



Economic Commission for Africa
Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
Seventh session

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

Plenary round-table panel on meeting data and statistics needs for evidence-based, inclusive and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and to achieve the goals of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development in Africa**Information and guidelines for the plenary round-table panel on data and statistics****I. Date and time**

1. The plenary round-table panel will be held on 2 March 2021 from 11.15 a.m. to 1 p.m.

II. Introduction and objective

2. In the advent to the decade of action, the progress made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development continues to be too slow and uneven. In some areas it has either stalled or been reversed. Yet the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has also reinforced pre-existing obstacles to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals, structural inequalities, gaps and systemic challenges and risks.

3. Member States are therefore confronted with the challenges of ensuring a sustainable and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and accelerating the achievement of the Goals in the framework of the decade of action and delivery. Accurate and timely data and statistics are the cornerstones for addressing those challenges. They are indispensable to effective policies and actions to, among other things, reach those in greatest need, such as those living in extreme poverty and in vulnerable situations, thereby ensuring that no one is left behind.

4. The objective of this round-table panel is to address the importance and the status of availability, access and application of accurate data and statistics for evidence-based implementation of and reporting on the two agendas. The panellists will highlight the increasingly urgent need for approaches, policy options and investments to generate timely and accurate data to achieve an inclusive and sustainable recovery, in line with the goals of the 2030 Agenda

* ECA/RFSD/2021/1/Rev.1.



and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, and to build forward better from the COVID-19 crisis.

III. Format

5. The discussion will be led by a panel comprising policymakers and senior experts drawn from the statistical, scientific, technology and innovation communities; relevant ministries of national Governments; regional organizations; the private sector; and civil society. The detailed list is presented in paragraph 7 below.

IV. Guidelines

6. The following guidelines will apply to the plenary round-table panel:

- (a) The Chair will introduce the round-table panel, including the objective as stated above and the panel members. The Chair will then yield to the moderator, who will guide the dialogue among the panellists and other participants;

- (b) The moderator will invite each panellist to address (in no more than five minutes) one or more of the following questions:

- (i) How have accurate data and statistics contributed to strengthening implementation, monitoring and reporting on the two agendas?

- (ii) What is the role of digital technologies and innovation in enhancing the generation, management, dissemination and use of accurate data and statistics? How can they be better harnessed to that end?

- (iii) What are some of the policies and practices that have worked, and why have they been successful in enabling the effective generation, dissemination and use of accurate data and statistics?

- (iv) Who are the key stakeholders in the generation, dissemination and use of statistics, and how can they be better supported to fulfil their roles?

- (v) What challenges have been experienced in generating, managing, disseminating and using accurate and disaggregated data and statistics?

- (vi) What support could partners at the national, regional and global levels provide to ensure availability, access to and use of accurate and disaggregated data and statistics to inform policies and actions aimed at recovering from the COVID-19 crisis and accelerating the implementation of the two agendas?

- (vii) What are ways and opportunities to improve the generation, management, access, dissemination and use of data and statistics to build forward better from the COVID-19 crisis and to speed up implementation?

- (c) The moderator will help to foster an interactive dialogue among the panellists. In doing so, the moderator will give representatives of the countries taking part in voluntary national reviews in 2021 the opportunity to pose questions to representatives of countries that have already participated in the review process;

(d) The moderator will then invite questions and other contributions from the floor;

(e) At the end of the dialogue, the moderator will provide a summary of the key policy messages, including recommendations made. The moderator will then yield to the Chair, who will conclude the round-table panel.

V. Moderator and panellists

7. The Chair, moderator and panellists of the round-table panel will be as follows:

Chair: Chair of the Bureau of the seventh session of the Regional Forum

Moderator: TBC

Panellists:

- Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, and head of United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, Mami Mizutori
 - Minister responsible for statistics
 - Minister responsible for finance
 - Minister responsible for information, science and technology/digital transformation
 - African Union Commission/regional economic community representative
 - Civil society/private-sector representative
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