

RDA Interest Group (IG): “Data for Development”

Introduction:

The existing difference in data availability, access, use, and distribution between developing and developed countries hinder development for all. For instance, the availability and use of data and statistics on issues such as poverty, education, health, fragile states, pandemics, or natural disasters would trigger a new wave of data-driven scientific innovation and research. However, developing countries experience several bottlenecks, such as limited data infrastructure, data illiteracy, as well as unwillingness by government, private sector, and civil society to make data and statistics readily available.

This Interest group focuses on access to and use of data for the benefit of developing countries, especially vulnerable groups. Vulnerable groups in developing countries can include the rural poor, indigenous people, women, elderly people, immigrants, and children born of war among others. This interest groups intends to work towards achieving interoperable data for development of the low-income countries and vulnerable populations; through creating a platform to promote data and statistics that benefit all, interrogating practices, engaging in capacity building, and suggest sound recommendations that align with many of RDA’s ongoing and upcoming outputs, recommendations, interest group, and working group activities.

User Scenario:

For the developing countries to achieve inclusive social and economic growth, security and region integration, there is need to strength data literacy, enhance data demand and supply, build partnerships, and establish data governance. This interest group will enhance capacity and contribute to five core areas:

- Data and statistical capacity of vulnerable groups
- Availability of foundational data and its application in daily life of individuals, organisations and governments
- Development of strong data policies and laws to support data revolution in developing countries
- Promote meaningful use of data and statistics for regional and international cooperation

This Interest group is concerned with providing a platform to support implementation of RDA outputs and recommendations linked to data, research, policy making, advocacy for citizens of developing countries and interested groups in developed countries to discuss and provide meaningful solutions to enhance the use, access, and distribution of data for development. It intends to support the demand and supply of data and statistics with interoperable mindset and with the priority of protecting and supporting the citizen and the vulnerable populations. It will also build collaborative partnership across RDA interest groups and working groups to work in the field of capacity development in low-income countries.

Objectives:

The interest group follows two broad objectives:

- a) Facilitate discussions, improve capacity, and enhance data sharing. In this objective the IG will engage with entities that provide and use data, promote study of development data attributes or and work with government and non-government entities to develop a framework for interoperability of development data which we hope will further form focused working groups.
- b) Engage regional and international development groups to assess the quality and limited use of data and statistics for policy, decision making and social transformation. In this objective, the IG will target development groups working on social transformation in developing countries to enhance data capacity and strategies for innovation, research, and social change driven by data and statistics.

Participation:

The IG will reach out to academic research institutions, research networks, organizations, and ministries with whom to collaborate or establish a foundation for collaboration. It is open to discussions relevant to social sciences, humanities, human rights, conflict and development research, vulnerable and hidden populations. The IG will also contact other RDA IG's that are thematically, methodologically, or technically related.

Outcomes:

- Offer a forum to discuss important issues related to access to and use of data and statistic for development and to develop recommendations in relevant working groups.
- Promote initiatives towards improving the culture of data sharing, respect for ethical issues related to open access, especially the protection of vulnerable populations
- Promote discussion and innovation of data and strategies to promote citizens' or stakeholders' demand for accountability, and work towards or protection of the rights and privacy of vulnerable individuals
- Initiate debate, research and dialogue for networks that enhance innovation, research and policies for data access, use, distribution, and availability in developing countries.

Timeline:

First year: building the working capacity and networks for the interest group through reaching out and organizing of RDA sessions.

Second-Fifth year: working with governments, researchers, and citizen groups to promote equal access and use of data for development.

Potential group members:

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