UN Global Working Group (GWG) on Big Data for Official Statistics

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The UN Global Working Group (GWG) on Big Data for Official Statistics

Role of the UN GWG

BigData UN Global Working Group

- Created in 2014, as an outcome of the 45th meeting of the UN Statistical Commission.
- Provides strategic vision, direction and coordination of a global programme on Big Data for official statistics, including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Promotes practical use of Big Data sources, capability building, training and sharing of experiences.
- Fosters communication and advocacy of use of Big Data for policy applications.

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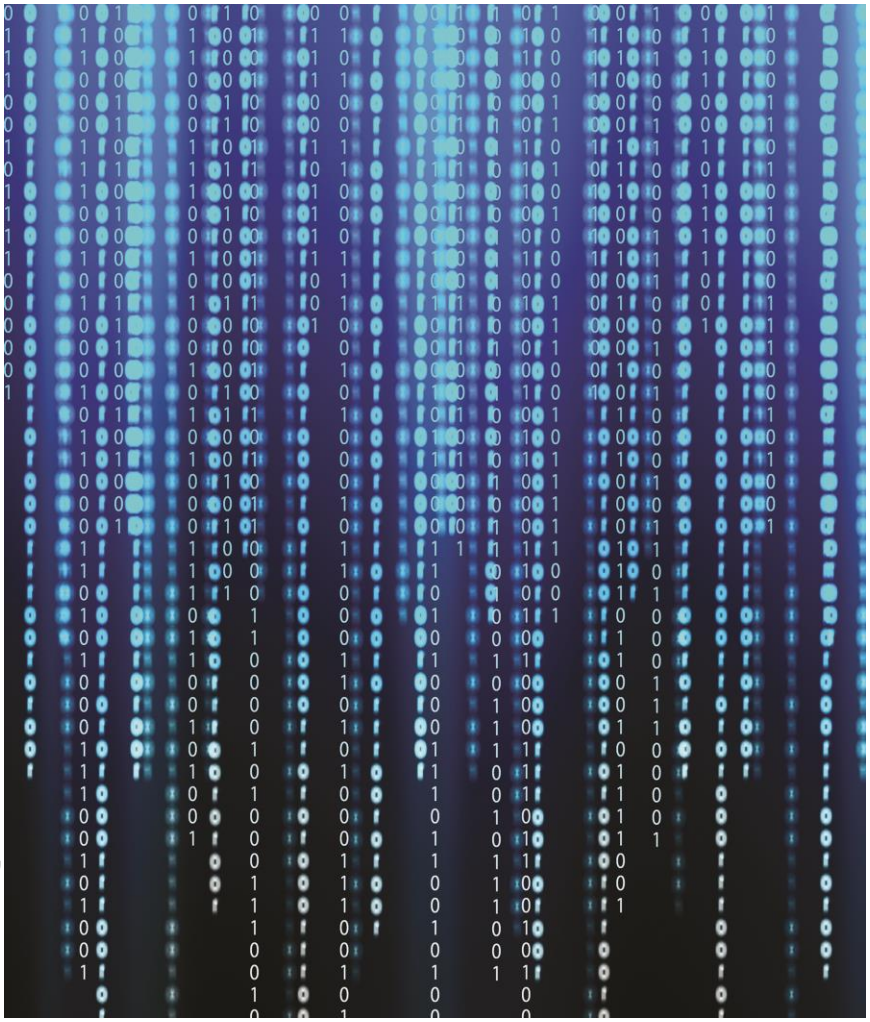
Role of Big Data

- The UN GWG views using Big Data for official statistics as an obligation of the statistical community, based on the Fundamental Principle to meet the expectation of society for enhanced products and more efficient ways of working.

- Digital information is continuously generated through the widespread and constant use of telecommunications and other devices such as; sensors, mobile phones, satellites and social media.

- The GWG is in the process of establishing, testing and sharing tools and methods for harnessing the power of Big Data from a global perspective.



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The UN GWG on Big Data Task Teams

Satellite Imagery Task Team

- Chaired by Australia.

- Task Team aims to provide strategic vision, direction and development of a global work plan on utilising satellite imagery and geo-spatial data for official statistics and indicators for post-2015 development goals.

- Members of the Satellite Imagery Task Team include Australia, Colombia, Mexico, international organisations, NGOs and private industry.

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Satellite Imagery Task Team Big Data workshops

The Satellite Imagery Task Team is considering hosting a Big Data workshop to be held in Japan in October 2016, and potentially in Latin America in December 2016.

These workshops will deliver on the Satellite Imagery Task Team objectives to provide guidelines around data production, methodology and quality of Satellite Imagery data and to provide training materials about these guidelines.

The workshop will include hands-on sessions where practitioners can work on training Big Data sets using the techniques and models explained in the course.

The intention of the workshop is for the attendees to return to their home country with a practical set of skills which can be applied to their own data and requirements.

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Satellite Imagery Task Team and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a universal development agenda for all countries and stakeholders to use as a blueprint of action for people, the planet and prosperity.

The agenda is anchored by 17 SDGs, associated targets and a global indicator framework. The 2030 Agenda specifically requires new data acquisition and integration approaches to support implementation of the development agenda at all levels.

The Satellite Imagery Task team is developing techniques and approaches which in future could assist with:

- Monitoring targets
- Planning
- Tracking progress
- Helping nations and other stakeholders make informed decision to assist with achieving SDGs

The Satellite Imagery Task Team has produced the following pilot studies:

- Urban-Rural Functional Dependencies Through Georeferenced Tweets (INEGI- Mexico)
- Climate Scenarios (INEGI- Mexico)
- Using satellite images to calculate and use and land cover statistics (DANE - Colombia)
- Satellite Imagery, Remote Sensing and Geospatial Data – Investigative Report (ABS- Australia)

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UN GWG on Big Data and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

As part of the broader UN GWG on Big Data, it is intended the techniques and methodologies developed by the Satellite Imagery Task Team be applied to monitor the progress of SDGs.

The use of Satellite Imagery data, and Big Data more broadly to monitor SDGs is a key priority of the UN GWG.

The SDGs Task Team is chaired by World Bank in New York.