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Background document  
Available in English only

**Items for decision: Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

**Preparing the outcomes for the fifth UN World Data Forum and other areas of strategic importance to the HLG-PCCB**

Prepared by the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB)

## Introduction

1. This background document sets out the current plan and timetable for the second phase of the CTGAP realignment process ahead of its launch at the fifth UN World Data Forum to be held in Medellin, Colombia between 11 and 14 November 2024. The document also discusses possible other outcomes and areas of strategic importance to the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the high-level group). The information is meant to supplement the high-level group's official report to the 55<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission<sup>1</sup>.
2. The HLG-PCCB is responsible for preparing an outcome document to be launched at the close of each UN World Data Forum. There have been five outcome documents prepared since 2017 when the first Forum was held. The most prominent is the Cape Town Global Action Plan launched at the first Forum and referenced in the UN General Assembly resolution together with the SDG indicator framework.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of these outcome documents is as a statement of intent by the stakeholder community of the Forum.
3. The preparations for the fifth Forum represent an important moment to further the data and statistics agenda with full support from the growing stakeholder community. The interest in the Forum has grown from hundreds to tens of thousands stretching well beyond official statistics to many different data and statistics communities from across the public sector, private sector, and civil society as well as across almost all countries of the World<sup>3</sup>. The high-level group recognizes a broader stakeholder base requires a more sophisticated engagement and consultation framework.
4. The fifth Forum also follows the [2023 UN SDG summit](#) where political momentum was generated for the “power of data”, a high impact initiative launched at the Summit to mark the mid-point of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. In these international summits, the statistics needed for the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda and therefore statistical systems are viewed through the “power of data” agenda and the data dividend. Production, analysis and use of statistics need to coordinate, communicate, partner and share good practice with those responsible for the data. The HLG-PCCB wishes to take this opportunity to advance the terms of reference between statistics and data to benefit the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. This will be part of a process for delivering more impactful and action driven outcomes as part of organising the Forum and earning the attention of policy and decision makers across all parts of the community.

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<sup>1</sup> Document E/CN.3/2024/5

<sup>2</sup> A/RES/71/313

<sup>3</sup> See previous Forum participation snapshots in [2023](#), [2021](#) and [2020](#).

## **Realigning the existing global action plan**

5. The current Cape Town Global Action (CTGAP) was launched at the first United Nations World Data Forum (UNWDF), held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 15 to 18 January 2017. The UN General Assembly welcomed the document in its resolution on 7 July 2017 regarding the work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The CTGAP currently contains 6 strategic areas, 14 objectives and 66 key actions. The CTGAP remains influential and is referenced in the establishment of recent global initiatives for the funding of data and statistics such as the Bern Network, the Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data, the World Bank Global Data Facility and the Complex Risk Analytics Fund (CRAF'd); as well as appearing in many reports and speeches made by senior UN officials.
6. The first phase of the realignment process concluded with the Hangzhou declaration and provided some recommendations to take forward into the second phase. This includes maintaining the name recognition established within the community and referenced by the General Assembly as well as the scope represented by the strategic areas but simplify the structure by reducing the number of items and levels within the plan. Much work remains in the second phase to further streamline the structure and update the language to recognize several new developments since 2017 when the plan was established.
7. During 2024, the HLG-PCCB continue to work and consult on the second and final phase of realigning the Cape Town Global Action Plan in time for its launch at the fifth Forum. Some of these new developments include new roles for national statistics offices in partnership, innovation and coordination being pursued in their respective statistical systems and data ecosystems. The provisional timetable for the work is given in Annex I.

## **Other outcomes for the Forum and areas of strategic importance to the HLG-PCCB**

8. The HLG-PCCB determined at earlier meetings to set a more assertive communication strategy around their work focused around the outcomes of the Forum and the global action plan of which they are custodian. This will mean adopting a more outward looking approach aimed at promoting partnerships, coordination, and capacity development efforts. This will include consideration of important changes in the strategic nature of data and statistics in the global data ecosystem upon which regional and national level systems connect. Some ideas to be followed-up by the HLG-PCCB as an outcome through the Forum or in its own capacity are as follows:
  - Assess the state of coordination in data and statistics
  - Sustaining an international dialogue on data and statistics
  - Engaging new stakeholders and partnerships
  - Promote good practices in financing and investment

## Assess the state of coordination in data and statistics

9. While the HLG-PCCB does not directly coordinate any process or programme beyond the Forum, its representation by 22 chief statisticians distributed across 5 global regions<sup>4</sup> provides a unique perspective among groups within the international statistical system. The HLG-PCCB's current [terms of reference](#) mentions responsibilities for oversight of “statistical monitoring and reporting within the framework of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics”, “consistency between national and global monitoring and reporting” and to “facilitate the modernization and harmonization of data infrastructures” under the SDGs and 2030 Agenda. There is certainly more the HLG-PCCB can do on these areas in coordination with other groups such as its sibling body the [IAEG-SDGs](#) but also with the international coordination bodies: [CCS-UN](#) and [CCSA](#) as well as other international statistical and data bodies of a strategic nature.

## Sustaining an international dialogue on data and statistics

10. The Forum has long supported a [webinar](#) and [blog](#) series as ways of continuing the conversation on data and statistics before and beyond each Forum. In particular, the webinars are particularly successful with a regular audience of several hundred. The topics and speakers have typically been chosen by the UN secretariat with support from international partners. The HLG-PCCB might use the success of these webinars to bring attention and seek wider comments on strategic issues of an international nature. Greater linkages can also be made to other outreach conducted by the UN secretariat such as the more technical discussions held within the [Global Network of Data Officers and Statisticians](#) or [domain or topic specific](#) groups.

## Engaging new stakeholders and partnerships

11. The Forum has long been a showcase of new and successful partnerships. These are usually selected for showcase from hundreds of proposals received in a call for programme proposals conducted before each Forum of which only 70 proposals are chosen to be on the final programme. This “grass roots” approach has worked well until now but needs to be complemented with a more overarching partnership strategy. The HLG-PCCB intends to work with the [Programme Committee](#) to convene a joint-subgroup to discuss a strategy for any additional outcomes and commitments for the fifth Forum. This joint subgroup will look at developing a more overarching approach to connecting and collaborating on a strategic level with other data-centric communities such as the digital, development and data discussion group within the private sector (i.e. Data Foundation) by, for example, creating a stakeholder mapping for the Forum.

## Promoting good practice in data finance and investment

12. The HLG-PCCB have concentrated on financing for data and statistics since its inception and this area features predominantly in its [terms of reference](#) with references to “target funding”, “advocate for resource mobilization” and “leverage the resources and creativity of the private sector”. The group have produced several background papers to the Statistical

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<sup>4</sup> Regions are Northern Africa and Western Asia (3 members), Sub-Saharan Africa (4 members), Northern America and Europe (5 members), Latin America and the Caribbean (5 members) and Asia and Pacific (5 members).

Commission on this area.<sup>5</sup> More prominently, the [Dubai declaration](#) called for an *innovative funding mechanism* in 2018 and the response to this came at the 2021 Forum when three such initiatives were launched: the [Bern Network Clearinghouse for financing development data](#), the [World Bank Global Data Facility](#) and the [UN Complex Risk Analytics Fund \(CRAF'd\)](#). The HLG-PCCB continues to receive regular updates on two of these three initiatives. During 2023, further initiatives were launched with the “power of data” and a stakeholder led “Data Action Plan to 2030”<sup>6</sup> at the recent UN SDG Summit. The HLG-PCCB will continue to monitor and provide advice as necessary on the expanding area of finance and investment in data and statistics.

## Summary

13. The HLG-PCCB will continue to look at opportunities for coordination, dialogue, partnership, innovation and in promoting good practice in resource mobilisation using its unique role in the international statistical system and by harnessing the strong interest in data and statistics for the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. The HLG-PCCB will facilitate this either under its own capacity or through the Forum which continues to mature in its recognition and engagement across different stakeholder groups. A key aspect is for the HLG-PCCB to maintain outputs relevant to whole stakeholder group and the realignment of the global action plan will be important part of this.

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<sup>5</sup> The most recent document presented to the Commission, see [https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/statcom/session\\_51/documents/BG-Item3a\\_Mechanism-for-SDG-data-and-statistics-E.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/statcom/session_51/documents/BG-Item3a_Mechanism-for-SDG-data-and-statistics-E.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Open Data Watch: <https://opendatawatch.com/publications/data-action-plan-sets-targets-for-2030/#:~:text=Developed%20by%20a%20coalition%20of,to%20achieve%20Sustainable%20Development%20Goals> and Cepei, <https://cepei.org/en/data-action-plan-2030/>.

**Annex I: Timetable for realignment of the global action plan**

<b>Timetable: steps</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a subgroup from HLG-PCCB members to work on second phase</li> <li>- Agree modalities for joint-subgroup with the <a href="#">UNWDF Programme Committee</a> on Forum outcomes</li> </ul>	<p>Background document on realignment process and other outcomes</p> <p>Establish discussions by <a href="#">Thematic Areas</a></p>	November - January 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Begin defining the elements for the realigned global action plan</li> <li>- Define the pursuit of other outcomes (i.e., stakeholder mapping, commitments, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>Strategy document for drafting realigned plan and supporting outcome work</p>	February-March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft realigned global action plan</li> <li>- Agree approach to global stakeholder consultation process</li> </ul>	<p>Realigned draft global action plan document</p> <p>Engagement strategy</p>	April – June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Global stakeholder consultation process</li> </ul>	Revised document	July - October
Launch of realigned CTGAP	Final document	November