



## PARIS21 Annual Meetings

30 March-1 April 2015

Paris, France

### *PARIS21 Seminar: Measuring Statistical Capacity: Where do we stand and where do we go from here?*

Measuring statistical capacity is not an exact science, particularly if we want to assess the quality of the data produced by a given country. Various tools from different organisations, with diverse interfaces, scope and objectives are available, but few have succeeded in obtaining a detailed measurement of the statistical capacity of the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) within the National Statistical System (NSS). There is a growing interest on this topic, as witnessed at the side event hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank at the 46<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

During the PARIS21 Annual Meetings, a half-day seminar was organised on 1 April 2015, to emphasise the need to measure statistical capacity, take stock of the current tools and propose next steps on addressing statistical capacity measurement.

The opening remarks by the facilitators addressed the importance of measuring statistical capacity not only to track national statistical progress and to know where National Statistical Offices (NSOs) stand but also to assess the impact of capacity building programmes to answer governments' requests and to better allocate resources and funds.

A quick overview was made on the different available tools by the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Eurostat and the Inter-American Development Bank.

Following the introductory remarks, participants broke out in groups to discuss four key themes for measuring statistical capacity: a) aim and target audience, b) focal areas, c) dissemination and d) process.

The reporting back from the groups confirmed that there is a need to carry out in-depth comprehensive assessments on how to best produce and use statistics. It was noted that statistical progress needs to be easily understood by non-statisticians and it is important to invest in human resources as a way to improve statistical capacity building. Moreover, participants suggested that the assessment could be a hybrid system looking at different dimensions and benchmarks done every 3 to 5 years to leave time for implementation.

There was general consensus that there is a need to measure statistical capacity with a wider scope than the one provided by existing tools. The measurement needs to take into account the demand for statistics and user satisfaction using a common tool that will allow development partners and donors alike to know where to invest their efforts and track the process of technical assistance. The statistical community should make use of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) momentum to submit proposals on indicators on statistical capacity building.

As a short-term action point, PARIS21 will develop a mapping of existing initiatives to propose a set of indicators to measure statistical capacity and share it with the participants for feedback.