

UN World Data Forum

Draft Concept Note

(As of 6 March 2016)

Background

Following one of the main recommendations contained in the report entitled “*A World That Counts*”¹, presented in November 2014 by the United Nations Secretary-General’s Independent Expert and Advisory Group on Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, the Statistical Commission agreed that a UN World Forum on Sustainable Development Data (UN World Data Forum) “would be the suitable platform for intensifying cooperation with various professional groups, such as information technology, geospatial information managers, data scientists, and users, as well as civil society stakeholders.”

With the guidance of the Statistical Commission, and the support of the Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG), in close consultation with Member States, the World Bank and other international partners, will be leading the discussion on the organization of the UN World Data Forum to be held in late 2016.

Objectives

- The Forum will provide a venue for technical discussion of opportunities and challenges in applying information, data, and statistics to measure global progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The Forum will engage public and private measurement experts, information collectors, statistical producers, information system specialists, and users to discuss technical issues to be resolved in the production and stewardship of the sustainable development goal indicator statistics.
- The Forum will engage with civil society, business, and the scientific and academic communities to discuss the latest information innovations and their potential application to the production and communication of sustainable development statistics.
- The Forum will facilitate a discussion of sustainable development goal indicator methods and measurement to ensure coherence within the broader UN Programme on data, statistics and geospatial information, as anchored in the mandates given by Member States through the deliberations of the UN Statistical Commission.

¹ Available online from <http://www.undatarevolution.org/report/>

Potential Technical Discussion Themes

- Experiences, lessons learnt and new priorities for **statistical capacity building and data literacy**
- Strategies to strengthen basic statistical survey programmes, statistical registers and use of administrative records for the compilation of integrated statistics
- **Innovative technologies and methods** for data production, dissemination and analysis, including issues of privacy and data protection, [participation, data disaggregation and inclusive data collection, transparency and accountability](#)
- Integration and development of synergies between **traditional and new sources of data**, including big data and qualitative data
- **Geo-spatial information systems** and their role in the integration, analysis and communication of data for sustainable development
- Data **communication** and **visualization** tools

Format

- The Forum will facilitate a series of technical seminars focusing on the themes above, featuring substantive presentations by invited experts representing different stakeholder groups
- Forum events could include exhibits, poster sessions and other types of interactive demonstrations
- Forum events could feature panel discussions and interviews led by professional moderators

Organization

- The Forum will be organized under the auspices of the Statistical Commission and the guidance of the High Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building in statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG).
- The Forum recognizes the unique roles and contributions of civil society, the private sector, and national statistical offices in supporting the measurement of progress for sustainable development. The particular viewpoints and comparative advantages of these partners will also be discussed during Forum events.
 - Partnerships for the mobilization of **resources and means of implementation**
 - Needs and insights from **data users**, and their role as partners in data production and analysis
 - **Data governance and standards**, including legal aspects of using new sources of data and the role of the official statistics community
- It is proposed that the Forum event take place on a biennial basis, starting in 2016.
- Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, in consultation with the subgroup on the UN World Data Forum of the HLG, will issue a call to Member States to host the Forum. Host countries will be selected on a rotating basis. The HLG encourages and advises the organization of regional and country level events as needed.
- The subgroup of the HLG will establish a programme committee to define the focus and content of the Forum.

Next steps

- UNSD in collaboration with the HLG will identify countries to host Forum events.
- The HLG will engage with relevant groups seeking to work with the UN World Data Forum. It will discuss roles and unique contributions of its partners.