United Nations Statistical Commission 2022 - Side event

Ensuring resources for data and statistics as part of building back better: a stronger role for NSOs?

To properly deliver on the data needs of the 2030 agenda and other national priorities, sufficient funding needs to be ensured for the statistical systems in countries. While some progress has been made since the adoption of the 2030 agenda in 2015, many low- and middle-income countries are still not able to secure resources to modernise their national statistical and data systems and, in some cases, even to fully implement regular statistical programmes or a full civil registration and vital statistics system. The harsh impact of COVID-19 pandemics has further exasperated this situation, increasing the budget gap for many. How could countries close their budget gaps for data systems? What are some of the solutions that countries could implement? Are there opportunities as part of the build-back better after the pandemics for meeting the more and better financing need for statistical data systems? Fulfilling this need is a prerequisite for sustainable development and requires both the mobilisation of additional domestic resources and a smarter approach to external aid to enable existing funds to go further and more effectively leverage new resources.

In October 2021, at the third UN World Data Forum, two new complementary solutions were launched by the Bern Network on Financing Data for Development and the World Bank, respectively, to mobilize smarter finance for development data. While the traditional approach had focused mostly on raising funds from external sources and improving their coordination these new mechanisms are also aimed at helping raise the levels of domestic resource allocations. More importantly, however, efforts continue to be made at national level. What are some of solutions that could be shared and scaled up? One is to increase understanding of policy makers that could lead to raising the profile at the political level resulting in allocation of more funds to data and statistics. This strategy of increased engagement with policy makers and providing data in an understandable manner has had success in some countries. Increased engagement around national financing discussions, including the Integrated National Financing Framework is another avenue that countries have started exploring.

The Bern Network's Clearing house is also offering an innovative solution as it is intended to make financing for data smarter by providing timely, accurate and granular information to match the demand for, and supply of, statistical support, create a community of practice to leverage existing knowledge, and facilitate monitoring of investment results. The Clearinghouse will complement the World Bank's Global Data Facility by acting as its information and community hub, helping inform the allocation of effective resources.

Central to the successful operationalization of such solutions as the Clearinghouse and the increased engagement around the Integrated National Financing Framework is the involvement and the coordination role of National Statistical Offices. This event will provide the space for the initial discussion on how to define the role of NSOs in bringing together all parts of the national data and statistical systems in decisions on the allocation and utilization of international aid, and how they can ensure that national priorities are effectively channelled through the various mechanisms for the implementation of the clearinghouse. It will also allow for exchange with financing for development experts and UN Resident Coordinator Offices on how NSOs could play

a bigger role in the governments' decision-making processes in the allocation of internal resources for data and statistics.

Guiding questions

The focus of the discussion will be to move the conversation around financing forward by sharing solutions on how NSOs can play a more effective role in making the case for greater domestic investment in data and deliver and show the impact of how greater investment pays off encouraging more political support for data in medium-long term.

- Why is domestic resource mobilization (DMR) important in data and statistics an important component for quality data production and why do NSOs have a key role in championing to apply solutions and showing impacts of more and better domestic resource allocation to data?

- What are some of the good practices to mobilize DMR? Under what circumstances these good practice solutions have worked and how to scale them up for other data sectors or for other countries?

- How can external funds be best matched with DMR to align with national priorities? What mechanisms are there to assist with such coordination and alignment? What are some key performance indicators to guide planning for such alignment?

Event structure:

9.00 – 9.15 – Introduction and setting the scene

9.15 – 10.00 – Moderated panel [chief statisticians, representative of donor community, UN Resident Coordinator, representative of Finance Ministry, expert from the UN Financing for Sustainable Development Office]

10:00 – 10:15 – Q&A's

10.15 – 10:30 – Wrap up and summary to be presented to the UNSC