GENDERED OPEN DATA REPORT

Juma, Linet;

Mutuku, Leo;Salim, Mary;Nyaggah, Muchiri;

AODN
AFRICA OPEN DATA NETWORK

Gendered Open Data in Anglophone Africa

Bridging data gaps to advance gender equality

Linet Juma

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

DRAFT

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

Gender inequality is not only a worldwide moral or social issue, but also a sustainable development problem. With women accounting for over 50% of the world's population[1], persistent gender inequality continues to have a negative impact on sustainable development. The situation is no different in Anglophone Sub-Saharan Africa, which this report focuses on.[2] Gender inequalities continue to persist, setting the African continent back an average of $US95 billion a year[3] in lost economic gains. Development potential both worldwide and in Africa can only be realized through active engagement of women and girls and equal access to the building blocks for structural transformation, from inclusive financial services, healthcare, education, political participation to peace and security.

In response to this, there has been a sustained push towards gender equality worldwide, through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in 2015 and notably on the African continent through Agenda 2063[4] and The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa[5] also known as the Maputo Protocol, amongst other women's rights instruments.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development alongside other development goals seeks to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. It spells out 17 development goals but dedicates goal 5 to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls[6]. Goal 5 on gender, like all other goals, has a series of targets including ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life whose achievement would continue the drive towards gender equality.

The Maputo Protocol and Agenda 2063 which informed the continent's contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Common African Position on Post 2015, articulate Africa's commitment and

1   World Bank Data Bank. Available at https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL.FE.ZS
2   Ibid
3   UNDP Africa Human Development Report 2016. Accelerating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Africa. Available at http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hdr/2016-africa-human-development-report.html
4   Agenda 2063. Available at https://au.int/agenda2063/about
5   Charter on The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Available at http://www.achpr.org/files/instruments/women-protocol/achpr_instr_proto_women_eng.pdf
6   UN Sustainable Development Platform. Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld

roadmap to gender equality. Agenda 2063[7] which is Africa's 50-year vision and plan for development and integration framed against 6 pillars, recognizes the cross-cutting nature of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment as articulated in the 7 aspirations and also provides specific focus under Pillar 3 on people-centered development. The Maputo Protocol additionally reaffirms women's rights and women's meaningful role in development, and mandates States to ensure the rights of women are promoted, realized and protected in order to enable them to fully enjoy their human rights.

Additionally, The African Union(AU) identified 2010-2020 as being the African Women's Decade (2010-2020) with the intention 'to advance gender equality through the acceleration of the implementation of global and regional decisions and commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment with both a top down and bottom up approach[8]. African heads of state also through the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) in 2004 reaffirmed their commitment to the principle of gender equality as enshrined in Article 4 (l) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, as well as other existing commitments, principles, goals and actions set out in the various regional, continental and international instruments on human and women's rights[9]. Both the SDGEA and the declaration of the women's decade signal the African continent's commitment towards achieving gender equality.

It is clear that the African continent recognizes the importance of gender equality, its central role in development and has put together frameworks and commitments for its realization. How then do African countries translate these frameworks, targets, aspirations and agreements into actions that result in greater equality? How can we monitor progress on targets that give us a true reflection of the state of gender equality in Africa? Part of the answer lies in data collected, used and shared by governments as a means of establishing baselines, progress and overall accountability.

Data allows us to see how gender inequality manifests itself, the areas in which there has been progress, those in which we can draw lessons and where inequality still persists. The data here refers to gendered data which is data disaggregated by sex as well as data that affects women and girls exclusively or primarily[10].

Beyond the existence of gender data, the availability of this data to actors working on gender equality initiatives

7   Agenda 2063. Available at https://au.int/agenda2063/about
8 African Women's Decade (2010-2020) officially launched on International Day of Rural Women. Available at https://unngls.org/index. php/un-ngls_news_archives/2010/749-african-women%E2%80%99s-decade-2010-2020-officially-launched-on-international-day-of-rural-women
9. https://www.mrfcj.org/pdf/Solemn_Declaration_on_Gender_Equality_in_Africa.pdf
10. Because she counts we have to count her. Available at https://www.data2x.org/what-is-gender-data/

Open data refers to data or content that is open for anyone to freely use, re-use or redistribute

Gendered data refers to data disaggregated by sex as well as data that affects women and girls exclusively or primarily

Openness of gender data ensures that actors can access it freely, repurpose it, share and even provide suggestions for future modifications ensuring data provided is useful for them

is imperative. This brings us to the aspect of open data. Open data refers to data or content that is open for anyone to freely use, re-use or redistribute, subject at most to measures that preserve openness and attribute the source of the data[11]. Openness of gender data ensures that actors can access it freely, repurpose it, share and even provide suggestions for future modifications ensuring data provided is useful for them. If this data is then used by organizations working on implementation of normative gender equality frameworks on the African continent and analyzed within policy making processes, it contributes to the evidence base ensuring resources are spent where they are needed most to eliminate inequality.

With a focus on Anglophone African countries, which are the Africa Open Data Network(AODN)'s priority countries within the Open Data for Development(OD4D) Network, this report examines the availability and openness of gendered data. It is framed around the SDGs for which indicators are conceptually clear and have internationally established methodology and standards[12].

11.World Bank Open Data Essentials. Available at http://opendatatoolkit.
worldbank.org/en/essentials.html
12   Tier Classification for Global SDG Indicators https://unstats.un.org/
sdgs/files/Tier%20Classification%20of%20SDG%20Indicators_11%20
May%202018_web.pdf

Background

1.1 The Gender Agenda:

Across societies, communities and countries women and girls face various structural, cultural and societal challenges that affect their wellbeing and diminish their ability to reach their full potential. While there has been progress over the years,[13] there still exists glaring inequality globally that needs to be addressed. It is important that the lives of women are improved through access to and the realization of their rights as they hold half of the world's success potential[14]. Women have long been on the sidelines of society's development and this unequal development matrix has frustrated sustainable development.

The push for gender equality is a worldwide response to counter this and to work towards a transformed partnership based on equality between women and men which is a condition for people-centered sustainable development[15]. It focuses on leveling the playing field for both men and women and addressing both inherent and manmade (dis)advantages that prioritize one gender over another.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the key global policy document on gender equality[16], foregrounds an agenda for women's empowerment. It aims at removing all obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through ensuring women have an equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making[17]. It makes a case for shared power and responsibility between women and men at home, in the workplace, and in the wider national and international communities[18]. The platform identifies twelve critical areas for action and vouches for multi-stakeholder approaches to achieving gender equality which includes governments, the international community and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

Apart from being an end in itself, gender equality is a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable development and this makes for the link with the Sustainable Development Goals. While SDG 5 mostly articulates gender equality as an end, including the gender agenda in all other SDGs is vital for the attainment of sustainable development.

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13   Gender equality: what do the data show in 2016? Available at https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/gender-equality-what-do-data-show-2016
14   SDG Report 2018. Available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2018
15   Platform for Action. Available at http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/plat1.htm#framework
16   Commission on the Status of Women. Available at http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw
17   Beijing Platform for Action. Available at http://www.genderequality.ie/en/GE/Pages/BeijingPlatform
18   Ibid

The relationship between the individual SDG indicators is catalytic in that achieving one target translates into the achievement of the other targets or enablement of their achievement[19]. Therefore, there is need to attain progress on SDG 5 and the gender equality agenda so as to enable all the other goals be successful.

Gender equality is thus central to the SDGs. Failure to achieve gender targets can lead to a compromise on all the other goals. In addition to this, gender inequalities manifest themselves in every dimension of sustainable development and as such, continued inequality continues to tank efforts towards sustainable development. An exploration of the gender agenda vis-a-vis the SDGs would therefore shed light on existing milestones and or gaps in the push towards gender equality in a bid to provide recommendations on how to further integrate these two.

1.2 The Maputo Protocol

The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa was adopted by African Union Heads of State in 2003 in Maputo, Mozambique earning it the name the Maputo Protocol. It entered into force 18 months later, making it the fastest treaty to come into force, when the required minimum ratifications were deposited by 15 Member States. As of September 2018, 40 member states had ratified the Protocol with a total of 49 signing it. Three countries had neither signed nor ratified the document.

Gender equality and women's empowerment remain central tenets for development progress on the continent with specific attention given to this in Africa's 50-year vision and plan for development and integration, Agenda 2063. However, stakeholders find it difficult to access data on most of the issues covered in the Protocol and in some instances, when they do find the data, it is not appropriately disaggregated or in formats that lend themselves to use or re-use.
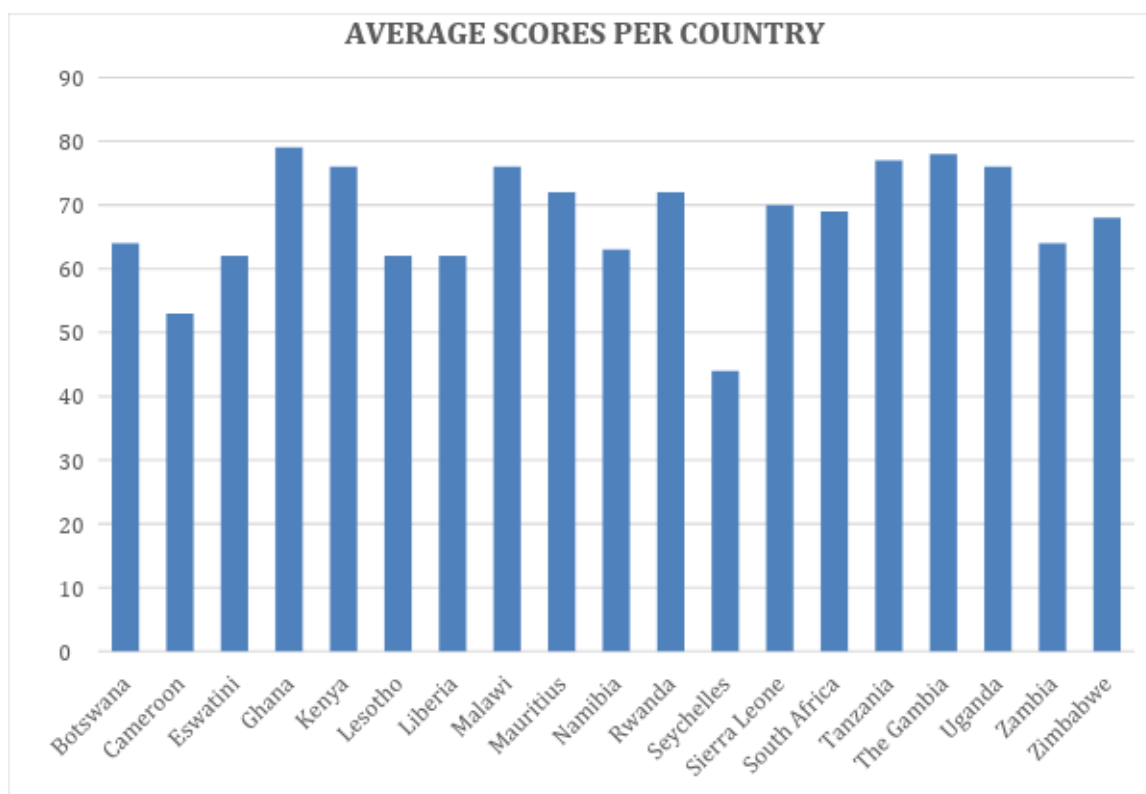
While other forms of evidence have been available and widely used by the women's rights movement in Africa, including stories about the lived realities of women and case studies on various issues, the data that allows stakeholders to grasp the scale or geographic distribution remains a challenge. Making this data freely accessible would provide an invaluable asset to those working on implementation and monitoring of the Maputo Protocol and support state reporting as well.

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19 The Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2016. Available at http://ggim.un.org/documents/The%20Sustainable%20Development%20Goals%20Report%202016.pdf
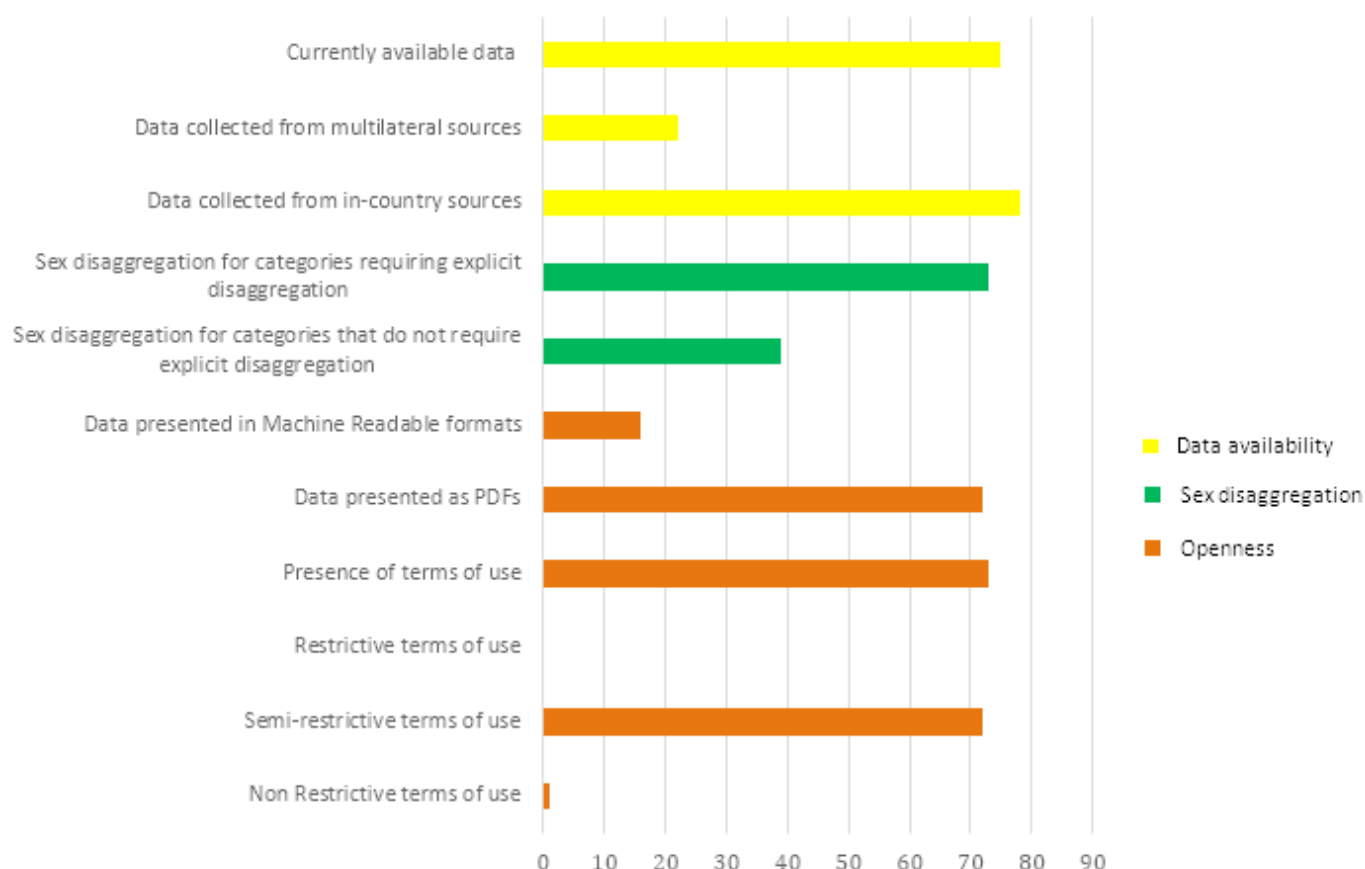
Findings

This study assessed the availability of data on the websites of national statistics offices, government ministries/ departments/agencies and multilateral agencies. They were analyzed along 3 domains; **data availability**, **sex disaggregation** and **openness**. Each country was scored based on 6 elements in the 3 domains with a maximum possible score of 300. The average scores for all countries ranged from 44 to 79 with a median value of 69 and an average score of 68.

It is important to note that this study does not set out to rank countries based on this assessment but rather assess countries' performance against each element(s) which are further discussed below. A higher average score by a country does not necessarily imply a better state of gendered data in the country. It is therefore more useful to assess each country's performance against individual elements and sub-elements to identify gaps that can be addressed.
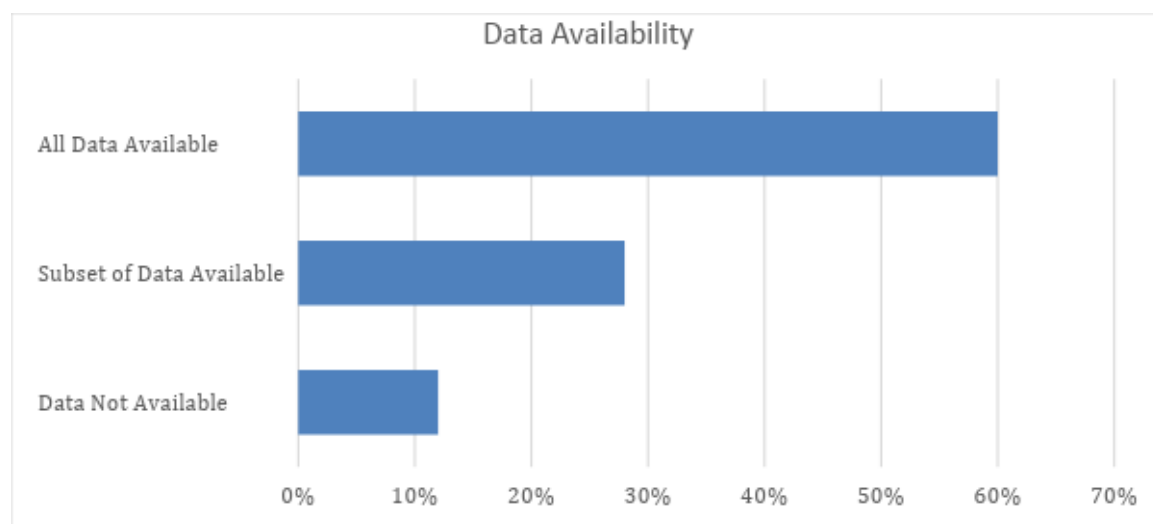
Average scores by elements

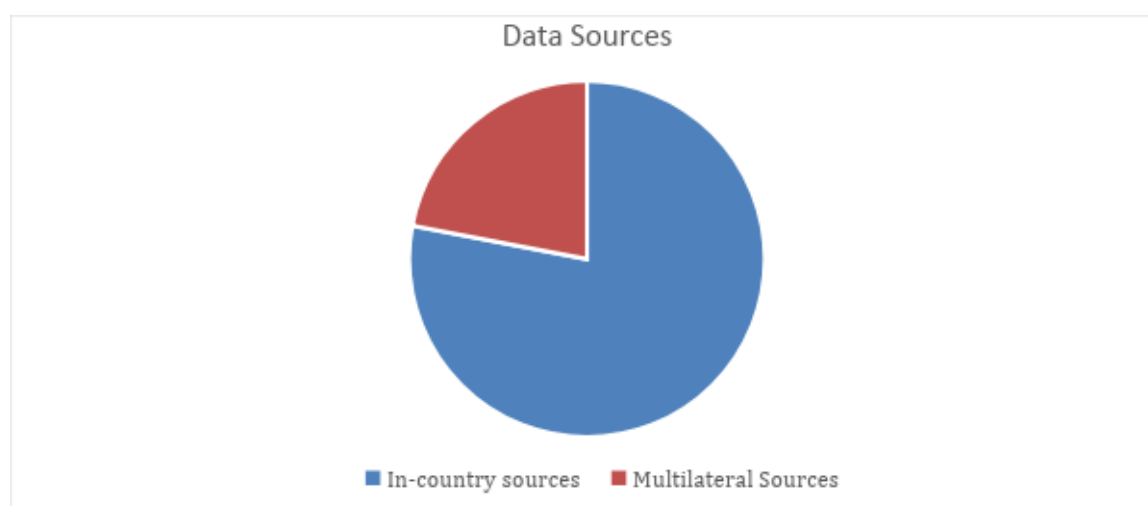**Data availability at national levels above average but gaps still exist.**

To explore data availability, we used two elements; the existence of data and the source of data (national or multilateral).

In general, 75% of data was available with all countries scoring above 50%. This points towards a substantial amount of data being published online by countries but still a significant data gap with 25% missing. Additionally, SDG 2 on *ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture* had the most amount of data with SDG 1 on *ending poverty in all its forms everywhere* having the least amount of data available.

The available data was then assessed against all the other elements. As shown in the chart below, more than half of the indicators had all data available at 60% with 28% having only a subset of the data available. Indicators with only sub-sets of data available make it difficult to adequately monitor development progress on indicators as there are certain aspects that are missing. This applies in the case of disaggregation for regions for instance. For targets on ending poverty, where indicators require that the data is presented for regions, a national figure doesn't provide the level of information needed by stakeholders to drive action.

Data Availability

On data sources, the data available was assessed based on which entity was publishing it; National Statistics Office (NSO) and official government websites or websites of multilateral organizations. 78% of all available data was found on in-country websites and 22% from websites of multilateral organizations. While 78% availability at the in-country level is substantial, countries should endeavour to publish and make open all available data at the national level on NSO and or other government websites.
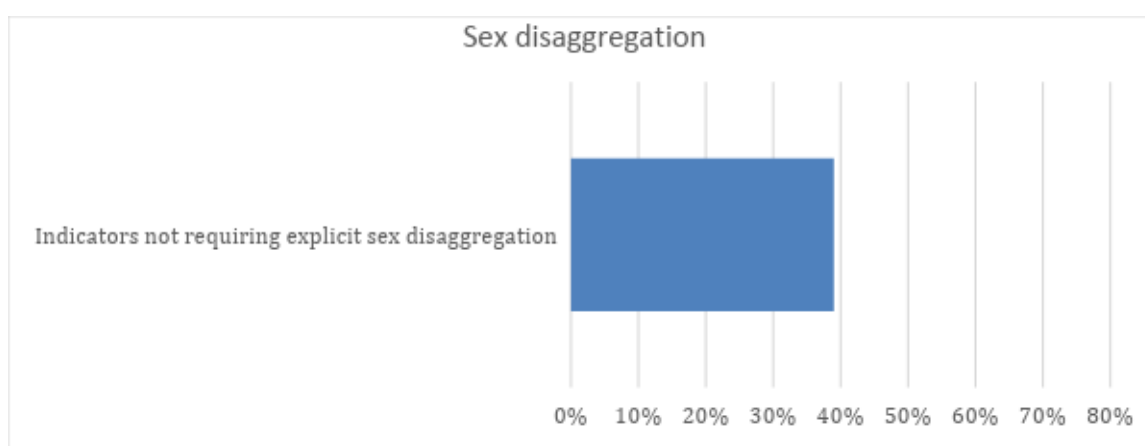

Data Sources

Sex disaggregation

In exploring sex disaggregation of data, indicators were divided into those that are explicitly required by the SDG indicator framework to be sex disaggregated and those that did not. Indicators that specifically addressed issues specific to women were included under those that required explicit disaggregation.

55% of the data found was sex disaggregated pointing towards a huge gap in sex disaggregating data, pointing towards an area that can be further leveraged to advance gender equality through better informed programs.

For the subset of indicators that explicitly required data to be sex disaggregated, 73% was disaggregated while 39% of those not explicitly requiring sex disaggregation were disaggregated demonstrating that some countries were willing to go the extra mile in making the data useful. The former subset was the core focus for this domain as there exists explicit instructions on it and member states would be reporting at the regional and international level in this form. While sex disaggregating the others that do need explicit sex disaggregation may be useful for indicators such as the indicator on youth with ICT skills, for some indicators such as malaria incidence, other disaggregations such as incidence among expectant mothers may be more useful than simple sex disaggregation. As such therefore a low score for the indicators not requiring explicit sex disaggregation is not necessarily a bad thing, In this regard, countries should explore the indicators specifically and determine which ones would be useful to sex disaggregate.
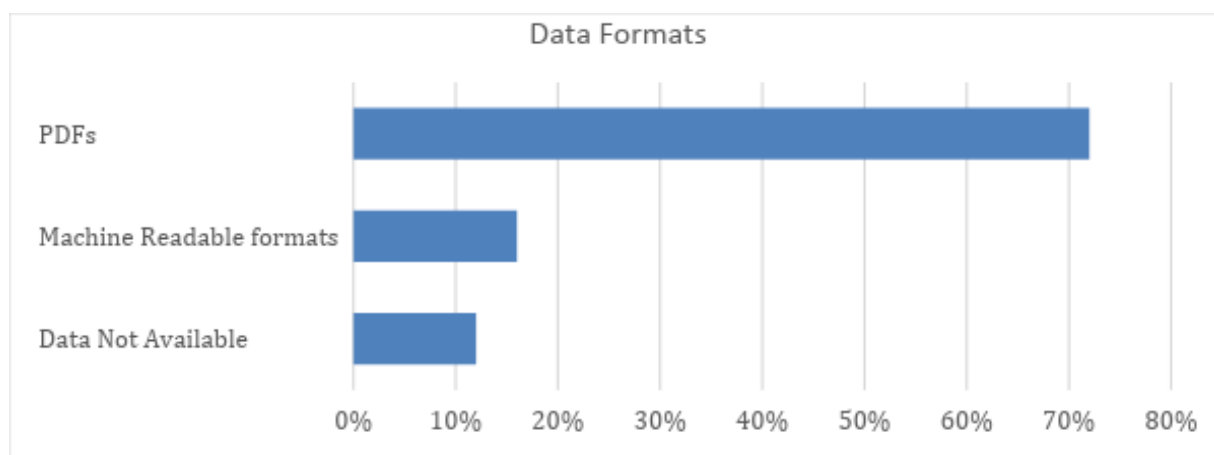

PDFs still most popular way of presenting data

To understand how open the data was, we assessed the formats in which countries and multilaterals presented data as well as the presence of terms of use attached to the data and whether or not those terms were restrictive.

On data formats, 88% of the available data was presented in machine readable formats such as JSON, CSV, XLS and or PDFs with a 72% and 16% split for machine readable formats and PDFs respectively. An exception was made for PDFs in this study since they serve to provide context to the data making it easy for users to fully understand. It should however be noted that while PDFs are useful in terms of context, their format makes it difficult for users
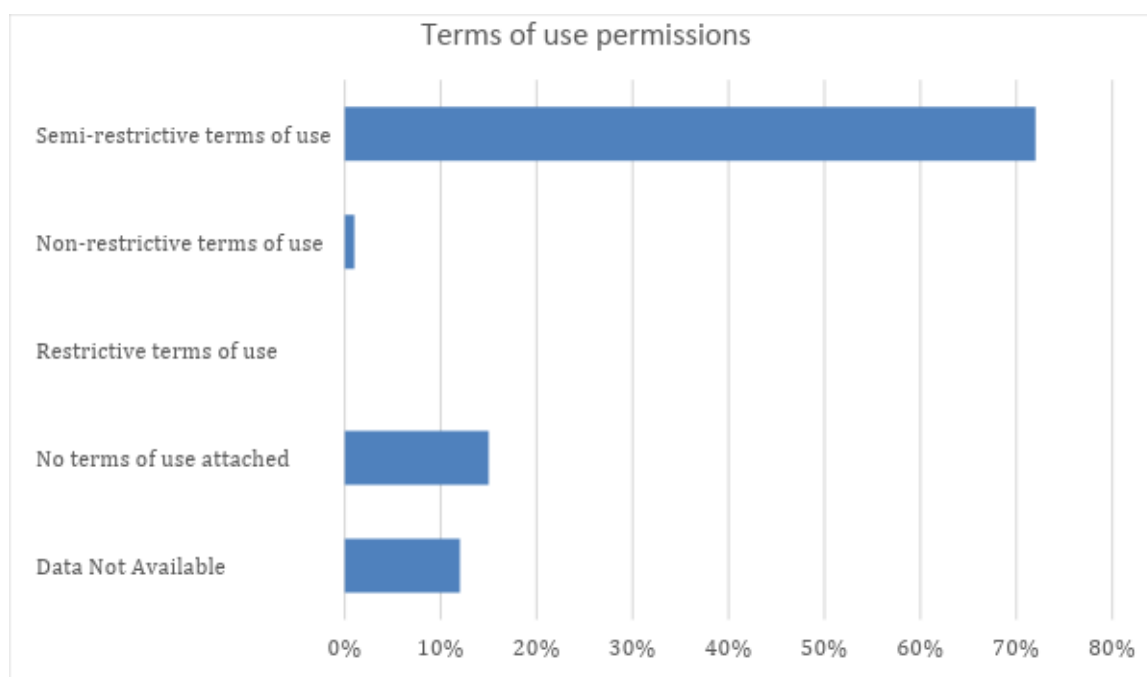
with basic skills to repurpose the data in ways that are meaningful to them. Presenting the data in additional formats that are machine readable is therefore recommended as a way to deal with the high amount of data published as PDFs. The chart below gives a breakdown of the formats in which the data was presented.

Data Formats

Non-restrictive terms of use still a mirage

The presence of terms of use attached to data published by countries and multilateral organizations is also a key element of openness. The absence of a terms of use can make users wary of reusing the data especially in jurisdictions were the legal environment can expose one to prosecution. 73% of the data had terms of use attached to them whether restrictive or non-restrictive.

Beyond the presence of the terms of use is the permissions included in the terms of use. For data to be open, a clear statement allowing for the data to be used, repurposed and re-distributed without a cost both for profitable and non-profitable causes is necessary. Terms of use attached to the available data were assessed for this and scored as either being *non-restrictive* implying open, *semi-restrictive* meaning a conditionality beyond requirement for attribution was included or *restrictive* meaning the terms of use completely forbid the reuse, repurposing and redistribution of the data. The chart below gives a breakdown of the terms of use attached to the available data.

Terms of use permissions

Semi-restrictive terms of use	████████████████████████ ~72%
Non-restrictive terms of use	█ ~1%
Restrictive terms of use	
No terms of use attached	████ ~15%
Data Not Available	███ ~12%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

While there are no restrictive terms of use that were found, only 1% of the data available was truly open, meaning it had an explicitly non-restrictive terms of use and 99% semi-restrictive clauses. This means that there are either groups that cannot reuse the data such as for-profit organisations in some instances or the process makes it difficult for users to reuse, repurpose and or redistribute the data as the terms of use had a limitation beyond just attribution.

The African continent holds some of the most progressive tools and policies on gender from the Maputo protocol to clauses in Agenda 2063. This coupled with SDG 5 on gender makes for even more grounds for achieving gender equality. These efforts will be greatly hampered by the lack of or inaccessibility of gender data. With data availability at 75% for SDGs 1-5, there still is a gap in data availed by governments. At the heart of transparency, citizen engagement and effective policy formulation and implementation is data availability. Lack of data is therefore an issue that governments need to address. Additionally, the data referred to in this study as being 'currently available' is not specific to a specific time period, implying that it was all from different years and may not necessarily be the most recent. It is therefore important to note that countries do not only need to make data available but routinely make the most recent data available if it is to be useful.

Discussion

In this study, sex disaggregation anchors gender data and how much of it is available. 73% of categories that required explicit sex disaggregation being disaggregated points towards availability of gendered data but also signaling an area that governments can further leverage to provide more gender data. Indicators on social protection and secure land rights for instance have less than 50% of the data available disaggregated by sex. Social protection and land rights are key facets of development and conversations on gender equality that if not monitored could be areas where inequality continues to persist making a case for governments to ensure data is disaggregated by sex.

Additionally, while not all indicators that do not explicitly require sex disaggregation would be useful, not sex disaggregating some of them means that some gendered data is being missed, making it difficult to monitor progress on gender equality in some development areas. One such indicator is the one on the proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills. The lack of sex disaggregation of data on ICT presents a huge challenge. With the world being increasingly interconnected, ICT and ICT skills are major drivers for development. Availability of sex disaggregated data in this context would be useful in sealing skills gaps for women through capacity building and thereby giving them a better chance of being part of the ICT revolution. Countries should therefore review indicators that do not explicitly require disaggregation and identify those that would be useful to sex disaggregate.

Finally, the availability of gender data would not be useful if it is not open. With 15% of the data missing a terms of use, there's still a lot to be done in this regard. While the intention may not be to deny access to this data, the absence of a terms of use makes users way of using the data. A clear terms of use allowing the reuse of this data would be useful. To deal with the large amount of semi-restrictive licenses, governments need to review their terms of use to include clauses that give explicit permission for users to reuse, repurpose and redistribute the data without restrictions. The existence of conflicting terms of use on websites and downloaded documents is also an issue that makes it increasingly difficult for users to use the data in ways that are meaningful. This could potentially be an area for further capacity building within National Statistics Offices to help streamline data use licenses.

Conclusion

The African Union (AU) identified 2010-2020 as being the African Women's Decade (2010-2020) with the

intention 'to advance gender equality through the acceleration of the implementation of global and regional decisions and commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment with both a top down and bottom up approach' it is [20].Implementation of gender related commitments is however anchored in data and more specifically gendered data. Additionally, a bottom up approach to gender equality implies citizen engagement; that people at the bottom are involved. A significant way to engage citizens is to give them access to data and the ability to reuse, repurpose and even redistribute the data.

Furthermore, as prescribed in the Beijing Platform for action, governments need to tap into multi-stakeholder collaborations especially with organizations already implementing gender equality interventions. This would further strengthen the gender data movement and effectively inform usefulness of data being put out by governments. With the African Union (AU) identified 2010-2020 African Women's decade almost coming to an end, it is an important time for the AU and African countries to take stock of their progress and make adjustments that would help make strides on advancing gender equality in Africa.

Finally, while this report makes a case for gendered data there is need going forward to go beyond the availability of gender data and integrate it with other aspects of gender data such as gender sensitive data collection processes such as including gender perspectives throughout data collection processes. This will be useful in capturing nuances that figures strictly addressing indicators do not capture and better inform steps towards achieving gender equality. There also needs to be ways in which data is increasingly linked with narratives. Silos between the data focused organizations and organizations implementing gender equality interventions continue to exist because of the lack of narratives that directly link the availability of gendered open data to success stories contributing to the advancement of gender equality. This would therefore go a long way in creating more synergies for these two communities to effectively influence the gender agenda.

20 African Women's Decade (2010-2020) officially launched on International Day of Rural Women. Available at https://unngls.org/ index.php/un-ngls_news_archives/2010/749-african-women%E2%80%99s-decade-2010-2020-officially-launched-on-international-day-of-rural-women

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Only 1% of the data had explicit permissions that allowed reuse, redistribution or repurposing of the data.

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