



Recap of the First Day of The Arab Forum on Statistical Capacity Building of a Data Revolution

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Data Revolution

Introduction::

The selection of Data Revolution as a theme for this forum actually came at the right time, as Arab countries and their statistical departments are being prepared to provide necessary data to monitor progress on the Sustainable Development Agenda, adopted by world leaders in September, 2015, and in response to the needs of national development, especially in light of the current circumstances in the Arab region, mainly the security tension and low energy prices.

Therefore, we in the Arab region are living under unusual circumstances that require data revolution and unusual solutions.



What Data Revolution Do We Need?

It is a transformation in the national statistical system to get updated and be able to produce development-related high-quality data in accordance with international standards, to meet the needs of national and international users. Such data shall be disseminated in a transparent and timely manner, and shall be used in decision-making and monitoring progress in achieving sustainable development goals, and bringing about the desired change in the lives of people and communities based on human rights, especially the right to development.

Main Features of Big Data?

- Faster data processing
- More accurate results
- Generate new or complementary indicators
- Produced by leaps and bounds
- Produced cost-effectively
- Improvement in data quality
- Improvement in the temporal and spatial coverage

Uses of Big Data

- Telecommunications
- Transport planning
- Tourism strategies
- Sports
- Healthcare
- Movements of migrants
- Pockets of poverty



Challenges Facing the Statistical Process in the Arab Region

- Lack of funding
- Shortage of trained manpower
- Poor infrastructure, especially those related to technology used in data collection, analysis and dissemination
- Lack of modern legislation
- Lack of interactive databases which enable users to access and process data easily
- Poor communication between the producers and users of statistical data
- Growing demand for data

Proposed Solutions

- Assess the current situation in order to identify gaps in the statistical system.
- Formulate national strategies for the development of statistics, to keep up with the progress requirements
- Think of viable solutions for the production of the necessary data in order to improve the lives of people
- Make partnership at the national, regional and international level
- Encourage the use of data by decision makers
- Use of big data: is it The solution, or is it part of the solution?

Cont. Proposed Solutions

- Use administrative records, as they provide cost-effective data
- Build an integrated database about social, economic and environmental aspects
- Build institutional statistical capacity
- Use modern tools in data collection and management
- Disseminate statistical knowledge
- Establish an ongoing dialogue with data users from the public and private sectors, civil society and academia



Cont. Proposed Solutions

- Activate the fundamental principles of official statistics and promote independence
- Follow an open data policy, while maintaining the confidentiality of individual data



Thank you