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Know your enemy: using data to tackle COVID-19
A Global Government Forum online conference
Wednesday 22 July 2020
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Introduction

After decades of rapid progress in the struggle against infectious disease, it's a shock to encounter a virus for which medical science offers few treatments. But in the digital era, data science can help plug the gap – supporting work to control the virus's spread, soften its impact, support damaged communities and restore economic growth. Effective use of data can enable governments to, for example, predict and track COVID-19 outbreaks, identify effective medical techniques, and target support services at those in greatest need.

Bringing together panels of senior civil servants, technical professionals and policy specialists from around the world, this Global Government Forum online conference will explore the skills, processes and systems required to realise the potential of data in tackling COVID-19 – equipping civil servants to stifle the pandemic and repair the health, social and economic damage left in its wake.

The first session will examine the use of data on citizens and organisations to improve service delivery to individual users, while the second covers the deployment of anonymised 'big data' to provide evidence shaping medical treatments, public health policies and economic stimulus packages.

Panel session 1: Using data to drive COVID-19 service delivery

Wednesday 22 July
USA/Canada Eastern Time (EST):	*09:00 to 10:15*
British Summer Time (BST):	*14:00 to 15:15*
Western European Summer Time (WEST):	*15:00 to 16:15*
Singapore Time (SGT):	*21:00 to 22:15*
Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST):	*23:00 to 00:15*
New Zealand Standard Time (NZST):	*01:00 to 02:15*

Blunt policy tools such as lockdowns, halting elective medical treatments and economy-wide furlough schemes have proved invaluable in addressing the pandemic. But as countries exit lockdown, data science can support far more targeted and cost-effective interventions – underpinning services such as contact-tracing, quarantine management, shielding and business support, while improving the management of key supply chains in PPE, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment.

Yet in using personal and organisational data, democratic governments must maintain public and political consent – addressing people's privacy, security and civil liberties concerns. This webinar will consider the opportunities to use data on individual citizens and organisations in COVID-19 service delivery, while maximising public participation and compliance. And it will examine how departments can best realise those opportunities, developing their ability both to gather, process, maintain and share data, and to deploy it in frontline services.

Panel session 2: The power of 'big data' in addressing COVID-19

Wednesday 22 July

USA/Canada Eastern Time (EST):	*10:45 to 12:00*
British Summer Time (BST):	*15:45 to 17:00*
Western European Summer Time (WEST):	*16:45 to 18:00*
Singapore Time (SGT):	*22:45 to 00:00*
Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST):	*00:45 to 02:00*
New Zealand Standard Time (NZST):	*02:45 to 04:00*

In recent years, 'big data' technologies – which combine, process and analyse large datasets, using analytics and AI algorithms to identify patterns and inform policy design and service delivery – have advanced rapidly. And these emerging techniques could be hugely valuable in governments' responses to COVID-19.

Data from aerial photography, telecoms firms, police forces and transport managers, for example, can enable public servants to track changes in movement patterns – helping to predict outbreaks and shape public communications. Information from industry bodies, tax returns and local authorities can identify the sectors and localities suffering the greatest harm, shaping the design of business support and economic stimulus policies. And aggregated data on hospital treatments, clinical research, infection control and lockdown policies can highlight effective prevention strategies and medical responses.

Gathering, analysing and deploying this information demands robust data management, strong digital capabilities and effective data sharing; and civil service bodies must ensure that data use safeguards' citizens' privacy, data security and public trust. This webinar will explore some of the potential applications of big data in tackling COVID-19, set out the key skills and policies required, and consider how governments can rapidly build those capabilities.

Should you have any questions regarding the event, please contact Maria Fetta on:
T (10)(2e)
E: (10)(2e) @globalgovernmentforum.com