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: Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Center – United Arab Emirates
Statement:
Click or tap here to enter text.Initially, 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. Moreover, we also commend the work of the Mr. Ronald Jansen the secretariat, Chief of the Data Innovation and Capacity Branch, and Mr. Risenga Maluleke, Chair of the UN Global Working Group on Big Data for official statistics, for their support on work of the GWG and to engage the community in creating the future of statistics.   For us in the UAE the UN GWG gave us opportunities to connect with our 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.   We also recognize and support the work done by the task teams of the GWG with all the different supporting documents, handbooks, methods, training courses. In addition, we believe that the new task team on the acquisition of global private sector data will support in creating new sub teams to find new ways and innovative products in leveraging private sector data.   This year we are pleased to sign the MOU with the UN team in order to be one of the regional hub. For the GCC countries and Arab world, we want this hub to be a sandbox of innovation, ideas and creativity. We will also focus on support in other Arab countries to join this movement in collectively redefining what statistics offices can be in the time of the data revolution.   The main objectives of the Regional Hub in UAE are the facilitation of projects in the use of Big Data and data science for official statistics and SDG indicators, the sharing of knowledge on newly developed methods, algorithms and tools, and the provision of training in the use of Big Data and data science for the community of official statisticians in the Arab region.   In addition , we will partner with the UN Global Working Group will collaborate and with other regional hubs to share best practices, methods, learnings and expertise with the network of hubs, which is envisaged to be globally recognized as a collaborative and action-oriented knowledge, technology and innovation hub, which will bring innovative technology and data science methods in the use of Big Data together and will provide a much-needed platform to further the data science projects in UAE and other countries, especially developing countries.

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In times of covid and changes in our economy, data access has become and evermore important. As statistical offices, the platform offers a collaborative space where we can leverage skills and expertise to overcome these challenges while using big data in our official statistics. We also believe we need to engage the youth in our efforts to up skill and support the platform and all the different work streams of the group. As the regional hub, we will be creating community of data experts who will be able to support the hub with technical expertise in data science and machine learning.

In terms of funding we believe that 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.

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 we 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.

| Submitted on: | 2/19/2021 |