



# Arab Forum on Building Statistical Capacity for a Data Revolution Concept Note

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The St. Regis Hotel, Doha, Qatar

**Ministry of Development Planning & Statistics,  
PARIS21 and GCC-STAT**

## Introduction

Discussions on the data revolution are taking place in all regions of the world, but turning these discussions into reality remains challenging. In order for the 2030 Agenda and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to have a meaningful impact, there is a need for specific recommendations and concrete objectives on how to utilise the data revolution, backed by long-term political and financial support.

Central to this support will be the understanding that statistical capacity at the country level is central to a successful data revolution. The 2030 Agenda expands the scope of the Millennium Development Goals and increases the complexity of monitoring, placing an increased burden on national statistical systems especially in developing countries. Shouldering that burden will require institutions, both state and non-state, to develop new and stronger capacities to plan for, manage, and measure commitments made under the new agenda.

However, without knowing how to identify existing capacity gaps and measures to be taken to support statistical systems and institutions, including costs, these entities will not be prepared to achieve the SDGs. A roadmap for a Data Revolution is needed to support countries to determine what changes need to take place, and help funders to determine where funds should be channelled.

With the aim of gaining political support for such a roadmap, PARIS21, MDPS and GCC-STAT will hold a Regional Forum on Building Statistical Capacity for a Data Revolution, bringing together the Arab region community to agree on concrete steps to build statistical capacity in countries to respond to national, regional, and international data needs within the 2030 Agenda. Participants will look at case studies highlighting best practices in statistical capacity development and measures that are helping countries adjust to the evolving data ecosystem. The Forum will also be an opportunity to take stock of statistical development and the demand for data, and identify challenges and opportunities for statistical systems in the region.

## Objectives

The main objective of the Forum will be to promote a series of specific recommendations and concrete objectives on how the data revolution can become a reality. To reach this objective, participants will be provided with a draft “Roadmap for a Data Revolution” that will outline a series of country case studies, including best practices and successful technological and institutional innovations for national statistical systems.

## Participants

The Forum will include the participation of high-level officials from the region, representing ministries of planning, statistics, and development. Complementing these core political participants will be approximately 100 participants representing the full range of stakeholders in development statistics, including:

- National statistical offices from the Arab region and beyond
- Administrators of main household survey instruments
- Major donors, public and private
- Private sector
- Open data campaigners and implementers
- Data users, including policy makers and researchers
- Key global institutions