

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization  
The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
Improving Measurement of Gender Equality in STEM Fields

Comparatively, there exists a significant gender disparity in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, as the ratio of women to men is severely imbalanced. Women in STEM are most underrepresented in graduate courses and advanced levels of study, as each step up the educational ladder leaves fewer women involved in the mathematical sciences. Many possible explanations exist for this gender gap including anecdotal reports and implicit discrimination, but concrete evidence remains insufficient. This absence of data and analysis provide roadblocks to those undertaking the gender inequality issue, as the lack of indicators can deter successful monitoring, design, and evaluation of women's participation in STEM, disabling methods to discover solutions to curbing the gender imbalance crisis.

The STEM and Gender Advancement (SAGA) organization was created with the mindset of decreasing the gender imbalance in STEM. With the support of UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector and Institute for Statistics (UIS), SAGA endeavors to implement policy instruments in countries at all educational levels to close the gap between men and women in STEM; in 2014, the UIS launched an interactive Women in Science feature that offers the available data on women in STEM for each country worldwide. Through the assessment and measurement of sex-disaggregated data, SAGA aims to analyze how policies affect the gender balance and use those findings to develop tools for evidence-based policy-making in Member States, building capacity within countries to conduct their own research on the present circumstance of women in STEM. The UK heavily endorses SAGA's mission of improving gender equality in STEM, and through the Campaign for Science and Engineering, the UK has supported national efforts to better gauge the gender gap in STEM. The UK has partnered with European Union member states in the European Commission to promote structural change for women in science, showing its dedication to advancing not only measurement of gender equality but also encouraging more female participation in STEM as a whole.

In order to effectively measure the gender disparity in STEM, it is vital that member states support the causes of SAGA and the UIS in generating solutions. As current data on female representation in STEM is relatively invisible, more initiatives like UIS's Women in Science need to be launched to provide exposure to available data and meet the demand for cross-national comparable statistics. Surveys on drivers and barriers to careers in science and engineering are crucial to understanding why so few females select the STEM field as their career discipline, and surveys on STEM innovation policies and instruments are necessary to detecting flaws in research policy and then filling in those gaps accordingly. Research and experimental development surveys as well as surveys on formal education are vital to providing solid analysis to support existing data. The creation of a singular streamlined research database is also important to ensuring consistencies in data, creating accessibility and efficiency for analysts. The UK looks forward to sharing these ideas in committee and is confident that through multilateral cooperation and mutual understanding, the measurement of gender equality in STEM can indeed be enhanced.

## Works Cited

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