

Foreword

Data and statistics are part of the OECD's DNA. They underpin, shape and inform our policy advice to promote better policies for better lives in all the countries we work with, numbering over 100, across all regions and levels of development.

In an era of fake news and alternative facts, good data are even more vital. All citizens have the right to true, reliable and accessible information. This is particularly important in the development field, since world leaders adopted the transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will require informed choices about priorities and strategies, and for this we will need a better evidence base than we have today.

The continued lack of basic data along with weak statistical systems remain major stumbling blocks to achieving the SDGs. For example, there are no data for about two-thirds of the 232 SDG indicators, and 88 indicators have neither an agreed methodology nor data for measuring them. Even when data are available, they are often insufficiently disaggregated, making it difficult for policy makers to track or compare the situations of different population groups or communities.

A key reason for this poor capacity is that official statistics in developing countries do not get the resources they need. Aid for building statistical systems was about 0.30% of total official development assistance over the past three years, equivalent to USD 600 million per year.

This is why the OECD decided to focus its annual Development Co-operation Report on data for development. The good news is that conditions have never been riper for developing countries to harness the data revolution. The global push for evidence-based policy making and the centrality of data to deliver the SDGs, combined with new technology, make it easier, faster and cheaper to produce and use the data we need.

This report not only provides a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the political and structural constraints faced by countries; it also formulates concrete options for policy makers to build on the new opportunities and make data work for sustainable development. It shows how governments, national statistical offices, citizens, and public and private development partners can work together to fill data gaps, generating and using better data, for better development policies for better lives.



Angel Gurría,
OECD Secretary-General

Acknowledgements

The 2017 edition of the OECD *Development Co-operation Report* was prepared under the direction of Jorge Moreira da Silva, Director of the OECD Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD). The report was managed and edited by Ida Mc Donnell, Senior Policy Analyst and Team Lead for the *Development Co-operation Report*, in close collaboration with Johannes Jütting, Secretariat Manager of PARIS21 – the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century – under the strategic guidance and oversight of Karen Jorgensen, Head of the Review, Evaluation and Engagement Division, DCD.

The Chair of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Charlotte Petri-Gornitzka, provided direction and advice. Martine Durand, OECD Chief Statistician and Director of the OECD Statistics Directorate (STD), provided advice, guidance and support throughout the process while also contributing content for the report. Thanks go to Paul Schreyer (Deputy Director, STD), Simon Scott (Counsellor, STD) and Brenda Killen (Deputy Director, DCD) for their inputs. Thanks also go to Mario Pezzini, Director of the OECD Development Centre and Special Advisor to the OECD Secretary-General on Development, for his guidance on the inception of the report in 2016 when he was Acting Director of DCD.

The report was supported by a core team: Valentina Sanna, Stacey Bradbury, Thilo Klein, Ragini Malik, Henri-Bernard Solignac-Lecomte, El Iza Mohamedou, Peter Carlson and Talisa Zur Hausen along with Shaida Badiie and her colleagues Deirdre Appel and Eric Swanson at Open Data Watch. Christine Graves gave editorial advice and copy-edited the report, with proof reading by Jennifer Allain, and cover design and infographics by Stephanie Coic. The French version of the report was translated by the OECD Translation Division, under the supervision of Florence Burloux-Mader and proofread by Sophie Alibert. The OECD Public Affairs and Communication Directorate produced the publication – special thanks to Anne-Lise Prigent, Cicely Dupont-Nivore, Damian Garnys, Audrey Garrigoux, Florence Guérinot, Ghani Kadem and Maria Petit-Breuilh David. Thanks also to Hilary Balbuena and Beth Del Bourgo for helping us get started and to Joachim Beijmo, Catherine Bremer, Scarlettte Elizée, Claudia Gemmel and Erin Renner Cordell for communication, editorial and media relations support; and Heidi Johnson, Hannah Murray Kelly, Ola Kasneci, Anne Keller and Angela Stuart for administrative support.

Special thanks go to all of the authors, who are named by chapter, and to all staff from across the Development Co-operation Directorate, including the Joint Support Team of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation and DCD's statisticians, who provided input and support in a variety of ways. Chapters were reviewed by Samantha Custer (AidData), Neil Jackson (DFID), Vinisha Bhatia-Murdach, Paige Kirby and Joshua Powell (Development Gateway), Frans Lammersen (OECD), Rahul Malhotra (OECD), Estelle Raimondo (Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank) and Jan Rielander (OECD). "In my view" pieces were authored by Lisa Grace Bersales (the Philippine Statistics Authority); Martine Durand (OECD); Sarah Hendriks (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation); Morten Jerven (Norwegian University of Life Sciences); Ellen Cathrine Kiøsterud (Statistics Norway); and Stefan Schweinfest (United Nations Statistics Division). Thanks also to the individuals and organisations that contributed case studies on data for development.

Many people were consulted to define the scope and content of this report, including through an experts workshop on data for development which took place in April 2017. The team would like to thank, hoping not to miss anyone, the many great experts, and the members of the DCD Publications Review Board, for their valuable advice, insights and suggestions: Yasmin Ahmad, Angel Alonso Arroba, Eric Bensel, Thomas Boehler, Federico Bonaglia, Kim Bradford-Smith, Soniya Carvalho, Oliver Chinganya, Rory Clarke, Catalina Covacevich, Nicolas De Cordes, Juan de Laiglesia, Poul Engberg-Pedersen, Emily Esplen, Anais Fahd, Gaëlle Ferrant, Mags Gaynor, Nadine Gbossa, Susan Greene, Alejandro Guerrero-Ruiz, Michelle Harding, Barbro Hexeberg, Erin Hohlfelder, Thomas Hos, Neil Jackson, Hanna-Mari Kilpeläinen, James Kim, Hetty Kovach, Michael Laird, Yohanna Loucheur, Patrick Love, Hans Lundgren, Claire Melamed, Suneeta Millington, Bathylle Missika, El Iza Mohamedou, Keiko Nowacka, David O'Connor, Ewelina Oblacewicz, Valentina Orrù, Nicolas Pinaud, Beatriz Pont, Leslie Rae, Judith Randel, Jorge Rivera, Haje Schütte, Rachel Scott, Linda Smioldo Herda, Joe Stead, Suzanne Steensen, Cushla Thomson, Yu Tian, Piera Tortora, Irene Tuveng, Koen Van Acoleyen, Michael Ward, Cara Williams and Felix Zimmermann.

The OECD would like to thank all DAC members and the providers of development co-operation beyond the DAC membership for fact-checking the “Profiles of providers of development co-operation” section, and for responding to the survey on DAC members’ policies and practices to “Make data work for sustainable development”.



From:
Development Co-operation Report 2017
Data for Development

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/dcr-2017-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2017), "Foreword", in *Development Co-operation Report 2017: Data for Development*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/dcr-2017-1-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to rights@oecd.org. Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at info@copyright.com or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at contact@cfcopies.com.