



Record of the Proceedings

27 April 2006

Chair: Shaida Badiee, Chair of the TFSCB Consultative Group

Opening Statement

1. The chair gave the background to the relationship between PARIS21 and the World Bank's Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB), which was solidified in 2003 when the Steering Committee asked for the two bodies to come closer together. She expressed her hope that today's discussions would demonstrate how these links are working.

Adoption of the Agenda

2. The World Bank representative asked to raise one additional issue at the end of the session: funding for the International Comparison Program. The agenda was then adopted without further modification.

TFSCB Consultative Group

3. The World Bank representative presented the TFSCB progress report, which included the fund's achievements, results of its evaluations, relationship to the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS), future directions, and financial situation. At the recommendation of its evaluations, the TFSCB is now oriented toward supporting national strategies for the development of statistics (NSDS) and aligned more closely with the results agenda and MAPS. The evaluations also recommended that the TFSCB review the quality of the requests received (looking more at outcomes rather than outputs), implement a stronger supervision of the projects, and improve the governance process of the fund. A new evaluation is planned in 2008, in parallel with PARIS21. The TFSCB expects to finance more than 30 NSDSs over next three years, improve oversight of the fund, improve the review process of proposals, improve supervision at the project level, and be in a position to say more about outcomes at the project level.

4. Fee income for oversight and supervision has been reduced from nine percent to five percent from TFSCB I to TFSCB II. Nevertheless, there remains a US\$12 million gap over the next three years. Many applications have to be rejected due to these resource constraints. The World Bank representative asked for agreement to reduce overhead (for the Bank's legal and administrative services) from five percent down to two percent. He also asked for approval for a line item in the fund to be used for supervision of individual projects (US\$200,000 per year). The intention is to streamline the process and allocate US\$500,000 per year to manage the fund and improve oversight and supervision. Lastly, he asked for approval to transfer the money remaining from TFSCB I over to TFSCB II.

5. Mr. Jean-Louis Bodin then presented the TFSCB advisory panel report. This panel reviews the TFSCB strategy, evaluates the projects, and reports its findings to the Consultative Group. The panel looked at to what extent linkages with PARIS21 could be strengthened and expressed its comments on the new TFSCB guidelines. The panel found that most of the recent requests were in line with PARIS21 objectives. Only 2 out of 20 projects have been rejected, and the advisory panel supported these particular decisions. The panel recommended enlarging the Internal Management Committee (IMC) by two people to cover all domains of statistical development.



Discussion

6. Several participants commented on the percentage of approved projects funding NSDSs versus those funding smaller statistical capacity building (SCB) projects. The Dutch and Swiss representatives also remarked upon the allocation of funds to middle-income countries rather than the poorest countries. The World Bank representative clarified that the Consultative Group had in the past agreed on the approximate 60/40 mix of NSDS vs. SCB funding of projects and added that the TFSCB does not discriminate on NSDS projects (all NSDS requests have been accepted, albeit some with modifications), but it does discriminate in favour of the poorest countries for the pure SCB projects. He further commented that the percentage of TFSCB funds going to NSDS is less of an issue now that a new donor — the African Development Bank (AfDB) — is active financing strategies.

7. The PARIS21 Secretariat Manager underscored the importance of co-ordination among the TFSCB, PARIS21, and other partners. In recent months, videoconferences have been held with the AfDB, PARIS21, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and the World Bank to ensure the co-ordination of funding requests. He also pointed out that the TFSCB has been instrumental in supporting Central American and Andean Community countries in the design of their strategies. The AfDB representative echoed the importance of co-ordination and said that his institution is working with the World Bank to determine how to assist the 15 African countries who do not yet have funding for their strategies.

8. The Secretariat Manager introduced the issue of statistical training schools and the reduced support they receive. He suggested that the TFSCB could establish a special component to support training centres in Africa. The AfDB representative supported this idea, adding that his institution is working with all six training centres in Africa to help them review their curricula and that any additional assistance would be welcome.

9. The chair concluded that the overall strategy of the TFSCB II is satisfactory. The 60/40 mix between NSDS grants and small grants is acceptable for now, but extra efforts to help more countries to secure funding for an NSDS are welcome. Regarding statistical training centres, the TFSCB II is not equipped for funding this large initiative but smaller proposals would of course be reviewed. Co-ordination and linkages, in particular with AfDB, must be maintained. The proposal to transfer funds remaining from TFSCB I over to TFSCB II was accepted. On the tightening up of supervision and governance and the changes to fee income and the oversight line item, these proposals were endorsed and will be shared with donors later for final signing.

PARIS21 Funding Situation

10. The Secretariat Manager presented the PARIS21 funding situation (see tables 2 and 3 on pages 20-21 of the progress report – document# *P21-SC1-06-PROG*). These figures do not include (1) secondments (e.g., from the European Commission and United Kingdom); (2) in-kind contributions (e.g., IMF assistance on the NSDS design guide); (3) the UNDP/Japanese contribution for the Asia regional programme which went directly to the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; or (4) the two new satellite programmes and Metagora. He commented that the current financial state of affairs is healthy and represents a strong indicator of support. Nevertheless, there is a one million euro shortfall for 2007. The planned expenditure figures will be updated in light of the comments received from participants in yesterday's and today's meetings. He closed by thanking the OECD financial and legal services and all donors to PARIS21 for all their assistance.



Discussion

11. There were no comments on the PARIS21 funding situation.

PARIS21 & TFSCB Funding Needs

12. The chair noted the shortfall in PARIS21 and TFSCB funding then called for comments and/or funding pledges around the table. The Canadian representative outlined the three components of the initiative between Statistics Canada and the Canadian International Development Agency: (1) a twinning arrangement, (2) statistical training, and (3) support to international initiatives including PARIS21 and the TFSCB. Canada is considering allocating significant funds for both PARIS21 and the TFSCB over a number of years. The Finnish representative commented that her institution is discussing providing further contributions in the form of technical expertise through Statistics Finland and funds. The Norwegian representative anticipated continuing to contribute at approximately same amount as in the past, although no firm decision has yet been taken. The United Kingdom representative said that the UK will continue to support PARIS21 and welcomes contributions from other donors and partners, as this is a real signal that the partnership is coming alive and flexible. The Swiss representative announced that Switzerland will continue to provide its yearly contribution. The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) representative offered to lend support to PARIS21 by involving their country officers in terms of teaming up with the initiative but also with follow-up and integrating the NSDS with everything the country does. This could constitute an integral part of UNFPA country programmes. The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) representative commented that his institution can support activities primarily in the short term, for instance by directly financing an activity in six weeks for US\$60,000 and in particular in support of their free trade countries. The Secretariat Manager thanked all donors and promised to work with EFTA to implement this direct funding proposal.

Funding Statistical Development & NSDS Implementation

13. Participants viewed the funding of strategy implementation as a critical issue. With the influx of strategies being designed, the donor community must step up to support country implementation efforts in order for the strategies to bear their fruit. If donors are serious about getting better data, they need to commit to co-ordinate in helping implement national strategies. The chair of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) proposed to write to all bilateral and multilateral heads to ask how they intend to support implementation before the Third International Roundtable on Managing for Development Results to be held in Hanoi, Vietnam in February 2007. The chair pointed to some examples of good practices for making implementation happen (e.g., Nigeria) where partners have co-ordinated activities. She then called on participants to offer proposals to address implementation funding needs.

Discussion

14. Several participants underlined the need for advocacy within their own institutions and the utility of drawing on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness to achieve this. The French representative said that experience shows that when a donor takes the lead at the country level, progress can be made; however, this presupposes that there will be co-ordination between the headquarters and country level. The World Bank representative provided the example of the Tajikistan case in which the government allocated funds to their strategy then secured additional funds through the International Development Association borrowing facility, which inspired the UK and Sweden to fill the funding gap. The UK representative confirmed that if a country develops a good strategy there will be no shortage of donors lining up to support it. She also commented that



the UK is looking to support human resources development and to work intensively with a small number of countries. They are interested in working with other donors who are keen to scale up their support on the ground. The Eurostat representative explained that, since their money is disbursed at the local level, his institution encourages national statistical offices to contact the European Commission delegations to have them mainstream NSDSs into national development plans. The Norwegian representative commented that donor support has been rather fragmented and not according to a plan. She therefore recommended that PARIS21 and the DAC make a statement that donors must respect national strategies. The Dutch representative announced that, as an input to the Hanoi Roundtable, his institution will make an assessment of what is needed on the donor side to support countries in filling data gaps. They could work with Accelerated Data Program to do so. The Canadian representative encouraged institutions attending the June OECD Statistics Committee to come to the meeting with a joint agreement between their development agency and statistical office. He appealed to funding agencies to be sympathetic when their statistical office approaches them with a joint agreement. At the recommendation of the DAC chair, it was agreed that the PARIS21 co-chairs would sign a joint missive to donor agencies and developing country finance ministers to report where the partnership is in this process and the importance of taking this forward and to outline what would be needed on both sides to make this a success.

Other Business — International Comparison Program (ICP)

15. The World Bank representative highlighted the activities of the ICP. The first results will be in late 2006 and final results in 2007. Most countries in Africa are participating in the programme. There has been a very good participation of large countries (e.g., Brazil, China, India, Russia) and many key supporters (e.g., Australia, Canada, France, UK). However, while the AfDB and World Bank are the largest financial supporters of this programme, there remains a funding gap of approximately US\$1.0 million. He asked if donors were supportive of this initiative before the World Bank sends out letters requesting funds. He urged donors to help take this programme further, as prices have been collected all over the globe. The Eurostat representative said that his institution is undertaking a considerable amount of work with this project and added that the project is at the same time vulnerable. The data collected are of enormous importance to statistical offices all over the world. He commented that it is crucial the ICP comes to a positive end as it allows the international community to support statistical capacity building and not simply generate data. The OECD representative pointed out that the first Millennium Development Goal indicator is dependent on this programme.

Other Business — Accelerated Data Program (ADP)

16. The chair presented the two components of the ADP: (1) a pilot programme of 12 countries of which 6 are in Africa and (2) a scaled-up version which will build on the pilot version. The Secretariat Manager reported on a recent ADP mission to Niger in which 17 nationwide surveys were discovered for which the data have not been made available. The ADP is critical to reverse this situation. The mission's official report will be ready in a few days.

Closing Remarks

17. The chair called on donors to prepare for the Vietnam Roundtable and welcomed the DAC chair's suggestion of a joint letter, which she felt could also be signed by the World Bank's François Bourguignon. She closed by announcing that the World Bank will prepare another report on the TFSCB for October 2006 and thanked all participants for their suggestions and support.



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