



Record of the Proceedings

Chair: Richard Carey, OECD

Thursday, 16 November 2006

I. Welcome Statement and Introductory Remarks

Chairman Richard Carey, Deputy Director of the OECD's Development Co-operation Directorate, welcomed participants. He announced that today's seminar would be an opportunity to brainstorm on substantive preparations for the Hanoi Roundtable, to be held 5–8 February 2007 in Vietnam. Jan-Robert Suesser expressed his pleasure in once again hosting the PARIS21 Steering Committee meeting on the premises of the *Ministère de l'économie, des finances et de l'industrie*. He conveyed his conviction of the usefulness of the PARIS21 initiative and the tangible inputs it offers to all countries in the development of statistics.

II. Presentation on the 2007 Third International Roundtable on Managing for Development Results in Hanoi (RT3)

The World Bank representative delivered a presentation on the Hanoi Roundtable (RT3). The main objectives of the event are to:

- Assess progress since the Marrakech Roundtable
- Link results agenda and Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness
- Agree core set of capacities that partner countries and development agencies need to be able to manage for results
- Agree ways to foster dialogue on MfDR capacity in partner countries
- Agree on tools that partner countries and development agencies can use to assess their capacity to manage for development results
- Agree ways to **implement national statistical development plans, and accelerate the improvements in collecting and processing the data needed** to measure and manage for results at all levels

The main themes will be “LEAPS” (Leadership, Evaluation and Monitoring, Accountability and Partnerships, Planning and Budgeting, and Statistics). Putting statistics on the agenda for the first two roundtables was a challenge; whereas, for Hanoi, statistics had earned its place on the agenda. He commented that the roundtable will be a very important occasion for statisticians to come together and define how to take the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS) agenda forward. There are three tentative topics for the Day 3 breakout sessions on statistics: (1) Statistics for results: what's needed; (2) Statistics for results: What's next; and (3) Better Use of Better Statistics – Partnership for Change. He sought seminar participants' thoughts on these topics.

Discussion

The PARIS21 Secretariat Manager commented that one of the Partnership's greatest challenges is in convincing ministers of finance and other funders of the need to fund statistical development. The Marrakech Roundtable was the first time that statisticians had the chance to speak to and convince funders to finance national statistical development. The Hanoi Roundtable could be another opportunity to articulate this need for funding. The French representative echoed this point, asking if the international statistical community has secured the long-term commitment of policymakers to fund statistics. The PARIS21 developing country co-



chair picked up this point, cautioning against the consequences of shifting political priorities. Political demand can be fleeting; there are no guarantees that it will always be there. He asked what the Partnership can do to ensure the sustainability of this political demand, the predictability of aid for statistical capacity building. The Dutch representative suggested that the typical advocacy messages that “statistics are important” are generally already accepted and that Hanoi should be used to identify capacity gaps and outline how to fill those gaps. The chair noted that preparations for Hanoi represented an encouraging picture, a really innovative international co-operative initiative.

III. Progress with the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS)

The World Bank representative then delivered a presentation on what has been accomplished since the 2004 roundtable held in Marrakech. His progress report covered the six actions proposed in the MAPS:

- *Mainstream strategic planning of statistical systems and prepare national strategies for the development of statistics (NSDS) for all low-income countries by 2006:* Evidence exists that statistical capacity is increasing. Statistical capacity building scores have increased regularly since 1999. The mainstreaming of NSDS has increased over the past few years as well.
- *Begin preparations for the 2010 census round:* UNSD is leading the preparations for the 2010 census round, which are now in the mobilisation stage to help countries gear up for implementation and secure resources. Two major meetings were held in Africa just last week. Next year the technical support phase will begin.
- *Increase financing for statistical capacity building:* The Light Reporting Exercise (LRE) has helped shed light on much of the funding in statistics. The World Bank Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB) now has more applications for good projects than what it can actually fund, suggesting that there has been an upscale in demand.
- *Set up an International Household Survey Network (IHSN):* The IHSN — now a satellite programme within the PARIS21 Secretariat — has taken flight and been a great success. More than 2500 surveys are now listed in the catalogue, which is available online.
- *Undertake urgent improvements needed for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals:* The Accelerated Data Programme (ADP) — also a satellite programme within the PARIS21 Secretariat — is intended to get some quick wins, addressing urgent needs in measuring the MDGs. The ADP priority is on Africa but Asian and Latin American countries are also involved.
- *Increase accountability of the international statistical system:* The importance of this donor co-ordination was of course also reflected in the Paris Declaration. The endorsement by the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities for PARIS21 to launch a task team on the LRE is in line with these principles. The recent ECOSOC resolution on SCB is also worthy of recognition in this regard.

Hanoi would provide the opportunity to extend MAPS, focussing on implementation, rather than developing a new Action Plan.

Discussion

The PARIS21 developing country co-chair raised the question of attribution, asking if the progress made has been thanks to MAPS or in spite of it. He suggested identifying why and how the progress has been made in order to sharpen the focus of the Partnership’s efforts and to encourage sustainability of these positive results. The OECD representative commented that it was encouraging to hear at the Inter-Agency and Expert Group Meeting on Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) earlier in the week how much more seriously statistics are being taken. This increased profile of statistics has also garnered greater financial support in countries. The unifying power of the MDGs has really raised the profile for statistics. The Ethiopian representative said that her country also places greater emphasis on statistics, but that



Ethiopia's capacity, for all sector statistics, needs to be strengthened. The ex-officio representative from Botswana commented that Africa requires the good will of development partners to ensure that African statistics are produced in the foreseeable future.

IV. The Role of National Statistical Capacity in Managing for Development Results: Input to Hanoi

The next session was a panel discussion to present the donor (presented by the United Kingdom), country statistician (Ghana), international statistician (UNSD), and country policymaker (Tunisia) perspectives on the following four questions regarding the proposed Hanoi sessions on statistics.

- 1. What main messages do you suggest for the "Measuring and Assessing Results" session on Day 2?*
- 2. What do you suggest for the content of any of the 3 breakout sessions (under "Measuring and Assessing Results: Statistical Capacity") on Day 3?*
- 3. What country and international good practice cases do you suggest we should try to mention or cover in any of the Hanoi sessions on statistics?*
- 4. Who do you suggest we try to get to participate in Hanoi as chair, speaker, and country/agency participants?*

X. Conclusions

The PARIS21 Secretariat provided the following overview of the seminar's panel discussions:

1. What main messages do you suggest for the "Measuring and Assessing Results" session on Day 2?

- Show how statistics illuminate and influence policy in/through national dialogue processes in countries
- Assess capacity gaps and focus on building capacity
- How to scale up various Statistical Capacity Building initiatives
- How to develop statistics profession; integrating training institutions
- Focus on key MDG indicators; ADP to address data gaps
- Focus on NSDS implementation – e.g.
 - (1) Recruitment of statisticians in line ministries; ICT; analysis
 - (2) Show how to integrate statistical activities into policy frameworks: tools, etc
- Measure results in developing statistical capacity (World Bank database)
- Need for change in behaviour: donors shouldn't produce country statistics – invest in national statistical systems; countries need to invest in improving their statistics

2. What do you suggest for the content of any of the 3 breakout sessions (under "Measuring and Assessing Results: Statistical Capacity") on Day 3?

- Fragile states, difficult environments
- Professional training for statistics
- Reinforce values and mandate of National Statistical Systems (NSS)
- Better data for indicators
- What next (going beyond what works)

3. What country and international good practice cases do you suggest we should try to mention or cover in any of the Hanoi sessions on statistics?



- Examples of good donor management by countries
- Semi-autonomous National Statistical Offices (NSO) work best: set target for 2010?
- Statistics Acts to cover all of NSS, not just NSO
- Uganda: sector statistics plans; Vietnam General Statistical Office progress in last ten years; Tunisia progress; Malawi economic statistics and (potentially) donor coordination; South Korea
- Statistical Councils for high-level advocacy
- Show country examples of what works: putting NSDSs into action

4. Who do you suggest we try to get to participate in Hanoi as chair, speaker, and country/agency participants?

- Developing countries to lead joint dialogue
- High-level advocates (such as UNDP Administrator, Gordon Brown, Trevor Manuel)
- High-level Vietnam government official to chair plenary; other session chairs from countries
- Media, private sector, NSOs, senior policy-makers, parliamentarians
- Include line ministries
- Include sub-regional organisations
- Engage UN Country Teams (UNSD has been designated as UN focal point for statistics at Hanoi)
- Include other networks, e.g., Health Metrics Network

Other points

- Agenda not very exciting
- Relevance of statistics already established, don't need to repeat case?
- Use new language

The chair commented that the profile of the statistical profession must be raised, recommended involving the Health Metrics Network in the Hanoi preparations, then closed by thanking the participants for the seminar's fruitful discussions.