



our ten-year strategy

2021–2030

Unlocking insight, shining a light
on progress, empowering others



Decision-makers require real-time, comprehensive, disaggregated information on the needs of people, in order to implement the right policies, financing and mechanisms.

UN Secretary General, António Guterres

Data Strategy of the Secretary-General
for Action by Everyone, Everywhere, 2020–22

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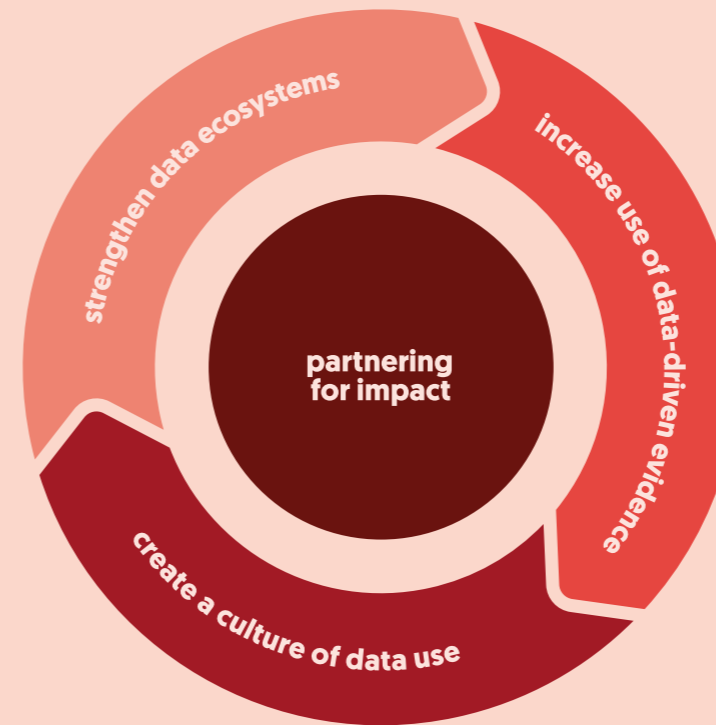
our strategy to 2030: unlocking insight, shining a light on progress, empowering others.

Our **mission** is to work closely with partners to ensure data-driven evidence and analysis are used effectively in policy and practice to end poverty, reduce inequality and increase resilience.

DI provides...

- greater visibility of financing.
- high-quality, data-driven analysis.
- sector expertise to develop policy interventions and financing mechanisms.
- technical expertise on data management and quality.
- training and workshops to foster a culture of data use.
- content creation services bringing data to life.
- geographical expertise.

Contributing to change



Our **purpose** is to apply the power of data and evidence to build sustainable solutions that create an equitable and resilient world.

And supporting partners to...

- better respond to people's needs through improved quality and use of data and evidence in policymaking.
- improve the quantity, quality and coherence of public finance and private investment.
- create a more equitable world by challenging systemic and structural barriers to progress and supporting the reform of existing systems.

1

our ambition

What DI aims to achieve
over the coming decade

Photo: US Mission to the UN in Rome

Over the next decade, the decisions we make and the actions we take are going to dictate whether we successfully overcome major global challenges that threaten to reverse progress on poverty, exacerbate inequality and reduce the future resilience of livelihoods, communities, governments and institutions.

A better future is possible, but a huge collaborative effort is required to overcome these challenges. At Development Initiatives, we are committed to playing our part by providing data-driven evidence and analysis to inform and support governments, donors and philanthropic organisations, civil society and NGOs, business and beyond.

Data has the power to unlock insights, shine a light on progress and empower people to increase accountability. Robust, comprehensive and timely data is a key component of success.

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2

the challenge

Key issues we must address if we are to create a better world

Photo: United Nations Photo

The persistence of extreme poverty combined with large inequalities, protracted crises and mounting environmental pressures threaten sustainable social and economic development and undermine peace and stability.

Weakened economic growth will pull millions of people back into poverty and limit the opportunities of many more. Some groups of people continue to be marginalised and left behind based on characteristics such as gender, disability, or age. These groups are often also impacted by intersecting factors, such as socio-economic disadvantage, discrimination and unequal access to resources. Lack of robust data, alongside various political and social factors, contributes to the challenges that prevent the needs of all communities being acknowledged and addressed.

Sufficient and appropriate financing and investments to end poverty, minimise the impact of crises and strengthen resilience have been a persistent global challenge.

National governments and international organisations are increasingly taking an integrated approach to tackling poverty and a lack of climate resilience, yet responses are fragmented and mobilising new resources remains a challenge.

Currently, investments to support sustainable and cost-effective solutions that help the poorest and most vulnerable people are not enough and are exacerbated by a disconnect between knowledge and practice. Coherence of policy and financing between the development, climate, humanitarian and peace-building communities at all levels continues to be a challenge that holds back progress.

Many global, regional and national systems and structures perpetuate poverty and injustice, increasing different forms of inequality. Those living in fragile or insecure environments – whether because of conflict, weak governance, or environmental degradation – face multiple challenges that are even more complex to resolve. Conversely, the costs of unsustainable progress are also distributed unequally.

Often these costs disproportionately impact the poorest people and places, specific groups (such as women and girls), people with disabilities and other marginalised groups. As a result, millions of people continue to live in poverty and lack access to basic resources (such as nutritious food, clean water and energy).

As we increasingly recognise the interconnectedness of global and national challenges, it is clear that the longer-term consequences of entrenched inequality, which perpetuate poverty, are not limited to a marginalised few. Addressing these inequities requires more than better data and greater investment – it requires strong and effective governance systems, accountable governments, strong international norms and standards, as well as transformed and effective multilateral institutions.

Challenging and transforming underlying systems and structures is essential, not only for a more equitable society, but also a more prosperous and stable one.

This decade is already witnessing rapid changes in national and international financing landscapes and the institutions that manage them. These changes are exacerbating existing challenges. However, with the right leadership, ambition and knowledge, change can also be an opportunity to maximise the impact of our collective effort.



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what is needed

Data must play a vital role, if we are to succeed

Photo: UNICEF/UNI235515/Willocq

A commitment to end poverty, reduce inequality and build resilience must be underpinned by global, regional and national action plans that set out the right policies and programmes; adequate and good quality financing; as well as mechanisms to monitor their implementation and impact.

Decision-makers require real-time, comprehensive, disaggregated information on the needs of people in order to implement the right policies, financing and mechanisms.

This data needs to exist in an accessible and useful format. To be effective, data needs to be ‘analysis-ready’, and analysis needs to be ‘decision-ready’. Data systems in fragile and conflict-affected states are particularly in need of attention, since they are generally weak or non-existent.

With poverty increasingly being concentrated in fragile contexts and countries experiencing significant demographic shifts, understanding the changing needs of people is critical. Fundamentally, strong data ecosystems are vital so that everyone can discover, access and share the data they need.



We all need to put unprecedented effort into working effectively together to maintain a powerful force for change and progress over the next ten years.

Increased access to information enhances people's agency, empowering them within their communities.

New technologies and the increasing digitisation of data offer the promise of new solutions. To fully realise the benefits of technological transformation, data management should be approached holistically. It needs to be supported by the development of processes and practices that deliver robust data governance, ensure data protection and uphold ethical data use. We need to increase expertise and availability of digital resources, training and 'how-to' tools for governments, civil society and citizens, so they can produce and use data. In this way we can harness new analytical opportunities and prevent the digital divide widening, to ensure that some groups are not left further behind.

An increase in good quality, coherent financing is essential if we are to deliver on the SDGs and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. All investments, public and private, need to deliver on sustained progress that is not eroded by future crises. We should also look for opportunities to better align financing with knowledge on what works and how it should be directed to meet and deliver on agreed international and domestic public policy commitments.

We all need to put unprecedented effort into working effectively together to maintain a powerful force for change and progress over the next ten years. And at DI, we will be reaching out to our partners and working with them to achieve the ambitions set out in global frameworks at the regional, national and subnational levels.



Image caption:
DI demonstrating our free data tool, which makes Uganda's official government data easy to access and understand

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the role we will play

How we will apply our skills and expertise to drive change

Photo: Development Initiatives

DI is a trusted partner to all we work with, from governments and international institutions to civil society. We inform their campaigns and policies and ensure they can advocate from a position of strength – underpinned by robust evidence.

Over the next ten years, collaboration will remain at the core of our approach. We will continue to build partnerships, expand our network and increase the support we provide to others, because we know this is the best way to achieve sustainable change.

We will also seek to inspire others to develop a culture where data and evidence are valued, motivate people, and lead to change; and where technology supports greater inclusion, access and voice. Our dedication to the use of data and evidence in decision-making, informed by locally-led and globally connected solutions, makes us perfectly poised to play this role.

We will continue to draw on the expertise and experience we have gained since DI was founded over 25 years ago in order to provide the following for our partners:

These activities will enable our partners to:



Who is missing from data?

5



Image caption:
DI's Harpinder Collacott explains that change means putting existing data to good use, and also urgently investing in better data.



drivers of change

Three core areas we will focus on to maximise our impact and achieve our mission

TEDxBath, photographer: Sam Page

Underpinning these drivers of change is DI's passion, expertise and belief in the power of comprehensive and timely data, and data systems. When used well, data makes hidden challenges visible, increases transparency of financial flows, reveals patterns and trends of who is and is not benefiting, and helps inform better decisions to build equitable and inclusive systems and solutions.

Strengthen data ecosystems to increase the collection, sharing and use of data that is open, comprehensive and underpinned by responsible production and management.

Increase use of data-driven evidence to contribute to an evidence base by turning data into insight and actionable analysis that can be used in policy and practice.

Create a culture of data use to increase skills, expertise and confidence in data, showing how data can drive better outcomes, and providing digital tools that make data use accessible and easy.



6



Image caption:
Nepal Open Data day 2018.
DI has worked with over 30 partners in Nepal to support local data innovation, improve the inclusion of women in the data sector, develop sustainable data systems and grow data-use skills and open data literacy.

partnering for impact

Why we are putting collaboration at the heart of everything we do

Photo: Development Initiatives

Our three drivers of change are connected by DI's focus on collaboration and partnering for impact.

We know that one organisation alone cannot create the change we aspire to. Only by working together and understanding how we support each other can we reach our shared goals.

Our contribution forms part of a wider chain of impact – a broader ecosystem of actors aiming to build a more equitable and resilient world. Our focus on data and evidence unlocks insight, shines a light on progress and empowers people to increase accountability. Alone it does not and cannot achieve our vision of a better future, but it is a necessary part of getting us there.

We will work with others to inform policy and practice, change mindsets and influence debate at the global, regional and national level to bring about the changes we want to see.

We will support our partners to:

Better respond to people's needs through improved quality and use of data and evidence in policymaking.

Improve the quantity, quality and coherence of public finance and private investment.

Challenge systemic and structural barriers to equity and support the reform of existing systems.



DI's data on poverty offers an opportunity to make informed decisions especially when we make strategic plans to increase the incomes of small scale farmers.

Mount Elgon Coffee and Honey Co-Operative
Uganda



A big general thank you to you all at Development Initiatives for everything you do. It makes such a difference for the humanitarian sector to have high quality and regular data.

Hugo Slim, Senior Research Fellow
Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford, UK

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foundational principles

Our principles guide who we are and how we work, informing organisational culture and shaping the services we provide

1

people

DI puts people at the heart of its agenda. We serve the world's poorest and most marginalised communities. We aim to bring about change in their lives and increase opportunities for all through improvements to systems, structures and resource allocation.

2

simplicity

DI believes less is more. By making data and evidence simple, visually appealing and clear we can reach people who would otherwise be excluded from accessing information that could empower them.

4

perseverance

DI believes anything is possible. Through hard work, focus and commitment, change is possible. But change takes time and requires dedication. Our organisation embodies perseverance, focus and resilience in the face of obstacles.

3

partnerships

DI encourages collaboration, connection and community. We bring people together from different places, with different experiences, ideas and perceptions so we can come up with better ideas and solutions to achieve our purpose.

5

transformation

DI does not believe in standing still. We are always learning, developing and changing. We believe it is important to constantly seek out new ideas and ways of working; explore innovations and technological advances; and develop projects to achieve transformation and unlock change for all.

6

high performance

DI is thriving because it consists of (and is informed by) high performing individuals, who challenge and encourage each other to do better. We are all committed to being the best we can be. As an organisation, we value quality, rigour and attention to detail.



Image caption:
The Development Initiatives
Staff Conference, 2020.

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our core values

Our values define us and run through all that we do

Photo: Development Initiatives

Our core values have been developed by staff to embody how we work with each other and our partners.

purpose-driven

everything we do is motivated by our shared desire to contribute to positive change in the world

people-centred

we are supportive, friendly and considerate, with mutual respect for how people think, work, live and identify so that together we thrive

transparent

openness and honesty are at the heart of how we work, driving high levels of trust, as well as fair and ethical practice

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our evolution to 2030

How we are changing to
ensure we realise our ambition

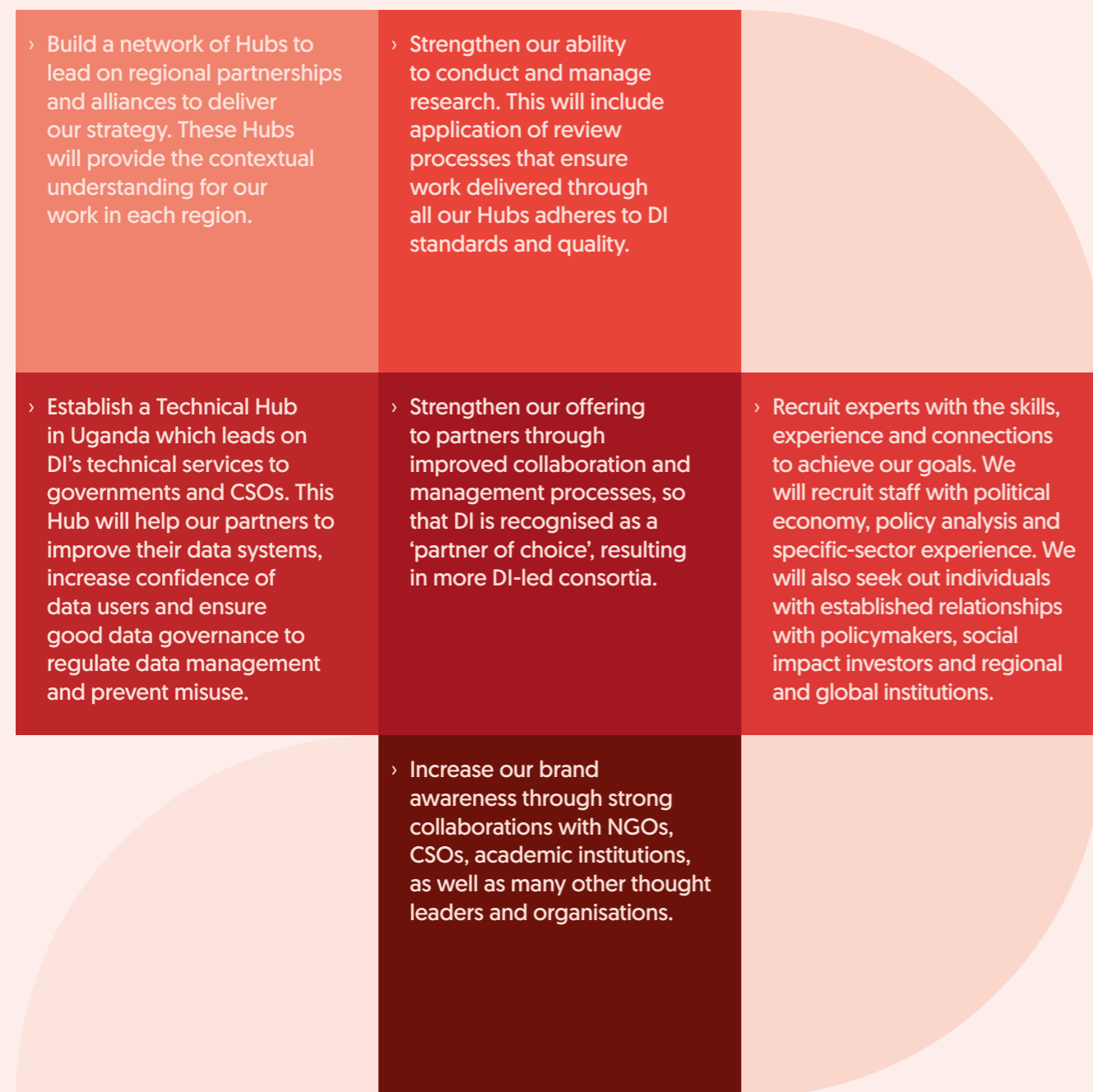
Photo: Jan Huber, Unsplash

Over the next ten years, we will strengthen our capabilities to deliver on our goals. DI will develop and change as an institution to ensure we are effective, innovative and responsive to need.

Our new operating model will be supported by a network of hubs around the world. This will enable us to be closer to the organisations and people who we want to collaborate with at all levels, from global institutions to regional, national and subnational organisations. We will work with our partners to strengthen data ecosystems in these locations, and ensure our evidence and analysis is tailored to the needs of our partners.

Each of our Hubs will be anchored in a regional capital. They will coordinate work with and through partners and consultants in countries within the region. These Hubs will primarily operate in countries with stable governments committed to a transformative agenda aligned with DI's values. We always seek to work in locations where there is an open and effective civil society and a commitment to data and evidence.

To deliver on our goals for the next decade, we will strengthen our capabilities and transform our organisation through a range of activities.



DI's work will focus on fragile and crisis contexts as poverty shifts into these contexts and building resilience becomes a priority. Case studies from fragile contexts will inform our analysis. Although consultants and staff may travel to fragile contexts for specific assignments, we will not set up operations at a national level in states which are fragile, conflict-affected, insecure and difficult to operate in.

Resourcing our ambition: From 2021 to 2030, we expect DI to expand as an organisation through our network of Hubs. We will continue to engage our major donors as partners with whom we co-create and co-execute strategies, while also mobilising new funding for our regional work. We will strengthen our ability to secure and manage large multi-year grants and contracts. We will continue to provide a mixture of services to our partners – including governments, international non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations (CSOs), social impact investors and corporate partners – supported by grant income and through contracts.



Development Initiatives is a global organisation harnessing the power of data and evidence to end poverty, reduce inequality and increase resilience.

While data alone can't bring about a better world, it is a vital part of achieving it. The decisions we make today will decide what future we create, and good decisions need good data.

We deliver trusted and actionable insights for decision-makers and partners based on what available data can tell us. We increase data use by growing people's skills and expertise and showing how data can drive better outcomes. And we improve what data is available by helping others to collect, share, manage and use data responsibly and effectively.

This work means we inform effective policy and practice, help change mindsets and influence debate – using data-led evidence to bring about the changes we want to see.

We work at global, regional, national and subnational levels, with staff across the world. Alongside our network of hubs based in country capitals, we have strong relationships with partners in many other countries that enable us to have an impact across the globe.

We undertake an exciting portfolio of grant-funded work and we offer consultancy services to those who share our aims and values.

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