How to make data work for the 2030 Agenda

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Data are a strategic asset in addressing developmental challenges

Data value chain

- Collect
- Store
- Analyse
- Transform data into digital intelligence

Supporting the SDGs

- Improved tracking of progress
- Cheaper access to technologies & knowledge
- New technological solutions to accelerate progress
- Tools for improved (international) collaboration

...if well handled
Digital divides accompanied by evolving data divide risk widening economic divides

Internet users (billions)

'19 4.1
'20 4.6
'21 4.9
'22* 5.3

Average internet speed
LDCs

Developed economies

8x

Bandwidth per Internet user, Kbit/s

40

108

115

680

Low-income
Upper-middle-income
Lower-middle-income
High income

International bandwidth is geographically concentrated along two main routes

North-America
Europe
China

Source: ITU (2022)
Cross-border data flows pose particular challenges to developing countries

**Growing imbalances**
- Infrastructure
- Population size
- Skills
- Trust in digital economy

**Institutional capacities**
- Legal & regulatory framework
- Access to financing
- Representation in global policy debates

...but unilateral regulation is not sufficient
**Many developing countries face common challenges in the digital economy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy areas</th>
<th>Main challenges</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal and regulatory frameworks</td>
<td>Weak legal and regulatory frameworks, including data and consumer protection online.</td>
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<td>ICT infrastructure and services</td>
<td>Limited Internet access in rural/remote areas and high costs of fixed and mobile-broadband Internet.</td>
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<td>Trade logistics and trade facilitation</td>
<td>Inadequate facilities for physical delivery of online purchases.</td>
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<td>Payment solutions</td>
<td>Overreliance on cash transactions, plus low access to and limited experience with online payments and the use of credit cards.</td>
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<td>E-commerce skills development</td>
<td>Education system not fit for the digital economy; lack of business development and e-commerce skills.</td>
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<td>Access to financing</td>
<td>Unsuitable financial mechanisms for start-up enterprises to engage in e-commerce.</td>
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Prerequisites for a more equitable distribution of gains from the digital economy
The enabling environment determines the gains from the data-driven digital economy.

Holistic approaches are needed.

- Infrastructure for connectivity
- Addressing skills shortages
- Developing talent: creating local and regional digital products
- Public policies to build trust online
- Developing effective solutions for individual control over data
- Competition & tax policy for more equitable outcomes
- Improved global understanding of data and platform governance
Achieving the 2030 Agenda:
Making data flows work for the people and the planet
Fragmentation will hamper development gains from data flows

Data flows are not just trade, but increasingly discussed in trade negotiations.

Leading to less opportunities for data sharing across jurisdictions, risk of Internet fragmentation, reducing opportunities for business and social value creation.

Broad multi-stakeholder discussions best suited to maximize the benefits from data flows.
A balanced global approach to digital and data governance needs to work for the people and the planet

To prevent inequalities from being amplified
To enable global data-sharing and develop global digital public goods
To avoid further fragmentation in the digital space
To increase trust in the digital economy and reduce uncertainty
To address policy challenges emerging from the dominant positions of global digital platforms
To account for spillovers of national policies into other countries

With a view to enabling data to flow across borders as freely, as necessary and possible, while addressing various development objectives

Key data-related policy areas

- Agree on definitions and taxonomies
- Establish terms of access to data
- Strengthen measurement
- Deal with data as global public good
- Explore emerging forms of data governance
- Agree on rights and principles
- Develop standards
- Increase international cooperation on platform governance
Connecting the dots

- **Our Common Agenda** (Sept ’21)
- **Roadmap for GDC issued** (Jan ’23)
- **Deadline for GDC submissions** (30 Apr ’23)
- **GDC co-facilitators appointed** (Oct ’22)
- **Thematic deep dives** until June
- **Development issues paper**
- **Intergovernmental negotiations on GDC** (Sep ’23)
- **Summit of the Future** (Sep ’24)
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Guiding questions

What are the key issues at stake for developing countries in relation to cross-border data flows?
Guiding questions

What is needed to ensure that the benefits of the digital economy are shared more equitably?
Guiding questions

What national and international policies and support measures can help address challenges among developing countries in e-commerce and the digital economy?
Guiding questions

What are the implications of cross-border data flows at the regional and international levels in relation to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda?
Guiding questions

How can contributions to the debate on data governance best be made, to maximize the development potential of data?
Thank you!

For feedback & questions, please email:
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