

Strategic reflections on modernizing statistical communication

The Speech of Director General of Institute of Statistics, Ms Delina Ibrahimaj

I am honoured to be here and chair this seminar on getting the message across, strategic reflections on modernizing communication. Yesterday's seminar on measuring what matters, touched upon many different issues concerning relevance and the need to go where people are, which reaches beyond measuring what matters into how we communicate to the public and how we have to change to get the message across.

We live in the era of Information and Communication Technology, and I think we are privileged to be part of such a transformation of our society, where we are only a click away from a virtual world, where everything can be seen, heard and measured like never before.

I dare to say that such amazing innovations have awoken the statistician in everyone, now easily measuring & comparing, analysing and sharing every aspect of our lives in real-time.

In this era, through social media, everyone can get their message across and can measure the reach of their message. This makes our job easier in some ways and harder in others.

It is a crowded place, considering over 50% of the world's population is now connected in real-time, getting your message across is no easy task.

(54.4% world internet penetration Dec.31 2017 <https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>)

But how do we do it? We need to remain relevant.

In many ways I think we are relevant but we need to modernize who we are, what we do and how we do it.

We need to communicate it in an easier way, more relevant to the ones for whom our statistics are made for.

We need to speak to people in their language and tell them the stories that speak to them.

Well, I think we are certainly winners here, as we have all the elements for telling the story of our lives, we just need to do it better, to make it relevant to all users. We need to modernize the way we get our message across.

So where do we start! We should start by modernizing our image.

We have a good starting point, with advantages grounded in the long history of our institutions enjoying high awareness, public acknowledgment and respect.

And, as with most paradoxes in life, our strength is also our weakness, as large traditional bodies we face challenges in the fast changing environment.

HOW do we modernize our image!

As many countries have pointed out, one of the first major shifts into modernization of communication is to become a brand.

In its full meaning a brand is not just a logo, it means to become human, to put a face, a character and a personality into our institutions, and behave accordingly.

But in order to get our message across we need not only to modernize the way we look, but also to modernize what we do, our products and services, as they are the cornerstone of every aspect of a modern intelligent society, we give people mirrors to enhance their analytical thinking and decision making process to improve their lives.

The Innovation in products and tools that many countries have shown us, is already clear proof that we are on the right path to transforming our communications.

The major challenge that I see is to modernize how we do it... to achieve this we need to raise our capacities.

As statisticians, I think we are the most equipped to embark on the modernization journey, but we need to get better, to get closer to the public and do it in an innovative way... we cannot afford to avoid innovation because we have limited capacities...

Modernization in communication is a challenge, but also an opportunity to get our message across.

Quote from Domenic 'if we don't know where to go most probably we will never get there'.. so if we don't think strategically about it, we might get lost in the sea of innovation.

This era has given us the tools to measure everything, it is our richest playground and I hope that the proceedings to today's meeting will help us to better embark this journey.

Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing. - Rollo May (American Psychologist).

We are a community full of individuals who want to be different, stand out, and yet belong. We speak in numbers, yet tell the same story, and it is the story of everything.