

Toward more and better financing for data and statistics priorities in emerging economies

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Overall donor financing for data collection and statistical capacity building in developing countries has decreased significantly in the last several years. This under-investment in statistical systems has worsened gaps in high-quality data in low- and middle-income countries around the world, which in turn has threatened the effectiveness of the full spectrum of social and economic development initiatives, from human capital investments to digital economic reforms to the achievement of most of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Nascent commitments featuring stronger international cooperation to support data and statistics are starting to materialize, however, which may help to stem or reverse this trend, though additional action is needed in the immediate term to maximize opportunities across regions. Heartening progress is emerging where donor resources are intentionally pooled and used to leverage significant dedicated resources for sectoral development, and which can collectively unlock an increase in (and sustained investment of) domestic resources for data and statistics. For example, the World Bank is presently establishing a global Umbrella Trust Fund for Data called the *Global Data Facility*, in response to a call to do so by the UN Statistical Commission's High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which emphasized the need for an innovative funding mechanism to strengthen the capacity of national data and statistical systems and help overcome data deprivation across regions. The Global Data Facility thus focuses on a three-part approach, combining: (i) pooled donor resources; (ii) leveraged World Bank IDA or IBRD resources; and (iii) increased domestic financing. New approaches such as the Global Data Facility are needed to enable a step change in financing data and statistics priorities, while ensuring a country-led, flexible, and adaptive approach to strengthen the capacity of national data and statistical systems.

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