

## Gender Statistics Advisory Group Paper

### **Selection of Gender Indicators**

#### Introduction

With funding support from Office for Women under FaHCSIA via the Commonwealth, State, Territory and New Zealand Ministers' Conference on the Status of Women (MINCO), ABS has commenced developing set of Gender Indicators and Gender Indicators Product which are released on the ABS website.

The purpose of the Gender Indicators is to enable both government and the community to understand gender differences across aspects of life in Australia and to measure progress towards gender equality in Australia. A focus on indicators will help improve analysis of policies and programmes.

#### Characteristics of a good indicator

In selecting the indicators, ABS is making an overall assessment of whether each indicator is fit for purpose. The conceptual and methodological criteria being used to assess and select the indicators are as follows:

The indicator:

- a. has a clearly defined concept and source of measurement
- b. is of sufficient quality overall, i.e. not subject to significant measurement or data quality issues
- c. is sufficiently coherent (able to be compared with other sources, and to itself over time, to enable data compilation and comparison)
- d. is sensitive to changes in the underlying phenomena captured by the indicator
- e. is able to display movements over time that unambiguously signal progress or regress
- f. is able to measure trends over time, whether short, medium-term, or long-term changes
- g. is relevant to measuring policy outcomes and responsive to changes in policy
- h. is consistent with or comparable to internationally agreed measures.
- i. is an outcome measure (such as a measure of health) rather than a measure of the inputs or processes (such as the number of doctors or hospitals) used to produce an outcome.

## Selected Gender Indicators

An initial set of Gender Indicators has been selected that was released by the ABS in a new product on its website in early 2011. The initial set of published indicators will be expanded progressively towards a more comprehensive set of indicators. A second expanded release occurred in early 2012.

The selected indicators have been grouped under six domains: Economic security; Education; Health and wellbeing; Work and family balance; Safety and justice; and Democracy, governance and citizenship.

An example of the proposed dissemination approach is shown in the Attachment.



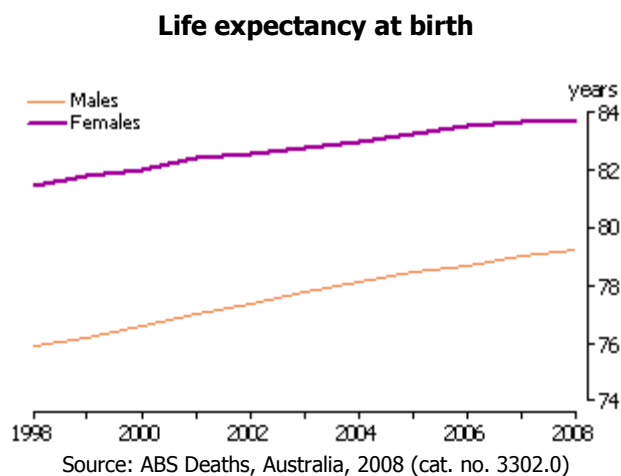


## Attachment: An example of a proposed dissemination approach

### Domain: Health and wellbeing

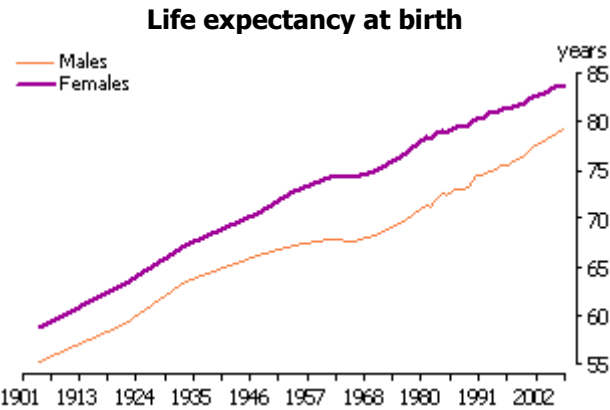
#### **Indicator: Male and Female Life Expectancy at birth**

In Australia, life expectancy at birth has improved for both males and females during the decade 1998 to 2008. A boy born in 2008 could expect to live to 79.2 years (75.9 in 1998), while a girl born in 2008 could expect to reach 83.7 years (81.5 in 1998). Over the last decade, the gap between boys' and girls' life expectancy has reduced from 5.6 years in 1998 to 4.5 years in 2008.



Life expectancy at birth has increased over the past century, resulting in an increase of over 25 years of life for both men and women.

Life expectancy of new-born girls was consistently higher than that of new-born boys, with the difference peaking at about seven years in the 1970s. The difference was largely due to the significant decline in heart disease, stroke and respiratory disease mortality among women. In recent years, this gap in life expectancy between males and females has narrowed to less than five years and can be attributed to the large reductions in death rates of males aged 45 years and over, and particularly in heart disease deaths among males.



Source: ABS Australian Historical Population Statistics, 2008 (cat. no. 3105.0.65.001); ABS Deaths, Australia, 2008 (cat. no. 3302.0)

#### ***About this indicator***

Life expectancy at birth represents the average number of years that a baby could expect to live, assuming current age-specific death rates were experienced.

A life table is a statistical model used to represent mortality of a population. Life tables are generated from age-specific death rates and the resulting values are used to measure mortality, survivorship and life expectancy.

Mortality rates used in the life tables are based on death registrations and estimated resident population. The life tables do not take into account future assumed improvements in mortality.