2015—2020

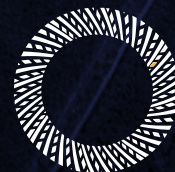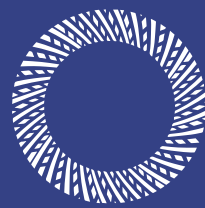**Five years of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data**

A Global Movement for Better Data & Better Lives

Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

Global
Partnership
for Sustainable
Development Data

Acknowledgments

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Acronyms

ARDC	Africa Regional Data Cube
Cepei	Centro de Pensamiento Estratégico Internacional
CGD	Citizen-generated data
COVID-19	Coronavirus 2019, the disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus
CRVS	Civil registration and vital statistics
CSO	Civil society organizations
DANE	National Administrative Department of Statistics
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IDC	Inclusive Data Charter
NSO	National Statistical Offices
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

Foreword

I am delighted to be the Honorary Chair of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, which is marking its fifth anniversary with this report. I thank the other members of the Global Partnership Board, Technical Advisory Group, and 260 partners for their tenacious efforts to leverage data to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Now, more than ever we need rapid and actionable data and statistics to inform and accelerate progress towards our shared goals to preserve the planet and its people. Much has been done but there is still much to do together.

Since its inception, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data has tackled many pressing issues, but the COVID-19 pandemic is our greatest challenge yet. The availability of data has never before been so clearly linked to the fate of the world and its people. Strong data systems, or the lack thereof, will make or break economies, guiding billions of decisions, big and small at this crossroads in our history.

The world's poorest and most vulnerable people are being hit hardest by the effects of the pandemic. As many as 71 million people are estimated to be pushed back into extreme poverty in 2020 – the first rise in global poverty since 1998. I have been heartened to see the close collaboration between the UN and the Global Partnership to help broker or strengthen data partnerships in more than 20 countries on COVID-19 and

post COVID recovery in just a few months. We need to bring in expertise from all corners of the world if we are to rebuild sustainably and inclusively, and I am grateful to all the partners who have contributed speedily and effectively to this vital work.

The production and use of timely data for decision-making is an essential ingredient in achieving the universally agreed collective vision of a people-centered and planet-sensitive future: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda remains our framework for recovering in ways that accelerate progress on poverty, gender equality, finance, and climate change while also addressing the human rights, inequalities, and fragilities that have been exposed or exacerbated by the pandemic.

Only with accurate, timely and inclusive data can we comprehensively assess the challenges we face, identify and invest in the most appropriate solutions, and measure the results and concrete progress we must make to build back better post-COVID-19.

Importantly, if data is to be shared, used responsibly, and reach the people and places where it is needed most, policies on privacy and data governance will be needed and risks must be assessed, managed, and mitigated. More extensive financing will also be critical to better timely data at scale. These challenges can't be tackled alone - that's why the Global Partnership's role in bringing together: private sector, civil society, youth, researchers, and governments remains critical.

Our interconnectedness is a source of strength and needed solidarity - we are on this earth together and we must forge a future that works for everyone, not just the few. The United Nations looks forward to working with the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data over the next five years to continue to build a world where credible data drives better decisions and better lives for all by achieving the SDGs everywhere.

Amina J. Mohammed,
United Nations Deputy Secretary-General

Executive Summary

Data is power. It's a power that is often obscured by technical detail, but it's a power that can change minds, change policies, and change lives. The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data was created in 2015 to put that power at the service of sustainable development.

Five years on, our global reach means we can make connections between countries, institutions, and sectors that no one else can make. Our approach to partnership builds relationships that endure over time and create lasting impact. Our roots in the Sustainable Development Goals give us a laser focus on data that drives progress for people and the planet. And our unique network means we can bring together the key players to build a just and robust data system that supports human progress.

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data: Five years, five facts.

1

We have 260 registered partners from 59 countries across 111 cities

2

Our work is powered by 39 working groups, task teams, committees, and collaboratives, solving problems together

3

27 governments are partnering with us to create impact in their countries

4

The Secretariat has brokered 70 strategic partnerships, and...

5

...delivered 150 convenings (high-level meetings, events, webinars, and workshops)

Data for better decisions

Data is an essential tool for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and over the last five years, the team has worked with governments around the world to build national and regional partnerships for data production and use. Thanks to Global Partnership brokering and support, better data means that:

· The government of Sierra Leone can better protect its vital mangrove forests.
· In Senegal, farmers can get prices for their crops more quickly at harvest time.
· The government of Paraguay can more effectively track flood risk and manage water systems.
· In Nigeria, the government is better able to track COVID-19 cases and health center availability.
· In Kenya, wildlife conservation groups can find the best location for resettling endangered rhinos.

Data for better lives

The commitment to "leave no one behind" has always been at the heart of the Global Partnership's work. From the earliest days, we have focused on how data can improve the lives of the poorest people in the world. Our work with partners means that:

· In Colombia, the statistics office now takes into account gender, life cycle, ethnicity, and disability, to create a fuller understanding of people's needs in data.
· The government of Zanzibar is using data to understand the gendered dimensions of migration and crime.
· The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center published the first-ever global estimates of the number of internally displaced children and women.
· The government of Sierra Leone has data on gender and disability for the nation's children.

A better world of data

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data aims to drive systemic changes in the field of data, facilitating useful innovation and responsible data sharing, making systems interoperable, and increasing funding for data. In the last five years, we have:

· Worked with the World Bank to support 38 collaborative data innovation projects with US$7.2 million.
· Produced a guide on data interoperability, based on learning from nearly 100 partners, which has been endorsed by the UN Statistics Commission and is already being used to inform practice in at least nine countries.
· Worked with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, FAO, the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Bank, and several governments, launched the 50x2030 initiative, a donor plan to spend $236 million through 2030 for data to support smallholder farmers.

What we have learned

We have learned so much since 2015 about what works and how we can best enable our partners to work together towards the future we all want. Our five most important lessons in the last five years are:

· Good data takes time: time to build relationships, change institutions, and learn together.
· Progress depends on people: understanding and trust are the keys to good partnerships.
· Politics drives technical change: political support is critical for sustainable change at scale.
· Values count: inclusivity and equity must underpin progress on data.
· Systems not silos: interoperability and openness strengthen systems and increase impact.

What has remained constant is the energy, enthusiasm, and expertise of the organizations and people who drive our mission — our 260 partners who power the network and must take credit for our success and the impact we have had in the world. It is a pleasure and a privilege to work with them every day. Together we are doing something quite extraordinary.

Introduction

By Claire Melamed, CEO, Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

Data is power. It's a power that is often obscured by technical detail, but it's a power that can change minds, change policies, and change lives. The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data was created in 2015 to put that power at the service of sustainable development.

Five years on, we have 260 registered partners in 59 countries and 111 cities, and we work with almost twice that number of organizations to deliver our work. Their combined reach extends to every region (bar Antarctica) and almost every country in the world. Our work is having an impact on people's lives — from Colombia, where inequalities stemming from decades of armed conflict can be better understood and addressed, to Chennai, where residents' rubbish is collected more efficiently, and to Senegal and Ghana where farmers are getting access to climate-resistant crops.

There's a lot to be proud of. And also a lot of learning to reflect on, as we look back at some of the things that have happened along the way. This report celebrates our successes, is open about our challenges, and highlights what we have learned.

2015 was a year of hope. It seemed like the start of a new era of cooperation to solve global challenges with the agreement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement on climate action, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Things look very different five years on. The crises of climate change, inequality, migration, and conflict; and the COVID-19 pandemic, are not being met with commensurate action by a united global community. But collaboration remains essential, and networks like the Global Partnership, which foster new relationships across national, sectoral, and institutional borders, are even more critical as global institutions struggle to overcome the barriers put in their way.

The Data4SDGs
Network
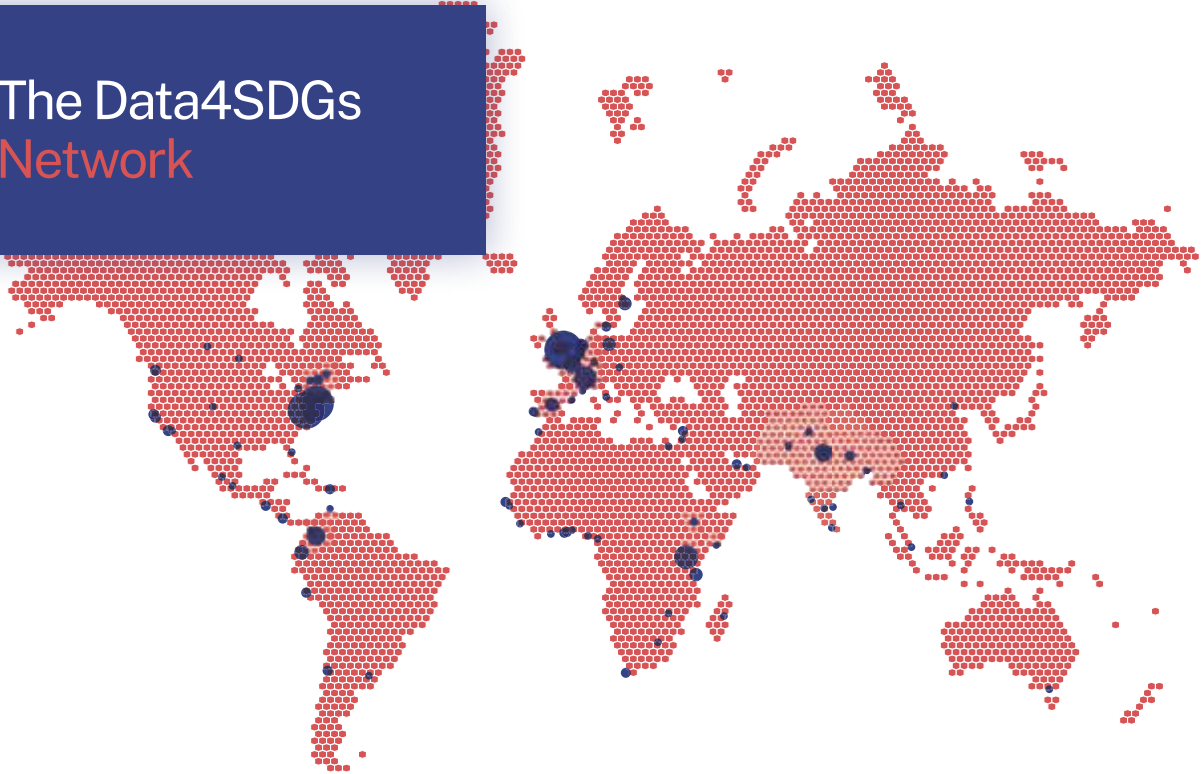
Figure 1: Map of registered partners' headquarters.

NORTH AMERICA
31.64%

EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA
34.38%

SOUTH ASIA
16.02%

81

88

EAST ASIA & PACIFIC
16.02%

LATIN AMERICS & CARIBBEAN
24.22%

25

41

62

80

41

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
31.25%

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA
9.77%

GLOBAL
18.75%

48
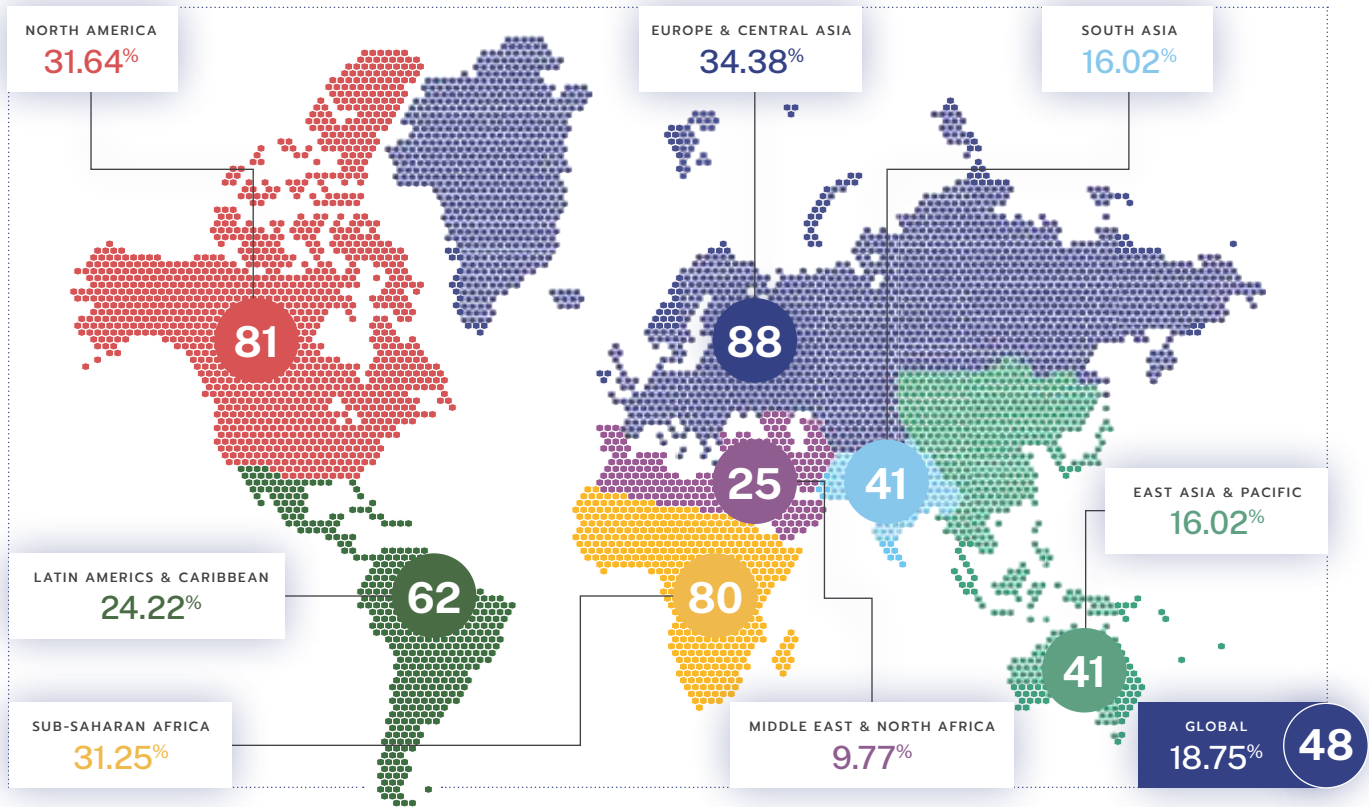
Figure 2: Regions where registered partners work or have impact.

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data: it's who we are

Simply being diverse, either as a network or a secretariat team, is not a guarantee of acting as a truly international institution, where all regions are treated equally and power is not concentrated in one place. Values have always been at the heart of how we define ourselves as a team and network, and we have high expectations around how we should treat each other. Sometimes we fall short. But our goal in both the network and the secretariat is to create an open atmosphere founded on trust and kindness, where all can express their views, where we are open to change and adapt, and where we all know we have much to learn and can always do better.

Being a team and network that is open, collaborative, and equal is who we are and how we work. It is the foundation of everything we have achieved over the last five years and will be our touchstone for the future.

Being global in 2020 is a more deliberate and thoughtful proposition than it was in 2015. The inequalities and injustices highlighted by the Black Lives Matter movement, and the exposure of discrimination and injustice in too many international organizations, has created a much-needed conversation about how to be an international organization in a way that contributes to building justice.

The Global Partnership is two things — a network that powers it and a secretariat that services it. The Global Partnership secretariat team is focused on helping the 260 very diverse partners coordinate, collaborate, and together drive better data for better lives, and needs to reflect that diversity. One of the earliest decisions I took when I became the CEO of the Global Partnership was to create a decentralized structure, hiring the best people, wherever they were in the world, and keeping the team as close as possible to the partners. As a result, our team of 20 is based in six countries on four continents, with seven nationalities between us. Our senior leadership team of four is based in three countries and three continents, and our Board of Directors consists of leaders from twelve different countries. We are more women than men, with a majority of women in senior leadership too.

When we feel helpless as individuals, we are lifted by community, and it's been a joy to see the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data foster an open, supportive, and expert community for data. The Secretariat team, the Board, and the partners show such determination and generosity of spirit in working together to drive forward towards the inclusive society we all want.

– ANNE-BIRGITTE ALBRECTSEN

CEO, Plan International; Co-Chair of the Board, Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

Data for Development Festivals

Our approach to managing and sustaining a global organization and network was exemplified in the first Data for Development Festival in Bristol, UK, in 2018. Planning the festival involved well over 30 partners, and the line up illustrated the breadth of the network.

Eighty percent of the panels featured speakers from low and middle income countries, and 54 percent had a private sector speaker. Our collaborative approach generated some amazing and innovative ideas, with a SDG simulation game, live 3D drawing, a field trip, a storytelling competition, and a data dive, among the many activities on offer. And this innovation produced results, with 98 percent of participants saying they met someone new they were likely to collaborate with in the future. The next festival is scheduled for 2022, stay tuned.

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data: it's how we work

To be a partnership means to facilitate others to achieve impact, bringing together organizations with different strategies, business models, and priorities. Our work in the team is about enabling others to do things, not doing them ourselves.

Since the Global Partnership launched in September 2015, we have brokered over 70 partnerships at local, national, regional, and global levels. We have created a structure of working groups, task teams, and a Technical Advisory Group, that work, learn, and create change together. There are three hard-won lessons from those many and varied partnerships that I will be taking into the next five years.

Firstly and critically, it takes time and energy to broker a partnership, and to make sure it delivers. We are often working with partners who have never worked together before, who come from different institutional cultures, with different levels of knowledge, and who face very different incentives and constraints. Understanding that, like everything else, data is about people, about relationships, and about how they come together in institutions, our team has amassed experience with building lasting partnerships, that deliver change. It is painstaking work to embed systemic changes

I am proud to be among those who helped to start up the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data five years ago. The network it has built and the progress made are extraordinary. But with every step we take to improve the development data along the data value chain from production to dissemination to use and impact, we learn more about what is needed and what works and doesn't. The strength of the Global Partnership for the next 5+ years is to take these learnings forward and using the power of partnership, help us to test and scale-up solutions to make data a practical instrument to improve lives.

– SHAIDA BADIEE

Managing Director and Co-founder, Open Data Watch

into existing institutions, to work with the grain of individual and organizational incentives, and to build lasting relationships, underpinned by mutual interest. It's slow, but it works. Secondly, we need different kinds of partnerships to do different things. Some of our partnerships are open-ended working groups, coming together to both define challenges to solve, and then to develop common strategies. Other partnerships are smaller and more focused, brought together

to meet an already-defined need, whether that be data to tackle COVID-19, or to monitor agricultural production or to protect the environment.

Both have had impact but in very different ways. There are sometimes pressures from funders that push us more towards particular types of partnerships, and we need to ensure that we are striking the right balance and serving our partners, and the wider mission, as well as we can.

The third lesson is about what it means to achieve change through partnerships rather than by being operational. The line is not always clear. As one example, our networking and brokering sometimes combine the contributions of our partners into a single product or offer. But if the Global Partnership owns products or delivers our services in the long term, we risk losing our neutrality and our flexibility.

Our role must be catalytic. When partnerships create products and services, that's an indication of success. But to be sustainable, partners must maintain these products themselves and put them to use. The Africa Regional Data Cube has worked brilliantly in this way. Catalyzed by the Global Partnership, working with a core group of technical partners and countries, it is now scaling up to a regional entity, owned and funded by partners. The API Highways platform was less successful and did not, in the end, catalyze a group of partners to take it on and resource it.

Our approach to partnership has evolved over the last few years and is still evolving as we learn. We are pulled in many different directions and won't always get it right. But what will not change is our total commitment to being open, honest, and to keep partnership at the heart of how we create change in the world.

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data: it's what we are for

This focus has been further refined in real-time as we have built relationships, learned, and evolved. In the next five years, increased investment in learning and knowledge sharing will allow our network to drive a transformation in the use of data to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Bogotá, 2016. Helkin Rene Diaz/Cepei.

We were born from the same process that created the Sustainable Development Goals, and the goals have always been our guiding framework, setting our strategy and direction. There are seventeen goals, and this means a long list of issues to work on. In 2018, we developed our first five-year strategy, defining what we will do to drive progress on the SDGs — and also, critically, what we will not do.

This led to a much stronger focus on data use. Like much of the data landscape, we started off thinking about data from the supply side: who was collecting it, who was turning it into cool apps or presenting it on platforms, who had good analysis or tools? We defined the problem we were trying to solve in terms of "data gaps," and sought to support the production of new data to solve new challenges.

However, developing the strategy crystalized a change of perspective — that some of the biggest challenges in turning data into positive action are not about the production of data but its use. There are still data gaps — people and places missing from the record — but a focus on use can help increase demand for and investment in filling those gaps, as well as doing more with what already exists.

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data: the community we build

The culture of data is changing, bit by bit. But creating the data systems that will support sustainable development requires more: the technical, legal, institutional, and governance frameworks that can unleash the power of data for social change and human progress. We have the responsibility to work together and find solutions to the challenges we collectively face.

Being a partner in the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data should mean helping build a world where people can trust that data will be used for the good of all.

Today's data system is full of contradictions. It is a world where some lives are sliced and diced by data to an almost absurd extent, while others are virtually invisible to those who could help them. It's a world where some information is available at the touch of a button, but vital facts are fiercely protected to secure a market advantage. It's a world where some have to fight to be counted, and others face an equally daunting battle to protect their privacy.

Our global network, the partnerships we broker, what we learn, and what we say, needs to be focused on resolving these contradictions in a way that supports the SDGs and the emergence of a more peaceful, sustainable, and fairer world. Over the last five years, we have seen many positive changes. Fears have been allayed, mutual suspicion has been replaced by understanding and collaboration, and real, practical progress has been made. More and more organizations are working together on the most critical issues like the importance of ethics and robust governance, the challenges of interoperability, and the balance between the public and private sectors.

Bogotá, 2016. Helkin Rene Diaz/Cepei.

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data at Five

The partnership is the oil in the engine of the data system that can make all the other parts more effective and more efficient, working together with less noise and less friction.

Our global reach means we can make connections between countries, institutions, and sectors that no one else can make. Our approach to partnership builds relationships that endure over time and create lasting impact. Our roots in the SDGs give us a laser focus on data that drives progress for people and the planet. And our unique network means we can bring together the key players to build a just and robust data system that supports human progress.

The next 10 years will be just as challenging and just as fun. But while we reflect on the past, my strongest emotion is one of deep admiration and gratitude for everyone who brought us this far — the original founding partners whose energy and commitment brought us into being, our secretariat team, past and present, who have worked so hard to make the idea a reality, our donors who have trusted us to deliver on our promises, and most importantly the partners working every day to use data to understand the world and make it more equitable.

Thank you all, and here's to the next five years.

Claire Melamed
CEO, Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

Dakar, Senegal. Vince Gx/Unsplash.

✳ **Explore Our Data Visualizations**

Visit **www.data4sdgs.org/visualizing-global-partnership** for dynamic maps about where our partners work, where Secretariat and partner collaborations have focused, and where and why we have brought data communities together.

The numbers included in this report are dynamic and will continue to change. They were accurate as of August 2020.

Bringing the
Network Together

Our convenings by year and location

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
4	14	19	20	29	41

Virtual			
	Kenya Nairobi	South Africa Cape Town	United Arab Emirates Dubai
	Ghana Accra	United States Washington, D.C.	Sierra Leone Freetown
United States New York	Colombia Bogotá	Spain Madrid	Togo Lomé
		Ethiopia	
	United Kingdom Bristol	Thailand	
		Germany	Costa Rica
		Senegal	
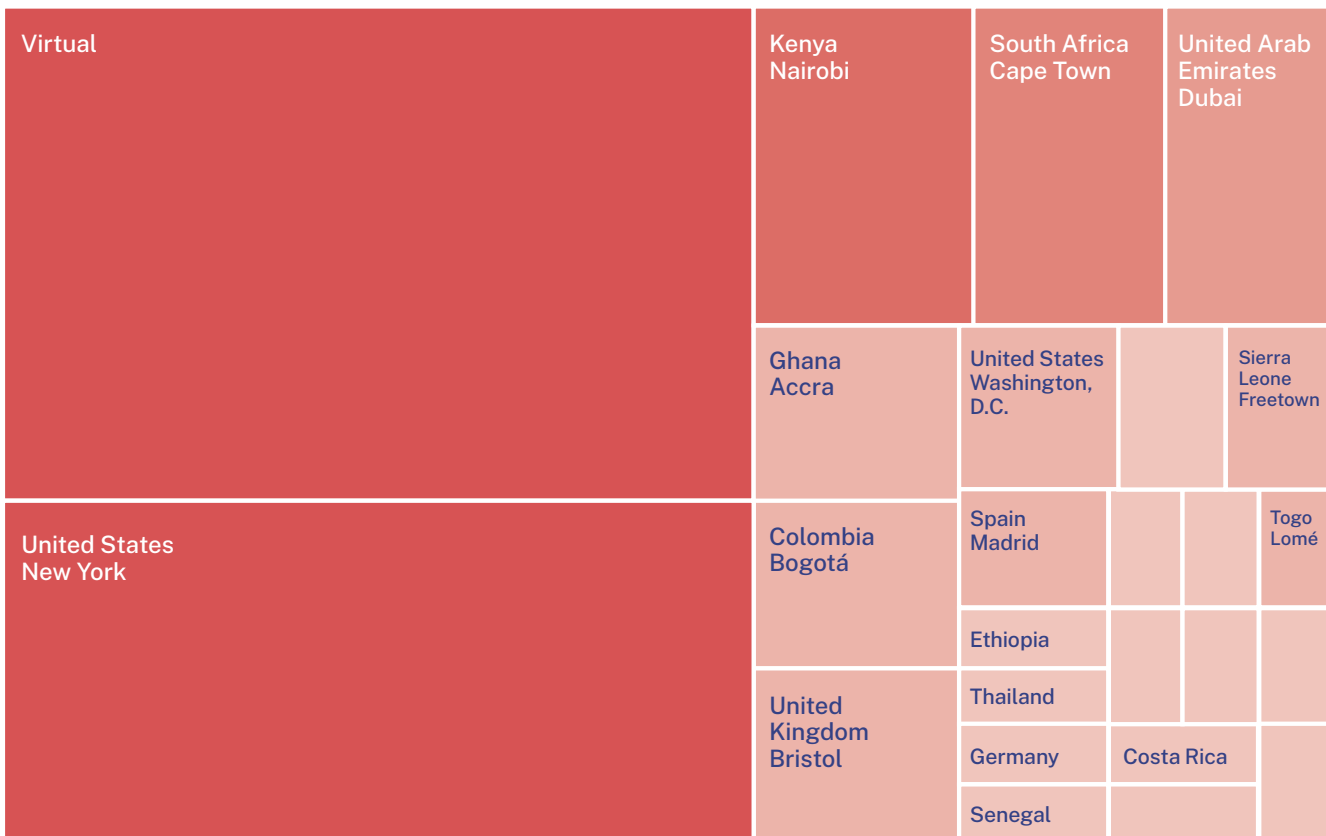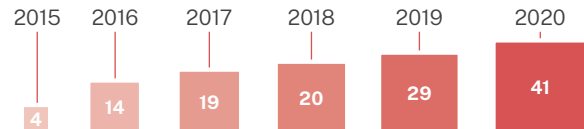
Data4SDGs in Action, Tableau Map. Claire Pei/Kizley Benedict.

Data for better decisions

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (the Global Partnership) was created to help governments access and use better data to make decisions. Data is an essential tool for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and over the last five years, the team has worked with 27 governments around the world to build national and regional partnerships for data production and use. For example:

In **Latin America**, government partners in Paraguay and Colombia have developed new methods of SDG monitoring, which are now recognized as part of the official system, allowing countries around the world to more effectively monitor their progress on SDG 9 and SDG 11.

In **Africa**, better data helped the government of Sierra Leone protect its mangroves, has helped farmers in Senegal determine crop prices faster, has enabled the government of Nigeria to track COVID-19 cases and health center availability, and is helping Kenyan wildlife conservation groups find the best location for resettling endangered rhinos.

Our work is guided by the dual principles of local ownership and sustainability. We have focused on understanding what countries need, and how to strengthen the internal advocates for data-led decision-making. We can then build partnerships that are in line with national priorities, invest in training and capacity development, and develop strong relationships to sustain institutional and political support over the long term.

Creating champions: bringing together the technical and the political

Some of the countries we work with are leaders in the area of data, innovation, and technology. With political leaders who embrace change, these countries use partnerships to accelerate internal progress, and also to share knowledge and experience with their peers. They have shaped the partnership through their involvement in governance mechanisms and some of our major initiatives.

Colombia

Colombia's National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) was an early champion of data for sustainable development. DANE leveraged partnerships brokered through the Global Partnership's network to become a global leader in the use of EO data to track SDG indicators The government developed new methods for measuring SDGs 9 and 11, which are now being adopted in countries around the world. Colombia had a government minister on the Global Partnership's board for several years, is a member of the Inclusive Data Charter, and remains an active country partner.

Ghana

Since 2017, Ghana has become an active, strongly engaged member of the Global Partnership, with the Vice President of Ghana serving on our Board. The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) frequently contributes to peer exchange and knowledge-sharing initiatives, supporting and inspiring other country representatives and partners. Ghana is an Africa Regional Data Cube founding country and an Inclusive Data

Charter champion. The government also co-hosted the 2019 Global Partnership Media Fellowship to Ghana, which brought journalists to Accra to learn about national data for development progress and resulted in media coverage in outlets such as Vox, Voice of America, SciDevNet, Bloomberg, Quartz, and more. Thanks to partnerships brokered by the Global Partnership, Ghana is using satellite data to protect water quality and to detect illegal mining, using mobile data to track the effectiveness of lockdown policies following the COVID-19 pandemic, and working to disaggregate data so marginalized groups are counted, among other things.

Progress on sustainable development doesn't happen with speeches wishing it to be so. True progress is always localized. We proudly represent the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data in Latin America and the Caribbean by co-creating initiatives with governments, grassroots organizations, academia, long-standing and technology companies to strengthen inclusive data ecosystems.

– PHILIPP SCHÖNROCK

Director, Cepei

Virgyl Sowah/Unsplash.

Transforming Data for Development in Ghana, For People and Planet

By Professor George Gyan-Baffour, Minister for Planning, Ghana; Data for SDGs Ambassador

The National Data Roadmap workshop in Ghana marked a turning point and a shift in our national statistical system's priorities and culture with respect to data for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The data roadmap process kickstarted what would become ongoing, participatory, multi-stakeholder collaborations that drew members from government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), civil society organizations, academia, and the private sector, making our data ecosystem more inclusive and resulting in positive outcomes for organizations and people across the country. Subsequently, there have been several initiatives advancing the recognition accorded statistics in various segments of the society.

For example:
- Ghana's Vice President became an active member of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data's Board of Directors, demonstrating high-level political commitment.
- Civil society organizations were integrated into the government's SDG implementation framework. They are now better integrated in the Ghana Statistical Service's (GSS) data production processes and are currently represented on the 2020 Population and Housing Census Steering Committee.
- Better collaboration between GSS and other national institutions, and recently an SDG and Statistics Desk, has been established in the Research Department of Parliament with the goal of directly improving evidence-based policymaking and development planning. While this might seem like a small, bureaucratic shift, these kinds of changes lead to improved outcomes on the ground — it will help us implement and track the SDGs more efficiently and effectively, and will make life better for Ghanaians across the nation.

Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data · **Five-Year Report 2015–2020** · Part 1: Data for better decisions

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- The Statistical Service Act, passed into law in September 2019, was a major outcome of successful stakeholder engagements and negotiations and another demonstration of the government's greater investment in the statistical system. The legislation re-established the GSS' role in coordinating the national statistical system and strengthening the quality of statistics produced in the country. It also mandated GSS to provide statistical direction and leadership.

Our work with the Global Partnership has also strengthened our country's ability to access and leverage non-traditional data sources such as Earth Observation (EO) data, mobile data, and citizen-generated data. These new data sources are helping to fill data gaps that were previously stalling development progress. For example:

- The Global Partnership facilitated discussions with the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation leading to their, jointly with the Vodafone Ghana Foundation, funding our first effort to integrate mobile data with official statistics. The project aimed to produce official statistics using de-identified telecommunications data, to strengthen humanitarian and development decision-making in Ghana. GSS is being trained to be able to analyze de-identified telecommunications data in combination with traditional data sources (e.g., household surveys), to address a range of humanitarian and development issues from public health to disaster preparedness.

- The Africa Regional Data Cube, now Digital Earth Africa, gives GSS access to analysis-ready satellite imagery and EO data, plus training and collaboration with peers working on similar challenges. As a result, we are now better able to have information on illegal mining, track progress on reclaimed illegal mining sites, and track crop production.

Kenya

The Government of Kenya is a founding member of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data and the co-host of the 2017 High-Level Meeting on Data for Development in Africa, a key political forum to drive commitments to data in partner countries across the region. The government has hosted several UN General Assembly official side events in partnership with the Global Partnership, to raise the political profile of data on the world stage. Kenya became a founding partner and government participant in the Africa Regional Data Cube initiative and is, along with the Global Partnership, on the Technical Advisory Committee of Digital Earth Africa, its continental-scale successor. The Open Institute, with support from the Global Partnership, developed a sub-national data infrastructure for agriculture connecting smallholder farmers with government officials in Nakuru County. As a result, smallholder farmers now have near real-time access to better market prices, bringing higher profits from their produce.

The Philippines

The Philippines Statistical Authority (PSA) has a long commitment to leveraging the data revolution for the SDGs, to guide human development and enable citizens to hold their leaders accountable, and has been a regional leader in innovation, hosting several high-level political events to raise the profile of data. The Philippines is an Inclusive Data Charter champion and its IDC action plan strengthened disaggregated data across nine SDG areas.

The Philippines Statistics Authority's active participation with the Global Partnership provided access to knowledge and experience from various global communities, helping it hasten innovations and contributing to the Philippines' push to achieve the 2030 Agenda. This work created the data environment the country needed to provide citizens better lives. Now, while PSA's top management has changed, the Global Partnership's legacy from these past five years has taken root — initiatives started in 2015 are ongoing. This is sustainability in action!

– LISA BERSALES

Professor of Statistics, University of the Philippines;
Former National Statistician of the Philippines

A woman washing hands at Wangige Market in Kiambu, Kenya. Elphas Ngugi/Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.

Regional approaches

As our engagement has deepened, we have found common needs and interests that have brought our government partners together to solve problems at a regional level. A common theme emerged early on from partners across Africa — the need for increased access to EO data and remote sensing technologies, such as satellites. A regional response made sense, and the Global Partnership brought together a group of partners to develop the Africa Regional Data Cube (ARDC) together with National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), Amazon Web Services, the Government of Kenya, and Strathmore University. The ARDC, based on the Open Data Cube infrastructure, is an innovative tool that makes 17 years' worth of satellite imagery available in an analysis-ready, user-friendly format.

Since its launch in May 2018, the Africa Regional Data Cube has been used in all our long-standing country partners in Africa — Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania — and is now being scaled across the continent as it transitions into Digital Earth Africa, managed and funded entirely by partners from the region and beyond.

Farmers in Senegal were struggling because of the loss of arable land due to various climate-related shocks. With the Africa Regional Data Cube allowing us to use and analyze Earth observation data with the farmers' land and context in mind, we were able to identify areas at risk and optimize crop losses based on yield estimates. The Senegalese authorities now have reliable statistics that can provide a warning of food insecurity in certain areas where rainfall conditions are deficient.

– EL HADJI MAMADOU DIENG NGOM

Division of Analysis, Forecasting, and Agricultural Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, Senegal

Jordi Perdigó/Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.

On-going training, which is tailored to and supports ongoing implementation plans in countries, has been a key part of the success of the ARDC. To date, we have conducted more than 25 trainings layered with on-going technical support for the development of 39 use cases across 38 institutions on seven SDG indicators[1] covering agriculture, deforestation, illegal mining, water, urbanization, mangroves, land degradation, and water. For example:

- **The Water Resources Commission in Ghana** more effectively and efficiently monitors water quality and extent of the Weija Reservoir, one of the main sources of water supply to Accra and its peri-urban areas.
- **The Environment Protection Agency in Sierra Leone** better understands changes in the mangrove ecosystem, which informed the development of integrated coastal management policy and the design of mangrove conservation interventions.
- **The National Bureau of Statistics in Tanzania** studied the effects of climate change on Lake Sulunga and its surrounding communities, which sparked further interest from the Office of the Prime Minister, who is now keen to continue using EO data for environmental statistics.
- **Pilot use cases in Senegal** on agricultural productivity and water extent and quality, demonstrated time and cost savings.

In conclusion, the long term and multi-sectoral relationships that we have developed with some of our partner countries over the last five years have allowed us to invest in both political and technical relationships, supporting colleagues within the government who want to drive innovation and improvement, galvanizing political support and providing opportunities to build partnerships at the national and regional level. This has taught us the value of long-term engagements, building relationships across government, and working with colleagues to understand their incentives and the political drivers for change. Working with the Global Partnership, these governments have created tangible improvements for their people while emerging as regional and global leaders on data for development.

[1] SDG Indicators 2.4.1, 6.6.1, 6.3.2, 11.3.1, 14.5, 15.1.1 & 15.3.1

Meeting challenges: working together to find solutions

Our approach always brings together the technical and the political, as both are critical if better data is to lead to better decision-making. In some countries, rather than whole systems, the team works with governments on partnerships framed around specific challenges, where data can unlock progress on priority issues. This enables strong relationships between countries who are facing similar challenges, and who can learn from and support each other.

Administrative Data: Learning and Brokering

One such challenge, common to several of our country partners, is the need for the basic building blocks of the data system, as the foundation for innovation and modernization. Administrative data sources, such as civil and business registers and health and education information systems are a critical part of this. Additionally, faced with severe gaps and limitations in SDG data, many of our country partners have prioritized strengthening their administrative data systems because they cannot address these gaps with traditional surveys and censuses alone.

New partnerships have helped countries learn from each other. For example, at a bilateral level, the Global Partnership is facilitating technical assistance between Statistics Canada (STATCAN) and Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INEC) Costa Rica. This will strengthen capacities and improve the Statistics Business Register in Costa Rica.

Partnerships for mutual support have also been developed at regional and global levels. In Latin America, countries are working together on population data, with both statistics offices and other ministries involved, strengthening intra-governmental collaboration as well as intra-regional exchanges. Late last year, working with our partner Cepei, we convened a peer exchange on administrative data, hosted by the Government of Mexico, with 11 countries from Latin America and Africa. Peer exchange workshops expose participants to good practices and have led to cross-country connections and offers of support — from sharing documents and providing advice via teleconference to several concrete projects that continue to bear fruit through continued collaboration.

As countries struggle to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic effects, administrative data sources are more important than ever. Country partners are urgently looking for support, good practices, and advice. Together with the UN Statistics Division (UNSD), we established an administrative data collaborative to facilitate the exchange of experiences and practical tools. Demand is high — the collaborative's first webinar, on the use of administrative data for COVID-19 response, was our most popular webinar yet.

Data for Now and COVID-19 response

Too much of the data that countries rely on for decisions is out of date, and as COVID-19 has so brutally exposed, in our fast-moving world this is both inadequate and, with new technologies and methods, wholly unnecessary.

In 2019, we launched our flagship Data for Now program, in partnership with the UNSD, the World Bank, and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), to work together on solving this challenge. Data for Now aims to improve the timeliness of government data, developing partnerships focused on embedding existing solutions within data systems and bringing proven methods to scale.

The Data for Now initiative is a unique opportunity to bring new data solutions to countries where improvements in data availability and timeliness are most urgently needed. Data for Now is really about empowering National Statistical Offices to play a bigger role, establishing new partnerships with different national and international data actors, and validating and utilizing new tools in their regular data production.

– FRANCESCA PERUCCI

Chief, Development Data and Outreach Branch, Statistics Division, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Gold mine in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Jordi Perdigó/Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.

The following snapshots illustrate some of the early work underway:

- In Colombia, DANE, working with the Sustainable Development Solutions Network's Thematic Research Network on Data and Statistics (SDSN TReNDS) and Cepei, identified solutions for producing timely poverty estimates using Earth observation data to be applied in the Pacific region of Colombia.
- In Paraguay, the government is establishing a water management system to integrate data across geographies and organizations to manage natural resources and better protect vulnerable communities from floods. The government established partnerships with counterparts in Mexico and the Dominican Republic, who had built systems that could be replicated in Paraguay. Non-government partners like UN Environment Programme and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have also shared tools that integrate Earth observation tools to gather environmental data and respond to crises. Non-government partners like GEO, the UN Environment Programme, and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) also shared tools that integrate Earth observation tools to gather environmental data and respond to crises.
- In Senegal, there is work underway focusing on more timely data on agriculture, urban issues, the environment, and more.
- In Asia, the governments of Bangladesh and Nepal, working with core team partners, have identified priorities within the national statistical system and are developing work plans for technical implementation.

The Data for Now initiative opened an important space for cooperation and exchange with our peers, both internally and externally. It has enabled us to think beyond traditional statistics to get closer to the statistics of the future, which presents a high use of mobile data and satellite images to report the progress of sustainable development in Paraguay in a timely and innovative way. The work thus far has improved national statistics and helped us invest in what is necessary to improve the quality of people's lives.

– IVÁN OJEDA

Director-General, Institute of Statistics, Surveys, and Censuses, Paraguay

A cart puller at work at Wangige Market in Kiambu, Kenya. Elphas Ngugi/Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.

Bolatbek Gabiden/Unsplash.

Monitoring Crop Productivity and Severe Winters in Mongolia with Timely Data

By Ariunzaya Ayush
Minister for Labour and Social Protection, Mongolia; Former chairperson,
Mongolia National Statistical Office

We have harsh winters in Mongolia. Sometimes the severe winter weather conditions cause a shortage of food and/or water that leads to mass death of livestock. This phenomenon, which we call "dzud" in Mongolian, killed 22 percent of the country's livestock from 2009-2010. The changing climate is exacerbating this trend. This is one of many examples of why we need timely, quality data – to track shifts and respond fast.

In Mongolia, our NSO plays a key role in the national decision-making process. Unlike many other countries, our NSO is not a government agency. Rather, it is an independent agency under the supervision of the Parliament, directly supporting political processes in the country. We have technical experts who specialize in the production of statistics using non-traditional data sources, like the use of civil registration systems to produce birth and population estimates. We also have good foundational skills in the use of geospatial data and analysis. However, we would benefit from further training on satellite imagery and remote sensing technology to address priority data gaps on SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities). The Data for Now initiative presented this opportunity, enabling our NSO to strengthen its use of non-traditional data sources and new technologies to help track environmental and agriculture-related data in less time and with fewer resources.

The crop and livestock sectors form a major part of the Mongolian economy and people's livelihoods – there are over 70 million livestock in the country, compared to about 3 million citizens. Data on these sectors provide important inputs for measuring progress on Goal 2 and could help understand changes in Goal 11 indicators. We were collecting this information through annual surveys, which are particularly expensive and time-consuming given that Mongolia is the second least densely populated country in the world.

Timely data on agricultural productivity is crucial given the impact of climate change, and what that means for livelihoods, migration patterns, education, employment, and access to public services. At the Data for Now inception workshop in Kigali, we met with representatives of different organizations to discuss possible approaches for crop monitoring. We focused on crop yields and how satellite imagery, predictive modeling, and other new technologies can help plan and improve crop production in the face of a changing climate and challenging economic outlook.

During the workshop, colleagues at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization spoke about Sen4Stat, a partnership with the European Space Agency and others that use remote sensing technology to measure crop productivity. Since the workshop, we have been working to integrate Mongolia into Sen4Stat as the program scales in the coming years. We have also been developing governance frameworks and identifying datasets that could support the calibration of models for crop productivity estimates.

Beyond crop productivity estimates, Data for Now presents an opportunity to understand the drivers of change in the agricultural sector and what impact that has on citizens. Dzud winters often cause rural communities to migrate to urban centers, where access to basic services is lacking and pollution leads to poor health outcomes. Being able to learn from other Data for Now countries will allow the Mongolian NSO to use and scale new approaches for measuring climate change, use big data to determine migration flows, and determine urbanization rates and access to services, among other things. This will help decision-makers effectively use evidence in the allocation of state resources. We also have great experience to share with colleagues around the world and look forward to strong collaboration in the coming years.

In early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic threw our plans – and the rest of the world – into disarray. While it disrupted planned work, COVID-19 also demonstrated the critical need for timely data to support governments in planning for and responding to the crises. The UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) asked the Global Partnership to work with them to urgently apply the Data For Now approach to the COVID-19 crisis, focusing on four key data gaps: population vulnerability, virus tracking, healthcare facility mapping, and economic data. In each area, we have identified partners who can work with countries to share data, build platforms, or exchange new methods or tools. The Global Partnership provides coordination, in particular on political engagement and aligning short-term support with longer-term capacity development and institutional change. To date, we are currently engaging in 40 countries across Africa, have built a roster of over 30 partners who will work with those countries, bringing different assets to bear, and have already developed or strengthened partnerships in 21 countries. For example:

- Namibia urgently needed to understand and monitor the movement of persons throughout the region, to track and control the virus. Working closely with the University of Namibia, the Global Partnership connected the Qatar Computing Research Institute to offer a platform and mobility analytics, and Facebook to supply data.

From these partnerships, Namibia will be able to assess adherence to lockdown requirements, specifically in areas such as Walvis Bay, which has been hardest hit by the pandemic.

– PROFESSOR ANICIA PETERS

Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Research, Innovation, and Development, University of Namibia

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- Sierra Leone needed more detailed and timely data on at-risk populations across the country. The Government of Sierra Leone's National COVID-19 Emergency Operations Centre consisting of the Directorate of Science, Technology & Innovation, Statistics Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Information and Communication, and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation is collaborating with a coalition of international partners including GRID3, Esri, Maxar Technologies, Fraym, the Global Partnership, and the UNECA to produce crucial geospatial datasets, analyses, and tools under an open, non-commercial license to support Sierra Leone's COVID-19 response.

Because of the partnerships the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data helped us to broker, Sierra Leoneans now have access to more reliable and accessible COVID-19 data in one platform which informs decision-making, combat misinformation, and nurture innovation.

– MS. YEAMA SARAH THOMPSON

Director General of the Sierra Leone News Agency

The partnership is producing the most granular geospatial data in Sierra Leone's history, with rapid population estimates that predict how many people, as well as their age and sex, live within any given hectare area across the country. This data can help identify those most at risk, determine the most efficient support and anti-COVID-19 strategies, including partial or total lockdowns, and resulting community needs. To ensure everyone can benefit from this groundbreaking geospatial data, the new findings are openly accessible in a national digital dashboard and COVID-19 hub, which enable easy access for experts and the general public alike.

This work on COVID-19 shows how access to data and the ability to integrate various pieces of information rapidly for real-time decision-making is critical for an effective response to any crisis, be it a virus, a flood, or famine. By underpinning all of the work we have done with sustainable foundations, we can ensure the partnerships, knowledge transfer, and capacity building continues beyond this crisis. We are deeply grateful to the UNECA and all of our partners who have tirelessly worked alongside us to combat this pandemic.

The initiative to build resilience to COVID-19 in Africa is unique in many ways. It is making tools available to produce more timely data, and developing capacity through skills transfer to country experts to improve their data management skills. It is providing governments opportunities and better ways of understanding the data generated under COVID-19. Increasing interest and requests to join the initiative demonstrates the value it is bringing to address data needs. It is a game-changer.

– OLIVER CHINGANYA

Director of the African Centre for Statistics,
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

Grant Durr/Unsplash.

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Nigeria's Rapid Mobilization Against COVID-19

By Dr. Yemi Kale, Statistician-General, Nigeria Bureau of Statistics

The speed with which the deadly coronavirus can spread has enabled it to transform from one isolated case to over 25 million cases worldwide in a matter of months (and rising). In Nigeria, as elsewhere, the government has worked to quickly devise prevention and response plans to mitigate the far-reaching impacts of this disease. On 9 March 2020, President Muhammadu Buhari established the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 to coordinate and oversee Nigeria's multi-sectoral inter-governmental efforts to contain the spread and mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Effectively fighting the COVID-19 pandemic requires extensive coordination, planning, and resources — adequate testing, movement restrictions, sufficient hospital capacity, robust health care staffing, and personal protective equipment, to name a few. But it also requires rapid decision-making. Ensuring critical interventions are as effective as possible demands good data, and the ability to analyze and understand the data.

How many new cases are there each day? Where are cases concentrated? How many people have been tested? Who is most vulnerable? Answers to these questions permit an informed, direct, and timely response. Moreover, understanding and quantifying the various dimensions of COVID-19's impact on all sectors will help governments around the world protect people. This, however, will require timely and quality data to inform mitigation plans and post-COVID-19 recovery.

My team at Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) well understood this urgent need for data. In early April 2020, we attended the Global Partnership's cross-country virtual peer exchange on COVID-19 response. In that meeting, we learned about COVID-19: Data for a resilient Africa, the regional initiative from the Global Partnership and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa that brings together their large networks, partnership brokering experience, technical capacity building, and political know-how to mobilize relationships and resources for public health, social protection, and economic recovery.

As the Statistician-General of Nigeria, I immediately recognized how this program could strengthen my country's COVID-19 response. Less than 10 days later, we convened with the Global Partnership and representatives from GRID3, Esri, Flowminder, and Fraym to establish an informal working group with the aim of creating a COVID-19 data hub for Nigeria – a data infrastructure that would bring together relevant data in a succinct format and boost our already-established National COVID-19 Multi-Sectoral Pandemic Response Plan.

In early June, we launched the COVID-19 data dashboard on the NBS website. By pulling together a wide array of COVID-19 data, the hub combines and centralizes data and visualizations from government agencies, providing decision-makers and the general public with a go-to source for COVID-19-relevant population data. There is a vast amount of critical information within the hub, including locations of health care facilities, cases by region, and locations of infection epicenters, coming from diverse sources such as GRID3, Qatar Computing Research Institute, Our World in Data, and the MRC Centre for Global Infectious Disease Analysis at Imperial College.

Rather than handling unwieldy and cumbrous raw data, the data hub allows readily accessible visualization and analysis. At NBS, we are routinely asked to provide analysis and we hope that the data made available can aid decisions about palliatives, intra- and interregional vulnerabilities, improving access to healthcare and testing, planning around lockdowns, socio-economic support for communities most affected by the pandemic, and more. As a direct result of this work, the Presidential Task Force, the highest decision-making body in relation to coronavirus response, is working with NBS to build a database for internal use that will help guide their decisions. In addition, we have also been approached by civil society organizations who are interested in incorporating data about the impact of coronavirus on child labor practices, highlighting a gap in the measurement of the pandemic's impact on vulnerable populations.

With a virus that has spread so rapidly, timeliness is key. We did not wish to waste any time, and the Global Partnership was able to quickly connect NBS with partners from the private sector and civil society, who provided the resources necessary to rapidly create a tool that will guide policy throughout the fight against COVID-19.

Data for better decisions

As with many existing partnerships, COVID-19, although unwanted, shone a light on why these partnerships are important, the existing network allowed rapid response to the needs of decision-makers. In that sense, we were collectively able to reach and support more users, existing and new. The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data were able to connect government users with the global resources Esri were making available and facilitate conversations.

– MATTHEW PENNELLS

Africa Manager & Digital Transformation Lead, Esri

Simply having better data is no guarantee that it will be used to improve decisions and ultimately improve lives. Data is produced and used within a political, institutional, and technical context. Understanding the whole picture is essential if data communities are to be successful in moving towards a more evidence-based approach to decision-making in governments. Our approach to this has been to build national and regional partnerships, aimed at strengthening systems, building capacity, and learning together what works and how to scale up successful experiments. Combining technical and political engagements, peer learning and exchange, and a focus on capacity and sustaining engagement over the long term have all been critical elements in helping our country partners to achieve impact. Whether working across whole government systems or focused on specific challenges, our partnerships with governments in every region have led to stronger data systems and to improved decisions that will accelerate progress on the SDGs

Panel discussion at the SDG Media Zone during UN General Assembly in 2018.

Data for better lives

One of the most fundamental inequalities is between those who are counted and those who are not. Millions of people of all ages in low- and middle-income countries are denied basic services and protection of their rights because they are absent from official records. Lacking records of their birth and civil status, they are excluded from health coverage, schooling, social protection programs, and humanitarian response in emergencies and conflicts.

– A WORLD THAT COUNTS (2014)

When world leaders promised to leave no one behind as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it was clear that this would require a radical shift in how data is collected, analyzed, and used. Data on the poorest and most marginalized people's lives are often either entirely missing, or their unique challenges are masked underneath national averages or programmatic data that does not consider specific population groups. Accurate, disaggregated data on those furthest behind, and data that reflects people's lives as they see them, is urgently needed to inform the choices that can make lives better.

The commitment to leave no one behind has always been at the heart of the Global Partnership's work. From the earliest days we have focused on how data can improve the lives of the poorest people in the world:

· We brought partners together to share learning and develop new guidance for the collection and use of

citizen-generated data (CGD), which are now being tested in Kenya and used by partners around the world.

· Twenty organizations joined the Inclusive Data Charter (IDC) as inclusive data champions, each one with an IDC Action Plan, committing to specific steps to make their data more inclusive:

   · In Colombia, DANE now takes into account gender, life cycle, ethnicity, and disability when producing statistics to create a more complete understanding of people's needs.
   · The government of Zanzibar is using data to understand the gendered dimensions of migration and crime.
   · The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) has developed original data collection tools, conducted 2,800 quantitative surveys in 15 countries, and published the first-ever global estimates of the number of internally displaced children and women.
   · The government of Sierra Leone collected gender and disability data through the 2018/19 education census.

Citizen-Generated Data: Data for the people, by the people

Citizen-generated data (CGD) allows people to speak for themselves through numbers. By collecting data that defines and describes their situation, people can advocate more effectively for their rights and have direct inputs into policymaking. Civil society groups around the world have used data from citizens to change policies, improve services, and claim their rights.

The Global Partnership convened a working group on CGD early on, bringing together 38 organizations from all over the world to understand how they could work collectively to increase the quality of the data they were collecting, and pass their learning on to others. Based on their collective learning, the collaborative produced the CGD report and guide.

The Global Partnership's resource on citizen-generated data (CGD) brings home the critical message that, at the end of the day, it is the children, women, and men in local communities, refugees, and those often left behind that are best placed to say whether their lived realities align with the promises of the SDGs. World Vision is working with local communities with the Citizen Voice and Action social accountability approach in 48 countries and through it capturing volumes of CGD that is valuable for a continuum of accountability from the local to the global. The CGD guide has useful pointers on how to ensure CGD is fit for purpose.

– BESINATI PHIRI MPEPO

Technical Director, Social Accountability and Transformational Development, World Vision International

This wealth of knowledge distilled into resources has been useful for UN agencies, donors, CSOs and governments. In Kenya, the CGD guidance was successfully adapted to align with national context and data standards. In order to continue to develop the guide and understand how CGD can contribute to improving lives, the Global Partnership is now conducting two additional projects:

· Working with CSOs to develop guidelines for collecting CGD that align with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics' criteria.
· A new initiative for 2020-2021 supports healthcare organizations to collect CGD on antimicrobial resistance, using these inputs to better understand attitudes, beliefs, and practices that lead to the overuse of antibiotics in coastal, urban, and rural settings.

The Inclusive Data Charter

There are many reasons people are excluded from data. A lack of political support and scarce resources are often compounded by limited technical knowledge and capacity, siloes of expertise within sectors and organizations, and limited coordination between organizations collecting and using data. Solving for one of these challenges is often insufficient. Overcoming technical barriers does not necessarily mean the rest will fall into place.

The Inclusive Data Charter (IDC) is a unique multi-stakeholder initiative advancing the availability and use of inclusive and disaggregated data so that governments and organizations better understand, address, and monitor the needs of marginalized people and ensure no one is left behind. Launched in 2018, the IDC has quickly built momentum for inclusive data, garnered commitments from 20 diverse champions, and accelerated and deepened progress.

IDC Champions sign up to the Inclusive Data Charter's high-level vision and set of principles, and then develop and implement their tailored action plans, outlining their priorities on inclusive data and the steps they will take to achieve the vision.

The IDC team provides strategic technical support and fosters knowledge exchange between champions and others. Amplifying the progress and learnings of champions catalyzes a broad movement for inclusive data as other institutions realize that it is possible to make progress and are inspired to prioritize inclusive data.

Children ready to go to their classroom in Sierra Leone. Credit: GPE/Stephan Bachenheimer.

Data-Driven Radical Inclusion in Education in Sierra Leone

By Dr. David. M. Sengeh, Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and Chief Innovation Officer, Government of Sierra Leone

In 2019, the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) of Sierra Leone became an Inclusive Data Charter (IDC) Champion to accelerate our efforts around one of our four guiding principles: radical inclusion. To us, radical inclusion means anyone, and everyone should have equal opportunities to access quality education — data is an integral part of this. It is essential that the information we collect to guide MBSSE's decision-making is inclusive of all children and disaggregated so we can ensure all citizens can access quality education, and no one is left behind.

We committed to strengthening education data through our IDC action plan, particularly looking at disaggregating survey data by variables such as gender, disability, and geography. We also sought to strengthen our collaboration and coordination with key national partners, such as Statistics Sierra Leone, to improve how data is collected, analyzed, and shared.

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data and the IDC were pivotal to generating and sustaining the political will needed to advance more inclusive education data. In 2018, these partners supported a series of consultations to improve alignment and coordination across MBSSE and our collaborators, especially around topics such as disability. By hearing directly from civil society and marginalized groups through these meetings, MBSSE developed a clearer prioritization of the most pressing data gaps and identified specific ways to address them.

To begin with, education data was scattered across many agencies and institutions without a central hub for analysis. To consolidate and harmonize education data, we recruited technical staff to form a new delivery team working directly in the ministry. We strengthened the Education Management Information System (EMIS), including recently having produced new EMIS codes for all schools included in the 2019 Annual Schools Census. The new codes link to Statistics Sierra Leone's EMIS codes, and our national examination data, ensuring consistency when linking data sets and surveys.

In the past two years, we have included more questions - for instance, on disabilities - in national surveys and annual school censuses to understand better the realities of marginalized groups in the education system. Using this more inclusive, reliable, and granular data, we have been able to work across government to overturn a ban on pregnant girls in school and have also designed policies and campaigns to get us to zero learning poverty, zero makeshift schools, and zero irregularities and exam malpractice. Throughout our work, we have referred to the five IDC principles as guidelines from the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data to inform our decision-making.

While we have made great progress, there is much more to be done. We are prioritizing the conduct of the Annual Schools Census in the coming weeks despite the setbacks presented by COVID-19. For this, we will use both digital and physical questionnaires. We are continuing our efforts to consolidate education data into one portal and integrating disaggregation into this portal. As we strengthen the quality of education data, we'll also continue to integrate data into the heart of the Ministry's decision-making as we advance radical inclusion as part of a larger transformational policy agenda.

Since launching the Inclusive Data Charter in 2018, we have:

Increased the visibility of inclusive data on global and national agendas. We have worked with partners to organise high level political moments, and have also supported grassroots advocacy and citizen engagement on inclusive data, for example, by partnering with the Council of Non-Governmental Organisations for Development Support (CONGAD) in Senegal. Champions, including UNICEF and Sightsavers, have credited the IDC with increasing enthusiasm and support for inclusive data within their organizations and in the broader development community.

Catalyzed action on inclusive data by helping champions strengthen and accelerate their efforts, and nurtured a vibrant, global network. In the past year, the IDC team expanded the technical assistance offerings, providing tailored support to each champion to assess priorities, data gaps, and needs; develop and implement their action plan, and access capacity-building support. In Kenya, the IDC Secretariat is providing technical support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to improve disability data and enable the ministry to ensure the social protection system is meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

Facilitated knowledge exchange and brokered collaboration to help champions learn and adopt best practices. We bridge the fragmented data ecosystem by facilitating knowledge sharing sessions and fostering partnerships around key topics, for example, a nascent disability data working group, and a collaboration to raise awareness of data gaps around internally displaced youth with IDMC, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Consortium for Street Children.

The IDC has plans to scale up from 2020 to 2023, by continuing to increase the number and diversity of champions and deepening the technical support and knowledge exchange offered within the network. As a result, more inclusive data, of higher quality, will be used to shape policies and programs that protect vulnerable people and help them thrive, thus enabling the international community to fulfill its commitment to leave no one behind.

Data for better lives

If data is to be used to meet the SDGs commitment to leave no one behind, it needs to reflect the realities of life for the poorest and most vulnerable people, and reveal the information that can lead to effective advocacy, programming and policies. Governments and civil society groups both have a role to play in making the invisible visible, and ensuring that no one is left behind in data. Data must be inclusive in both form and function — it reveals the reality of people's lives, and does so with their knowledge, consent, and involvement. Partnerships and collaborations catalyzed by the Global Partnership over the last five years have increased knowledge and skills among many organizations, and led to tangible improvements in how people are represented in data and involved in data systems. We will continue to ensure that data systems benefit the poorest by making them visible and driving change that can improve their lives.

A better world of data

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data aims to improve policymaking and improve people's lives through better data use. As well as engaging directly with governments, companies, and civil society groups on discrete projects and programs, the Secretariat also works with partners to drive systemic changes in the field of data, facilitating useful innovation and responsible data sharing, making systems interoperable, and increasing funding for data systems. For example, the team:

- worked with the World Bank to support 38 collaborative data innovation projects with US$7.2 million.
- produced a guide on data interoperability, based on learning from nearly 100 partners, which has been endorsed by the UN Statistics Commission and is already being used to inform practice in at least nine countries.
- worked with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, FAO, the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Bank, and several governments to launch the 50x2030 Initiative to Close the Agricultural Data Gap. This multi-partner effort seeks to support smallholder farmers with productivity and yields by co-funding agricultural surveys across 50 countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. The launch event garnered commitments equal to roughly half of the estimated gap to scale up agricultural surveys in 50 countries by 2030.
- helped Ghana Statistical Services unlock $1.6 million and Sierra Leone $2.5m in funding for data initiatives developed through Global Partnership collaborations.
- produced a major report estimating financing needs for data, and a series on the value of data to support advocacy for investment in data systems. With a group of partners, brought data up the agenda in development finance circles, including within the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.

Our team brings together partners with common interests to work together, sharing their knowledge, and together creating change that no single organization can achieve on its own. In 2021, we plan to scale our learning, policy, and advocacy work, to ensure the power and expertise of our network is helping create the data systems the world needs to protect people's rights and achieve the SDGs.

Funding innovation

The Collaborative Data Innovations for Sustainable Development Fund, set up by the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data in partnership with the World Bank, supports innovative collaborations for data production, dissemination, and use. The fund is currently running its third cycle and has included projects from a variety of sectors and disciplines with solutions to problems identified by governments or other key actors. The collaborations take place in or benefit low income and lower-middle income countries and are directed towards sustainable development generally, and linked to the SDGs in particular. In total the fund has supported 38 projects with US$7.2 million since 2016.

One recipient, Dimagi, is a digital health provider with a presence in sub-Saharan Africa. Dimagi supports clinical care pathways for frontline workers to better manage HIV patients and embed service provision in communities. Dimagi's Innovation Fund grant aimed to help answer the following question: "Within a digital health system, can we use machine learning to prioritize patients most at risk to default, and how would this be designed into the workflow of a frontline worker?" The project demonstrated the feasibility of applying machine learning to predict defaulter risk. The predictive machine learning models developed through the project have the potential to help frontline health programs identify patients who are likely to fail to return for treatment (for diseases such as HIV and TB) by quantifying the underlying risk factors of defaulting from care. This in turn will help health programs support patients at high risk of not returning, and thus cut down on costs.

Another recipient, Kabadiwalla Connect, revolutionized urban waste management in Chennai, India. This work represents the first attempt to survey and map stakeholders in the informal waste ecosystem in Chennai. Kabadiwalla Connect has developed policy mechanisms and technology that nudge communities to sustainable waste generation and management practices, and integrate them into the local municipalities' formal waste management strategies.

Supporting innovation in private data use

Private firms hold massive amounts of big data, such as mobile data, that has many social good applications. Many partners are experimenting with different technical and partnership models to use these kinds of data to support SDG monitoring and implementation. While these efforts have shown the positive potential of public-private data sharing, they have also highlighted the risks and barriers that are preventing the responsible use of privately-held data for the public good at scale. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated these efforts while making the risks more prominent.

Over the past five years, we have worked to strengthen the responsible use of private data for development at scale, by supporting innovation around new approaches, brokering partnerships between public and private sector actors, and facilitating knowledge sharing on the topic.

Brokering partnerships

In the early days of engagement with government partners in Africa and Latin America, many were interested in taking advantage of privately-held data, but they faced challenges initiating and developing public-private partnerships. We responded by brokering relationships to move these efforts forward and enable innovation among our government partners.

- In Ghana, we helped rekindle a collaboration between Ghana Statistical Service, Vodafone Ghana, and the Flowminder Foundation, helping restart a project to explore the use of call detail records for the production of official statistics. The Government of Ghana is now using mobile data to understand Ghanaians' mobility and track the effectiveness of Coronavirus lockdown policies.

- In Kenya, we worked with Kenya Communications Authority, the National Bureau of Statistics, and Safaricom to build on a pilot project supported by the International Telecommunications Union that used big data to measure the information society. This effort helped drive the development of a data protection and privacy framework in Kenya.

More recently, as part of our COVID-19 collaboration with the UNECA, we are supporting efforts to use mobile and social media data for COVID-19 response in Nigeria, Namibia, and Sierra Leone.

Mobile big data analytics has enormous potential to help achieve the SDGs, but there is a lot of work to be done to turn potential into concrete demand and impact. GSMA and the Global Partnership have long collaborated on closing the gap between private sector and government users. Whether it's collaborating on awareness raising, capacity-building, privacy discussions or creating knowledge products, GPSDD has helped us to support those who are working to deliver and adopt new insights for the SDGs.

– JEANINE VOS

Head of SDG Accelerator, GSMA

Sharing lessons

Using privately-held data for public good requires multi-stakeholder collaboration and new ways of working. It requires building new relationships and translating concepts and approaches across disciplines and sectors. As experimentation occurs in different countries with different partners, using different methods and models, we create space to share lessons and help move the field forward.

In February 2019, the Global Partnership convened the Mobile Data for Social Impact Forum in Nairobi, bringing together more than 100 stakeholders from Ghana, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda and global-level actors to share knowledge on existing tools and methodologies for leveraging mobile data for development. Participants shared successes and challenges and came away with concrete next steps and new partnerships to explore. These discussions drove movement on the data protection and privacy framework in Kenya.

More recently, we convened a virtual learning series, enabling practitioners involved in public-private data sharing for COVID-19 response to share experiences. We were motivated by a desire to foster learning across sectors and projects that often work in silos, to create a space for practitioners to learn-while-doing rather than waiting for the crisis to be over, and to ensure we could distill lessons for the future. The series brought together 32 people from 23 organizations, including data users, data holders, intermediaries, researchers, advocates, and donors, coming from 10 countries.

Hearing the perspectives of such a diverse range of participants, representing all parts of the public-private data-sharing ecosystem, was extremely insightful. When I am working on a project, I focus on doing what is needed to meet the aims of that specific project. This often doesn't leave room to thoroughly examine the perspectives of each of the many stakeholders. The Global Partnership's learning series provided a space to hear data providers, data consumers, and intermediaries describe their motivations, requirements, and challenges. This has given me a better view of the landscape, which I will bring to future data-sharing initiatives.

– TRACEY LI

Flowminder Foundation

Mobile Data for Social Impact Regional Forum, Nairobi, Kenya

While challenges exist on all sides of data-sharing partnerships, the discussions in this series pointed to greater challenges on the public sector, data user side. Many identified a failure to adequately consider user perspectives, which will continue to hold back progress if left unaddressed. It is perhaps not surprising that the conclusions from the learning series came back to data use, but it is an important reminder that responding to genuine user needs is critical to sustainability. We will integrate this learning into our future work, keeping user needs at the center of our advocacy, knowledge sharing, and brokering.

Interoperability: connecting people by joining-up data

Data is more useful when it is combined with other data, and a good system is one that enables connections between data from different sources, to create detailed pictures that can lead to a good understanding and good policy.

From very early on, our country partners noted interoperability — or its absence — as limiting statisticians and policymakers' ability to work effectively with data. Too often, interoperability has been the exception, not the rule. Commercial pressures, institutional rivalries, and funding constraints have meant that countless systems that do not talk to one another have been created within and across organizations, for collecting, processing, and disseminating data. With the proliferation of different technology platforms, data definitions, and institutional arrangements for managing, sharing, and using data, it has become increasingly necessary to dedicate resources to integrate the data necessary to support policy design and decision-making.

Data is interoperable when it can be easily re-used and processed in different applications, allowing different information systems to work together.

The Global Partnership's work on interoperability – the ability to join-up diverse data sets without losing context or meaning – spans four years and illustrates a sustained commitment to bringing partners together to build better data systems. The story of our commitment to interoperability, as an area of both data policy and practice, is the story of what the Global Partnership arguably does best – bringing together diverse partners around tricky, technical areas of the data revolution to find, nurture, and release their human and organizational potential.

Creating the collaborative

At the first United Nations World Data Forum (UNWDF) in 2017, the UN Statistics Division and the Global Partnership announced a partnership to explore opportunities and identify good practices for enhancing data interoperability in sustainable development. The Interoperability Collaborative served as a forum where NSOs, UN agencies, international non-governmental organizations, civil society, academia, and the private sector could forge a common discussion around what it means to "join-up" data. Much of the Collaborative's early work focused on convening diverse stakeholder groups to find common definitions and interpretations of what interoperability means in practice.
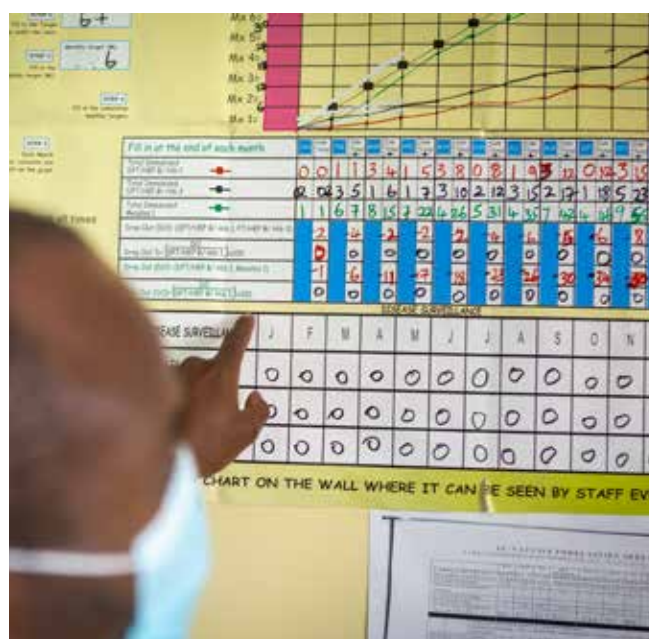
Elphas Ngugi/Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.

Sharing and embedding learning: launching the Interoperability Guide

The Collaborative produced Interoperability: A practitioner's guide to joining-up data in the development sector (the Guide), a resource on interoperability issues designed specifically for statisticians and development professionals who manage data. At its launch at the 2018 UNWDF in Dubai, the Guide received acclaim and endorsement from several government representatives including INEGI – Mexico's NSO – who subsequently used the Guide to inform their data management strategy, the Government of Kenya, and others.

With the launch of the Guide, in just two short years the Collaborative had succeeded in unifying voices around a very technical, and sometimes obscure, area of data management and raising its profile as a key enabler of the data revolution. The UN Statistical Commission then endorsed the Guide, marking a further milestone for the Collaborative and its objectives. In practice, the endorsement has meant that the Guide is now available to NSOs the world over as an official resource. Supporting endorsement, NSO representatives of Switzerland, Indonesia, and Malaysia issued statements welcoming the Guide as a resource during the 50th UNSC.

Informing practice: interoperability in action

In 2020, our focus turned to implementation. Following a request for assistance by the Government of Kenya, the Global Partnership supported Kenya's Ministry of Health to finalize the Kenya Health Information Systems Interoperability Framework and its corresponding roadmap (see case study). At the same time, global policy work continued. The UN

Statistical Commission requested "the further development of the guidelines on interoperability, recognizing the importance of countries having access to interoperability tools." To meet this objective, the Collaborative is currently working on a maturity model module on interoperability to help countries develop priorities for implementation.

At the 2020 UNWDF later this year, the Collaborative's work will come to a close with the launch of its maturity assessment for interoperability. The original task of building consensus around a common understanding is complete, and the Guide will continue to be updated in line with emerging thinking and practice. The Global Partnership will increasingly mainstream work on interoperability, and through partnerships, projects, and policy work will continue to push for interoperability as one characteristic of useful data that can help to drive progress on the SDGs.

Data to End Hunger, side event during UN General Assembly in 2018.

Joining-up health data for universal healthcare in Kenya

By Dr. Joseph Sitienei, Head of Department for Health Sector Monitoring, Ministry of Health, Kenya

In 2018, the President of the Republic of Kenya launched the "**Big 4 Agenda**," an ambitious agenda that sets out four priority development areas for Kenya - food security, affordable housing, manufacturing, and universal healthcare (UHC). Here at the Ministry of Health, it is our duty to ensure that the vision of UHC for all Kenyans becomes a reality by the year 2022.

Attaining UHC in Kenya will require a constant stream of data flowing into the ministry from every corner of the country. With this data, we'll know which diseases are affecting which populations – this will enable us to activate the medicines, research, and other services to respond effectively. We'll know which medical personnel and supplies we have positioned where – so we can assess and respond to needs. And we'll know which medical facilities exist in each county and sub-county – so we can ensure that each community has adequate access to the facilities they need. Across the whole ministry, this data is crucial to planning, implementation, monitoring, and follow-up activities. In brief, the data will be used for decision-making at all levels of service delivery.

In order to achieve this vision, we need to be able to connect all the data streams that flow across the health sector in Kenya and join them at the Ministry of Health. In other words, we need to make these data flows interoperable – joined-up in such a way that the data retains its contextual meaning but can be automatically processed, aggregated, analyzed, and integrated by a computer.

Our legislative and policy frameworks already recognise this need and set out a clear mandate for us at the Ministry of Health to move forward with our interoperability agenda. Our **Health Act 2017** explicitly mandates a "mechanism for ensuring inter-connectivity between each county's information systems." Our **Kenya National e-Health Policy 2016 – 2030** and **Kenya e-Health Strategy** elaborate on the Health Act's mandate and set out a clear course for us to follow. Building on these policy frameworks, and with the Global Partnership's assistance, we have now developed and finalised the **Kenya Health Information Systems Interoperability Framework**.

The interoperability framework is key to connecting health data in practice across the country, and across the health sector at county and national levels to include non-state actors. We recognize that interoperability is not just about joining-up data, but connecting the people, departments, health facilities and suppliers that together make up our health system. This approach also reflects our acknowledgment of the paramount importance of ensuring that Kenya's e-health policy keeps apace of technical developments, making sure that all parts of the health system have a stake in data systems.

From our vantage point, what has made this project unique is the focus on engagement and coordination that has consistently run through it. This is reflected in the framework itself, which emphasises governance and leadership as key enablers of interoperability, building on the guidance set out in **Data Interoperability: A Practitioner's Guide to Joining Up Data in the Development Sector**. While these may sound like minor, logistical details, these elements will help ensure that the guide is practical and meets the needs of each person who will use it – from the doctors and nurses in the health clinics and hospitals around the country to the clinics' IT staff to my staff who will analyze the data, and to myself and my colleagues who will use the analysis to help make big decisions around health-related funding and resource allocation.

Through the President's Big 4 Agenda there is currently an unprecedented political moment in Kenya to really change health delivery in the country. The interoperability framework provides one of the foundational cornerstones for us to progress towards this vision. It provides the Ministry with a clear mandate and roadmap on how we can start to get all the streams of health data in Kenya all flowing in the same direction, unified in purpose.

Investing in data: the foundation for good systems

All of our partners recognize that lack of financing is too often a constraint on the production and use of data that can make lives better. Data is critical to delivery in every sector, be it health, agriculture, education, or social protection. However, it is chronically underfunded, and existing funding often drives unhelpful incentives to create silos and systems that are not interoperable with each other. The Global Partnership and its partners will continue to advocate for effective investment in the data systems that underpin progress in every area.

The Global Partnership has worked with key partners including the World Bank, PARIS21, Open Data Watch, Development Gateway, the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office[2], and others to advocate for more and better funding for data.

In support of this work, the group produced the *State of Development Data Funding* report, led by Open Data Watch which calculated the minimum cost of producing data for the SDGs in 144 developing countries and estimated the funding gap based on current levels of domestic and international investment. These estimates have been widely cited since their publication in 2016 and helped frame the advocacy discourse around the need for more and better financing for data. This was followed by 11 short case studies focused on the financial and social returns from data investments — a story that is often not told, but which has proven to be the most persuasive way of getting policymakers to pay attention.

Building on discussions in our advisory group and with the leadership of the Swiss government and PARIS21, the Bern Network was created to increase the quantity and quality of resources for data and statistics in support of the SDGs. The Bern Network is working toward greater transparency and

coherence in funding for data and statistics, and improved alignment between funding and country needs. As a member of the core group, the Global Partnership Secretariat is contributing to the overall strategy and supporting advocacy.

We have also worked on initiatives to support funding in specific sectors, in line with our priorities:

Investment in data to leave no one behind

Civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems are a foundation for legal identity and ensuring that everyone is counted. The coverage of birth and death registration and the completeness of vital statistics remains a challenge, even among countries with functioning civil registration systems.

To a large extent, this challenge remains because of underinvestment in CRVS and other identity management systems. Even as new identity systems are rolled out and digital technology is introduced, many countries have failed to strengthen these foundational systems. This perpetuates many inequalities, exclusion and marginalization, poor planning and service delivery, and public resource wastage. Between 2018 and 2019, the Global Partnership partnered with the Centre of Excellence on CRVS Systems, hosted at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to produce a compendium of six case studies, showcasing countries that have succeeded in linking their CRVS and identity management systems. The purpose of the compendium (launched at the 74th UN General Assembly and the 5th Conference of African Ministers responsible for CRVS) was to showcase good practice for other countries to learn from, but also to build political support for strengthening CRVS, integrating with ID, and working towards legal identity for all as a foundation for achieving the SDGs.

[2]Previously known as the UK Department for International Development (DfID)

Linking Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management Systems for better decision-making

By Irina Dincu and Anette Forsingdal, Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems, International Development Research Centre

Holistic, innovative, and integrated civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) and identity management systems help ensure people are protected and counted throughout their lives. These systems, which include birth, marriage, and death (with its causes) registration, as well as the legal identity, can provide people with a pathway to access their basic rights and services. This is of particular importance for marginalized groups who are often not considered in policy decisions and resource allocation. The Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems at the International Development Research Centre and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data joined forces to develop the *Compendium for Linking Civil Registration, Vital Statistics, and Identity Management Systems*, a resource that documents practices on integrating these systems, to support country stakeholders who want to build and strengthen sustainable CRVS systems that protect people and generate the data needed to monitor the SDGs. These systems are particularly useful for SGD 16.9 on legal identity and 17.19 on developing measurements of progress, among other indicators.

The Centre of Excellence also worked with the Global Partnership and the UN Statistics Division to host "Civil registration, vital statistics and identity to leave no one behind," a side event during the UN General Assembly in New York in 2019. The event demonstrated the value of investing in CRVS and integrating it with ID by showcasing practical country examples. It also explored emerging thinking and aimed to build political support for strengthening CRVS, integrating with ID, and working towards legal identity for all as a foundation for achieving the SDGs. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs at the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Mahmoud Mohieldin, Senior Vice-President for the 2030 Agenda and UN Affairs at the World Bank both participated, along with ministers and high-level officials from Ecuador, Namibia, the Netherlands, and Zambia.

At the 5th Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration, the highest convening of authorities in Africa responsible for civil registration, the Centre of Excellence, the Global Partnership, and the Global Financing Facility organized three sessions to launch and promote the compendium. By sharing insights from the new compendium and disseminating it alongside other research materials, the conference offered a strategic opportunity to contribute to the global and regional agenda on legal identity and the integration of CRVS and ID systems. As a result of our engagement in both technical and policy discussions, the Centre of Excellence's work was referenced in both the preparatory experts meeting and ministerial meeting reports. Specifically, the reports encouraged African Union member states to adopt the best practices and lessons from the compendium and requested pilots of the CRVS System Improvement Framework in at least two countries. This not only points to the value and relevance of the Centre's engagement in Africa, but also highlights the extent to which governments are relying on our work to strengthen CRVS systems.

New donor commitments in data for agriculture

In September 2018, we supported the launch of the 50x2030 Initiative to Close the Agricultural Data Gap, a major funding commitment to foundational data. 50x2030 is a multi-stakeholder initiative to strengthen core statistics in the agriculture sector by investing in regular surveys of farming households in 50 countries by 2030. Without these foundational data, it will be next to impossible to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition, as set out in SDG 2. This sectoral funding commitment represents an important contribution to the broader effort on data financing and the importance of a sectoral as well as a cross-cutting approach. We are continuing to advocate for investments in foundational agriculture data by building political support for the data and statistics work of the agriculture and food-focused international organizations based in Rome, where we continue to use the value of data case studies in our advocacy.

A better world of data

Data is part of the critical policy infrastructure for driving progress. Like physical infrastructure, data systems must be strong enough to meet the needs of users. This means national and global commitments to fund the production and use of data, to drive the innovations that can make use of new technologies in a safe and democratic way, and to ensure that data itself is collected and used means it can be part of a whole system and not locked behind walls that prevent interoperability. These changes can only come about through collaboration, consensus building, and commitments over the long term — this is what the Partnership has brought organizations together to do over the last five years, and the world of data is better for it.

Conclusion: What these five years have taught us

Over five years, we have experimented, tested, failed, succeeded, and tried again. As a network and a team, we are learning every day in big and small ways, but we are also aware that there is much more to know. There are some big lessons from the last five years that have driven changes to our strategy and our approach. We have reflected deeply on what it means to be a partnership committed to driving change and impact within countries, and on what it takes to bring organizations together to a common end. We have also accumulated a body of knowledge and experience on how to build a better data system that we all aspire to. This learning will guide our decisions over the next five years and will, we hope, be useful to others who share our goals and values.

Five themes have emerged in these five years to guide us into the future:

1

Take time

Strategic engagement takes patience.
Sustained progress on data-led decision-making takes time to embed. Relationships take a long time to build, and institutions change slowly. Commitments must be long term, and planning and budgeting need to take this into account.

Listening is an under rated skill.
There is no shortcut to taking time to understand a country's priorities and developing a response to their needs. Unless partnerships are providing something that countries need and value, they will be unsustainable.

Institutions matter.
While progress starts with good relationships between people, it can only be sustained if it is embedded within a supportive institutional framework. The structure and linkages need to be right, however bureaucratic and time-consuming may seem to people impatient for change.

Investment in learning is money well spent.
Reflecting and sharing experiences and learning is not a corner worth cutting, despite the relentless pressure to jump into the next project quickly.

2

Progress depends on people

Relationships are key.
Trust is built over time in multi-sectoral partnerships. Even when relationships are established, they can be weakened by staffing changes, changes of government, or of business leadership. It is always worth taking time to build strong relationships at different levels.

Understand each other.
Misaligned expectations can hinder progress. There is a natural gap between "supply-side" innovators from the private sector, global non-governmental organizations, and academia set against the slower pace of governments. Part of the Global Partnership's role is to mediate between organizations with very different incentive structures and interests, build common understanding, and agree on common goals.

3

Politics drives technical change

Politicians need to want change.
Political leaders decide what gets prioritized and funded, and they are driven by political incentives. Working with allies in governments to secure the political capital needed to effect change requires a good deal of fortitude, creativity, and the ability to grapple with layers of bureaucracy.

Governments listen to their peers.
The best advocates for change are other governments, and South-South collaboration is underutilized as a lever of change. Champions working on the ground often struggle to convince their peers to adopt new ways of working. Demonstrations of successful initiatives in other countries can give them support to drive progress.

4

Values count

Data on people should be inclusive in form and function — it's something that's best collected and analyzed with the input of the groups whose lives you are trying to understand.

Data governance is critical.
Governments are grappling with the many technical, ethical, and political challenges thrown up by the new opportunities and threats they face in the emerging fields of data and technology, but they are doing so with vastly different levels of knowledge and skills. At the moment, the big global questions of ethics, regulation, and governance are only being addressed by the few who have the capacity and resources to engage. To get a system that benefits all, all must be involved.

Capacity for all.
New skills and capacities are needed in public, private, and civil society to manage complex data issues and be ready to respond to unforeseen phenomena. We need a new generation of workers who can bring a different mentality to their roles.

5

Systems not silos

Interoperability is central.
Data has the most value when combined, but too many non-standardized datasets and platforms prevent this from happening. Interoperability is a key value underpinning the effective and equitable production and use of data and needs to be embedded in the DNA of data systems.

Openness helps.
Open data, tools, and platforms make systems more flexible and fair, unleashing innovation and spreading knowledge. However, openness is not always straightforward and a good and fair system needs a bias towards openness with recognition of the different constraints and issues faced by all partners.

After five years, we are one-third of the way to 2030 and the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals. We have learned so much since 2015 about what works and how we can best enable our partners to work together towards the future we all want. What has remained constant is the energy, enthusiasm, and expertise of the organizations and people who are central to our mission — our 260 partners who power the network and must take credit for the success and impacts that have been described in this report. It is a pleasure and a privilege to work with them every day. Together we have done something quite extraordinary.

A full list of annexes can be found at:
www.data4sdgs.org/5-year-report-annexes

Composition of the Global Partnership's Governance Mechanisms

It is a privilege to have the following extraordinary people compose our Board of Directors:

Amina J. Mohammed (Honorary Chair), Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations

Anne-Birgitte Albrectsen, Chief Executive Officer, Plan International

H.E. Mahamudu Bawumia, Vice President, Republic of Ghana

Gilberto Camara, Secretariat Director, Group on Earth Observations (GEO)

Elizabeth Cousens, President, and Chief Executive Officer, United Nations Foundation

Aidan Eyakuze, Executive Director, Twaweza

Mike Flannagan, Former Senior Vice President of Analytics, SAP

Helani Galpaya, Chief Executive Officer, LIRNEasia

Natalia Kanem, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund

H.E. Benigno López Benítez, Minister of Finance, Paraguay

Mahmoud Mohieldin, Senior Vice President for the 2030 Development Agenda, World Bank Group

H.E. Raychelle Omamo, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Kenya

Alex 'Sandy' Pentland, Professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

John Pullinger, Former UK National Statistician, Head of the Government Statistical Service (GSS), and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, United Kingdom

Julio A. Santaella, President, National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), México

Jeni Tennison, Vice President, and Chief Strategy Adviser, Open Data Institute (ODI)

We also want to thank the following past members who served on our Board of Directors:

Alicia Bárcena Ibarra, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Lisa Grace S. Bersales, Former National Statistician and Civil Registrar General, Philippine Statistics Authority, Republic of the Philippines

Bob Collymore, Chief Executive Officer, Safaricom (1958 - 2019)

H.E. María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Colombia

H.E. Carlos Holmes Trujillo, Minister of Defense, Colombia

H.E. Ken Nyauncho Osinde, Former Chief of Staff, Office of the Deputy President, Republic of Kenya

Barbara Ryan, Former Secretariat Director, Group on Earth Observations (GEO)

We are grateful for the diversity of viewpoints and expertise we benefit from through the changemakers who compose our Technical Advisory Group:

Joshua Powell (Chair), Chief Executive Officer, Development Gateway

Bill Anderson, Data and Information Architect, Development Initiatives

Cristoph Aubrecht, Senior Geospatial Strategist, European Space Agency Representative to the World Bank

Shaida Badiee, Managing Director, Open Data Watch

Ania Calderón, Executive Director, Open Data Charter

Pedro Antonio de Alarcón, Head of Big Data for Social Good, LUCA-Telefónica

Irina Dincu, Senior Specialist, Center for Excellence for CRVS Systems, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

Jessica Espey, Associate Director, Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)

Anna Hakobyan, Executive Director, Evidence, Measurement and Evaluation, Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)

Johannes Jütting, Secretariat Manager, Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21)

Al Kags, Founder, Open Institute

Jon Kapp, Executive Director, Community Systems Foundation

Serge Kapto, Policy Specialist on Data for Development, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Deepa Karthykeyan, Founder and Managing Director, Athena Infonomics

Emmanuel Letouzé, Director and Co-founder, Data-Pop Alliance

Elizabeth Omoluabi, Executive Director, Centre for Research, Evaluation Resources and Development, Nigeria

Juan Daniel Oviedo Arango, Director General, DANE - National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia

Frederic Pivetta, Managing Partner and Co-founder, Dalberg Data Insights

Francesca Perucci, Chief, Statistical Services Branch, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)

Suwadu Sakho-Jimbira, Researcher, Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rural (IPAR)

Philipp Schönrock, Director, Cepei

Steve Schwartz, Social Impact Manager, Tableau

Yeama Thompson, Director General, Sierra Leone News Agency (SLENA)

Erik Wetter, Assistant Professor, Stockholm School of Economics & Co-founder and Chairman, Flowminder

We also want to thank the following people who previously served in our Technical Advisory Group:

Aboubacar Beye, Former Manager General, National Agency for Statistics and Demography, Republic of Senegal

Laveesh Bhandari, Director and Co-founder, Indicus Foundation

Mikel Maron, Community Team Lead, Mapbox

Iris Palma, Director, Datos El Salvador

Jennifer Park, Former Senior Advisor, Office of the U.S. Chief Statistician, Office of Management and Budget, United States

Lindsey Shaughnessy, Associate Director, Global Research and Data Support, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA)

ANNEX B

Our Country Partners

Bangladesh*	Nepal*
Burkina Faso**	Nigeria**
Canada	Paraguay*
Colombia*	Philippines
Costa Rica	Rwanda* **
Cote d'Ivoire**	Senegal* **
Dominican Republic	Sierra Leone**
Ecuador	Somalia**
Ghana* **	Tanzania**
Guinea**	Togo**
Kenya**	United Kingdom
México	United States
Mongolia*	Zambia**
Namibia**	

*Countries participating in the Data for Now initiative.
**Countries participating in the COVID-19: Data for a Resilient Africa initiative.

2015—2020

**Five years of the Global Partnership
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