

**United Nations Statistical Commission High-level side event on
Financing for Data and Statistics: The Role of National Statistical Offices**

Wednesday, 16 February 2022, 9:00 – 10.30 am

Summary

1. An urgent need remains to fill the funding gap to respond to the demands of the Cape Town Global Action and the new challenges to data systems posed by the pandemic.
2. Within today's financing landscape, there is the possibility of reinvigorated action to mobilize both international and domestic resources is needed.
3. The Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFF), provide a solid framework for financing national sustainable development priorities and the SDGs at the country level, as well as sub-national level, and thus can help unlock domestic resources for data and align financing with data needs/priorities for development, positioning financing data needs as a priority for national funding and alignment with the SDGs. On the other side, data provide de evidence required for the INFFs to work. NSOs are already involved in INFF processes, but can take a more active role, also advocating for data and statistics to be a prioritized area for financing in the process.
4. Donors need to better align their financial support and work with National Statistical Offices to ensure that international resources are used effectively to respond to the priorities of the national data and statistical system, and to help mobilize domestic resources.
5. Donors' investments in data in countries should be guided by two overarching principles: country ownership and sustainability. To abide to these principles' donor investments should: 1. be catalytic, which can be ensured if international investments are well coordinated; 2. be based on an extensive assessment of the data ecosystem of the specific countries. 3. accurately reflect national priorities. Through this approach, effectiveness is ensured, avoiding having overfunded countries while some are left out.
6. Donors rely heavily on quality data to inform and guide their foreign aid programmes and need to invest in building countries' capacities in data and statistics.
7. Key elements in securing national funding for data and statistics are responsiveness to policy maker's information needs, advocacy and the build-up of solid business cases, the importance of engaging communication processes, partnerships, innovation and transparency.

8. NSOs need to become competitive and visible to get more funding. One way to do this is by exercising new roles, particularly as Data Stewards. Likewise, it is key to rely on the fundamental values of our data and statistical community as these lay out an effective framework for cooperation with stakeholders from the entire data ecosystems.
9. NSOs need to be proactive in their partnerships, strengthening the existing and creating new ones, not only at the national level, but also internationally. It is necessary to get involved in projects and exchange experiences.
10. NSOs have a key role to play in actively pursuing mobilization of domestic resources for data and statistics--their impact is even stronger where they have evolved from data producers to coordinators of the whole data and statistical system in the country, or to data stewards.
11. NSOs need to become better on communicating and explaining their roles. As an example, censuses are usually understood as just counting people, and the public does not see the link on how this can be translated into policy making, and planning processes.
12. UN Resident Coordinators play an important role in the country in facilitating the priority setting and establishing collaborations across different parts of the Government and can help empower NSOs in securing domestic resources. Resident Coordinators have seen how NSO face challenges when trying to make a business case for investment in data. However, it is also evidenced that donor support goes to technical advice, rather than installed development capacities to produce and use data. External funding should not be contingent on finders' areas of interest and Resident Coordinators can play a key role in making the case for the importance of statistics across the board.
13. International organizations can provide support to NSOs as they engage in a dialogue with Ministries to secure national funding for data and statistics, in particular by providing support for NSDS planning, identifying data and capacity gaps, and developing a realistic budget. During the COVID pandemic, we have seen an increase in the demand for data and more pressure on NSOs to deliver it, within a constraining fiscal scenario. Therefore, there is a need to align investments and efforts by the international community with domestic resource mobilization.
14. The recently launched Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data will help NSOs in optimizing the use of external funding and increasing domestic resources for data and statistics, in particular by gathering the latest information on demand for and supply of financing for data and highlighting areas that have been underinvested and need attention. One of the key features of the Clearinghouse is the capacity to build communities towards the local needs of a particular country where there are gaps of data, such as gender statistics that need to be financed.
