# Global community advances the future of data for sustainable development at fifth UN World Data Forum

**Medellín, Colombia, 13 November 2024** – Following the outcome of the Summit of the Future, the fifth UN World Data Forum opened yesterday to accelerate progress on sustainable development by leveraging the transformative power of data. More than 3,000 data experts, leaders, entrepreneurs, youth, academics, representatives from governments and civil society from over 120 countries are gathering from 12 to 15 November to promote tangible solutions; covering topics including youth, gender, climate and environment, digitalisation and modernization, capacity development, data literacy and data science including AI. The Forum will explore four thematic areas:

1. Innovation for better and more inclusive data
2. Maximizing the use and value of data for better decision-making
3. Building trust, protection and ethics in data
4. Effective partnerships for better data and a more equitable data ecosystem

"This year's Forum reflects the growing community of practice on data innovation, governance, partnership and capacity development that is needed to make the 2030 Agenda a reality and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals," said Amina J Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, as she addressed the opening of the Forum. "With this renewed momentum, the United Nations system looks forward to working with you to bring more support for countries and social groups, including those in fragile contexts, to strengthen statistical and geospatial data systems, improve data quality and analysis, and expand data coverage and access that leaves no one behind."

The main goal set for the Forum — the first taking place in Latin America — is to promote a unique environment for socialization, dissemination and analysis of processes, practices, challenges and use cases led by data practitioners Deliberations are expected to strengthen National Statistical Systems and the understanding of expanded ecosystems of data. That's why this year the renewal of the Cape Town global action plan will be

launched during the closing of the Forum on 15 November, with the aim of having a clear and strong framework for action that allows us to improve access and use of better data for better lives.

Given that only 17 per cent of SDGs targets are on track to be achieved by 2030, data experts have stressed that intensified efforts are needed to create a better future. Data can empower governments, the private sector, media, non-profit entities, academia, international and regional agencies and civil society to enhance their decision-making processes and allocate resources more effectively, advancing the goal of building more sustainable and equitable societies. Likewise, the adoption of technological tools such as AI can also open a spectrum of opportunities, but also pose risks that data-driven decision-makers are considering in depth.

"Bringing together leaders and experts from around the world allows us to harness all the knowledge towards building a better world, where countries can access and fully leverage data for policymaking, accountability and the implementation of efficiencies by businesses, academia, media and other civil society actors. All of this must be grounded in the trust and ethics that should underpin the use of data," noted Piedad Urdinola, Director of the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia.

During the Forum, participants will have the opportunity to attend over 100 concurrent conferences featuring a diverse array of data experts and leaders from various countries and organizations. Additionally, attendees will have the chance to enhance their professional networks within the global data and statistics community.

**About the UN World Data Forum**

The United Nations World Data Forum (UNWDF) serves to highlight the role and value of data in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Forum in 2024 is hosted by the Government of Colombia, represented by the Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE-Colombia). The programme is prepared by UNWDF Programme Committee (UNWDF PC), under the strategic leadership and guidance of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB) and the United Nations Statistical Commission. Secretariat support for all these bodies is provided by the Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

More information can be found on the media page at undataforum.org, on X (formerly Twitter) at @UNDataForum or LinkedIn at United Nations Statistics Division. The Plenary sessions will be livestreamed on @UNStats and @DaneColombia YouTube channels.

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