Partner Report on Support to Statistics
PRESS 2013

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS
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PARTNERSHIP IN STATISTICS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY
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Support to statistics reached US$ 394 million in calendar year 2013. This is US$ 100m more than in 2012, though still down from the peak in 2011 of US$ 518m.

The share of ODA dedicated to statistics fell from 0.32% in 2011 to 0.16% in 2012; 2013 figures for all ODA are not yet available.

Almost 90% of support to statistics is aligned with NSDSs, up from 88% in 2012 and 32% in 2011.

The top five providers of development co-operation in statistics (World Bank, United Kingdom, European Commission, African Development Bank, and UNFPA) provided 89.2% of total commitments in 2013, up from 76% in 2006.

Top 15 Recipients of Aid to Statistics, 2013

1. Bangladesh $195,130,137
2. Afghanistan $21,337,573
3. Myanmar $16,831,719
4. South Sudan $14,397,502
5. Yemen $12,166,984
6. Congo (Democratic Republic of the) $10,653,195
7. Ethiopia $10,647,675
8. Bosnia and Herzegovina $9,986,961
9. Lao People’s Democratic Republic $8,065,244
10. Chad $6,769,974
11. Côte d’Ivoire $5,911,545
12. Cambodia $5,396,030
13. Burundi $3,117,548
14. Mauritania $3,058,813
15. Malawi $1,104,502
INTRODUCTION

Overview

The fundamental role statistics play in development is increasingly recognized. The evolving Post-2015 Development Agenda is a clear indication: Whereas statisticians were engaged only after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had been established, they are making a substantial contribution to the debates on post-2015. All six reports issued in 2013 from UN bodies on the Post-2015 process highlighted the need for sound statistics.¹

This follows a steady increase in the demand for data over the last two decades, largely driven by the growing traction of results-based management among decision makers. The heightened awareness, coupled with new statistical technologies and approaches, has led to a proliferation of statistical stakeholders, each one with specific demands for data to inform decision making. Despite progress and much effort, many countries struggle to meet these demands. More effort is needed to ensure developing countries have the capacity and resources to better monitor progress on their own policy objectives as well as international goals.

With the aim of facilitating collaboration among partners and co-ordination of resources, the Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS) provides a snapshot of ongoing financial support to statistical development worldwide and an overview of trends. The PRESS report measures financial support provided by multilateral and bilateral donors covering all area of statistics ranging from National Accounts to Human Resources and Training (see Classification of Statistical Activities in Methodological Annex for more details). The Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) designed and administers the PRESS exercise to inform discussions on statistics, offering insights into what support is being channelled to which countries and when.

Although the financial figures presented in the PRESS are useful, the numbers need to be interpreted with caution as there are methodological challenges in collecting and processing the data. For instance, PRESS numbers rely on the Creditor Reporting System (CRS) for Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments supplemented by voluntary reporting from additional donors – hence full coverage of all programs as well as complete absence of double-counting cannot be guaranteed. PRESS is intended primarily to serve as a tool to provide a rough figure of how much money the international community spends on statistics, in which areas and for which regions/countries in view to facilitate collaboration and co-ordination among developing countries and providers of development co-operation, rather than as a purely accounting exercise.

Methodology

The PRESS exercise is conducted annually. The present report outlines the results of the 2013 calendar year, marking a shift towards focusing more on annual figures, rather than three-year rounds, to better reflect year-on-year changes. Results are also available from the five previous rounds (conducted in 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012) on the PARIS21 website. The raw data collected are available for free download on the PARIS21 website as an Excel file allowing readers to delve deeper into the data that are presented in this concise report.

The methodology used in compiling PRESS data is described in the 2009 PRESS methodology report. Briefly, the exercise begins with an extraction of data from the CRS. For countries and institutions that do not report to the CRS, the PARIS21 Secretariat supplements these data with an online questionnaire filled out by a global network of reporters. Such reporting is voluntary, offering an opportunity for actors to share information on their statistical activities. Unfortunately, the response rate of reporters has declined, decreasing from 44 in 2011, to 20 in 2012 and 17 in 2013. Here, it has to be noted that PRESS numbers for the years 2012 and 2013 do not include data from CRS and thus will be subject to future revision.

The Creditor Reporting System (CRS)

The CRS is the official source of information on aid commitments from OECD member countries, as well as a number of multilateral organisations. It was established in 1967, jointly by the OECD and the World Bank, with the aim of supplying the participants with a regular flow of data on indebtedness and capital flows. Calculating capital flows and debt stock remain key functions of the System, but others have evolved in the course of years. In particular, the CRS aid activity database has become the internationally recognised source of data on the geographical and sectoral breakdown of aid and is widely used by governments, organisations and researchers active in the field of development. It is updated on an ongoing basis in accordance with the relevant directives. The PRESS draws on the Official Development Assistance (ODA) portion of the database, which includes both geographic and sectoral information of projects, to identify those targeting statistics. The CRS also includes data on Other Official Flows and Official Export Credits.


The recipient countries covered in the PRESS exercise fall into three sub-categories: those eligible to borrow from the International Development Association (IDA), lower income countries (LIC), lower middle income countries (LMIC) as defined by the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee, and all African countries. Although PARIS21 activities and reporting focus on the poorest countries, African upper middle income countries are included in this exercise because the 2006 Light Reporting Exercise (LRE) — the process that evolved into the PRESS — reported on support to statistics across the entire African continent. By retaining all African countries in the PRESS, users interested in statistical development in Africa are able to sketch trends back from the original LRE. The complete list of countries is available in the methodology annexes below. Support that is not country-specific is shown in the tables below under the category “unallocated.”

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2 - See http://www.paris21.org/Press
3 - See http://www.paris21.org/Press2013
5 - This document and all maps included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.
6 - The list of IDA borrower countries (http://www.worldbank.org/ida) is periodically updated. This report reflects countries with IDA borrowing status as of October 2013.
7 - This report includes countries with LMIC status according to the October 2011 DAC list of Official Development Assistance recipients (http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist), which is updated every three years.
SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS FROM PRESS 2013

Trends in PRESS 2013

Financial commitments to statistical development for the period 2011–13 were roughly equivalent to the previous level of US$ 2.3 billion (Figure 1). This number includes activities committed prior to, but still active during, the reporting period. The three-year reporting cycle, while useful to show general trends, masks year-on-year fluctuations in commitments. To make such changes more apparent, the rest of this report, and future PRESS reports, will focus on a single calendar year.

Support to statistics is recovering after a slump in 2012. 2013 commitments to statistical development of about US$ 394 million show a 42% increase from the previous year. Also, commitments are still down from a peak of US$ 557.3 million in 2011. Such fluctuations are not as visible in the reporting based on three-year rounds. For example, change between the 2012 and 2013 calendar years is positive, whereas the change between the 2010-12 round and the 2011-13 round is slightly negative. The opposite is true when comparing change over 2011 and 2012 to changes between the 2009-11 and 2010-12 rounds: a decrease in annual commitments but an increase in the commitments across rounds.

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8 - Total commitments to active projects/programmes supported by providers of development co-operation in the PRESS round calculation may cover a longer period than the tri-annual cycle. Aggregated financing totals for the PRESS rounds should therefore be viewed cautiously.
The increase in commitments in 2013 should lead to an increase in the share of Official Development Assistance (ODA) dedicated to statistics, all else being equal. However, we can see that the slump in 2012 was accompanied by a decrease in the share of ODA dedicated to statistical development from 0.32% in 2011 to 0.16% in 2012. Beyond these annual fluctuations, it is also worth noting that compared to other sectors of ODA such as ‘Education’ or ‘Health’, but also ‘Transport & Storage’ or ‘Communication’, the amount of aid to statistics is negligible. In Figure 3, Statistical Capacity Building would make up one small portion of the “Other Social Infrastructure & Services” tranche.

Commitments have also increased in per capita terms, climbing from US$ 0.06 to US$ 0.12 over 2012-2013. This strong increase can be explained by an increase in absolute commitments, and by changes in the PRESS coverage. In 2013, a total of 11 countries (i.e., Albania, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, FYR of Macedonia, Iran, Jordan, Niue, Peru and Thailand) moved from being Lower Middle Income Countries (LMICs) to Upper Middle Income Countries (UMICs), and hence are not covered in this year’s report. As such, populations covered by PRESS decreased from 5.0 billion in 2012 to 3.4 billion in 2013.

The reported alignment of commitments with National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDSs) has improved significantly. Over 2012-13, the share of commitments that were reportedly aligned with an NSDS grew from 88.4% to 89.1%. Alignment was strongest in the Middle East where 92.9% of commitments are aligned with an NSDS; unallocated commitments perform worst with 76%. When examining this trend, one should also consider that the number of countries implementing an NSDS has steadily increased as well, meaning there were more NSDSs with which support could be aligned. For example, between October 2011 and October 2012, the same period where we see the largest increase in NSDS alignment, the number of countries implementing an NSDS increased by 10%.

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9 - Disaggregated ODA figures that would allow the calculation of this percentage for 2013 were not available at the time the present report was written. Figures on ODA commitments are taken from the CRS and include all ODA donors. There is a time lag due to the collection process and the latest data available are from 2012. Database available online at [http://oecd.org/development/stats/idsonline.htm](http://oecd.org/development/stats/idsonline.htm).

10 - Sectoral categories and data taken from the CRS.

11 - Population figures are drawn from the UN Population Division. See [http://esa.un.org/wpp/Excel-Data/population.htm](http://esa.un.org/wpp/Excel-Data/population.htm).

What is an NSDS?

An NSDS (National Strategy for the Development of Statistics) is expected to provide a country with a strategy for developing statistical capacity across the entire national statistical system (NSS). The NSDS provides a vision for where the NSS should be in five to ten years and sets milestones for getting there. It presents a comprehensive and unified framework for continual assessment of evolving user needs and priorities for statistics and for building the capacity needed to meet these needs in a more co-ordinated, synergistic and efficient manner. It also provides a framework for mobilising, harnessing, and leveraging resources (both national and international) and a basis for effective and results-oriented strategic management of the NSS.

Looking at individual commitments reveals a trend toward larger, slightly shorter-term commitments (see Figure 6). The average size of commitments has increased since 2006 from US$ 1.10 million to US$ 2.04 million, although, on average, they run over one year shorter than in 2006, from 3.06 years to 1.98 years. Moreover, fewer commitments account for a greater share of overall support to statistics (see Figure 5). In 2012 US$ 151.8 million (54.7% of that year’s total aid to statistics) were allocated via commitments worth more than US$ 10 million, in 2013 that figure was US$ 285.4 million (72.4% of total aid to statistics). Additionally, the number of commitments reported has returned to its 2006 values from 181 to 182 (with a high of 769 commitments in 2010).

The means through which donors channel support to countries is shifting towards more multilateral, country-specific assistance. Support from multilateral bodies accounted for 71.0% of total aid to statistics in 2006 and for approximately 90.5% in 2013. Likewise, the share of country-specific aid increased from 67.6% in 2006 to 84.6% in 2013.

13 - This is based on projects with a known time span and thus does not necessarily include all projects in the PRESS database.
14 - Multilateral support in this context refers to support coming from multilateral institutions, and country-specific assistance refers to projects for which there is a single country recipient.
The target of statistical support is shifting. While general statistical items have always been the dominant category of support, accounting for US$ 493 million in 2013, demographic and social statistics came in second, with US$ 332 million, for the first time since we’ve been tracking this trend. Figure 8 shows the breakdown of aid to statistics across areas of statistical development. The numbers reflect the frequency of commitments for each area while the bars indicate the share of total commitments in the respective area. Since commitments can fulfil multiple purposes, the numbers each year will not necessarily add up to the total number of commitments.\textsuperscript{15}

\textbf{Figure 7: Allocation of Aid to Statistics, 2006 - 2013}

\textbf{Figure 8: Areas of Aid to Statistics, 2006 - 2013}

\textsuperscript{15} - The purpose of a commitment is reported according to the statistical categories based on the “Classification on activities in the domain of Statistical capacity building, adjusted for the reporting of donor and recipient activities”, developed by an inter-agency task team that defined PRESS methodology. This classification is largely based on the Classification of Statistical Activities used in the UNECE’s Database of International Statistical Activities, and, since 2009, for the list of subject matter domains in the Content-oriented Guidelines, produced by the SDMX (Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange) initiative. For more details, see the Methodological Annex.
Key findings, by recipient

The distribution of support among regions is also changing. With 64.7% (US$ 255.3 million), Asia-Pacific received the largest share of global total support - though mostly due to one large commitment. Africa received a quarter (26.5%) of total statistical support, equivalent to US$ 104.6 million, the Middle East 3.2% (US$ 12.7 million), Europe 3.1% (US$ 12.1 million), and Latin America and the Caribbean 0.9% (US$ 3.6 million). A further 1.6% (US$ 6.2 million) was committed to global, non-country-specific projects and programmes. In 2012, almost two thirds (62.9%) of reported commitments went to Africa. In fact, Africa has historically received the lion’s share of statistical support, as reported in the PRESS. The shift towards Asia-Pacific should nevertheless not be overstated, since big multi-year commitments can spur volatility. Figure 9 gives an impression of the fluctuation of financial flows to different world regions between 2006 and 2013.

Figure 9: Relative and Absolute Commitments by Geographic Region, 2006-2013
Support to statistics is more concentrated with the top 25 recipients receiving 84% of support, up from 62% in 2006. In terms of country-specific aid this concentration is even more pronounced with the top 25 recipient countries receiving almost 99% of country-specific aid to statistics in 2013, compared to 91% in 2006. Such countries also tend to reappear year after year in this list: 18 of the top 25 recipients have been on the list at least four times (out of eight). A similar concentration can be observed in the top five recipients in per capita terms between 2006 and 2013: While in total terms countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Rwanda rank high, in per capita terms small islands states like Niue, Tuvalu and the Seychelles dominate the top five.

**Figure 10: Main Recipients of Country-specific Aid, 2006-2013**

**Figure 11: Commitments in 2013 by Geographic Region**
Countries with the lowest statistical capacity do not always receive the most support. By matching the figures on commitments with the country statistical capacity scores from the World Bank,\(^\text{16}\) one can begin to determine if a relationship exists between the volume of statistical support provided to countries and their need for developing capacity. It is recognised that drawing a correlation between the two variables can be deceiving, as support to statistics often depends on multiple factors such as actual funding needs of each individual country and most likely shows a time lag in impact. Nevertheless, PRESS data and the World Bank’s scores can provide an initial view of the situation. Countries with the highest overall statistical capacity score received the lowest levels of support, per capita. However, countries in the middle of the distribution (51.5-72.5 points out of 100) received more funding per capita than countries with low scores.

**Small Island Developing States**

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)\(^\text{17}\) receive the highest levels of support, in per capita commitments (Niue: 1st, Tuvalu: 2nd, Seychelles: 3rd) though this is not reflected in absolute values. In the past three years (2011-2013), SIDS covered in the PRESS received total commitments worth approximately US$ 15.6 million. From 2011 to 2013, six SIDS received more than US$ 1 million in commitments, making up 63% of total aid to SIDS. In comparison, countries with a number of inhabitants close to that of all SIDS combined (the sum of all inhabitants in the 25 SIDS covered this year is approximately 26.2 million) such as Nepal (US$ 5.99 million) and Iraq (US$ 4.32 million) received less; an exception is Afghanistan where commitments amounted to US$ 52.2 million.

\[
\begin{array}{c|c}
\text{Country} & \text{Commitment (US$)} \\
\hline
\text{Cabo Verde} & 2,123,020 \\
\text{Dominican Republic} & 1,417,495 \\
\text{Comoros} & 1,227,305 \\
\text{Seychelles} & 1,297,442 \\
\text{Guinea-Bissau} & 1,035,320 \\
\text{Rest} & 5,770,878 \\
\end{array}
\]

\(16\) - On an annual basis, the World Bank updates its “country-level statistical capacity indicator based on a set of criteria consistent with international recommendations.” This indicator – on a scale of 0 to 100 – is available for more than 140 countries. See [http://bbsc.worldbank.org](http://bbsc.worldbank.org). This excludes those PRESS countries for whom the World Bank has not calculated a statistical capacity score (DR Korea, Kosovo, South Sudan and Tuvalu).

\(17\) - For the purposes of this report, the definition for a small island developing state (SIDS) is drawn from the United Nations. See [http://www.sids2014.org/index.php?menu=1496](http://www.sids2014.org/index.php?menu=1496)
**Fragile States**

Support to fragile states, who receive considerable attention from the statistical development community, is highly concentrated. Currently, all 36 fragile states are included in PRESS with commitments of US$ 310 million between 2011 and 2013. This represents almost one-third of all country-specific commitments worldwide (US$ 972 million). Afghanistan and Central African Republic together received more than one-third (35.0%) of all statistical aid to fragile states. Figure 14 shows the support to all fragile states who received more than US$ 10M in commitments.

**Methods of Financing**

The main financing instrument employed by donors has shifted from grants to loans and credit, though the trend differs widely across regions. While in Asia-Pacific 52.2% of the total volume of aid was provided as loans or credits between 2006 and 2013, in Africa only 9.9% of the aid during this period of time was in form of loans/credits. The opposite can be observed for grants. Obviously, unallocated commitments are predominantly distributed as grants.

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18 - For the purposes of this report, the definition for fragility and the identification of countries satisfying those criteria are drawn from the World Bank’s harmonized list of fragile states. See [http://go.worldbank.org/BNFOS8V35Q](http://go.worldbank.org/BNFOS8V35Q)
**Key findings, by provider of development co-operation**

A large share of global support to statistics continues to come from a very small number of providers. The top five providers of development co-operation in statistics (World Bank, United Kingdom, European Commission, African Development Bank and UNFPA) provided 89.2% of total commitments in 2013, up from 76.5% in 2006. While multilateral donors are strongly engaged in country-specific aid to statistics, the UK, Canada and the Netherlands are among the top five donors for unallocated commitments, together accounting for approximately 33.6% (US$ 290.8 million) over 2006-2013. Figures 17-22 outline support from the top 5 providers.