

STRATEGIC COLLABORATION FOR A DATA-DRIVEN KENYA: BUILDING AN INTEROPERABLE STATISTICAL SYSTEM THROUGH SDMX PARTNERSHIPS

Introduction

The increasing demand for high-quality, timely, and interoperable data to support sustainable development and evidence-based policymaking has positioned the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) as an enabler in modern data ecosystems. Recognizing that this ambition required more than internal capacity, KNBS strategically pursued and partnered with international organizations, development partners, and sub-national organizations. This presentation details how these collaborations have been fundamental to overcoming technical, financial, and institutional barriers, successfully implementing SDMX across the data value chain, and creating a robust, interoperable ecosystem that turns data into actionable insight for sustainable development.

1. The Foundation: Why Strategic Partnerships Were Important

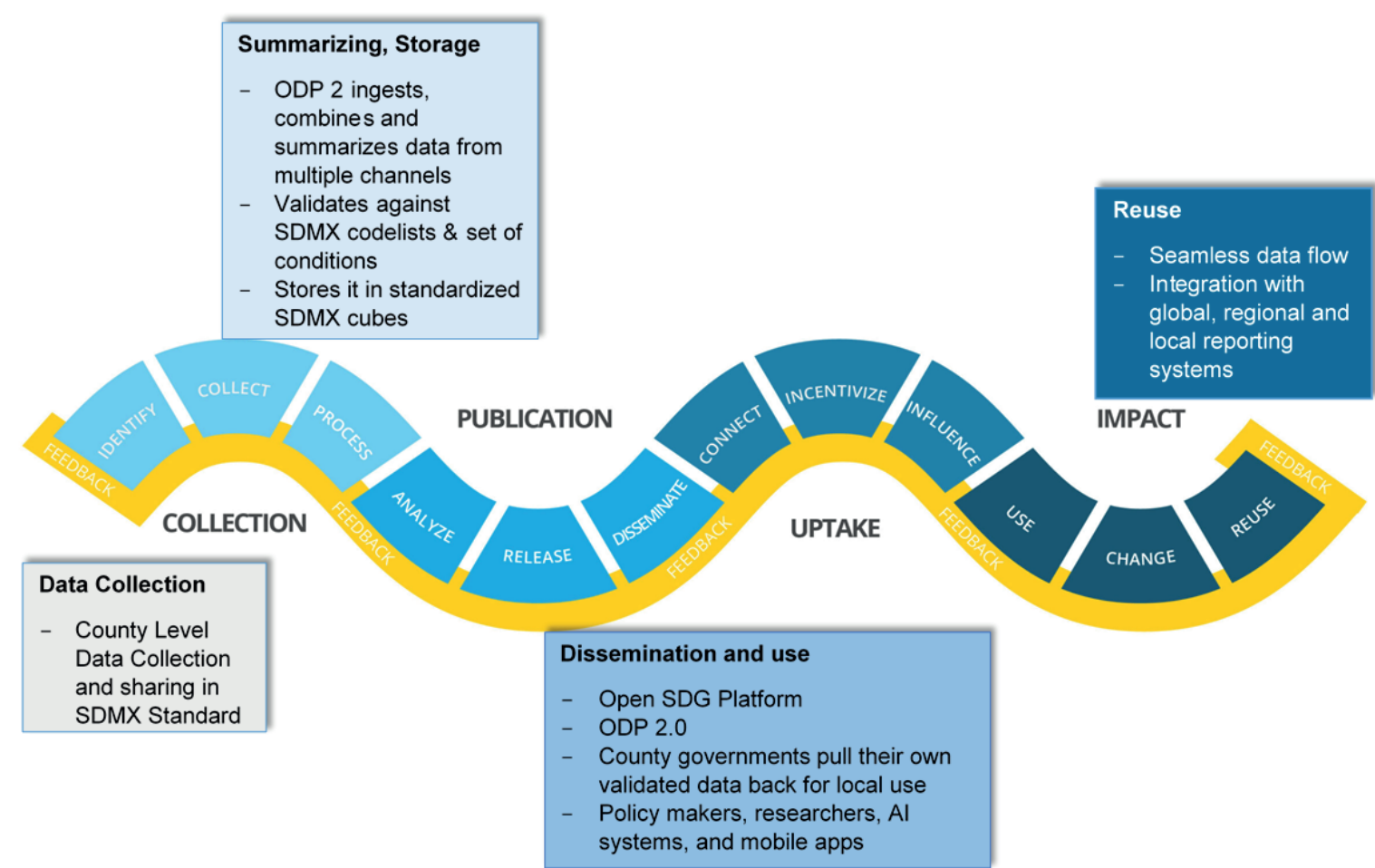
Kenya's data modernization faced three core challenges:

- Technical Complexity:** Implementing SDMX requires specialized skills in data modeling and conversion.
- Resource Constraints:** Developing in-house platforms demands significant financial investment and time.
- Institutional Coordination:** Integrating systems across national and county levels requires aligned vision and capacity.

2. Detailed Partnership Portfolio: Scope, Contribution, and Impact

Partner	Form of Collaboration & Technical Scope	Key Outcomes & Deliverables
UNECA, UNSD, UK ONS	Technical Co-creation & Capacity Building: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ONS provided capacity building on development of the Open SDG platform, customization and technical support.• UNSD Capacity building on SDG data modeling to SDMX format, Conversion using SDMX converter and technical support• UNECA resource mobilization for the activities and international best practices	Open SDG Platform: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A fully operational, interactive data platform for all Kenya's SDG indicators.• 171 Indicators standardized using the international SDG DSD.• Seamless integration with other SDMX native platforms
African Development Bank (AfDB)	Architectural Support & System Integration: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of technical experts to design and build ODP 2.0's core SDMX Reference Infrastructure (RI).• Capacity building on customization and local hosting of the platform• Capacity building on SDMX data modeling and uploading• Integration of ODP 2 and Open SDG Platform• Technical support	ODP 2.0 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A centralized, SDMX native platform harmonizing different portals.• Key Modules: Data Entry (Excel, CSV, SDMX-ML), Processing (calculations, aggregations), Dissemination (SDMX API, dashboards, mobile app).• Serves as the Single Source of Truth for all national official statistics.
UNICEF & County Governments	Sub-National Capacity Development & Inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) counties to address data marginalization.• Provided resources for hands-on training for county officers on producing and validating SDMX-compliant data from abstracts.• Provided financial support for development of tools for mapping local data to national SDMX structures.	Digitized County Statistical Abstracts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transformation of static PDFs into dynamic, machine-readable data.• Each county will have a dedicated data flow within ODP 2.0, enabling two-way data sharing.• Empowers evidence-based devolution and local planning.
East African Community (EAC)	Regional Harmonization & Policy Alignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resource mobilization for regional capacity building• Alignment of Kenya's SDMX structures with regional frameworks to ensure comparability.	Regional Interoperability: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peer to peer learning in the EAC region• Streamlined reporting for regional policy initiatives and development agendas.

3. The Integrated Data Value Chain: From Collection to Insight



4. Smarter Data for Better Insights

- **Smarter Data:** Data is no longer locked in static reports. Through SDMX, it becomes structured, machine-readable, and AI-ready, enabling advanced analytics and innovative use cases outlined in the Kenya AI Strategy.
- **Better Insights:** The integrated ecosystem provides timely, comparable, and high-quality data to a diverse range of users:
 - o **Policymakers:** Access dashboards for monitoring national and county-level progress on SDGs and Vision 2030.
 - o **Citizens:** Use mobile apps to access data offline, enhancing transparency and accountability.
 - o **Researchers & Innovators:** Leverage the SDMX API to build new applications and drive economic development.

5. A Model for the Future

The KNBS experience demonstrates that strategic, multi-stakeholder partnership is an important enabler for successful statistical modernization. By leveraging the unique strengths of each partner, Kenya has built a resilient, interoperable, and inclusive data ecosystem that eliminates duplication, reduces reporting burden and enhances data quality and governance. KNBS remains committed to deepening these essential collaborations and continuing its leadership in statistical innovation for sustainable development.

Presenter:

Name: Serah Mwikali Ndunda
Contacts: sndunda@knbs.or.ke, +254714156119
Designation: Manager, Data Science and Dissemination

