FfD4 and the Future of Data: Strengthening Systems for Sustainable Financing

Lead implementing countries/entities: Colombia, Norway, United Kingdom

Endorsing countries/entities: Canada, Ireland, Switzerland, Maldives, Nigeria; Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data; HLG-PCCB; IATI; Open Data Watch; Paris21; Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN); UN Development Programme (UNDP); UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC); UN Women; UNFPA; UNICEF; United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD); United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER)

Description

Data and statistics are strategic assets and force multipliers for development finance. Smart investments in data help governments raise revenue, manage debt, unlock private capital, and coordinate international assistance more effectively. The FfD4 outcome document acknowledges the importance of data. But recognition alone won't drive results. Collective action, building on the foundations of successful data initiatives and partnerships, will enable delivery of commitments and priorities for data and statistics within the renewed global FfD framework. This submission to the Sevilla Platform for Action by a group of member states, civil society, and UN agencies, sets out the principles and vision for embedding data at the core of financing strategies and ensuring it delivers on all FfD4 ambitions:

- Enhancing domestic resource mobilization: Well-integrated data systems improve tax collection, revenue forecasting, and spending efficiency—freeing up more resources to fund national priorities.
- Improving private sector investment: Better economic and financial data lowers risk, reduces uncertainty, and supports well-targeted public-private investments.
- Optimizing international development cooperation: Timely, reliable data on needs and results helps align aid with impact, strengthens coordination, and builds accountability.
- Supporting debt sustainability: Transparent, integrated data enables sound debt management and earlier responses to emerging risks.
- Addressing systemic issues: Strong data systems, delivering accurate, reliable and timely data builds resilience to global shocks and enhances financial stability.

To deliver on this vision, action is built on three pillars:

1. Efficient Data Financing
   Fragmentation of investment, overreliance on short-term approaches, and poor coordination undermine results and waste resources. Efficient financing requires aligning support with national priorities, harmonizing funding streams, and

maximizing impact through collaboration.

2. Future-Proofing Data Investments
Data systems must evolve with today's demands- digital economies, inclusive growth, people and planet all require flexible, tech-ready systems and fit-for-purpose, AI ready data. Future-proofing means scaling what works and adapting quickly to new challenges, guided by national leadership.

3. Political Commitment and Cross-Sector Coordination
Success depends on high-level support. Ministries of finance, planning and statistics must work together, backed by partners committed to breaking silos and building shared accountability.

Data is a central driver of informed financing for development. Strengthening national systems is critical for implementation for the global development agenda and key to mobilize access to additional financial resources. We commit to collective action, progressing the Medellin Framework for Action on Data and its commitment platform, and delivering data priorities to drive the global FfD agenda.

Specific Actions

1. Efficient Data Financing
- Donors will align their support with shared principles for effective data financing—reducing duplication, improving coordination, aligning with national priorities, strengthening national data and statistical systems, and increasing the impact of both north–south and south–south cooperation.
- Governments will coordinate across ministries, and with civil society and private sector, to improve data quality and foster responsible data sharing that strengthens domestic resource mobilisation and enhances debt management
- Donors and Investors will strengthen the transparency of their investments by mapping funding flows, identifying gaps, and prioritizing underfunded national data priorities.
- Governments and partners will harmonise and standardise data collection at the source to enable reuse, interoperability, and AI-readiness of official data.

2. Future-Proofing Investments in a Changing World
- Governments and their partners will invest in modern tools and technologies to harness data and support digital transformation, enabling more effective financing outcomes.
- Development partners will expand technical assistance and capacity building to support the use of alternative data sources, emerging technologies and innovative methods for producing timely and inclusive, policy-relevant data.
- Leaders of major policy and financing initiatives will commit to dedicating part of their investments toward the underlying data systems needed to ensure those efforts are effective, sustainable, and scalable.

3. Harnessing Political Commitment and Coordination Across Sectors

- **Governments, donors, and multilateral actors** will engage through shared platforms to sustain high-level commitment to data as a strategic asset, including through active use of data and statistics to inform decision making, and foster better alignment of data-related resources across sectors.
- **Governments** will invest in national data and statistical systems to advance domestic revenue generation, manage debt, curb illicit financial flows and attract investment.
- **Member states** will foster peer learning and mutual accountability on data system strengthening by engaging in mechanisms like the *UN Statistical Commission's High-Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity Building (HLG-PCCB)*.
- **Global statistical leaders** will improve coordination, ensuring that efforts are aligned and that standards—such as metadata frameworks—are embedded early in system design.
- **Donors** will dedicate a meaningful share of development cooperation to building sustainable data and statistical systems – ensuring more effective use of existing resources and long-term development impact.

FFD action areas

- Domestic public resources
- Domestic and international private business and finance
- International development cooperation
- International trade as an engine for development
- Debt and debt sustainability
- Addressing systemic issues
- Science, technology, innovation and capacity building
- Data, monitoring and follow up