Introducing the Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data

Data are critical for policy making and planning, and for monitoring and measuring progress towards national and global sustainable development goals. The COVID-19 crisis has further increased the demand for high-quality, timely, and disaggregated data to underpin evidence-based policymaking to manage the crisis as well as formulate effective and inclusive recovery policies. Strong, modern national statistical systems that can deliver and use more and better data are essential for both crisis response and recovery, and to ensure long-term prosperity and sustainable development.

The Bern Network, a multi-stakeholder alliance created in 2019 by the Swiss Government, is developing a ‘Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data’ to help countries, donors and development partners identify funding opportunities, bring projects to scale, advocate for support to data and statistics and connect to new partners.

The online platform will provide information and services to match the supply and demand of financing for data and statistics to foster transparency, accountability, and alignment, and facilitate coordination among donors and partner countries.

Donors can use it to identify key data funding gaps in recipient countries, benchmark their country’s data funding, and highlight opportunities for joint projects with other donors. Recipient countries can use it to understand how much aid they are receiving for statistics across the board and plan investments accordingly, assess their funding gaps to lobby for more resources from government and donors, and access best practices to improve efficiency and effectiveness of investments in data and statistics.

The clearinghouse will fit the needs of diverse user groups. An official at a national statistical organisation can discover the trends in international support for data, as well as opportunities for funding by various doors. A project manager at a donor agency can learn about which countries and sectors are well funded and which are under-funded, or deep dive into a range of specific country data. Researchers can analyze overall trends in financing for data and forecast future trends. Civil society organizations advocating for better data can review the funding landscape and identify who the top donors/recipient are and which countries are increasing their own investment in data and statistics.
A preview of the pilot clearinghouse will be launched at the virtual UN World Data Forum in October 2020, and a fully operational clearinghouse expected to be launched at the UN World Data Forum in October 2021. Components under consideration include visualizations of funding levels and opportunities based on analyses of financing flows and needs, including by sector and SDG area; now-casting and forecasting of resource allocations for data and statistics; and profiles that highlight the financing flows from and to countries around the world.

We have a unique opportunity in the next decade to harness data to tackle various challenges, ranging from a fair and inclusive post-COVID-19 recovery to climate change. To do so, the world needs improvements in funding effective, inclusive, and resilient data ecosystems. The Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data is the Bern Network’s answer to meeting this challenge.

Join the Bern Network today to make more and better funding for data a reality through the development of the clearinghouse. We invite any partners who wish to support the development of this initiative to contact the Bern Network Secretariat at PARIS21 secretariat@bernnetwork.org.

The Bern Network is a multi-stakeholder alliance created in 2019 by the Swiss Government and led by a group of core members including GPSDD, OECD, Open Data Watch, Switzerland, PARIS21, the United Kingdom, United Nations Statistics Division, and the World Bank.