



“Emphasize that partnerships between ministries, government agencies, academia, civil society, and the private sector are necessary in order to provide innovative solutions that contribute to the issuance of our products in accordance with international standards and user needs”

HE Dr. Saleh M. Al-Nabit

Providing Official Data and Statistics: A National and Global Necessity

HE Dr. Saleh M. Al-Nabit, President of the Planning and Statistics Authority

The official data and statistics stand as a key tool that contributes to understanding the developments around us at the national, regional, and international levels, in an era characterized by complexity and uncertainty, with the current global challenges of geopolitical tensions, high levels of inflation experienced by the global economy, and the phenomenon of climate change. At the national level, data plays an important role in the formulation of national sustainable development strategies to achieve the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030. At the heart of this transformative and enabling journey lies our vital role in innovating modern methods and methodologies that are in line with technological progress and innovation, and with the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission and its specialized organizations to modernize, govern and supervise our statistical system.

It goes without saying that data is the “new energy”, and it is one of the key means used to make informed decisions, and to reveal patterns and disparities in the standards of living and quality of lifestyle enjoyed by the nation’s people, as well as other gains. Data also provides an insightful, comprehensive, and multifaceted portrait of society. Its great value cannot be ignored because it enables policy makers, researchers, and the public in general to understand reality in its complex aspects.

Considering the sustainable development pursued by our country, the data enables us to predict and plan for the future accurately and in real time, especially in tracking the course of implementation of programs and projects of the Third National Development Strategy sectors in ministries, government agencies and related institutions. This is done based on specific performance indicators and a smart dashboard. We are working with partners to launch this strategy in the near future.

The official statistics produced by the Planning and Statistics Authority are one of the pillars of national knowledge, as stipulated in the Basic Principles of Official Statistics issued by the United Nations Economic and Social Council on 24 July 2013 and are the basis on which policies are built. These policies are based on evidence, credibility, accountability, and international benchmarking. The official statistics are the reliable source of information that is indispensable in measuring progress towards achieving the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Recognizing the importance of official data and statistics in the preparation of effective development policies and strategies, the United Nations Statistics Division has issued specific recommendations related to the quality of statistical data, entitled "Statistical Data Quality Framework", with a view to guiding countries to produce quality data with high credibility. The official data and statistics are based on internationally agreed concepts, definitions, and classifications. We, at the Planning and Statistics Authority, work within a global guidance and coordination based on the national data quality framework, which ensures the quality and credibility of our products, maintains the confidentiality of personal information of individuals and institutions, and ensures that they reach data users of all categories with different needs

Just as we worked with partners in ministries, government agencies, the private sector and civil society in developing the Third National Development Strategy, we will later develop, in cooperation with our national partners, a national strategy to modernize the official statistics system and its governance in the near future. We will further work to innovate modern methods and methodologies to collect data from multiple sources, such as administrative records and big data, using data science, AI, and machine science. We will also provide modern data to all society in multiple forms, and innovative visual formation, through a central statistical database that is built according to advanced standards that adopt transparency and open data dissemination policy, to enable citizens and decision makers to access and use data easily.

In this regard, we would like to emphasize that partnerships between ministries, government agencies, academia, civil society, and the private sector are necessary in order to provide innovative solutions that contribute to the issuance of our products in accordance with international standards and user needs. To achieve sustainable development, many standard indicators related to economic, social, and environmental aspects are required. They provide the necessary evidence for the formulation of national policies and the monitoring of their progress, so that no one is left behind, as stated in the literature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In conclusion, official data and statistics are a precious asset that we use to achieve our national SDGs, as the foundation on which we build a better world for a promising future; a world that supports the principles of justice and prosperity, maintains advanced levels of quality life, and protects the environment. We also have a shared responsibility to partner, collaborate and invest in the provision and use of high-quality data to create positive change and shape a sustainable future for all members of society. Hence, we are interested in organizing a national data forum entitled "Doha Data Forum for Comprehensive Data Systems and Effective Decisions" during the period 29-30 October 2023.

The organization of this forum comes in line with the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the modernization of national statistical systems, issued by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its forty-eighth session held in March 2020, and with the Declaration of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development recently issued by the United Nations General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session held on 18-19 September 2023.

