



PARIS21 Consortium Meeting – Concept Note

Background

Experience from recent major international meetings such as the Third International Roundtable on Managing for Development Results in Hanoi and the OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge, and Policy in Istanbul has shown that clear progress has been made to bring statistical issues onto the development agenda. However, issues related to country statistical development are very often seen as a specific and separate field and do not therefore receive due attention. In statistical meetings, issues related to development constraints that statistical offices face are rarely discussed, and in the same way in discussions about development and poverty reduction, measurement of development matters pertaining to statistical capacity building are not addressed.

Different actors are involved in statistical development such as statisticians, policy-makers, researchers, civil society at country level, staff from bilateral, regional and international donor agencies, statisticians from international and specialised agencies, etc. — in other words, the PARIS21 partnership as a whole. These partners have to work more closely together. This has become particularly necessary in light of the initiative promoting a scaling up of support to national statistical systems and the approaching 2010 deadline to improve country statistics for monitoring development progress, for instance for the review of the Millennium Declaration.

To respond to this need, a PARIS21 Consortium meeting is proposed. The most recent meeting was held in October 2002 in Paris, during which the importance of statistics in policy-making and the role of PARIS21 in statistical capacity building were discussed and endorsed.

Purpose

The purpose of the second PARIS21 consortium meeting is for all actors and partners involved in the development of statistics to agree on the overall objectives of statistical development and the use of statistics and on what role everyone is expected to play, in order to understand and take into account the constraints of other partners.

Specifically, the meeting will consider the status of statistical capacity and outputs in developing countries relative to needs; how to bridge the gap between availability and need; and the roles of the various partners in this venture.

A background report will be commissioned to facilitate discussion, together with presentations by key speakers.

Background paper

The paper will provide a conceptual framework and baseline to facilitate discussion, including:

- (1) reference material on statistical development, outputs, constraints and usage;
- (2) a review of the status of statistical development over the past ten years, including the effects of global initiatives, such as PRSP and MDG, on the availability and improvements of statistics;
- (3) a review of who is doing what in statistical development, including different approaches to supporting statistical capacity building. A review of the strengths and weaknesses would contribute to a better understanding of what needs to be improved;
- (4) points of discussion on key issues to be addressed in the coming years, such as: (a) what will have a major influence over statistical development and availability of statistics (globalisation, new technologies, competition between official and non-governmental statistics, etc.); (b) how to strengthen support to statistical development (financially, technologically, sharing good practices, etc.); and (c) what are the priorities (actual or new) for statistical development (concepts/methods, priority areas, user relations, etc.)

Work on the reviews will rely on existing sources from countries and partners. To enrich the recommendations on future issues, consultations (in the form of interviews) with key players in the statistical field is proposed. The

report will be a product of strong collaboration among PARIS21 partners. A specific web site or part of the PARIS21 web site will be devoted to collecting and organising the documents and knowledge gathered for the Report.

Output

The output of the meeting will be a statement on statistical development and the use of statistics in development, agreed upon by every group of participants. It will include a list of recommendations on how to align better the needs of the statistical community at the country level with the support provided by development partners and on future priorities and actions of the PARIS21 Partnership to respond to these needs, including a monitoring and reporting system. A road map for different participants could be designed taking into account the resolutions of other initiatives, such as the Managing for Development Results agenda, the Paris Declaration, etc.

Timing and Location

The PARIS21 Consortium meeting is proposed for end 2008 / early 2009. The exact date will depend on the calendar of existing large conferences. Three locations have already been proposed: Dakar (Senegal), Tunis (Tunisia) or Paris (France), with different costs associated. Other locations could be of course be considered.

Participation

Up to 300 participants will be invited. Invitees will include senior policy makers (50) and statisticians (80) from developing countries as well as senior representatives from bilateral and multilateral donor agencies (50) and national, regional, and international statistical agencies (40) as well as senior representatives of academia, research institutes and foundations (30). Participants will be balanced between the supply and demand sides for good statistics.

Format

The meeting will last two and an half days with parallel sessions feeding into plenaries to ensure that the messages from different actors are presented to all participants. It will be accompanied by a market fair where countries through posters and international institutions and initiatives through booths could present their products.

Preparatory Work

Separate discussions and meetings will be organised in the framework of existing meetings or electronically to ensure that every aspect of statistical development (supply and demand sides of statistics) is taken into account including the constraints and strengths of all actors. Outputs of the preparatory work will be included in the Background Paper.

Institutional arrangements

A group of partners and countries will be formed to prepare the agenda, the concept paper, and the overall logistics of the meeting. It will liaise with existing groups preparing other meetings, such as the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to be held in Ghana in 2008.

Cost

The cost will depend mainly on how many developing-country funded participants will be invited, and the location of the meeting. For example, with 80 funded participants from developing countries (40 statisticians, 40 policy makers), the cost will be around 280,000€ Other invited participants will be expected to meet their own costs. Costs of the background paper, which will have many other uses, are not included in this figure.