

Session Outcome Document*(2 pages max)***Dialing up Mobile Phone Data for Official Statistics****Organized by: ITU/ World Bank/UN-CEBD Task Team on Mobile Phone Data (MPD)****6 July 2026 – 15:00-15:45**<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2026/Agenda/Session/171>**Key Issues discussed: (5–8 bullet points summarizing the main discussion points)**

- The role of Mobile Phone Data (MPD) as a complementary data source for official statistics, offering greater granularity, timeliness and geographic detail while preserving user privacy.
- The governance requirements necessary to establish sustainable MPD systems, including strategic, legal and technical frameworks, institutional arrangements and high-level authorization processes.
- Legal and privacy considerations associated with the use of mobile phone data, including legal bases for data sharing, data protection requirements and privacy-preserving techniques.
- Country experiences demonstrating how mobile phone data can support humanitarian response, disaster management and official statistics through partnerships among mobile operators, regulators, national statistical offices and development partners.
- Operational challenges related to accessing MPD, building technical capacity and ensuring data quality and reliability for statistical purposes.

Key Outcomes of the session (concise bullet points capturing the concrete results of the session)

- Participants gained a clearer understanding of how MPD can be operationalized through a practical governance framework structured around strategic, legal and technical pillars.
- Successful country experiences on the use of MPD were shared, including long-term partnerships in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and Ghana, demonstrating the value of MPD for public policy, humanitarian action and official statistics.

- Existing resources and tools were showcased, including governance frameworks, MPD maturity assessment approaches and practical guidance for ensuring sustainability of MPD implementation for official statistics.
- The ITU MPD Jupyter Notebooks was presented as a hands-on capacity-building resource that enables users to explore the complete MPD workflow showcased in the context of the Information Society indicators.
- The discussion reinforced the need for sustained engagement and collaboration among regulators, mobile operators, national statistical offices and other stakeholders to enable responsible, effective and sustainable use of MPD for official statistics.

Key Recommendations and Forward-Looking Actions (2–5 bullet points outlining practical and actionable recommendations to support WSIS implementation towards 2035)

- Develop national MPD governance frameworks that clearly define roles, responsibilities, legal bases and operational procedures for the use of MPD in official statistics.
- Strengthen partnerships between national statistical offices, regulators, mobile network operators, ministries and development organizations to support sustainable access to MPD.
- Invest in capacity development through practical training resources, toolkits and communities of practice to enhance national expertise in MPD analysis.
- Promote the use of privacy-preserving technologies, data governance mechanisms and transparent protocols to build trust and support responsible data use.
- Encourage further exploration of MPD applications for disaster response, mobility analysis and official statistics in support of evidence-based decision-making and the WSIS 2035 vision.
- Establish a permanent operational data pipeline. Countries should invest in sustainable partnerships and data sharing that enable mobile phone data to be securely and rapidly mobilized for policy responses during disasters, epidemics and other emergencies, as well as for use in official statistics.

Quotes:

Paul Blanchard: "By building a governance framework, MPD requires a certain level of standardization, promoting unified thinking in a structured manner" // "In a nutshell, the key takeaway is a comprehensive and organized framework for complex systems that is highly adaptable to country contexts. It is both strategic and technical, offering practical guidance for implementing MPD systems."

Daniel Power: "We take data privacy very seriously, as it is a highly sensitive matter." // "There is a significant impact there, and we need to invest more and more in data."

Esperanza Magpantay: "Mobile phone data (MPD) are not intended to replace official data sources such as household surveys. The same applies to indicators on Internet use: while MPD can provide more timely and geographically granular insights, it should complement rather than substitute traditional data collection. However, in situations where household surveys or other conventional data sources are unavailable or cannot be conducted in a timely manner, MPD can serve as a valuable alternative for producing the information needed to support evidence-based policymaking."

Fredrik Eriksson: "One of the greatest challenges in working with mobile phone data is developing the necessary skills without access to real data. This is exactly what the ITU Notebooks aim to address."