

**INTERSESSIONAL PANEL OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)**

**Lisbon, Portugal
6-7 November 2023**

CSTD 2023-2024 priority theme on “Data for Development”

Statement submitted by

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**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR
DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)**

DECLARATION FROM CAMEROON

Theme : Data for Development.

Thank you Moderator,

Allow me to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Portugal for their efforts in organizing this session. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to all the speakers for their brilliant and insightful presentations.

Distinguished delegates,

In an era where digital connectivity has become an integral part of our daily lives, data emerges as a keystone in shaping the course of global development. We recognize the far-reaching impact data holds in today's society, and we understand that harnessing its potential is essential for our nation's sustainable progress.

Cameroon, like many developing countries, acknowledges the multifaceted relationship between data and sustainable development.

We are keenly aware of the promises data bring, from the potential to stimulate innovations and foster economic growth to providing evidence-based insights into addressing pressing global challenges. We understand that data, when managed wisely, can be a powerful tool in eradicating poverty, mitigating the effects of climate change, ensuring food security, managing disaster risks, and responding effectively to pandemics.

And for this purpose, Cameroon has actively engaged in various (STI) cooperative mechanisms at both regional and global levels, such as

- the CROPWATCH Initiative program
- Digital Transformation Acceleration Project (PATNuC) .
- the CHAD-CAMEROON Interconnection Project (Pirect)
- Deployment of environmental technologies and innovations for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Those initiatives enables decision-makers to provide context-specific assistance, thereby improving the lives of populations facing challenging situations, and living in remote areas.

However, we must tread with caution, recognizing that data, like any powerful tool, can also pose significant challenges if mishandled. The digital divide, the disparity between developed and developing nations, remains a growing concern.

Unregulated data can exacerbate these disparities and inadvertently lead to market monopolies, discriminatory practices, and even threats to fundamental human rights.

Leveraging data for sustainable development is undoubtedly a valuable pursuit, but we must also recognize that the production, analysis, and management of data and reforms

of national statistical systems come at a cost, particularly for developing countries.

As these nations embark on their data-driven journeys, they encounter financial challenges associated with building and maintaining robust data infrastructure, training a skilled workforce, and ensuring data security.

The international community should extend its support to alleviate these burdens, in order to empower developing countries to actively engage in shaping global data policies, thereby guaranteeing the representation of their perspectives and the fulfillment of their needs, and ensure that the benefits of the data-driven era are accessible to all.

As we look ahead, we are encouraged by the recommendations put forth in the issues paper for the international community. In alignment with these recommendations, Cameroon strongly supports the call for harmonized ethical guidelines for AI and data governance.

We firmly advocate for an enhanced international cooperation, recognizing its pivotal role in facilitating technology transfers, sharing best practices, and fostering local innovation ecosystems.

Essential to this endeavor are capacity-building and knowledge-sharing initiatives aimed at cultivating the skills and expertise required to harness data effectively.

Thank you for your attention