on. Therefore, to pin point the specific identity, the group of women and men will need to disclose more detailed information.

**Why Gender Statistics?**

Development programs and any policy decisions are determined following data analysis. Inclusive data is very important in decision making to work towards continuous improvement and to meet accountability requirements of the decisions. Importantly to evaluate alternatives and make informed choices decision makers must have reliable and timely data upon which they can make their decisions. In the present context of Bangladesh, we see that in sectors like employment, readymade garments, education, health and politics etc., this type of data is available to some extent to understand the status of gender equality. This data is helping in taking decisions from a gender perspective, for example the data on girls enrollment in primary education shows that we have achieved the MDG Goal of gender parity in primary education (gender parity index 0.921 in 2000 to 1.008 in 2016, WB-School enrollment, primary (gross), gender parity index (GPI)), and at the same time data on gender based violence shows us that violence against women is increasing¹⁰ Real-time gender inclusive data is contributing to improved decision making by the policy makers. The gender inclusive data can enhance operational efficiency of the policy makers and implementers, and CAN enhance the overall efficiency of their decisions.

Therefore, the data has to be gender inclusive to avoid the high risk of unsuccessful decisions and policy by the decision makers without which investments might not be utilized for proper purpose or for proper reason. An example could be – for decision makers taking any cybercrime related policy decision, if we don’t collect the data inclusively from younger as well as adolescent girls and boys; from both women & men; the business and other sectors that are relevant, and if the data does not follow rights perspective’s in analysis; the policy might not be successful in addressing cyber-crime for all people.

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⁹ For example, in the UN publication, *The World’s Women 2005*, reviewed the status of official statistics on women, focusing on statistics related to population, health, education and work, as well as relatively newer areas, such as violence against women; poverty; power and decision-making; and human rights (DESA 2006:vii)

Another example could be - as women’s household work is not recognized by the society and not reflected in statistics. The data remains absent, the people have no idea about women’s contribution in the total economy of this country and the policy makers continue to remain in dark as the women’s suffering increases.

There are statistics on household work among women and men but it is often not considered in general measures about a country’s economy. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) has conducted the Time Use Pilot Survey in 2012. In this survey report BBS shows all data by sex, like the average number of hours spent in paid work, household work, leisure and other among the employed population (fig-1). This figure shows that female spent more time in household work than their male counterpart and on the other hand male spent more time in paid work than female. In case of other and leisure work, the percentage of time spent is almost similar.

We need to represent our data and statistics by sex if we want to get the concrete and appropriate scenario of our society.

**CHART I :** Number of hours spent in paid work, household work, leisure and other, 2012

_Average of hours per day. Employed population_

![Chart](chart.png)

Source: Time Use Pilot Survey 2012, BBS

Sex-disaggregated data is important and needed to show the differences that exist between women and men in a given society. Data must be disaggregated by sex in order to analyze gender issues. However, this alone is not always sufficient for gender analysis. For example, the disaggregation of victims of Domestic Violence Against Women - DVAW by sex has some value, but information on the perpetrator and their relationship to the victim is also needed to understand if the DVAW was committed for gender relationship or due to other socio-cultural or economic factors relevant to the family. Without knowing the real reason for DVAW how will the decision maker make an effective decision to end DVAW? The following two charts showing us how information can give a clear picture if gender segregated data is used.
CHART II: Persons refrained from going out in evenings because of fear of being subjected to crime, 1980–2005
Persons aged 16–84 in Sweden. Percent

Source: Living Conditions Survey, Statistics Sweden

In this above chart II, the person’s aged 16-84 refrained from going out in evenings because of fear of being subject to crime. Here the data is gender blind and not segregated by sex, therefore it is not possible to understand from the chart that is there any differences for women or men.

CHART III: Women and men refrained from going out in evenings because of fear of being subjected to crime, 1980–2005
Persons aged 16–84 in Sweden. Percent

Source: Living Conditions Survey, Statistics Sweden

In this sex disaggregated chart III, person’s both women and men aged 16-84 refrained from going out in evenings because of fear of being subject to crime. Here the data clearly shows that the fear of crime is more for the women - 20% and above - then for men about which is about 5 percent.
However, we must always keep in mind that the concept of gender places focus not only on women, but on both women and men. This is important because policies and programmes affect women and men differently and because men’s position in society is an important context for understanding women’s position and vice versa. However, a focus on either men or women may also be appropriate in some specific cases.

Data can make decision makers responsible & accountable
Data gives us opportunities to see the decision makers are accountable, and gives us the governance situation of any organizations or sectors. Data helps the decision makers to take decisions so that the existing injustice and inequality has been removed. Building a society without injustice is a priority for the state and it is a Constitutional mandate too. In our country there are people in the Ethnic group, Dalit, Harijan, Third Gender, Physically and Mentally Challenged – but we do not have enough data about their education, health, income, violence or other social issues. With the limitation of inclusive data, the decision makers/policy makers are unable to take affirmative actions for them. Hence the development is not equally benefitted for all people in a society.

Where is the gender data gap?
Even in a developed society, the inequality and injustice can be high, the poverty reduction doesn’t necessarily reduce inequality and injustice. Bangladesh’s extreme poverty rate dropped to 12.9 percent in 2016, mentioned by the World Bank\textsuperscript{11}. However, a number of particularly disadvantaged groups have remained subjugated, despite significant socio-economic achievements at the national level. These groups include: people living in coastal areas, haors, baors (large water body), chars, and hills; disabled people; agricultural, particularly female agricultural workers; dalits (untouchable) and street cleaners; people living in slums, and tea garden workers.

For example, it is much appreciated that as a nation Bangladesh has achieved gender parity in lower level school enrollment\textsuperscript{12}.\textsuperscript{7} There are good number of achievements of girls students in secondary and some in higher levels too. The question is, is this education making our girls empowered? Is this education is empowering? What kind of sociocultural change is promoted through the education overall? Is it changing gender mindset of students, women, men and the decision makers? Is gender parity in education enrollment also validated quality of expected changes are promoted through our education system? Are men’s gender stereotyping reduced as percentages of educated people increasing in Bangladesh? Are men learning and practicing to be non-violent, non-aggressive and respectful to women’s freedom of choice and mobility? This is also true for any other sector like Violence Against Women - VAW, we now have data to highlight VAW but is it giving us any basic info that why the VAW is increasing or decreasing? Existing data is really not helping decision makers take decisions which will help to reduce or eliminate VAW.

\textsuperscript{12} World Bank (2017) Breaking ground in gender parity in Bangladesh’s primary schools \url{http://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/breaking-ground-gender-parity-bangladesh-s-primary-schools}
This is why we need data which reflects gender statistics from where we will be able to know the general info, but more importantly the data will support the decision makers to take progressive and targeted actions by knowing why the gender situation persists, and where to intervene to get the fastest results by bringing about all inclusive changes.

**How gender responsive statistics help?**

We expect data to give us information that can be used for decision making, to change the situation. The statistics and data help us to understand the gender dimensions and/or social construction. We also like to find out answers to the question of why, such as if the VAW data shows the changed situation of women or men or children, we can further explore the reason for change, in this case newer areas of data need to be found to improve gender responsiveness.

The sex disaggregated data gives clear and comparative idea of women and men, where they are, and how the representation looks.

This is why there is a need for advocating for statistics which not only show numbers but also answer the question of why the number is relevant and what & where the number or content needs to be changed so that it effects the result/s positively to minimize the gender gap.

Data is **gender blind** when it does not reflect the situation of women and men related to the context and ignore or fail to address the gender dimension.

**Gender dis-aggregated** data is the statistical information, which differentiates between men and women - broken down by sex, age or other variables to reflect the different needs, priorities and interests of women and men, and their access to and control over resources, services and activities - this allows one to see where there are gaps by numbers.

Gender responsive (gender statistics) data is nondiscriminatory, equally benefiting women and men and aimed at correcting gender imbalances - which also asks the question of why there are differences between women and men (condition &/or situation) and reasons for the discriminations. From which decision/policy makers will be able to make decision looking at the socio-cultural and economics context of women, men, and others that ultimately results in promoting gender equality. Most importantly, it will produce and present data in a way that helps decision makers take appropriate actions.
Some examples
Education is one of the basic tools for developing human resources. It has direct impact on overall welfare of the individual as well as the nation. Education ensures the acquisition of skills necessary for providing better services to a nation. The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) conducts a household education survey regularly, however, population literacy rates, one of the main variables of literacy enhancement programme has been discussed in the education household survey 2014 report\(^{13}\). Sex-disaggregated data for the mainstream population’s education rate and relevant information is clearly mentioned in the education survey report, however sex-disaggregated data for ethnic minorities, dalits, and persons with disabilities are rarely presented - which shows a non-inclusive representation. There is no sex disaggregated data for disabled people in the education household survey by BBS - this a gap where the network GSNB can make a valuable difference.

Now we can see the following four tables from the education household survey report 2014 of Bangladesh. Table-1 is showing the literacy rate of population (7 years and older) by area and sex. Table-1 is showing sex-disaggregated data and it is included both urban and rural areas information. Table-2 is showing the data of percent distribution of ethnic and non-ethnic population by area. It is an inclusive style because it has included both ethnic and non-ethnic population information. But this is gender-blind information, because there are no sex-disaggregated data. If we see the table-3, we can see both inclusive and sex-disaggregated data on literacy rate of ethnic and non-ethnic population by sex. Now we can read the table-4, literacy rate of disabled persons. There is no any sex-disaggregated data but is has been included the information of different types of disability.

Literacy rate of population
Literacy rate of population 7 years and above obtained from the data of Education Household Survey was 59.1% at national level, 61.3% for male, and 56.9% of female population. The corresponding rates for rural and urban areas were 55.6% and 70.9% respectively. In case of net and gross enrolment rates at primary educational institutions, the variation of enrolment rates between boys and girls in primary level shows that boy’s net enrolment rate was 90.8% while it was 92.1% for the girls at national level. The rates were 90.5% for the boys and 91.7% for the girls at rural level. In the urban area, the rates were 91.9% for the boys and 93.7% for the girls. It is important to note that girls, enrolment surpassed boys by 1.3 percent at national level, 1.2 percent in rural and 1.8 percent point in urban area. At the national level, gross enrolment rate\(^{14}\) for boys was estimated at 117.0% and for girls it was 118.5%. In rural area, gross enrolment rate (GER) of boys was found to be 118.2% and for the girls 120.0%. In urban area, the rate obtained from the education household survey was 112.0 % for boys and 112.8% for the girls.

\(^{13}\) BBS (2014) *Education and Household Survey report*. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

\(^{14}\) Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) or Gross Enrollment Index (GEI) is a statistical measure used in the education sector, and formerly by the UN in its Education Index, to determine the number of students enrolled in school at several different grade levels (like elementary, middle school and high school), and use it to show the ratio of the number of students who live in that country to those who qualify for the particular grade level.
CHART IV: Literacy rate by area and sex, 2014

Population aged 7 or above. Percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>55.58</td>
<td>57.67</td>
<td>53.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>70.87</td>
<td>73.36</td>
<td>68.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>59.09</td>
<td>61.28</td>
<td>56.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education household survey report 2014, BBS

Literacy rate of ethnic people

The EHS 2014 collected information about the ethnicity. A small section of people speaking in different languages and culture are also a part of Bangladeshi population. Majority of minor indigenous ethnic community living south–eastern hilly part in the districts of Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachari. They are named as Chakma, Tripura, Marma, Bawm, Tanchonga, Khuni, Lusai, Garo, Hajang, Khasia, Sautal, Oraw, Rakhain and Monipuri. They are also living in plain land, such as Mymensingh, Sylhet and Cox’s Bazar regions and also scattered in other districts. Populations of ethnic community have separate cultural identity from other non-ethnic races and religions. The following tables shows the distribution of ethnic and non-ethnic population by area. Only 1,586,141 of total population in Bangladesh was in ethnic group, called indigenous minority population (BBS, 2011). It is observed from the table V that ethnic population was 40.00% literate, male 44.83% and female 35.26%, among the age-group of ethnic population (7 years and above).

CHART V: Ethnic and non-ethnic population by area, 2014

Percent distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-ethnic</td>
<td>99.32</td>
<td>73.36</td>
<td>68.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


CHART VI: Literacy rate of ethnic and non-ethnic population by sex, 2014

Population aged 7 or above. Percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44.83</td>
<td>35.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-ethnic</td>
<td>59.21</td>
<td>61.39</td>
<td>57.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>59.09</td>
<td>61.28</td>
<td>56.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literacy rate of disabled persons
Prevalence of disability is an integral part of current health status of the country’s population. The disabled are also accounted for determining their literacy and level of education. The government policy is to take care of them and creating provision for all sorts of support in respect of health and education to get them into normal lives.

The Census 2011 data has put a figure of 1.41% (a total of 101,585 disables) on the overall disability prevalence in Bangladesh. DISABILITY IN BANGLADESH: Prevalence and Pattern 2015 by BBS shows the prevalence and pattern of disable persons in Bangladesh.

However, EHS-2014 collected disability data from the sample dwelling units as literacy outcome. Table VI provides literacy rate (7 yrs and above) by types of disability calculated on the events found during the survey operation. In the table, the people with ‘physical disability’ were estimated 42.45% literate among the disabled population. At the national level, literacy rate of disabled population was found 32.59%, in the rural area, it was 31.18%, and in urban it was 38.13%. There is no data by sex of disable peoples in the stated education survey by BBS. If we not represent the sex dissagregated data of disable peoples, we cannot get the whole scenario of them. The gender statistics of disable peoples can help the policy makers and practitioners.

CHART VII: Literacy rate of disabled persons 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of disability</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>62.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical disability</td>
<td>42.45</td>
<td>37.63</td>
<td>59.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental/Intellectual/Cerebral palsy</td>
<td>25.25</td>
<td>24.17</td>
<td>[30.76]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision/Speech/Hearing/Hearing-vision</td>
<td>27.21</td>
<td>29.93</td>
<td>17.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down Syndrome/Multi disability/Others</td>
<td>[39.16]</td>
<td>[35.48]</td>
<td>[57.98]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Now we can see some sex disaggregated data with examples for our further understanding about gender statistics.
Gender based violence – GBV

The issue of gender based violence (GBV) and its impact on Bangladesh’s development. finding solutions to reduce and respond to gender based violence is not only vital to the lives and well-being of women and girls, but to the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and overall development of the country. GBV is the most pervasive form of human rights violation that women and girls are regularly facing in Bangladesh. The VAW Survey 2015, jointly conducted by UNFPA and the BBS, revealed that 73% of ever married women in Bangladesh have experienced any kind violence by their current husband, 55% reported any type of violence in the past 12 months, and 50% reported physical violence in their lifetime.

The frequency and severity of GBV varies across the country, but the negative impact it has on individuals, on families is universal, and has direct links to overall development of Bangladesh. Violence against women impoverishes individuals, families, communities and governments and reduces the economic development of a nation. At the individual level as many as 14% of maternal deaths is associated with GBV and at the national level the country loses 2.10% of GDP due to domestic violence\(^{15}\).

\(^{15}\) CARE Bangladesh (2013)
CHART VIII: Women and men subjected to assault, 2012–2014

*Persons aged 20 - 64 in Sweden. Proportion (%) of occurrences and number in thousands*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woman perpetrator/man victim</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man perpetrator/man victim</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman perpetrator/woman victim</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man perpetrator/woman victim</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total estimated occurrences 1,179


The CHART VIII shows there are more violence on men by the men, the questions remain to answer where the violence took place?

CHART IX: Women and men subjected to assault by location, 2012–2014

*Persons aged 20-64 in Sweden. Proportion (%) of occurrences and number in thousands*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perpetrator/victim</th>
<th>At home</th>
<th>Work/school</th>
<th>Public space</th>
<th>Other place</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woman perpetrator/man victim</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man perpetrator/man victim</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman perpetrator/woman victim</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man perpetrator/woman victim</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total estimated occurrences 1,179


The above table give us more information on who the victims of violence are, who the major perpetrators are, and where the incidents took place. It shows more men are subject to violence in public places therefore the causes are not necessarily GBV. However, in the case of women, the highest number of violence happened at home, presumably from male partners, which is likely GBV. However, a further investigation is needed to be sure of this assumption.
Literacy rate
The literacy rate in Bangladesh has risen remarkably over the past decade to an all-time high of **72.76%** in 2016, according to data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). The figure marks an increase of **26.1** percentage points from 2007, when the literacy rate was a mere **46.66%**.16

One in five children dropped out of school last year due to high levels of poverty, child marriage, social insecurity and marginalization, experts have said. Although data from Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) showed a 10% increase in the net enrollment rate for secondary and primary schools in the last ten years, it also pointed to an alarming dropout rate. The rate of 19.2% recorded in 2016 was just a single percentage point lower than that of 2015. The executive director of the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), Rasheda K Chowdhury, said there were socio-economic reasons for children dropping out of school. “Although primary education is free and the textbooks are provided by the government, a large number of children from ultra poor areas - such as char areas, haor areas and the Hill Tracts - are barely enrolled in the public school system,” she said. “Things like poor teaching methods, incompetent untrained teachers, lack of encouragement has caused children to not continue their schooling. “The problem is worse for indigenous children because even though the government has published textbooks in five indigenous languages, the teachers are not equipped to teach them in it. These children are simply not comfortable in a mainstream classroom and so their dropout rates are higher”17.

The following two charts (No. X & no. IX) Interestingly showing how data and chart can show us information differently about women/girls and men/boys when we add sex as a variable.

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17 Hasnet, M (2001) School enrollment high drop out even higher
The Chart X shows the rate of literacy by age group. The bottom one clearly showing the rise of number of young girls in education.

**CHART XI: Literacy rate by sex and age, 2014**

*Population aged 7 and above in Bangladesh. Proportion of age group*

Conclusion
Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) published a book regarding the ‘Gender statistics of Bangladesh’ in 2008. In this book BBS stated that “….gender disaggregated data are very much needed for prescribing appropriate policy measures and development intervention for the women”. However we just like to add gender statistics represents a picture for both women and men, also other genders and people with different sexual orientations.

Moreover, there are data gaps by sex for ethnic communities and disable peoples. To fulfil the requirement to achieve the goal of SDGs there is a crucial need to include information that is inclusive to all variations of human being, so that no one is left behind.

We expect data to give us information that can be used for decision making, to change the situation. The statistics and data help us to understand the gender dimensions and/or social construction. We also like to find out answers to the question of why, such as if the VAW data shows the changed situation of women or men or children, we can further explore the reason for change, in this case newer areas of data need to be found to improve gender responsiveness.

The sex disaggregated data gives clear and comparative idea of women and men, where they are, and how the representation looks.

This is why there is a need for advocating for statistics which not only show numbers but also answer the question of why the number is relevant and what, how & where the number or content needs to be changed so that it effects the result/s positively in minimizing the gender gap.

This can help policy makers to take decisions that are more gender responsive - which will be able to reduce the social inequalities and discrimination, violence and abuses. Which aspire a nation leading to a just society without discriminations, violence, and undermining the potentials of all.

Our dream for a network like GSNB in order to facilitate understanding and promote the need for user friendly Gender Statistics for all data suppliers as well as the users. Who collectively can act as a pressure group to enhance incorporation of gender statistics in different national level plans and actions.