

High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Monday, 9 July – Wednesday, 18 July 2018

Session: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for resilient societies
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In the 1950s, W. Edwards Deming proposed a simple model for business processes, which he posited, that, if implemented properly, would lead to improved customer satisfaction. Today, Deming's Plan-Do-Check-Act model is *apropos* to the 2030 Agenda, and would improve the satisfaction of the ultimate customers, the peoples of this world, by achieving sustainable development, while leaving no one behind.

The first round of *planning* began with the global endorsement of the Transformative Agenda in September 2015. Since then, countries have been *doing*; that is, implementing policies and programmes at the global, regional and national levels in furtherance of the attainment of the goals.

The importance of *checking* is recognised as a critical enabler for the realization of the 2030 Agenda as exemplified by the coordinated efforts to improve the supply of reliable and timely data. The value of statistical information to support the attainment of the 17 goals is enshrined in the document *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* which has been endorsed by Member States of the United Nations. To quote the transformative agenda, “[q]uality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress and to ensure that no one is left behind. Such data is key to decision-making.” (Paragraph 48)

This simple but powerful notion has reignited the global discourse around the importance of official statistics, and puts at the fore the importance of strengthening national statistics systems. If we are to attain the goals of the 2030 Agenda, it is essential that we consistently monitor progress, and take the necessary *actions* to ensure that we stay on the path towards development.

The recognition though that this process continues iteratively throughout the post-2015 era is also essential. This means that it is not enough to produce one-off indicators, but that the SDG indicator framework must be mainstreamed into global, regional and national statistical programmes, and that the appropriate financial, human and technical resources are allocated to ensure effective monitoring of progress towards the goals. It also means that special efforts must be made to strengthen statistical capacities, and improve financing for statistics in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), developing countries and other vulnerable economies. This will ensure that no nation is left behind on the road to 2030.

To borrow from the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data [March 2017]

The global statistical system is called upon to take decisive actions to transform how data and statistics are produced and disseminated to inform development policy decision, with the vital support of governments and in closer partnership with stakeholders from academia, civil society, the private

sector, and the public at large. This will entail the concerted and sustained accounting and coordination of existing efforts and the **strategic investment of resources** in order to significantly address existing gaps in the technical and institutional capacities of national statistical systems, and thereby improve the coverage, quality and frequency of data and statistics, made available through transparent and public access.

It is essential that we strengthen the statistical systems across the globe, and mobilize resources, both domestic and international, towards improving the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We must not only *Plan* and *Do*, but also *CHECK*, and *Act* continuously, if we are to attain sustainable development by 2030.