

## I – INTRODUCTION

“Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a pre-condition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty , promoting sustainable development and building good governance “

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Men and women are equal and both play an important role in the development of their families in a particular society. The Indian Constitution grants women equal rights with men. But even after sixty years of Independence, women in India still bear the burden of inequality, discrimination, unequal educational opportunities, low status in custom, vulnerability to sexual violence and denial of rights. Gender inequality adversely affect the development goals and thereby the economic growth. In India, this is one of the newly emerging areas attracting the attention of the planners and policy makers.

The disaggregated Socio-economic statistics by gender is needed to study the magnitude of relative disparities and discrimination between men and women prevailing in the society. Gender statistics are also required for creation of public awareness and also for sensitizing the policy makers to the gender issues and to act as a guide to the planners for evolving suitable policies and programmes for the welfare, development and empowerment of women .

Gender inequality, gender bias and gender discrimination are some of the issues which have received a lot of emphasis in recent times all over the world. These considerations have therefore, led all countries towards engendering their statistical systems. In various international workshops and Seminars, the need for sensitizing the data collection system towards the gender issues and incorporating a responsive perspective in the system as a whole has been repeatedly emphasized. The Central Statistical Organisation is regularly bringing out a publication Men and women in India every year incorporating up-to-date and reliable statistics on issues relevant to development planning and policy formulation.

The National Statistical Commission (NSC) emphasized the need for building up of a data base on gender statistics by the State DESs and preparation of gender indices. Further, a number of action points for improving the scope and coverage of Gender statistics in India and to focus on important gender issues have been identified in the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the COCSSO held in December 2008.

- a) State/UT DES should facilitate line departments in the States/UTs in collection of gender related data and make efforts to improve the quality of data collected by the line departments
- b) The number of female field level investigators need to be increased to facilitate collection of gender sensitive statistics

- c) Highest priority should be accorded for tracking and monitoring gender specific issues that are relevant to the achievements of MDGs
- d) CSO should sponsor specific studies and research work to develop methodology for providing gender specific poverty estimates.
- e) CSO should review the crime record statistics in general and data flow in regard to violence against women in particular.

The aim of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is to encourage development by improving social and economic conditions in the world's poorest countries. Out of the eight goals , the third is to "Promote gender equality and empower women" Regular data flow on gender statistics are vital for analyzing and addressing the gender issues in the society and for monitoring the achievement of national and international goals and policies.

A national workshop on "Gender Statistics Data Gaps" was held at Puducherry during June 21-23, 2009. In the workshop, a number of important areas of data gaps were identified and a set of recommendations for bridging the data gaps was made. Collection of data on new dimensions of gender related issues has also been undertaken in the current population census 2011.

As per the instructions of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the fifth "Statistics Day" was celebrated on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011. The theme of Statistics Day 2011 "**Gender Statistics**". The main aim of taking up the theme is to make concerted and focused efforts to fill the data gaps, improve timeliness and quality of data related Gender Statistics.

Directorate of Economics and Statistics has already initiated action for collection of Gender Statistics and a publication entitled Women and Men in Puducherry has been brought out for the year 2001. The next issue of the publication has been brought out containing data up to the year 2009-10. The publication is intended to provide a bird's eye view of the present status of men and women in Puducherry.

