



## **OPENING REMARKS**

International Conference on Sustainable Development Goals Statistics  
“Level Up: Shaping a Strong Data Ecosystem for Monitoring SDGs”  
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By  
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Mr. Ernesto Pernia, Secretary of Socio-economic Planning, National Economic and Development Authority of the Philippines

Mr. Haoliang Xu, Assistant Secretary General UN and Director UNDP

Lisa Bersales, National Statistician and Civil Registrar

Mr. Romeo S. Recide, Deputy National Statistician,

Ms. Jose B. Perez, Deputy National Statistician

Distinguished participants, colleagues,

Allow me first to thank Lisa Bersales and her colleagues at the Philippine Statistics Authority, especially Candido Astrologo and his team, for organizing this conference and giving us the opportunity to reflect on the data requirements for the SDGs, review the gaps and share knowledge and experiences on how to improve our capacities to address the data demands.

We’ve made some progress – after two years, the SDG indicator framework is now adopted and more importantly, Member States in the GA resolution adopted in July of this year have recognized the centrality of data and statistics for the implementation of the agenda and the need to strengthen countries capacity, including by implementing the CT Global Action Plan.

Specifically, the Agenda mandated the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) to develop a global indicator framework addressing all targets of the Agenda that embodies the ambitions established by Member States. Without a doubt the international statistical community has gone above and beyond in its work to deliver on this challenging task, in a very short period of time.

But we the most important task for the data and statistical communities still lies ahead of us: fulfilling the ambitions of the 2030 agenda by meeting the vast data demands. Data that is timely, relevant, of high quality, open and disaggregated.

Central to the implementation of the SDGs are data produced in countries to inform their policies and measures. And country data are central to monitoring – both the national and global SDG monitoring systems. National reporting is the most significant level of the SDG review process and data derived from national sources is the foundation for SDG reviews at all levels.

While we have these enormous challenges, we also have the opportunities and the technology to produce the information needed by citizens and policymakers to make better decisions and improve people's lives.

Increasingly, we see the creation of partnerships that enable the integration of new data sources with more traditional ones, with National Statistical Offices at the center of this process.

Data innovation projects are being implemented by a broad range of public and private actors in many parts of the world. The results are promising. But the use of innovative technologies and new data sources for the public good is not without risk. It also presents institutional challenges: merging new data sources with traditional ones requires the modernization of data governance and quality frameworks to ensure national ownership and the establishment of transparent mechanisms.

We need, more than ever, official statistical systems that provide clear rules, standards, and principles for these new “data architectures.” Having clear standards will help protect individuals’ privacy and boost statistical capacity, while enabling decision makers at all level to access the data they need.

The first UN World Data Forum in January this year was our first important opportunity for different data communities to come together and discuss innovative ideas and solutions for the production and use of better data for sustainable development.

This conference is an important stepping stone before the next UN WDF in October next year.

I am confident that everyone in this room truly believes in the power of data -- that data can improve people’s lives. We can make that happen. Let’s get together from all different data communities and work on very concrete actions to provide real solutions to ensure that those data are produced and made available to all.

At the UN Statistics Division we are committed to support this work.

I wish you all a very productive discussion.