



PARIS21: A Strengthened Partnership -- Discussion Note

The purpose of this paper is to propose ways in which the PARIS21 Partnership can be strengthened to accelerate the achievement of our shared objectives. Key points are: how can we embrace collaboration and coordination; how to reach out to the wider Partnership; how best to share efforts and promote statistical development within the constituencies; and how to establish performance criteria for the wider Partnership.

Background

1. One of the recommendations of the Steering Committee in April 2006 was that the notion of “partnership” within PARIS21 be renewed and strengthened. It was noted that the Secretariat of PARIS21 **can be a catalyst to facilitate the task of each partner and to promote a dialogue among partners, but each partner must assume the main responsibility for delivering its own outputs and outcomes to meet PARIS21’s objectives within its own mandate and within its institution.**
2. Indeed, the goal of PARIS21 has not changed. Developing a culture of evidence-based policy-making and implementation to improve governance and effectiveness in reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs remains at the top of the agenda. But to achieve it requires a strong commitment from members of PARIS21 to work in a collaborative manner, building on each partner’s strengths and using the limited resources available as efficiently as possible.
3. It may be useful to recall the main groups constituting the PARIS21 partnership and to summarize briefly their role:
 - **Statisticians at country level:** ensure production and dissemination of national statistics;
 - **Policy-makers, financiers and users at country level:** analyze and use national statistics in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of poverty-reduction strategies and other decision-making, and support statistical development by ensuring an enabling environment for the statistical system and budgetary support
 - **Statisticians in partner institutions:** develop methodological tools, promote quality control according to international standards, assure data comparability and dissemination, provide technical assistance
 - **Policy-makers in donor institutions:** support statistical development by using statistics to evaluate its aid effectiveness, by incorporating statistical development in its policy dialogue with client countries, and by funding statistical activities. Representatives of donor institutions in client countries also have a role to play in supporting directly the development of national statistical strategies and in participating in donor coordination at the country level.
4. It should be noted that other groups, such as the research community, including universities, research centres, data brokers, dissemination specialists, and foundations, also support statistical



development and other areas of PARIS21 agenda, and as such are part of the wider partnership of PARIS21.

5. The four groups above are involved in PARIS21's agenda, as follows:

- the **Constituency of PARIS21** includes all four groups, since they are the key players in statistical development, and thus constitute the obvious audience for PARIS21's advocacy programme;
- the **Partnership** is a sub-set of the Constituency, representing each group of statisticians and policy makers/users, which has committed itself to promote and implement PARIS21's agenda;
- the **Steering Committee**, composed of representatives of the main groups of the Partnership, provides advice on strategic orientations to ensure that PARIS21's agenda is implemented.

6. The following section discusses how the Partnership can be renewed and strengthened to achieve the shared objectives.

Renewed Partnership – Discussion Points

7. The challenge facing partners now more than ever is how to renew the partnership with the aim of accelerating the achievement of our shared objectives, as NSDS are being completed and their implementation becomes the critical next step. In other words, what can/should be done to keep statistical development on the radar screen of Governments and donor institutions? The points of discussion then should revolve around what is required from partners, as a group and individually, to move the agenda of PARIS21 forward. To launch the discussion, the Secretariat proposes the following elements for a stronger partnership:

- **Change in behaviour** – collaboration and coordination are not just ideals, they must be embraced, if support to statistical development is to become more effective. Information exchange, such as the pilot experiences on a partner reporting system in Africa by PARIS21, in Balkan countries by Eurostat, and in Central Asian countries by UNECE, are a start, but more is required. Advocacy is a continuous activity that needs to be carried out with high-level managers, but equally with operational staff who are close to decision-making at the country level. This also implies that partners are willing to change their policy and procedures to incorporate statistical development in their policy dialogue with countries and thus in their country strategies. An NSDS provides the broader vision of a country's statistical development and should form a basis of dialogue. Statistical development is greater than the routine of monitoring and evaluation of projects/programmes, it looks at the user needs and what can/should be included in a national statistical system to support sound decision-making. It does this, in light of the "development" constraints faced by the system in developing countries, namely low pay, inadequate infrastructure, and poor working conditions. **What advocacy activities could be undertaken as a group or by individual donors to promote statistical development? Who would be the targeted audience?**
- **Broader notion of partnership** – The partnership encompasses all persons/agencies who, through their commitment to statistical development, support the agenda of PARIS21.



These include operational staff (economists, project/programme managers, managers) and bilateral donors and development agencies who are not actively involved in PARIS21 meetings. **How to identify and reach out to these persons/agencies in order to broaden and deepen the work of PARIS21?**

- **Common approach and strategy** – sharing the efforts of different partners to meet PARIS21’s objectives, such as the recent guidelines prepared by Eurostat for staff of EC delegations and courses, such as the e-learning course proposed by the World Bank, could reduce costs and ensure more harmonization in approach. The proposed Task Team on a partner reporting system, composed of PARIS21 members, is another good example of partner collaboration. **What other efforts could be undertaken to collaborate further a common approach and strategy? How can we develop a shared international strategy for statistical development in partner countries?**
- **Reporting on promotion of partnership** – what can PARIS21 Steering Committee members do to promote statistical development in their own institutions (e.g., the review of country strategies to ensure mention/support to statistical development, training for staff, presentations to management/staff, funding support? Have there been any positive effects from their efforts? Should monitoring indicators be set by/for each institution?
- **Evaluation of PARIS21** – future evaluations of the Secretariat could be extended to a sample of members. **Should performance indicators be developed? If so, should they be identified by each partner or should generic ones be proposed?**

PARIS21 Secretariat
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