

Partner Reporting System on Statistical Development

Task Team Meeting, June 25, 2007 – Minutes

1. The fourth meeting of the Task Team on the Partner Reporting System on Statistical Development was held on June 25, 2007 at the offices of the PARIS21 Secretariat. Participants to the meeting were: Morag Ottens of Eurostat, Jean-François Divay of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Petteri Baer of UNECE, Valérie Gaveau of OECD, and Antoine Simonpietri, Marc Tocatlian, Jean-Marc Landais, and Adriana De Leva (chairperson) of PARIS21. Naoko Watanabe of the World Bank joined the meeting in the afternoon by video-conference. The discussion documents, namely the agenda, the revised classification of statistical areas, the revised classification of financial and non-financial support, and a draft proposal for the design and development of the reporting system, were sent to Team members prior to the meeting. The Task Team also received the link to the proposed Eurostat questionnaire, for testing and comments, prior to the meeting. The questionnaire is based on the classifications agreed upon by the Task Team.

2. The first point of discussion was the preliminary findings, as well as methodology, of the CRS feasibility study, presented by Jean-Marc Landais, consultant PARIS21. The methodology adopted for the study entailed two “searches”, namely using the CRS purpose code, “16062-Statistical capacity building”, to identify statistical activities in all transactions reported in the CRS for a selected country, followed by an expanded “key-word” search (including census/survey, data collection, statistics/statistical/statistique, and support to M&E activities of PRSP and MDG). The study carried out these searches for four countries -- Uganda, Mauritania, Niger, and Ethiopia. The results of this first step were then compared to those of the LRS. The main conclusions drawn from this exercise are that (i) information for bilateral donors is relatively comparable in the two systems, suggesting that the CRS could serve as an initial basis to identify the statistical support of these donors; and (ii) information on multilateral donors (particularly, UN agencies, IMF, World Bank) and regional/sub-regional organizations is not easily accessible in the CRS, implying that information on statistical support from these partners needs to be collected in another way. The meeting highlighted that the CRS is the only recognized system for official development aid flows, and as such is an accounting tool. The meeting agreed that **the consultant report, to be completed by mid-July 2007**, include the following:

- **main findings**, with an explanation of the reasons for differences between CRS and LRS reporting by bilateral partners, as well as an assessment of the time required to access country information from the CRS, using the above methodology;
- **recommendations** on how (i) the CRS can be used for the reporting of statistical support, and (ii) to improve donor reporting on statistical capacity building to the CRS.

It was also recommended that the findings and recommendations of the study be presented to the Statistics and Monitoring Division, the OECD Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD/STAT), possibly in September 2007.

3. The meeting reached the following **agreements**:

- **classification of statistical areas**: The meeting accepted the revised changes to the explanatory note of the classification, drafted by Petteri Baer, namely those related to sections 2.1, 2.2, 4.4, 4.5, 5.1, 5.3, 5.5, and 5.7, which reflect the perspective of recipient

countries. It also agreed to the following **modifications**, as suggested by Naoko Watanabe (section 3.4 remains unchanged):

- section 4.3.2: split section into two: for agriculture censuses and registers (4.3.2.1) and business censuses and registers (4.3.2.2)
 - section 5.2: split section into two: for NSDS (5.2.1) and other statistical programs (5.2.2)
 - at the end of the list of statistical areas, add a category, entitled: “Activity not included in any of the above (specify)”
- **classification of financial and non-financial support:** the following **changes** were agreed upon:
 - section 3.2 should read “Commitment (total for statistical component for the period indicated above);
 - section 3.3 should read “Disbursement (amount spent): total as of last financial/calendar year”. Section 3.3.1, Disbursement – total to date was deleted.
 - the explanatory note will be revised to reflect these changes.
 - **questionnaire:** comments of those who tested the draft Eurostat questionnaire, proposed by Morag Ottens, were generally very positive. The questionnaire was seen as very user-friendly, its content as a good reflection of the classifications agreed-upon by the Task Team, and as a definite step forward for the design of the reporting system. The **main modifications** suggested by the Team were to:
 - add “global” and “regional” to the list of beneficiary countries;
 - define the year of implementation as the year the commitment is made;
 - define the period of the activity as the “expected starting date to expected end date”;
 - report “future activities” separately. It was suggested that the questionnaire be composed of 3 sheets for general information, specific sheet for ongoing projects/programmes, and a sheet for future planned activities, specifying their stage of preparation/approval;
4. As to the **draft proposal on the reporting system**, the meeting generally agreed that the content of the draft proposal was in line with previous discussions. The Task Team recommended that the following elements be further clarified/included in the proposal:
- **source of information:** Antoine Simonpietri stressed that the proposal distinguish between the reporting by technical and financial partners and the reporting to be carried out at the beneficiary country level, principally because of the different objectives of each group. He emphasized that, for the former, the main objective is information exchange to improve coordination and aid efficiency, while, for the latter, to monitor assistance received, to ensure closer consistency between partner support and the NSDS and to avoid duplication of statistical projects. In this regard, PARIS21’s recent and ongoing work with AFRISTAT in assisting member countries of AFRISTAT to undertake the reporting exercise at their level will be useful input for the proposal. Ms. De Leva, who visited Mali in June 2007 to work with AFRISTAT staff to launch this work, will report on her mission findings during the next Task Team meeting. **Mr. Simonpietri agreed**

to give more precise suggestions on distinguishing the two sources of information for the reporting system by end-July.

- **coverage:** The proposal should indicate that the reporting system will cover all developing countries and thus will be extended to other regions of the world.
- **output of reporting system:** The outputs should be clearly linked to the operational objectives of the reporting system (see above). It was agreed that the basic outputs of the system are a database on a “read-only” basis and a report on findings for the general public and on progress in statistics for partners. In order to contribute to the capacity building of the recipient countries and better aid coordination, more in-depth analysis of the information can be carried out, based on the needs of the audience – for example, for development partners, the identification of gaps in funding of statistical areas and an assessment of the efficiency of technical assistance; for beneficiary countries, the preparation of a needs assessment and definition of the funding strategy of the NSDS. The meeting also suggested that the information of the system be added to the PARIS21 website.
- **development of web-accessible database:** The features of the database, its costing and timetable should be defined in the proposal. The meeting suggested that the reporting system allow an easy transfer of information from partners’ databases, thus avoiding manual re-entry of information.
- **timeframe/budget:** The proposal should include a more detailed action plan, with more explicit costing.

It was recommended that a **draft proposal of the key features of the reporting system be distributed to the CCSA meeting in Madrid and the PARIS21 Bureau meeting in September 2007, while the complete proposal (including costing and schedule) be submitted to the Steering Committee for approval in November 2007.** In addition, Eurostat plans to launch its reporting exercise in Africa for the EC and EC member countries in September 2007, which will serve as a good opportunity to test the questionnaire.

5. The meeting agreed to the following **work programme** for the period July 2007-March 2008:

Activity	Responsibility	Date
Feasibility note on CRS	P21 Consultant	Mid-July 07
Revised questionnaire	Ottens	July 17, 07
Final classification of statistical areas, including explanatory note	Baer	July 13, 07
Input for proposal: separating reporting by development partner and reporting at beneficiary country level	Simonpietri	July 30, 07
Draft proposal to Task Team	De Leva	July 30, 07
Draft proposal of key features of reporting system to CCSA/PARIS21 Bureau	Simonpietri	End-August 07
Transfer data of LRE to user-friendly software	P21	Sept 07
Reporting exercise on Africa <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data collection and processing • data analysis and report 	Eurostat for EC and EC member countries	Mid-Sept-Dec 07 Feb 08
Presentation of proposal to CCSA/PARIS21 Bureau	PARIS21	Sept 10-12, 07
Follow-up on pilot exercise in Mali during meeting of Comité de Direction of AFRISTAT	De Leva/Divay	Oct 29-31, 07
Draft proposal to P21 Steering Committee for approval	De Leva	End-Oct 07
Reporting exercise on Africa (if approved by P21 Steering Committee in Nov 07) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data collection and processing • data analysis and report 	P21 for non-EC countries and partners	Dec 07-Jan 08 Mar 08
Results of Africa exercises to FASDEV	Eurostat/P21	Mar 08 (tentative)
Next meeting of Task Team	TT	TBD