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IN THIS ISSUE:

- [Development Data: An Essential Building Block for UN SDG Action](#)
- [2015 Significance, RSS Young Statisticians Writing Competition Underway](#)
- [Statistics Fastest-Growing Undergraduate STEM Degree in the U.S.](#)
- [The World of Statistics 2015 Activities Calendar](#)
- [Participating Organization News Roundup from:](#)
 - International
 - Colombia
 - Ethiopia
 - Qatar
 - United States
 - Sri Lanka
 - Joint Statistical Meetings
 - India
 - The World of Statistics
- [National Statistical Organization News Roundup from:](#)
 - Namibia
 - Africa
- [Join the World of Statistics](#)
- [The World of Statistics Needs Your Help](#)
- [Follow Us on Twitter & Facebook](#)
- [Guide to Contributing to The World of Statistics is Available](#)

DEVELOPMENT DATA: AN ESSENTIAL BUILDING BLOCK FOR UN SDG ACTION

Late last month, the United Nations Foundation and The World Bank convened experts and representatives from UN missions in New York City to flesh out the characteristics of a possible new funding stream to help drive the data revolution. This meeting–themed “Financing Key Priorities of the Data Revolution” –was in response to calls for such a funding stream by the Secretary-General’s

Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution (IEAG) and the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report.

The meeting kick-started consultations on concrete proposals for a new funding mechanism to support data that could be considered by negotiators in the lead-up to the Financing for Development Conference and the post-2015 process.

The case for improving development data to support implementation and monitoring of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and to improve development outcomes more broadly has been repeatedly made. Most recently, the "informal elements paper" for the financing for development negotiations acknowledges the centrality of better data for development.

Specifically, *"Effective monitoring of results depends on appropriate quantitative and qualitative data and statistics, and their comprehensive analysis"* and *"Updating and extending relevant statistical methodologies, and building partnerships with private data providers, is a continuing imperative of the international community."* Improved data can lead to significant efficiencies; it will be critical to articulate how much money can be saved by investing in data.



Several key elements emerged at the meeting:

- There is a clear need for new funding that is predictable, sustainable, and effective. This new funding stream must complement existing instruments to improve data and statistics.
- There are three critical gaps that are not effectively addressed by existing funding mechanisms:
 - fostering innovative approaches,
 - embedding the use of data in people's day-to-day lives, and
 - incentivizing lasting partnerships between public and private actors, including civil society.

In addition to these gaps there continue to be significant unmet needs to strengthen and modernize national statistical capacity.

- New funding must be catalytic by crowding in domestic resources and by creating incentives for change beyond the specific projects it funds.
- It needs to be clear about its target market—who is the funding aimed to help—as well as flexible and responsive to take advantage of new actors, data sources and technologies as they emerge.
- It must empower and enable the range of stakeholders in the "data ecosystem" and account for their different levels of capacity and the nature of their engagement in sustainable development at local, national, and international levels. While a financing mechanism has to be housed in one institution, it needs to reflect the priorities of the range of stakeholders involved in the data revolution.

- Any new funding mechanism should drive collaboration, experimentation, learning and capacity development. It should incentivize data sharing as well as sharing analytical capacity and tools.
- Partnerships with business for data sharing and other forms of collaboration will be essential. But, we need much more discussion on the benefits and risks of these partnerships to ensure we maximize their potential while putting in place the necessary boundaries and safeguards.

Next Steps

The World Bank pledged to work with this group of experts and others to quickly develop a funding mechanism that reflects these characteristics and fills key gaps drawing from past experiences to build on lessons. This funding mechanism would not preclude complementary funding mechanisms or partnership arrangements to drive and sustain political attention to the data revolution.

Participants expressed their hopes that a broad advocacy community would push for sustained action on the data revolution and that during the forthcoming Financing for Development negotiations member states would champion the data revolution by supporting the establishment of high-level principles for data that countries could adopt, encouraging greater coordination of capacity-building, and standing behind the establishment of a new funding stream.

2015 SIGNIFICANCE, RSS YOUNG STATISTICIANS WRITING COMPETITION UNDERWAY

Can you tell a complex statistical story in an entertaining and thought-provoking way? If you think you've got what it takes and are within the first 10 years of your statistical career, we want you!

Annually, *Significance* and the Young Statisticians Section of the Royal Statistical Society host a competition to promote and encourage top-class writing about statistics. This year's competition is now underway.

The rules of entry are simple. Send us your best article—between 1,500 and 2,500 words—on the subject of your choosing. The article could be on work that you have done or it could explain the work of others. The winning article will be published in the October edition of *Significance* and on significancemagazine.com. Runners-up also will be published online.



Last year's winner, [Jonathan Auerback](#), used public data and a variation on capture-recapture methodology to counter the myth that New York City is home to as many rats as people. Following publication of his prize-winning article, stories about his work appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Daily Mail*, *Newsweek*, *China Daily* and *Japan Times*.

Of the two runners-up last year, [Nathan Cunningham](#) used Google search data to investigate the claim that Christmas comes earlier each year, while [Katie Saunders](#) compared survey data to medical records to check whether patient ethnicity is correctly recorded. Nathan's analysis was widely reported in the United Kingdom and Ireland, including on the front page of the *Daily Telegraph*, while Katie's research was covered by *The Guardian*.

It doesn't matter what you choose to write about as long as you follow these basic guidelines:

- The article should be interesting, engaging and easy to read.
- Technical terms and mathematics should be kept to a minimum and explained clearly where used.
- Readers finish the article knowing more about statistics than they did before.

Three finalists will be invited to present their work at a special session of the Royal Statistical Society International Conference—to be held September 7–10 in Exeter, United Kingdom. That is where the overall winner will be announced.

How to Enter

Email your submission as a text/Word file or as a PDF to ysswritingcompetition2015@gmail.com. Submissions must be received by the May 30 deadline. [Click here](#) for the complete competition rules.

STATISTICS IS FASTEST-GROWING UNDERGRADUATE STEM DEGREE IN THE U.S.

Statistics is the fastest-growing science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) undergraduate degree in the United States over the last four years, an analysis of federal government education data conducted by the American Statistical Association (ASA) revealed.

The ASA analyzed data compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) on 160 STEM bachelor's degree categories granted by U.S. public and nonprofit colleges and universities. Degree categories with a minimum of 200 completions in 2013 were included in the analysis.

The ASA analysis showed undergraduate statistics degrees nearly doubled—95% growth rate—during the period spanning 2010 to 2013. The significant growth of statistics outpaced that of all computer-related disciplines, environment and psychology (see following table for complete list).

FASTEST-GROWING STEM UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES 2010–2013

Field	% Increase from 2010	# of 2013 Degrees
Statistics	95.1	1,656
Computer Info Tech Admin. & Mgmt.	92.0	1,985
Environmental/Environmental Health Engineering	86.4	1,195
Mathematics & Statistics, Other	80.0	216
Computer Programming	77.2	466
Sociology & Anthropology	76.7	454
Science Technologies/Technicians, Other	74.1	484
Computer Software and Media Applications	68.4	1,160
Research & Experimental Psychology	66.1	4,723

Source: Data from the National Center for Education Statistics; Analysis by the American Statistical Association

This news may be a surprise to many higher-education experts and business leaders who might expect a computer science-related area to be the fastest-growing STEM field. But the news did not come as a surprise to the ASA.

“The analysis confirms what the ASA has known for some time: Statistics is a hot career field that more and more students are choosing to enter,” said ASA President David R. Morganstein, vice president and director of the statistical staff for Westat, Inc., a statistical-services company based in Rockville, Maryland. “It’s also important to note that this growth is not a passing fad. Across the country, universities and colleges are dedicating new resources so their respective statistics departments can expand to meet this growing demand.”



Promoting the Practice and Profession of Statistics

The University of Minnesota–Twin Cities (UMTC) is a prime example of this phenomenon. Enrollment in its undergraduate statistics program grew from just 34 majors in 2004 to 224 currently. Overall, the number of statistics bachelor’s degrees has grown from 526 in 2003 to 1,678 in 2013.

This significant growth and interest in statistics can be attributed to factors such as a more quantitative society, emphasis on data analytics, the advent of Big Data and the corollary growth of the Advanced Placement Statistics program. However, the primary influencer is the job market and the resulting demand for workers with statistical and analytical skills, [which LinkedIn ranked as the most important job skills in 2014](#).

The [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#), published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, finds that the number of statisticians will grow by 27% between 2012 and 2022, far outpacing the projected 11% growth rate for all other career fields. Separately, McKinsey Global Institute, a global management consulting firm that serves leading businesses, governments, nongovernmental organizations and not-for-profits, [predicted in a report on Big Data](#) that the country will face a shortage of up to 190,000 people with deep

analytics skills, such as statisticians, who are needed to manage Big Data-related projects and run data analytics and business intelligence operations in the private and public sectors.

“The main driver is the job market,” said Frederic P. Schoenberg from his frontline position as chair of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) statistics department. “Our graduates are getting excellent jobs in industry with a statistics degree. Businesses throughout the country are forming analytics groups and seeing the value of data analysis. They are, therefore, hiring statisticians at a high rate and that is fueling our majors.”

Schoenberg and other leaders of college/university statistics departments said undergraduates of their programs are securing good-paying jobs at Internet, software and technology companies; finance and banking firms; analytics and consulting agencies; management and marketing organizations; biopharmaceutical and medical sciences companies; and government agencies.

To further meet this burgeoning demand, many colleges and universities are offering new undergraduate degree statistics programs. For instance, since 2003, the number of schools granting undergraduate statistics degrees has increased from 74 to more than 110 in 2013. Amherst College in Massachusetts, Arizona State University and the University of Chicago are just three of the 20 schools that recently unveiled new undergraduate degree programs in statistics ([see the complete list here](#)); additional new programs are in the works.

Another interesting finding from the ASA analysis of the NCES data is that more than 45% of undergraduate statistics degrees during the four-year timespan studied were awarded to women. Over the past four decades, women have earned more than 40% of math and statistics bachelor’s degrees. For comparison, in 2013, the share of women who graduated with an undergraduate degree in computer science was 18%; in engineering, it was 23%; and, in physics, it was 19%.

[An article relaying the growth experiences of four institutions](#)—UMTC, UCLA, Grand Valley State University, and Carnegie Mellon University—is published in the February issue of *Amstat News*, the ASA’s member magazine.

THE WORLD OF STATISTICS 2015 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Following are The World of Statistics participating organization-sponsored events and activities around the world that are scheduled for February and March. [Click here](#) to see the complete 2015 calendar. Submit your organization’s events for the 2015 calendar; [use this convenient form to do so](#).

FEBRUARY 2015

- **February 16-17, 2015** — [Statistical and Computational Challenges in Omics Data Integration Workshop](#), Statistical and Applied Mathematical Sciences Institute, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, USA
- **February 19-21, 2015**—[2015 Conference on Statistical Practice](#), American Statistical Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

MARCH 2015

- **March 1-3, 2015** — [Infinite Possibilities Conference](#), Oregon State University and Building Diversity in Science, Corvallis, Oregon, USA
- **March 3-6, 2015** — [Regression Modeling Strategies 4-Day Short Course](#); Department of Biostatistics, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine; Nashville, Tennessee, USA
- **March 5-6, 2015** — [Nitra Statistical Days](#), Slovak Statistical and Demographical Society and the Faculty of Natural Sciences at Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra, Slovak Republic
- **March 7, 2015** — [Radical Statistics 2015 Conference and AGM](#), Radical Statistics, London, United Kingdom
- **March 10-13, 2015** — **11th International Workshop on Operations Research** (*For info & registration, email: sira@matcom.uh.cu or marie.cottrell@univ-paris1.fr*); University of Havana and University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne; Havana, Cuba
- **March 10-13, 2015** — **Colloquium on Teaching Effectiveness** (*For info & registration, email: sira@matcom.uh.cu or marie.cottrell@univ-paris1.fr*); University of Havana and University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne; Havana, Cuba
- **March 11-13, 2015** — [Complex Survey Data Analysis with SUDAAN and the SAS Survey Procedures](#), Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
- **March 16, 2015** — [The International Workshop on Graph Analytics](#); Drs. Collin Lynch, Tiffany Barnes and Jennifer Albert, Poughkeepsie, New York, USA (held in conjunction with the [5th International Learning Analytics and Knowledge Conference](#), March 16-20, 2015)
- **March 16-18, 2015** — [13th International Conference On Statistical Sciences “Statistics: Future Risks, Challenges and Developments”](#); Islamia College Peshawar, Islamic Countries Society of Statistical Sciences, and Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries; Peshawar, Pakistan
- **March 16-18, 2015** — [Bioinformatics: Discovering Patterns in Human Microbiome Data Workshop](#), Statistical and Applied Mathematical Sciences Institute, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, USA
- **March 19-20, 2015** — [3rd Royal Statistical Society Special Conference on Statistical Challenges in Lifecourse Research](#), Royal Statistical Society, Leeds, United Kingdom
- **March 23-25, 2015** — [Discovery Summit Europe](#), SAS Institute, Brussels, Belgium

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION NEWS & EVENTS

Following is the latest news and information from statistical organizations participating in The World of Statistics:

International—*Significance* magazine has opened its 10-year archives for access by the public. The magazine’s volumes 1 through 10 [are available to read](#), free of charge. Further, all magazine content will be made freely available one year after its initial publication. Editor Brian Tarran believes open access will demonstrate the importance of statistics and the contributions it makes in all areas of life. Royal Statistical Society and ASA members and subscribers will continue to enjoy exclusive access to the latest magazine content. [Read more](#).

International—Unless you live completely off the grid, you likely have heard of and contribute to “Big Data,” the often-used catch phrase describing massive (and ever-increasing) volumes of information stored digitally on computers, servers and clouds. From advertisers using data mined from customer

interactions; to government agencies making data public so developers can create beneficial mobile apps; to farmers applying statistical data to determine their production and marketing practices, a wide-variety of people and industries use Big Data.

So what implications might Big Data have for the production of official statistics? Dr. Daniel Pfeffermann, president of the International Association of Survey Statisticians (IASS), addressed this topic at the recent Morris Hansen Lecture, an annual, open-to-the-public education and outreach event recently held at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's headquarters in Washington D.C.

Pfeffermann stressed that Big Data presents some impressive opportunities and notable challenges. Big Data might improve the timeliness of statistics while reducing response burden, he said, but only if Big Data can be properly assessed, analyzed and interpreted to provide high-quality, accurate information that is truly of value to users.



Pfeffermann discusses possible impacts Big Data may have on official statistics.

Big Data is interesting and valuable for the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), where the agency strives to provide timely, accurate and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture. It accomplishes this mission by administering hundreds of surveys online, over the phone and in person each year; the Census of Agriculture every five years; and preparing reports covering nearly every aspect of U.S. agriculture. In short, NASS generates tremendous amounts of statistics about agriculture.

NASS has used two classes of Big Data for many years in the production of official statistics—remotely sensed satellite data and administrative records. Other sources of Big Data are still to be explored and may add to the quality or detail of the current information.

Unfortunately, Big Data is likely not the silver bullet for statistical agencies confronting reduced response rates and demands for more, better, faster data with fewer and fewer resources. Technological advancements such as the rise of Big Data are certainly worthy of exploration to the extent that they might improve our ability to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics to the people we serve.

It looks like we are still at the beginning of Big Data. It will take a lot of research and continued collaboration among statisticians, computer scientists, software designers, engineers, and the public. Pfeffermann said he can't wait to see what happens when Big Data and official statistics find a way to merge. The opportunities will be endless.

International—The International Statistical Literacy Project (ISLP) is sponsoring an International Poster Competition for the 2014-2015 school year. School students from around the world are invited to design a statistical poster about any topic. Each submitted poster must reflect or illustrate usage analysis, interpretation and communication of statistics or statistical information.

There will be national-level competitions within each participating country followed by an international competition to determine overall winners. International winners will be announced and the posters will be displayed at the International Statistical Association's 60th World Statistics Congress in July in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



The competition is open to teams of 2 to 3 students. There are two categories; one each for:

- students born in 1999 and younger
- students born in 1996 and younger

Teams must be registered by teachers. Teachers must inform the country coordinator of the home country of their participants. If you don't find your [country's coordinator on this list](#), please inform ISLP Director Reija Helenius at Reija.Helenius@stat.fi. [Click here to learn more about the ISLP poster competition.](#)

Colombia—Sponsors of the upcoming Cartagena Data Festival are inviting everyone to the April 20-22 event in Cartagena.

The world may be awash with more data than ever, but it is not yet always well-used to solve global problems like tackling poverty or building more sustainable futures. There's a growing divide between those who have information and those who don't.

What we need is a "data revolution"—a fundamental change in the depth and use of knowledge about the most marginalised people in the world and in their ability to use this knowledge to spur transformative change.

This three-day event, hosted by [ODI](#), [Africa Gathering](#), [CEPEI](#), [Data-Pop Alliance](#), [PARIS21](#), [UNDP](#), and [UNFPA](#), and funded by the [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#) and other partners, will bring together 200 to 300 policymakers, civil society organisations, technical innovators, academics and data activists to discuss how to turn the data revolution from theory to reality.



A year before new global sustainable development goals take effect, there is no better time to start shaping innovations and building the relationships to implement and monitor these new goals than with better data at the heart.

[Click here for more information about Cartagena Data Festival and to register.](#)

Ethiopia—The College of Bahir Dar University will conduct its 3rd Annual Science Conference (ASC 2015) under the theme “Prospects of Science and Its Role for Development” April 24-25. Interested individuals are invited to submit research papers linked to any of the [thematic areas listed in the conference poster](#), including statistics. Abstracts will be peer-reviewed and authors of the qualifying papers will be notified to present their work at the conference.

Qatar—Qatar University is organizing an international conference titled “Bioinformatics and Biostatistics Applications in Cancer Genomics Research” in collaboration with the [Qatar National Research Fund](#) and [Texas Tech University’s \(U.S.\) Health Sciences Center-School of Pharmacy](#). The conference will be held April 26-28 at Qatar University.

The conference aims to create an interdisciplinary platform for stakeholders—academics, researchers, practitioners, specialists, policy- and decision-makers and students—to share, exchange and disseminate the results of their work, experience, research, ideas and perspectives pertinent to all aspects of bioinformatics and biostatistics applications. Particular attention will be given to the bioinformatics and biostatistics applications in cancer genomics research around the world and in Qatar especially. Furthermore, the scope of the conference will go beyond technical, pharmaceutical and medical areas for dimensions to include the environmental, institutional, economic, commercial and educational aspects.

Event Featured Topics

Cancer Research in the Post-Genome Era: Accurate editing of human cellular genomes by using bioinformatics-biostatistics tools permit new approaches in functional genomics and possibly even corrective gene therapy and moving toward personalized medicine.

Bioinformatics and Statistics Applications: Bioinformatics and statistics methods have important applications in multidisciplinary research. One vital application is to uncover correlation between genetic and environmental factors in cancer for better understanding of cancer risk assessment, improving diagnosis, prevention and treatment.

Statistical Issues in Drug Design and Development: Statistical applications in the modelling and design of drugs have a great impact in decision making and better returns of clinical trials that accelerate drug development.

Contemporary Statistical Theory and Applications: Methodological research in statistics and bioinformatics found other uses in collaborative work in clinical, biological, pharmaceutical, industrial, quality assessment, environmental, risk analysis, and functional genomic research.

[Additional details are available on the conference's website.](#)

The deadline for submission of abstracts is February 15. Email your questions to Dr. Abdel-Salam Gomaa, chair of the organizing committee, at BBACGR2015@ga.edu.qa

United States—A three-day workshop titled “Complex Survey Data Analysis with SUDAAN and the SAS Survey Procedures” will be held March 11-13 in Atlanta, Georgia. Health researchers in academia, all levels of government, and business frequently need to conduct secondary analyses of publically available datasets from U.S. national and state health surveys that use probability sampling. However, training in this statistical specialty is not routinely included in public health degree programs.

Health survey data (e.g. NHIS, NHANES, and BRFSS) obtained from probability sampling typically are stratified, clustered and weighted in accordance with the complex sampling plan that was used. Specialized survey software packages that recognize these design features must be used for valid statistical analyses and appropriate statistical inferences. Researchers in disciplines other than health face the same issue with publicly released complex survey data available in agriculture, manufacturing, economics, crime, housing, transportation, and education.

Workshop Learning Foci

[Instructor Donna Brogan, PhD](#), emerita professor in biostatistics at Emory University’s Rollins School of Public Health, will present prototype statistical analyses using data from the 2013 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). Afterward, participants will conduct and interpret new NHIS analyses in computer lab exercises. Participants also will learn how to transfer their learned skills using the NHIS dataset to other complex survey datasets. Last, participants will learn Program SUDAAN and the SAS survey procedures for descriptive, analytical and statistical modeling analyses of complex survey data.

The workshop registration fee is \$1,000 (U.S.). [Click here to view workshop prerequisites and to register.](#)

United States—The first-ever National Data Science Bowl recently launched. This online competition challenges the data-science community to develop an algorithm that will advance the study of marine biology and ocean health. In essence, event organizers Booz Allen Hamilton and Kaggle want to see who can come up with something akin to facial recognition for plankton. Competitors face the formidable

task of examining nearly 100,000 underwater images to develop an algorithm that will enable researchers to identify and monitor planktonic organisms. The winner takes home \$175,000. Deadline for entries is March 16.

United States—The Department of Mathematics at Texas A&M University-Kingsville is seeking presenters for its “Fourth Annual Statistics Day”, scheduled for April 24. The purpose of the event is to increase student and faculty awareness of the important role statistics plays in their everyday lives, particularly its application in a variety of disciplines. If you would like to present a talk or attend the event, email Sarjinder Singh at sarjinder@yahoo.com. All presenters will receive a polo t-shirt emblazoned with the event name. Space is limited; register now.

International—As you likely have noticed, there has been much [media attention](#) and discussion in the scientific community about p-values in recent months. We recently came across the following cartoon created by [xkcd](#)—a self-identified webcomic of romance, sarcasm, math, and language—on the topic and thought we’d share it with our readers. We hope you enjoy it as much as we did!

<u>P-VALUE</u>	<u>INTERPRETATION</u>
0.001	HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT
0.01	
0.02	
0.03	
0.04	SIGNIFICANT
0.049	
0.050	OH CRAP. REDO CALCULATIONS.
0.051	ON THE EDGE OF SIGNIFICANCE
0.06	
0.07	HIGHLY SUGGESTIVE, SIGNIFICANT AT THE P<0.10 LEVEL
0.08	
0.09	
0.099	HEY, LOOK AT THIS INTERESTING SUBGROUP ANALYSIS
≥0.1	

NOTE: For an extra treat, click on the above cartoon and then roll your mouse over the image on the xkcd website.

United States—The 29th New England Statistics Symposium will be held April 24-25 in Storrs, Connecticut. The Department of Statistics of the University of Connecticut will host the event, which will bring together statisticians from all over the region. Invited keynote speakers are Yaakov BarShalom of the University of Connecticut and Adrian E. Raftery of the University of Washington. On April 24, there will be three, full-day short courses. Those are:

- “Bayesian Biostatistics: Design of Clinical Trials and Subgroup Analysis” presented by Professor Peter Müller of the University of Texas at Austin
- “Modern Multivariate Statistical Learning: Methods and Applications” presented by Professors Kun Chen and Jun Yan of the University of Connecticut and
- “Boosting R Skills and Automating Statistical Reports” presented by Dr. Yihui Xie of RStudio, Inc.

Interested individuals are invited to present talks and posters on all aspects of statistics and probability. Separately, students are encouraged to submit papers for one of three awards in the IBM Student Awards competition. Students must submit an application for consideration of award by April 6. [Click here](#) for more information.

The World of Statistics Update—Two organizations from countries previously not represented in The World of Statistics recently joined the movement. Those organizations and their countries are:

- Cambodian Mathematical Society, Cambodia
- Statistical Institute of Belize, Belize

There are now 131 countries represented in The World of Statistics. We welcome our new colleagues to our global community!



United States—The 8th Annual Conference on Statistical Issues in Clinical Trials will be held April 15 at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The 2015 conference, themed “Statistical Issues Arising in Pragmatic Clinical Trials,” will bring together leading scientists who will discuss current statistical issues in the design and analysis of clinical trials. Participants from all sectors with an interest in clinical trials methodology are encouraged to attend. Sponsors are the [Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute](#) and [University of Pennsylvania Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics](#). [Click here to learn more and to register.](#)

NATIONAL STATISTICAL ORGANIZATION: NEWS & EVENTS

Following is the latest news and information from national statistical organizations participating in The World of Statistics and other national statistical agencies:

Namibia—Ndafewayo Kafidi, the former director of demographic and social statistics at the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA), has taken over the helm of the agency after John Steytler resigned. She has been appointed in an interim capacity until a permanent appointment is made.

An announcement in that regard is expected within the next six months, announced NSA board chairperson Florette Nakusera.

Nakusera said Kafidi holds a master's in social statistics as well as a post-graduate diploma in statistics from the University of Southampton. She also holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Thiele College in Pennsylvania. Kafidi also has completed the senior management development programme at the University of Stellenbosch.

Kafidi has more than 22-years' experience in statistical production and research, including management and supervision of statistical units. "The board is confident that Ms. Kafidi will be able to lead the NSA during the above-mentioned period according to the best of her abilities. The board assures Ms. Kafidi of its full support during this period," said Nakusera.

Kafidi also expressed her gratitude to Steytler for his role at NSA. Steytler has been mentioned as a candidate for a top job in the government of President-elect Hage Geingob.

Africa—African statisticians have been challenged to change the way data is produced for meaningful and evidence-based economic planning.

A recent meeting of the Committee of Directors General of National Statistics Offices and the Statistical Commission for Africa in Tunis, Tunisia, agreed that Africa's data revolution must be African-led.

Hakim Ben Hammouda, Tunisia's Minister of Finance and Economy, elaborated on Tunisia's efforts to improve its evidence-based planning and emphasized the need for statistics for Africa to be generated by Africans. "Without reliable statistics, economic policy projections for Africa cannot be done," he said.

A key issue of debate at the meeting was the need for an overhaul of gross domestic product (GDP) estimates, which participants acknowledged needs to be valued at a common price level and expressed in a common currency.

Further, more coordination of United Nations agencies at the continental level on statistical activities as well as in-country coordination and joint capacity development efforts in collaboration with global and regional UN agencies were proposed. The meeting addressed key areas of strengthening Africa's System of National Accounts, following an agreed African strategy developed in 2008.

More needs to be done, agreed the participants, to increase resources, capacity, harmonize systems and develop effective communication strategies to strengthen implementation.

JOIN THE WORLD OF STATISTICS

If your organization or an organization you know of isn't yet part of The World of Statistics, encourage them to join. Joining is easy—just ask a representative of the group go to www.worldofstatistics.org and click on the “Join” icon on the top right-hand side of the homepage to become an official participating organization in The World of Statistics. Participation is valuable and is absolutely free!

THE WORLD OF STATISTICS NEEDS YOUR HELP

Now that the [new website for The World of Statistics](http://www.worldofstatistics.org) is up and running, we need your help. You can help move The World of Statistics website up in the list of Internet search results by linking to the new website address—www.worldofstatistics.org—from your organization's website and replacing the old Statistics2013 logo with the new logo for The World of Statistics and linking it to the new website. [You can download the new logo here.](#)

[See how the United States National Center for Education Statistics is displaying The World of Statistics logo on its website \(go to bottom of the homepage\).](#) Kudos to Andrew White, NCES Senior Research Statistician Statistical Standards and Data Confidentiality, for sharing the link with us and, more importantly, for posting the logo.

Some other things your organization can do to help the cause include:

1. Update existing links to www.statistics2013.org on your website so that these point to www.worldofstatistics.org
2. Change all references to Statistics2013 on your website to The World of Statistics and link to the new website (www.worldofstatistics.org)
3. Change your Facebook page information, links and logos so that these reference The World of Statistics. Also, share information about and publicize The World of Statistics on your organization's social media accounts, including Facebook and Twitter
4. Post a version of The World of Statistics logo in your language on your organization's website. [We currently have nine language versions available for download.](#) To request a language-customized logo, email the following information in a PDF document to Jeff Myers at jeffrey@amstat.org:
 - a. The interpretation in your language of: “The World of Statistics”
 - b. The interpretation in your language of: “Participating Organization”
5. If you have a linked Statistics2013 banner on your organization's website, please remove it and replace it with a new banner for The World of Statistics and link the new banner to www.worldofstatistics.org. [You can download these new banners here.](#)
6. The World of Statistics Twitter account is @astatworld. Start following us today. Be sure to retweet our tweets and also mention The World of Statistics—hashtag #TWOS—in your tweets.
7. If your website has content about Statistics2013, please delete it and replace it with [copy about The World of Statistics](#).

8. As you did with Statistics2013, include mentions of The World of Statistics in all your organization's online communications.

Working together, we'll move up The World of Statistics in all search engine results.

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Get the latest news and updates about The World of Statistics by following us on Twitter at @astatworld. Also, when you use Twitter to spread the word about The World of Statistics, be sure to use the hashtag "#TWOS". You also can follow developments in The World of Statistics [on our Facebook page](#). Become our friend today!

GUIDE TO CONTRIBUTING TO THE WORLD OF STATISTICS AVAILABLE

[Click here to access the "Guide to Contributing to The World of Statistics and Downloading Logos and Other Resources."](#)