

**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**

<i>Statement provided by:</i> ESCWA Statistical Committee	
<i>Statement:</i> <p>ESCWA countries would like to thank the UN GWG for creating a space where countries can come together, innovate in the big data, and utilize tools and technologies to uplift our statistical work and build transformative products that is aligned with the needs of our policy makers.</p> <p>The UN Global Working Group (UN GWG) gave participating national experts and opportunity to connect with friends and colleagues from different countries, to learn from each other and to come together to solve challenges to be able to ultimately achieve the SDG's 2030. The wealth of knowledge in the different task teams that are a part of the global platform is substantial and we have engaged in different levels with the UNGWG community.</p> <p>The Arab countries welcome the establishment of the regional center of excellence for Big Data applications and capacity building in the United Arab Emirates as one of the UN affiliated centers in the world. The potential benefits of the center are critical for the official national statistics in Arab countries and to localize best practices and experiences from different regions as part of the global UN Big Data platform. The realistic launching of activities in 2021 is an opportunity to harness practical applications of Big Data for assisting with evidence the Arab countries to rebuild better and more sustainably while recovering from Covid-19 pandemic with the urgent need for more timely data to complement and sometimes substitute traditional data collection schemes due to health risks lockdown, security constraints, or high cost burdens. In addition to tracking impact of Covid-19 and effectiveness of related governmental responses, the Arab countries can benefit from possible applications of Big Data in tracking progress on the SDGs indicators and statistical</p> <p>In terms of funding, there should be an collaborative effort from the countries to bring new projects and initiatives to the platform. Also to engage with the research institutes community as the backbone and technical arm for the countries thinking about developing their own platforms, this shouldn't be the case as the UNGP has all the capability to host, develop and implement big data project using trusted partners and advisors.</p> <p>Since the UNGWG was established and the times and work done today has changed to include Data science at the heart of how the group operates. Thus, ESCWA countries would like to endorse the change of the name of the Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics to the United Nations Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics.</p>	
Submitted on:	2/19/2021

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