



Final Report

Evaluation of the global partnership for sustainable development data

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Submitted by Itad



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Contents

List of acronyms	iv
Executive summary	vi
Why we undertook the evaluation	vi
Introducing GPSDD and its role within the data for development ecosystem	vi
GPSDD's contribution to the data for development ecosystem	vii
How GPSDD can build on progress in the future	x
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Evaluation purpose, objectives and audiences	1
1.2 Report structure	1
2 Context	2
2.1 Rationale	2
2.2 GPSDD's approach	2
2.3 GPSDD and the wider data for development ecosystem	3
2.4 GPSDD theory of change	3
3 Evaluation scope	5
3.1 Background and changes to the terms of reference	5
3.2 Evaluation scope	6
3.3 Evaluation questions	6
4 Evaluation design and methodology	7
4.1 Evaluation approach	7
4.2 Evaluation methods	8
4.3 Limitations	10
5 Findings and analysis	11
EQ1: To what extent are the activities and outputs of the GPSDD consistent with its stated goals and objectives? To what extent do the goals and objectives of the GPSDD triangulate with the needs and interests of its different target groups?	11
EQ2: What are GPSDD and other efforts (to improve the quality and availability of data to support the SDGs) well positioned to achieve, and why? To what extent do these efforts and GPSDD complement one another, and what has been the outcome of this complementarity?	12
EQ3: To what extent have the objectives of the GPSDD, as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks, been achieved? To what extent did the different GPSDD activities and outputs contribute to these results?	14
EQ4: How, and in which contexts, have different streams of work enabled GPSDD to deliver outputs and contribute to the achievement of objectives? Which streams of work have made the greatest, and least, contribution, and why?	18
EQ5: How does GPSDD's work at national, sectoral, regional and global levels contribute to the achievement of objectives?	21
EQ6: What are the main factors which have enabled or hindered GPSDD's contribution to the achievement of objectives as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks?	22
EQ7: What have been GPSDD's most important contributions to the data for development ecosystem? What have been the most important opportunities which the Secretariat could potentially have engaged with but did not?	23
EQ8: How effective are the different member engagement mechanisms used by GPSDD?	25

EQ9: How effective has the Secretariat been in advancing GPSDD objectives?	26
EQ10: How effective have GPSDD governance structures been in advancing GPSDD objectives?	28
6 Conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned	29
6.1 Conclusions	29
6.2 Recommendations	31
6.3 Lessons learned	34
Annex 1: 2017 GPSDD theory of change	36
Annex 2: Evaluation questions	37
Annex 3: Outcome descriptions	39
Annex 4: Detailed findings and analysis	48
EQ1: To what extent are the activities and outputs of the GPSDD consistent with its stated goals and objectives? To what extent do the goals and objectives of the GPSDD triangulate with the needs and interests of its different target groups?	48
EQ2: What are GPSDD and other efforts (to improve the quality and availability of data to support the SDGs) well positioned to achieve, and why? To what extent do these efforts and GPSDD complement one another, and what has been the outcome of this complementarity?	50
EQ3: To what extent have the objectives of the GPSDD, as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks, been achieved? To what extent did the different GPSDD activities and outputs contribute to these results?	53
EQ4: How, and in which contexts, have different streams of work enabled GPSDD to deliver outputs and contribute to the achievement of objectives? Which streams of work have made the greatest, and least, contribution, and why?	59
EQ5: How does GPSDD's work at national, sectoral, regional and global levels contribute to the achievement of objectives?	64
EQ6: What are the main factors which have enabled or hindered GPSDD's contribution to the achievement of objectives as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks?	68
EQ7: What have been GPSDD's most important contributions to the data for development ecosystem? What have been the most important opportunities which the Secretariat could potentially have engaged with but did not?	71
EQ8: How effective are the different member engagement mechanisms used by GPSDD?	76
EQ9: How effective has the Secretariat been in advancing GPSDD objectives?	78
EQ10: How effective have GPSDD governance structures been in advancing GPSDD objectives?	84
Annex 5: Strategy alignment review	88
Pre-2019 Strategy	88
2019-2023 Strategy	90
Annex 6: Sample for partner goals mapping exercise	91
Annex 7: Complementarity analysis sample	92
Annex 8: Responding to a pandemic	93
Annex 9: Internal operating workstreams	94
Annex 10: Organisational assessment rubric	95

List of acronyms

ADP	Accenture Development Partnerships
ARDC	Africa Regional Data Cube
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEPEI	<i>Centro de Pensamiento Estratégico Internacional</i> : Centre for International Strategic Thinking
CGD	Citizen Generated Data
CoG	Council of Governors
Covid-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil society organisations
DANE	National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia
DEA	Digital Earth Africa
DFAT	Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade
DFID	UK's Department for International Development (now part of FCDO)
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EQ	Evaluation questions
FCDO	UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
GIZ	<i>Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i> : German International Aid Agency
GPSDD	Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data
GSS	Ghanaian Statistical Service
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDC	Inclusive Data Charter
IEAG	UN Secretary-General's Independent Expert Advisory Group
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics and Geography (Mexico)
IPAR	Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rural
IR	Intermediate Result
KII	Key informant interviews
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean countries
NaDMO	National Disaster Management Organisation
NDPC	National Domestic Preparedness Consortium
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
RAIC	Right to Access Information Commission

RC	Resident Coordinator
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SME	Small and medium enterprises
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
ToC	Theory of change
UNECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive summary

Why we undertook the evaluation

The **purpose of the evaluation** was to assess the extent to which, and how, GPSDD has contributed to its stated outcomes and goals. The two **objectives for the evaluation** were to:

- Assess progress and implementation by assessing the relevance and effectiveness of GPSDD.
- Identify lessons learned and make recommendations for the future role and work of GPSDD.

As such, the **primary audiences** for the evaluation are the GPSDD Secretariat, the GPSDD Board, the Funders Group and the Evaluation Committee. The **secondary audiences** for the evaluation are GPSDD partners – namely global and national CSOs, governments and the private sector.

Introducing GPSDD and its role within the data for development ecosystem

In 2014, a year before world leaders adopted the SDGs, the United Nations Secretary-General’s Independent Expert Advisory Group (IEAG) on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development highlighted the need for the creation of a Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) as part of their report, *A World that Counts*.¹ GPSDD was created to tackle a set of formidable challenges: to mobilise and coordinate as many initiatives and institutions as possible to achieve the vision set out in *A World that Counts*, and to harness the potential of new technologies for sustainable and equitable development.

During the first five years of its operation, GPSDD’s theory of change and action has undergone multiple iterations. Each iteration involves a more confident and clearer articulation of GPSDD’s vision and value proposition. GPSDD’s overarching goal as set out in the 2019–23 strategy is to drive better decisions and better lives for all by facilitating the production, sharing and use of better data. GPSDD intends to achieve this goal through two related objectives: 1) more and better data is used to achieve the SDGs, and 2) more and better data is used to monitor the SDGs. Four intermediate results (IR1.1–1.3, IR2.1) are expected to contribute to the achievement of these objectives. Given the facilitative nature of GPSDD’s work, the change pathways from outputs to outcomes are dependent on a combination of mutually reinforcing and sometimes overlapping activities categorised as levers of change (supporting changemakers, creating incentives and developing learnings) and contributions from partners (skills, data, knowledge, resources).

Over the past five years, the partnership’s initial focus on data production and data gaps has given way to an emphasis on data use and how best to utilise data for sense-making and decision making.² In the same vein, GPSDD gradually shifted its attention from addressing complex technical problems, to issues that demanded a combination of technical expertise, advocacy and communication skills. One facet of GPSDD’s model, which has remained constant throughout the different iterations of its agenda, concerns its open and intensively participatory approach to collaboration.

Based on our review, GPSDD’s strategy appears to have been both broad and flexible enough to accommodate the needs and interests of the diverse target groups represented among its partners. Evidence from a desk-based mapping exercise, KIIs, and a partner survey clearly demonstrated that partners from a full range of sectors – academia/research, CSO/NGO, for-profit, government, multilateral – recognised the value of their contributions as delivered through the activities and outputs.

GPSDD occupies a unique place among global data for development actors, which has enabled the partnership to work with its peers in a complementary way. There is strong evidence from KIIs, triangulated by the results of a desk-based complementarity analysis, that GPSDD has established a niche for itself within the web of global actors.

¹ IEAG (November 2014). *A World that Counts: Mobilising the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development*

² GPSDD (September 2020). *A Global Movement for Better Data & Better Lives*

Stakeholders from three of GPSDD's partners (PARIS21, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and CEPEI³) were interviewed and they identified GPSDD's unique value in its function as a network to bring together organisations within the ecosystem which were not previously connected, particularly new or emerging data sources and technologies, and established or institutionalised stakeholders. GPSDD's involvement in the World Data Forum, both in terms of convening key actors, and in agenda setting, was cited as an example of the partnership leveraging its niche effectively.

GPSDD's contribution to the data for development ecosystem

GPSDD has made the biggest contribution to the way in which data is used to *achieve the SDGs* through helping partners utilise data in support of decision making (IR1.1); through the routine use of earth and satellite data in several countries under the ARDC and use of telecoms data as a result of the Ghana national data roadmap process. Other outcomes among those examined⁴ which have contributed to this intermediate result include the Inclusive Data Charter (IDC) initiative, co-established by GPSDD, which is contributing to increased availability of disaggregated data and a peer exchange between LAC and African countries which contributed to increased use of administrative data.

Important contributions made by GPSDD are evident in creating a global movement promoting responsible data use, building public trust, and showcasing pathways to success (IR1.2), including through advocacy and engagement among the group of IDC champions (including 11 global organisations), advocacy and engagement with the global Bern network resulting in a more inclusive strategic agenda, and the transition from ARDC to Digital Earth Africa (DEA) representing a step towards fostering a global movement. While GPSDD has made the fewest contributions to embedding standards of interoperability into global frameworks (IR1.3), the data interoperability guide⁵ supported by GPSDD is an important step towards achieving this, and specific country-level results to which it has contributed include supporting the Ministry of Health in Kenya adopting as official policy an interoperability framework, and within its support to the National Data Reporting Platform and the Data Quality Assurance Framework in Ghana. Many of these IR1.2 and IR1.3 contributions are at country or regional level and are steps towards meeting the global or 'at scale' ambition of the intermediate results and are therefore considered to have made a smaller contribution (compared to IR1.1) to the way in which data is used to *achieve* the SDGs relative to the global or at scale ambition of these intermediate results. Initiatives such as the work of the GPSDD/UNSC Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability have the potential, together with more policy advocacy, to better showcase results and accelerate progress towards this ambition.

GPSDD has made several notable contributions to the way data is used to *monitor the SDGs*, including through using satellite and earth observations data to monitor environmental indicators in several countries, and initiatives like the National Data Reporting platform in Ghana. Outcomes contributing to the use of timely and robust data for SDGs monitoring (IR2.1) include ARDC use cases (e.g. monitoring water quality, monitoring changes in mangrove swamps, monitoring crop performance and deforestation) and capability of the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia (DANE) to measure SDG indicator 11.3.1⁶ using geospatial data because of GPSDD brokering. GPSDD support to strengthening SDG monitoring through development of the National Data Reporting Platform and the Data Quality Assurance Framework in Ghana, in addition to project work to increase the availability of quality data, has also contributed to IR2.1. Initiatives such as Digital Earth Africa (DEA) into which the ARDC has transitioned, alongside other new ways of expanding country coverage, have the potential to scale the use of data for SDG monitoring.

Among the outcomes examined, there were two examples where the contribution from GPSDD led to a different outcome than identified in the outcome harvest. The evaluation examined GPSDD's work with DFID and UNICEF as

³ Centro de Pensamiento Estratégico Internacional: CEPEI is a think tank that works to promote dialogue, debate, knowledge and multi-stakeholder participation in global agendas on sustainable development.

⁴ Using Outcome Harvesting the evaluation team identified a list of 41 potential outcomes/interim changes of which we examined a sample of 23 in greater detail.

⁵ Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability (October 2018). *Data Interoperability: A Practitioner's Guide to Joining up Data in the Development Sector*.

⁶ Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate.

IDC champions and found that the two identified outcomes (DFID published a new disability strategy, UNICEF adjusted its priorities as a result of being an IDC champion) were not directly attributable to them having signed up to the IDC. Instead, signing up to the IDC has enabled DFID and UNICEF to signal the importance of inclusive data and emphasise relevant aspects of their work.

The evaluation evidence has demonstrated that all three levers of change play an important role in achieving results, and there is evidence among some outcomes of an effective interaction of all three – which builds on GPSDD’s consistent and agile approach in very complex environments. GPSDD’s work on supporting changemakers is most evident, with 13 of 14⁷ outcomes demonstrating evidence of support that fits within this lever of change – in particular related to its convening power. The creating incentives lever is least evident with evidence of support related to this lever in eight outcomes. Support which fits within the developing learnings lever was evident in nine outcomes. Among the outcomes examined, the ARDC and the Ghana national data roadmap show evidence of all three levers being used. For example, under the ARDC, GPSDD’s approach to *supporting changemakers* was key to identifying and working with the correct institutional champions and in developing the capacity of users within these institutions, whilst GPSDD’s advocacy and engagement skills helped *create incentives* for government institutions to buy in to the ARDC, and the DEA has been able to leverage ARDC achievements and learning (*developing learnings*).

The ARDC and the Ghana Roadmap Process have been the most important contributions made by GPSDD to the data for development ecosystem because of the level and scale of results achieved. Whilst many of GPSDD’s interventions are too recent to expect to have contributed to impact-level change, there is evidence that both the ARDC and the Ghana Roadmap process are contributing to change at the level of GPSDD’s strategic objectives.

Several respondents said that GPSDD could potentially have done more in the way of providing follow-up support. For example, several respondents highlighted that although the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange itself had been effectively organised, leading to improved collaboration, they felt that more thought could have been given to following up on the commitments and action plans made at the end of the event. Similarly, respondents involved in the peer exchange between LAC and African countries said that more could have been done to monitor the alliances that emerged from the peer exchange.

Respondents identified lessons learned from the ARDC’s transition into DEA which highlight the potential importance of initiatives graduating from GPSDD support in the right way. The evaluation has highlighted that, since the transition, African stakeholders believe they have been given less opportunity to contribute to, and influence, the project; primarily because of differences in organisational priorities and culture. According to one of these respondents, the DEA appears to have treated product development as a purely technical issue and is not investing sufficiently in knowledge transfer and localisation and is therefore not contributing to the building of national systems or capacities.

We have interpreted the convergence of enabling factors, or the package⁸, as GPSDD’s ability to build the foundations for and then place, the right⁹ message or insight, in a timely fashion, by the right means while deploying the right partner strength or contribution.¹⁰ GPSDD builds the enabling environment for this moment by helping establish the right level of interest and the right mix of stakeholders in a network. It effectively provides a multifaceted response in a complex and rapidly evolving sector.

The Secretariat has been highly effective in advancing GPSDD’s objectives. The Secretariat structure is agile, highly aligned to GPSDD’s shared values and has evolved as needs have arisen. Now, respondents request a further adaptation of the Secretariat’s operating model to align with the demand for scale-up in the current strategy. The

⁷ This includes only the outcomes which: a) were achieved during the lifetime of the current GPSDD strategy (in which the three levers of change are documented), b) demonstrate meaningful contributions to intermediate results, and c) GPSDD made a meaningful contribution towards.

⁸ The how and why GPSDD contributed with other actors.

⁹ Several respondents used the word ‘right’ when interviewed for the outcome harvest and the organisational assessment.

¹⁰ This assumes that partners make contributions in one of four ways: (a) **Bring data**: a variety of types of data (mobile, satellite, etc.) as well as datasets, (b) **Bring skills**: technical expertise on tools, methodologies, and systems that builds capacity, (c) **Share knowledge**: information in a variety of forms (papers, webinars, discussions, etc.) that support individual and collective learning, and (d) **Bring resources**: primarily financial investments, but also includes time and personnel investments to a defined data objective.

7S organisational assessment and the survey provide evidence¹¹ that GPSDD's credibility has been established. It occupies an important niche where it has access to resources and people that few in its ecosystem can match.

The most important factor determining the effectiveness of GPSDD and partner engagements is the open, responsive, collaborative and professional approach which GPSDD adopts – which is one of the packages of factors indicated above. Respondents working on ARDC-related outcomes highlighted GPSDD's willingness to invest time and effort in capacity building while others in Kenya and Ghana said their engagement with GPSDD was enabled by the enthusiasm and energy of GPSDD staff. Respondents who had been involved in the Ghana-Kenya peer exchange pointed towards the importance of GPSDD staff being based in-country as a part of this. Some believe there are opportunities for other initiatives (e.g. DEA) to learn lessons from this approach – to help provide greater opportunities for collaboration with African stakeholders.

GPSDD partners reported that there is a need for GPSDD to both scale up and to refresh its strategy, and to leverage connections in countries where it is harder to engage, to optimize the equitability of GPSDD's work. Several respondents interviewed mentioned that GPSDD should scale up and do more of the same. Specifically mentioned was that GPSDD should continue to use its network and to scale up influencing, convening and knowledge sharing and also the coordination of data for development actors. Across several interviews including with country partners, and members of GPSDD's governance structures, respondents mentioned that the current GPSDD strategy still does not focus enough on working with partners who have the 'weakest' levels of capacity or capability in using data for development.

GPSDD's ability to leverage partnerships, adopt an advisory role and catalyse change was brought to the fore during the pandemic in 2020. GPSDD adopted a new model which allowed an unprecedented delivery at scale and speed across African countries for the Data for Now programme. During this time, two key findings (agility of the Secretariat and need for scale-up) from the evaluation's organisational assessment were validated unexpectedly when the Covid-19 pandemic hit. GPSDD's work in partnerships with UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) on Data for Now demonstrated it is possible for GPSDD to deliver multiple new partnerships, at speed and in many different contexts, which meet demand. As yet, these new partnerships and their results have not been independently evaluated, nevertheless emerging evidence¹² suggests GPSDD with partners has supported the development of datahubs, participated in peer-to-peer exchanges and supported capacity building. Further, there is evidence that in a substantial number of the new countries GPSDD has worked successfully through the UN Resident Coordinator. This has emerged as a new and successful model to be added to GPSDD's mechanisms for engaging a broad range of stakeholders, across several contexts simultaneously. GPSDD believe that between April and October 2020 the "speed and scale of delivery was unprecedented".¹³

GPSDD's governance structures are, in the main, highly effective. Respondents state that the Board is a strong, robust function and the Secretariat is very effective and highly respected. Respondents are however actively looking for how the Secretariat can secure greater involvement from the TAG, collectively and individually. Findings validate that the political capital housed in the TAG, is underused. It is seen as part of the original governance model/in need of updating. The TAG is a group of expert individuals who have agreed to devote time to supporting GPSDD's work in different ways.

There are new and emerging challenges for GPSDD's governance as it achieves greater scale and impact: it needs a graduation strategy; there are trade-offs relating to efficiency vs style and approach, efficiency vs inclusivity in partnership and the application of ethics and principles in partnership. GPSDD's Board and Secretariat's ability to convene and sustain collaborating competitors is highly valued. As the Secretariat hones its value proposition, generates funding to support scale-up and is more effective in achieving scale through institutional linkages (regional to country) and influence, its governance structures need to keep pace.

GPSDD's regional and global-level initiatives have consistently been supported and facilitated by GPSDD's ability to convene space for multisectoral, multi-stakeholder partnerships at the national level especially through the

¹¹ Itad presentation of preliminary analysis paper in June 2020 and survey respondent assessment of GPSDD's organisational effectiveness.

¹² Reports, data stories and board learning papers provided by Secretariat to Itad team.

¹³ Covid-19 Response Board Learning paper

country roadmap processes. This linkage is not only unidirectional – there is also evidence that GPSDD’s regional initiatives reinforce country-level initiatives. Across multiple countries (Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ghana) there is an established change pathway that has emerged starting with engagement at a country level that leads to country-level relationships and governance structures that then provide a basis for that country’s engagement in GPSDD’s regional and global activities, particularly regarding the ARDC.

How GPSDD can build on progress in the future

This evaluation concludes positively about the role and effectiveness of GPSDD within the complex global system in spite of challenges. It seeks to respond to the surge of demand from interviewees for GPSDD to scale up, validated by a healthy and resilient organisational performance. As a partnership originating from the SDG discussions and with an influential Board and wider network, many could argue that GPSDD has an obligation and responsibility to do what is within its power to progress action over the next nine years.

Naturally, any scale-up comes with risks, however, the scale-up envisaged for GPSDD is one grounded emphatically in its shared values and institutional agility; a source of great internal strength for the Secretariat, reflected in its networks and partnerships. The scale-up would build on the current structure and not necessarily incur significant additional headcount. It would be catalysed by organically matching demand and supply within its networks and partners, for example, at the global level aligning action through a newly devised policy advocacy agenda amongst other initiatives. In essence, GPSDD needs to continue to do the work it does at the country level and smartly integrate new networks and partnerships to scale results. Three clusters of conclusions and recommendations emerge from the evaluative evidence presented above.

Cluster 1: Extending and scaling up contributions.	Cluster 2: Mobilising the network for scale-up.	Cluster 3: Documenting and applying learning.
<p>Policy advocacy is a good route to achieving change. Scale up level of ambition on policy advocacy work. Adopt a deliberate and concerted approach to policy advocacy that is both a pathway and an outcome.</p>	<p>Mobilising external data communities and the wider GPSDD network is critical to scale up. Scale by adopting new, cost effective ways of expanding country coverage by drawing on GPSDD’s core networking and brokering strengths.</p>	<p>Creating effective sustainable solutions is critical to scaling up. Document and apply learning in support of the policy advocacy agenda, scaling up country level results, improving the sustainability of interventions and making it possible for partners to self-serve.</p>
<p>GPSDD has made important contributions to all intermediate results set out in its current strategy – which is relevant and highly aligned to national, regional and global objectives. GPSDD is making important steps towards achieving a global or ‘at scale’ ambition, though this has not yet been achieved and the current strategy lacks specificity about how it will be achieved. The interplay between the levers of change and partner contributions within the ToC is clear, though there is scope to clarify the role of policy advocacy in bringing about change between the intermediate result and objective levels within the ToC.</p>	<p>A key strength and added value of GPSDD within the data for development sector lies in its ability to work on strategic objectives across the national, regional and global levels and the potential to transfer lessons emerging from activities on one level to others. Many of the countries with whom GPSDD has had a broad-based and sustained engagement have capable institutions and evident political will for reform. In addition to managing multiple models of engagement, a challenge for GPSDD going forward will be to find ways of reaching institutions in countries where this capability and political will is less evident to help ensure they are not left behind.</p>	<p>The Secretariat has established a niche for itself and leverages value for those working in the ecosystem because of its complementarity. It has the potential to generate learning at scale from this complementarity, not only about the technical initiatives it has supported, but also about the way it supports them. There is the potential for GPSDD to better leverage its niche at the global and regional levels to support the ecosystem to sustain progress already made and move towards global solutions for data use. There is a risk that, if interventions or initiatives do not ‘graduate’ from GPSDD in the right way, then the longer-term impact of GPSDD’s efforts could be diminished.</p>

Cluster 1: Extending and scaling up contributions.	Cluster 2: Mobilising the network for scale-up.	Cluster 3: Documenting and applying learning.
<p>Recommendation 1: Update the ToC to reflect policy advocacy as a critical mechanism for scale up at the regional and global level, then develop and implement a deliberate policy advocacy agenda with specific outcomes.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: Mobilise the GPSDD network in support of the policy advocacy agenda.</p> <p>Recommendation 3: Make (bounded) adjustments to the structure of the Secretariat to ensure it is properly aligned with the policy advocacy agenda and any associated strategy updates.</p>	<p>Recommendation 4: Emphasise GPSDD’s ability to leverage partnerships, adopt an advisory role and catalyse change (e.g. through work like Data for Now).</p> <p>Recommendation 5: Place an intentional focus on expanding institutional partnerships with organisations who have a country presence and a local comparative advantage that aligns with GPSDD’s multi-stakeholder brokering.</p>	<p>Recommendation 6: The Secretariat could consider ways to maintain and communicate a high-level mapping of partner initiatives against GPSDD’s objectives.</p> <p>Recommendation 7: Reflect on evidence and learning generated by the Secretariat to date and document the Secretariat’s most current understanding of how change happens with reference to the current ToC.</p> <p>Recommendation 8: Prepare a how-to guide on brokering, convening and supporting effective multi-stakeholder collaborations within the data for development ecosystem.</p> <p>Recommendation 9: Amplify the voices of DEA African stakeholders and help DEA management adopt a more responsive and collaborative approach.</p>

1 Introduction

This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation of Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) conducted by Itad between September 2019 and 2020. This report builds on an evaluability assessment conducted by Itad between October 2018 and May 2019, which looked at whether GPSDD was evaluable in both principle and practice, as well as the institutional context of the evaluation. An Evaluability Assessment Report was prepared in February 2019 and updated in July 2019.¹⁴ This evaluation is based on the Evaluation Design,¹⁵ completed in May 2019 and informed by the evaluability assessment.

1.1 Evaluation purpose, objectives and audiences

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which, and how, GPSDD has contributed to its stated outcomes and goals. The two objectives for the evaluation are to:

- Assess progress and implementation by assessing the relevance and effectiveness of GPSDD;
- Identify lessons learned and make recommendations for the future role and work of GPSDD.

As such, the **primary audiences** for the evaluation are the GPSDD Secretariat, the GPSDD Board, the Funders Group and the Evaluation Committee. These can be defined as decision makers who might directly use the evaluation report to inform future programming. These stakeholders have contributed to the design of this evaluation and have had a direct relationship with the evaluation team as it proceeded.

The **secondary audiences** for the evaluation are GPSDD partners – namely global and national CSOs, governments and the private sector. These can be defined as those who are not directly involved in decision making within GPSDD but who may be directly affected by decisions around future programming. These stakeholders will be consulted during the evaluation but will not have a direct relationship with the evaluation team.

The **tertiary audiences** for the evaluation are other actors in the data for development sphere who are not directly involved in GPSDD, but for whom the evaluation is relevant. These could include but are not limited to: UN organisations involved in data and statistics; other development agencies; and other private sector organisations involved in the data for development ecosystem.

1.2 Report structure

Section 2 outlines the evaluation context, provides background information of GPSDD and introduces the GPSDD theory of change (ToC). Section 3 explains the scope of the evaluation and any changes from the original terms of reference. Section 4 documents our approach to the evaluation and the methods and tools used. Section 5 presents the findings against the evaluation questions (EQs) and section 6 presents the evaluation's conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

¹⁴ Itad. (July 2019). *Evaluation of GPSDD: Evaluability assessment report*

¹⁵ Itad. (May 2019). *Evaluation of GPSDD: Evaluation design document*

2 Context

2.1 Rationale

GPSDD came into being as a result of the same process that created the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2014, a year before world leaders adopted the SDGs, the UN Secretary-General's Independent Expert Advisory Group (IEAG) on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development highlighted the need for the creation of a Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data as part of their report, *A World that Counts*.¹⁶

The IEAG perceived GPSDD's role as mobilising and coordinating global efforts so that the unfolding data revolution would directly support sustainable development. According to the IEAG, this was unlikely to happen organically, given that data gaps and disparities in data availability, access and use remained unaddressed despite the overall increase in the volume and types of data generated through new digital platforms and mobile networks.

A critical issue that the IEAG perhaps underplayed was that efforts to place data and evidence-based policy at the heart of sense-making and planning for the SDGs, could not solely focus on the emerging challenges posed by new technologies and new actors. To have any chance at success, these efforts also had to address longstanding issues, including but not limited to the diminished capacity of many national statistical offices, deep-rooted disparities in how different groups were represented in official statistics, and the multiple barriers to using data to inform decision making and public debate, to name only a few.

GPSDD was, therefore, created to tackle a set of formidable challenges: to help address problems that organisations like the UN Statistical Division (UNSD) had been trying to resolve for decades and to harness the potential of new technologies for sustainable and equitable development.

2.2 GPSDD's approach

During the first five years of its operation, GPSDD's theory of change and action has undergone multiple iterations. Each iteration involves a more confident and clearer articulation of GPSDD's vision and value proposition, including the values that underline GPSDD's approach to collaboration and innovation.

As mentioned in the report encapsulating the impact and lessons yielded by GPSDD during these first five formative years, the partnership's initial focus on data production and data gaps, gave way to an emphasis on data use, on how best to utilise data for sense-making and decision making.¹⁷

In the same vein, GPSDD gradually shifted its attention from addressing complex technical problems, to issues that demanded a combination of technical expertise, advocacy and communication skills. As shown in the five-year report, this approach of bringing together the technological and the political is exemplified by GPSDD's efforts to support champions for data and innovation within different country contexts.

Another aspect of its operation that GPSDD has sought to resolve over the years concerns the balance between facilitating and building connections within and beyond its partner network on the one hand and leading on project implementation on the other. Choosing one approach over the other is further complicated by the fact that GPSDD's ability to work at different levels, might in fact be a key strength rather than a weakness.

¹⁶ IEAG (November 2014). *A World that Counts: Mobilising the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development*

¹⁷ GPSDD. (September 2020). *A Global Movement for Better Data & Better Lives*

One facet of GPSDD’s model, which has remained constant throughout the different iterations of its agenda, concerns its open and intensively participatory approach to collaboration.

2.3 GPSDD and the wider data for development ecosystem

GPSDD has had to find its place within a complex and highly competitive sector. The place that GPSDD has created for itself appears to be a result of:

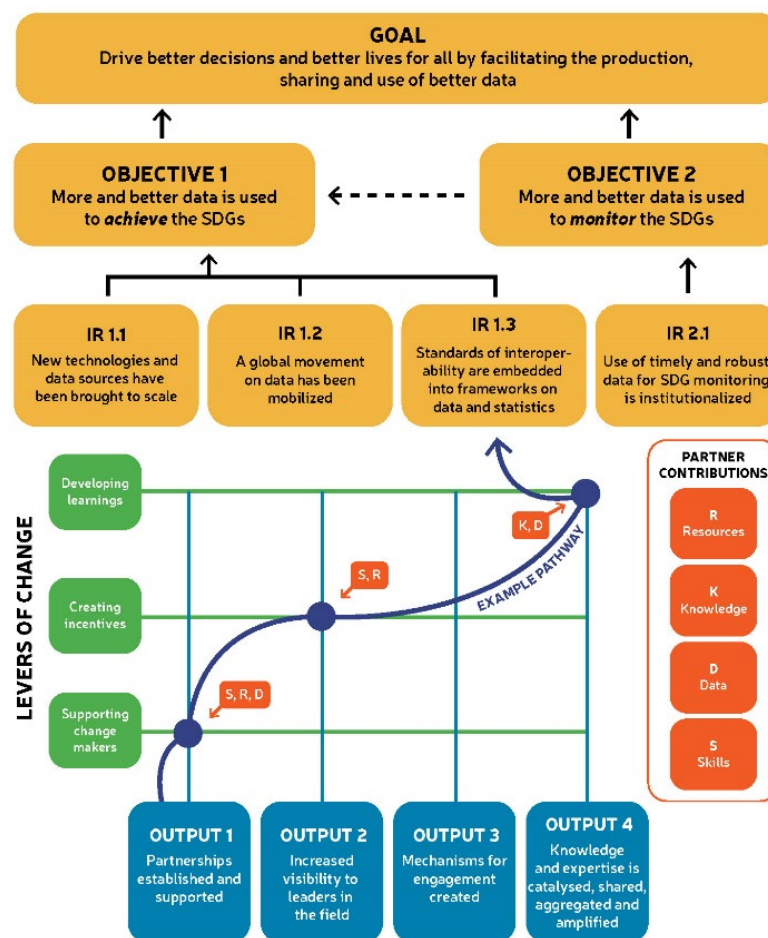
- Its capacity to work, create and sustain meaningful relationships across national, regional and global contexts and silos and to transfer lessons between contexts and silos.
- This function of GPSDD is illustrated by its capacity to connect traditional actors within the data for development ecosystems, such as governments and National Statistical Agencies, with emerging actors, such as telecom operators and civil society organisations involved in citizen-generated data collection efforts.
- Its approach to technical development that is grounded in advocacy and attention to real user needs and political change.
- Its values, evidenced by its ongoing collaborations, of co-creation.

2.4 GPSDD theory of change

After finalisation of the evaluation design in May 2019, members of the evaluation team worked with the GPSDD Secretariat to help further develop a GPSDD theory of change (ToC) to accompany the 2019–23 GPSDD strategy¹⁸ published in January 2019. A final version¹⁹ of the ToC was published in October 2019, the visual representation of which is set in in Figure 1.

GPSDD’s overarching goal as set out in the 2019–23 strategy and within the ToC is to **drive better decisions and better lives for all by facilitating the production, sharing and use of better data.** GPSDD intends to achieve this goal through two related

Figure 1: GPSDD ToC diagram 2019–23



¹⁸ GPSDD. (January 2019). *Five-Year Strategy 2019-2023*

¹⁹ GPSDD. (October 2019). *Theory of Change Narrative*

objectives: 1) **more and better data is used to achieve the SDGs**, and 2) **more and better data is used to monitor the SDGs**. Four **intermediate results** (IRs) are expected to contribute to the achievement of these objectives as follows:

- **IR1.1:** New technologies and data sources are scaled, building on existing systems, to improve government decision making.
- **IR 1.2:** A global movement is fostered of political, business and civil society leaders, promoting responsible data use, building public trust, and showcasing pathways to success.
- **IR 1.3:** Standards of interoperability are embedded into global frameworks on data and statistics, making progress towards a world where data interoperability is the norm.
- **IR 2.1:** The use of timely and robust data for SDGs monitoring is scaled so that by the halfway point to the SDGs, the world has a clear picture of progress on the Goals.

GPSDD's ToC is based on the fundamental logic that change is dynamic and non-linear. Given the facilitative nature of GPSDD's work, the change pathways from outputs to outcomes are dependent on a combination of mutually reinforcing and sometimes overlapping activities categorised as **levers of change** (supporting changemakers, creating incentives and developing learnings) and contributions from partners (skills, data, knowledge, resources). The initiatives or interventions which GPSDD supports will contribute to change at the outcome (intermediate result) level by supporting activities within one or more outputs that leverage one or more of the levers of change and crowd in (or activate) contributions or inputs from the partners.²⁰ The three levers of change are as follows:

- **Supporting changemakers:** We establish and support partnerships that help individuals and organisations achieve their objectives in strengthening enabling policies and data ecosystems.
- **Creating incentives:** We use our communications and advocacy expertise to provide visibility to leaders in the field, create mechanisms for engagement, and build coalitions for change, to promote innovation and investment in data.
- **Developing learnings:** We share, aggregate, and amplify our network's knowledge and expertise, so all partners can learn and show what can be done and how to do it.

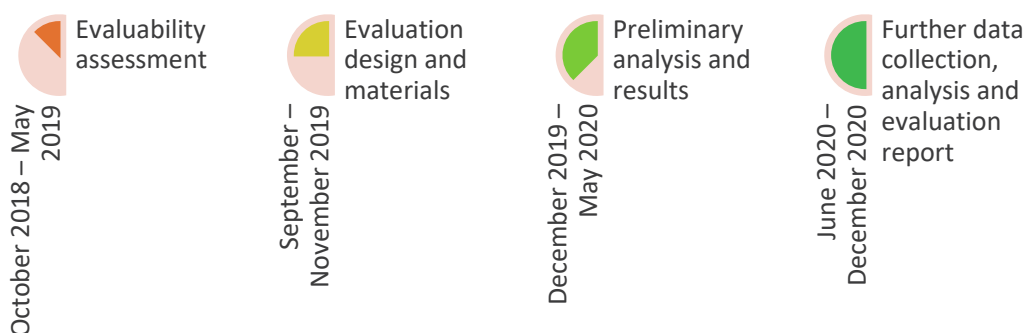
²⁰ Ibid

3 Evaluation scope

3.1 Background and changes to the terms of reference

Since GPSDD commissioned Itad to undertake this evaluation in 2018, the evaluation team have completed three phases of work and delivered three substantive deliverables (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Timeline of key deliverables



This final evaluation report represents the culmination of the previous work. Under the initial evaluability phase, the evaluation team assessed GPSDD’s evaluability in principle and practice and the institutional context in which the evaluation would be situated. This assessment concluded that GPSDD was evaluable in principle and practice, and that the operating context was supportive of an evaluation and identified the challenge of evaluating against two different theories of change. The evaluation team offered seven recommendations for GPSDD to implement to facilitate the fulfilment of the evaluation terms of reference. Full details of this assessment are given in the Evaluability Assessment Report.²¹

Following on from the evaluability assessment, the team provided an evaluation design document²² that details the approach, methods and limitations of the intended evaluation design, with an accompanying set of evaluation materials that included tools to be used for data collection. The design document has remained central to this evaluation’s implementation, and our approach and methods have remained in line with the design, with the exception of a small number of minor changes:

1. The evaluation design stated that we would assess outcomes against the ‘relevant’ theory of change depending on the timeframe for that activity: activities conducted prior to 2019 would be assessed against the original ToC (see Annex 1), and those since against the new ToC aligned to the 2019–23 strategy. This was trialled during the preliminary analysis and results phase but proved to be too complex and to serve little value, particularly as most outcomes examined straddled these periods. We have therefore primarily examined GPSDD’s contribution to changes in the data for development sector from the perspective of the current ToC.
2. The Covid-19 pandemic began mid-way through the evaluation’s preliminary data collection phase and has had a significant impact on the scale and focus of GPSDD’s operations through 2020. The evaluation team discussed at length how to ensure the evaluation’s utility in such a fast-changing environment and how to pivot methods and tools to ensure that the team could fulfil the evaluation’s objectives.

²¹ Itad. (July 2019). *Evaluation of GPSDD: Evaluability assessment report*

²² Itad. (May 2019). *Evaluation of GPSDD: Evaluability design document*

This resulted in a redesign of our sampling strategy and data being gathered from in-person key informant interviews (KIIs) to remote KIIs. The redesign of our sampling strategy was agreed with the Secretariat and the Evaluation Committee after the presentation of our preliminary results in May 2020. In summary, given restrictions on international travel, it was agreed that it would be more valuable to take a thematic cross section of outcomes, looking across multiple countries and geographies, replacing the original design sampling that used three country-based case studies. The sampling strategy agreed and used is detailed in the methods section below.

3.2 Evaluation scope

As outlined in the evaluation design, the scope for this evaluation is both summative and formative, with a primary focus on learning. The evaluation therefore reflected on the activities of GPSDD with the aim of generating learning and identifying the main trends in GPSDD achievement from 2016, in line with the evaluation's purpose and objectives, outlined above.

Specifically, results achieved prior to GPSDD's 2019–23 strategy are considered in terms of the extent to which they have provided a foundation for newer results, rather than for accountability purposes against the previous version of the ToC. While this report sometimes refers to the earlier ToC to contextualise an outcome, judgements about GPSDD's contribution are made only in reference to the current ToC (detailed in section 2.4 above). The 2017 ToC is included in Annex 1 for completeness and to help guide the reader when it is referred to in text.

3.3 Evaluation questions

To fulfil its objectives, the evaluation scrutinises GPSDD through 10 EQs which were refined and agreed with the Secretariat during the evaluability phase, presented below. A more detailed evaluation framework including sub-questions is provided in Annex 2.

GPSDD's role within the data for development ecosystem/landscape [Relevance]

1. To what extent are the activities and outputs of the GPSDD consistent with its stated goals and objectives? To what extent do the goals and objectives of the GPSDD triangulate with the needs and interests of its different target groups?
2. What are GPSDD and other efforts (to improve the quality and availability of data to support the SDGs) well positioned to achieve, and why? To what extent do these efforts and GPSDD complement one another, and what has been the outcome of this complementarity?

GPSDD's success as a partnership [Effectiveness]

3. To what extent have the objectives of the GPSDD, as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks, been achieved? To what extent did the different GPSDD activities and outputs contribute to these results?
4. How, and in which contexts, have different streams of work enabled GPSDD to deliver outputs and contribute to the achievement of objectives? Which streams of work have made the greatest, and least, contribution, and why?
5. How does GPSDD's work at national, sectoral, regional and global levels contribute to the achievement of objectives?
6. What are the main factors which have enabled or hindered GPSDD's contribution to the achievement of objectives as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks?

7. What have been GPSDD’s most important contributions to the data for development ecosystem? What have been the most important opportunities which the Secretariat could potentially have engaged with but did not?
8. How effective are the different member engagement mechanisms used by GPSDD?

GPSDD’s operational structure and approach [Efficiency]

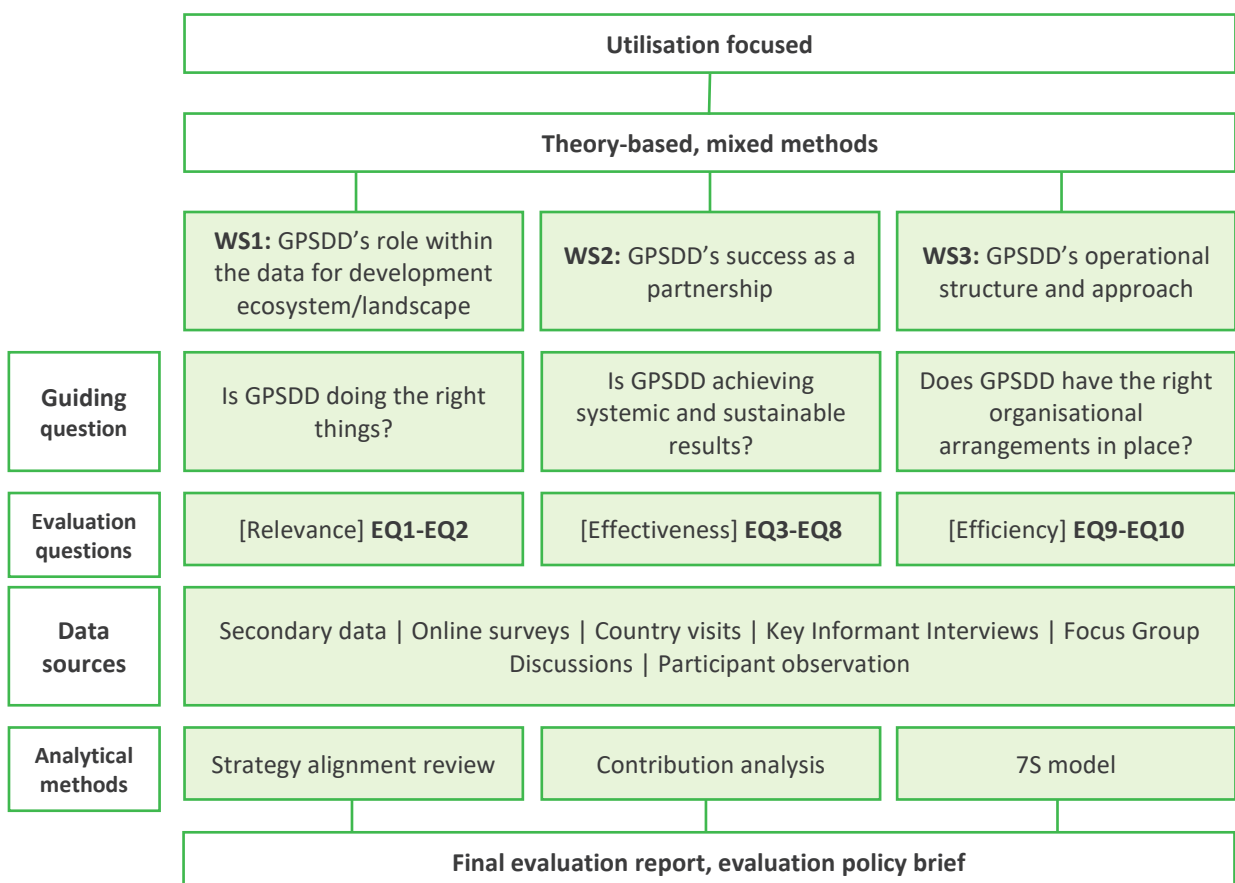
9. How effective has the Secretariat been in advancing GPSDD objectives?
10. How effective have GPSDD governance structures been in advancing GPSDD objectives?

4 Evaluation design and methodology

4.1 Evaluation approach

To answer the 10 EQs set out in the preceding section, we have implemented **three discrete, but interlinked workstreams that combine to form a theory-based, mixed methods approach to analysing GPSDD’s theory of change, as illustrated in figure 3 below.**

Figure 3: Evaluation approach



Workstream 1 examines GPSDD's role in the data for development ecosystem and in doing so responds to EQs 1 and 2. Workstream 2 scrutinises GPSDD's ToC and as such GPSDD's success as a partnership and in doing so responds to EQs 3–8. Lastly, workstream 3 assesses GPSDD's operational structure and approach and responds to EQs 9 and 10.

Across the three workstreams, we have used a **mix of analytical approaches** to answer the evaluation questions:

- A **strategic review** of GPSDD's position in the data for development ecosystem to understand the relevance of GPSDD's strategy to their goals, considering other actors in the space.
- A combination of **outcome harvesting** and **contribution analysis** to analyse GPSDD's contribution to realising its outcomes of interest.
- An organisational capacity assessment, based on the McKinsey **7S model**, to understand the ways in which GPSDD's structure and set-up supports work towards its goals.

In addition to drawing on secondary data sources, we have collected **primary data** through:

- **Key informant interviews** (KIIs) with a range of stakeholders including, among others, GPSDD Secretariat, GPSDD partners, representatives of GPSDD funders, Technical Advisory Group (TAG) representatives, and GPSDD Board members.
- **Online survey** of GPSDD Secretariat staff, partners and other stakeholders, designed to provide data for different EQs.

4.2 Evaluation methods

The key methods employed under each workstream are outlined below. More detailed descriptions of each workstream methods can be found in the relevant sections of the evaluation design document.²³ Any deviations from the methods set out in that design document are detailed below.

Workstream 1: GPSDD's role within the data for development ecosystem/landscape

Workstream 1 has been designed to answer **EQ1** and **EQ2**, examining the **relevance** of GPSDD and guided by the overarching question: *Is GPSDD doing the right things?*

Workstream 1 consisted of four main steps:

Step 1: The evaluation team mapped the main GPSDD interventions as documented in their workplans from 2017 onwards against the relevant logframe for the year that the activity took place to understand the appropriateness of GPSDD's activities to its strategic goals and objectives.

Step 2: We mapped the goals and the goals and objectives of a sample of GPSDD partners against those of GPSDD (in the 2019–23 GPSDD strategy) to understand how well triangulated they were with each other. To do this, we analysed documentation of 29 partners²⁴ of different types (academia/research, civil society organisations (CSO)/non-governmental organisations (NGO), multilateral organisations, government partners, for-profit). The sample for this mapping is shown at Annex 3.

Step 3: We then conducted a complementarity analysis, taking a sample of 20 partner organisations, and considering their mandate and scope within the data for development sector. This helped to build a picture of the ecosystem, in order to draw conclusions

²³ Itad. (May 2019). *Evaluation of GPSDD: Evaluability design document*

²⁴ A further seven were included in the sample excluded from the sample, as no strategy information was publicly available.

about GPSDD's relevance, and the extent to which it works in a complementary way with its partners.

Step 4: Having completed the complementarity analysis, gaps in the evidence base were identified. We therefore conducted a final step beyond the original evaluation design for workstream 1. KIIs were held with stakeholders from global and regional partners in the data for development sector to explore in more detail GPSDD's role, and the extent to which its work is harmonised with other major players. Evidence from interviews carried out as part of workstream 3 were then consulted to triangulate conclusions drawn.

Workstream 2: GPSDD's success as a partnership

Workstream 2 has been designed to answer **EQs 3–8**, examining the **effectiveness** of GPSDD and guided by the overarching question: *Is GPSDD achieving systemic and sustainable results?* This workstream included 5 steps:

Step 1: involved undertaking an outcome harvest and developing a database of outcomes to which there was credible evidence that GPSDD had contributed. To do this we undertook a structured literature review and carried out in-depth interviews with 10 Secretariat staff and analysed the results of these against a number of categories to develop the outcome database. This process identified **36 GPSDD outcomes**. An outcome was defined as change in policy, behaviour or practice, and aligns to contributions to the achievement of the intermediate results articulated in the GPSDD ToC.

Step 2: involved assembling the data and information collated during the outcome harvest against the relevant GPSDD ToC. To do this, we created visualisations of the causal pathways of relevant harvested outcomes for the different GPSDD-supported interventions, paying attention to the interplay of GPSDD workstreams and logframe outputs.

During this process, we differentiated between **21 outcomes**, where there is evidence that change has already occurred, and **24 interim changes** where a change has occurred but is not substantive enough to be considered an outcome, or where there is evidence of change beginning but not yet being established enough to be considered an outcome. The total number of changes is greater in this step as when we aligned each change to the ToCs, we split some of the original 36 outcomes into multiple individual changes that aligned to different parts of the ToC.

Step 3: we then assembled initial contribution stories against these outcomes in line with step 3 of the contribution analysis methodology explained in the evaluation design document. This combined the results of steps 1 and 2 with an analysis of partner survey responses to set out our initial understanding of GPSDD ToC change pathways. Importantly, this involved identifying the main weaknesses and gaps in the contribution story, and where it would be useful to collect additional evidence in subsequent steps. These initial contribution stories were reported in our preliminary analysis presentation in May 2020.

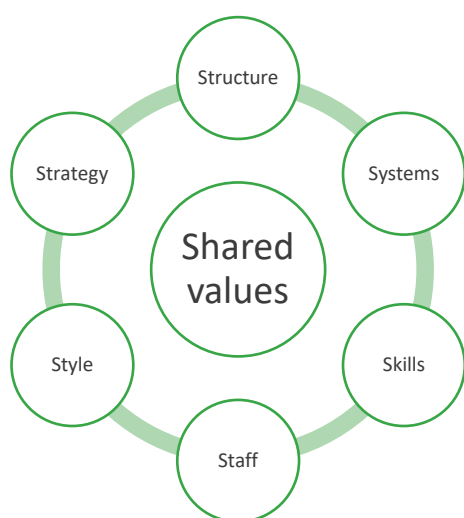
Step 4: after the presentation of our preliminary contribution stories, we agreed a sample of 23 outcomes/interim changes on which to focus on in more depth in the second phase of data collection. These are detailed in Annex 3. This step replaced the original design of the three country case studies, as explained in section 3.1 of this report that outlined changes to the terms of reference. The evaluation team then undertook further KIIs with GPSDD partners and other key stakeholder groups involved directly or indirectly in those outcomes in order to reiterate and refine the contribution stories.

Workstream 3: GPSDD’s operational structure and approach

Workstream 3 has been designed to answer **EQ9** and **EQ10**, examining the **efficiency** of GPSDD and guided by the overarching question: *Does GPSDD have the right organisational arrangements in place?*

We conducted 32 KIIs to provide the evidence base for our analysis under workstream 3. This included eight Board members, 14 members of the TAG and 10 members of the GPSDD Secretariat. We also undertook a document review and incorporated findings from the evaluation survey data to complete the analysis and triangulate the findings of the organisational capacity assessment.

We then used an adaptation of the McKinsey **7S model**¹ to understand the ways in which GPSDD’s structure and set-up supports work towards its goals.



The 7S model is designed to assess an organisation’s strategic position through the assessment of seven interrelated elements, centred around the organisations shared values, that should be aligned and reinforced in order to maximise an organisation’s effectiveness in achieving its goals. These are grouped into ‘hard’ elements: the organisation’s strategy, structure and systems and ‘soft’ elements: the organisation’s staff, skills and style. The scoring rubric for the 7S model is included at Annex 10.

4.3 Limitations

The primary limitation for this evaluation is the strength of evidence under certain outcome contribution stories for workstream 2. Two outcomes from the original sample were dropped due of lack of availability of stakeholders with institutional memory, and the intended outcome being delayed due to Covid-19. On a few other occasions, we were able to speak to some, but not all of the stakeholder groups that we intended to interview. Limitations to the evidence of each outcome contribution are summarised in Annex 3, which details all the outcome descriptions. The most significant of these was that we were unable to speak to anyone from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). As such, we have had to appropriately caveat our findings regarding outcomes in Kenya.

A second limitation of the evaluation is that the focus of the evaluation is biased towards GPSDD’s interventions in East and West Africa, as these are the countries that GPSDD have engaged in for the longest and therefore have made the most contributions to date. However, this is not intended to discredit the work that GPSDD is doing in Asia or particularly in Latin America where GPSDD has most recently scaled up its efforts.

Lastly, due to Covid-19, we have conducted all KIIs remotely. This can limit data collection as it is harder to establish a rapport and connectivity issues can limit interviews. The evaluation team took several mitigatory steps to ensure that there was minimal disruption to the evaluation data collection.

5 Findings and analysis

This section sets out the key findings and analysis against each of the evaluation questions. A more comprehensive set of findings and analysis for each EQ is included at Annex 4.

EQ1: To what extent are the activities and outputs of the GPSDD consistent with its stated goals and objectives? To what extent do the goals and objectives of the GPSDD triangulate with the needs and interests of its different target groups?

This section considers the extent to which GPSDD's activities and outputs are consistent with achieving the goals and objectives laid out in its strategy, before analysing the ways in which the organisation meets the needs of its diverse partners.

The ambition and scope of GPSDD's strategy was clear from evidence gathered in the organisational assessment.²⁵ The complex, rapidly evolving nature of the data for development sector is recognised in the current 2019–23 strategy and ToC, and the need for a multifaceted response is clearly articulated.²⁶ Analysis of GPSDD's planned activities and outputs over the last four years shows them to be highly relevant to the intermediate results that GPSDD has identified as key to achieving its long term strategic goals and objectives (see Box 1 below).²⁷ In the 2019 logframe, the 19 listed activities were aligned with at least two intermediate results in addition to the results they were primarily designed to address.²⁸ Care has been taken to design interventions and broker a space in a way that responds holistically to the multi-stakeholder contexts in which GPSDD operates.

Box 1. Current GPSDD intermediate results

IR1.1: New technologies and data sources are scaled, building on existing systems, to improve government decision making.

IR 1.2: A global movement is fostered of political, business and civil society leaders, promoting responsible data use, building public trust, and showcasing pathways to success.

IR 1.3: Standards of interoperability are embedded into global frameworks on data and statistics, making progress towards a world where data interoperability is the norm.

IR 2.1: The use of timely and robust data for SDGs monitoring is scaled so that by the halfway point to the SDGs, the world has a clear picture of progress on the Goals.

The levers of change, outlined in the current strategy and ToC, are an effective tool to ensure that different activities and outputs are mutually reinforcing. An additional element added to the 2019–23 strategy were the levers of change, mechanisms through which GPSDD aims to effect change. These three levers – supporting changemakers, creating incentives, and developing learnings – were well-aligned with the activities outlined in the 2019 logframe.²⁹ For all 19 activities, at least two levers were related to the work being carried out, helping to ensure that efforts in one area also contribute to other aspects of GPSDD's mandate.³⁰ One example of the levers of change in action³¹ is the 2019 Ghana-Kenya Peer Exchange³¹, where GPSDD drew on its networks to incentivise influential actors to come together and share

²⁵ See EQ9

²⁶ Indeed, the discussion of enabling and disabling factors draws this out – see EQ6

²⁷ See Strategy Alignment Review; Annex 5

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ See outcome 25

learning around key data for development topics, including citizen generated data. This is detailed further under EQ4.

Based on our review, GPSDD’s strategy appears to have been both broad and flexible enough to accommodate the needs and interests of the diverse target groups represented among its partners. Evidence from a desk-based mapping exercise, KIIs, and a partner survey clearly demonstrated that partners from a full range of sectors – academia/research, CSO/NGO, for-profit, government, multilateral – recognised the value of their contributions as delivered through the activities and outputs.³²

Nevertheless, some respondents believe an opportunity to refresh the strategy exists (see EQ7) and some Board and TAG respondents believe there is room for more ambition (see EQ 9).

EQ2: What are GPSDD and other efforts (to improve the quality and availability of data to support the SDGs) well positioned to achieve, and why? To what extent do these efforts and GPSDD complement one another, and what has been the outcome of this complementarity?

This section analyses the ways in which GPSDD is able to complement, rather than compete with, the work of other global actors within the data for development sector. It then considers the results emerging thus far from this complementarity, and the potential achievements of GPSDD and its partners going forward.

GPSDD occupies a unique place among global data for development actors, which has enabled the partnership to work with its peers in a complementary way. There is strong evidence from KIIs, triangulated by the results of a desk-based complementarity analysis,³³ that GPSDD has established a niche for itself within the web of global actors (See table 1 in EQ 2 at Annex 4).³⁴ Key stakeholders from PARIS21, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and CEPEI³⁵ identified GPSDD’s unique value in its function as a network to bring together organisations within the ecosystem which were not previously connected, particularly new or emerging data sources and technologies, and established or institutionalised stakeholders.³⁶ GPSDD’s involvement in the World Data Forum, both in terms of convening key actors, and in agenda setting, was cited as an example of the partnership leveraging its niche effectively.³⁷

GPSDD achieves and maintains complementarity when it effectively articulates its mandate and scope. In most instances, GPSDD can function in a way that complements

“GPSDD think about how data will be used globally for development and also they have access to literally everyone – from small community organisations to international governments. Therefore, if GPSDD calls, organisations will come. They have a certain credibility and standing because of that.”

WS3-KIIT7

³² Examples include WS1-KII1; WS1-KII3; O2-KII1; O2-KII2; O2-KII4; O3-KII1; O18&35&37-KII1; O18&35&37-KII3; O25-KII1. See methodology Section 4 for full details of the mapping exercise

³³ See methodology section 4 for full details of complementarity analysis

³⁴ Complementary analysis; WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; WS1-KII3

³⁵ *Centro de Pensamiento Estratégico Internacional*: CEPEI is a think tank that works to promote dialogue, debate, knowledge and multi-stakeholder participation in global agendas on sustainable development.

³⁶ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; WS1-KII3; WS3-KIIT3

³⁷ WS1-KII1

the work of other major global actors, largely due to consensus over the main goals of the data for development movement. Informants from other global initiatives³⁸ felt that the major actors, including GPSDD, are all aiming towards the same broad objectives,³⁹ with the SDGs acting as a framework within which to articulate both goals and contributions.⁴⁰ This effective complementarity was demonstrated during the Covid pandemic when GPSDD honed its value proposition and successfully engaged new partners (please see EQ 9).

Elements of GPSDD’s organisational culture – the value placed on relationship building, its strategic approach, its effective leadership – have been important enablers of this complementarity. The ability of the Secretariat to articulate the organisation’s mandate and scope was highlighted as important, particularly in the early stages of GPSDD’s development.⁴¹ This allowed GPSDD to overcome some initial unease from official statistics actors about the partnership’s role, and to establish its value.⁴² GPSDD’s strategic overview of the data value chain, and its multifaceted, holistic responses to partner needs give them an awareness of where their niche should be, and the flexibility to adapt accordingly.⁴³ This finding is validated in the organisational assessment discussed under EQs 9 and 10.

GPSDD’s ability to work in a complementary way has been a key factor in developing high-level initiatives, including the Data for Now Initiative, and the Inclusive Data Charter (IDC). It has also contributed to the establishment of a new regional operating model in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), through CEPEI.

This positions GPSDD and its global peers well to encourage and embed the use of new data sources and technologies in official statistical systems, and to promote the responsible involvement of private sector actors. There was a strong sense from key informants that GPSDD will be increasingly able to leverage its links with new and emerging data actors to encourage and embed the use of new data sources and technologies as a tool within official statistics systems, as well to address the challenge of making them sustainable in low-income settings.⁴⁴ The collaboration with UNSD was identified as a means to scale up work to improve the quality and availability of data.⁴⁵ CEPEI’s experience and contacts within the official statistics community in LAC was also highlighted as an enabler of potential change in that region.⁴⁶

³⁸ PARIS21; UNSD

³⁹ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2

⁴⁰ WS1-KII1

⁴¹ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII3

⁴² WS1-KII1

⁴³ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII3; WS3-KIIB4; See also EQ9 – to what extent are the skills, staff and style of GPSDD aligned with its values?

⁴⁴ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; WS3-KIIT7

⁴⁵ WS1-KII1

⁴⁶ WS1-KII3

EQ3: To what extent have the objectives of the GPSDD, as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks, been achieved? To what extent did the different GPSDD activities and outputs contribute to these results?

This section sets out to what extent GPSDD has contributed to each of the intermediate results set out in the current strategy and ToC (see section 4), and through which interventions or initiatives these contributions have been made. Boxes 2-5 set out how outcomes, among those examined, have contributed to these intermediate results. The findings in this section are based on an analysis of KIIIs and documents associated with the sample of outcomes selected from the outcome harvest (see section 4).

GPSDD has made the biggest contribution to the way in which data is used to *achieve the SDGs* through helping partners utilise data in support of decision making (IR1.1); particularly through the routine use of earth and satellite data in several countries under the ARDC and use of telecoms data as a result of the Ghana national data roadmap process. Important contributions made by GPSDD are evident in creating a global movement promoting responsible data use, building public trust, and showcasing pathways to success (IR1.2; e.g. through advocacy and engagement among the group of IDC champions – including 11 global organisations), and embedding standards of interoperability into global frameworks (IR1.3; e.g. the Ministry of Health in Kenya adopting as official policy an interoperability framework). Many of these IR1.2 and IR1.3 contributions are at country or regional level and are steps towards meeting the global or ‘at scale’ ambition of the intermediate results and are therefore considered to have made the smallest contribution to the way in which data is used to *achieve* the SDGs relative to the global or at scale ambition of these intermediate results. Initiatives such as the work of the GPSDD/UNSC Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability have the potential, together with more policy advocacy, to better showcase results and accelerate progress towards this ambition.

“I know they really helped us in organising, by bringing in experts from other countries to come and speak to issues on administrative data and how Ghana should look at the SDGs which has led us into a lot of projects that we are currently running.”

O18&35&37-KII3

GPSDD has made a number of notable contributions to the way data is used to *monitor the SDGs*, including through using satellite and earth observations data to monitor environmental indicators in several countries, and initiatives like the National Data Reporting platform in Ghana. Outcomes contributing to the use of timely and robust data for SDGs monitoring (IR2.1) include ARDC use cases (e.g. monitoring water quality, monitoring changes in mangrove swamps, monitoring crop performance and deforestation) and capability of the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia (DANE) to measure SDG indicator 11.3.1⁴⁷ using geospatial data as a result of GPSDD brokering. The Ghana national data roadmap process has contributed to strengthening SDG monitoring through development of the National Data Reporting Platform and the Data Quality Assurance Framework, in addition to project work to increase the availability of quality data. Initiatives such as Digital Earth Africa (DEA) into which the ARDC has transitioned, alongside other new ways of expanding country coverage, have the potential to scale the use of data for SDG monitoring.

GPSDD appears to have made the greatest contribution to helping improve government decision making (IR1.1) and there are several examples among the outcomes examined

⁴⁷ Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate

where new technologies and data sources have been scaled (see Box 2). For example, the Africa Regional Data Cube (ARDC)⁴⁸ is now established as a key tool within supported countries and its successful transition into the Digital Earth Africa (DEA)⁴⁹ initiative is enabling a significant scale-up of ARDC technology in support of government decision making across the whole of Africa.⁵⁰ GPSDD's work on the IDC is contributing to increased availability of disaggregated data, though among the outcomes examined this has been as an advocacy and engagement tool, as opposed to directly influencing the work of associated IDC champions.⁵¹

Other country specific examples include the Ghana data roadmap process⁵² through which GPSDD brokering between stakeholders has resulted in telecoms data being used for a range of purposes, and the adoption as official policy of the Kenyan Ministry of Health's interoperability framework – which sets out how health data should be combined to aid government decision making.⁵³ Peer exchange initiatives are helping supported countries access and share resources, tools, best practices and experiences related to the use of administrative data.⁵⁴

Box 2. Summary of how the outcomes examined have contributed to IR1.1

IR1.1: New technologies and data sources are scaled, building on existing systems, to improve government decision making.

- GPSDD support for the **ARDC** has contributed to this result through: a) the routine use of earth and satellite data to inform Government practice and decision making in Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone (from which key informants⁵⁵ were interviewed), and b) contributing towards institutionalising the use of satellite and earth observations data in Ghana and Sierra Leone.
- GPSDD has helped improve government decision making through its **brokering of a collaboration between GSS, Vodafone Ghana, and Flowminder**, linked to the Ghana national data roadmap process, which has enabled telecoms data to be used, among other things, by the National Disaster Management Organisation (NaDMO) in support of an early warning system for disaster response.⁵⁶
- The **IDC initiative** co-established by GPSDD has helped IDC champions DFID and UNICEF signal the importance of inclusive data and emphasise relevant aspects of their work.⁵⁷ In the case of DFID, signing up to the IDC allowed them to advocate for inclusive data and influence others in a way they do not believe would have been possible otherwise.
- A **peer exchange between LAC and African countries**⁵⁸ organised by GPSDD in collaboration with others⁵⁹ has led to several regional results, including inter-country sharing of experiences and lessons learned related to the use of administrative data,⁶⁰ and the establishment of an administrative data collaborative.⁶¹

⁴⁸ See outcomes 2, 4 and 42

⁴⁹ See outcome 3

⁵⁰ O3-KII1, O3-KII2, and O3-KII3

⁵¹ See outcomes 21 (DFID publishing a new disability strategy) and 51 (UNICEF pushing for initiatives such as an administrative data maturity mode and country-level data action plans)

⁵² See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

⁵³ See outcome 24

⁵⁴ See outcomes 25 and 26

⁵⁵ O2-KII1, O2-KII2, O2-KII3 and O2-KII4

⁵⁶ O18&35&37-KII1 and O18&35&37-KII3

⁵⁷ O21&51-KII1 and O21&51-KII2

⁵⁸ See outcome 26

⁵⁹ CEPEI, the Mexican National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) and the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB)

⁶⁰ O26-KII1

⁶¹ O26-KII2

Among the outcomes examined, GPSDD’s work has contributed to building connections between different types of stakeholders (IR1.2 – see Box 3) and improved interoperability (IR1.3 – see Box 4) though primarily at country level thus steps towards the global ambition of the intermediate results (e.g. a global movement, and global frameworks). While the IDC initiative and the improved coordination among data funders within the multi-stakeholder Bern network⁶² are outcomes to which GPSDD has contributed significantly and which are helping to foster a global movement (IR1.2), other contributions have delivered results primarily at the country level. For example, the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange, as part of the data roadmap process in Ghana and the building or strengthening of connections between in-country stakeholders and institutions.⁶³ Other regional outcomes which represent steps towards the fostering of a global movement include the transition of the ARDC into the DEA, and partnerships and cooperation between countries around administrative data arising from the Latin American, Caribbean and African peer exchange.⁶⁴

“I think for an organisation that is as small and as resource strapped as GPSDD is, you need to bank those successes and milk them for everything they’re worth.”

O21&51-KII2

Box 3. Summary of how the outcomes examined have contributed to IR1.2

IR 1.2: A global movement is fostered of political, business and civil society leaders, promoting responsible data use, building public trust, and showcasing pathways to success.

- A **peer exchange between Ghana and Kenya** organised by GPSDD,⁶⁵ focused on exchanging lessons around SDG monitoring, has contributed to this result by improving connections and boosting collaboration between key government and civil society stakeholders.
- The transition from **ARDC to DEA**⁶⁶ represents a step towards fostering a global movement through enabling a pan-African focus on democratising access to quality earth observations.
- Within the **Ghana national data roadmap process**,⁶⁷ the extensive work done by GPSDD to broker/promote relevant and productive partnerships between GSS and key players in the data for development sector contributes to this result.
- GPSDD’s advocacy and engagement with the **Bern network**⁶⁸ resulted in a broader and more inclusive strategic agenda which draws on the comparative advantage of the global network.
- The diversity of **IDC**⁶⁹ champions (9 governments and 11 global organisations) and the advocacy and engagement taking place within the group is helping foster a global movement around inclusive data.

While GPSDD has made the fewest contributions to embedding standards of interoperability into global frameworks (IR1.3), the data interoperability guide⁷⁰ supported by GPSDD is an important step towards achieving this, and has helped influence, among the outcomes examined, one regional and two country-level interoperability results. The guide is now being

⁶² See outcome 13

⁶³ See outcome 25

⁶⁴ See outcome 26

⁶⁵ See outcome 25

⁶⁶ See outcome 3

⁶⁷ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

⁶⁸ See outcome 13

⁶⁹ See outcomes 21 and 51

⁷⁰ Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability (October 2018). *Data Interoperability: A Practitioner’s Guide to Joining up Data in the Development Sector*

institutionalised through UNSC and members of the Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability (e.g. Mexico and Columbia) are in the process of using the guide to make changes to national systems – including with a view to refining the guide in response. In addition to contributions made by the Ghana National Data Roadmap process, GPSDD has supported development of a health interoperability framework in Kenya and also through the LAC–Africa peer exchange.

Box 4. Summary of how the outcomes examined have contributed to IR1.3

IR 1.3: Standards of interoperability are embedded into global frameworks on data and statistics, making progress towards a world where data interoperability is the norm.

- Building on earlier work undertaken by USAID, GPSDD helped the Ministry of Health in Kenya finalise and adopt as official policy an **interoperability framework**⁷¹, which also sets out how data from different systems can be combined to better aid planning and decision making (IR1.2). This work was informed by the interoperability guide launched by the Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability (co-convened by GPSDD and the UNSD).
- The **LAC peer exchange**⁷² generated interest among participating countries to deepen knowledge on methodologies and data management to strengthen interoperability and led to a webinar⁷³ focusing on interoperability - organised by GPSDD and UNSD.
- GPSDD support to the development of the **National Data Reporting Platform** and the **Data Quality Assurance Framework**, linked to the Ghana national data roadmap process⁷⁴, has made a modest contribution to improved standards of interoperability.

As a result of GPSDD support, several countries have strengthened their capability to monitor the SDGs (IR2.1) among the outcomes examined, as a result of the ARDC and the Ghana National Data Roadmap process (see Box 5). GPSDD’s work on the ARDC has contributed to scaling the use of timely and robust data in several ways, through its application, underpinned by appropriate governance arrangements, which is being scaled up through its transition into DEA. In Ghana, development of the National Data Reporting Platform and the Data Quality Assurance Framework have contributed to scaling up robust data for SDG monitoring.⁷⁵ Although achieved in 2017, prior to the publication of the current 2019–23 strategy, a GPSDD brokered collaboration resulted in the Department of Statistics of Colombia (DANE) using geospatial data to measure an SDG indicator.⁷⁶

Box 5. Summary of how the outcomes examined have contributed to IR2.1

IR 2.1: The use of timely and robust data for SDGs monitoring is scaled so that by the halfway point to the SDGs, the world has a clear picture of progress on the Goals.

- GPSDD worked with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and GIZ to develop guidelines for improving the quality **Citizen Generated Data (CGD)**, informed by a global guide⁷⁷ prepared by GPSDD’s CGD Task group.

⁷¹ See outcome 24

⁷² See outcome 26

⁷³ <http://cepei.org/en/eventos/webinar-interoperability-a-bridge-to-strengthen-data-and-achieve-the-sdgs/>

⁷⁴ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

⁷⁵ See outcome 35

⁷⁶ See outcome 32

⁷⁷ GPSDD. (2019). *Choosing and engaging with citizen generated data*

- **ARDC** use cases⁷⁸ such as monitoring water quality in Ghana, monitoring changes in mangrove swamps over time in Sierra Leona, and monitoring crop performance and deforestation in Senegal are directly contributing to SDG monitoring.⁷⁹
- Under the Ghana national data roadmap process⁸⁰, the development of the **National Data Reporting Platform** and the **Data Quality Assurance Framework**, in addition to project work to increase the availability of quality data has contributed to this result.
- The **peer exchange between Ghana and Kenya**⁸¹ led to a high-level meeting with Council of Governors (CoG) and KNBS, where they were able to agree on a way forward for the development of norms and standards for data collection – which then fed into development of the Kenya CGD guidelines.
- GPSDD brokered a **collaboration between National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia (DANE) other Columbian stakeholders and expert partners (NASA and Google Earth Engine)**, which resulted in DANE developing the capability to measure SDG indicator 11.3.1⁸² using geospatial data.⁸³

EQ4: How, and in which contexts, have different streams of work enabled GPSDD to deliver outputs and contribute to the achievement of objectives? Which streams of work have made the greatest, and least, contribution, and why?

This section examines how, and in what contexts, the levers of change (streams of work) which GPSDD employs (see GPSDD’s ToC in section 4) have enabled GPSDD to deliver results within the outcomes examined. Boxes 6-8 sets out how selective examples of GPSDD’s work falls within these levers of change. We also examine how the GPSDD Secretariat has identified and responded to evidence and learning within the outcomes examined.

The evaluation evidence has demonstrated that all three levers of change play an important role in achieving results, and there is evidence among some outcomes of an effective interaction of all three – which builds on GPSDD’s consistent and agile approach in very complex environments. GPSDD’s work on supporting changemakers is most evident, with 13 of 14⁸⁴ outcomes demonstrating evidence of support that fits within this lever of change – especially related to its convening power. The creating incentives lever is least evident with evidence of support related to this lever in eight outcomes. Support which fits within the developing learnings lever was evident in nine outcomes. Selected examples of how these levers of change have supported achievement of results are set out in Boxes 6-8. Among the outcomes examined, the ARDC and the Ghana national data roadmap show evidence of all three

“GPSDD is crucial in making those connections and relationships and figuring out who to interact with, who are the proper stakeholders ... I see their job as being fantastic facilitators and establishing global partnerships. That’s what they do, and I think they do a really good job of it.”

O3-K111

⁷⁸ See outcome 2

⁷⁹ See outcomes 4 and 42.

⁸⁰ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

⁸¹ See outcome 25

⁸² Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate

⁸³ See outcome 32

⁸⁴ This includes only the outcomes which: a) were achieved during the lifetime of the current GPSDD strategy (in which the three levers of change are documented), b) demonstrate meaningful contributions to intermediate results, and c) GPSDD made a meaningful contribution towards.

levers being used. For example, under the ARDC, GPSDD's approach to *supporting changemakers* was key to identifying and working with the correct institutional champions and in developing the capacity of users within these institutions, whilst GPSDD's advocacy and engagement skills helped *create incentives* for government institutions to buy in to the ARDC, and the DEA has been able to leverage ARDC achievements and learning (*developing learnings*).

GPSDD's approach to supporting changemakers is underpinned by its ability to bring together diverse groupings of individuals from a range of backgrounds; with this lever of change being evident in most of the outcomes examined (see Box 6). GPSDD's efforts to establish and support partnerships was evident at country, regional and global levels (e.g. through country roadmap processes, the ARDC, peer exchanges, strengthening enabling policies, and the IDC). Respondents associated with several outcomes said how important GPSDD's convening power was. An integral part of GPSDD's approach to collaboration is the emphasis that GPSDD staff place on co-creation of project goals, activities and outputs, through the ongoing engagement of key stakeholders.

Box 6. Selective examples of how GPSDD is deploying its supporting changemakers lever of change

Supporting changemakers: We establish and support partnerships that help individuals and organisations achieve their objectives in strengthening enabling policies and data ecosystems.

- GPSDD's open and flexible approach to supporting changemakers was key to identifying and working with the correct **ARDC**⁸⁵ institutional champions and in developing the capacity of users within these institutions. In Ghana and Sierra Leone, GPSDD's investment in building connections and advocacy and engagement prior to 2019 were vital to generating political will, and in finding the right institutions and stakeholders to support.
- Within the **Ghana roadmap process**,⁸⁶ GPSDD have supported changemakers through their significant investment in supporting key players and institutions such as the GSS and the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC).
- GPSDD's convening power appears to have been an integral factor in the timely development of the **IDC**,⁸⁷ including through their ability to bring together different stakeholder groups.
- Respondents in Kenya highlighted the importance of GPSDD's support to convene and build consensus on key priorities across a diverse range of government stakeholders as being an important factor in the successful development of the **Kenya interoperability framework**.⁸⁸

GPSDD's work around creating incentives has contributed to results and these are most evident at country level (e.g. through country roadmap processes and the ARDC – see Box 7). This lever of change was evident in the fewest number of outcomes; potentially due to the challenge of tracing linkages between GPSDD's communications and advocacy work to specific results. There are examples of how GPSDD has supported the creation of incentives through its experience in advocacy and capacity for influencing, including in support of greater global investment in data (e.g. via the DEA and the Bern Network) and innovations at country levels (e.g. Citizen Generated Data (CGD) in Kenya, and through new partnerships in Ghana).

⁸⁵ See outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 42

⁸⁶ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

⁸⁷ See outcomes 21 and 51

⁸⁸ See outcome 24

Box 7. Selective examples of how GPSDD is applying its creating incentives lever of change

Creating incentives: We use our communications and advocacy expertise to provide visibility to leaders in the field, create mechanisms for engagement, and build coalitions for change, to promote innovation and investment in data.

- GPSDD’s advocacy and engagement skills helped create incentives for government institutions to buy in to the ARDC⁸⁹ and have underpinned its **transition into the DEA**. GPSDD helped establish a coalition⁹⁰ for the DEA which was able to leverage the political will and networks of the ARDC, and those of the Australian Geoscience Data Cube, to crowd in investment from the Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Helmsley Trust.
- Within the Ghana roadmap process⁹¹, GPSDD has helped create incentives for engagement by supporting the development of frameworks and projects with clear policy/real-world applications (**National Data Reporting Platform** and the **Data Quality Assurance Framework**), facilitating/brokering valuable partnerships and helping generate high-level political support.
- Respondents highlighted the importance of GPSDD’s experience in global advocacy and capacity for influencing and communication in helping the Bern network reach high-level decision makers with the right message during preparation of the **Bern Network’s five-point action agenda**⁹².
- Together with GIZ, GPSDD’s support to the development of **Kenyan specific CGD guidelines**⁹³ built a coalition for change among CSOs and the KNBS, whose agendas were less than aligned, through building buy-in and working to strengthen trust among stakeholders.

There are many examples of where GPSDD has facilitated the documentation and sharing of knowledge and learning, particularly through peer exchanges, webinars and sessions/side-events at international forums (see Box 8). Through initiatives like the IDC and the administrative data collaborative, and nurturing the ARDC–DEA transition, GPSDD has leveraged the knowledge and expertise of its network.

The GPSDD Secretariat is clearly learning-oriented and in recent years has stepped up its investment in documenting and sharing learning; and in adjusting its strategies in response.

Among the outcomes examined there are some examples of where the Secretariat has adjusted its approach to specific interventions in response to learning. Respondents from Ghana and Senegal highlighted how GPSDD had responded to feedback on technical issues and limitations on the ARDC tool. In the case of the IDC, the Secretariat is in the process of preparing a new three-year strategy for the IDC, drawing on evidence and lessons documented from the IDC champions two-year anniversary learning event held in July 2020.

However, the interaction of the levers of change with a policy advocacy pathway is at best implicit. It is currently unclear how the levers interact and use policy advocacy tactics to achieve for example, the intermediate result of a global movement.

⁸⁹ See outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 42

⁹⁰ Including NASA, Amazon Web Services, UNECA, DFAT Australia and The Helmsley Trust

⁹¹ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

⁹² See outcome 13

⁹³ See outcome 15

Box 8. Selective examples of how GPSDD is applying its developing learnings lever of change

Developing learnings: We share, aggregate and amplify our network’s knowledge and expertise, so all partners can learn and show what can be done and how to do it.

- GPSDD has shared, aggregated and applied the knowledge and networks built up through the **ARDC**⁹⁴ into a continental-wide operational service on earth observation data in the form of the **DEA**. There was a clear consensus that the use cases developed in the five ARDC countries had a significant impact in demonstrating applications of satellite and earth observations data for development objectives.
- GPSDD’s efforts to connect institutions in country to specialist partner organisations (**GSS, Vodafone Ghana, and Flowminder**) and foster collaborations to develop new, innovative sources of/uses for data are examples of where it has helped develop learning under the Ghana roadmap process.⁹⁵
- Among the outcomes examined, the **Ghana-Kenya**⁹⁶ and **LAC peer exchanges**⁹⁷ embody the developing learnings lever, with the former aiming to “enable in-depth learning and provide participants with the opportunity to develop hands-on knowledge and skills”⁹⁸ and the latter allowed participants to share their experiences and lessons learned related to the use of administrative data.

EQ5: How does GPSDD’s work at national, sectoral, regional and global levels contribute to the achievement of objectives?

This section considers the global, regional and national levels of GPSDD’s work and how interventions at these different levels interact with each other and influence each other to contribute to change. Specifically, this section questions the extent to which GPSDD’s global-level work has an impact at the country level and vice versa and whether these activities are mutually reinforcing. This section focuses in on examples from Ghana, as the country with the greatest representation of GPSDD’s work at different levels within our outcome sample.

In its first five years, GPSDD has established effective linkages between its work at country, regional and global and levels which amplifies and reinforces country-level initiatives and their contribution to GPSDD’s strategic objectives. Among the outcomes examined in several countries,⁹⁹ there is an established change pathway that has emerged starting with engagement at a country level that leads to country-level relationships and governance structures that then provide a basis for that country’s engagement in GPSDD’s regional and global activities. For example, Statistics Sierra Leone participated in the World Data Forum and took part in peer exchanges after engaging with GPSDD on country-level activities, whilst the national roadmap process in Ghana has underpinned GSS’s involvement in the Open Data Charter, Data for Development Festival, and peer exchanges.

GPSDD’s ability to bring together a broad range of multi-level stakeholders has been critical in the achievement of its national and regional-level objectives and in facilitating

“What I have seen now is a stronger coordination or collaboration between NDPC and the GSS, which originally wasn’t as strong as it is now... the two institutions are speaking to each other more... And this, I would say is because we ... brought these two institutions together... through the Ghana Kenya exchange.”

O25-KII2

⁹⁴ See outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 42

⁹⁵ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

⁹⁶ See outcome 25

⁹⁷ See outcome 26

⁹⁸ GIZ (2019). *Ghana and Kenya Peer-to-Peer Learning Exchange on SDG Monitoring: Summary Report*

⁹⁹ Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ghana

the sharing of lessons and linkages between work at these different levels, particularly through learning events such as peer-to-peer exchanges and the documentation and sharing of lessons from country-level use cases GPSDD's technical initiatives.

In-country relationships and engagement have been shown to facilitate the realisation of GPSDD's regional and global-level implementation objectives. Convening stakeholders at the country level and especially through country roadmap processes has consistently been shown to facilitate the achievement of GPSDD's objectives at multiple levels in multiple countries, including Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone. These country-level relationships offer the significant benefits of building political capital that can be leveraged to generate interest and commitment in GPSDD's regional and global objectives.

The integration of regional-level objectives in country-level work and vice versa has again been instrumental in ensuring that activities at both levels are mutually reinforcing. This has been facilitated through a concentration of GPSDD engagement through centralised governance structures at the country level which have helped to concretise relationships and promote the relevance of GPSDD's work to high-level country partners. In turn, this has helped generate their buy-in to GPSDD's regional objectives; especially the case in instances where GPSDD's regional-level objectives are closely linked to country-level objectives, such as the integration of the ARDC into the Big and Spatial Data Workstream in Ghana.

GPSDD may struggle with its current model to reach the depth and breadth of countries to achieve its global and regional objectives. Experience from GPSDD's response to Covid-19 (see EQ9) suggests that new partnership models, combined with the agility of the Secretariat, may be used to complement more in-depth country engagement to facilitate an expansion of country coverage.

EQ6: What are the main factors which have enabled or hindered GPSDD's contribution to the achievement of objectives as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks?

The analysis and findings for EQs 3–5 set out the contribution GPSDD and partners made. This section delves into how and why that contribution was possible.

GPSDD uses levers of change, namely supporting changemakers, creating incentives and developing learnings with its partners and network to achieve its intermediate results (see section 2.4 for the full theory of change) and contribute to more and better data being used to achieve and monitor the SDGs.

GPSDD recognises that there are multiple influencing factors at play and the broader context of the data for development ecosystem provides yet further complicated and complex factors that are pushing and pulling GPSDD. There is a considerable challenge to identify a set of influencing factors (how and why GPSDD contributed) given the myriad of system-wide factors affecting the data for development ecosystem, resources and capacities.

GPSDD's ToC narrative and the findings set out against EQs 3 and 4 describe and validate GPSDD's contribution. This contribution across several outcomes, technical areas, partnerships and regions could arguably be described as complex and multifaceted. This description as 'complex and multifaceted' has a bearing on how we assess the main factors.

Evidence from the evaluation suggests strongly that the Secretariat's mature problem-solving skills of need in complex and complicated contexts allows them to respond appropriately and effectively convene stakeholders. Indeed, findings against EQ2 attest to the high complementarity of GPSDD's work. When a contribution is complex and

multifaceted, Mayne (2019)¹⁰⁰ argues that a casual package of factors is at work. We propose for GPSDD that it is the combination of the right approach, style, timing, skills and influence on its network, its partners (country, global, regional), the wider data for development ecosystem and the UN system acting together that promotes desired outcomes. It is a richly complementary approach.

Convening and catalysing stakeholders, who consist of a network of partners stretched across national, regional and global levels is no mean feat with a minimal headcount. The ‘how and why’ GPSDD is effective is tied up in the interaction of the levers of change it deploys (please see EQ4) and the agile way in which it weaves through the package of causal factors. As expressed under EQ4, the evaluation evidence suggests that GPSDD could become even more effective by explicitly using policy advocacy tactics across its portfolio and better understand the role of policy advocacy at different levels and in different methods of partner engagement. Policy advocacy is a reliable route to scale up.

However, it is possible to see that GPSDD has and will continue to run into many and potentially simultaneous disabling factors in the future. Disabling factors tend to be context specific and impede the aforementioned package of casual factors. To tackle these, GPSDD needs to mobilise its partner network and TAG. In this future, GPSDD’s ability to build the capacity of partners and the supply-side, to link its Board and/or TAG members to influence regionally or nationally, and at the same time achieve a consistency in approach and style through the Secretariat will be essential to achieving any contribution.

EQ7: What have been GPSDD’s most important contributions to the data for development ecosystem? What have been the most important opportunities which the Secretariat could potentially have engaged with but did not?

This section responds to the above evaluation question by first drawing out two examples of the interventions that the evaluation team judge as having been GPSDD’s most important contributions to the data for development ecosystem through the lens of which have contributed to the highest level of the theory of change. It then outlines some of the most prominent opportunities that GPSDD has either missed or chosen not to engage in so far and provides some possible reasons for why this may have been the case, informed by the perception of GPSDD’s partners.

The ARDC and the Ghana Roadmap Process have been the most important contributions made by GPSDD to the data for development ecosystem because of the level and scale of results achieved. Whilst many of GPSDD’s interventions are too recent to expect to have contributed to impact-level

“I think we need to move to a stage where, in line with their regional strategy, [there are] country specific strategies or annual plans so that we know specifically what is prioritised for Tanzania, how is this implemented, through what timeframe. So, I think that is important. So that priorities are set for our country. And it's clearly known by GPSDD and by the countries that these are the priorities and these are the timeframes. And that should be very much aligned with a regional strategy as well.”

O3-KI2

¹⁰⁰ Mayne, John (2019) *Revisiting Contribution Analysis*

change, there is evidence that both the ARDC and the Ghana Roadmap process (see Boxes 16 and 17 in Annex 4 for further details) are contributing to change at the level of GPSDD's strategic objectives.

The ARDC has contributed to a shift towards embedding or standardising the use of satellite and earth observations data among supported government institutions. ARDC technology is now being scaled up in support of government decision making across the whole of Africa through the DEA.¹⁰¹ The Ghana roadmap process demonstrates how, through combining all three levers of change, GPSDD is able to contribute to both strategic objectives of more and better data being used to monitor and achieve the SDGs including, in addition to ARDC related Ghana outcomes, through: a) local and national SDG reporting platforms, b) use of telecoms data for government decision making, and c) establishment of an SDG secretariat within the CGS.

A theme that was quite consistently reported across outcomes was that follow-up is a current constraint in GPSDD maximising its objectives and that more considered support and planning for supported interventions to 'graduate' from its support could help GPSDD to go even further in contributing to its higher-order objectives in the theory of change. For example, this included follow-up of potential partnerships from peer-to-peer exchanges,¹⁰² follow-up on collaborations that GPSDD had facilitated to 'check in' or to see if further linkages and connections could be made¹⁰³ and also follow up on technical work that GPSDD had supported, including both the Kenya CGD and the Kenya Interoperability guidelines and also the development of tools for monitoring the SDGs.

There was no single opportunity that interviewees consistently reported that GPSDD had missed, nor one specific area of work that respondents wanted GPSDD to move into. Instead, multiple suggestions were made of specific opportunities that GPSDD could engage with that usually related directly to the respondents' own specific interests. However, across the interviews, respondents were aware and mindful of the capacity constraints on GPSDD and aware that they sometimes had to make difficult decisions about resource allocation. This finding links to the questions raised under workstream three about how to maximise the impact of GPSDD through the strategic deployment of its governance structures and partner organisations. In other words, the core challenge for GPSDD is maintaining a minimal Secretariat headcount and achieving the breadth and depth of engagement required to achieve its objectives.

Linked to this, some GPSDD partners suggested there is a current opportunity and a need for GPSDD to scale up or achieve larger scale results. Respondents outlined several potential avenues for achieving this. Specifically mentioned was that GPSDD should continue to use its network and to scale up influencing, convening and knowledge sharing and also the coordination of data for development actors, which one respondent explicitly said was "ultimately what GPSDD was set up to do".¹⁰⁴ Some respondents suggested that GPSDD could lean more on 'larger, stronger champions' and leverage their resources and country capacity to advocate for change in more difficult to reach contexts; and to better support champions coming into the network, through peer support.

Some respondents suggested that GPSDD was at an opportune moment to refresh its strategy. Several respondents, corroborating some of the findings under EQ9 and EQ10, suggested that now is an opportune time for GPSDD to take stock, reflect on their collaborations to date and update their strategy accordingly. Across a number of interviews

¹⁰¹ O3-KII1, O3-KII2, and O3-KII3

¹⁰² O25-KII1

¹⁰³ O28-KII1

¹⁰⁴ O12-KII1

including with country partners, and members of GPSDD’s governance structures, respondents mentioned that the current GPSDD strategy still does not focus enough on working with partners who have the ‘weakest’ levels of capacity or capability in using data for development.¹⁰⁵

EQ8: How effective are the different member engagement mechanisms used by GPSDD?

This EQ focuses on the mechanisms GPSDD has used to engage with members and non-members and draws from interviews with key informants involved with the outcomes examined, together with responses to the GPSDD partner survey carried out in early 2020. We explore which forms of engagement with GPSDD have been the most useful and how these have contributed to observed outcomes.

The most important factor determining the effectiveness of GPSDD and partner engagements is the open, responsive, collaborative and professional approach which GPSDD adopts – which is echoed within our analysis under workstream three (see EQs 9 and 10).

Respondents¹⁰⁶ working on ARDC-related outcomes highlighted GPSDD’s willingness to invest time and effort in capacity building while others in Kenya and Ghana¹⁰⁷ said their engagement with GPSDD was enabled by the enthusiasm and energy of GPSDD staff. Respondents who had been involved in the Ghana-Kenya peer exchange¹⁰⁸ pointed towards the importance of GPSDD staff being based in-country as a part of this. Some¹⁰⁹ believe there are opportunities for other initiatives (e.g. DEA) to learn lessons from this approach – to help provide greater opportunities for collaboration with African stakeholders.

Engagement with other partners, both within and between countries, as a result of GPSDD brokering or convening, was cited as being particularly useful by several respondents, especially where there was a diversity of partners. Respondents who had been involved in the Ghana-Kenya and LAC peer exchanges highlighted how the wide variety of participants brought a diversity of perspectives and enriched dialogue during the exchanges.

Respondents who had been involved in country-level partnerships facilitated by GPSDD highlighted how the engagements had adopted a co-creationist approach which built consensus and buy-in, and catalysed other actions.

Some respondents believe GPSDD could potentially do more to provide follow-up support, including in response to an assessment of action plans developed as part of certain initiatives (e.g. peer exchanges, IDC) through which

“After the exchange, there could have been more support in the development/ implementation of action plans made at the peer exchange. This would have allowed for better assessment of progress, spurred more commitment and engagement. This has not been forthcoming and could have enhanced achieving the objectives set by participants at the exchange.”

O25-KI13

¹⁰⁵ O21&51-KI12

¹⁰⁶ O2-KI11, O2-KI12, O2-KI13, O2-KI14, O3-KI11 and O3-KI12

¹⁰⁷ O18&35&37-KI11, O18&35&37-KI12, O24-KI11, O24-KI12, and O24-KI13

¹⁰⁸ O25-KI11 and O25-KI12

¹⁰⁹ O3-KI12 and O3-KI13

additional opportunities for collaboration, brokering or sustaining relationships might be identified.

Among GPSDD partner survey respondents, the large majority of both partners and non-partners expressed satisfaction with their experience of engaging with GPSDD. Results from the 2020 GPSDD partner survey indicate that 77% (n=88) of all respondents were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with their experience of engaging with GPSDD. When partner survey respondents were asked to indicate the ways in which they had engaged with GPSDD in the last year, the most common response was ‘through attending a GPSDD event’ overall (32%, n=73) and for non-partners (34%, n=29) while for partners it was ‘subscribed to a GPSDD listserv’ (36%, n=44).

EQ9: How effective has the Secretariat been in advancing GPSDD objectives?

Below is a summary of key findings relating to the effectiveness of the Secretariat including references to the main findings of the 7S organisational assessment in early 2020. These findings are nuanced with an analysis of the key developments during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Secretariat has been highly effective in advancing GPSDD’s objectives. The Secretariat structure is agile, highly aligned to GPSDD’s shared values and has evolved as needs have arisen.¹¹⁰ Now, respondents¹¹¹ request a further adaptation of the Secretariat’s operating model to align with the demand for scale-up in the current strategy. The 7S organisational assessment and the survey provide evidence¹¹² that GPSDD’s credibility has been established. It occupies an important niche where it has access to resources and people that few in its ecosystem can match.

GPSDD’s shared values of inclusivity and mutual trust are reflected in the Secretariat’s leadership style and across the staff. The reported skill strengths of policy, advocacy, brokering and convening in the Secretariat are also aligned to the value of engagement with a broad range of actors. The survey¹¹³ suggests that the operationalisation of these values needs to be done with one eye on how members *and* non-members react.

Shared values, alongside staff and style, is one of the most accomplished elements of the Secretariat’s current operating model. Shared values sit at the centre of every operating model and enable effective performance across all elements. As the organisational assessment found, shared values are, for many respondents,¹¹⁴ the Secretariat’s distinct value add. This suggests that the shared values are not dependent on individuals. Nevertheless, the evidence points to the strong and inclusive leadership by the Chief Executive Office (CEO) as a defining characteristic. Furthermore, respondents¹¹⁵ clearly stated that the Secretariat brings a depth of understanding and connection to sustain collaborating competitors that is greatly valued. This was verified in the analysis of key factors detailed under EQ6 where GPSDD’s convening power

¹¹⁰ WS3-KIIB1, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIB6, WS3-KIIB8, WS3-KIIS6, WS3-KIIS8, WS3-KIIS9, WS3-KIIT1, WS3-KIIT2, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIT10, WS3-KIIT11, WS3-KIIT13

¹¹¹ WS3-KIIB8, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIT2, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIT7, WS3-KIIT8, WS3-KIIS3, WS3-KIIS10, WS3-KIIT4, WS3-KIIT9, WS3-KIIT10, WS3-KIIB6, WS3-KIIB7, WS3-KIIT11, WS3-KIIT12, WS3-KIIT13, WS3-KIIB8, WS3-KIIB7, WS3-KIIB3, WS3-KIIB1

¹¹² Itad presentation of preliminary analysis paper in June 2020 and survey respondent assessment of GPSDD’s organisational effectiveness. Please also see Annex 4 for a discussion of key findings presented here.

¹¹³ Skills, style, staff and shared values are the most accomplished according to the survey. Non-partner and partners alike felt that skills were the most developed capacity followed by staff and then style. Whereas the Secretariat deemed that style is the most developed capability, followed by staff, skills and then values.

¹¹⁴ WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIB6, WS3-KIIB8, WS3-KIIT9, WS3-KIIB7, WS3-KIIS8, WS3-KIIS1, WS3-KIIS2, WS3-KIIS3, WS3-KIIS10, WS3-KIIS9

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

is strongly underscored by ‘how’ it goes about building networks and partnerships in an adaptive and collaborate style, which supports changemakers and develops learning.

The level of ambition contained in the strategy needs to be replicated in GPSDD’s scale of influence at the regional and global levels. The 7S organisational assessment provides evidence that alignment is required between the ambition of meeting the SDGs in 2030 with the structure and systems of GPSDD. Evaluative evidence suggests that there is a policy advocacy pathway and outcome which has great potential to support GPSDD achieve greater impact. While there is no one model to employ, each chosen approach must reflect the shared values of GPSDD Secretariat and partners and demonstrate explicitly how the network can convene around a policy advocacy pathway and achieve further global and regional objectives. To achieve consistent effectiveness across a network, the Secretariat needs to convene its network, specifically the TAG and other members, to define a policy advocacy agenda, explicit tactics and state how this has and will continue to contribute to GPSDD’s objectives. Furthermore, the Secretariat’s emphasis needs to be on convening and catalysing partnerships through policy advocacy to the end of the current strategy. All implementation models should support this emphasis.

GPSDD’s ability to leverage partnerships, adopt an advisory role and catalyse change was honed/brought to the fore during the pandemic in 2020. GPSDD adopted a new model which allowed an unprecedented delivery at scale and speed across African countries for the Data for Now programme. During this time, two key findings (agility of the Secretariat and need for scale-up) from the evaluation’s organisational assessment were validated unexpectedly when the Covid-19 pandemic hit. GPSDD’s work in partnerships with UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) on Data for Now demonstrated that it is possible for GPSDD to deliver multiple new partnerships, at speed and in many different contexts, which meet demand. As yet, these new partnerships and their results have not been independently evaluated, nevertheless emerging evidence¹¹⁶ suggests GPSDD with partners has supported the development of datahubs, participated in peer-to-peer exchanges and supported capacity building. Further, there is evidence¹¹⁷ that in a substantial number of the new countries GPSDD has worked successfully through the UN Resident Coordinator. This has emerged as a new and successful model to be added to GPSDD’s mechanisms for engaging a broad range of stakeholders, across several contexts simultaneously. GPSDD believe that between April and October 2020 the ‘speed and scale of delivery was unprecedented’.¹¹⁸

By frequently employing this mode of engagement, by drawing on its core networking and brokering skills, GPSDD was arguably free to engage with more countries and more demand. The roster of supply-side partners included those able to simultaneously deploy across multiple contexts. This is a new engagement strategy that offers very distinct possibilities for scale-up where deep country engagement is not possible. Further, the UN Resident Coordinator position is currently under reform,¹¹⁹ which leaves a door open for GPSDD to establish important relationships early-on with this recast position.

The Secretariat recognises¹²⁰ that there are multiple influencing factors at play and the broader context of the data for development ecosystem provides yet further complicated and complex factors. The Secretariat wants to remain nimble to counteract the pushing and pulling of GPSDD. Nevertheless, there is a subtle convergence of enabling factors or a causal package of factors that enable GPSDD. The Secretariat with partners deploys the right

¹¹⁶ Reports, data stories and board learning papers provided by Secretariat to Itad team

¹¹⁷ WS3-KIIS1, WS3-KIIS8, WS3-KIIS12

¹¹⁸ Covid-19 Response Board Learning paper

¹¹⁹ UN Leadership Reform process

¹²⁰ GPSDD current strategy

tool/technical insight through the right partnership to deliver the right message at the right time and that has helped improve government decision making (please see EQ2 on complementarity for further evidence). Further, during the pandemic the Secretariat has honed its value proposition successfully.

There is, however, no one model of country or partner engagement that will ensure GPSDD achieves its objectives. However, sustaining the agility and complementarity of the Secretariat’s work will keep GPSDD fit and able to negotiate the fine line between enabling and disabling factors. Harnessing the willingness of the TAG to do more, will in turn support this (discussed against EQ10 below). If the TAG can replicate this agility and complementarity, it could influence regionally, globally and achieve a consistency in approach and style with the Secretariat. All of this would support greater partner engagement, develop a global movement and potentially lead to greater contributions at scale.

EQ10: How effective have GPSDD governance structures been in advancing GPSDD objectives?

Below is a summary of key findings relating to the effectiveness of GPSDD governance structures including references to the main findings of the 7S organisational assessment in early 2020. These findings are nuanced, as in EQ9, with an analysis of key developments during the Covid-19 pandemic.

GPSDD’s governance structures are, in the main, highly effective. Respondents¹²¹ state that the Board is a strong, robust function and the Secretariat is very effective and highly respected. Respondents¹²² are however actively looking for how the Secretariat can secure greater involvement from the TAG, collectively and individually. Findings validate that the political capital housed in the TAG, is underused. It is seen as part of the original governance model/in need of updating. The TAG is a group of expert individuals who have agreed to devote time to supporting GPSDD’s work in different ways.

The refocusing of the role of the TAG in late 2020 is welcomed and will give greater focus to GPSDD’s policy advocacy as a pathway and an outcome in its work through the network and wider partnership. It appears congruent with other efforts to achieve greater impact. The ambition is to scale up work with countries on earth observations data from five to 15 by the end of the current strategic period. If the engagement with the TAG body and wider network is successful and culminates in an agreed advocacy agenda for GPSDD, there is the possibility that the Secretariat could influence the functioning of its network to enhance the supply side and influence resources to flow where they can be most effective. However, it is important that lessons are learned¹²³ and that scale-up, and proactive linking of policy advocacy to existing partnerships, is focused and disciplined.¹²⁴

There are new and emerging challenges for GPSDD’s governance as it achieves greater scale and impact: it needs a graduation strategy; there are trade-offs relating to efficiency vs style

¹²¹ WS3-KIIB8, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIT7, WS3-KIIS3, WS3-KIIT9, WS3-KIIT10, WS3-KIIB6, WS3-KIIB7, WS3-KIIT11, WS3-KIIT13

¹²² WS3-KIIT5, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIT7, WS3-KIIT12, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIT8, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIB1

¹²³ Lessons learned: • Partnerships at scale require technical skills and extensive networks to design and implement. • Partnerships at scale need their own value proposition and offer. • Partnerships at scale require significant resources to maintain and achieve impact. Based on these lessons, if considering or developing new partnerships at scale, we should consider: • Do we have the right technical skills and networks in the core team to understand the range of solutions and bring in the right partners to deliver them? • What is the value proposition and offer for different partners, and is it sufficient to deliver change at scale? • What will be the plan to resource this partnership, and what is the timeline and strategy for seeking dedicated funding? The use of an MoU process will also help establish early whether there are common interests and possibilities, and allow decisions to be made about resource allocation before too much time has been invested.

¹²⁴ Annex 8 of the External Relations Strategy is a go-no-go decision matrix.

and approach, efficiency vs inclusivity in partnership and the application of ethics and principles in partnership. GPSDD’s Board and Secretariat’s ability to convene and sustain collaborating competitors is highly valued. As the Secretariat hones its value proposition, generates funding to support scale-up and is more effective in achieving scale through institutional linkages (regional to country) and influence, its governance structures need to keep pace.

The organisational assessment (further details can be found in EQ10 in Annex 4) found that there is a high level of consistency in findings for Strategy, Structures and Systems, which means that across key stakeholder groups GPSDD’s capabilities are developing and, in some instances (Structure) consolidating. Strategy has moved back to developing because respondents¹²⁵ clearly ask for the level of ambition contained in the strategy to be replicated in the Secretariat’s scale of influence. Interviewees¹²⁶ believe that GPSDD has access to resources and people that few other organisations in the world can match. When data from the survey (as demonstrated in the density plot charts¹²⁷ in Annex 4 Figure 7) is triangulated with key informant interview data these results are further verified.

6 Conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

6.1 Conclusions

GPSDD occupies an important niche where it has access to resources and people that few in its ecosystem can match. GPSDD has made good use of its brokering and convening capabilities and is contributing to the achievement of its strategic objectives. During the pandemic in 2020, GPSDD’s ability to leverage partnerships, adopt an advisory role and catalyse change at scale and speed was brought to the fore largely thanks to the agility and effectiveness of the Secretariat and its network of partners. Three clusters of conclusions emerge from the evaluative evidence presented in the preceding sections.

Cluster 1: Extending and scaling-up contributions. GPSDD is making important contributions and, through learning from its work to date, now has options for extending and scaling-up these contributions – whilst broadly sustaining current levels of in-depth country support.

Conclusion 1: GPSDD has made important contributions to all intermediate results set out in its current strategy and is making important steps towards achieving a global or ‘at scale’ ambition – though this has not yet been achieved. There is variation in the extent to which intermediate results have been achieved, with GPSDD having made its biggest contribution to government decision making (e.g. through initiatives like the ARDC). GPSDD appears to have made the least contribution to intermediate results with a global focus. An important factor in this appears to be that the mechanism of policy advocacy is not explicitly specified as a pathway of change, or an intermediate result, though there are examples of where GPSDD is using this to good effect (e.g. through institutionalising the interoperability guide within the UNSC).

Conclusion 2: GPSDD’s strategy is relevant and highly aligned to national, regional and global objectives. However, the current strategy lacks specificity about how GPSDD will achieve the ambition of the scale required to meet the SDGs in 2030. Key informants under both workstream 2 and workstream 3 believe there is an opportunity and need for GPSDD to

¹²⁵ WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIT10

¹²⁶ WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIB8

¹²⁷ The higher parts of the density plot show more frequently occurring values. The values on the y axis represent the ratio between a given value and its frequency (i.e. how often it occurs within the data given the range of values that it belongs to). Density plots represent a probability distribution extrapolated on the basis of the observed values

scale up its strategy. The strategy is linked to the SDG agenda, and is broad enough at the regional and national level to (a) allow the flexibility and responsiveness which emerged as a valuable element of GPSDD's approach; and (b) accommodate the diverse needs and interests of its partners and network. There are sometimes two gaps, however, that emerge. First, regarding partners' understanding where a given project or initiative fits into GPSDD's work more broadly, and what the longer-term potential of involvement might be. Secondly, a gap in how comprehensive the strategy is to achieve the ambitious objectives and goal¹²⁸ and as explained, against intermediate results that are global in nature. A key element that requires adjustment is the link to a policy advocacy agenda.

Conclusion 3: The interplay between the levers of change and the different types of contribution of various partners is clear and supportive, at this level, of the GPSDD ToC. There remain however gaps in thinking in the existing ToC about how pathways between the intermediate results and the overarching objectives lead to the overall goal. The evaluation has highlighted how the majority of outcomes examined have contributed to GPSDD's stated intermediate results, how the different levers of change enable these contributions, and the main enabling factors. One important aspect of GPSDD's work which is not well reflected in the ToC relates to advocacy and influencing which, whilst considered part of the creating incentives lever of change, is an important lever itself between intermediate results and objectives. The most recent work to adjust the terms of reference for the TAG to develop GPSDD's policy advocacy agenda could go some way to filling the gap in understanding about how these intermediate results contribute to the overarching objectives.

Cluster 2: Mobilising the network for scale-up. GPSDD occupies a unique place among actors within the global data for development sector. The Secretariat's agility is typified by its convening and brokering of changemakers in its network and the wider data for development sector.

Conclusion 4: A key strength and added value of GPSDD within the data for development sector lies in its ability to work on strategic objectives across the national, regional and global levels and the potential to transfer lessons emerging from activities on one level to others. This aspect of GPSDD's approach depends on its on-the-ground presence in countries such as Kenya, which includes political and technical support, and is amplified by GPSDD's convening capacity. The evaluation has highlighted how this approach can support more nuanced understandings of factors that promote or hinder progress on topics such as, interoperability, citizen-generated and geospatial data at the global level through learning at a country-level. However, it is not possible for GPSDD to engage in this depth in all situations. Multiple models of engagement are required.

Conclusion 5: Many of the countries with whom GPSDD has had a broad-based and sustained engagement (e.g. Ghana, Kenya) have capable institutions and evident political will for reform. In addition to managing multiple models of engagement, a challenge for GPSDD going forward will be to find ways of reaching institutions in countries where this capability and political will is less evident to help ensure they are not left behind. To deepen its contribution to achieving and monitoring the SDGs, as GPSDD moves beyond its first five years, it will be important for it to find ways of reaching countries with less capability and political will. As discussed under EQ6 relating to disabling factors, GPSDD will continue to be challenged by a complex ecosystem and many contextual factors that it has little to no influence over.

¹²⁸ Please refer to the organisational assessment

Cluster 3: Documenting and applying learning. The Secretariat has increasingly demonstrated its ability to generate and respond to learning and has the opportunity to do more to make learning available at scale in support of a sustainable global movement.

Conclusion 6: The Secretariat leverages value for those working in the ecosystem because of its complementarity. It has established a niche for itself. It has the potential to generate learning at scale from this complementarity, not only about the technical initiatives it has supported, but also about the way it supports multi-level multi-stakeholder institutional linkages. GPSDD occupies an important niche within the data for development ecosystem. The evaluation has highlighted the positive contribution that the Secretariat's approach makes. That is, its style; both through interviews with partners under workstream 2, and also through the organisational assessment under workstream 3. Documenting lessons learned from the Secretariat's open, responsive, collaborative and professional approach and linking these to a new 'at scale' policy advocacy agenda could be of potential value to other organisations. Perhaps this learning could lead to a how-to guide, or a similar product. Such an output will begin to generate an agreed way forward/consistency in approach about what it brings to support collaborating competitors at scale. Again, this type of product would support GPSDD as it embraces programmes graduating from its support.

Conclusion 7: By investing more in follow-up or operational monitoring, more and better opportunities for achieving GPSDD objectives could be identified and enabled. Several examples have been identified where follow-up action on the part of either the Secretariat, TAG or GPSDD partners could potentially have resulted in the deepening or broadening of results achieved. The underuse of the TAG is one example which is highlighted in the organisational assessment. The Secretariat could potentially strengthen its role as an exchange which reviews documented priorities and needs (e.g. within IDC action plans and peer exchange commitments) and brokers relationships in response.

Conclusion 8: There is the potential for GPSDD to better leverage its niche at the global and regional levels to support the ecosystem to sustain progress already made and move towards global solutions for data use. There is a risk that, if interventions or initiatives do not 'graduate' from GPSDD in the right way, then the longer-term impact of GPSDD's efforts could be diminished. As put forward in Conclusion 6, the Secretariat has a highly complementary approach that could be used to advocate more strongly on behalf of its members, and to influence more effective ways of working. The evaluation has highlighted that, since the transition of the ARDC into the DEA, African stakeholders believe they have been given less opportunity to contribute to, and influence, the project; primarily because of differences in organisational priorities and culture. GPSDD's growing confidence and ability to articulate its value proposition (as outlined under EQ9) as well as the different types of contribution GPSDD makes and its influence over a causal package of factors strongly point to GPSDD as the partner of choice in these complex and complicated situations. It could be considered therefore, to have an obligation to develop capacity within the ecosystem for this type of partnering. Trialling and adjusting a how-to guide as proposed under Conclusion 6, is a potential first step.

6.2 Recommendations

This evaluation concludes positively about the role and effectiveness of GPSDD within the complex global system in spite of challenges. It seeks to respond to the surge of demand from interviewees for GPSDD to scale up, validated by a healthy and resilient organisational performance. As a partnership originating from the SDG discussions and with an influential Board and wider network, many could argue that GPSDD has an obligation and responsibility to do what is within its power to progress action over the next nine years.

Naturally, any scale-up comes with risks, however, the scale-up envisaged for GPSDD is one grounded emphatically in its shared values and institutional agility; a source of great internal strength for the Secretariat, reflected in its networks and partnerships. The scale up would build on the current structure and not necessarily incur significant additional headcount. It would be catalysed by organically matching demand and supply within its networks and partners, for example, at the global level aligning action through a newly devised policy advocacy agenda amongst other initiatives. In essence, GPSDD needs to continue to do the work it does at the country level and smartly integrate new networks and partnerships to scale results.

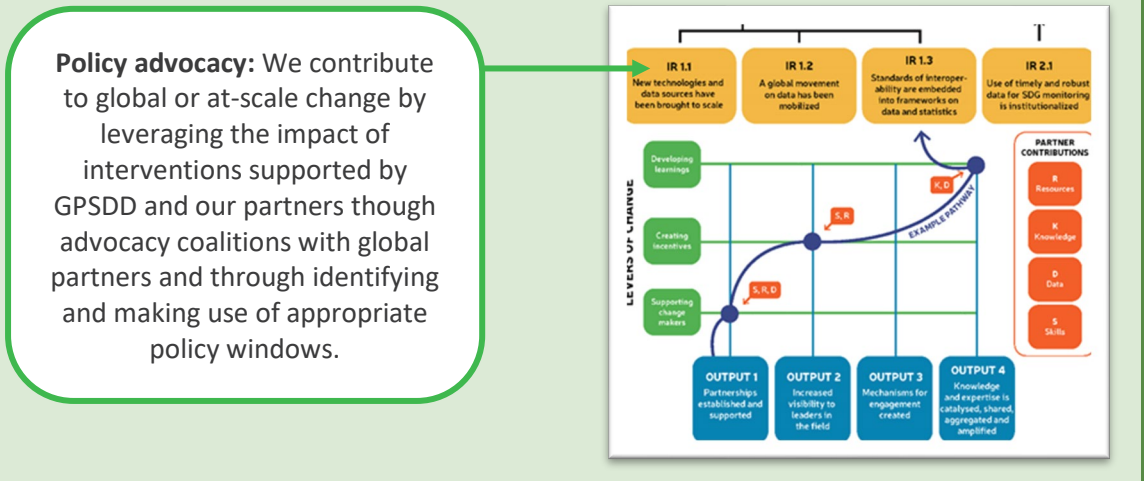
The recommendations are written for the GPSDD Secretariat and TAG, grouped within the clusters set out in the conclusions above and positioned for immediate consideration.

Cluster 1: Extending and scaling up contributions. Policy advocacy is a good route to achieving change. Scale up level of ambition on policy advocacy work. Adopt a deliberate and concerted approach to policy advocacy that is both a pathway and an outcome.

Recommendation 1: Update the ToC to reflect policy advocacy as a critical mechanism for scale-up at the regional and global level, then develop and implement a deliberate policy advocacy agenda with specific outcomes. The evaluation has identified the valuable role of policy advocacy in achieving intermediate results¹²⁹, in particular those with a global ambition, as well as being a pathway in and of itself to global change. There now exists the potential to articulate a policy advocacy agenda in collaboration with partners and to, deliberately and persuasively, communicate validated evidence of results and learning about what works (and what does not) generated through interventions supported by GPSDD and/or its partners. Box 9 sets out how GPSDD might incorporate a new policy advocacy lever of change within the ToC.

Box 9. Defining a policy advocacy lever of change

Policy advocacy could be included within the ToC through defining an additional lever of change which operates at the intermediate result level and focusses on how GPSDD, guided by its policy advocacy agenda, applies different strategies for bringing about change through policy advocacy.



Recommendation 2: Mobilise the GPSDD network in support of the policy advocacy agenda. The evaluation findings suggest a number of ways in which the GPSDD network could support policy advocacy work including, amongst others: (a) coordinating policy advocacy work with

¹²⁹ As defined within the GSPDD ToC and results framework.

selected partners where agendas are aligned; (b) cultivate demonstration effects through policy advocacy by working with country level partners to ensure evidence and learning is captured and communicated; and (c) harness the willingness of the TAG to ‘do more’ through inviting members to help shape the policy advocacy agenda and to find ways of supporting its implementation.

Recommendation 3: Make (bounded) adjustments to the structure of the Secretariat to ensure it is properly aligned with the policy advocacy agenda and any associated strategy updates. A new policy advocacy agenda with partners, and mobilising the GPSDD network in support of this, will place additional burden on Secretariat staff. It will be important to ensure there are no unhelpful or inefficient overlaps between the external relations team, policy team and the CEO. As the scale up progresses through policy advocacy work and other avenues, it may be necessary to consider larger changes – consistent with an organic approach to organisational development which fits well with the Secretariat’s agility.

Cluster 2: Mobilising the network for scale-up. Mobilising external data communities and the wider GPSDD network is critical to scale-up. Scale by adopting new, cost effective ways of expanding country coverage by drawing on GPSDD’s core networking and brokering strengths.

Recommendation 4: Emphasise GPSDD’s ability to leverage partnerships, adopt an advisory role and catalyse change (e.g. through work like Data for Now). As part of this, strengthen the Secretariat’s brokering role by establishing a formal exchange function within specific initiatives and link this to the policy advocacy agenda. For example, reviewing IDC action plans or peer exchange commitments to identify: (a) common themes where collective action might usefully be mobilised or (b) specific partner needs and matching expertise from another partner and broker a targeted relationship between them. Relating these back to more and better data for and to monitor the SDGs.

Recommendation 5: Place an intentional focus on expanding institutional partnerships with organisations who have a country presence and a local comparative advantage that aligns with GPSDD’s multi-stakeholder brokering. GPSDD could explore opportunities for partnering with UN Resident Coordinators at country level and focus on leveraging GPSDD knowledge and learning resources (including related to scale-up under Covid-19) and additional learning (see cluster 3). Other bilateral organisations (e.g. FCDO, GIZ and USAID) might also be of interest.

Cluster 3: Documenting and applying learning. Creating effective sustainable solutions is critical to scaling up. Document and apply learning in support of the policy advocacy agenda, scaling up country level results, improving the sustainability of interventions and making it possible for wider network of partners to self-serve.

Recommendation 6: The Secretariat could consider ways to maintain and communicate a ‘high-level’ mapping of partner initiatives against GPSDD’s objectives – to support an organic alignment of policy advocacy efforts across GPSDD’s network and partners, to provide resources that allow partners to self-serve, and to help GPSDD scale and maintain its strategic relevance. Such a resource could inform how best the network could be mobilised in support of a policy advocacy agenda (see recommendation 2) and provide an important resource for partners to identify potential collaborations or opportunities for knowledge sharing. More formal options for the mapping include: a) administering an annual survey, either as part of the current annual partners survey, or as a complementary exercise sometime afterwards, or b) a type of customer management system (CRM) which is updated by Secretariat staff after engagements with partners. A solution with a lower maintenance cost to GPSDD could be an online portal where partners themselves enter details and self-serve – with minimal Secretariat prompting.

Recommendation 7: Reflect on evidence and learning generated by the Secretariat to date and document the Secretariat’s most current understanding of how change happens with reference to the current ToC. A comprehensive and formalised articulation of how GPSDD understands change to happen in the contexts in which it works could be a valuable resource for the Secretariat, GPSDD partners and others working in the same space. This new resource would document the important enabling role of policy advocacy (see cluster 1) and at the same time focus on making available validated evidence of results and what works (and what does not) to inform policy advocacy efforts.

Recommendation 8: Prepare a how-to guide on brokering, convening and supporting effective multi-stakeholder collaborations within the data for development ecosystem. This guide could become an important resource for partners working on interventions graduating from GPSDD support and help contribute to greater sustainability. Related to this, any ‘exit strategy’ should focus on how partnerships/engagements are to evolve (rather than end), including to support an optimal transition and to identify opportunities to catalyse further change through graduated partners (e.g. linked to Recommendation 4). The guide could also help others working in the same space (see cluster 2) build capacity to: (a) broker a space and agenda for multisectoral collaborations; and (b) manage the relationships between collaborating competitors.

Recommendation 9: Amplify the voices of DEA African stakeholders and help DEA management adopt a more responsive and collaborative approach. To help ensure the longer-term success and relevance of the DEA, GPSDD could use its influence (and the strength of its approach as well as leadership) to help the current DEA leadership listen to and respond to the needs and priorities of African stakeholders. In actioning this recommendation, the Secretariat could help address a concern identified by the evaluation and also trial the ways of working how-to guide.

6.3 Lessons learned

In this section, we summarise some of the main lessons identified by key informants, both as they relate to the work of GPSDD, and the related outcome more broadly.

1. Evidence from respondents¹³⁰ confirmed many of the lessons identified by GPSDD within an ARDC lessons learned paper,¹³¹ including the need to invest time in relationships, **the importance of embedding institutional structures and separating technical management and political leadership where appropriate.**
2. **Seizing a critical moment makes a real difference – by identifying opportunities, and deploying the right people and the right time, and working in the right way.** Respondents¹³² involved with the ARDC highlighted how GPSDD understood the potential of data cube technology, knew the contexts where it could be best applied, had the right networks and political capital to reach stakeholders, and chose the right moment for implementation. A respondent¹³³ involved with the preparation of health interoperability frameworks in Kenya highlighted that GPSDD was able to accomplish a lot in a very short period of time because of the team mobilised and the way they worked.
3. Respondents¹³⁴ identified several lessons learned from the ARDC’s transition into DEA. Firstly, **several effective elements of the ARDC approach and model have not been**

¹³⁰ O2-KII1, O2-KII2, O2-KII3 and O2-KII4

¹³¹ GPSDD (2019). *ARDC Lessons Learned One Year Post-Launch*

¹³² O2-KII1, O2-KII2, O2-KII3 and O2-KII4

¹³³ O24-KII3

¹³⁴ O3-KII2; O3-KII3

adopted by the DEA, specifically with respect to its responsiveness to African stakeholders and its awareness of local context. The respondents felt that this less African-centred approach was due to the influence of the major donors contributing to DEA, and to the leadership of DEA, which was more technical than that of ARDC.

Secondly, according to one of these respondents, **the DEA appears to have treated product development as a purely technical issue and is not investing sufficiently in knowledge transfer and localisation** and is therefore not contributing to the building of national systems or capacities. A third lesson, identified by another respondent,¹³⁵ is that **while the leadership of GPSDD and DEA had both been very successful in their own way, they questioned whether they would “ever come together and work as one in a very cohesive way to benefit Africa under the DEA umbrella? Or will it be seen as the GPSDD umbrella and the DEA umbrella, both of them doing work in Africa, but not quite together?”**

4. **The way in which an initiative or intervention is branded or communicated can make a real difference to the level of interest it generates.** One respondent¹³⁶ commented on the “genius” of talking about inclusive rather than disaggregated data when developing the IDC – and how this helped capture people’s attention and support. Conversely, a respondent¹³⁷ involved with the Latin American, Caribbean and African peer exchange highlighted the difficulty of encouraging some government representatives to participate in the exchange; reportedly because they do not see the value of the exchange topics (e.g. making better use of administrative data). One respondent suggested that stronger communication in advance, including showcasing the potential value of administrative data, might have helped generate more interest in some cases. In addition, applying the IDC lesson, there could benefit in “rebranding” administrative data.
5. Two respondents reinforced learning – of which the Secretariat is aware – around the **importance of GPSDD needing to prioritise and not try to do everything.** For example, where GPSDD supports implementation (e.g. in response to resourcing gaps) they should pick on a few areas where they have a comparative advantage and take care not to replicate work which other organisations are better placed to support (e.g. UNSD’s work related to the global statistical system).¹³⁸ Another related example, specific to the IDC, is that a better use of resources may be to focus on issues common to a majority of champions or where there are gaps across the network; as opposed to addressing more champion specific issues.¹³⁹

¹³⁵ O3-KII1

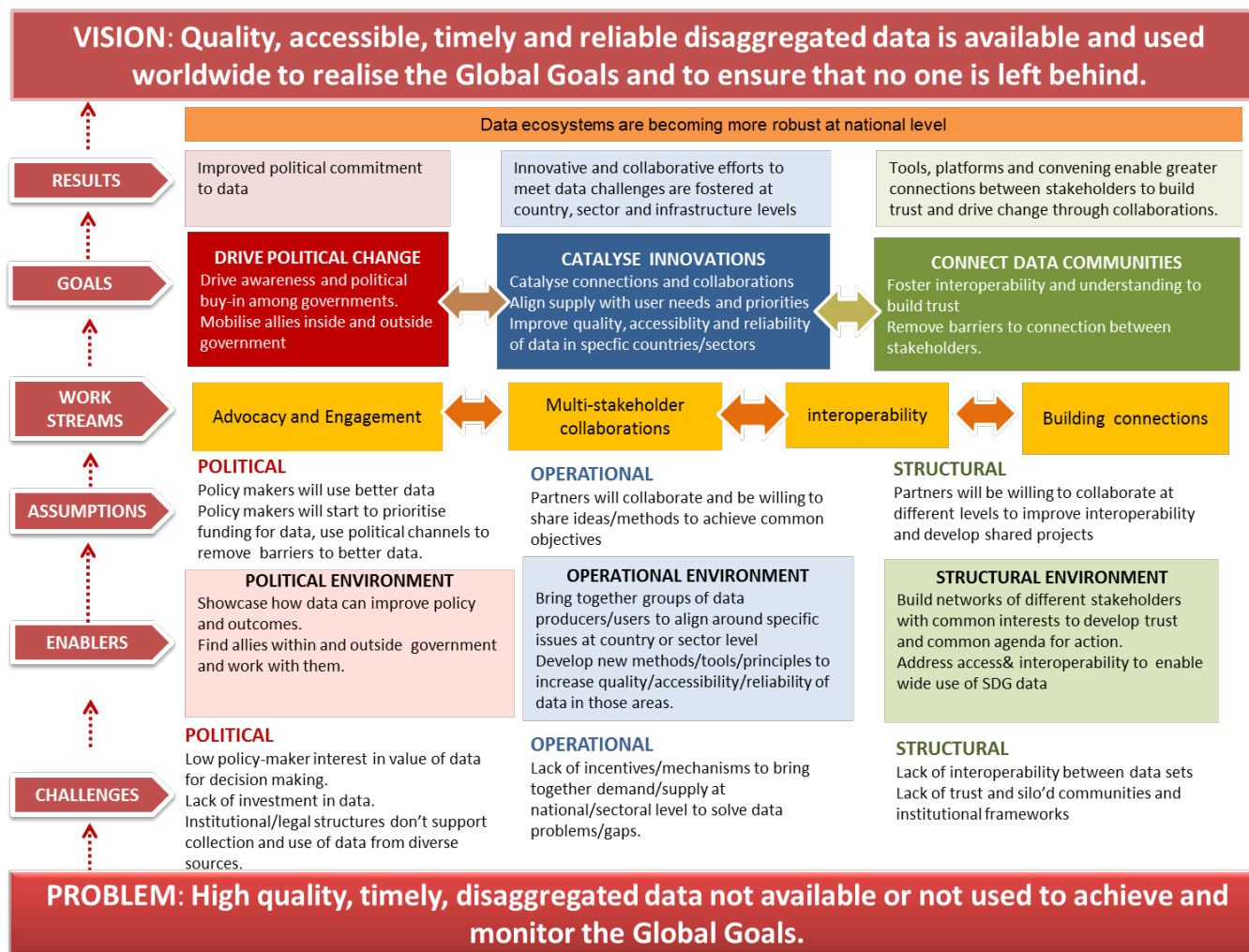
¹³⁶ O21&51-KII1

¹³⁷ O26-KII2

¹³⁸ O21&51-KII1

¹³⁹ O21&51-KII3

Annex 1: 2017 GPSDD theory of change



Annex 2: Evaluation questions

GPSDD's role within the data for development ecosystem/landscape [Relevance]

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. To what extent are the activities and outputs of the GPSDD consistent with its stated goals and objectives? To what extent do the goals and objectives of the GPSDD triangulate with the needs and interests of its different target groups?</p> | <p>a) How has the triangulation of GPSDD goals and objectives with the needs and interests of its different target groups evolved over time?</p> <p>b) Are there any target groups with a particularly strong, or particularly weak, alignment with GPSDD goals and objectives?</p> |
| <p>2. What are GPSDD and other efforts (to improve the quality and availability of data to support the SDGs) well positioned to achieve, and why? To what extent do these efforts and GPSDD complement one another, and what has been the outcome of this complementarity?</p> | <p>a) In addition to Paris21 and UNSD, are there any other major international efforts that aim to improve the quality and availability of data to support the SDGs?</p> <p>b) What have GPSDD and the identified efforts been positioned to achieve <i>in theory</i>, and what are their comparative advantages? What overlaps, synergies or gaps exist between these efforts?</p> <p>c) Have the GPSDD Secretariat and the identified efforts harmonised and coordinated their interventions <i>in practice</i>? If so, what was the outcome and if not, why?</p> |

GPSDD's success as a partnership [Effectiveness]

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>3. To what extent have the objectives of the GPSDD, as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks, been achieved? To what extent did the different GPSDD activities and outputs contribute to these results?</p> | <p>a) To what extent have the objectives of the GPSDD been achieved at the various levels, as stated in the 2019–23 strategy and accompanying results framework?</p> <p>b) What were the main trends in GPSDD achievement over the period 2016–2018 and to what extent have these provided a foundation for post-2018 results?</p> <p>c) To what extent are the contributions of GPSDD activities and outputs consistent with, or counter to, the 2019–23 ToC?</p> <p>d) Have there been any unintended consequences (positive or negative) arising from the GPSDD, and if so, to what extent did the different GPSDD activities and outputs contribute to them?</p> |
| <p>4. How, and in which contexts, have different streams of work enabled GPSDD to deliver outputs and contribute to the achievement of objectives? Which streams of work have made the greatest, and least, contribution, and why?</p> | <p>a) How, and in which contexts, have past GPSDD workstreams enabled GPSDD to deliver outputs (e.g. advocacy and engagement, multi-stakeholder collaborations, interoperability, and building connections)?</p> <p>b) How, and in which contexts, are current GPSDD building blocks enabling GPSDD to deliver outputs (e.g. supporting changemakers, creating incentives, building knowledge)?</p> <p>c) To what extent, and how, has the Secretariat identified and responded to evidence about what works and why?</p> |
| <p>5. How does GPSDD's work at national, sectoral, regional and global levels</p> | <p>a) How do interventions at different levels interact with each other and contribute to change?</p> |

contribute to the achievement of objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) How, and in which contexts, does change at one level influence change at another level (in any direction)? c) To what extent, and how, does working at the global level have an impact at country level?
6. What are the main factors which have enabled or hindered GPSDD's contribution to the achievement of objectives as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To what extent, and how, has the Secretariat identified and responded to these factors?
7. What have been GPSDD's most important contributions to the data for development ecosystem? What have been the most important opportunities which the Secretariat could potentially have engaged with but did not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have any of the initiatives supported by GPSDD to date delivered tangible change and the goal/impact level? b) If so, what were the main features of the way in which this change was achieved, and who were the main beneficiaries? c) Why did the Secretariat not pursue the opportunities identified (e.g. intentional decision, lack of attention to issues, lack of bandwidth, insufficient relationships)?
8. How effective are the different member engagement mechanisms used by GPSDD?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What forms of member engagement have been used by GPSDD? What informal mechanisms have been used to engage with non-members? b) Which forms yielded greatest member and/or non-member engagement? c) Which engagements resulted in the greatest contribution to GPSDD objectives/outcomes, and why?
GPSDD's operational structure and approach [Efficiency]	
9. How effective has the Secretariat been in advancing GPSDD objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What are the main factors that have enabled or hindered this advancement? b) To what extent is the Secretariat set up to be flexible and adaptive and to generate and respond to learning? c) How appropriate is the Secretariat operating model for delivering against the new five-year strategy?
10. How effective have GPSDD governance structures been in advancing GPSDD objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What are the main factors that have enabled or hindered this advancement? b) To what extent are governance structures set up to be flexible and adaptive and to respond to learning? c) How appropriate are GPSDD governance structures for delivering against the new five-year strategy?

Annex 3: Outcome descriptions

ID	Location and period	Outcome harvest description	Revised outcome description	Limitations
2	Ghana, Senegal, Sierra Leone pre-2019	1) The Ghana Water Resources Commission is using Africa Regional Data Cube (ARDC) to monitor water quality in Weija Reservoir, Accra; 2) The Sierra Leone Environmental Protection Agency is using ARDC to explore the various scenarios in the change in mangroves using the satellite analysis time series data; 3) The Senegal Direction de l'Analyse, de la Prévision et des Statistiques Agricoles is using ARDC to monitor crop performance – calculating vegetation phenology changes using Landsat data; 4) The Senegal Direction de la Gestion et de la Planification des Ressources en Eau is using the ARDC to monitor water extent and quality of Lake Guiers; 5) The Senegal Direction des Eaux et Forêts, Chasses et de la Conservation des Sols is using the ARDC to monitor deforestation.	GPSDD played a crucial role in developing use cases for the ARDC through leveraging political will and providing a tailored package of capacity building to relevant government departments in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Senegal. The introduction of ARDC has marked a shift towards embedding the use of satellite and earth observations data for development policy.	The Ghana Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) use study was dropped as no respondents were available for interview. We were unable to speak to anyone from IPAR (Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rural) in Senegal. In Sierra Leone we were only able to speak to one respondent from the EPA.
3	Africa-wide 2019–present	Digital Earth Africa (DEA) has been established, leveraging the achievements and learnings from the ARDC. GPSDD has several members on the steering committee.	DEA is a direct, scaled-up descendant of the ARDC, leveraging both the political buy-in generated, and its infrastructure and staffing. GPSDD sits on the Technical Advisory Committee; and is therefore one of the major actors guiding DEA.	No significant limitations.
4	Ghana, Sierra Leone	Formal framework with identified institutional hosts established in ARDC countries – which provides a coordination mechanism and mandate	Both Ghana and Sierra Leone have established governance structures in place, hosted within country institutions. In Ghana,	Overlap between key informants for this outcome and for outcomes 18, 35, 37

ID	Location and period	Outcome harvest description	Revised outcome description	Limitations
	2017–2020	for implementation. Country partners note that the mechanism provided space for cooperation between state and non-state actors and broadened the government data community into a multi-stakeholder community. For example, Ghana: Coordinate along thematic and geographic interests by establishing sub-data communities for agriculture, water resources, deforestation, and specific regions within the country.	thematic workstreams were set up, and action plans developed with in collaboration with government ministries, departments or agencies. This helped to ensure the development of relevant use cases.	<p>constrained time available in interview for respondents from Ghana.</p> <p>No respondents from the Right to Access Information Commission (RAIC) were available for interview.</p> <p>The respondents that were available from Sierra Leone had some limitations to their knowledge on this outcome area.</p>
12	Global, 2018–present	GPSDD brokered connection between African Centre for Statistics (based at UN Economic Commission for Africa) and Office for National Statistics (ONS) UK Data Science Campus during the Director’s visit to Brighton Data Festival. As a result of this and subsequent discussions, the idea of a Regional Data Science Campus was conceived. Regional Data Science Campus concept note prepared to attract funding, with GPSDD support. Creation of the campus is reportedly underway. As part of this process the ONS is seconding someone to the UNECA, supported by DFID, to provide long-term tech support to the Director in setting up a new data campus.	UNECA and GPSDD maintain a close relationship and mutually advise on relevant priorities. For example, the CEO of GPSDD has been involved in advising on the creation of a Regional Data Science Campus though this initiative is being driven by direct links between UNECA and ONS. GPSDD’s role is facilitative rather than brokering.	No significant limitations.
13		As a result of ‘nudging’ by GPSDD Secretariat members, the Bern network changed their published position on recommending the creation of a Data Financing Facility (July 2019 paper on Financing more and better data to	GPSDD Secretariat members helped develop and build consensus around the Bern Network’s 5-point action agenda, which helped shift the early focus on creating a data financing facility to a broader and more	No significant limitations.

ID	Location and period	Outcome harvest description	Revised outcome description	Limitations
		Achieve the SDGs) to recommending a package five of commitments (More and Better Development Data for a Decade of Action, Jan 2020).	politically palatable agenda aiming to improve the quantity and quality of financing for data.	
15	Kenya and global 2019–2020	GPSDD produced and disseminated a report and guide that presents a typology of thinking about the different types of citizen-generated data. GPSDD reports that “one really concrete result is GIZ coming to us and funding a project in Kenya that takes this approach further”. Working together with the Kenyan Bureau of Statistics and GIZ GPSDD have prepared a Kenya specific set of guidelines for use by CSOs to address concerns about quality, samples etc. and build confidence in the use of CGD among policymakers”.	Working together with the Kenyan Bureau of Statistics and GIZ GPSDD have prepared a Kenya specific set of guidelines for use by CSOs to address concerns about quality, samples etc. and build confidence in the use of CGD among policymakers.	No respondents from relevant CSOs were available for interview.
17	Colombia	The Colombian Ministry of Planning acknowledged the importance of monitoring the SDGs and recognised the importance of GPSDD’s role to achieve this – within their office Strategy for Achieving the SDGs. This was enabled by a GPSDD brokered collaboration in 2017 between Colombian Stats Agency (DANE) and expert partners (NASA and Google Earth Engine–GEO) and other Colombian stakeholders.	The Colombian Ministry of Planning acknowledged the importance of monitoring the SDGs and recognised the importance of GPSDD’s role to achieve this – within their office Strategy for Achieving the SDGs. This was enabled by a GPSDD brokered collaboration in 2017 between Colombian Stats Agency (DANE) and expert partners (NASA and Google Earth Engine–GEO) and other Colombian stakeholders.	This outcome was not included in our analysis. The National Department of Planning had changes in the team and suggested to leave it out, since the current counterparts at the Ministry of Planning are not aware of GPSDD’s activities.
18	Ghana pre-2019	The Ghanaian NSO’s involvement with GPSDD has resulted in a number of different activities and collaborations that have allowed them to	Key informants confirmed that GPSDD has been instrumental in enabling Ghana Statistical Service to leverage new sources of	No significant limitations.

ID	Location and period	Outcome harvest description	Revised outcome description	Limitations
		access funds needed to improve their capacity and perform their role more effectively. One estimate made by an NSO employee puts the value of additional funding mobilised at \$1.6 million.	funding, including a 3-year, >\$1 million partnership with Statistics Denmark.	
21	Global Jul 2018– present	DFID published a new disability strategy, which clearly sets out their approach to mainstream disability inclusion across the organisation, with time-bound commitments over the next 5 years and a delivery plan.	While there is clear evidence that UNICEF (see outcome 51) and DFID have benefited from their involvement in the IDC initiative, the specific outcomes identified were not achieved as a result of the IDC. Both DFID and UNICEF already had data their own plans in place which they drew from to create their specific IDC action plans. The main outcome for these organisations was the contribution of being an IDC signatory had on their own advocacy efforts in this area.	No significant limitations.
24	Kenya Sept 2019- August 2020	The Kenyan Ministry of Health has commenced work to improve the interoperability of the country's health information systems and the associated frameworks of governance through a consultancy funded by PEPFAR.	GPSDD supported the Kenyan Ministry of Health to develop an interoperability framework for the country's health information systems through a consultancy funded by PEPFAR which built on the results of the Health Informatics, Governance and Data Analytics (HIGDA) program funded by USAID.	No significant limitation.
25	Ghana, Kenya 2019–2020	GPSDD stakeholders from Ghana and Kenya exchanged lessons on progress towards monitoring the SDGs and identified new solutions	The Ghana–Kenya peer exchange was seen by participants as a productive and valuable opportunity to share learning, and to develop contacts. National guidelines on the use of	No significant limitations.

ID	Location and period	Outcome harvest description	Revised outcome description	Limitations
		and opportunities for collaboration which strengthen their capacity during a peer exchange.	citizen-generated data have been developed in Kenya as a direct result of that event.	
25a	Ghana Tanzania	As a result of the LAC–African peer-to-peer exchange organised by GPSDD representatives from the Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics visited the Kenyan Ministry of Labour to learn how they digitised their protection systems, because this is something that the Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics was struggling with.	The visit planned during the peer-to-peer exchange was planned but did not go ahead due to Covid-19.	No respondents were available for interview to confirm if any other work relevant to this outcome had continued in 2020.
26	Latin America and Africa Nov 2019	The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) and Centre for International Strategic Thinking (CEPEI) partnered with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Government of Mexico’s National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) to host a peer knowledge exchange in Mexico City, focusing on administrative records. A total of 48 participants from 11 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa attended the workshop.	Representatives from African and Central and South American countries exchanged lessons and experiences on the use of administrative data and identified solutions and opportunities for collaboration which strengths their capacity to leverage this source of data.	No significant limitations
28	Global 2015–2016	In 2016, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) was approached by Facebook with an idea to collaborate on a research project consisting of a survey of SMEs who use the Facebook platform for business purposes. In the spirit of fostering public-private partnerships, the GPSDD Secretariat connected the Facebook team with two GPSDD partners,	GPSDD was involved in the set-up of the collaboration between OECD, World Bank (WB) and Facebook that led to the creation of the Future for Business Survey. However, it is unknown what exact role GPSDD played in this and what might have happened without GPSDD’s involvement.	Respondents from the organisations that were available for interview did not have the institutional knowledge to comment on GPSDD’s contribution to this outcome, and advised that institutional memory from this time is lost.

ID	Location and period	Outcome harvest description	Revised outcome description	Limitations
		the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD) and the World Bank. These three entities, in partnership, launched the Future of Business Survey as a new source of information on SMEs		
31	Colombia 2016	As result of the collaboration between DANE and Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and NASA a clear methodology was developed for monitoring SDG indicators 9.1.1 and 11.7.1, which allowed experts to move them from Tier 3 to Tier 2.	DANE, NASA and GPSDD co-organised a workshop in Bogotá, Colombia entitled “Towards Integration of National Statistics and Earth Observations for SDG Monitoring”. According to GPSDD, this workshop helped broker a relationship between DANE and NASA which resulted in the development of improved methodologies for SDG indicators 9.1.1 and 11.7.1.	A respondent from DANE highlighted that GPSDD did not provide support to the process of improving methodologies to measure indicators 9.1.1 and 11.7.1 DANE has been working with UN-Habitat and the World Bank to refine the methodologies for both indicators.
32	Colombia 2016	DANE developed a methodology to monitor SDG 11.3.1 (ratio of land consumption to population growth) by using the Google Earth Engine and applied it across 151 cities in Colombia.	Using enhanced capacity and new tools, DANE measured SGD indicator 11.3.1, for 151 cities over 2003-2015. This was enabled by a GPSDD brokered collaboration in 2017 between Colombian Stats Agency (DANE) and expert partners (NASA and Google Earth Engine (GEO) and other Colombian stakeholders. (Cross-ref to Outcome 33).	No significant limitations.
33	Colombia, Ghana and Tanzania	Methods, algorithms and tools developed within DANE (Colombia) related to 11.3.1, Ratio of urban land consumption to population growth tested in Ghana and Tanzania	Methods, algorithms and tools developed within DANE (Colombia) related to 11.3.1, Ratio of urban land consumption to population growth tested in Ghana and Tanzania.	Respondents interviewed from Ghana did not know whether the methods and tools for measuring this outcome came from DANE.

ID	Location and period	Outcome harvest description	Revised outcome description	Limitations
				No respondents from relevant institutions in Tanzania were available for interview.
35	Ghana Pre-2019	a) Ghana launch a national SDGs data reporting platform as a product of the GPSDD data roadmap process; b) Ghana developed a national data quality assurance framework to ensure the integrity of official statistics with the support of the national advisory committee and partnerships borne out of the GPSDD-led country roadmap process; c) The Ghanaian Statistical Service (GSS) partnered with Statistics Denmark to improve its capacity to use administrative data; d)The GSS partnered with Ghana Vodafone to leverage telecommunication data and earth observation data using the African Regional Data Cube (ARDC) for SDGs monitoring.	Ghana has used its data roadmap process to make significant changes in the way that data is used by government. The three principles established there guide the work of GSS, and help ensure that subsequent interventions were well planned and harmonised. The establishment of the national SDGs data reporting platform, the data quality assurance framework, the partnership with Statistics Denmark, and the ARDC use cases were all overseen by the Roadmap Advisory Committee. GPSDD's significant investment of time and resources into the process was confirmed as a crucial enabling factor.	No significant limitations.
37	Ghana pre-2019	The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) developed its expertise in using anonymised telecommunications data for mapping and planning for economic migration and access to social services through a collaboration between Flowminder and the Hewlett Foundation.	GPSDD were instrumental in brokering GSS's partnership with Flowminder, the Hewlett Foundation, and Vodafone Ghana. 2 use cases for anonymised telecommunications data are now functional: 1) incorporating real-time data into early warning and disaster response in partnership with the National Disaster Management Organisation; 2) creating a Covid mobility analysis tool. GSS has also responded to the pandemic by setting up a Covid tracker, with support from Fraym and	No significant limitations.

ID	Location and period	Outcome harvest description	Revised outcome description	Limitations
			Esri, partnerships which were brokered by GPSDD.	
38	Kenya 2018-2020	After coming together at the GPSDD-facilitated mobile Data for Social Impact Regional Forum, the KNBS improved its capacity to access and use mobile data via a collaboration with International Telecommunications Union, the Kenyan Communications Authority and Kenyan mobile service operators in 2018.	GPSDD did not appear to have had any involvement in outcome 38 apart perhaps the mobile data for social impact forum providing the space where these actors met.	Respondents from KNBS declined our invitation for interview.
39	Kenya 2018–2019	Building on the lessons learned from the 2018 partnership project between the international telecommunications unions, the communications authority, KNBS and mobile network operators, the KNBS further improved its capacity to access and use mobile data via a collaboration with the Communications Authority and Safaricom in 2019.	Building on the lessons learned from the 2018 partnership project between the international telecommunications unions, the Kenyan Communications authority, KNBS and mobile network operators, GPSDD brought together, with funding from GIZ, KNBS, the Communications Authority and Safaricom with the goal of scaling the use of mobile data by KNBS. After supporting the development of the new partnership’s agenda and workplan GPSDD withdrew from the effort due to a lack of resources.	Respondents from KNBS declined our invitation for interview.
42	Ghana, Sierra Leone	Relevant in-country organisations take ownership of the ARDC platform and coordinate geospatial data’s use, sharing, generation and training among key stakeholders GPSDD asserts that “Institutionalising the ARDC governance framework ensures sustainability because it	In Ghana, the ARDC governance framework sits within, and derives legitimacy from the data roadmap governance structures. Ghanaian institutions and stakeholders have full ownership of the structures and processes. High-level political buy-in has been	Overlap between key informants for this outcome and for outcomes 18, 35, 37 constrained time available in interview for respondents from Ghana.

ID	Location and period	Outcome harvest description	Revised outcome description	Limitations
		<p>leverages existing structures and ensures national-level ownership.” According to GPSDD in their study on ARDC, “Many country partners noted that this approach has helped garner political buy-in and support for the use of earth observation data at scale.” In both Ghana and Sierra Leone, the ARDC has good political buy-in from the highest levels of government. In Ghana, the Vice President has endorsed the technology and approach publicly.</p>	<p>a powerful incentive for stakeholders involved in ARDC. In Sierra Leone, the governance structures are in place, but the evidence was not complete enough to judge the degree to which country ownership, and political support had been established.</p>	<p>No respondents from the Right to Access Information Commission were available for interview.</p> <p>The respondents that were available from Sierra Leone had some limitations to their knowledge on this outcome area.</p>
51	Global Jul 2018 – present	<p>UNICEF adjusted its priorities as a result of being an inclusive charter champion for example pushing for initiatives such as an administrative data maturity mode and country-level data action plans as a result of signing up to the IDC.</p>	<p>While there is clear evidence that UNICEF and DFID (see outcome 21) have benefited from their involvement in the IDC initiative, the specific outcomes identified were not achieved as a result of the IDC. Both DFID and UNICEF already had data their own plans in place which they drew from to create their specific IDC action plans. The main outcome for these organisations was the contribution of being an IDC signatory had on their own advocacy efforts in this area.</p>	<p>No significant limitations.</p>

Annex 4: Detailed findings and analysis

EQ1: To what extent are the activities and outputs of the GPSDD consistent with its stated goals and objectives? To what extent do the goals and objectives of the GPSDD triangulate with the needs and interests of its different target groups?

This section considers the extent to which GPSDD's activities and outputs are consistent with achieving the goals and objectives laid out in its strategy, before analysing the ways in which the organisation meets the needs of its diverse partners.

The ambition and scope of GPSDD's strategy was clear from evidence gathered in the organisational assessment.¹⁴⁰ The complex, rapidly evolving nature of the data for development sector is recognised in the current 2019–23 strategy and ToC, and the need for a multifaceted response clearly articulated.¹⁴¹ Analysis of GPSDD's planned activities and outputs over the last four years show them to be consistent with working in this way and progressing towards their overall goals.¹⁴² This approach was established in the pre-2019 phase, where GPSDD set out a package of interventions and outputs that holistically addressed their strategic goals and objectives. 9 out of 10 activities in the 2017 logframe, and 9 out of 11 activities in the 2018 logframe were relevant to the primary objective they were designed to address but were at least partly aligned with other strategic goals. The 2019–23 strategy maintains the holistic approach established in the pre-2019 phase, with a package of activities and outputs that remain complementary, despite their wider scope and ambition. All 19 activities set out in the 2019 logframe addressed their primary objective and were also aligned with at least two of the three remaining intermediate results (see Box 10). There was a particularly good degree of alignment between interventions IR1.1 and IR1.2, which would then contribute in turn to IR2.1.

Box 10. Current GPSDD intermediate results

IR1.1: New technologies and data sources are scaled, building on existing systems, to improve government decision making.

IR 1.2: A global movement is fostered of political, business and civil society leaders, promoting responsible data use, building public trust, and showcasing pathways to success.

IR 1.3: Standards of interoperability are embedded into global frameworks on data and statistics, making progress towards a world where data interoperability is the norm.

IR 2.1: The use of timely and robust data for SDGs monitoring is scaled so that by the halfway point to the SDGs, the world has a clear picture of progress on the Goals.

An additional element added to the 2019–23 strategy were the levers of change, mechanisms through which GPSDD aims to effect change. These three levers – supporting changemakers, creating incentives, and developing learnings – were well-aligned with the activities outlined in the 2019 logframe.¹⁴³ For all 19 activities, at least two levers were related to the work being carried out. Some significant examples of GPSDD impact, such as the ARDC, the Ghana National Data Roadmap process and the programme of peer exchanges, have employed all three levers of change.¹⁴⁴ The levers of change therefore seem to be a useful

¹⁴⁰ See EQ9

¹⁴¹ Indeed, the discussion of enabling and disabling factors draws this out – see EQ6

¹⁴² See Strategy Alignment Review; Annex 5

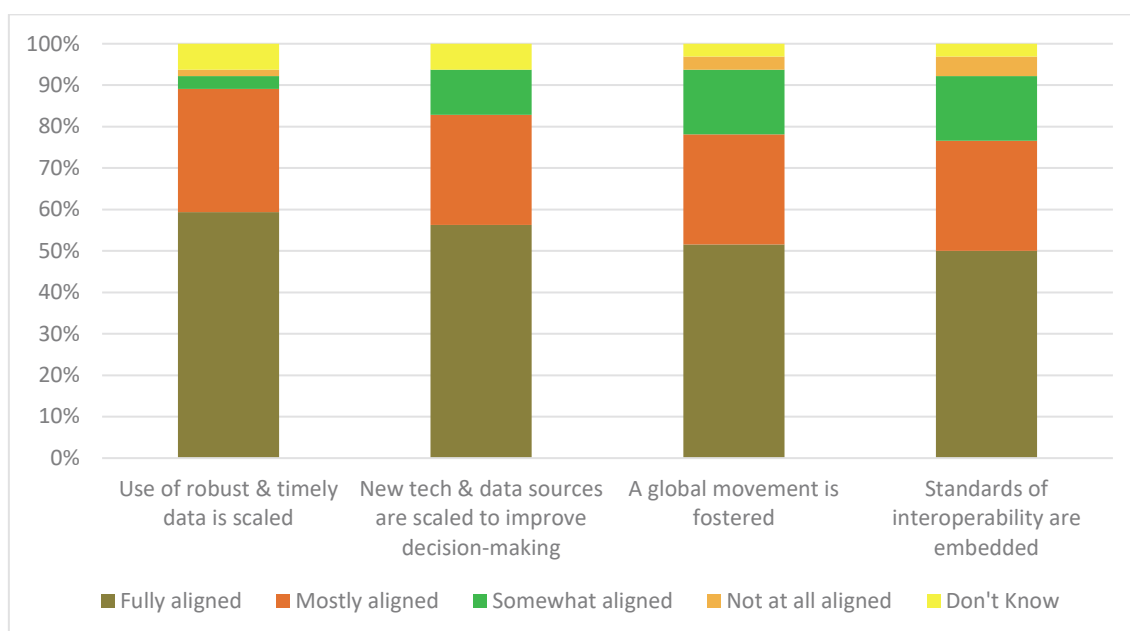
¹⁴³ Ibid

¹⁴⁴ See EQ4

element in ensuring that efforts made in one strategic area complement, and add value to those made in the others.

Evidence from a desk-based mapping exercise, and from key informants likewise clearly demonstrated that GPSDD’s objectives meet the needs of partners and align with their interests. Key informants gave a clear sense of the value of their contributions as delivered through the activities and outputs as part of the strategy.¹⁴⁵ A mapping exercise based on a sample of partners from different target groups – academia /research, CSO/NGO, donor/foundation, for-profit, government and multilaterals – found good levels of alignment with GPSDD goals.¹⁴⁶ All 22 sampled partner organisations showed some degree of alignment with GPSDD’s 2019–23 strategy.¹⁴⁷ Of these, 55% had one or more core goals that were fully aligned with GPSDD’s, 32% has one or more core goals that were mostly aligned, and 13% had one or more core goals that were partly aligned.¹⁴⁸ This is supported by evidence from the partner survey,¹⁴⁹ which found that at least 50% of respondents described GPSDD goals as fully aligned with their needs and interests (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: How well do each of GPSDD’s planned results align with your own organization’s aims and objectives?



Partner goals were most likely to align with IR1.2. When all the partner goals from the sample were aggregated, and considered together, 40% were fully, mostly or partly aligned with GPSDD’s work in building a global movement advocating for sustainable data.¹⁵⁰ There was also a good degree of alignment between partner goals and IR1.1 and IR2.1, with 21% and 13% of respective partner goals fully, mostly or partly aligned. Explicit references to IR1.3 among partner goals were less frequent, with 6% of partner goals fully, mostly or partly aligned. To some degree, this reflects the nature of the goals; IR1.2 is likely to be among the interests of organisations joining a global partnership like GPSDD, whereas interoperability

¹⁴⁵ Examples include WS1-KII1; WS1-KII3; O2-KII1; O2-KII2; O2-KII4; O3-KII1; O18&35&37-KII1; O18&35&37-KII3; O25-KII1. See methodology section 4 for full details of the mapping exercise

¹⁴⁶ See methodology Section 4 for a fuller explanation of the partner goals mapping exercise used for analysis

¹⁴⁷ See Annex 7 for details of sample used.

¹⁴⁸ Partner goals mapping exercise

¹⁴⁹ See methodology Section 4 for a fuller explanation of the partner survey.

¹⁵⁰ Partner goals mapping exercise

(IR1.3) is a more specific sub-section of data for development work, with a narrower field of actors.

GPSDD's strategic goals and objectives also align well with the interests of their different target groups. The partnership occupies a unique place in terms of the breadth of organisations included in its network, and its strategy allows it the room and the flexibility to respond to partners' needs.¹⁵¹ There was also some variation in the degree of alignment that different target groups had with GPSDD goals. Academia/research and government target groups had the highest proportion of strategic goals which triangulated with GPSDD's work. 50% of the academic/research organisations' goals, and 60% of the government institutions' goals were either fully or mostly aligned with GPSDD outputs/outcomes.¹⁵² It is encouraging that GPSDD's work aligns well with the academic/research organisations which are likely to be leading innovators in the data for development landscape. The alignment with government institutions, largely official statistics bodies, is also a positive sign in terms of progress towards the SDGs, and of their effective monitoring.

Multilaterals also showed a good degree of alignment with GPSDD goals, with 30% of the goals of sampled institutions either fully or mostly aligned.¹⁵³ As the sampled multilateral institutions have broad mandates, of which data for development issues form a smaller part, this represents a high proportion of goals linked to GPSDD's work. It was hard to draw conclusions about the level of alignment between for-profit partners and GPSDD's work, as this is a target group less likely to make available detailed strategy documents.

EQ2: What are GPSDD and other efforts (to improve the quality and availability of data to support the SDGs) well positioned to achieve, and why? To what extent do these efforts and GPSDD complement one another, and what has been the outcome of this complementarity?

This section analyses the ways in which GPSDD is able to complement, rather than compete with, the work of other global actors within the data for development sector. It then considers the results emerging thus far from this complementarity, and the potential achievements of GPSDD and its partners going forward.

There is strong evidence from key informant interviews (KIIs), triangulated by the results of a desk-based complementarity analysis,¹⁵⁴ that GPSDD has established a niche for itself within the web of global actors (see Table 1 below) in the data for development sector, and that this allows it to contribute in a complementary way to progress being made towards better data for the SDGs.¹⁵⁵ Key stakeholders from PARIS21, UNSD and CEPEI identified GPSDD's unique value in its power to create a network linking a broad range of organisations/systems within the ecosystem which were not previously connected.¹⁵⁶ GPSDD's ability to bridge the gaps between established or institutionalised stakeholders and new or emerging data sources and technologies was seen as a particular strength. Several key informants highlighted GPSDD's links with UN actors, and the consequent links to official and national statistics institutions, as an important conduit for newer, less established stakeholders, and for private sector partners.¹⁵⁷ GPSDD also operates successfully at different levels: global, regional and

¹⁵¹ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; See EQ2 for fuller discussion

¹⁵² Partner goals mapping exercise

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ See methodology section 4 for full details of complementarity analysis

¹⁵⁵ Complementary analysis; WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; WS1-KII3

¹⁵⁶ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; WS1-KII3; WS3-KIIT3

¹⁵⁷ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; WS3-KIIT10

country,¹⁵⁸ and has the necessary reputation and convening power to leverage these effectively.¹⁵⁹

Table 1: Global partners sampled in complementarity analysis and key informant interviews (shown in bold)

Athena Infonomics	International Aid Transparency Initiative
CEPEI	Innovations for Poverty Action
Data2X	Open Knowledge International
Development Gateway	PARIS21
Development Initiatives	Tableau Foundation
Directorate-general Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Belgium	UN Statistics Division
Global Biodiversity Information Facility	UN Women
Google	

In most instances, GPSDD is able to function in a way that complements the work of other major global actors, largely due to consensus over the main goals of the data for development movement. This was, however, somewhat dependent on differences in organisational mandate and scope being clearly articulated. Informants from other global initiatives¹⁶⁰ felt that the major actors, including GPSDD, are all aiming for the same broad objectives,¹⁶¹ with the SDGs acting as a framework within which to articulate both goals and contributions.¹⁶² Although operating in the same space, where differences in mandate are clearly articulated, GPSDD and its peers operating at global level are able to coexist and to collaborate effectively.¹⁶³ For instance, while UNSD and GPSDD occupy the same space, the former's clear focus on official institutions and statistical systems makes its role and contribution distinct from GPSDD's.

In addition, GPSDD has the agility to develop new ways of working at the regional level, as in the recent partnership with CEPEI and the response to the global pandemic (see EQ9), as a means to extend its work and influence in Latin America, the Caribbean and across Africa.¹⁶⁴ The common framework of the SDGs, and the existing effective relationship with CEPEI, as a founding member of GPSDD were key to establishing this model, with CEPEI as regional implementing partner.¹⁶⁵ This new form of complementarity (a) leverages CEPEI's knowledge base and reputation, built through their years of experience in the region, and (b) enables GPSDD's global network and data for development expertise to include partners in Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁶⁶

There are a couple of instances where overlap in scope causes an element of competition, largely arising in situations where GPSDD and other partners have donors in common. Some major international donors found a slight lack of clarity in differentiating the mandates of PARIS21 and GPSDD, as organisations with similar goals, founded by the same stakeholders.¹⁶⁷ There was not a sense that this prevented the two organisations from coexisting, but that the

¹⁵⁸ Complementarity analysis

¹⁵⁹ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; WS3-KIIB2; WS3-KIIT7

¹⁶⁰ PARIS21; UNSD

¹⁶¹ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2

¹⁶² WS1-KII1

¹⁶³ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2

¹⁶⁴ WS1-KII3

¹⁶⁵ WS1-KII3

¹⁶⁶ WS1-KII3

¹⁶⁷ WS1-KII2

two organisations could perhaps collaborate more effectively to articulate their different mandates, particularly as both are currently undergoing large-scale evaluations.¹⁶⁸

Where effective complementarity does exist, however, it is enabled by core elements of GPSDD’s organisational culture, including its leadership, its strategic approach, and the value it places on establishing effective relationships.¹⁶⁹ This verifies the findings of the **organisational assessment set out against EQ9.** GPSDD’s effective leadership, and the ability of the Secretariat to articulate the organisation’s mandate and scope was highlighted as important, particularly early on, when tensions remained over how the partnership would interact with official statistics institutions.¹⁷⁰ GPSDD’s broad network, and interactions at different levels within the ecosystem, gives it a strategic overview of the data value chain. They also operate in an inductive and holistic way, responding in a multifaceted way to the needs of partners.¹⁷¹ The combination of these two elements gives them both an awareness of where their niche might be and the flexibility to adapt their role accordingly. In practical terms, the Secretariat has invested, and continues to invest, time in developing the connections necessary to working in a complementary way.¹⁷² Respondents reported a range of types of engagement, and lines of communication established by GPSDD, including high-level events, participation in governance structures of global initiatives, and regular, informal contact with key stakeholders.¹⁷³ At its most effective, this has led to co-creation, or joint development of key initiatives, as in the work achieved by GPSDD in collaboration with UNSD.¹⁷⁴

Consequently, GPSDD’s capacity to function in ways that complement the work of other key global actors has led to some promising initiatives, largely in terms of high-level advocacy initiatives and events, that have the potential to deliver results. Complementarity with UNSD has been particularly fruitful, with collaboratives on data interoperability and administrative data. The Data For Now Initiative, launched in 2019, is a further concrete example of high-level work prompted by close collaboration between the two organisations, this time with the addition of the World Bank.¹⁷⁵ Evidence from respondents showed that GPSDD’s effective collaboration both at global and country level was an important factor in this outcome.¹⁷⁶ There has also been progress in the establishment and roll-out of the Inclusive Data Charter, and concrete contributions to the UN Data Forum, both in implementation, and in the evaluation process, and to the UN Global Platform for Big Data.¹⁷⁷ For PARIS21, the evidence showed a different degree of complementarity, with the two entities coexisting, and making contributions to the same high-level advocacy work, as well as participating in the governance of key organisations and networks in the sector, as in the Bern Network.¹⁷⁸

The evidence also highlighted areas where GPSDD and other global actors in the data for development ecosystem are positioned to achieve results in the future. There was a strong sense from key informants that GPSDD will be increasingly able to leverage its links with new and emerging data actors to encourage and embed the use of new data sources and technologies as a tool within official statistics systems, as well as addressing the challenge of

¹⁶⁸ WS1-KII2

¹⁶⁹ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII3; See EQ9 – organisational assessment

¹⁷⁰ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII3

¹⁷¹ WS3-KIIB4

¹⁷² WS1-KII1; WS1-KII3; See also EQ9 – to what extent are the skills, staff and style of GPSDD aligned with its values?

¹⁷³ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; WS1-KII3

¹⁷⁴ WS1-KII1

¹⁷⁵ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII3

¹⁷⁶ WS1-KII1; WS3-KIIT3

¹⁷⁷ WS1-KII1

¹⁷⁸ WS1-KII2

making them sustainable in low-income settings.¹⁷⁹ The collaboration with UNSD was identified as a means to scale up work to improve the quality and availability of data.¹⁸⁰ CEPEI's experience and contacts within the official statistics community in Latin America and the Caribbean was also highlighted as an enabler of potential change in that region.¹⁸¹

There are potential gains to be made through links with the private sector, a complex emerging challenge in the data for development landscape.¹⁸² GPSDD's experience of brokering partnerships between private sector actors and government institutions, as in the example of the collaboration between Ghana Statistical Service, Fraym and Esri to set up the National Covid Tracker, sets it up as an important contributor going forwards.¹⁸³ There is also potential to build on the work achieved so far with the Inclusive Data Charter, using it as a tool to respond to the challenge of data disaggregation, a crucial part of the Leave No One Behind agenda.¹⁸⁴

Finally, the partnership with CEPEI gives GPSDD an opportunity to consider how it might expand its work in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the extent to which learning from this operational model might be applied in other regions. Evidence from key informants in the region demonstrated a readiness to see larger-scale projects and initiatives developed, which build on the Data for Now Initiative, and bring the expertise of new GPSDD partners into Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁸⁵ The regional hub through CEPEI is a new venture for the Secretariat. The organisational assessment interviewees neither endorsed nor criticised the model.

EQ3: To what extent have the objectives of the GPSDD, as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks, been achieved? To what extent did the different GPSDD activities and outputs contribute to these results?

This section sets out to what extent GPSDD has contributed to each of the intermediate results set out in the current strategy and ToC (see section 4 and Box 11 below), and through which interventions or initiatives these contributions have been made. The findings in this section are based on an analysis of KIIs and documents associated with the sample of outcomes selected from the outcome harvest (see section 4).

Box 11. Current GPSDD intermediate results

IR 1.1: New technologies and data sources are scaled, building on existing systems, to improve government decision making.

IR 1.2: A global movement is fostered of political, business and civil society leaders, promoting responsible data use, building public trust, and showcasing pathways to success.

IR 1.3: Standards of interoperability are embedded into global frameworks on data and statistics, making progress towards a world where data interoperability is the norm.

IR 2.1: The use of timely and robust data for SDGs monitoring is scaled so that by the halfway point to the SDGs, the world has a clear picture of progress on the Goals.

¹⁷⁹ WS1-KII1; WS1-KII2; WS3-KIIT7

¹⁸⁰ WS1-KII1

¹⁸¹ WS1-KII3

¹⁸² WS1-KII1

¹⁸³ WS1-KII1

¹⁸⁴ WS1-KII1

¹⁸⁵ WS1-KII3; O17&31&32-KII2

There is clear evidence that a range of GPSDD outcomes examined have helped improve government decision making (IR1.1) and this appears to have been primarily achieved through country or regionally focused, rather than global, initiatives. GPSDD's support for the ARDC¹⁸⁶ has contributed to improved government decision making in several ways. First, within Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone (from which key informants¹⁸⁷ were interviewed) the ARDC is now established as a key tool for government ministries, departments and agencies to monitor a range of environmental indicators and issues linked to the SDGs through the use of satellite and earth observations data.

Second, the ARDC has contributed to a shift towards embedding or standardising the use of satellite and earth observations data in government institutions.¹⁸⁸ According to respondents¹⁸⁹ from Ghana and Sierra Leone, this shift has been underpinned by the establishment of ARDC governance structures, though the sustainability of these appears more evident in Ghana – primarily due to a clear institutional home, ministerial-level support and commitment of the Ghana Statistical Services (GSS). Within Sierra Leone, interview responses were not sufficient to make a firm judgement about sustainability.

Third, the successful transition from ARDC into the now firmly established DEA initiative is enabling a significant scale-up of ARDC technology in support of government decision making across the whole of Africa.¹⁹⁰

Among the outcomes examined, GPSDD's work on the Inclusive Data Charter (IDC) is contributing to increased availability of disaggregated data (IR1.1), though as an advocacy and engagement tool, as opposed to directly influencing the work of associated IDC champions. The evaluation examined GPSDD's work with DFID and UNICEF as IDC champions and found that the two identified outcomes¹⁹¹ were not directly attributable to them having signed up to the IDC.¹⁹² Instead, signing up to the IDC has enabled DFID and UNICEF to signal the importance of inclusive data and emphasise relevant aspects of their work.¹⁹³ In the case of DFID, signing up to the IDC allowed them to advocate for inclusive data and influence others in a way they do not believe would have been possible otherwise – and resulted in them getting the World Bank and the Government of Kenya to sign up to the IDC and begin developing inclusive data action plans. Since the merger of DFID and FCO, the British government has signalled its ongoing commitment to inclusive data through the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) signing up to the IDC.

One specific country-level result¹⁹⁴ around new data sources for government decision making attributable to the work of GPSDD (building on the work of an earlier USAID project) relates to the finalisation and adoption as official policy of the Kenyan Ministry of Health's interoperability framework.¹⁹⁵ The framework sets out clear standards on how data from different systems that feed information to the Ministry of Health can be combined into various

¹⁸⁶ See outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 42

¹⁸⁷ O2-KII1, O2-KII2, O2-KII3 and O2-KII4

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ O4&42-KII1, O4&42-KII2 and O4&42-KII3

¹⁹⁰ O3-KII1, O3-KII2, and O3-KII3

¹⁹¹ See outcomes 21 (DFID publishing a new disability strategy) and 51 (UNICEF pushing for initiatives such as an administrative data maturity model and country-level data action plans)

¹⁹² DFID already had its own data disaggregation plan prior to development of the IDC. The data disaggregation plan informed DFID's contribution to developing the charter, but after the charter had been developed it then also informed changes to DFID's data disaggregation plan, including making it broader and more of an inclusive plan. In other words, it was an iterative process which worked both ways. UNICEF had begun work on the admin data maturity model and data action planning in 2016. UNICEF prepared their IDC action plan by pulling together relevant aspects of workstreams and action plans that already existed.

¹⁹³ O21&51-KII1 and O21&51-KII2

¹⁹⁴ See outcome 24

¹⁹⁵ O24-KII1, O24-KII2 and O24-KII3

information products to aid planning and decision making (see below for further details related to IR1.3). A peer exchange between Latin American, Caribbean and African countries¹⁹⁶ organised by GPSDD in collaboration with others¹⁹⁷ has led to several regional results, including a webinar focusing on interoperability¹⁹⁸ (see IR1.3 below), inter-country sharing of experiences and lessons learned related to the use of administrative data,¹⁹⁹ and the establishment of an administrative data collaborative²⁰⁰ – through which countries can access and share resources, tools, best practices and experiences.²⁰¹

Among the outcomes examined, there are examples of where GPSDD’s work has contributed to building connections between different types of stakeholders (primarily at country level), and these are steps towards building a global movement, though this intermediate result (IR1.2) has not yet been achieved. Through its support to the National Data Roadmap process in Ghana, GPSDD has helped develop partnerships with GSS and a variety of national and international stakeholders which relate to the focus of IR1.2 (see Box 12).

A peer exchange between Ghana and Kenya organised by GPSDD,²⁰² focused on exchanging lessons around SDG monitoring, has contributed results related to IR1.2, by improving connections and boosting collaboration between key government and civil society stakeholders. Respondents²⁰³ were able to name a number of results which arose from the exchange, mostly related to building or strengthening connections between stakeholders and institutions within the same country, and between Kenyan and Ghanaian stakeholders, and between GPSDD and GIZ, including in relation to the development of guidelines for the use of citizen-generated data (see IR2.1 below).

Other regional outcomes that have contributed to improved government decision making (see IR1.1 above) also represent steps towards the fostering of a global movement (IR1.2). These include the transition of the ARDC into Digital Earth Africa,²⁰⁴ and partnerships and cooperation between countries around administrative data arising from the Latin American, Caribbean and African peer exchange.²⁰⁵ While the above country and regional-level results are not evidence of a global movement having been fostered, they represent steps towards this. One outcome identified within the sample which potentially relates to IR1.2 is the creation of a new African Regional Data Science Campus²⁰⁶ within UNECA. The campus is still a work in progress and cannot be considered an outcome at this point. In addition, it appears this idea came about as a result of direct discussions between UNECA and ONS and did not involve GPSDD (who were involved in some follow-up discussions, but apparently not in a substantive way).²⁰⁷

The IDC initiative and the improved coordination among data funders within the multi-stakeholder Bern network are outcomes to which GPSDD has contributed significantly and which are helping to foster a global movement (IR1.2). One way in which GPSDD has contributed²⁰⁸ to the fostering of a global movement is through its advocacy and engagement

¹⁹⁶ See outcome 26

¹⁹⁷ CEPEI, the Mexican National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) and the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB)

¹⁹⁸ O26-KII2

¹⁹⁹ O26-KII1

²⁰⁰ O26-KII2

²⁰¹ www.data4sdgs.org/initiatives/administrative-data-collaborative

²⁰² See outcome 25

²⁰³ O25-KII1, O25-KII2 and O25-KII3

²⁰⁴ See outcome 3

²⁰⁵ See outcome 26

²⁰⁶ Which is still a work in progress and could not be considered an outcome in any case.

²⁰⁷ O12-KII1

²⁰⁸ See outcome 13

with the Bern network. It helped to replace an earlier discussion paper²⁰⁹ on financing data with a five-point agenda²¹⁰ that was broader, more inclusive, more strategic and which drew on the comparative advantage of the network. All four respondents²¹¹ interviewed confirmed GPSDD's support and that the new agenda represented a significant improvement over the earlier one. However, all four respondents remarked at how difficult the agenda is proving to operationalise (which GPSDD is continuing to support) and one believed the Bern network is not ideally suited to this task; primarily due to its lack of country experience and presence.

At the time of writing, nine governments²¹² and 11 global organisations (including INGOs, UN agencies and the World Bank) had signed up to the IDC²¹³ as champions, with the majority having prepared, and begun implementation of, IDC action plans. The diversity of IDC champions and the advocacy and engagement taking place within the group is helping foster a global movement around inclusive data.²¹⁴ While clear progress²¹⁵ has been made under the IDC, some respondents²¹⁶ voiced concern, or accepted, that the IDC initiative has been focused on getting institutions or organisations who are already in a strong position regarding inclusive or disaggregated data to sign up to the IDC. Although this has been important in terms of generating momentum, consideration could be given to focusing efforts on those who need more support to ensure "no data champion is left behind".

Box 12. The Ghana National Data Roadmap process²¹⁷

The Ghana National Data Roadmap process began in 2016 and marked the start of a productive relationship with GPSDD. The process has contributed in some way to all GPSDD's current 2019–23 strategic objectives. For example, in addition to the ARDC, GPSDD has helped improve government decision making (IR1.1), though its brokering of a collaboration between GSS, Vodafone Ghana, and Flowminder, funded by the Hewlett Foundation, which has enabled telecoms data to be used, among other things, by the National Disaster Management Organisation (NaDMO) in support of an early warning system for disaster response.²¹⁸

The extensive work done by GPSDD to broker/promote relevant and productive partnerships between GSS and key players in the data for development sector contributes to IR1.2. Work on developing key policy frameworks, and on ensuring that data collection matches data platforms and data needs has made some contribution to standards of interoperability (IR1.3).²¹⁹ The development of the National Data Reporting Platform and the Data Quality Assurance Framework, in addition to project work to increase the availability of quality data has contributed to scaling up robust data for SDG monitoring (IR2.1).²²⁰

The data interoperability guide²²¹ supported by GPSDD is an important step towards helping embed standards of interoperability within global frameworks (IR1.3), and has helped influence, among the outcomes examined, one regional and two country-level interoperability results. The interoperability guide was launched in October 2018 by the

²⁰⁹ The Bern Network (July 2019). *Financing More and Better Data to Achieve the SDGs*

²¹⁰ The Bern Network (2019). *More and Better Development Data for a Decade of Action*

²¹¹ O13-KII1, O13-KII2, O13-KII3 and O13-KII4

²¹² Columbia, Ghana, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Peru, Philippines, UK (FCDO and ONS), and Zanzibar

²¹³ <https://www.data4sdgs.org/initiatives/inclusive-data-charter>

²¹⁴ O21&51-KII1 and O21&51-KII3

²¹⁵ GPSDD (July 2020). *IDC Champions two-year anniversary learning: session outputs*

²¹⁶ O21&51-KII2 and O21&51-KII3

²¹⁷ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

²¹⁸ O18&35&37-KII1 and O18&35&37-KII3

²¹⁹ O18&35&37-KII3

²²⁰ O18&35&37-KII1

²²¹ Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability (October 2018). *Data Interoperability: A Practitioner's Guide to Joining up Data in the Development Sector*

Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability – co-convened by GPSDD and the UNSD and established in 2017. The guide was conceived, not only as a technical reference, but as a means of supporting policy advocacy – though shifting mindsets at national and global levels on interoperability and the importance of more robust multi-stakeholder data ecosystems. The guide is now being institutionalised through UNSC and members of the collaborative (e.g. Mexico and Columbia) are in the process of using the guide to make changes to national systems – including with a view to refining the guide in response.

In addition to the modest contribution made to standards of interoperability (IR1.3) by the Ghana National Data Roadmap process, two other examples were identified among the outcomes examined: one at country level and one regional in focus. The first of these relates to the adoption as official policy of the Kenyan Ministry of Health’s interoperability framework²²² supported by GPSDD (see IR1.1 above) and influenced in an opportunistic manner by the data interoperability guide. All three respondents²²³ interviewed considered this support a great success. The fact GPSDD was able to leverage buy-in from ministry leadership from the outset was a key factor here; supported by GPSDD’s network that enabled it to identify frustration among the senior leadership and to subsequently channel political pressure.

An outcome of the LAC–Africa peer exchange²²⁴ (see IR1.1) was to generate interest among participating countries to deepen knowledge on methodologies and data management to strengthen interoperability.²²⁵ In addition, a webinar²²⁶ focusing on interoperability was organised by GPSDD and UNSD with the participation of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) and the UN; linked to the wider Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability.

Kenya guidelines for civil society organisations (CSOs) involved in Citizen Generated Data (CGD) collection contribute to scaling the use of timely and robust data for monitoring the SDGs (IR2.1) alongside several outcomes which also contribute to one or more other GPSDD objectives, including the ARDC, Ghana–Kenya peer exchange, and Ghana National Data Roadmap. The idea of Kenya-specific guidelines for improving the quality of CGD was first mentioned during the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange in 2019. GPSDD subsequently worked with Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and GIZ to develop the guidelines, informed by the global guide²²⁷ prepared by GPSDD’s CGD Task group. GPSDD initiated and spearheaded the development of the guidelines with funding from GIZ and they both leveraged GIZs connections with the Kenyan government to help speed up review processes which had slowed or stalled. Draft Kenya CGD guidelines are currently being reviewed by KNBS. The guidelines as such have not made a difference to the CGD data in Kenya as they have not yet been published. However, the process of developing the guidelines has softened attitudes towards CGD within KNBS and alerted CSOs on the additional work that needs to happen from their side to strengthen the quality of CGD.²²⁸

GPSDD’s work on the ARDC has contributed to scaling the use of timely and robust data (IR2.1) in several ways, particularly through its application, underpinned by appropriate governance arrangements, which is being scaled up through its transition into DEA. ARDC use cases²²⁹ (e.g. monitoring water quality in Ghana, monitoring changes in mangrove swamps over time in Sierra Leona, and monitoring crop performance and deforestation in Senegal) are

²²² See outcome 24

²²³ O24-KII1, O24-KII2 and O24-KII3

²²⁴ See outcome 26

²²⁵ O26-KII2

²²⁶ <http://cepei.org/en/eventos/webinar-interoperability-a-bridge-to-strengthen-data-and-achieve-the-sdgs/>

²²⁷ GPSDD. (2019). *Choosing and engaging with citizen generated data*

²²⁸ O15-KII1, O15-KII2 and O15-KII3

²²⁹ See outcome 2

directly contributing to SDG monitoring and are underpinned by ARDC governance arrangements.²³⁰ The transition from ARDC to DEA is directly contributing to the scaling up of data for monitoring the SDGs, through democratising access to quality earth observations and satellite data for monitoring development outcomes.

The contribution of the Ghana National Data Roadmap process²³¹ to scaling up robust data for SDG monitoring is summarised in Box 12. Two results emerging from the Kenya–Ghana peer exchange²³² also relate to IR2.1. The exchange enabled participants to share good practice, and innovative ideas, which participants were able to learn from. In particular, the exchange led to a high-level meeting with Council of Governors (CoG) and KNBS, where they were able to agree on a way forward for the development of norms and standards for data collection – which then fed into development of the Kenya specific CGD guidelines reported above.²³³ The same respondent said that learning about private sector models for data management gave them better knowledge from which to lobby for more acceptance of citizen-generated data in Kenya.

Although achieved in 2017, prior to the publication of the current 2019–23 strategy, a GPSDD brokered collaboration between the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia (DANE), other Columbian stakeholders and expert partners (NASA and Google Earth Engine) resulted in DANE developing the capability to measure SDG indicator 11.3.1²³⁴ using geospatial data.²³⁵ This result, together with the building of awareness of the importance of monitoring the SDGs within The Colombian Ministry of Planning as a result of the collaboration²³⁶ are clearly linked to IR2.1. Another DANE-related outcome identified in the outcome harvest concerns the development of methods used to measure SDG indicators 9.1.1 and 11.7.1.²³⁷ Secretariat members clarified that a workshop in Bogotá, Colombia entitled “Towards Integration of National Statistics and Earth Observations for SDG Monitoring” was co-organised by DANE, NASA and GPSDD²³⁸ and which helped broker a relationship between DANE and NASA which resulted in the development of improved methodologies for SDG indicators 9.1.1 and 11.7.1 – though no subsequent support was provided by GPSDD in the development of these methodologies. Respondents²³⁹ in Columbia said that while GPSDD support was key to helping them use geospatial data to measure SDG indicator 11.3.1, they did not play a role in the development of methods used to measure SDG indicators 9.1.1 and 11.7.1.

Among the outcomes examined, several positive unintended consequences of GPSDD’s work were identified by respondents, including opportunities for scaling up CGD efforts in Africa, deepening of IDC advocacy efforts by the UK government, and extending the results of two country-level initiatives in Colombia and Kenya. None of the respondents identified any negative unintended consequences from GPSDD’s work. One respondent²⁴⁰ said that GPSDD had developed a good connection with UN Women during their work on Kenyan CGD guidelines²⁴¹ as a result of having consulted with them early on in the process about the work

²³⁰ See outcomes 4 and 42.

²³¹ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

²³² See outcome 25

²³³ O25-KII3

²³⁴ Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate

²³⁵ See outcome 32

²³⁶ See outcome 17

²³⁷ See outcome 31

²³⁸ OECD. (2017). *Development Co-operation Report 2017. Case Studies on Data for Development.*

²³⁹ O17&31&32-KII1, O17&31&32-KII2 and O17&31&32-KII3

²⁴⁰ O15-KII3

²⁴¹ See outcome 15

UN Women had been doing on CGD in Kenya. The respondent suggested this may lead to a potential collaboration focused on scaling CGD efforts in other countries. Respondents²⁴² involved with the ARDC²⁴³ did not identify specific unintended consequences, though they did not expect DEA to be the eventual outcome.

In Colombia, DANE have adapted the use of geospatial information tools and algorithms (including some developed as a result of GPSDD brokering²⁴⁴) to measure other land use indicators in addition to the original three SDG indicators they were designed to measure.²⁴⁵ According to one respondent,²⁴⁶ as a result of GPSDD’s support for the Kenyan health information systems interoperability framework,²⁴⁷ progress appears to have been unlocked on other policies such as the setting of minimum technical standards for IT systems vendors – that could not move forward because of the lack of agreed upon standards.

UK’s DFID officially merged with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 20 September 2020 to become the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Almost immediately, at the GPSDD Fifth Anniversary Townhall on 25 September, the FCDO Minister for Overseas Territories and Sustainable Development announced the FCDO had signed up to the IDC.²⁴⁸ One respondent²⁴⁹ said an unintended consequence therefore of DFID having signed up to the IDC was that, because FCDO subsequently signed up, it was now possible to bring the “whole might” of the diplomatic service to engage with other countries and better advocate for more inclusive data. This is seen by the respondent as a massive step forward in terms of how the UK can better influence outcomes in this area.

EQ4: How, and in which contexts, have different streams of work enabled GPSDD to deliver outputs and contribute to the achievement of objectives? Which streams of work have made the greatest, and least, contribution, and why?

This section examines how, and in what contexts, the levers of change (streams of work) which GPSDD employs (see GPSDD’s ToC at section 4 and Box 13 below) have enabled GPSDD to deliver results within the outcomes examined. We also examine how the GPSDD Secretariat has identified and responded to evidence and learning within the outcomes examined.

Box 13. Current GPSDD levers of change

Supporting changemakers: We establish and support partnerships that help individuals and organisations achieve their objectives in strengthening enabling policies and data ecosystems.

Creating incentives: We use our communications and advocacy expertise to provide visibility to leaders in the field, create mechanisms for engagement, and build coalitions for change, to promote innovation and investment in data.

Developing learnings: We share, aggregate, and amplify our network’s knowledge and expertise, so that all partners can learn and show what can be done and how to do it.

GPSDD’s convening power appears to have been particularly important when it comes to supporting changemakers and contributing to results, including those associated with peer

²⁴² O2-KII2 and O2-KII4

²⁴³ See outcome 2

²⁴⁴ See outcome 17, 31 and 32

²⁴⁵ O17&31&32-KII1

²⁴⁶ O24-KII1

²⁴⁷ See outcome 24

²⁴⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJ4Q5pCaFQ8>

²⁴⁹ O21&51-KII1

exchanges, strengthening enabling policies, and the IDC. In addition to the way GPSDD has leveraged support to changemakers under its support to the ARDC (see Box 14) and the Ghana National Data Roadmap process (see Box 15), respondents associated with a range of outcomes said how important their convening power was. For example, Bern network respondents²⁵⁰ believed that GPSDD’s convening experience allowed them to articulate a coherent and cohesive set of priorities and objectives’ across disparate stakeholders and partners by helping to develop and operationalise a broader five-point agenda than the network’s earlier one (which focused on creating a global fund for financing data).²⁵¹ Similarly, respondents²⁵² in Kenya, highlighted the importance of GPSDD’s support to convene and build consensus on key priorities across a diverse range of government stakeholders as being an important factor in the successful development of the Kenya interoperability framework.²⁵³ An integral part of GPSDD’s approach to collaboration is the emphasis that GPSDD staff place on co-creation of project goals, activities and outputs through the ongoing engagement of key stakeholders. For instance, in the case of the development of the interoperability framework for the Kenyan Ministry of Health, GPSDD took on board the suggestion for the project to result in something more than a report that ‘gathers dust on the shelves’, by helping to identify areas where relatively easy fixes with regards to interoperability could immediately yield important results.

The convening power of GPSDD was clearly evident in both the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange²⁵⁴ and the Latin American, Caribbean and African peer exchange.²⁵⁵ On the former, all respondents²⁵⁶ were satisfied with the model GPSDD uses, and with the contributions it brings in terms of networks, influence, convening and knowledge of the data for development sector (see developing learning below), and expressed a wish for GPSDD to do even more/scale up the work that they are already doing. On the latter, one respondent²⁵⁷ said that GPSDD was “key to bring together two regions” and that “in a normal situation, this would not be possible because they are so different”.

GPSDD’s convening power appears to have been an integral factor in the timely development of the IDC.²⁵⁸ One respondent²⁵⁹ highlighted how their ability to bring together different stakeholder groups, and to operate slightly outside of the UN system allowed them to make progress more quickly than if going through normal UN channels. The respondent also highlighted how, because the IDC was a multi-stakeholder initiative, they were more able to advocate for inclusive data by pointing towards their participation within it, rather than their own efforts alone. Another respondent²⁶⁰ commented on how good GPSDD is at convening – indicating that they do this well, and that the talent they have attracted and retained is excellent at enabling this.

²⁵⁰ O13-KII1 and O13-KII2

²⁵¹ See outcome 13

²⁵² O24-KII1, O24-KII2 and O24-KII3

²⁵³ See outcome 24

²⁵⁴ See outcome 25

²⁵⁵ See outcome 26

²⁵⁶ O25-KII1, O25-KII2 and O25-KII3

²⁵⁷ O26-KII2

²⁵⁸ See outcomes 21 and 51

²⁵⁹ O21&51-KII1

²⁶⁰ O21&51-KII2

Box 14. Africa Regional Data Cube²⁶¹

In supporting the ARDC initiative, GPSDD has employed all three 2019–23 levers of change, combining them to develop partnerships within and across the five ARDC focus countries and facilitating the sharing of knowledge within and beyond this network, and ultimately building a coalition to transform the ARDC into the DEA.

GPSDD's open and flexible approach to *supporting changemakers* was key to identifying and working with the correct institutional champions and in developing the capacity of users within these institutions. In Ghana and Sierra Leone, GPSDD's investment in building connections and advocacy and engagement prior to 2019 were vital to generating political will, and finding the right institutions and stakeholders to support.²⁶² Respondents²⁶³ from Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone said that the different forms of support offered by GPSDD were complementary and relevant and believed all to have been useful – highlighting the relevance and quality of the capacity building offered, though one respondent²⁶⁴ said that the diversity of trainees had complicated capacity building because they all had different needs.

GPSDD's advocacy and engagement skills helped *create incentives* for government institutions to buy in to the ARDC and have underpinned its transition into the DEA. GPSDD noted that communicating the value of ARDC tools, and their real-world policy applications effectively was key to establishing the project.²⁶⁵ Respondents²⁶⁶ confirmed GPSDD had done this successfully. GPSDD helped establish a coalition²⁶⁷ for the DEA which was able to leverage the political will and networks of the ARDC, and those of the Australian Geoscience Data Cube, to crowd in investment from the Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Helmsley Trust.²⁶⁸

GPSDD has employed the *developing learnings* lever of change by sharing, aggregating and applying the knowledge and networks built up through the ARDC into a continental-wide operational service on earth observation data in the form of the DEA. Respondents²⁶⁹ confirmed that DEA has leveraged ARDC achievements and learning in several key aspects: the use cases, network, staffing, infrastructure, technical knowledge and the capacity built under ARDC have all contributed. There was clear consensus that the use cases developed in the five ARDC countries had a significant impact in demonstrating applications of satellite and earth observations data for development objectives.

There are examples of GPSDD's success in creating incentives though its experience in advocacy and capacity for influencing, including in support of greater global investment in data (e.g. via the DEA and the Bern Network) and innovations at country levels (e.g. CGD in Kenya, and through new partnerships in Ghana). In addition to supporting changemakers, another lever employed within GPSDD's support to the Bern network was creating incentives – through the way in which GPSDD advocated for, and made, changes to the Bern paper, to better promote improving financing for more and better data. GPSDD made suggestions about: (a) how different actors can improve financing for data by spending existing funding more effectively; and (b) how to expand incentives within the network by suggesting different pathways through which better financing for data can be achieved. Respondents²⁷⁰ also highlighted the importance of GPSDD's experience in global advocacy and capacity for influencing and communication in helping the Bern network to reach high-level decision makers with the right message.

²⁶¹ See outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 42

²⁶² O4&42-KII1, O4&42-KII2

²⁶³ O2-KII1, O2-KII2, O2-KII3 and O2-KII4

²⁶⁴ O2-KII4

²⁶⁵ GPSDD. (2019). *Africa Regional Data Cube: One-Year Post-Launch*

²⁶⁶ O2-KII1, O2-KII2, O2-KII3 and O2-KII4

²⁶⁷ Including NASA, Amazon Web Services, UNECA, DFAT Australia and The Helmsley Trust

²⁶⁸ O3-KII1, O3-KII2, O3-KII3

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ O13-KII1, O13-KII2, O13-KII3 and O13-KII4

Box 15. The Ghana National Data Roadmap process²⁷¹

Across the range of outcomes examined which have arisen from the Ghana National Data Roadmap process, GPSDD has employed all three levers of change.²⁷²

They have *supported changemakers* through their significant investment in supporting key players and institutions such as the GSS and the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), and in developing specific interventions/projects such as the National Data Reporting Platform and the Data Quality Assurance Framework.

GPSDD has helped *create incentives* for engagement by supporting the development of frameworks and projects with clear policy/real-world applications, facilitating/brokering valuable partnerships and helping generate high-level political support.

GPSDD's efforts to connect institutions in country to specialist partner organisations and foster collaborations to develop new, innovative sources of/uses for data are examples of where it has helped *develop learning*.

Together with GIZ, GPSDD's support to the development of Kenyan specific CGD guidelines²⁷³ built a coalition for change among CSOs and the KNBS, whose agendas were less than aligned, through building buy-in and working to strengthen trust among stakeholders.²⁷⁴ This has resulted in KNBS demonstrating an increased willingness to explore how CGD can complement official statistics, especially with regards to SDGs reporting. In addition to these examples, GPSDD has helped create incentives within its support to the ARDC (see Box 14) and the Ghana National Data Roadmap process (see Box 15).

Among the outcomes examined to which GPSDD has contributed, alongside others, are two peer exchange initiatives which embody the developing learnings lever, alongside country-level initiatives in Kenya and Ghana and regionally through the ARDC. Initiatives which have contributed to developing learnings include the ARDC (see Box 14) and the Ghana Roadmap process (see Box 15). In addition, as part of GPSDD's support to the development of Kenyan specific CGD guidelines,²⁷⁵ GPSDD were able to promote a better understanding of the value of CGD within KNBS through sharing learnings from a GPSDD/GIZ-funded CGD project²⁷⁶ implemented by the Open Institute in Kenya.²⁷⁷ Showcasing of lessons from this project also fed into the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange.²⁷⁸ During the process of drafting the CGD guidelines for CSOs, GPSDD supported GIZ to deliver a side event at the UNSD session in March 2020 focused on sharing learning around 'Building Trust in Citizen Generated Data', including presentations by the Kenyan Open Institute and KNBS.

Among the outcomes examined are two peer exchange initiatives which embody the developing learnings lever. Although the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange took place in 2019, it was largely enabled by previous GPSDD work, linked to the pre-2019 strategy. These contributions fall within multiple pre-2019 workstreams, including building connections, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and advocacy and engagement. The exchange was jointly organised by GPSDD and GIZ and "aimed to enable in-depth learning and provide participants with the

²⁷¹ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

²⁷² O4&42-KII2, O18&35&37-KII1 and O18&35&37-KII3

²⁷³ See outcome 15

²⁷⁴ O15-KII1, O15-KII2 and O15-KII3

²⁷⁵ See outcome 15

²⁷⁶ The main objective of the project was to work with the county government of Nakuru in Kenya, Civil society groups and research organisations to develop appropriate methods for governments, farmers and youth groups to produce, access and analyse data at the country level, for better policy and decision making to improve market access and agricultural productivity and boost nutrition

²⁷⁷ O15-KII2

²⁷⁸ See outcome 25

opportunity to develop hands-on knowledge and skills, share concrete examples, build networks, and provide solutions that they can apply back in their respective countries.”²⁷⁹

Latin American, Caribbean and African peer exchange,²⁸⁰ organised by GPSDD and CEPEI in collaboration with IDB and INEGI, helped to establish bilateral partnerships and cooperation between countries to share their experiences and lessons learned related to the use of administrative data. One respondent²⁸¹ mentioned that Mexico has been sharing its experience using administrative data with Paraguay, Ecuador, Kenya and South Africa. In addition, the administrative data collaborative,²⁸² established as a result of the workshop, is enabling countries to share resources, tools, best practices and experiences.²⁸³

Among the outcomes assessed, there are clear examples of where the Secretariat has adjusted its approach to specific interventions in response to evidence or lessons learned from implementation. Respondents²⁸⁴ from Ghana and Senegal said they had been given the opportunity to provide feedback on technical issues and limitations on the ARDC tool, including suggestions for addressing them, and highlighted how GPSDD had responded, including providing further support for scaling up in Ghana. Other respondents²⁸⁵ pointed towards how transitioning from ARDC to DEA was enabled by GPSDD’s willingness to take on board feedback from ARDC partners and stakeholders, including how identified issues have informed technical changes and strategies for scaling up (e.g. needing to understand ‘Jupyter notebook’²⁸⁶ and needing to scale up faster through being less resource heavy).²⁸⁷

Another example of where the Secretariat is responding to evidence and learning is the IDC. At the time of writing, the Secretariat was in the process of preparing a new three-year strategy for the IDC, drawing on evidence and lessons documented from the IDC champions two-year anniversary learning event held in July 2020. Key elements of the feedback to which the Secretariat is reportedly²⁸⁸ responding is the need to convene more specific interest group discussions and knowledge sharing, and to bring different actors together to help tackle inclusive data issues. One respondent²⁸⁹ believed that the Secretariat could have addressed these issues earlier, and also pointed towards areas where the Secretariat had not responded to related feedback about what works, possibly due to resource constraints (though the reason was not clear), including a data navigator²⁹⁰ developed by UNICEF and the idea of a joint UNICEF–GPSDD inclusive data advocacy plan.

GPSDD is proactive at identifying lessons learned from implementation with the aim of strengthening the way it approaches and delivers data for development initiatives. GPSDD has documented lessons learned and recommendations across the portfolio of interventions it has supported through a variety of publicly available documents, including through specific use case reports, case studies, learning event reports, specific lesson learning reports and documented within reports of a broader focus. For example, several ARDC use cases have

²⁷⁹ GIZ (2019). *Ghana and Kenya Peer-to-Peer Learning Exchange on SDG Monitoring: Summary Report*

²⁸⁰ See outcome 26

²⁸¹ O26-KII1

²⁸² <https://www.data4sdgs.org/initiatives/administrative-data-collaborative>

²⁸³ O26-KII2

²⁸⁴ O2-KII2 and O2-KII4.

²⁸⁵ O3-KII1, O3-KII2 and O3-KII3

²⁸⁶ The Jupyter Notebook is an open-source web application that allows you to create and share documents that contain live code, equations, visualisations and narrative text. See <https://jupyter.org/>

²⁸⁷ O3-KII3

²⁸⁸ O21&51-KII3 and O21&51-KII4

²⁸⁹ O21&51-KII2

²⁹⁰ A tool for helping people move away from a tools or data first approach and instead getting people to focus first on purpose – and from there decide what data they need to serve that purpose, and then the best tools to use to generate that data.

been documented, including a Pilot in Senegal,²⁹¹ and 17 case studies are available on the GPSDD website – the most recent focused on GPSDD’s work to help establish a Covid-19 data dashboard at the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in Nigeria.²⁹²

GPSDD has developed specific learning reports, drawing on inputs from partners and in some instances the proceedings of associated learning events, such as those related to the data roadmaps,²⁹³ ARDC²⁹⁴ and IDC²⁹⁵ (see above). The data roadmaps report set out a set of series of recommendations in response to lessons and feedback which subsequently informed preparation of the current five-year strategy (e.g. provide further political engagement, extending lessons learned and case studies, and connect to the right partners) while the ARDC report sets out a number of lessons related to capacity building (e.g. level of effort required, need for governance structures, and types of engagement) and maximising use (e.g. communicating value and linking to policy development). Alongside a fifth anniversary town hall event, GPSDD launched a report reflecting on the work of the partnership to date, including five overarching lessons learned as set out in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Lessons learned identified by GPSDD to inform future programming

1. Take time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic engagement takes patience ▪ Listening is an underrated skill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutions matter ▪ Investment in learning is money well spent
2. Progress depends on people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relationships are key 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand each other
3. Politics drives technical change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Politicians need to want change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governments listen to their peers
4. Values count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data on people should be inclusive in form and function ▪ Data governance is critical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity for all
5. Systems not silos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interoperability is central 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Openness helps

EQ5: How does GPSDD’s work at national, sectoral, regional and global levels contribute to the achievement of objectives?

This section considers the global, regional and national levels of GPSDD’s work and how interventions at these different levels interact with and influence each other to contribute to change. Specifically, this section questions the extent to which GPSDD’s global-level work has an impact at the country level and vice versa and whether these activities are mutually reinforcing. This section focuses on examples from Ghana, as the country with the greatest representation of GPSDD’s work at different levels within our outcome sample.

GPSDD’s regional and global-level initiatives have consistently been supported and facilitated by GPSDD’s ability to convene space for multisectoral, multi-stakeholder partnerships at the national level especially through the country roadmap processes. This linkage is not only unidirectional – there is also evidence that GPSDD’s regional initiatives reinforce country-level initiatives. Across multiple countries,²⁹⁶ there is an established change pathway that has emerged starting with engagement at a country level that leads to country-level relationships and governance structures that then provide a basis for that country’s engagement in GPSDD’s regional and global activities, particularly regarding the ARDC. For example, in Senegal, respondents reported that GPSDD’s existing country-level partnership

²⁹¹ GPSDD (March 2020). *Africa Regional Data Cube Pilot Use Cases Report: Senegal*

²⁹² <https://www.data4sdgs.org/index.php/resources/nigerias-rapid-mobilization-against-covid-19>

²⁹³ GPSDD (December 2017). *Data Roadmaps for Sustainable Development: Assessment and Lessons Learned*

²⁹⁴ GPSDD (June 2019). *Africa Regional Data Cube: One-Year Post-Launch*

²⁹⁵ GPSDD (July 2020). *IDC Champions two-year anniversary learning: Session outputs*

²⁹⁶ Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ghana

with IPAR, was key to enabling the regional-level ARDC work in Senegal.²⁹⁷ In Sierra Leone there were similar reports that previous work that GPSDD has done with the Open Data Council, with the Right to Access Information Commission (RAIC) on data sharing protocols has influenced the governance of the ARDC by creating some of the links needed to set up governance structures involving a range of ministries, departments and agencies. Statistics Sierra Leone also participated in the World Data Forum and took part in the peer exchanges after engaging with GPSDD on these country-level activities, which again suggests that existing country relationships help to generate interest and buy-in for GPSDD's regional activities.

Last, respondents from the Ghana Statistical Service reported how the roadmap process underpinned both country-level and regional-level work that GSS is involved in. For example, respondents linked the global initiatives of the Open Data Charter and Data for Development Festival, the regional-level peer-to-peer exchanges and ARDC use cases and country-level work on citizen-generated data and response to Covid-19 as all directly stemming from or being linked to the roadmap process, demonstrating that the roadmap process has underpinned the achievement of results across the national, regional and global levels.²⁹⁸

Countries that GPSDD has strong relationships with individually have helped to galvanise GPSDD's global objectives by providing opportunities for country commitments or use cases that could be easier to leverage through existing partnerships than in countries where GPSDD has no existing relationship. For example, DANE joining the IDC and GPSDD supporting the development of guidelines to improve the quality of citizen-generated data in Kenya facilitates the dialogue on IDC and CGD respectively at a global level as they demonstrate country-level interest in such initiatives and generate examples or use cases that can help promote these initiatives on other global platforms. This was demonstrated through DFID leveraging Kenya's interest in disability data disaggregation and encouraging them to sign up to the IDC at the Global Disability Summit 2018.²⁹⁹

As mentioned previously in this report, Digital Earth Africa is a new institution, continent-wide, borne largely from the ARDC. When asked about this scale-up, interviewees linked this continent-wide scale up to the country-level convening and brokering that GPSDD has been implementing. In fact, there is no country partner yet involved with DEA without some existing prior country-level partnership with GPSDD.³⁰⁰

GPSDD's interventions at the country level have built relationships with key governmental institutions that have provided the political capital required to engage and convene high-level partners in regional and global activities, although the extent to which this has been an intentional part of GPSDD's strategy is unclear. Many respondents across the outcomes scrutinised relating to ARDC, DEA and country roadmap processes described the benefits of having existing relationships with country governments and that these helped GPSDD to influence senior government officials' involvement and interest in GPSDD's regional and global initiatives. Country programme teams also led IDC action planning as these teams had country-level relationships. Interviewees reported how these relationships can really help in overcoming problems and in having relevant in-country contacts.

However, it is not clear whether GPSDD intentionally leveraged existing relationships to elevate their work from the country level to the regional or global level or whether this has been rather more opportunistic. For example, in Kenya, we know that the CoG were familiar with GPSDD through work on the Marifa Centre and it was suggested that it was this work that provided the existing relationship with GPSDD that garnered the CoG's interest in participating

²⁹⁷ O2-KII4

²⁹⁸ O4&42-KII2

²⁹⁹ O21&51-KII1

³⁰⁰ O3-KII2

in the peer-to-peer exchange with Ghana.³⁰¹ However, it is not clear whether this link was intentionally leveraged by GPSDD and its governance structures or whether it was more opportunistic in nature – i.e. they invited the CoG to participate in the peer-to-peer exchange because of their existing relationships through other work, rather than delivering country-level work with the intention of it contributing to and facilitating the achievement of GPSDD’s regional and global objectives.

GPSDD has facilitated and influenced the alignment of national objectives with regional-level GPSDD objectives, and this has resulted in subsequent activities being mutually reinforcing.

The alignment of national and regional objectives has benefited initiatives at both levels in different ways. Regional initiatives have benefited from the buy-in generated among country-level stakeholders, while national initiatives have benefited from the resources and opportunities available through regional programming.

For example, respondents interviewed regarding the roadmap process in Ghana reported that the ARDC, which responds to GPSDD’s regional objectives, fits within the broader country-level priorities for the future of Ghana’s data ecosystem that was established through The Data Roadmap Forum in 2017. The fact that the ARDC fits into that broader picture, both in terms of governance and in terms of vision and objectives, helped to generate and sustain interest in the ARDC from higher-level political stakeholders in Ghana.³⁰² The linkages between the country-level roadmap and regional-level ARDC activities have, in this instance, been mutually reinforcing: respondents reported that the ARDC has benefited from the momentum and political capital generated by the high-level meetings convened through the roadmap process, and the roadmap process benefited from the inter-ministerial links built by the ARDC technical and task teams.³⁰³ Respondents also credited both the country-level roadmap and the regional-level ARDC with increased political support for and improved perceptions of the GSS and increased interest in the use of data for decision making.³⁰⁴

Respondents involved in the IDC also mentioned that it was valuable to have the IDC as a global initiative integrated into the portfolio of GPSDD country support, and recognised that this country-level support helped realise country-level commitment to the global objective of the IDC.³⁰⁵ However, the IDC team also suggested that in other countries, for example where there are no country roadmaps then global initiatives such as the IDC can provide an initial introductory workstream that paves the way for exposure to and integration of other GPSDD initiatives at the country-level that could align to GPSDD’s national-level objectives.³⁰⁶ This suggests that country work and global work can reinforce each other and vice versa, and highlights the importance of existing relationships in leveraging and influencing new areas of work, while supporting the facilitative nature of aligned objectives.

GPSDD’s ability to convene across and between levels within and across countries, most notably through peer-to-peer exchanges, facilitates the sharing of learning that ultimately benefits both country-level and regional-level objectives. GPSDD has facilitated two peer-to-peer exchanges, one attended by Kenya and Ghana in Nairobi and one hosted in Mexico City that was attended by 48 participants from 11 countries across LAC and Africa.

Respondents from both the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange and the LAC–Africa peer exchange reported that bringing together multi-level stakeholders in the peer-to-peer exchange facilitates the linkages of knowledge and ideas within and between countries at multiple

³⁰¹ O23-KII3

³⁰² O4&42-KII2; O18&35&37-KII1

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ O21&51-KII3

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

levels. In the case of the LAC–Africa peer exchange, learning and information exchange across national statistical offices was particularly emphasised as helpful given the focal topic of administrative data; one respondent explained that “learning how administrative records are used in other countries opened a lot the perspectives [on how administrative data is used in other countries]”.³⁰⁷ However, it is premature to say exactly which country-level results that the exchange has contributed to as the exchange took place in November 2019, and has also in some instances lost momentum due to a lack of follow-up (see EQ7 for more information), but there were reports from interviewees that the peer-to-peer exchange has helped to start designing projects on the topic of administrative data.

The links described by respondents involved in the Kenya–Ghana exchange were more numerous and cross-level. These included, but were not limited to, links between different government departments within countries, such as the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) and the National Development Planning Commission; and between the Kenya Council of Governors and the Kenya National Bureau for Statistics, who have since held high-level meetings and agreed a set of guidelines for the use of citizen-generated data in Kenya off the back of the exchange;³⁰⁸ between different government departments across countries, such as the NSOs in Ghana and Kenya which were reported to be more strongly linked after the event, through conversations and the sharing of ideas;³⁰⁹ and also between CSOs across countries as demonstrated by the reported reinforcement of the existing partnership between the civil society for a linked to the SDGs in both Ghana and Kenya that prompted them to collaborate in an event at the G20 High-Level Political Forum.³¹⁰

This lesson sharing helped to bolster individual country work by providing advice on country-level projects such as the use of mobile data for social impact, which was a key topic of the Nairobi Ghana–Kenya peer exchange organised by GPSDD in 2019. It helped to join up some of the work that GPSDD has been supporting in both countries individually on this topic.

There is also evidence of lesson sharing contributing to regional objectives through the scale-up of ARDC to DEA, where country use cases and learning from ARDC ‘super users’ across the five DEA pilot countries³¹¹ demonstrated the value of the data cube approach to using earth observation data for development as well as some of the limitations of the ARDC both in terms of accessibility and need for capacity development, and in terms of scaling up.³¹² This learning then contributed to the inception and design of the DEA. Many respondents involved in the ARDC and DEA mentioned that the ARDC has become a mechanism for sharing in-country learning at a regional level and that GPSDD has enabled this through the collaborative, partnership-based approach that they have employed at the country-level.

The establishment and ongoing support of local governance structures plays a key role in linking country and global-level initiatives and realising the mutually reinforcing benefits of these linkages. National-level governance structures that leverage the existing country-level relationships mentioned earlier in this section have facilitated regional and global-level work. This is most easily seen through the ARDC, whose global objectives have been implemented through the individualised national-level governance mechanisms.

The GSS set up a Secretariat for the measurement of the SDGs through the country roadmap process and off the back of the high-level political forum that GPSDD convened as part of this process. The Secretariat runs multiple country-level projects linked to GPSDD and also houses

³⁰⁷ O26-KII2

³⁰⁸ O25-KII3

³⁰⁹ O25-KII1

³¹⁰ O25-KII1 and O25-KII2

³¹¹ Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Sierra Leone Tanzania

³¹² O3-KII1, O3-KII2, O3-KII3, O2-KII1, O2-KII2 and O2-KII3

the ARDC technical and coordination teams within its Big and Spatial Data workstream.³¹³ The ARDC also reports to the Roadmap Advisory Committee.³¹⁴ The concentration of GPSDD support through this centralised governance structure has facilitated linkages between and across GPSDD's work at different levels by ensuring that investments made by GPSDD for the ARDC such as capacity building or relationship building has also contributed to other roadmap interventions, and vice versa.

Additionally, in Sierra Leone, some respondents commented on how the existing national structures in place from the open data charter work completed under the country roadmap process provided a ready institution for the coordination of ARDC activities through the Open Data Council³¹⁵ showing again how GPSDD's country-level engagement has facilitated the realisation of its regional-level objectives.

EQ6: What are the main factors which have enabled or hindered GPSDD's contribution to the achievement of objectives as set out in its strategic plans or frameworks?

The analysis and findings for EQs 3–5 set out the contribution GPSDD and partners made. This section delves into how and why that contribution was possible.

GPSDD uses levers of change, namely supporting changemakers, creating incentives and developing learnings with its partners and network to achieve its intermediate results (see section 2.4 for the full theory of change) and contribute to more and better data being used to achieve and monitor the SDGs.

We have interpreted the convergence of enabling factors or the package³¹⁶ as GPSDD's ability to build the foundations for and then place, the right³¹⁷ message or insight, in a timely fashion, by the right means while deploying the right partner strength or contribution.³¹⁸

GPSDD helps build the enabling environment for this moment by helping establish the right level of interest and the right mix of stakeholders in a network.

Disabling factors tend to be context specific and impede the package of causal factors. They are found at different levels: (a) system level in country or region; and/or (b) partner or stakeholder capacity level.

System level in country or region:

- Gap in capacity for the institutional setting, such as culture, leadership (assumed from opportunities missed please see EQ7).
- Insufficient interpersonal relationships between GPSDD and another, which is required to support the intervention (e.g. engaging very senior political level in UNICEF was difficult for IDC³¹⁹).

³¹³ O4&42-KII2

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ O4&42-KII1

³¹⁶ The how and why GPSDD made a contribution with other actors

³¹⁷ Several respondents used the word 'right' when interviewed for the outcome harvest and the organisational assessment. It was noted in interviews for a number of outcomes: 2, 37, 13, 21, 51, 24, 25. As well as interviews, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIS2, WS3-KIIS1, WS3-KIIS4, WS3-KIIT10, WS3-KIIS9, WS3-KIIB6, WS3-KIIB8 and WS3-KIIT5

³¹⁸ This assumes that partners make contributions in one of four ways: (a) **Bring data**: a variety of types of data (mobile, satellite, etc.) as well as datasets, (b) **Bring skills**: technical expertise on tools, methodologies, and systems that builds capacity, (c) **Share knowledge**: information in a variety of forms (papers, webinars etc.) that support individual and collective learning, and (d) **Bring resources**: primarily financial investments, but also includes time and personnel investments to a defined data objective.

³¹⁹ See outcome 51

- Limitations in the wider system such as political support, or lack of funding and resources (e.g. ability of GPSDD to follow up gains made over the longer term³²⁰ and peer exchanges³²¹ and availability of finances and funding for specific data challenges³²²).

Partner or stakeholder capacity level:

- Lack of individual capacity of key actors, partners and/or stakeholders such as interests, capacities and credibility (e.g. technical limitations of ARDC tools³²³ or the technical capacity and language barrier to staff during peer exchanges³²⁴ or what happened in KNBS³²⁵)

There is clear evidence³²⁶ that deploying the right tool, at the right time in the right context helped improve government decision making (IR1.1). This further validates findings around GPSDD's high level of complementarity (please see EQ2). GPSDD supported changemakers and developed learning. At first, within Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone (from which key informants were interviewed) the ARDC tool provided clear value add for government ministries, departments and agencies to monitor a range of environmental indicators and issues linked to the SDGs through the use of satellite and earth observations data. The ARDC contributed to a shift towards embedding or standardising the use of satellite and earth observations data in by government institutions because it supported the articulation of a coherent and cohesive set of priorities and objectives that were aligned with government priorities. The Secretariat contributed to building political buy-in because communications generated the right level of interest for the contexts and harmonised with existing priorities. Moreover, strong evidence suggests that it was GPSDD's approach during transition to the DEA,³²⁷ its adaptive collaborative style, technical skills and open collaboration (providing access to a network of member countries and partners) that enabled ARDC to transition to the new DEA structure.

GPSDD understood that key stakeholders were ready and that there was huge existing demand for disaggregated data so GPSDD's work on the IDC³²⁸ contributed to increased availability of disaggregated data, as an advocacy and engagement tool. Respondents³²⁹ suggest that it was the size and composition of the team that made a difference, which was facilitated by GPSDD. In particular, GPSDD was commended by respondents for how it interacted with UNSD.

GPSDD contributed to the finalisation and adoption of new data as official policy of the Kenyan Ministry of Health's interoperability framework because of its open, responsive and collaborative approach. It invested time and resources in capacity building. It focused on providing accompanying support and engaged in discussions about technical issues and limitations. Through this process it contributed to building political buy-in. This evidence validates a similar role played in moving from the ARDC to the DEA.³³⁰

³²⁰ See outcome 25

³²¹ See outcome 26

³²² See outcome 13

³²³ See outcome 2

³²⁴ See outcome 26

³²⁵ See outcome 15

³²⁶ O2-K111, O2-K112, O2-K113, O2-K114

³²⁷ See outcome 3

³²⁸ See outcomes 21 and 51

³²⁹ O21&51 K111, O21&51 K113

³³⁰ See outcome 3

Indeed, respondents³³¹ suggest that GPSDD's work at different levels contributed to a global movement being fostered (IR1.2) within the multi-stakeholder global Bern network³³² because of the skills of its staff and ability to seize the right moment in a highly complementary way. It played a critical role in shaping the five-point agenda and supporting the network to understand how to allocate funds to stakeholder priorities.

Further, the benefits (countries can access and share resources, tools, best practices, and experiences) of the peer exchange³³³ between Latin American, Caribbean and African countries organised by the Secretariat in collaboration with others led to several regional results. This was because, again, GPSDD maturely diagnosed the problem political stakeholders were experiencing and offered them a space to connect and learn. Indeed, respondents said it was this ability to connect the global and in-country problems through their network of actors and facilitate partnerships that made things happen more quickly.

Again, it was GPSDD's technical know-how and its adaptive and collaborative style (the way it built the network and partnerships) that enabled it to achieve political buy-in and make a contribution. Kenya specific CGD guidelines³³⁴ contribute to scaling the use of timely and robust data for monitoring the SDGs (IR2.1) alongside several outcomes which also contribute to one or more other GPSDD objectives, including the ARDC, Ghana–Kenya peer exchange, and Ghana National Data Roadmap.³³⁵ GPSDD understands how to support changemakers. In this instance it was about using communications to generate the right level of interest among stakeholders and build political will.

The Secretariat has a highly complementary approach. Working with partners, they introduce the right tool, at the right time, with stakeholders who are ready to receive the message. This capacity is founded in GPSDD's high quality approach and open, responsive and collaborative operational style (please see EQ8 and EQ9). ARDC use cases³³⁶ are an example of where GPSDD has contributed to its overarching objectives – SGD monitoring (e. g. monitoring water quality in Ghana, monitoring changes in mangrove swamps over time in Sierra Leona, and monitoring crop performance and deforestation in Senegal).

However, from the contribution stories used to assess GPSDD's contribution, it is possible to see that GPSDD has and will continue to run into many, and potentially simultaneous, disabling factors in the future. In this future, GPSDD's ability to build the capacity of partners and the supply-side, to link its Board and/or TAG members to influence regionally or nationally, and at the same time achieve a consistency in approach and style through the Secretariat will be essential to achieving any contribution.

Arguably, in the main, GPSDD has built on fertile ground where the multitude of disabling factors at the system level in country or region; and/or at the partner or stakeholder capacity level were minimised. For example, there were instances where although GPSDD supported changemakers as set out in the case of the ARDC, technical limitations of the tools reduced stakeholder capacity and interest.³³⁷ However, despite this, GPSDD's intention to develop learning and its conscious adoption of an open and collaborative style meant that a demand for scale-up emerged and the transition to DEA began.

A further example of a disabling factor that has impacted on GPSDD's ability to develop learning is the lack of availability of finances and funding – a generic and well-documented

³³¹ O13-KII1, O13-KII2, O13-KII3, O13-KII4

³³² See outcome 13

³³³ See outcome 26

³³⁴ See outcome 15

³³⁵ See outcomes 18, 35 and 37

³³⁶ See outcome 2

³³⁷ See outcome 2

problem in the data for development ecosystem. For GPSDD, this meant that they were unable to follow up on the gains made over the longer term through peer exchanges³³⁸ and IDC champions face challenges due to finance availability and funding.³³⁹

There are many complexities in development norms for data sharing in public and private partnerships³⁴⁰ as well as competing agendas³⁴¹ which impede the delivery of the package of causal factors. To scale GPSDD's contribution GPSDD, with its partners, will need to work more and more on less fertile ground where their ability to influence the disabling factors is minimal.

EQ7: What have been GPSDD's most important contributions to the data for development ecosystem? What have been the most important opportunities which the Secretariat could potentially have engaged with but did not?

This section responds to the above evaluation question by first drawing out two examples of the interventions that the evaluation team judge as having been GPSDD's most important contributions to the data for development ecosystem in terms of those changes that have contributed to the highest level of the theory of change. These are presented in Boxes 16 and 17. It then outlines some of the most prominent opportunities that GPSDD has either missed or chosen not to engage in so far, and provides some possible reasons for why this may have been the case, informed by the perception of GPSDD's partners.

The ARDC and the Ghana Roadmap Process have been the most important contributions made by GPSDD to the data for development ecosystem because of the level and scale of results achieved. Whilst many of GPSDD's interventions are too recent to expect to have contributed to impact-level change, there is evidence that both the ARDC (see Box 16) and the Ghana Roadmap process (see Box 17) are contributing to change at the level of GPSDD's strategic objectives.

The ARDC has contributed to a shift towards embedding or standardising the use of satellite and earth observations data among supported government institutions. ARDC technology is now being scaled up in support of government decision making across the whole of Africa through the DEA.³⁴² The Ghana roadmap process demonstrates how, through combining all three levers of change, GPSDD is able to contribute to both strategic objectives of more and better data being used to monitor and achieve the SDGs including, in addition to ARDC related Ghana outcomes, through: a) local and national SDG reporting platforms, b) use of telecoms data for government decision making, and c) establishment of an SDG secretariat within the CGS.

In some cases, GPSDD could have extended and/or deepened results by following up with stakeholders more systematically, including to encourage and facilitate longer-lasting partnerships. In addition, by considering issues of sustainability and exit planning earlier, GPSDD can help ensure – when its work with a particular organisation comes to an end – that it does so at the most appropriate time and with minimal disruption.

³³⁸ See outcomes 25 and 26

³³⁹ GPSDD (July 2020). *IDC Champions two-year anniversary learning: session outputs*

³⁴⁰ outcome 37

³⁴¹ outcomes 21 and 51

³⁴² O3-KII1, O3-KII2, and O3-KII3

Box 16. GPSDD's contribution to impact-level change: how the ARDC is contributing to more and better data being used to monitor the SDGs

ARDC use cases have made a clear contribution to GPSDD strategic objectives, both in terms of the **pre-2019 strategy**, output 2: innovative and collaborative efforts to meet data challenges; and of the **2019–23 strategy**: 1.1 harnessing new technologies and data sources; and 2.1 scaling up the use of data for SDG monitoring. In doing so, we can also see that GPSDD support to develop the use of ARDC tools, through engagement and capacity building, has enabled better and easier access to satellite and earth observations data, which is now being used for monitoring of environmental issues linked to the SDGs, and is thus contributing to the objective level of the theory of change: more and better data used to monitor the SDGs.

The evaluation has seen how through GPSDD's support to changemakers (for more see EQ4):

- The ARDC is now established as a key tool for government ministries, departments and agencies to monitor a range of environmental indicators and issues linked to the SDGs in Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone.
- ARDC tools are being used, and are providing better, quicker access to and analysis of earth observations data, thereby cutting time and resources needed to respond to environmental issues.
- ARDC has contributed to a shift towards embedding or standardising the use of satellite and earth observations data in by government institutions.

Several use cases of how the ARDC has enabled and led to better monitoring of the SDGs have been documented³⁴³ and some scrutinised under this evaluation. These include:

- The use of ARDC in Ghana to monitor the water quality of Weija reservoir, which serves as the main source of water for Accra and the surrounding area³⁴⁴ and other, similar large water bodies, such as the Ashaiman Dam, and Lakes Bui, Bosomtwe and Volta.³⁴⁵
- The use of ARDC in Senegal to monitor results against five SDG indicators relating to agriculture and the environment: (indicators 2.4.1,³⁴⁶ 15.1.1,³⁴⁷ 15.2.1,³⁴⁸ 6.3.2³⁴⁹ and 6.6.1³⁵⁰).³⁵¹ This represented an increase in the amount of data available to monitor key indicators: "it really changed things because we realised not only the level of information for environmental sector indicators had improved, it improved by 25%". In a few cases, such as for monitoring land degradation in forest areas in southern Senegal, ARDC was able to provide localised data which had not previously been available: "The ARDC has allowed us to have localized data for 9.3% of the indicators."³⁵²

The EPA in **Sierra Leone** is now able to use ARDC tools to monitor deforestation, linked to mangrove coverage in coastal areas.³⁵³ The respondent emphasised that this reduced the need for time in the field, and offered real-time information on environmental issues, which they found particularly useful in communicating with policymakers.

Multiple respondents across different outcomes mentioned lack of follow-up as a missed opportunity in furthering several different outcomes. This included follow-up of potential partnerships from peer-to-peer exchanges,³⁵⁴ follow-up on collaborations that GPSDD had

³⁴³ ARDC Pilot Use Cases Report

³⁴⁴ O2-KII1, O2-KII2; ARDC Data Stories; Ghana Water Resources Commission, ARDC Case Study p3

³⁴⁵ Mapping Lake Bui Ghana; Ghana Water Resources Commission, ARDC Case Study p.3

³⁴⁶ Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture

³⁴⁷ Forest area as a proportion of total land area

³⁴⁸ Progress towards sustainable forest management

³⁴⁹ Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality

³⁵⁰ Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time

³⁵¹ ARDC Pilot Use Cases Report Senegal p.2

³⁵² O2-KII4

³⁵³ O2-KII3, ARDC Data Stories

³⁵⁴ O25-KII1

facilitated to ‘check in’ or to see if further linkages and connections could be made³⁵⁵ and also follow up on technical work that GPSDD had supported, including both the Kenya CGD and the Kenya Interoperability guidelines and also the development of tools for monitoring the SDGs.

Respondents interviewed about the future for business survey were not aware of any follow-up GPSDD had undertaken on the partnership that they facilitated between OECD, FB and WB that led to the creation of the survey.³⁵⁶ However, they did not explicitly suggest that this was something that they felt GPSDD should have done or missed an opportunity to do.

Box 17. GPSDD’s contribution to impact-level change: The Ghana Roadmap process

As reported under EQ4, GPSDD have supported changemakers, created incentives and developed learnings through the Ghana Roadmap process. The employment of these three levers of change have contributed to some results that the evaluation has found to reach into the upper portion of the theory of change – the roadmap process has begun to contribute to GPSDD’s objectives of more and better data being used to monitor and achieve the SDGs:

1. Local and national SDGs data reporting platforms now exist to disseminate information about the SDGs in an accessible way, using open, transparent data³⁵⁷
2. A collaboration between the Flowminder Foundation, Vodafone Ghana and Ghana Statistical Service, that was brokered by GPSDD has resulted in the development of a protocol for sharing of anonymised call detail records between the private and public sector. This enabled telecoms data to be used for ARDC tools, and to develop various use cases for call detail records, including:
 - The National Disaster Management Organisation (NaDMO), whose early warning system for disaster response was previously based on census projections from the 2010 national census.³⁵⁸ GSS has been able to use anonymised call data to layer over their existing models to provide more accurate population changes throughout a given day by layering hour by hour, average population density estimates which in turn allows the NaDMO to make accurate resourcing decisions.³⁵⁹
 - A Covid-19 Mobility Analysis, developed since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, which leverages the existing programme infrastructure and data pipeline, with support from Flowminder and produced almost real-time reports on mobility patterns throughout lockdown, allowing the monitoring of compliance with government regulations and highlighting areas with unusual travel patterns that were used to update the National Coordinating Committee on Covid-19.”³⁶⁰

The Ghana Roadmap process has led to the establishment of an SDGs Secretariat within the GSS, which became a key part of the governance structure for the roadmap process as a whole, as well as for the ARDC governance framework: *“[this] is the first time a unit was being created that is not in the organogram of the institution. And ... it was widely accepted within the institution, from top management to the staff ... we got something that ordinarily was not existent to be accepted within that institutional framework. And so, it also helped because it would serve as a Secretariat for the entire governance team. The workstream advisory committee and all the other technical things that we set up: that became the Secretariat for all of them.”*³⁶¹

Attendees from the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange also reported that results regarding the Kenyan Guidelines for Citizen-generated Data could have been strengthened by further GPSDD support on operationalising the guidelines. This claim was also corroborated by interviewees that we spoke to about the CGD outcome. Respondents reported that the guidelines represent a successful first step in improving the quality of CGD and bringing new datasets to light that

³⁵⁵ O28-KII1

³⁵⁶ O28-KII1 and O28-KII2

³⁵⁷ O18&35&37-KII1

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ O4&42-KII2

have been used in projects, but that it would have been useful to have further support in how to ensure uptake of the guidelines by civil society and increase the likelihood that CGD could be used to cover gaps in official statistics, especially for SDG reporting.

Respondents interviewed about the Kenya interoperability guidelines and the tools developed by DANE in Colombia to measure progress towards the SDGs also offered similar feedback: that continued support would have helped to the Ministry of Health to operationalise interoperability in the case of the former, and that continued support would allow countries to move faster in the development of their methodologies and tools for the latter.

Multiple respondents consistently mentioned that GPSDD missed specific opportunities to be involved in. Where specific suggestions for new areas of work were offered in interviews, respondents were mindful of GPSDD’s resource constraints and recognised that GPSDD cannot be everything to everyone. Respondents who mentioned missed opportunities almost all recognised that GPSDD’s resources are spread thinly and that more resources would be needed to fully realise the respondents’ ambitions for GPSDD. This finding corroborates some of the internally reported findings about resource constraints detailed under workstream 3. In particular, the underuse of the TAG.

Positively, no respondents suggested that there were areas that GPSDD were unaware of, nor criticised GPSDD regarding their *capability* to engage in any particular areas. In fact, many respondents explicitly praised GPSDD’s knowledge of the sector, engagement in the data for development sectors developments, operating model, network and ability to convene. Additionally, some respondents replied positively that they did not feel that GPSDD had missed any opportunities, and others more actively suggested that GPSDD should be doing more of the same.

It is therefore the alignment of GPSDD’s *operating model with its strategy* and a lack of confidence that it can match supply with demand that appears to underpin some of the missed opportunities reported in this section. This also corroborates GPSDD’s finding under workstream three from interviews with the GPSDD Secretariat, Board and TAG.

GPSDD partners reported that there is a current opportunity and a need for GPSDD to both scale up and to refresh its strategy, which verified the findings that we have described from internal GPSDD stakeholders under EQ 9 and 10. Several respondents interviewed mentioned that GPSDD should scale up and do more of the same. Specifically mentioned was that GPSDD should continue to use its network and to scale up influencing, convening and knowledge sharing and also the coordination of data for development actors, which one respondent explicitly said was “*ultimately what GPSDD was set up to do*”.³⁶²

GPSDD country partners were able to provide us with multiple suggestions of new avenues or new areas of work for GPSDD to be involved in and most of these were specific to the outcome that they were being interviewed about. For example, identifying potential ARDC use cases, or opportunities to support the expansion of voluntary local reporting in Kenya.³⁶³ Some respondents also mentioned new areas of work where they felt GPSDD was now active but should be more engaged and scale up efforts; and could have been engaged in earlier, specifically around responsible data³⁶⁴ private sector engagement,³⁶⁵ and the use of telecoms data.³⁶⁶ Other respondents suggested new areas of work that they would like to see GPSDD

³⁶² O12-KII1

³⁶³ O2-KII2; O25-KII3

³⁶⁴ O21&51-KII1

³⁶⁵ O21&51-KII1 and O25-KII1

³⁶⁶ O21&51-KII1

move into, specifically the promotion of digital transformation of national statistics³⁶⁷ and being a more vocal participant in the data regulation and privacy debate.³⁶⁸

Some respondents suggested that there was need for a more comprehensive revisioning of GPSDD's strategy and suggested that this is a critical time period for GPSDD to take stock and focus on their collaborations to date. This corroborates some of the suggestions from GPSDD's Secretariat and governance structures that we have reported under EQ9 and EQ10 of this report, which document the evaluation's findings under Workstream 3: GPSDD's organisational effectiveness. One respondent suggested that GPSDD should have a regional strategy with country-level strategies that feed into this regional strategy. This would allow GPSDD to have an explicit set of objectives and parameters in each country it works in and with and can demonstrate how this contributes to the achievement of regional.³⁶⁹ In the same vein, another respondent commented that GPSDD needs to "*focus in on where it is able to deliver results*" suggesting that GPSDD could benefit from being more intentional about working (and not working) in certain areas of the data for development sector.³⁷⁰

A couple of respondents suggested that there is a missed opportunity for GPSDD to combine their scale-up strategy, refresh and address resource constraints through the earth observation work that GPSDD are currently undertaking through Digital Earth Africa.³⁷¹ They suggested that GPSDD could scale up DEA in the Americas, and that DEA provides an opportunity both to generate revenue as a business opportunity and to attract funding from traditional governmental donors.³⁷²

GPSDD could lean on the global network of the UN more in order to achieve larger scale results, and to leverage connections in countries where it is harder to engage, to optimise the equitability of GPSDD's work. Across a number of interviews including with country partners, and members of GPSDD's governance structures, respondents mentioned that the current GPSDD strategy still does not focus enough on working with partners who have the 'weakest' levels of capacity or capability in using data for development.³⁷³ While there are challenges in working with such partners in terms of resource needs and also the need to demonstrate results, it important to engage with such challenges to ensure that GPSDD's work is equitable and impactful.

Some respondents suggested that GPSDD could lean more on 'larger, stronger champions' such as UN agencies and leverage their resources and country capacity to advocate for change in more difficult to reach contexts; and to better support champions coming into the network, through peer support. One representative from a UN agency reported that they had not been asked to engage with GPSDD much and felt that it could have been more deliberate about joining the dots between these larger global champions. This, suggests, for example, that someone in GPSDD could have reviewed these organisations' action plans and identified where different organisations were working on the same thing, or where the strengths of one organisation could facilitate the strategic objectives of another, which would help avoid duplication of effort and help broker a relationship that facilitates knowledge exchange.

There are a few examples of occasions when GPSDD has turned down the opportunity to engage with UN agencies. It was not always clear whether GPSDD's lack of engagement was intentional and strategic or missed due to resource constraints. UNICEF reported that they had

³⁶⁷ O12-KII1

³⁶⁸ O28-KII2

³⁶⁹ O3-KII2

³⁷⁰ O12-KII1

³⁷¹ O3-KII1 and O3-KII3

³⁷² O3-KII1 and O3-KII3

³⁷³ O21&51-KII2

proposed to partner with GPSDD on two separate occasions and that on both GPSDD had declined the opportunity to collaborate. The first of these was the suggestion to create a Joint Advocacy Plan for UNICEF to advocate for the Inclusive Data Charter and the disaggregation of data through advocacy opportunities open to them through UNICEF’s platform at global events such as Children’s Day and the UN General Assembly.³⁷⁴

EQ8: How effective are the different member engagement mechanisms used by GPSDD?

This EQ focuses on the mechanisms GPSDD has used to engage with members and non-members and draws from interviews with key informants involved with the outcomes examined, together with responses to the GPSDD partner survey carried out in early 2020. We explore which forms of engagement with GPSDD have been the most useful and how these have contributed to observed outcomes.

Across several outcomes,³⁷⁵ respondents singled out GPSDD’s operational style (open, responsive, collaborative and professional) as being central to the effectiveness of their engagement with them – in stark contrast to respondents’ experiences of engaging with DEA. Respondents³⁷⁶ working on ARDC-related outcomes highlighted GPSDD’s willingness to invest time and effort in capacity building while others³⁷⁷ said their engagement with GPSDD was enabled by the enthusiasm and energy of GPSDD staff, including their proactive and flexible approach. Several respondents³⁷⁸ pointed towards the importance of GPSDD staff being based in-country as a part of this.

Some African respondents³⁷⁹ had noted a shift in the approach to establishing DEA compared to that employed by GPSDD when developing the ARDC; African stakeholders are given less opportunity to contribute to, and influence, the project. Respondents believed that this less African-centred approach was due to the influence of the major donors contributing to DEA, and to the leadership of DEA, which was more technical than was the case for ARDC.

Engagement with other partners, both within and between countries, as a result of GPSDD brokering or convening, was cited as being particularly useful by several respondents, especially where there was a diversity of partners. Respondents³⁸⁰ who had been involved with the peer exchange³⁸¹ between LAC and African countries said that the administrative data collaborative (established following on from the exchange) had become an important engagement platform for sharing and accessing resources, tools and best practices. The same respondents highlighted how the wide variety of participants at the exchange brought a diversity of perspectives and enriched dialogue during the exchange. One respondent³⁸² made a similar point about the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange, noting that the mix of participants (CSO, local and national government, national statistical offices, private sector) involved was key to the exchange’s success.

Respondents who had been involved in country-level partnerships facilitated by GPSDD highlighted how the engagements had adopted a co-creationist approach which built consensus and buy-in, and catalysed other actions. In Kenya for example, GPSDD adopted this

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Outcomes 2, 3, 4, 18, 24, 25, 35, and 37

³⁷⁶ O2-KII1, O2-KII2, O2-KII3, O2-KII4, O3-KII1 and O3-KII2

³⁷⁷ O18&35&37-KII1, O18&35&37-KII2, O24-KII1, O24-KII2, and O24-KII3

³⁷⁸ O25-KII1 and O25-KII2

³⁷⁹ O3-KII2 and O3-KII3

³⁸⁰ O26-KII1 and O26-KII2

³⁸¹ See outcome 26

³⁸² O25-KII1

approach to bring to the table actors with less than aligned agendas (CSOs and NSOs) by helping to identify a real need (that of ensuring that CGD meet certain quality standards) and a constructive solution (the development of guidelines for CSOs on CGD which are vetted and adopted by the NSO).³⁸³ The Ghana national data roadmap forum resulted in the co-creation of three main priorities by participants (key political figures from within Ghana and a range of organisations/partners from the data for development sector) which, because of this process, were seen as relevant and useful and as providing an overarching vision into which interventions, policy work, and projects could fit.³⁸⁴

Several respondents highlighted the importance of regular and open communication between themselves and GPSDD, though a number also voiced concern about the lack of follow-up activities in some cases. Respondents from Ghana³⁸⁵ involved with either the National Data Roadmap process or the ARDC highlighted how helpful the open and informal communication they had experienced with GPSDD had been. Another respondent³⁸⁶ said that “I have a very open line with GPSDD. So, for me, it’s emails, phone calls, it’s lots of messages, it’s social media, it’s all rounded. So I think they are very accessible to us in that way, and we are also very accessible to them because they really know how to get hold of us.” A further respondent³⁸⁷ spoke about the fortnightly meetings they held with GPSDD to discuss their work, and to identify any potential collaboration while another³⁸⁸ said that GPSDD regularly check in to ask if there’s “anything that we’re particularly looking for”.

Several respondents said that GPSDD could potentially have done more in the way of providing follow-up support. For example, several respondents³⁸⁹ highlighted that although the Ghana–Kenya peer exchange³⁹⁰ itself had been effectively organised, leading to improved collaboration, they felt that more thought could have been given to following up on the commitments and action plans made at the end of the event. Similarly, respondents³⁹¹ involved in the peer exchange between LAC and African countries³⁹² said that more could have been done to monitor the alliances that emerged as a result of the peer exchange.

A respondent³⁹³ who had been involved in the IDC initiative³⁹⁴ believed that GPSDD could have been “more deliberate about joining the dots between champions”, suggesting that more could have been done to read across action plans prepared by IDC champions to identify (a) where several champions were working on the same thing (in order to then follow up and help avoid duplication of effort); and (b) where one champion had a particular capacity gap and another had a strength in this area (in order to help broker a relationship that facilitates knowledge exchange).

One IDC³⁹⁵ respondent highlighted how GPSDD’s informal engagement with the UN system was a ‘powerful’ enabling factor, while another respondent suggested that engagement at the very senior (i.e. political) level of their organisation, as opposed to the senior technical, would have been more beneficial in promoting the IDC agenda. GPSDD engaged with UNSD in

³⁸³ O15-KII1, O15-KII2 and O15-KII3

³⁸⁴ O18&35&37-KII3 and 4&42-KII2

³⁸⁵ O2-KII1, O2-KII2, O2-KII3 and O18&35&37-KII2

³⁸⁶ O3-KII2

³⁸⁷ O12-KII1

³⁸⁸ O18&35&37-KII1

³⁸⁹ O25-KII1, O25-KII2 and O25-KII3

³⁹⁰ See outcome 25

³⁹¹ O26-KII1 and O26-KII2

³⁹² See outcome 26

³⁹³ O21&51-KII2

³⁹⁴ See outcomes 21 and 51

³⁹⁵ See outcomes 21 and 51

an informal manner while developing the IDC which enabled the team to benefit from UNSD's contribution (who were on board from the start) without having to engage with formal UN bureaucratic processes – which would have slowed and complicated development of the IDC.³⁹⁶ A representative³⁹⁷ of an international organisation with whom GPSDD worked under the IDC initiative believed that if GPSDD had been able to, for example, get the organisation's Executive Director up on a stage to discuss inclusive data, this would have yielded dividends in two ways. First, it would help raise the profile of inclusive data and help generate greater backing and momentum as a result. Second, it would have required the Executive Director to have engaged sufficiently in the subject matter in advance, leading to a greater understanding of the issues. The same respondent pointed towards where this had been done successfully at the launch of the Data for Now Initiative – which involved the Executive Director of World Food Programme (WFP), the Permanent Secretary of DFID and other senior organisational representatives. The respondent believes this was GPSDD at its best and believes that there has not been enough of such practice.

Results from the 2020 GPSDD partner survey indicate that 77% (n=88) of all respondents (N=88) were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their experience of engaging with GPSDD, while 18% were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'. Overall, non-partners appear to have a higher level of satisfaction than partners with 86% (n=21) saying they were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' – compared to 73% (n=45) for partners. However, a greater proportion of partners (33%) than non-partners (24%) reported the highest level of satisfaction. The only respondents reporting dissatisfaction in their engagement with GPSDD were partners (2%). No respondents of any type reported being 'very dissatisfied'.

When partner survey respondents were asked to indicate the ways in which they had engaged with GPSDD in the last year, the most common response was "through attending a GPSDD event" overall (32%, n=73) and for non-partners (34%, n=29) while for partners it was "subscribed to a GPSDD listserv" (36%, n=44). In addition, more than a quarter of partner respondents reported having "shared GPSDD social media posts" (27%), being an "active member of a GPSDD-facilitated group" (25%) and having "collaborated on a GPSDD project" (25%). The only other form of engagement reported by more than a quarter of non-partners (28%) was being an "active member of a GPSDD-facilitated group". A very small proportion (4%) of respondents had not engaged with GPSDD at all during 2019.

EQ9: How effective has the Secretariat been in advancing GPSDD objectives?

This section begins by sharing our summary of key findings about the effectiveness of the Secretariat. Then, a short presentation of the main findings is shared from the 7S organisational assessment in early 2020. These findings are then nuanced further with an analysis of the key developments throughout the rest of 2020. To this, we weave in analysis and findings covering the main factors, the flexibility of the Secretariat to respond to learning and the appropriateness of the operating model.

The full detail of the methodology of the 7S organisational assessment can be found in section 4 and the assessment rubric is in Annex 10. This sub-section summarises the findings and analysis on alignment of the hard and then the soft elements with shared values. Figure 6 details the specific results for the assessment of each S. It judges the results of each S as:

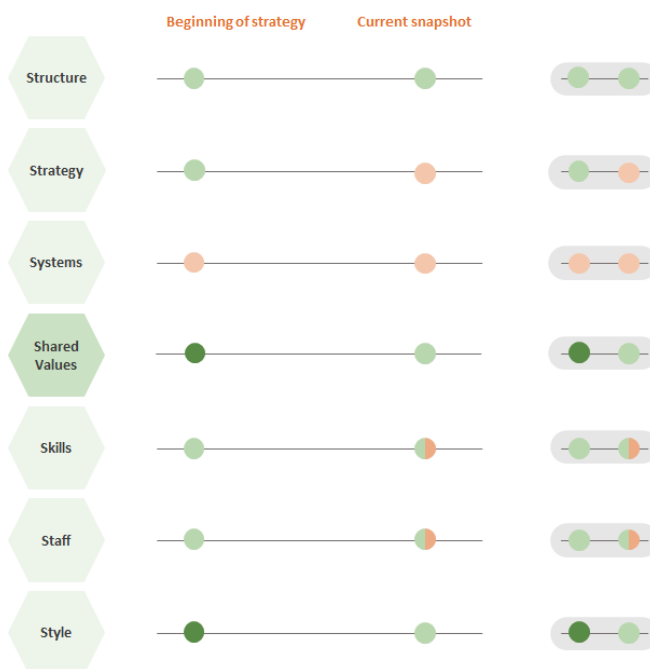
³⁹⁶ O21&51-KII1

³⁹⁷ O21&51-KII2

beginning (red), developing (amber), consolidating (light green) and exemplary (green). A full detailed breakdown of each S was presented to the Secretariat in June 2020.³⁹⁸

It is important that these results and the movement between certain states (e.g. from developing to consolidating or from consolidating to developing) is put into context and not judged as a one-dimensional movement. GPSDD has gone through a period of intense growth from the beginning of the strategy to current time (window of assessment). Some of the movement can be explained by rising expectations and clearer market value to stakeholders than necessarily diminishing performance. The results are dynamic and test the hard and soft elements within an evolving context.

Figure 6: 7S organisational assessment findings of GPSDD



We begin with the alignment of the ‘hard’ elements of the model:

strategy, structure and systems with shared values. We then consider adjustments that may be necessary to ensure the ongoing appropriateness of GPSDD’s operating model to deliver the five-year strategy. The backdrop being the previous detailed discussions in EQs 3–8 on the effectiveness of GPSDD and the main factors that have led to the Secretariat successfully advancing GPSDD objectives to date.

To what extent are the strategy, structure and systems of GPSDD aligned to its values?³⁹⁹

Evidence⁴⁰⁰ suggests that the strain of sustaining the ‘dualism’ of an institution and a partnership is starting to show. Respondents, particularly TAG members, are calling for clarity and a decision on the extent to which GPSDD is an implementation/ NGO institution or a partnership. This decision will then inform the engagement strategy with partners and facilitate discussion and decisions around how to scale up and: (a) how to create greater links between implementation and advocacy; (b) how to prioritise and simplify; and (c) how to continue to fill a critical niche in UN system.

The Secretariat structure has been agile and evolved as needs have arisen. Respondents⁴⁰¹ are now calling for GPSDD to rapidly scale up, develop greater clarity on strategic implementation and formulate a mode of engagement at the regional and country level that will enable it to rapidly deliver its strategy. Greater clarity and a greater emphasis on convening over delivery roles will in turn give greater direction and mandate to the policy

³⁹⁸ Itad presentation of preliminary analysis paper in June 2020

³⁹⁹ The norms and standards that guide employee behaviour and company action. These are the rules, values, customs and principles that guide organisational behaviour and the extent to which the values are internalised.

⁴⁰⁰ WS3-KIIT12, WS3-KIIS3, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIS2, WS3-KIIS1, WS3-KIIT10, WS3-KIIT11, WS3-KIIT4, WS3-KIIB1, WS3-KIIT8, WS3-KIIS11

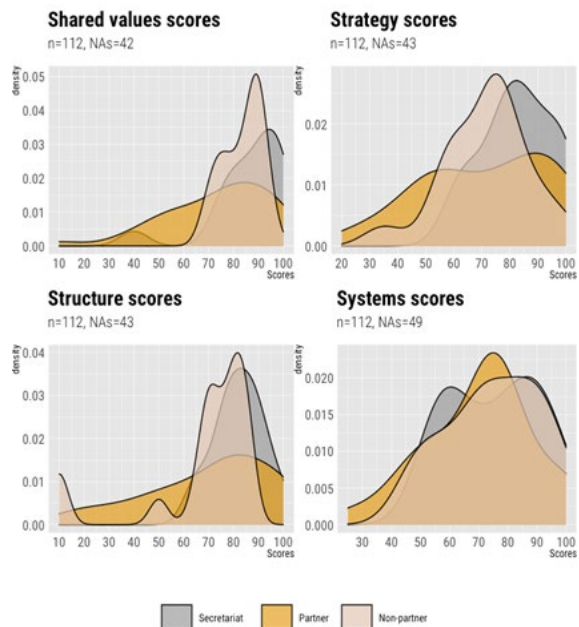
⁴⁰¹ Board, TAG and Secretariat members

advocacy team. Some respondents⁴⁰² suggested a simplification of the current portfolio to enable scale.

Respondents⁴⁰³ clearly ask for the level of ambition contained in the strategy to be replicated in the Secretariat's scale of influence. GPSDD's credibility has been established. Interviewees⁴⁰⁴ believed that GPSDD has access to resources and people that few other organisations in the world can match. However, the ambition of meeting the SDGs in 2030 needs to be reflected in the structure and systems that are chosen and must reflect the shared values of GPSDD Secretariat and partners.

Nevertheless, results are in the main positive, when data from the survey (as demonstrated in the density plot charts⁴⁰⁵ above in Figure 7) is triangulated with key informant interview data. There is a high level of consistency in findings for Strategy, Structures and Systems, which means that across key stakeholder groups GPSDD's capabilities are developing and, in some instances (Structure) consolidating.

Figure 7: Density plot charts against selected 7S



To what extent are the skills, staff and style of GPSDD aligned to its values?

GPSDD's shared values of inclusivity and mutual trust are reflected in the Secretariat's leadership style and across the staff. The reported skill strengths of policy, advocacy, brokering and convening in the Secretariat are also aligned to the value of engagement with a broad range of actors. The survey⁴⁰⁶ suggests that the operationalisation of these values needs to be done with one eye on how members *and* non-members react.

Shared values, alongside staff and style, is one of the most accomplished elements of the Secretariat's current operating model. As the organisational assessment found, shared values are, for many respondents,⁴⁰⁷ the Secretariat's distinct value add. Respondents⁴⁰⁸ clearly stated that GPSDD brings a depth of understanding and connection to sustain collaborating competitors that is greatly valued. This was verified in the analysis of key factors detailed under EQ6 where GPSDD's convening power is strongly underscored by 'how' it goes about building networks and partnerships in an adaptive and collaborate style, which supports

⁴⁰² WS3-KIIB6, WS3-KIIT6

⁴⁰³ WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIT10

⁴⁰⁴ WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIB8

⁴⁰⁵ The higher parts of the density plot show more frequently occurring values. The values on the y axis represent the ratio between a given value and its frequency (i.e. how often it occurs within the data given the range of values that it belongs to). Density plots represent a probability distribution extrapolated on the basis of the observed values

⁴⁰⁶ Skills, style, staff and shared values are the most accomplished according to the survey. Non-partner and partners alike felt that skills were the most developed capacity followed by staff and then style. Whereas the Secretariat deemed that style is he most developed capability, with staff, skills and then values

⁴⁰⁷ WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIB6, WS3-KIIB8, WS3-KIIT9, WS3-KIIB7, WS3-KIIS8, WS3-KIIS1, WS3-KIIS2, WS3-KIIS3, WS3-KIIS10, WS3-KIIS9

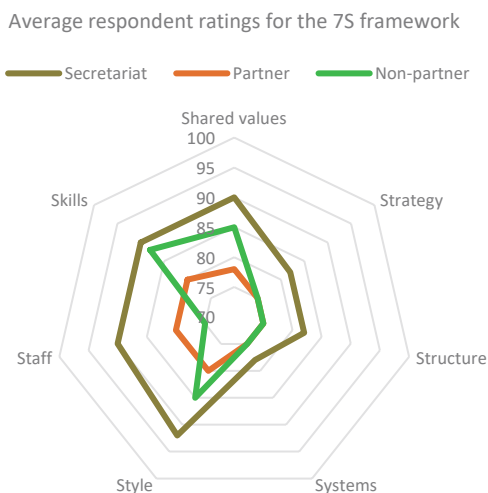
⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

changemakers and develops learning. Shared values sit at the centre of every operating model and enable effective performance across all elements.

The values are however, more aligned against style and staff of the Secretariat, and less so against strategy, structure and systems. Please see Figure 8 below, which visualises the survey data on this subject.

Interviewees⁴⁰⁹ reported greater alignment between shared values and internal ways of working, than GPSDD’s external engagement. Indeed, respondents⁴¹⁰ identify two key areas where GPSDD needs to articulate values related to their strategy. The first is in working with partners and particularly with governments (who will they work with, when and why?); and the second is values around ethics and privacy. Some respondents⁴¹¹ raised questions about the process of selecting CEPEI as regional partner⁴¹².

Figure 8: Visualisation of survey data validating interview data



Top 2:	Partner	Non-partner	Secretariat
1	Skills	Skills	Style
2	Staff/Style	Staff/Style	Staff/Skills/Values

There is a potential conflict between staff and the shared values of inclusion, equality and mutual respect across the Secretariat, given that some staff are employed through different contracting modalities and therefore have different opportunities and rights when it comes to issues such as parental leave or sick pay.

There is a further potential conflict between the shared values of engagement and prioritisation of partnerships, transparency and integrity and a lack of skills⁴¹³ in ethics and legal frameworks.

Key findings from an analysis of developments since organisational assessment

This sub-section is included to ensure the evaluation considers the reflection, learning and more general work of the Secretariat since early 2020, pre-pandemic. It is split into three mini sections: (a) scale-up through Data for Now; (b) formalising risk assessment and management; and (c) internal alignment to strategy.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁴¹⁰ WS3_KIIT12, WS3_KIIS8, WS3_KIIS10, WS3_KIIT1

⁴¹¹ WS3-KIIT4

⁴¹² This selection was made before the current Ethics Policy was in place.

⁴¹³ Please note that since the evidence was collected and analysed against this GPSDD has appointed an Ethics Officer and has an Ethics Policy

Scaling up through Data for Now

Reports, case studies, press releases and tracking tools ⁴¹⁴attest to the demand for the **UNECA GPSDD partnership work on Data for Now, a pan-African programme, during the 2020 pandemic.** The Secretariat has embraced significant scale-up opportunities and this has led to greater confidence in its ability to: (a) match demand and supply simultaneously across several countries and different partnerships; as well as (b) better define its value proposition. All of this builds its ability to manage the inherent dualism in the current operating model. Please see Annex 8 for further details of how GPSDD responded to the pandemic.

Box 18. GPSDD and UNECA

In April 2020, GPSDD announced a partnership with UNECA. The partnership receives capacity support from Data for Now, a coalition of partners including UNSD, SDSN and the World Bank. Together the group has brokered, as of early November 2020, 49 partnerships¹ in an additional 30 countries across Africa. GPSDD reports that 20 of these partnerships are already delivering results through impact on decision making. Please visit [here](#) for the full details of the Africa UN Knowledge Hub for Covid-19.

The rapid scale-up through the UNECA partnership⁴¹⁵ **on Data for Now, because of Covid-19, has demonstrated it is possible for GPSDD to deliver at a greater scale, at the same time, through a growth in the range of partnerships.** GPSDD has supported changemakers through their roster of 30 Solution Partners. These includes private sector technology companies, data science institutions and the organisers and grantees of various Covid-19 challenges. Please see Figure 9 for details of the Nigeria Covid-19 datahub.

During the pandemic, the Secretariat has become more sophisticated in articulating their value proposition to the data for development ecosystem. The technical skills of GPSDD staff to broker partnerships and their approach to institutional development is better recognised and defined in these stronger value propositions. This suggests⁴¹⁶ that some rapid reflection and learning took place to enable this. The proposed and successful collaboration between DFID's Frontier Technologies Hub's #COVIDaction and the UNECA partnership to build Africa's resilience to Covid-19 is a case in point. There is the potential to have similar relationships with several other organisations.

The successful collaboration proposed to DFID (now FCDO) matched supply with demand to bring #COVIDaction's sourcing and supporting data and technology solutions strength together with GPSDD and UNECA's network of government and local partners in lower and middle-income countries who need access to these tools, data and technologies to support their response to the pandemic. The Data for Now Covid response programme provides #COVIDaction with a fast-track route for their data and technology solutions to these users.

Further, during the pandemic, GPSDD has honed its bespoke services with Solution Partners into a package for Data for Now.⁴¹⁷ GPSDD articulates this package as a combination of three capabilities. First, it understands and can navigate the landscape. Second, its outreach and learning enable the uptake and use of tools and solutions. Third, it can provide strategic advice on product design. GPSDD is, however, very careful to point out that it is led by the needs and priorities of its partners and cannot force one product or solution over another, nor guarantee the uptake of any given tool even after brokering a relationship or partnership. This speaks

⁴¹⁴ There is no independent evidence available at present and due to timing, all interviews for workstream 3 were completed in February 2020 prior to Covid-19 being classified a pandemic. It was not possible to collect key informant data on GPSDD's response. However, some key informant interviews for workstream 2 did verify certain elements of the roll-out and internal reports and tracking sheets were used to verify GPSDD's activities

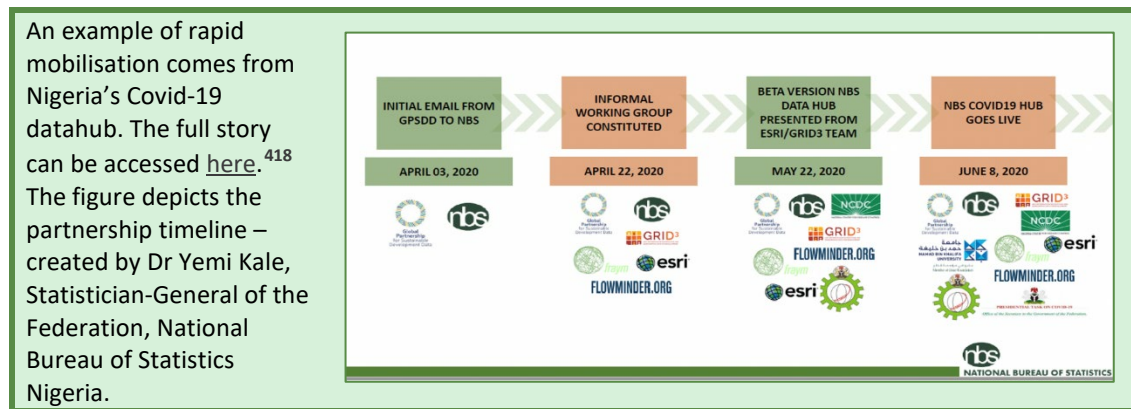
⁴¹⁵ UNECA made a direct and unpromoted request to GPSDD to help them design and lead the Africa-wide COVID programme in March 2020

⁴¹⁶ Validated by internal Board papers shared with the GPSDD Evaluation team

⁴¹⁷ Most recent internal note relating to program of work

strongly to its emerging confidence to articulate its ethical stance in partnership with global Solution Partners (many of whom are private sector).

Figure 9: An example of rapid mobilisation



However, further thinking and analysis⁴¹⁹ on learning and knowledge for GPSDD has verified the tension of dualism that was raised in the organisational assessment. The analysis conducted by Accenture Development Partnerships (ADP) to identify areas of change for GPSDD to transition to its prioritised future state verified the evaluation's organisational assessment conclusions. Namely, it suggests that GPSDD's delivery role is best placed as a learning curator, amplifier and broker in most of its offerings. It recommends that it redefines its role away from implementor in order to achieve its strategic priorities.⁴²⁰ However, to achieve the standards expected in a GPSDD model, there would therefore have to be greater emphasis on the brokering, coordination, standard setting and communications elements of partners, which might mean GPSDD has to spend time building these skills and ensuring the same style (the hallmark of its approach).

Formalising risk assessment and management

The Covid-19 work has opened up the Secretariat to different risks. There are limits to the global partnership's ability to affect influence at the system level and limits in partner capacity (please see discussion of disabling factors against EQ6). These risks validate the organisational assessment findings on aligning shared values with structure through partnerships and with strategy – what is delivered. First, while the Secretariat are actively managing⁴²¹ new partnerships, there are limits to GPSDD's ability to affect influence at the system level. There are limits on the capacity of the core partners to drive progress. All are operating under significant limits in terms of time and money. This limits the potential impact and also increases the risk of loss of momentum and failure to follow through. Second, in relation to coordination with other projects – in some countries, Data for Now work sits alongside other very similar projects. GPSDD's challenges are manifold to: coordinate projects, increase the overall impact, and reduce the burden on governments.

Aligning internal capacity and structures relating to advocacy with TAG role

GPSDD is more confident in its value proposition and conscious of the role advocacy can play in achieving the SDGs. It needs to bring this level of confidence inside to align internal capacity, strategy, systems and structures relating to advocacy. And, at the same time

⁴¹⁸ <https://www.data4sdgs.org/resources/nigerias-rapid-mobilization-against-covid-19>

⁴¹⁹ Accenture Development Partnerships (ADP) work on a Learning and Knowledge Strategy

⁴²⁰ Slide 8

⁴²¹ Risk scoring new partnerships and actively monitoring status of all partnerships.

ensure this process is fully connected to and empowers the new role of the TAG.⁴²² The operating model needs to be aligned to achieve a common agenda. In preparation for its virtual retreat in 2020, GPSDD teams (external relations, policy and programmes) individually mapped the workstreams present in their teams.⁴²³ These represent GPSDD’s blueprint for how it delivers impact as well as highlighting synergies and differences across teams. Through this process, nine ‘umbrella models’ were identified as part of their operations. The aim over time is to make sure these are aligned with other ongoing strategy related thinking.

This work is the start of important thinking to align internal structures in the Secretariat to deliver against GPSDD’s ambitious vision. The evaluation team notes with interest the overlap between the external relations and policy team in their advocacy work and approach. The proposed reconfiguration of the TAG’s role (please see EQ10) will create an advocacy agenda for GPSDD. Once this is agreed, it will be important to align this with the current ways of working across two core teams in GPSDD.

EQ10: How effective have GPSDD governance structures been in advancing GPSDD objectives?

The current Board and TAG members are a powerful voice of GPSDD⁴²⁴ within the data for development ecosystem: the UN, national governments and regional outfits. The TAG members are the custodians of norms (interoperability, openness, sustainability) and how to implement these. In order to align the structure with the level of ambition contained in the strategy, respondents⁴²⁵ suggest that GPSDD needs to consider how it can work more smartly with this voice through institutional linkages (via Board members and technical experts).

There has been no shortage of desire to work more closely with TAG members, but the Secretariat has struggled with capacity. The strain of sustaining the dualism has contributed to an underuse of the TAG (picked up under EQ9) and a lack of clarity on how policy advocacy enables GPSDD’s work. The result is a lack of linking TAG members with institutions, stakeholders, partners and solutions. The more the Secretariat can be resourced to influence the levers of change, the more able they are to effect change (as shown under EQs 4 and 6).

In early 2020, GPSDD launched an 18-month process⁴²⁶ to review GPSDD policy advocacy’s agenda through the TAG. It is a partnership-wide process to identify shared positions for collective advocacy. The new work to reposition the TAG hopes to ensure that GPSDD’s voice is consistently present, supporting the ecosystem as well as influencing priority policymaking circles. This new work responds to calls from respondents⁴²⁷ in this evaluation for greater links between convening and advocacy to support changemakers.

The proposal is to refresh the TAG’s role and improve its effectiveness (see Box 19 below). Currently, there is no plan to change the structure, but rather use the TAG more effectively as a gateway to reflect on different perspectives of the data communities. The TAG is seen as a legitimate gateway to GPSDD’s network and through which GPSDD can organise its policy advocacy work. GPSDD will ask TAG members, as appropriate, to lead on particular topics to develop common policy advocacy positions and agendas. The GPSDD Secretariat will provide

⁴²² Please see EQ10 for the full discussion within the analysis of governance structures.

⁴²³ GPSDD Models exercise for virtual retreat (2020). Please see Annex 6 for further details

⁴²⁴ WS3-KIIT5, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIT7, WS3-KIIT12, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIT8, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIB1

⁴²⁵ WS3-KIIT5, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIT7, WS3-KIIT12, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIT8, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIB1

⁴²⁶ Policy Advocacy Paper and presentation to Board

⁴²⁷ WS3-KIIS8, WS3-KIIS7, WS3-KIIS1, WS3-KIIS10, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIB7, WS3-KIIT2, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIT10, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIT1

strategic, analytical and logistical support for the process and will work closely with the TAG Chair on the overall strategy and direction.

This proposal begins to tackle an issue that came up in the evaluation – respondents⁴²⁸ are actively looking for how to add a collection of individuals or strategic technical advisors to the governance structures of the Board and the Secretariat. Some respondents⁴²⁹ think that the greatest value GPSDD can add is on the policy advocacy side through a modern scale-up structure with a small subset of regional partners that change according to technical needs. Perhaps the current process of realigning the TAG with policy advocacy and the need for technical advisors can be brought together. The Board will shortly enter a period of transition, with long serving members moving off. At this point, it has been suggested that expertise in governance funding may be useful. Indeed, respondents⁴³⁰ request more dialogue between the Board and the Funders Group to ensure a consistent approach going forward.

To achieve this, GPSDD’s operating model for scale-up must continue to put regional and country-level priorities first. One stakeholder⁴³¹ states it is time to prioritise and move beyond the confines of geography. Governance structures must be nimble, lightweight and enable impact. Time will tell if the new role for the TAG can deliver greater impact.

Box 19. Definition of a positive policy agenda⁴³²

“Collectively define a GPSDD policy agenda which can serve as the basis for forging common advocacy positions to drive the change we want to see.

This process will enable the network to define a positive agenda by forging a community vision of the future, articulating what we stand for, and where there is potential for the network to come together to drive change.

The positive agenda defined through this process will enable the network to be more effective in forging common advocacy positions and together creating the change we want to see.”

There are new and emerging challenges for GPSDD’s governance as it achieves greater scale and impact. First, a graduation strategy to maintain institutional linkages. It is important GPSDD embraces discussions about how to enable interventions to graduate from their support. GPSDD’s ability to convene and sustain collaborating competitors is highly valued as is its ability to create and maintain institutional linkages. As a facilitator, the Secretariat team connects the demand and supply of skills, data, knowledge and resources to strengthen the data ecosystem and drive the production and use of data to support the SDGs.

New institutions may need ongoing support from the Secretariat. For example, DEA, as an evolution of ARDC, should represent a set of institutional linkages from regional to country level. However, there is some concern from respondents⁴³³ that in the shift from ARDC, DEA has come to function less effectively as an ecosystem, or a system of systems. One respondent⁴³⁴ felt that any linkages which existed were still a product of previous work and investment by GPSDD, and that DEA had not advanced far enough to develop or strengthen these links itself. The current DEA is driven by a strong Australian agenda. It is possible,

⁴²⁸ WS3-KIIT5, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIT7, WS3-KIIT12, WS3-KIIB5, WS3-KIIT8, WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIB1

⁴²⁹ WS3-KIIS8, WS3-KIIS7, WS3-KIIS1, WS3-KIIS10, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIB7, WS3-KIIT2, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIT10, WS3-KIIT3, WS3-KIIT1

⁴³⁰ WS3-KIIB4, WS3-KIIT6, WS3-KIIB2, WS3-KIIT3

⁴³¹ WS3-KIIB5

⁴³² Policy Advocacy Paper and PowerPoint from Jenna

⁴³³ O3-KI12 and O3-KI13

⁴³⁴ O3-KI13

therefore, to infer that there is a danger of existing institutional linkages being weakened under DEA as GPSDD exits.

Second, new decentralised modes of engagement (like through the UN Resident Coordinator system) enable GPSDD to operate more quickly in new contexts and identify the right people and the right agencies. Using the Resident Coordinator system to convene in new contexts appears highly appropriate. However, these modes of engagement do not necessarily ensure the same style and approach. There is a tension between the success of GPSDD style and approach as highlighted throughout this evaluation and its ability to scale through new modes of engagement that may be less agile and perceived as less neutral. The net results may be slower and of narrower impact but in more countries than GPSDD could have achieved without increasing the size or function of the Secretariat.

Through the UNECA partnership, GPSDD is currently engaged in 35 countries across Africa. With a roster of over 30 partners, the partnership has already developed or strengthened partnerships in 18 countries. Its governance structures have supported this delivery. It has embraced new ways of working through 15 country decentralised approaches, via the UN system and the UN Resident Coordinators (a position currently under reform⁴³⁵) who work with national institutions.

There is then a challenge to embrace other different modes of engagement with partners and countries who require more support and where the ground is less fertile (as discussed under EQ6 on disabling factors). Rather than seeing this as an efficiency/inclusivity trade off, perhaps GPSDD can continue to accept the need to work through various models. GPSDD is aware that due to the pressure to scale up with well-resourced supply-side partners, they have not been as democratic or as inclusive as they would perhaps have liked. The roster includes large companies or consortiums operating at a global scale. In the interests of sustainability and replicability, GPSDD recognises the need to engage with regional and national partners. But again, this involves additional resources from GPSDD.

Lastly, the final challenge is around scale-up and the attention this puts on ethics and principles to guide the approach to partnership. GPSDD has identified the need to safeguard the integrity of its work through core partners if they are to use the Data for Now brand. The learning from the pandemic has further validated the institutional assessment for this evaluation, which found that shared values sit at the heart of everything GPSDD does; however, greater alignment is required through the structures – in this instance the partnerships. In particular, the learning verifies the gap noted in the assessment that there must be strong alignment between the ethical principles of the core partners and GPSDD.

Greater alignment of principles would enable the strength of GPSDD shared values (brought to life through its approach) to be shared with core partners. This change would increase the number of organisations able to implement Data for Now projects. The core partners would retain a role brokering new projects, ensuring alignment with the principles, making connections between projects for purposes of learning, coordination and collaboration, and giving visibility to the work and to partners through communication of impact and learning. New and existing projects could be incentivised to use the Data for Now brand through more

⁴³⁵ Leadership reform is one of the UN Secretary General (SG)'s flagship initiatives. It introduces a new Management and Accountability Framework (MAF), that reinforces the position of the Resident Coordinator (RC) as an empowered leader of UN Country Teams. The landmark resolution passed by the General Assembly (A/RES/72/279) that establishes the new system, describes, "a dedicated, independent, impartial, empowered and sustainable development-focused coordination function for the United Nations development system by separating the functions of the resident coordinator from those of the resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme". Under the new system, the RC reports to an Assistant Secretary General in the SGs office, rather than to UNDP. The Secretary General's 2019 and 2020 reports on the reform's show progress in the first year in terms of the recruitment of RCs and roll-out of the structures and financing for the new RC, as does the first annual report on the RC system by the UN Sustainable Development Group.





opportunities for learning, the chance to increase visibility through communications products, and the possibility of pooling resources for greater impact.

In a recent document, Guiding Principles for Building and Implementing Data Partnerships (2020), GPSDD states:

“The purpose of these guiding principles is to inform the development and implementation of appropriate and responsible data partnerships between government entities and supply-side partners including private sector, development agencies, civil society, and academia. These principles encourage stakeholders to understand ethical considerations, address them within partnerships, and support responsible innovation. Acceptance of and adherence to this principles-based approach to building data partnerships is intended to prevent and mitigate potential risks of adverse impacts on people and planet and to safeguard the impartiality and independence of GPSDD and UNECA as facilitators/brokers.”




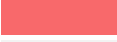
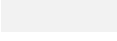
GPSDD requires partners to align with the UNECA principles and GPSDD’s Ethics and Integrity framework as well as national priorities of the participating country(ies) and partners. At the time of this evaluation report the principles being developed were as follows. The implications of these principles are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Principles and implications

Principle		Implications for GPSDD’s partnership
	Inclusion and fairness	Tackles impact of partnering with private sector and ensuring unintended discriminatory effects are minimised.
	Transparency	External communications will give advance notice to all parties ahead of releasing public communications
	Accountability	Data Management and protection framework for cooperation sets out each parties’ role and responsibilities.
	Interoperability and sustainability	Harmonization with existing or transitional country systems.

Annex 5: Strategy alignment review

Pre-2019 Strategy

Fully aligned:	
Mostly aligned:	
Partly aligned:	
Not aligned:	
Not applicable:	
LF alignment:	✓

2017 logframe outcome:	Data ecosystems are becoming more robust at national level		
Output-outcome alignment:	✓	✓	✓
2017 logframe outputs:	1. Improved political commitment to data	2. Innovative and collaborative efforts to meet data challenges are fostered at country, sector and infrastructure levels	3. Tools, platforms and convenings enable greater connections between different stakeholders to build trust and drive change through collaborations.
Interventions:			
2018 Workplan			
Governments, international organisations and companies commit to and implement new investments and partnerships to enhance data ecosystems at national, regional and global level.			
Improve coordination among data funders and encourage them to work together to ensure that funding for data initiatives is as effective as possible, and new commitments are made on funding for data.			
Progress on the roadmap process, supported by peer-to-peer learning and an increased range of tools produced by the GPSDD and partners.			
There is an increase in the availability and use of data to 'Leave No One Behind'.			
There is an increase in the availability and use of environmental data.			
Technical and political barriers to collaboration and integration of data sources are removed.			
<i>Continue to build the API highways site and ensure that the site is a useful resource for developers looking to meet demands from governments and others.</i>			
<i>Work with UNSD to develop practical tools to ensure interoperability of data and develop the governance and policy frameworks to facilitate interoperability, for presentation at the WDF in 2018.</i>			
<i>Continue to expand and refine the innovations fund, ensuring that it is playing a catalytic role in supporting innovations that respond to the needs of countries and that fill gaps in the wider data ecosystem.</i>			
Multi-stakeholder networks promote mutual trust and understanding and a stronger data ecosystem at global, regional and national levels.			
Tools and platforms enable greater connections between different stakeholders to build trust and drive change through collaborations.			
2017 Workplan			
Governments, international organisations and companies commit to a significant package of announcements to strengthen data that are presented at a major high-level meeting in Kenya.			
Awareness, support and funding for data production and use increases in roadmap countries.			

Data funders are more coordinated and work together to ensure that funding for data initiatives is as effective as possible.	✓		
The discussion on public-private data sharing is advanced through a strategy that produces actionable recommendations.	✓		
Countries are moving toward more robust data ecosystems through actions developed in the roadmaps action plans, supported by peer-to-peer learning and an increased range of tools produced by the GPSDD to support roadmaps.		✓	
Increase the availability and use of data to 'leave no one behind'.		✓	
Increase the availability and use of environmental data.		✓	
Remove technical barriers to collaboration and integration of data sources.		✓	
Multi-stakeholder networks promote mutual trust and understanding and a stronger data ecosystem at global, regional and national levels.			✓
Tools and platforms enable greater connections between different stakeholders to build trust and drive change through collaborations.			✓

2019-2023 Strategy

2019 logframe outcomes:	1. More and better data is used by governments, companies, investors, and civil society to achieve the SDGs			2. More and better data is used by governments, companies, investors, and civil society to monitor the SDGs
Output-outcome alignment:	✓	✓	✓	✓
2019 logframe outputs:	1.1. New technologies and data sources are scaled, building on existing systems to improve government decision making.	1.2. A global movement is fostered of political, business and civil society leaders, promoting responsible data use, building public trust, and showcasing pathways to success.	1.3. Standards of interoperability are embedded into global frameworks on data and statistics, making progress towards a world where data interoperability is the norm.	2.1. The use of timely and robust data for SDGs monitoring is scaled so that by the halfway point to the SDGs, the world has a clear picture of progress on the Goals.
Interventions:				
Increase the number of governments using Earth observation data...	✓ 1			
Increase the number of governments using privately held big data...	✓ 1 3			
Facilitate multi-stakeholder collaborations in at least ten countries...	✓ 1 3			
Increase to at least 50 the number of governments, companies, and civil society organisations signed up to and implementing action plans...		✓ 1		
Identify, develop, and share examples of public-private data sharing...		✓ 2		
Aggregate the evidence for increasing investment in data...		✓ 1 2		
Provide resources for others who are working to effect change by growing the number and visibility of research and advocacy products...		✓ 1 2		
Institutionalise principles for data interoperability within the official statistical system...			✓ 3	
Develop and maintain technical advice on interoperability...			✓ 3	
Put the principles and technical advice in the interoperability guide into practice...			✓ 1 3	
Foster collaboration with relevant researchers, data providers, and technology partners...				✓ 1 3
Strengthen administrative and other sources of foundational data...				✓ 1 3
In instances of limited national and disaggregated data, work with partners...				✓ 1 3
Cultivate high-profile moments to showcase timely data on the SDGs...				✓ 2
Deliver high-level and high-profile moments at United Nations General Assembly...				✓ 2 3
Work with civil society organisations who want to use timely data...				✓ 1 2
Work with a group of pioneer companies using data on SDGs...				✓ 1 2
Aggregate and amplify new tools, methods, and approaches...				✓ 3
Document and share knowledge and practical examples...				✓ 2 3

Annex 6: Sample for partner goals mapping exercise

Partner organisation	Target group type	Partner goals mapping
Athena Infonomics	For-profit	Some, limited information
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Donor/Foundation	No publicly available information
BrightFront Group	For-profit	No publicly available information
Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines (CCCM)	CSO/NGO	Full strategy document
Data2X	Academia/research	Full strategy document
Development Gateway	CSO/NGO	Full strategy document
Development Initiatives	Academia/research	Full strategy document
Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid of Belgium (DGD)	Government	Some, limited information
Geospatial Media and Communications	Media	No publicly available information
Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF)	CSO/NGO	Full strategy document
Global Development Incubator	For-profit	Full strategy document
Google.org	For-profit	Some, limited information
IBM	For-profit	No publicly available information
Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rural (IPAR)	CSO/NGO	Full strategy document
Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA)	Academia/research	Full strategy document
International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)	Academia/research	Full strategy document
Kathmandu Living Labs	CSO/NGO	Some, limited information
Lynk	For-profit	Some, limited information
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development of France	Government	No publicly available information
National Bureau of Statistics of Tanzania (NBS)	Government	Full strategy document
National Institute of Statistics and Census of Ecuador (INEC)	Government	Some, limited information
National Statistics Office of Dominican Republic (ONE)	Government	Full strategy document
Open Knowledge International	CSO/NGO	Full strategy document
Tableau	For-profit	Some, limited information
UN Women – United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	Multilateral	Full strategy document
United Kingdom’s Office for National Statistics (ONS)	Government	Full strategy document
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)	Multilateral	Full strategy document
World Council on City Data (WCCD)	Academia/research	No publicly available information

NB: Those partners with no publicly available information were excluded from the sample.

Annex 7: Complementarity analysis sample

Partner organisation	Location covered	Partner type
Athena Infonomics	South Asia	For-profit
CCCM	Latin America and Caribbean	CSO/NGO
Data2X	North America	Academia/research
Development Gateway	North America / Europe and Central Asia / Sub-Saharan Africa	Academia/research
Development Initiatives	North America / Europe and Central Asia / Sub-Saharan Africa	Academia/research
DGD Belgium	Europe and Central Asia	Government
ECLAC	Latin America and Caribbean	Multilateral
GBIF	North America / Latin America and Caribbean / Europe and Central Asia / Sub-Saharan Africa / South Asia / East Asia and Pacific	CSO/NGO
Google	Global	For-profit
IATI	Global	Academia/research
INEC	Latin America and Caribbean	Government
IPA	North America / Latin America and Caribbean / Sub-Saharan Africa / South Asia / East Asia and Pacific	Academia/research
IPAR	Sub-Saharan Africa	CSO/NGO
Kathmandu Living Lab	South Asia	CSO/NGO
NBS Tanzania	Sub-Saharan Africa	Government
ONE Dominican Republic	Latin America and Caribbean	Government
ONS UK	Europe and Central Asia	Government
Open Knowledge International	North America / Latin America and Caribbean / Europe and Central Asia / Sub-Saharan Africa / East Asia and Pacific	CSO/NGO
Tableau Foundation	North America / Latin America and Caribbean / Europe and Central Asia / South Asia / East Asia and Pacific	For-profit
UN Women	Global	Multilateral

Annex 8: Responding to a pandemic

The pandemic led to new demands for partnerships to support the response to the virus, and interest in data increased over 2020. GPSDD has a dedicated place on its website to the Covid-19 response that includes:

- A round up of resources: data, regional and country-level dashboards, visualisations, maps, response and calls to action, research analysis and tools.
- The Covid-19 Data for a Resilient Africa Initiative in partnerships with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).
- A website for national statistical offices.

While work was delayed or encountered unforeseen issues (experienced in all industries and sectors), Data for Now country priorities and resources focused on responding to the emergency.

In the selected nine countries, the commitment is to work with governments and other partners across sectors to define needs, priorities, and pathways for bridging the data gaps. The core organisations will then work with governments and supply-side partners to broker partnerships across sectors, share knowledge and technology across organisations, develop and deliver trainings, and scale data solutions within and across countries. This process of aggregation, amplification, and scaling up will strengthen existing systems and institutional capacity, leverage proven innovations, and develop new data solutions for better SDG data.⁴³⁶

Data for Now was launched with a simple mission – to deploy the best knowledge and tools in the service of the Sustainable Development Goals. With 10 years to go before the 2030 deadline, too many countries are still working with data that is out of date or incomplete. But there is now a critical mass of methods and innovations that we know work to solve this problem. Data for Now aims to bring together governments who recognise the value of data and want to invest, with technical solutions and capacity support, so they have the data they need to drive progress on the SDGs.

Data for Now brings together the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, the United Nations Statistics Division, the World Bank, and the Thematic Research Network on Data and Statistics (TReNDS) at the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, in a tailored and collaborative process for aggregating, amplifying, and scaling up data solutions. Together they bring expertise in brokering and facilitation, access to governments and academic networks, and technical know-how on data for development. The combined efforts will increase the access and use of data for development at an unprecedented scale and pace.

A workshop in Kigali in November 2019 brought representatives from those countries together with partners to identify priorities and begin work planning.

⁴³⁶ Data for Now – vision and strategy (2020)

Annex 9: Internal operating workstreams

In preparation for its virtual retreat in 2020, GPSDD teams (external relations, policy and programmes) individually mapped the workstreams present in their team.⁴³⁷ It is understood that these represent GPSDD’s blueprint for how it delivers impact as well as synergies and differences across teams. Through this process, nine ‘umbrella models’ were identified as part of their operations. The aim over time is to make sure these are aligned with other ongoing strategy related thinking.

This work is the start of important thinking to align internal structures in the Secretariat to deliver against GPSDD’s ambitious vision. The evaluation team notes with interest the synergy between the external relations and policy team in their workstreams. It may become necessary to align the new policy advocacy agenda with whoever delivers from the GPSDD Secretariat to ensure that there is alignment in what is being delivered and how this is done.

External relations team







Policy Advocacy team



⁴³⁷ GPSDD Models exercise for virtual retreat (2020)

Annex 10: Organisational assessment rubric

	 Beginning	 Developing	 Consolidating	 Exemplary
	Not at all present/developed/ very misaligned. A great deal of adjustment required.	A little present/developed/ misaligned. A lot of adjustment required.	Largely present/developed/ aligned. Some adjustment required.	Greatly present/developed/ aligned. No adjustment required.
Element level meaning				
Shared Values	The underlying reasons for conducting the type of work the organization is involved with, are unclear or mixed amongst teams.	←————→		There are strong, shared values that underpin and relate to the work of the organization.
Strategy	No agreed and/or articulated strategy. Disagreement over the organizations' aims and objectives among different stakeholders.	←————→		A clearly articulated strategy developed in consultation with multilevel stakeholders that is achievable, realistic and has been clearly communicated across the whole organization.
Structure	It is unclear how positions relate to one another and where decision-making power rests, or the structure is not appropriate for the work of the organization.	←————→		The organizational structure is clear and appropriate for delivering against organizational objectives; decision-making processes are well understood and appropriate.
System	Systems and processes are burdensome; staff do not use systems consistently; systems and processes are not reviewed.	←————→		Systems and processes well developed to support the work of the organization; systems and processes are streamlined and efficient and systematically reviewed for potential improvement.
Style	Leadership style is not well understood and does not suit needs of the organization; teams function in name only.	←————→		Clear understanding of leadership/ management style; style is appropriate for achieving organizational objectives; teams function to work together.
Staff	It is unclear how positions are relevant to the organization's objectives; positions have been vacant for long periods; there is high turnover.	←————→		It is clear how positions are relevant to achieving the organization's objectives; positions are filled with staff with relevant competencies.
Skills	Important gaps in key skills exist at both individual and institutional levels; skills assessments do not drive recruitment or staff development.	←————→		Individual and institutional skills are appropriate for achieving organizational objectives; skills are frequently reviewed and updated in the context of changing organizational needs.



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