

Economic and Social Council

Civil society hearing on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system

Statement submitted by the Institute for Conscious Global Change, Inc., a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The United Nations is to be commended for recognizing its need to be Fit for Purpose and in need of a Data Revolution to provide the opportunity for data to be used and served up in a truly revolutionary way.

Over fifty percent of the world's population is now under 30 years old. The "Future We Want" belongs to the Youth and to meet the Post-2015 Development Agenda that data must be of the kind in which they are an integral part.

The Institute for Conscious Global Change (ICGC) feels its readiness to deliver on the Post-2015 Development Agenda requires that it looks beyond the usual input providers to embrace women and the youth; and a more extensive use of 21st century technology.

Of great concern to our organization is the reluctance of the UN Statistics Commission to give equal recognition to the use of Geography to aid in the delivery of the Post-2015 Agenda. The 70 year old UN Statistics Commission needs to be made "fit for purpose". In the March 2015 Statistics Commissions Annual Meeting, it was declared that there is now a marriage of Statistics and Geography. However, given the limited role Geography plays in the Post-2015 process so far, it would appear this marriage is an uneven alliance and ceremonial at best. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology is an integrative collaborative planning tool that is data driven. Statistics alone cannot provide the place and location data needed to ensure that poverty is eradicated and no one is left behind. Statistics must yield to the reality of the times and open up the data space to allow Geography to provide the benefits Statistics does not have the capacity to deliver, this is what the Data Revolution should be all about. It is time to replace the Statistics Commission with a UN Geography and Statistics Commission/Agency with co-directors. Other countries like Brazil have done so successfully for decades and are reaping the benefits. A new future must include new and innovative technologies to meet the enormous demand for technology in the Means of Implementation (MOI).

To create the future we want, the voices of the Youth, Women and Children must also be heard and factored into the decision making at every level---international, national, regional and local in the collection of data as well as in planning and development in all countries.