



## Building robust approaches to data quality – learning from international development projects in the Asia-Pacific region

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### Abstract:

This paper takes experience from the use of digital data in the broader field of international development and examines some of the key lessons for official statistics. There has been much exploration of the potential for the use of so-called 'big data' in official statistics, particularly in understanding and addressing data quality issues. However, there are relevant lessons at the micro-level from the dedicated development projects funded by international organisations that leverage big data for the public sector. So far, sharing lessons between the two data production-use communities has been minimal. However, there are significant parallels and cross-disciplinary communication is becoming more essential as the pace of the challenges we face and digital data opportunities grow quickly.

Using examples from the Asia-Pacific region, including the work of the UN Pulse Lab Jakarta and the research of the NIRAS Digital Futures Hub, this paper focusses on broad lessons for the frameworks that we might use to govern how data producers and users can best interact in the digital data ecosystem and in particular manage data quality issues effectively. Key implications will be explored around incentives, both institutional and professional, and accountability and how this plays out in different phases of the data production cycle. Aspects include how traditional data producers can be made more comfortable in using data outside the control of traditional statistical production business models and how to develop institutional tools and frameworks to manage the emerging data quality issues we face.

### Keywords:

Digital data; big data; data quality; accountability; institutions