



Doha Declaration on Statistics in the Arab Region

Preamble

The first Conference of the Al-Khwarezmi Committee of the International Statistics Institute (ISI) was held in Doha, Qatar, from 6 - 8 December 2010, in conjunction with the Qatar National Statistics Day. The Conference was organized and chaired by H.E. Shaikh Hamad bin Jabor bin Jassim Al Thani, the Chair of the Al-Khwarezmi Committee and the President of Qatar Statistical Authority, under the patronage of H.E. Shaikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor Al Thani, the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The conference was attended by more than 200 participants including statisticians, policy makers, and researchers, and academics from within the region, as well as representatives of many international agencies. The participants were enthusiastic about holding this conference and look forward to a greater regional cooperation in statistics through the activities of the Committee.

Declaration

The participants unanimously affirmed that an effective and efficient statistical system is an essential element of good governance for all countries. Good statistics provide the basis for the identification and implementation of evidence based policies. Governments should take effective steps to strengthen the statistical capacity of countries in the Arab region.

In pursuit of these objectives, the participants affirmed the following:

- Call on the countries of the region to set their own priorities, in line with national goals, for the development of statistics by preparing and implementing National Strategies for the development of statistics.
- Enhance statistical systems in the region to operate in conformity with the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and implement the best practices and international standards and recommendations in all areas of statistics including the Millennium Development Goals.
- Improve the national statistical systems in the region to generate and maintain up-to-date, high quality statistics needed to support national objectives, women

empowerment, caring of elderly citizens, promoting access to decent and productive work, ensuring sustainable development and managing the impact of globalization.

- Call on the countries of the region to promote and strengthen dialogue between those who produce and those who use national statistical data.
- Emphasize the role of statisticians in promoting the use of statistics in decision making at all local and national levels including disseminating statistics making use of new technology in innovative ways.
- Countries of the region should work together through existing regional organizations to ensure that the voice of the Arab Region is properly represented at international statistical fora.
- Collaboration between academic researchers and practitioners should be strengthened with the aim of bridging the gap between the theory and practice of statistics.
- Arab countries should utilize the external technical assistance offered by UN agencies and their international partners promoting capacity development, emphasizing south-south cooperation including peer reviews, and making a more effective use of the expertise and experience available in the region.
- Statistical agencies in the Arab region should make their data (including all relevant information) available for the public, while maintaining confidentiality of individual respondents.
- Adopt the statistical aspects in the declaration of the Arab Conference on Population and Development that was held in Doha during the period, 18 - 20 May 2009.
- Adopt evidence-based policies in the field of education, culture, communications, science, and technology, and develop sector-wide approach to education statistics with special attention to measuring education outcomes, with education for all approach. Undertake efforts to develop cultural statistics based upon the 2009 UNSECO framework, and invest in the measurement of research & development.
- Urge the statisticians in the Arab region to join the Al-Khawarezmi Committee and to nominate deserving statisticians for election to the membership of ISI.

Next Steps

Conference participants call for strengthening and support of the activities of the Al-Khawarezmi Committee by implementing the Doha Declaration, organize biannual conferences, and increase membership in ISI and the Al Khawarezmi Committee.

As a first step, a permanent location for the Committee should be established in Doha Qatar, provided with the appropriate staff. A website should be also established and maintained to publicize the work of the Al-Khawarezmi Committee and to monitor progress towards the objectives of the Doha Declaration.

Doha, Qatar
8 December 2010