

UN World Data Forum closes with global agreement to improve data quality, new financing tools for data collection

People's Republic of China to host the UN World Data Forum 2023

Bern, 6 October – The 2021 UN World Data Forum is concluding today with the announcement of the [Bern Data Compact for the Decade of Action on the Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), a clear call for action and commitment to invest in data capacities and data partnerships to leave no one behind, build trust and fill data gaps to achieve the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

The Forum, held from 3 to 6 October, brought together over 700 in-person participants and more than 7,000 people joining virtually from over 100 countries around the world, including representatives from national statistical systems, international organizations, civil society, academia, and the private sector.

“The UN World Data Forum is a critical space for bringing data communities together, showcasing solutions, and nurturing partnerships to make ‘data for all’ a reality. Timely, open, quality data are more essential than ever,” stated UN Secretary-General António Guterres in his remarks to open the Forum.

Noting the crucial role of data to help the world recover from the devastation of COVID-19, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Liu Zhenmin said in his closing remarks to the Forum that “the need to harness the power of data is more urgent than ever.”

“Transformational changes are needed, and timely, high-quality, and open data are essential. Decision-makers should treat data as a strategic asset and a priority in building back better. Increased data financing is needed from both international and domestic resources,” Mr. Liu added.

Bringing together stakeholders from across the world of data, the Forum reflects the move from a narrow focus on official statistics to thinking about the data ecosystem more holistically.

Highlights from the Forum

- **Leaving no one behind**

The Forum discussions stressed the need for greater collaboration and coordination to leave no one behind; financial support informed by the needs of excluded communities; increased capacities of National Statistical Offices; and greater inclusion and access for people with disabilities.

- **Investing in data**

The Forum zeroed in on new approaches to capacity development and mobilization of financial support to leverage the opportunities of new data ecosystems. Key areas in need of financing include improved data security, engagement with policy and decision makers, and promotion of accountability. Stefan Schweinfest, Director of the Statistics Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), stressed that data, in this effort, is a worthwhile investment.

- **Building trust in data**

Discussions stressed the importance of good data governance systems and principles, along nurturing a lively dialogue among the broad community of data experts, to prevent misuse of information. Speakers stressed the role of communication and engagement with users in increasing data literacy and bursting “information bubbles”.

Innovative data solutions and the way forward

- In addition to the **Bern Data Compact for a Decade of Action on the Sustainable Development Goals**, two innovative and complementary solutions for smarter financing for data were launched:
 - The **Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data**, a new, free online platform providing access to data on over 15,000 projects, allows aid recipients, donors and the public at large to understand data financing flows, identify funding gaps, and connect to new communities of experts. The Clearinghouse aims to close the stark data financing gap that is preventing progress on the SDGs. It was developed by the Bern Network on Financing Data for Development, a multi-stakeholder alliance created in 2019 by the Swiss Government to promote more and better funding for development data.
 - The **Global Data Facility** is the new, World Bank-hosted fund to support data and statistics priorities at the global, regional, national, and community levels. It was designed in collaboration with UN DESA Statistics Division,

the UN Statistical Commission's High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG PCCB) and country counterparts and centers of excellence around the world. The Global Data Facility will support investments in both the fundamentals and the frontiers of data and statistics, including support to modernize data systems and tap into a range of new data sources for better decision-making, improved efficiency, and strengthened data integrity at scale. The Facility is designed to leverage significant additional financing to enable long-term support and durable data and statistics transformations. It will additionally leverage the Bern Network Clearinghouse to serve as a global coordination mechanism for a spectrum of partners, practitioners, and country clients to join forces in support of the global data revolution.

China to host UN World Data Forum in 2023

The HLG-PCCB Co-chair, Elsa Dhuli, announced at the closing ceremony that the next UN World Data Forum will be hosted by the People's Republic of China, in Hangzhou, in early 2023.

About the UN World Data Forum

The UN World Data Forum is organized by the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with substantial support from the World Data Forum Programme Committee, under the guidance of the UN Statistical Commission and in close consultation with Member States, international partners, and other stakeholders.

The Statistics Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs supports the organization of the Forum in its role as Secretariat of the High-level Group, the Programme Committee, and the Statistical Commission.

The hybrid Forum was supported by the Statistics Division of UN DESA, which supports the organization of the Forum in its role as Secretariat of the Commission and the HLG-PCCB.

Note to editors

Recordings of the Forum sessions, as well as other media information, can be found [here](#).

More about the UNWDF 2021

UN World Data Forum | [UNDataForum.org](https://undataforum.org) |

Social Media | [@UNDataForum](https://twitter.com/UNDataForum) |

Forum Programme | <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/undataforum/programme/> |

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