



Unlocking the potential of NSO data: *Strengthening data use by fact-checkers*

Friday 22 April - 9AM EDT/3PM CEST

Background

In today's digital data ecosystem, easy to access and understand data from national statistical offices (NSOs) is critical for evidence-based decision-making. It supports and fosters journalism, civil society and fact-checking of disinformation.

However, recent research has identified a number of challenges that reduce the potential impact of NSO data: limited access to data, a lack of context about how the data is collected and analysed, and the format it is published in.

Fact-checkers need high-quality data to do their work. Without this data, they cannot interrogate and debunk false and misleading information that harm society. They rely on several sources, including NSO managed data portals, to do their work. Moreover, their efficiency increases proportionally with the availability of open data and well-designed data portals.

NSO managed data portals perform a range of critical functions. They serve a vital role in the virtuous data cycle, from facilitating data discovery to data access. Good data encourages greater use, leading to improved policies and outcomes, which, in turn, increases demand for data.

However, not all data portals managed by NSOs perform to the expectations. A recent [study](#) of data portals in 74 IDA-eligible countries by PARIS21 and ODW confirms this. It found that although many perform better on some of the foundational requirements of the [UNSD's guidelines](#) on data portals, like communication and data disaggregation, many of the more advanced recommendations are far from being implemented. The missing elements include aspects that critically affect data discovery and access by data users.

In 2019 a few selected fact-checkers (Full Fact, Chequeado, and Africa Check) and the Open Data Institute were awarded a grant by Google.org as part of the global AI (Artificial Intelligence) impact challenge programme. The funding has accelerated the understanding of how technology, especially AI, can support the work of fact-checkers as data users and contributed to highlighting the importance of bridging the gap between the NSO and fact-checking community.

Webinar

Strengthening the relationship between fact-checkers and national statistical offices can enhance the impact of each community's work. To pursue this objective, PARIS21, together with ODW, Full Fact, Chequeado, Africa Check and the Open Data Institute, is organising a webinar. The goal is to identify specific areas of focus in the light of insights from the study of data portals by PARIS21 and ODW and results of the Google.org grant to Full Fact, Chequeado, Africa Check and the Open Data Institute.

The target audiences for this webinar would be policy advisors in strategic planning bodies in countries, development partners, NSO staff and fact-checkers. The webinar will also provide insights to the head of NSOs and the head of departments in NSOs responsible for information technology implementation.

Objectives

Against the above background, this webinar would precisely aim to:

- Bring together the fact-checkers, journalists, and official statistical community to explore the obstacles and opportunities of using NSO data for fact-checking and emerging roles for stakeholders to make it work.
- Assess the state of play, challenges, and emerging opportunities of using the UNSD's guidelines on data portals as a shared framework to align priorities and impact of NSOs' data portals.
- Identify win-win opportunities, the scope for synergies between official statistics and fact-checkers and implications for data publication and data portal design.

Speakers

Master of Ceremony

- Andy Dudfield, Head of Automated Fact Checking, Full Fact

Scene Setting

- François Fonteneau, Deputy Head, PARIS21

Panel 1

- Rajiv Ranjan, Innovation Team Lead, PARIS21 (moderator)
- Fionntán O'Donnell, Senior Data Technologist, Open Data Institute
- Eric Swanson, Director of Research, Open Data Watch
- Lee Mwititi, Chief Editor, Africa Check

Panel 2

- Kate Wilkinson, Deputy Chief Editor, Africa Check (moderator)
- Yeama Thompson, Managing Director, Sierra Leone News Agency
- Fadhila Najah, Chief of Dissemination Database Unit at National Institute of Statistics, Tunisia
- Pablo Fernández, Chequeado, Director of Innovation and Communication

Agenda (90 mins)

Time	Action	Person(s)
3 mins	Welcome and Introduction	Andy Dudfield
5 mins	Setting the scene	François Fonteneau from PARIS21

<p>Panel: 30 mins</p> <p>Q&A: 10 mins</p>	<p>Panel Discussion #1</p> <p>Fact checkers experiences</p> <p>Fact-checkers and NSO data</p> <p>Systematic review of the data and portals in NSO data publishing</p>	<p>Moderator: Rajiv Ranjan</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <p>Fionntán O'Donnell</p> <p>Eric Swanson</p> <p>Lee Mwiti</p>
<p>Panel: 30 mins</p> <p>Q&A: 10 mins</p>	<p>Panel Discussion #2</p> <p>Success stories: official statistics for journalists and fact checkers</p> <p>Success stories: official statistics for journalists and fact checkers</p> <p>Success story of someone who built a portal for an NSO</p>	<p>Moderator: Kate Wilkinson</p> <p>Panellists: Pablo Fernández</p> <p>Yeama Thompson</p> <p>Fadhila Najah</p>
<p>2 mins</p>	<p>Closing Remarks</p>	<p>Andy Dudfield</p>