Mid-Year Report to the
D4D Fund Steering Committee
(May-December 2022)

This report updates the Data for Decisions (D4D) Fund Steering Committee (SC) on developments since its last meeting of June 2022.

Implementation of the 18-month work plan (May 2022 – October 2023) endorsed by the SC has been steady, though remaining constraints on the resumption of travel have continued to weigh on delivery. Flexibility provided by the SC regarding the use of D4D Fund resources remains vital to assist countries in meeting pressing statistical needs related to policymaking in the post-pandemic period, in the context of high inflation and debt levels. In summary (i) demand for ad-hoc advisory services, particularly on government finance statistics (GFS), has been steady; (ii) development of the multilingual online learning curriculum continues as planned, with the launch of the External Debt Statistics online course (EDSx) and the offering of all other available courses in English, French, and Spanish; and (iii) the mid-term independent evaluation process is on track to deliver its final report to the SC in January 2023.

Looking ahead, the annual SC meeting in June 2023 will focus on program implementation and the next work plan, D4D Fund resources, and takeaways from the evaluation for the design of the Phase II of the D4D Fund.

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Program implementation showed resilience despite slower resumption of travel.

As last year, almost two-thirds of the 18-month[1] work program, amounting to 123 activities, are planned to be conducted in FY 2023 (which ends April 30, 2023). Despite the delay in the resumption of CD-related travel, which only picked up from September onward, almost the same number of CD activities were conducted during the May to December 2022 period than over the same period in 2021 (Table 1).

Table 1. D4D Fund Work Plan Implementation (May – December 2022)

Number of activities in the 18-month work plan	Activities to be implemented in FY 2023	Activities completed (May - December 2022)	Activities completed (May -December 2021)
207	123	40	44

In terms of **beneficiary regions,** Africa remains the largest recipient with more than a third of the activities, followed by the Middle East and Central Asia, and the Asia Pacific regions (Table 2).

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[1] May 2022 to October 2023.

Table 2. Breakdown of D4D Fund Activities by Region and Workstream (May – December 2022)

	Africa	Asia-Pacific	Middle East & Central Asia	Western Hemisphere	Europe	# of activities
# of activities	14	11	13	2	0	# of activities
MODULE 1:						
High-Frequency Indicators	1 TA mission (Togo*)	1 TA mission (Bhutan)	1 TA mission (Mauritania*)			3
National Accounts Benchmarking and Rebasing	1 Workshop (Prices*) 3 TA missions (Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Sierra Leone)	1 Workshop (Source data*) 3 TA missions (Cambodia*, India*, Vietnam)				8
Residential Property Price Index		2 TA missions (Cambodia, Philippines)	2 TA missions (Georgia*, Jordan*)			4
Current and Financial Account BOP	1 Workshop (MEFMI WAIFEM countries on Remittances) 2 TA missions (Equatorial Guinea, Sierra Leone*)		6 TA missions (Armenia*, Jordan* x2, Somalia*, Tunisia*, West Bank and Gaza)			9
Fiscal and Debt Reporting	5 TA missions (Eswatini*, Ghana, Madagascar, Sierra Leone*, Togo*)	2 TA missions (Timor-Leste*, Vanuatu*)	3 TA missions (Armenia, Uzbekistan*, Yemen*)	2 TA missions (Bolivia, Haiti)		12
MODULE 2: Financial Access Survey		2 Workshops (Asian countries, Pacific Islands)	1 Workshop (Arab-speaking)			3
MODULE 3:	Launch of External Debt Statistics (EDSx) SPOC, Consumer Price Indices (CPIx) MOOC in English, Balance of Payments - International Investment Position Statistics (BOP-IIPx) MOOC in French and Spanish, third National Accounts Statistics (NASx) MOOC in English, fifth Government Finance Statistics (GFSx) MOOC in English, second in French and first in Spanish, and ninth Public Sector Debt Statistics (PSDSx) MOOC in English, third in French and Spanish online courses; Development of Quarterly National Accounts / High-Frequency Indicators (QNA/HFIx), Financial Soundness Indicators (FSIx) and Producer Price Indexes (PPIx) online courses; Translation of the NASx into French and Spanish.					
MODULE 4:	1 Workshop (SDMX*)					1
Conducted in person.						TOTAL = 40

With regard to **distribution across modules and workstreams,** CD delivery has been particularly intense in the fiscal and debt reporting sub-module. This reflects not only the full-fledged engagement in technical assistance to select countries identified in the diagnostic workshops at the beginning of the phase of the D4D Fund, but also debt and fiscal impact of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. This concern is also reflected in the sustained demand for short ad-hoc advisory services in this area (see Annex for a comprehensive list). Delivery of CD has also been strong in the external sector statistics sub-module as well as in the national accounts workstream. This reflects strong demand for support to better monitor economic activity during the crisis. Three out of the four workshops under Module 2 - Financial Access Survey (FAS) have already been conducted, in Asia Pacific and Middle East and Central Asia regions. The online learning curriculum under Module 3 continues to unfold in full swing and to meet strong demand.

In-person CD has gradually resumed, and accelerated since September. Over the May-December 2022 period 40 CD activities were implemented, of which 23 (58 percent) were delivered in-person. This CD modality delivery ratio is below the original implementation forecast that was based on perceived demand that prioritized in-person delivery, with the underlying assumption of a 75 percent share of such delivery mode, and entails expenses $648,002 below projections for the period. STA will continue to monitor CD modality pattern and report back to the Steering

Committee at its June meeting on its impact on expenses and the budget envelope available for the remainder of Phase I.

Multiple reasons explain the lower implementation observed so far:

CD modality changes - In some instances like for the external sector statistics sub-module, switching back from remote to in-person CD delivery post-pandemic took extra preparation time.

Constraints on timing of follow-up missions - For some sub-modules such as fiscal and debt reporting, slower implementation over the period considered is partly the result of the dynamics of CD already provided. Most missions are follow-up missions, and as such they need recommendations from previous missions to be implemented before further CD delivery. A period of six to ten months is usually needed for this implementation to materialize.

Seasonality - There is also some seasonality in the CD delivery as an uptick of activity is traditionally recorded towards the end of a fiscal year.

CD recipients' resource constraints - For other workstreams such as RPPI or HFI, low implementation is caused by the resource constraints of recipient agencies, namely the national statistics offices, which focus on maintaining production of more traditional datasets, such as national accounts. It continues to be a challenge for many national statistics offices to stand up new statistical products such as RPPI or HFI coming out of the pandemic, as they still need to devote most of their resources to ensuring the continuity of existing statistical programs such as national accounts.

Coordination challenges - Finally, as highlighted in the work plan earlier in June, some CD activities have been scheduled to be delivered jointly with RCDCs, to bridge individual and institutional capacity gaps resulting from staff turnover during the pandemic. This is particularly the case of the fiscal and debt reporting submodule. The planned joint or consecutive activities under RCDCs and the D4D Fund target countries that require refresher training on basic compilation methods (RCDC responsibility), before tackling more advanced topics with the support of the D4D Fund (Burundi and Chad with AFC), or require addressing other CD needs that would better be met through combining D4D Fund and RCDC resources (Georgia with CCAMTAC). Scheduling joint D4D Fund/RCDC missions, or consecutive RCDC and D4D-funded missions, requires close coordination to ensure that there is sufficient spacing between missions, resulting in temporarily slower implementation.

The Financial Access Survey (FAS) continued to improve reporting, providing insight into financial access during the pandemic years.

The FAS, financed under Module 2 of the D4D Fund, provides statistical information to guide policymakers in addressing inequality in access to finance.

The 2022 FAS results were released in October 2022, along with the [press release](#) and the annual publication "[FAS 2022 Trends and Developments](#)". As of early-December 2022, 167 jurisdictions

have submitted data to the 2022 FAS round. The number of jurisdictions reporting gender-disaggregated data has risen to 82—a fifteen percent increase relative to the previous round. Four additional jurisdictions started to report data on the use of mobile money, increasing the number of reporting jurisdictions to 86, which covers roughly 90 percent of countries where mobile money services are available.

Table 3. Number of country reporters to the FAS database

	2021 Round	**2022 Round** (as of December 2022)
Total reporters	165	167
Gender data reporters	71	82
Mobile money reporters	82	86

Two webinars on financial access data collection were conducted for the Asia and Pacific region in June, where 48 officials from 20 jurisdictions attended. To help improve the production of SDG indicators in the Arab region, the FAS Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicators were presented at a United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia webinar, which included the participation of representatives from national statistical systems, central banks, and other relevant national entities in the region.

The FAS gender-disaggregated data was presented to IMF economists at the IMF internal training, Clinic on Macroeconomics of Gender Equality. The FAS was also presented to external partners including the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, Financial Alliance for Women, Data2X, the World Bank, and the Financial Sector Deepening Kenya at a workshop organized by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The FAS team also contributed to the Institute for Capacity Development's new course on "Gender Inequality and Macroeconomics," specifically to the Gender Inequality and Access to Finance lecture, which features the FAS data. The course was first delivered virtually at the IMF Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF) in Kuwait from October 31 to November 3, 2022. Another delivery at the CEF is scheduled in person in the coming months. In addition, and to increase the awareness of gender-disaggregated data for financial inclusion, the FAS team also organized (jointly with the IMF's Strategy, Policy and Review Department gender team) a Fund-wide seminar in September 2022, featuring the recent pilot exercise to identify gender data gaps conducted by Women's Financial Inclusion Data (WFID) partnership. The FAS gender-disaggregated data are also an important part of the new Gender Data Hub that was released internally to support the IMF's surveillance and policy efforts.

Consultations with internal and external stakeholders are under way on a FAS pilot survey to expand the data coverage for gender-disaggregated data and digital financial services, planned in 2023. The first consultation took place with external partners from WFID Partnership where the existing FAS gender-disaggregated data as well as proposed new indicators in the pilot were presented. A similar consultation took place with IMF internal stakeholders in December 2022.

Between May and November 2022, the FAS was the 8th most-downloaded IMF dataset (out of 24 datasets).

Development of the multilingual online learning curriculum is on track and meets steady demand.

The online learning curriculum unfolds as planned and continues to meet strong demand. Progress during the reporting period includes the following:

- The **EDSx** was launched in November 2022.

- The **BOP-IIPx** was offered in French and Spanish in May 2022, making the course accessible to a wider audience.

- Additional **CPIx**, **NASx**, **GFSx**, and **PSDSx** MOOCs in English, French and Spanish were offered during the reporting period.

- The launch of the **QNA/HFIx** SPOC and **NASx** MOOC in French and Spanish is planned by end-FY 2023.

- Development of the **FSIx** and **PPIx** has started as planned.

As of December 2022 and after the release of five out of the twelve courses of the curriculum, over 8,300 active participants[2] have benefited from forty offerings of D4D-funded online courses. More than half are from low- and lower middle-income countries, almost a third from Africa, and a sixth from fragile states (Table 3).

Table 3 – Active Participants in the D4D-Funded Online Learning Curriculum

	PSDSx (15 offerings)	GFSx (10 offerings)	BOP-IIPx (9 offerings)	NASx (4 offerings)	CPIx (2 offerings)	EDSx (1 Offering)
Total Active participants	**1,881**	**3,048**	**1,893**	**714**	**397**	**414**
...from low- and lower middle-income countries	985	1792	930	296	198	223
...from fragile states	320	620	249	58	41	67
...from AFR	575	994	507	147	111	97
from APD	313	642	429	193	101	91
...from EUR	242	264	308	131	50	69
...from MCD	239	375	240	85	49	71
...from WHD	473	783	344	148	85	86

Source: IMF's Institute for Capacity Development, as of 09 December 2022

To leverage the online course content for the broader public, micro-learning clips continue to be prepared using the online learning course video material. While the online courses are primarily geared towards compilers in need of a comprehensive understanding of the fundamentals of economic statistics, the micro-learning clips showcase best statistical practices in an easily digestible way. Broadcast on the <u>YouTube IMF Institute Learning Channel</u>, they also serve as a searchable repository. Video clips of PSDSx, GFSx, and BOP-IIPx are already available as playlists

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[2] Active participants are students who have registered for the course and have answered at least one graded question correctly. If a student's overall average score is above 0 percent, that participant is considered active.

on the YouTube channel. Video clips on CPIx and NASx will follow in the near future. The audience has increased sharply in one year, from 8.7k to 12.6k subscribers at end-2022.

The high-quality video material available from the online learning curriculum facilitates the engagement on remote and blended training. Moreover, microlearning clips have been extensively used in training courses delivered remotely, offering participants the option to familiarize themselves with the more basic concepts of a course at their own pace. It is also increasingly used as blended learning gains wider recognition as CD modality.

The independent mid-term evaluation of the D4D Fund program is being finalized.

The evaluation firm for the independent mid-term program evaluation for the D4D Fund, SEO-Amsterdam Economics, finalized their draft evaluation report in early December. In line with the IMF's Updated Common Evaluation Framework and terms of reference for the evaluation, it focuses on the outcomes, impact, and benefits of D4D Fund CD to the beneficiaries as well as the quality of content and delivery of CD. It aims at informing the strategy and work program for the second phase of the D4D Fund, scheduled to start in 2025. The Evaluation Sub-Committee, which consists of Steering Committee representatives from Japan, Luxembourg Switzerland, CD recipients from Uganda, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam, as well as IMF staff from the Institute for Capacity Development and African, Asia & Pacific, Fiscal Affairs, and Statistics Departments have reviewed the draft evaluation report in December. The final report will be shared with the Steering Committee in early-2023 and discussed at the upcoming mid-year check-in on January 31.

Looking ahead to the next SC meeting discussion.

The annual SC meeting is expected to take place in June 2023. It will include a discussion of the D4D Fund's implementation, work program and resources, as well as findings and recommendations emanating from the mid-term independent evaluation. Takeaways from this discussion will help design the Program document in preparation of Phase II of the D4D Fund. It is planned that an outline of this Program document for Phase II is presented to the Steering Committee at its June meeting. Ahead of this meeting, D4D Fund donors will receive briefing materials.

ANNEX

Remote D4D-funded ad-hoc assistance: May to November 2022

In June 2020, the SC approved allocating a lump-sum amount equal to 10 percent of the budget of Module 1 (around $292,000) to support remote ad-hoc assistance.[3] This assistance is limited to engagements that take less than one business day of staff time per case, and can only be used for countries eligible for D4D Fund financing. The IMF committed to inform the SC on the use of these resources on a quarterly basis.

Demand for this type of intervention has continued to grow as the effects of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine on economies persist. From May to November 2022, the IMF's Statistics Department completed interventions on 38 requests for ad-hoc assistance (against 57 for the same period in 2021), at a total expense of $24,624 (against $45,629 for the same period in 2021). Most interventions (27) related to fiscal and debt reporting; there were also a few (11) related to ESS. Demand for such support emanated primarily from Africa (25), followed by the Middle East and Central Asia (9), Asia-Pacific (3) and the Western Hemisphere (1). In terms of topics, most requests revolved around fiscal and debt transactions recording.

In addition to the interventions reported in the last quarterly report, the IMF's Statistics Department provided the following ad-hoc assistance activities:

- assisted **Guinea** in recording SDRs in the government accounts;

- supported **Jordan** with the recording of transaction in GFS;

- discussed with **Niger** the recording of a government's stake on oil pipeline company;

- helped **Senegal** with the accounting of transfer of real estate in the budgetary central government;

- advised **Togo** on the measurement of its fiscal deficit.

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[3] Paragraph 100 of the 2020 D4D Fund Progress Report and Work Plan.