**Gender Statistics Advisory Group  
28 May 2014**

**Agenda Item 7: Expanding Gender Indicators**

**Question for members:**

1. *Do members have any comments on the project outline expanding Gender Indicators to report data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Culturally and Liguistically Diverse people and people with a disability?*

**Introduction**

The ABS has released Gender Indicators, Australia (cat no 4125.0) twice yearly since August 2011. The indicators presented in this product were designed to assist and inform government policy, by helping decision makers to develop, monitor and evaluate policies and programs aimed at achieving gender equality. It is a useful base for supporting analysis and monitoring the outcomes of Australian men and women. The next release is scheduled for 26 August 2014.  
  
In 2013-14, with funding support from the Office for Women, ABS conducted a project to examine the feasibility of expanding gender indicators reporting to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and those with a disability.

There is increasing demand for reported data on these sub-populations. Over the past few years Australian Governments have sought to develop policies aimed at both social inclusion and improving the nation's productivity. Effective policies will require good data. An expanded disaggregation of Gender Indicators can assist in providing indicators for men and women affected by characteristics other than gender such as ethnicity, immigration status and disability.

1. **Project Outline**

In phase one of this project we have examined both ABS and non-ABS data sources used in the Gender Indicators product to identify which can be used to report more detailed data by CALD, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status and for those with a disability, where necessary. We have also identified data sources not used in Gender Indicators which may be able to report on these sub-populations. It should be noted that while potential data sources have been identified, more work is needed to decide whether these disaggregated populations are sufficiently robust to enable reporting. This work will form part of phase two.

We have also met with ABS subject matter experts in the Migrant, Disability and Indigenous statistics to keep them informed of this project and explore what assistance may be available. We will continue to liaise as the project goes forward and expect that they will be able to assist with data and useful intelligence regarding data comparability from different sources.

1. **Definitions**

It is important to agree on transparent and clear definitions for each sub-population so there can be a common understanding of the terminology and a common approach can be used to report each of the gender indicators. Definitions are proposed below for each of the sub-populations.

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**

The definition for this sub-population is consistent with the national standards, that is, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples include those people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both. Gender Indicators includes indicators for this sub-population in the Health (8), Education (6) and Safety and Justice (2) domains using data from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS). These two surveys along with the Census of Population and Housing are the key data sources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The ABS will undertake further analysis to highlight data gaps and propose alternative sources where required.

**Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) population**

In relation to the definition of CALD, there are several possible definitions, including year of arrival in Australia, main language other than English spoken at home, proficiency in English or birthplace. Whilst country of birth is routinely collected in ABS social surveys, the other options are not. At this stage, we have used Country of Birth for the purposes of the project- those born overseas are defined as CALD peoples and those born in Australia are not CALD peoples. It is noted that the Department of Health use the same definition for [CALD](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-cald-national-aged-care-strategy-html).

From the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, we know almost 25% of the Australian population was born overseas.

Initial findings suggest that most ABS sources currently used in Gender Indicators can report on CALD people, however further investigation is needed to demonstrate suitable data quality and to explore the availability of CALD data from external administrative data sources. Currently, there are no indicators for CALD people included in the Gender product.

**People with a Disability**

At this stage, we have examined the availability of data which reports ‘with or without a disability’. However, agreement is needed on how to define ‘persons with a disability’ for this project. ABS surveys use the following definition of disability:

*“a person has a disability if they report they have a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities”*

There are four levels of core activity limitation (profound, severe, moderate and mild) which are based on whether a person needs help, has difficulty, or uses aids or equipment with any of the core activities (self-care, mobility or communication). A person's overall level of core activity limitation is determined by their highest level of limitation in these activities. Further consideration is needed as to whether all levels of core activity limitation should be included in ‘with a disability’ reporting in the gender indicators.

Expanding the Gender Indicators to report on people with a disability is expected to be the most challenging in terms of data availability and heavily reliant on the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers supported by other household surveys which collect disability information. The 2012 Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers estimated that 18.5% of the Australian population had a disability.

1. **Findings**

The phase one work completed so far has identified possible ABS and non-ABS data sources for further disaggregation of the Gender Indicators - 46 key series. Findings are summarised in Attachment A and outlined below.

Sub-population: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data collected in the same source as Gender for 8 key series
* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data collected in a related Gender source for 22 key series
* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data sources are not yet known for 16 key series

Sub-population: Culturally and Linguistically(CALD) population

* CALD data collected in the same source as Gender for 42 key series
* CALD data collected in a related Gender source for 2 key series
* CALD data sources are not yet known for 2 key series

Sub-population: People with a Disability

* Disability data collected in the same source as Gender for 9 key series
* Disability data in a related Gender source for 19 key series
* Disability data sources are not yet known for 17 key series
* It was noted that the incidence of disability collected in household surveys using the short diability module, is much higher than shown in the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) due to the higher number of screening questions asked in SDAC. Therefore we would need to proceed with caution if multiple data sources were included in the expanded product.

1. **Output Options**

Phase one of this project has identified possible data sources for expanding Gender Indicators. However any output will be dependent on available funding. While the Office for Women has provided some funding, the ABS will need to consider its overall budget position before deciding on what outputs can be released.

Subject to funding, we are expecting to be able to release data publicly on the ABS website and have considered two main options of disseminating the expanded disaggregations:

* Integrate the sub-population indicators with the Gender Indicators (cat. no. 4125.0). This would have the advantage of locating all the data in one publication for easy access. Depending on data availability it may be possible to include sub-population indicators either within existing tables or to include additional tables.
* Release separate publications for each sub-population, for example:
* 4126.0 Gender Indicators, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people
* 4127.0 Gender Indicators, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
* 4128.0 Gender Indicators, People with a disability

While this second option could focus on each sub-population of interest, it would involve more work to establish three new products and therefore would be more costly. It could also confuse users as to the purpose and value of the main Gender Indicators product.

Further exploration of release options will be undertaken in phase two as the extent of data which can be released, becomes clearer.

**Frequency of Release**

While Gender Indicators is updated six-monthly, it is proposed that the additional disaggregated data will only be refreshed when new data is available. Proposals are provided below for updating sub-population data, subject to sufficient resources being available.

* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – proposed for approximately three yearly updates.   
  The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey results were released in 2013 and the next National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey commences in 2014, with results expected to be available for release in Gender Indicators, February 2016.
* Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people – proposed for annual update.  
  As Country of Birth is collected in all ABS surveys, it would be possible to release the CALD data annually.
* Persons with a disability – proposed for approximately three yearly updates.   
  The Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) is conducted three yearly with 2012 results released in 2013 and results from the 2015 survey expected to be available for release in Gender Indicators, February 2017.

1. **Next Steps**

Feedback from members will be incorporated into a final report for phase one, to be provided to the Office for Women in June 2014. The early findings confirm a second phase of the project should be conducted to establish the extent of releasable data for each sub-population. With funding from the Office for Women, the second phase is expected to commence in 2014-15.

Phase two will examine ABS and non-ABS data sources to determine whether they are sufficiently robust to enable reporting the key series for each sub-population. Gender Indicators uses data sources which are suitable for the whole population but they may not be as suitable for smaller sub-populations such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, CALD people and people with a disability. Reporting of findings will be provided to the Office for Women and the Gender Statistics Advisory Group in first half 2015.

**Attachment A**

**Gender Indicators Key series- Availability of Sub-population Data**

**Available Not known**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sub-population** | **Domain (e)** | **Gender Indicator Key Series Data Source(a)** | **Gender Indicator Related Series data(b)** | **Other ABS survey data source(c)** | **No current source (d)** |
| **Number** | | | | | |
| **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People** | | | | | |
|  | Economic Security | 1 | 9 | - | 1 |
| Education | - | 6 | - | 1 |
| Health | 7 | 7 | - | 3 |
| Work and Family | - | - | - | 7 |
| Safety and Justice | - | - | - | 4 |
|  | **Total** | **8** | **22** | **0** | **16** |
| **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People** | | | | | |
|  | Economic Security | 9 | 2 | - | - |
| Education | 7 | - | - | - |
| Health | 16 | - | - | 1 |
| Work and Family | 7 | - | - | - |
| Safety and Justice | 3 | - | 0 | 1 |
| **Total** | **42** | **2** | **0** | **2** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **People with a Disability** | | | | | |
|  | Economic Security | - | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| Education | - | 5 | - | 2 |
| Health | 4 | 3 | - | 10 |
| Work and Family | 4 | 1 | - | 2 |
| Safety and Justice | 1 | 1 | - | 2 |
| **Total** | **9** | **19** | **1** | **17** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total** |  | **58** | **43** | **1** | **35** |

Notes:

1. Available from the same key series data source used in Gender Indicators
2. Available from Gender Indicators Related series data source
3. Available from a different ABS survey not used in Gender Indicators
4. Non ABS data sources such as Medicare are still to be checked – may be available
5. Democracy, governance and citizenship domain not included

**How to interpret the table**

**EXAMPLE ONE:**

*Sub-population: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*

**Domain: Economic Security** contains 11 key series, of which 1 may report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples using the same Gender Indicators source as for the whole population, other Gender indicators sources are available to report on 9 key series and for 1 key series there is currenly no available source for reporting.

**EXAMPLE TWO:**

*Sub-population: People with a Disability*

**Domain: Education** contains 7 key series, of which none may report on people with a disability using the same Gender Indicators sources as for the whole population, other ABS sources are available to report 5 key series and for 2 key series there is currently no available source for reporting.