



Official Opening Session, International Data Week 2018, Monday 5 November 2018

Dumelang, Bagaetsho, Good morning.

Your excellency Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi

Honourable ministers, International Ministers, permanent secretaries, ambassadors, other dignitaries, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues and friends.

I am truly honoured to welcome you this morning on behalf of the International Data Week Programme Committee.

Welcome to the place of dreams ... a salutation in one of the emails I received recently from Botswana. Over 2 years ago, this week was more than a dream. A concrete desire to hold the second edition of International Data Week here in Gaborone.

A dream that has been brought to realisation by many people, supported, from the outset, by the Government of Botswana. Your Excellency, your presence here today, together with your Ministers and many dignitaries, opening this international event is a true statement of your government's commitment to open science, open data, and international collaboration to harness the benefits of data for research, innovation and society.

Data challenges are global and International Data Week brings together over 820 data professionals and researchers from all disciplines from across the globe, 66 countries to be precise, an amazing success, to discuss and find solutions for the many, many data challenges that we are currently facing.

Data is often referred to as oil, or light or water. Interestingly those commodities are many times a local, national or regional challenge. Science and data are global commodities. And one of the biggest challenges for policy makers is to ensure the global interaction, global agreements and global transactions around data happen. Botswana shows its leadership and determination in this field nationally, regionally and globally.

In the wonderful backdrop of Gaborone. We are immensely grateful to the Government of Botswana, particularly Ministry of Tertiary Education, Research, Science and Technology, for their generous support.

Our local hosts, the University of Botswana on behalf of the Botswana Open Data Open Science Forum have been instrumental in the achievement of this complex event, the presence of over 250 participants from Botswana is an indication of their tireless efforts and dedication to the event not just internationally but locally too. Prof. Atlhopheng - Dean of Science, Dr. Audrey Masizana - Head of Department of Computer Science, Dr. Tshiamo Motshegwa – HPC Project Coordinator, University of Botswana members of the IDW Programme Committee and all their staff, we are so grateful to you for making this happen.



We have had the firm support, cooperation and amazing contribution from the Academy of Science of South Africa, Susan Veldsman Director, Ina Smith Project Manager for the African Open Science Platform, Zukie and all their colleagues we give our heartfelt thanks. Also a special word on the beautiful lanyards that have been generously gifted by them to all delegates.

Dr. Kay Raseroka, Research Data Alliance Council member and Joint Minds Consult and Dr. Patrick Molotsi also of Joint Minds Consult. Kay was instrumental in the connections over two years ago and has continued to dedicate her time and energy to this endeavour. Thank you Kay. We are indebted to you.

Conferences are notoriously expensive events. Our sponsors have been fundamental to the realisation of this conference. We generously thank Bofinet, who sponsor the wifi, Wellcome Trust, Cloudera Foundation, Google Data Studio, Springer Nature, Hindawi, Bocra, Botswana Innovation Hub, Crossref, International Science Council Regional Office for Africa, VPN and Ethiopian Airlines.

International Data Week is a collaboration between the International Science Council's Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA), the World Data System (WDS) and the Research Data Alliance (RDA). We had our first edition two years ago in Denver, Colorado where the structure was a little different. This edition is a combination of a scientific conference (SciDataCon) and working meetings (Research Data Alliance) with plenary interventions and panel sessions from a range of international experts. A structure that we hope you, the delegates appreciate and leverage upon.

The programme is very, very rich, I am sorry Your Excellency that you cannot stay to enjoy some of it.

In addition to the other members of the programme committee that I have thanked already, I would like to thank Dr. Simon Hodson, Executive Director CODATA, Bonnie Carroll, CODATA Secretary General and Dr. Rorie Edmunds, WDS Programme Officer and all their colleagues from their organisations. It has been a great pleasure to work with you all on this special event and thank you very much for all your work.

Final thanks go to my own team from the Research Data Alliance, particularly Yolanda Meleco Project Director, RDA-US and the RDA secretariat, Technical Advisory Board and Council members.

So this long list of individuals and organisations has spent two years putting this together. The government of Botswana has given us a concrete statement of their commitment together with many other African governments who will be speaking in the ministerial session after the break.

We turn to you the participants who have travelled from close and farther locations to be here, to thank you for being part of this unique event, for dedicating your expertise, your time and your knowledge.

We wish you a fruitful and intense week of data discussions, we look forward to witnessing great achievements, new contacts, new ideas, future collaborations.

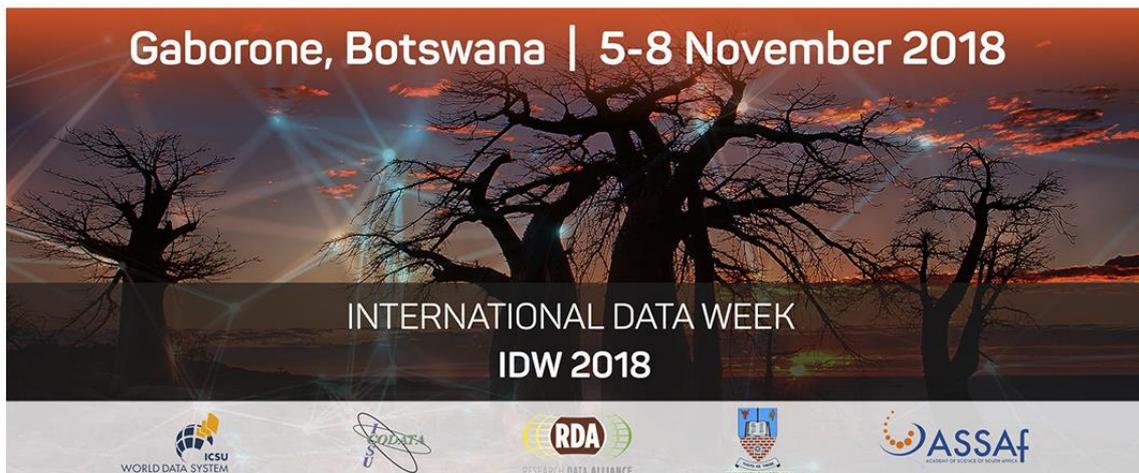
In our conference overview, we stated that "The data revolution must be inclusive, it must benefit all, and harness all energies and that no parts of the world and no disciplines should be left behind."



Let us together make our essential contribution to achieving this vision.

Thank you very much. Please enjoy the conference.

Hilary Hanahoe, Secretary General Research Data Alliance



The Digital Frontiers of Global Science

The second edition of International Data Week (IDW 2018) will be held on 5-8 November 2018 in Gaborone, Botswana. Hosted by the Botswana Open Science and Open Data Forum, IDW 2018 brings together data professionals and researchers from all disciplines and from all parts of the globe. Co-organized by the University of Botswana on behalf of the Botswana Open Data Open Science Forum, ICSU Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA), the ICSU World Data System (WDS) the Research Data Alliance (RDA) and the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), this landmark event will address the theme of 'The Digital Frontiers of Global Science'. In a hyperconnected world where the internet is pervasive and web technologies are driving major changes in our lives, research has become more than ever before digital and international. Furthermore, the major societal and scientific challenges facing humanity in this digital age are profoundly global in character, requiring the participation of researchers from all countries and disciplines. The data revolution is also a major source of the scientific opportunities to address these issues but to realise these potentials the frontiers of science, data analysis and stewardship must be advanced. Likewise, the data revolution must be inclusive, benefitting all, and harnessing all energies: no parts of the world and no disciplines should be left behind.

INTERNATIONAL DATA WEEK PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Julius Athlopheng - Dean of Science, University of Botswana

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Simon Hodson - Executive Director, ISC - CODATA

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INTERNATIONAL
DATA WEEK 2018

International Data Week, 5-8 November 2018, Gaborone, Botswana

www.internationaldataweek.org