

United Nations Statistical Commission

Fifty-second session

1–3 and 5 March 2021

Item 3 (j) of the provisional agenda

Items for discussion and decision: Big Data

Document E/CN.3/2021/14 – Report of the Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics

Statement provided by:

Bureau of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics

Statement:

UN ESCAP is a regional intergovernmental platform with 53 Member States and 9 associate members, or over 30% of countries worldwide. In 2020, 60% of the estimated 7.8b people globally were in the Asia-Pacific region. The region is also home to 97 of the 100 most air-polluted cities and 5 of the 10 countries most vulnerable to climate change.

The Bureau of the Asia-Pacific Committee on Statistics **WELCOMES** the report of the Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics and **APPRECIATE** the substantive work and achievements by its Task Teams. The use of big data sources for official statistics is well aligned with regional agreements contained in the *Collective Vision and Framework for Action by the Asia-Pacific Statistics Community for Advancing Official Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the Declaration on *Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind*.

We **CONGRATULATE** Statistics Korea, the UN DESA and ESCAP Statistics Divisions and the Global Working Group for organizing the Sixth International Conference on Big Data for Official Statistics where a variety of experiences from Asia and the Pacific were shared. We also **APPRECIATE** the many projects being undertaken on the United Nations Global Platform as well as the work of the Regional Hubs, and in this regard, **WELCOME** the inclusion of ESCAP's Statistics Division as a member of the International Advisory Committee for the Regional Hub in China and **LOOK FORWARD** to the Hub's support in Asia and the Pacific.

We **ACKNOWLEDGE** big data and administrative data is a big opportunity for National Statistical Offices and official statistics. National Statistical offices are faced with increasing demand for more statistics of greater timeliness and relevance not only for international agreements such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and forthcoming Convention on Biological Diversity, but also national priorities as has been experienced in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. We therefore **ENCOURAGE** capacity building efforts and expert exchange. We also **ENCOURAGE** enhancement of statistician's skills in all aspects of acquiring and using big and administrative data sources for official statistics. We **REQUEST** acceleration of manuals for using big data for official statistics.

Research conducted by ESCAP has shown that many big data projects are conducted without the involvement of National Statistical Offices. We **REQUEST** the Global Working Group to encourage development partners to engage with the national statistical offices to ensure national leadership on data innovation for the country-led 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We also encourage development partners to work with NSOs to establish Regional Cooperation Centres.

Submitted on:

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