

PARIS21 CONSORTIUM MEETING

4-5 OCTOBER 2001

OECD, PARIS

Proceedings

Session 1. Welcome by Chairman and Adoption of Agenda

1. The Consortium Meeting was opened by Mr. Jean-Claude Faure, Chairman of the DAC (OECD). Mr. Faure welcomed participants, noting that the Consortium had become an important forum bringing together main stakeholders in the development processes, viz. policy and decision-makers, civil society, statisticians and development partners. He mentioned that since its inception in 1999, the Consortium had made good progress in advocating for better use of better statistics. He said that all countries had signed up to internationally agreed development goals. He emphasised the need to act especially in poor developing countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with active participation of the international community. In doing so, he pointed out, there will be a need to identify and monitor country-specific indicators. Referring to the report being prepared by the World Bank and the IMF on the implementation of the PRSP, he emphasised that it will require a lot of data on inputs, processes and actions aimed at reducing poverty. Finally, Mr. Faure stressed the need for participants to communicate to decision-makers the need to promote action to reduce poverty.

Session 2. The Development Goals

2.1 Road Map for the Millennium Development Goals – Jan Vandemoortele (UNDP)

2. The UN, OECD, World Bank and IMF each issued a press release on 19 September matching the International Development Goals (IDGs) to the Millennium Declaration and presenting them as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs carry forward the vision and commitment made at the Millennium Summit in September 2000 by all the 189 United Nations member states, including 147 Heads of State. The road map set out in the press release draws on the joint work of governments, the UN system, the Bretton Woods institutions, international and regional organisations and civil society, and shows a desire for international collaboration between development agencies.

3. In order to help focus national and international priority setting, it was agreed that the number of development goals and targets be limited, be stable over time and be relatively easy to communicate to the wider audience. Eight major goals, 18 numerical targets and over 40 indicators were agreed to monitor progress towards the goals. The goals are:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empowerment of women
- Reduce child mortality

- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development.

It was mentioned that the 8th goal is new. It includes issues of trade, aid and debt relief and also addresses an imbalance in the original seven International Development Goals, by including the role of more industrialised countries in helping developing countries to achieve the goals.

2.2 *Monitoring Conference Goals: Country Experience– Jan Vandemoortele (UNDP)*

4. The UN, the World Bank, OECD and IMF collaborated to produce a common framework for monitoring development. For monitoring progress, there are two reporting levels. At the global level, the UN General Assembly will receive an annual report, from the Secretary-General, on progress towards achieving the goals. At country level, there will be reports to stakeholders who include the policy makers, senior politicians, media, and the general public.

5. Country reports give a snapshot of the progress made and the gaps. These reports also stimulate demand for information among the public and aim to reach politicians. So far, three country level reports have been produced – for Tanzania, Cameroon and Vietnam. Reports on the situation in Senegal, the Philippines and Nepal are about to be launched. It is expected that between 30 and 40 country reports will be produced per year. The periodicity of the report will depend on the needs of each country.

6. There are a number of principles followed in the preparation of the country reports. These include:

- Country ownership and flexibility;
- Collaboration within Government, United Nations, bilateral donors and civil society at country level;
- Drawing on existing materials and reports e.g. PRSP;
- Presenting the reports in a way that makes them accessible to the general public; and
- Adhering to the Guidance Note developed for country teams on how to prepare country reports in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

7. Preparation of country reports will require a lot of statistical information. There is a need to build the necessary statistical capacity to meet development needs of countries, including for such reports and for the PRSP process.

2.3 *Update on the UN Statistics Commission’s Indicator Review – Hasan Abu Libdeh (Palestine)*

8. It was reported that the various UN Conferences and Summits had identified more than 280 indicators altogether, with little co-ordination between them or consultation with acknowledged experts. It has been recognised that monitoring all the identified indicators would place an impossible burden on the capacity of national statistical systems, especially those of developing countries. Accordingly, in 2000 the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) asked the UN Statistical Commission to study the indicators with a view to rationalising and reducing the number.

9. The United Nations Statistical Commission formed a “Friends of the Chair” group to carry out the study. The group started its work in April 2001 and was able to classify the 280 plus indicators into 7 main domains with an expert group studying each domain. Within each domain, indicators were classified into three levels. *Very high priority* (those to be compiled by all countries – fit for internal use), *high priority* and *desirable* (for use in painting a comprehensive picture in each country). Sixteen indicators were found to be deficient in technical definition, or to duplicate others; and seven indicators – on human rights and good governance – were found to be qualitative in nature and so outside the remit of the group.

10. A draft report has been produced and circulated. The report is also available on the UN Statistics Division website. Some comments on the report have been received and these will be taken into account when the group meets again in mid October 2001 to finalise the report. The chair of the group, Tim Holt, will welcome comments on the report. The report will be presented to the UN Statistics Commission.

Session 2 Discussion

11. In the discussion following the three presentations, the following issues were raised:

- a) Aid is a partnership and should be a shared responsibility between donors and recipients. Goal 8 is an issue for donors – ODA/GNI ratios and trade are important. DFID mentioned that it had offered to provide support to the UN Statistics Division to develop indicators of global partnership, implementation and means of achievement. The consultant is due to report early in the New Year, to provide input to the Finance for Development Conference next March. The World Bank is carrying out research to estimate what it would cost to achieve the goals.
- b) Citing the country report on Tanzania, it was observed that monitoring development goals and targets was bound to be hampered by lack of statistical capacity in a number of developing countries. A 9th Goal on Development of Statistical Capacity Building was, therefore, proposed. It was also mentioned that there was a need to build statistical components into major national programmes.
- c) It was mentioned that the principle of country ownership was important, but for reasons of expediency it is sometimes not observed. There were questions about the extent to which Tanzania actually owned its report. It was explained that ownership is in terms of both the product and the process. Country teams produce all the reports on the Millennium Development Goals at country level. The Tanzania Report had gone through two reprints for local use and the demand for the report in the country is enormous. Jan Vandemoortele confirmed that, in future, all reports will be fully owned by Government.
- d) The method of work of the United Nations Statistical Commission Indicator Review was questioned. In particular, it was mentioned that some acknowledged experts had not been involved in the Friends of the Chair process. The need to consult more widely was stressed. OECD informed the meeting that the Millennium Development Goals and indicators will be taken into account at the upcoming meeting of the UN Friends of the Chair.
- e) There was a need for PARIS21 to explain to the international community what is required to produce effective indicators. Initiatives such as GDDS, Sequenced Information Strategies, UNDP country reports need to be linked, be coherent, and develop a common understanding among their proponents.

Session 3. Poverty Reduction Strategies – Statistical Monitoring

3.1 PRSP Monitoring and Evaluation Systems – Lucie Laliberté (IMF)

12. The principles of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) process, launched in August 1999, were outlined. These are that PRSPs (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) should be: comprehensive; long-term; results-orientated; country-owned and country-driven; and be developed through broad participation and partnership. The intent of the PRS process is to improve the poverty focus of country level action, and the effectiveness of donor support for these country-led efforts. In other words, the PRSPs are a means and not an end in itself. PRSPs are being used as the basis for concessional lending by the World Bank, IMF, and many bilateral donors; others are expected to follow suit.

13. The meeting was informed of the published materials and support available to assist countries in producing their PRSP. These include training and outreach programmes and the PRSP Sourcebook, which is a compendium of source material rather than a blueprint. Material is available on the websites of both the World Bank and the IMF¹. Five countries have so far produced full PRSPs and 36 have produced Interim PRSPs (I-PRSPs). Recently, a forum for African countries developing PRSPs was held in Dakar.

14. World Bank and IMF are currently carrying out a comprehensive review of the PRSP approach. Key inputs into the review will include views from country governments and other domestic stakeholders and proceedings from national and international meetings. External stakeholders are invited to make an input to the PRSP review. Participants were invited to send comments to the PRSP website. There will be a conference in January 2002 on the assessment of the PRSP; those who feel they have an input to contribute should make themselves known to the IMF and World Bank.

15. The PRS approach should have a positive impact on statistics. PRSPs are grounded in poverty diagnostics that require good poverty data. This requirement is highlighting the need for good underlying statistics and an understanding of the statistical system required to produce them. There is a growing recognition that national statistical systems have been severely neglected and that capacity building activities need to be long-term, if they are to be sustainable, and to take into account the quality of the data produced.

3.2 PRSP Country and Donor Experience - Njeri Kinyoho (ActionAid Kenya)

16. The PRS process in Kenya began in 1999. Initially it was not easy for civil society or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to engage in the process. But after negotiation ActionAid took on the role of lead agency in the consultation process, in some parts of Kenya.

17. In Kenya, the Ministry of Finance hosts the PRSP Secretariat with secondments of representatives of civil society and the private sector. At the national level, the consultation process included a forum for all stakeholders, chaired by the Vice President. Space was made available for civil society, private sector and donor representatives to work collaboratively with the government team. Responsibility for specific topics was split between nine sector working groups, chaired by the Permanent Secretaries of the relevant line ministries. These were supported by nine thematic working groups, chaired by representatives of civil society, with their recommendations being integrated into the sector working group reports. The NGOs were even more closely engaged at the local level, assisted by funding from donors channeled through the Ministry of Finance and NGOs and church bodies in charge of the district

¹ www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/index.htm and www.imf.org/external/np/prsp/prsp.asp.

consultations. There were in-depth consultations in 25 districts and one-day consultations in the other 45 districts. PPAs were conducted in 10 districts. In total some 25 NGOs and 21 development partners were directly involved in the process. The participation process was seen as so valuable that there is now pressure, especially from civil society, to legally institutionalise the district consultative fora to ensure continuity of community participation, even in monitoring the implementation of the PRS and other development initiatives.”

18. The ActionAid speaker mentioned that this was first time that civil society has been able to freely engage with government in the fight against poverty. The PRS process had led to increased NGO understanding of the budgetary processes of government and a commitment to continue to work closely in the long-term implementation.

19. A supplementary intervention from Phyllis Makau, Ministry of Finance and Planning in Kenya, stressed that the PRSP process had required the Kenyan government to reawaken the Statistics Office and to draw up a strategy to monitor the PRSP. Kenya needs well-crunched numbers; without this policies are of no value. One of the key problems was the level of resources allocated by the government for statistics. We had to understand that activities such as the census have a value beyond that of counting people and demographics. It is needed for resource allocation and for budgetary provision of all services.

3.3 PRSP Country and Donor Experience – Mohamad Ould Lemrabott (Mauritania)

20. The PRSP in Mauritania is an integrated approach for all development issues, building upon pre-existing initiatives. Mauritania had developed a plan in consultation with its stakeholders. Permanent structures for consultation and participation with partners were being created. As in Kenya, working groups have been set up along thematic lines. There are 12 of these, one of them on information systems for poverty. This group is examining how to respond to the different need of all users to produce timely, reliable poverty data, both quantitative and qualitative, within resource constraints.

3.4 PRSP Country and Donor Experience – Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz (Eurostat)

21. EU technical co-operation activities were reformed at the end of 2000. The programme priorities were revised, a project management office established (EuropeAid); and a new directorate created for the implementation of technical co-operation activities. Eurostat has traditionally focused on the regional dimension and economic statistics such as national accounts and foreign trade.

22. Now Eurostat is taking a greater role at the national level and are increasingly focusing on poverty related issues. Two regional and two country workshops were programmed for 2000/2001 in support of PARIS21. One was the Zambia workshop held in April 2001 with 70 participants, users and producers of poverty information, including high-level ministerial representatives. One of the key issues raised was under-utilisation of statistics, due mainly to the users not being informed of their availability. This highlighted the need for an advocacy campaign and for better dissemination. Another workshop will be held in Niger in December.

23. There is increasing interest within Eurostat on the issues of measuring good governance and democratisation. There will be a workshop in Munich on 21-23 November 2001 on democratisation indicators. Eurostat is also launching a study of poverty indicators and measurement techniques.

Session 3 Discussion

24. Issues raised during the discussion included:

a) Mr Ajayi gave some quick feedback from the Second African Forum on Poverty Reduction Strategies held in Dakar during September 2001. This was supported by the World Bank, IMF, UNDP and African Development Bank and centred around three parallel themes:

- Setting up monitoring and evaluation systems, setting priorities and developing action plans;
- Setting poverty reduction targets and estimating costs; and,
- Monitoring policies and service delivery using participatory approaches and the CWIQ survey (Malawi and Kenya were examples).

The process of measuring outcomes was well covered, but not the means of achievement. The key role of statistics in monitoring and implementing the entire PRSP process was recognised. One of the four days was assigned to monitoring and evaluation and to statistical capacity building. The outcomes from the meeting should be implemented and the findings discussed at country level with ministers of finance and senior policy makers.

- b) Earmarked resources are needed to effectively carry forward the agenda for long-term sustainable statistical capacity building. The current discussions about the uses of additional money from debt relief could include pressure to provide funds for statistical capacity building and monitoring and evaluation.
- c) Countries need ownership of their own information systems and should be prepared to commit their own funds to developing them. Country statisticians should work with policy-makers to ensure they appreciate the products provided by statistical systems. Without this country ownership and commitment, the information systems will be more responsive to the needs of international organisations and bilateral donors than to the needs of the national government.
- d) It is important that the roles of national statistical offices (NSOs) are not seen as peripheral to the PRSP process. NSOs must participate at the highest level in the decision-making processes. For this it is important for NSOs to take on a more analytical role so that they are not viewed purely as producers of data but as producers of policy relevant information.

Session 4. Report from the Interim Steering Committee - Guest Charumbira

25. The Chairman presented a report from the Interim Steering Committee (ISC). He noted that the Committee had agreed to prepare a paper for decision-makers in donor countries and international organisations to stress the needs for funds for statistics and for monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

Session 5. Election of the new Steering Committee - Guest Charumbira

26. The Chairman reported on the progress of the new governance arrangements for PARIS21. Nominations had been sought from members for representatives to serve on the new Steering Committee. Elections for the period October 2001 to October 2002 had been conducted by e-mail. The composition of the Steering Committee was approved by the meeting and is given in the following table:

Representative	Constituency	Alternate
Guest Charumbira	Chairman (Botswana)	
INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES		
Shaida Badiie Lucie Laliberté Jan Vandemoortele Willem de Vries Daniel Byk Brian Hammond	World Bank IMF UNDG UNSD EC OECD	Misha Belkindas Jan Bové Richard Leete Stefan Schweinfest Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz Enrico Giovannini
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES		
Lamine Diop (Afristat) Cletus Mkai (Tanzania-SADC) Hasan Abu Libdeh (Palestine) Paul Cheung (Singapore) Maria Arteta (Colombia) Zarylbek Kudabaev (Kyrgyz Republic)	Francophone Africa Anglophone Africa Arab States Asia & Pacific Central and South America Commonwealth of Independent States	Oladejo Ajayi (Independent Consultant)
DONORS		
Philippe Pommier Bernd Förstner Raul Saurez de Miguel Tony Williams To be advised Gerry Britan	France Germany Switzerland U.K. Japan (to be confirmed) USA	Michael Grewe Carol Mottet Roger Edmunds Muneera Salem Murdock

27. Paul Cheung and Cletus Mkai sent apologies that they could not attend the meeting due to other commitments. Cletus Makai's appointment to the Steering Committee as the newly elected representative for Anglophone Africa was welcomed. He had agreed that Mr Ajayi should act as his alternate. The Chairman will continue until the UN Statistical Commission in March next year, when Botswana leaves the UNSC Bureau.

28. The Steering Committee would consider bringing in representation of NGOs, professional bodies and academic institutions. This must be balanced against the need to keep the Committee to a manageable size. The Secretariat will examine the membership of the Consortium to establish who are official representatives of their governments.

Session 6. Progress, Plans and Finances

6.1 Annual Progress Report – Brian Hammond (OECD)

29. Brian Hammond thanked the Chairman for the role he had played in developing PARIS 21. He also thanked the Steering Committee for its work over the last year and Tony Williams for bringing the "Friends of the PARIS21 Chair" process to a successful conclusion in his role as Interim PARIS21 Manager.

30. Document PAR/CM(2001)2 reported on the progress of PARIS21 and its Secretariat to increase support for developing sustainable, holistic, policy-related statistical capacity in developing and transition countries. As agreed at the first PARIS21 meeting, the annual progress report would be put to UNSC and thence to ECOSOC. The report highlights progress through:

- Attendance at international meetings to present PARIS21;
- Holding two sub-regional workshops – SADC and East Africa and Greater Horn – to promote a user-producer dialogue and develop country action plans, with one follow up workshop in Zambia;
- A workshop in UNECA to promote Pan-African strengthening of statistical capacity in the context of poverty reduction; and
- Progress by task teams and promotion of synergies between them.

31. It was reported that the plans for the future work of the consortium would concentrate on three main areas:

- a) Broadening the coverage to areas beyond Anglophone Africa. In particular, two more workshops would be held in 2001, six in 2002 and two in 2003 along the pattern developed in the workshops held for SADC and East Africa and the Great Horn.
- b) Deepening the work already started by facilitating action at country level and by encouraging bilateral donors and Trust Funds to assist countries with developing the action plans produced in sub-regional workshops.
- c) Completing and disseminating materials resulting from the task team work.

32. It was reported that a full-time PARIS21 Manager, Antoine Simonpietri, had been appointed through open competition. The selection process had also led to the appointment of a half-time consultant, Ben Kiregyera, to work with the Secretariat and to represent PARIS21 in regional workshops and international events, with funding from Eurostat. Mary Strode would continue for another two years in the Secretariat and Bahjat Achikbache was on loan to PARIS21 from the World Bank while awaiting the arrival of other secondees. There were now two administrators funded for two years – Jenny Gallelli and Sandra Migdal. Makiko Harrison has been appointed as PARIS21 co-ordinator in the World Bank.

33. PARIS21 would be evaluated in full in 2003 with an interim review in 2002. The proposals for evaluation were being reviewed by the Steering Committee.

6.2 Summary Financing Proposal – Tony Williams (PARIS21 Interim Manager)

34. As described in the paper PAR/CM(2001)1, a “Friends of the PARIS21 Chair” process had been put in motion to resolve a number of issues raised both at the ISC meeting and at the UN Statistical Commission meeting in New York in March 2001. The ISC Meeting held in Geneva in June 2001 agreed on the goals and modalities of PARIS21 and proposed a light governance arrangement for endorsement by the Consortium. The Consortium should be a loose arrangement, not a new organisation. It was agreed that the PRSP was an entry point and not a boundary of PARIS21.

35. He explained that to build effective statistical capacity the majority of funds would come from national budgets, supplemented by financing from international and bilateral agencies. Statistics gets a very small amount of ODA resources. It was expected that through PARIS21 advocacy and awareness raising, there would be increased resources from these agencies.

36. The financing of PARIS21 was explained. Of the total amount of US \$ 2.9 million received by the Secretariat by September 2001, both in contributions and in kind through secondment, US \$ 1.4 million had been spent on regional workshops, task team activities, meetings and staff. The balance was committed to salary costs for staff and activities. Projected expenditure from now to the end of 2003 was US \$ 3.4 million. Most of this was to fund regional workshops, follow-up activities at country level, work of task teams and the cost of Consortium and Steering Committee meetings. Of the US \$ 3.4 million required, US \$ 1.1 million was in hand or had already been offered. A total of US \$ 0.5 million was pledged during the donor's meeting held on 3 October, leaving a funding gap of US \$ 1.2 million.

6.3 *Comments on the work programme by the PARIS21 Manager designate – Antoine Simonpietri*

37. The PARIS21 Manager designate mentioned that the success of PARIS21 would be measured by the number of countries with better statistical systems that meet the requirements of policy/decision makers and are able to measure effectiveness of poverty reduction programmes. In this connection, he mentioned that it was of vital importance that all PARIS21 activities aim at serving the needs of countries. Countries at different stages of development will need appropriate solutions; one type of action will not fit all situations. There must be an appreciation that not all developing countries/offices have internet/e-mail access. Finally, he underscored the fact that PARIS21 comprises the contributions of participants; the secretariat is just the catalyst.

Session 6 Discussion

38. In the discussion that followed the presentations, the following issues were raised:

- a) Statistics are too low on the developing country agenda for senior policy makers to raise the issue with donors. Innovative advocacy was needed to raise the status of statistics and place it on the radar screens of politicians. It should target donors, but even more importantly politicians and senior decision-makers in recipient countries. In the latter, the Ministry of Finance should be specifically targeted. It was proposed that PARIS21 should take advantage of meetings of Ministers for Finance (e.g. annual meetings held in Washington and of the Franc Zone) to advocate for statistics. Advocacy work at the highest level was one of the most important points for PARIS21 to address in the coming months.
- b) Advocacy is needed at two levels. First, it should aim to attract more resources to produce more and better statistics. Second, it should aim to ensure that available resources are put to best use. This is one of the functions of the Strategic Statistical Development Plans, to ensure that resources are used as effectively as possible to address key policy issues.
- c) PARIS21 Secretariat was urged to participate in the Africa Statistics Week celebrations, which a number of African countries are holding to create greater awareness about the role and importance of statistics. Switzerland indicated willingness to participate in these celebrations if invited. Mutual understanding needs to be built with the media to make effective use of statistical products.

Session 7: Work and Future of Task Teams

39. Detailed papers for each of these task teams were produced in advance by the convenors and tabled at the meeting. Discussions on each of the task teams were held in parallel, and the groups were asked to be forward looking. The key messages reported back to the plenary session are covered below.

7.1 Advocacy – Convenor Graham Eele (World Bank)

40. There is wide agreement on the importance of advocacy, although the term is used in many different contexts. It is difficult to produce a single product or even a number of products that will meet all needs. The task team has overseen the production of three products – a brochure, a poster and web pages. These are not designed as standalone products, but to be adapted to local circumstances for use by National Statistics Offices and other advocates for statistical development in countries.

41. The task team has already identified the following future activities:

- Further refine products;
- Disseminate materials to intermediate agencies to develop their own products;
- Work with SIS Task Team to include a component on advocacy;
- Improve product accessibility (translation to at least French and Spanish) and appearance;
- Distribute products through Consortium members with a user guide; and,
- Adapt existing products for national use. (It was recognised that much of this work may be beyond the scope of PARIS21 Secretariat funding and may require financing by Trust Funds).

7.2 Agricultural and Rural Statistics – Convenor Naman Keita (FAO)

42. Agricultural and rural statistics are very important for developing countries. A majority of the poor are engaged in agriculture, yet this is usually one of the weakest areas of national statistical systems. Although many people had expressed interest in this work and joined the task team after its establishment in June 2000, nothing had really happened. The Geneva ISC meeting asked that this task team be revived. A paper prepared for this meeting set out draft terms of reference² for this revived task team which explicitly noted the importance of building on existing work (FAO and World Bank) and the task team's role as a catalyst and facilitator.

43. At this meeting it was agreed that the task team should aim for a global reach rather than operate at the sub-regional level. It was agreed that FAO Statistics Division should convene the group and that they would amend the TORs in light of discussions.

7.3 Census – Convenor Richard Leete (UNFPA)

44. The next event for this task team will be to meet in late November in South Africa at a UNFPA/PARIS21 workshop bringing together donors and up to 30 representatives from partner countries. The objectives of the workshop are to reiterate the value of censuses as the foundation of good national statistical systems, and to look at more effective and efficient ways to conduct them. One of the key needs is to convince all stakeholders of their value beyond demographics – to emphasise them as a key source of small area statistics on communities.

7.4 Indicators of Statistical Capacity Building – Convenor Lucie Laliberté (IMF)

45. This task team is about developing indicators to monitor statistical capacity building efforts. The indicators will be developed and grouped according to the following dimensions (based on the IMF Data Quality Assessment Framework):

² See under task team on the PARIS21 website www.paris21.org

- The institutional conditions of the agency in charge of producing statistics (legal and institutional environment, resources, and quality awareness.);
- Integrity of the agency, that is in terms of objectivity so as to maintain users' confidence (professionalism, ethical standards, and transparency);
- Methodological soundness in applying international standards, guidelines, and agreed practices specific to datasets;
- Accuracy and reliability in producing data that portray reality (source data, statistical techniques, and supporting assessments and validation);
- Serviceability on how well a dataset meet users' needs (data relevancy, timeliness and periodicity, consistency, predictable revisions policy);
- Accessibility of information to users (clear and available data, assistance to users).

46. The group suggested four categories of data where capacity building should focus:

- GDP was proposed as it requires a complete system;
- A timely and accurate population census;
- A household survey programme; and
- A labour force survey.

7.5 *Sequenced Information Strategies (SIS) – Convenor Gerard Chenais (Mauritania)*

47. This task team should be re-named Task Team on Strategic Statistical Development Plans (SSDP). The role of this team is seen as sharing best practice and success stories in developing statistical development plans. The task team should not get involved in country level activities. The immediate aims of the group are to improve the web pages with more frequent updating and translation into other languages. More examples of good practice at the country level are required. While the task team has a finite life, the team should move on to consider the evaluation of strategic statistical development plans. The need for better synergy with other task teams, particularly advocacy, was recognised.

Session 7 Discussion

48. The task teams are seen to be of continuing value and the need for them to work together was reiterated. One of the main functions of the task teams was seen to be the dissemination of best practice (traditional and innovative) in their respective fields and in particular to look at cost effective and pragmatic ways of working in the face of limited resources for statistical capacity building. The importance of the task teams continuing to work using virtual means in order to keep the momentum going was stressed. But task teams were encouraged to take advantage of 'real' meetings perhaps by 'piggy-backing' on existing events.

49. The PARIS21 Secretariat reminded the convenors that they were responsible for sending all relevant materials for inclusion on the PARIS21 website.

Session 8. From Regional Awareness to Country Action

50. This session focused on deepening PARIS21 to promote action at the country level.

8.1 PARIS21/SADC sub-regional workshop and the Trust Fund Support Program – Guest Charumbira (Botswana)

51. The SADC Secretariat is responsible for the co-ordination of statistics in the 14 member countries. The work programme is approved by the Council of Ministers. The statistics committee was formed in 1995 to co-ordinate statistics for development under the remit of the SADC treaty, which identified poverty alleviation and the improvements of the life of its people as its overarching goal. PARIS21 provided a window of opportunity for the SADC secretariat to co-convene the first PARIS21 regional workshop held in Lusaka 5-8 December 2000³.

52. Following the workshop the SADC secretariat prepared a proposal for the World Bank Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB) with the goal of supporting evidence-based poverty reduction strategies in the SADC member states.

8.2 Zambia User/Producer workshop – Buleti Nsemukila (Zambia)

53. In April 2001, the Zambian Central Statistical Office, in collaboration with the PRSP secretariat, held a user/producer workshop to discuss the data requirements for the implementation of the PRSP. Eurostat funded the workshop and a consultant to facilitate the process. More than 70 participants from government institutions, international organisations, the research community and civil society groups attended. The aims of the workshop were to bring together users and producers of poverty data so as to ensure the relevance, timeliness and accuracy of the data and to try to institutionalise the dialogue between users and producers.

54. Some of the main conclusions from the workshop included: the need for the CSO to market their existing data and improve their methods of dissemination; the need to improve the available analytical skills; the need to establish a co-ordination mechanism across the Zambian Statistical System, which could require new legislation. Also recommended was a national forum on poverty issues to raise awareness of poverty data. There are already plans for an Annual Poverty Review Conference under the activities of the Poverty Monitoring and Analysis component of the Zambia Social Investment Fund (ZAMSIF).

8.3 East Africa PARIS21 sub-regional workshop – Ben Kiregyera (Uganda)

55. The East Africa and Greater Horn PARIS21 sub-regional workshop was held in July 2001 hosted by the Ugandan Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and the Regional Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (ISAE) at Makerere University. Over 100 delegates from 7 countries attended the workshop from national governments and organisations (policy makers and statisticians, civil society, academia and the media), sub-regional organisations and international and donor organisations. The theme of the workshop was ‘Supporting Policy with Statistics – Developing a Strategic Approach’.

³ Further information on this workshop can be found under the ‘Meetings’ page of the PARIS21 website www.paris21.org

56. The main topics covered included: country monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals; advocacy; tools for poverty monitoring; the information needs of social sectors; and planning statistical systems. At the workshop countries drew up outline plans of action for national statistical development; these were shared with stakeholders and require further work in country.

57. Some of the main conclusions and recommendations from the workshop included:

- the importance of advocacy in raising the profile of statistics;
- the importance of sharing experiences and best practice in the region (perhaps facilitated by PARIS21);
- the need for capacity building efforts at the sub-regional level (including training activities);
- that while donor assistance is required, it is not a substitute for the national commitment required to achieve sustainability;
- user requirements need to be continually assessed;
- government decentralisation is increasing the need for local level data;
- the importance of South-South co-operation; and
- the need for donor co-ordination at country and higher levels.

PARIS21 was urged to facilitate the holding of national user-producer / stakeholder workshops; as described in the Zambian example above.

8.4 South African South-South Co-operation – John Kahimbaara (South Africa)

58. South-South co-operation is not an alternative to North-South co-operation but complementary. South-South co-operation can take two forms - intra-country and inter-country co-operation. Whichever form it takes, the emphasis is on the South taking responsibility for initiating and maintaining the effort. The benefits of South-South co-operation include encouraging and strengthening regional development, and sharing and learning from common experiences.

59. Statistics South Africa has become engaged in the process of intra-country co-operation following the political changes in the mid-1990s. This led to the creation of a central statistical office in place of the fragmented system that had existed under the previous political system.

60. Co-operation was needed in order to make Statistics South Africa relevant to the needs of the new political environment. Activities included: advocacy for the use of statistics (at the same time as managing expectations); the redefinition of existing products and the introduction of new ones to meet user needs; structural reorganisation of both the physical infrastructure and the processes; and capacity building efforts.

61. In addition to intra-country co-operation Statistics South Africa have also been engaged in sub-regional (southern African) and regional (continental African) co-operation. Sub-regional co-operation efforts have included: collaboration on the 2000 census round; and organising a number of workshops covering themes such as national accounts, harmonisation of the Consumer Price Index and Household Surveys, poverty statistics, and quality management. They have also been involved in organising 'observation visits' where individuals have the opportunity to observe colleagues working in sister organisations. Activities that Statistics South Africa has been involved at the regional (continental) level include the training of civil servants in official statistics and poverty mapping.

62. The lessons? Every statistics office can offer something positive to others and that a group of statistics organisations working together can facilitate advocacy and funding.

8.5 UNECA CODI workshop – Mary Strode (PARIS21 Secretariat) and Dorothee Ouissika (Congo) – on behalf of Awa Thiongane (UNECA)

63. A one day workshop on ‘Strengthening statistical capacity for poverty monitoring’ was held in Addis Ababa to coincide with the Committee for Development Information (CODI) meetings in September 2001. Representatives from the 53 African States are invited to attend CODI meetings, but turnout has traditionally been very low. Combining the two events proved worthwhile, as representatives from more than 40 countries attended. The workshop provided a good opportunity for a round-up of the current PARIS21 and associated activities in Africa. It highlighted the need for monitoring and evaluation systems, clarification in setting poverty lines (\$ a day versus national poverty lines), and actively building trust among users of data, particularly those engaged in the PRSP. Many countries offered to support others in developing closer links with users. The Secretariat will concentrate on distilling lessons from this and other PARIS21 activities over the next few months.

8.6 GDDS Project for Anglophone Africa – Lucie Laliberté (IMF)

64. The IMF gave a quick overview of a new regional project they are implementing in 14 countries in Anglophone Africa to build statistical capacity and enable the production and dissemination of timely, relevant and reliable macro-economic and socio-demographic statistics. The IMF’s General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) will provide the framework for the project. The project will be launched at a 3-day workshop to be held in Gaborone in the first week of December; to which 3 senior officials from each of the participating countries will be invited. The project will be in two phases. The first phase will consist of producing the GDDS metadata for inclusion on the IMF’s Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSSB) <http://dsbb.imf.org>. As part of the first phase, countries will be invited to send officials to a two week workshop at which statistical specialists will assist them in preparing metadata. The second phase will consist of implementation of the plans for improvement.

Session 8 Discussion

65. The issues raised during the discussion following the presentations included:

- a) Recognition of the role PARIS21 has played in igniting interest in national statistical systems and statistical capacity building. But there is a need for quicker access to workshop and activity reports and a need to synthesise the lessons being learnt, from this and past initiatives, so that they can be included in future activities. There is a need for a generic set of agendas, issues, objectives and outputs with the aim of developing a well-trodden path on which to build rather than reinventing wheels.
- b) Kenya has produced its own national report of the East Africa workshop, which has been widely circulated round the office. The issues highlighted included the positive gains from regional co-operation, which for them has highlighted the need to restructure their office.
- c) There was need for follow-up at sub-regional and/or country level in order to not lose sight of recommendations and to keep the momentum going.
- d) Workshops need to recognise the role of the National Statistical Office in the PRSP process as going beyond producing policy relevant data.
- e) The Consortium was asked to consider the link between the immediate data needs of the PRSP and the wider needs of developing a complete and sustainable national statistical system.
- f) National statistical offices were asked to lobby for resources at the right time and to seize the appropriate opportunities. For example, the EU as part of the new Cotonou Agreement is about to

begin asking for proposals for some 20 billion Euros of expenditure. If these national and regional bids make no reference to the need for statistical capacity building or monitoring and evaluation, it will be very difficult to introduce new programmes at a later date. Countries were advised to lobby now for access to these funds.

Session 9.: Broadening the Coverage

66. This session focused on broadening coverage of PARIS21 activities to other parts of the world.

9.1 Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States – Zarylbek Kudabaev (Kyrgyz Republic)

67. Progress in building statistical capacity in Kyrgyzstan was presented as an example for the sub-region. Since 1994 Kyrgyzstan has effected far-reaching changes in the management of the National Statistical Office (Committee). A Presidential Decree established the Office as a semi-autonomous agency under the Office of the President. The head and deputy of the national statistical office are appointees of the President. This has given greater prominence and attention to statistics within Government. It has also made communication between statisticians and policy makers a lot easier.

68. The last Sunday of April has been set aside as Statistics Day to create greater awareness about the role and importance of statistics in society. Also a Statistical Society of Kyrgyzstan has been established. The society brings together statisticians, data users, academics and international organisations.

69. Since 1994, statistical capacity has been built with assistance from the World Bank (poverty issues), IMF (economic statistics), UNFPA (1999 population census), and from bilateral partners including Switzerland. A five-year integrated statistical programme has been designed to improve monitoring indicators. The PARIS21 process has been found useful.

70. The national statistical system has been able to provide official statistics on poverty and to support the PRSP process. Most of the statistics have been collected in four poverty-related household surveys (1996-1999) and the 1999 population census.

9.2 Central and South America and Caribbean – Guillermo Lecaros (Andean Community)

71. The Andean Community has nine members with a small population and resource base. The Community has developed a Community Statistical Programme (2000-2004) to assist member countries build statistical capacity for development and regional integration. The statistics programme has 11 chapters, including agriculture, trade, social aspects, and statistical infrastructure.

72. Under the statistical programme, National Statistical Offices are supported to provide data to inform national policy and decision-making processes and monitor development programmes using suitable indicators. There is full stakeholder involvement in statistical development.

73. On development of statistical infrastructure, PARIS21 processes have been found to be very relevant, especially the advocacy, information exchange and strategy aspects. Greater emphasis has been put on training (mainly on-job training), working on registers and sampling frameworks. Other activities that will be covered include statistics to monitor poverty reduction, statistics on the informal sector, continuous censuses in agriculture and economic areas. There were new initiatives including agricultural statistics and statistics on the service sector. A workshop was planned for December 2001 to look at these aspects of statistical infrastructure.

74. Donor support would be required to support the community statistical programme. So far, Spain and France have provided assistance to develop tourism statistics. Assistance was also expected from the European Union for different aspects of the statistical programme.

9.3 West and Central Africa – Dorothee Ouissika (Congo)

75. The speaker stressed the need for good statistics and building capacity to supply them. In this connection, there were three main challenges for National Statistical Offices, namely improvement in statistical management, increasing the quality of data, and improving data harmonisation and comparability.

76. The important role played by Economic and Statistical Observatory of Sub-Saharan Africa (AFRISTAT) in building statistical capacity in 17 African countries in the Franc Zone was outlined. AFRISTAT has since its inception in 1996 implemented various programmes to build statistical capacity in member countries and to harmonise and integrate national statistics to serve regional economic integration. Member states develop an agreed work programme to support the collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information and analyses. The Common Minimum Statistical Programme (PROSMIC) for 2001-2005 is designed to enable member states to focus on core statistics required by both users and producers of statistics.

77. Some constraints were mentioned. These include: meeting increasing demand for statistics while resources for producing them are not increasing - even decreasing in some countries; interacting effectively – with policy makers aware of their role; and ensuring that immediate data needs are met while building long-term statistical capacity.

9.4 Asia and Pacific – Davaasuren Chultemjamts (Mongolia)

78. Mongolian experience in building statistical capacity was outlined. Since 1992 and with assistance of the World Bank and Eurostat, the National Statistical Office in Mongolia has been able to design a master plan that gives a five-year integrated statistical programme with annual programme modules. The programme details the resources required, expected outputs, etc.

79. It has been realised that the continuous full involvement of stakeholders is required. This requires advocacy. Political will and international support are essential for the development of the national statistical system. In this connection, a data user-producer workshop was planned and PARIS21 was called upon to assist.

80. At the regional level, it was mentioned that only 5 countries in the sub-region have a full PRSP, while Asia is home to the majority of the World's poor. One PARIS21 sub-regional workshop in the region in 2002 was not enough. A request was made to bring the Asian programme forward.

9.5 Arab States – Ridha Ferchiou (Tunisia)

81. Statistical reforms in Tunisia started in 1999 after a diagnosis showed that the national statistical system was weak and there were new, unmet requirements for statistical data. The many data producers in government, particularly line ministries, were not co-ordinated. The national statistical system needed to harness the rapid development of ICT. There was much emphasis on data collection and much less on data analysis and dissemination.

82. The purpose of the reform was to re-orient data producers, make access to statistical information free as a fundamental right, move from a situation of one client (government) to many clients, and take advantage of emerging ICT.

83. As part of the reforms, a new Statistics Act was passed. The Act established a National Statistical Council to harmonise and co-ordinate statistical activities in the country. The Council, which has 28 members drawn from main data producers, universities, NGOs and other data users, reports to the Prime Minister. The first thing the Council did was to take stock of who was doing what and how. It was found that there were as many as 118 data producers in the country, 48 in Government Ministries. The Council has been able to better organise statistical production in the country. It has improved co-ordination between the National Statistical Office and other data producers as well as with research and training organisations.

84. Other reforms are improved statistical coverage and quality, the modernisation of data dissemination with an annual release timetable and an obligation to publish statistics. A one-stop centre for statistics has been established.

85. The development of human and material capacities is a priority. A school for statisticians has been established to replace the previous Paris based training. Areas of co-operation in the context of PARIS21 were identified as training, information and staff exchange.

Session 9 Discussion

86. The following issues came up during the discussion:

- a) The need for better representation of PARIS21 in South America and to increase the languages of PARIS21 to include Spanish.
- b) To encourage South-South co-operation and information exchange as major themes of PARIS21.
- c) To relate and link the information needs of the PRSP to wider national development objectives and a full national statistical system.
- d) The consortium was asked to consider national statistical systems in a holistic manner. Elements to stimulate demand were identified. These included PRSP, economic integration, good governance, development of new systems for countries emerging from conflict, and statistics to meet new needs and levels of sophistication.
- e) PARIS21 must assist statisticians to access policy-makers at high level meetings and in parliaments.
- f) To consider the possibility of using distance learning as an important resource to build statistical capacity, as this would reduce travel and accommodation costs.
- g) The World Bank Institute has assisted Caribbean governments to access policy-makers. The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States has just reaffirmed the need for strengthening departments in all members states in order to assist informed policy making. Eastern Caribbean politicians are on board, the partnership with PARIS21 is important, and the programmed workshop is welcomed.

87. At the close of the session changes were requested in future meeting arrangements. These included: reducing the number of presentations and increasing time for discussion; more parallel sessions where work could be taken forward; Spanish interpretation; earlier submission of papers so that they could be circulated in advance; and a list of participants at the start of the meeting.

Session 10. Statistics in Use

10.1 Public Health Indicators in Uganda – Francis Omaswa (Uganda)

88. Uganda has a sector-wide programme on health (SWAP) which feeds into the Ugandan Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). Baseline data was used to set targets for a minimum health package. The implementation of health policies and plans is monitored against these targets. Some indicators needed reformulating in due course as they proved to be unrealistic. Where targets are not achieved, there are penalty budget cuts for that sector. Statistics show where policies are going wrong, and help you to discover how to correct the problem.

89. Statistics have relevance to people's lives. The public needs to use and understand statistics, as does the lowliest health worker. The presentation showed how the outcomes of policy decisions and health programmes were tracked by statistics. The recent Ebola Fever epidemic demanded the production of statistics three times per day, in order to assist health workers to successfully control and contain the spread of the disease.

10.2 Monitoring Rural Development and HIV/AIDS - Hans Binswanger (World Bank)

90. Most of the poor in Africa live in rural areas and work in agriculture. Poverty tends to be deeper in rural areas. The development of the non-farm economy is important, but it must be driven by agricultural growth. There is a need to integrate agricultural statistics into national systems. FAO has the mandate to co-ordinate new initiatives in agriculture and is developing multi-donor 'hubs' which combine statistics and policy makers in the same place. One exists in Harare; another is being set up in The Horn & East Africa; another in West Africa.

91. A revised proposal for an initiative to improve agricultural and rural statistics has been circulated. Feedback and comments are sought. PARIS21 is invited to give feedback at the workshop of African Agricultural Statisticians to be held in November 2001. It was hoped that PARIS21 would support this proposal and incorporate it in the work broader programme. A trust fund was needed to take forward the work.

92. The proposal has two components. The first is a technical assistance and facilitation component, for which FAO is the international co-ordinator. The FAO central office with three sub-regional co-ordinators will drive the process. The second component is for country action. This is for building a broader based coalition of stakeholders and meeting the demands of policy and poverty analysis, particularly the demands of PRSPs. Countries will need to provide integrated plans for agriculture and nutrition in consultation with the donors.

Session 10 Discussion

The discussion included the following points:

- a) It was suggested that advocacy for statistics might be helped by comparing the investment in management information systems against the returns in improved health outcomes. Uganda offered to assist with work that had already been carried out by health economists. This kind of work would help with defending budgetary allocations. This is another areas where statisticians could advocate to policy makers.

- b) Indigenous systems need strengthening to reduce reliance on donors. Sector ministries need to form strong links with the central statistical office.
- c) FAO fully supported the proposal from the World Bank on Monitoring Rural Development. The plight of AIDS orphans and the burden on older households, unable to provide themselves with food, was emphasised. This aspect should be included in the rural data initiative.

Session 11. Proposals for Next Consortium Meeting – Brian Hammond (OECD)

93. The Secretariat proposed a revised format for the next meeting to be held on 1 and 2 October 2002 at the OECD. It would be shortened to 1 ½ days. It would include a newsworthy opening session by a Minister of Finance of a developing country, saying how she is using statistics to make a difference in her country. The formal business of agreeing the new Steering Committee would be reduced in time and conducted before coffee on the first day. The remainder of the meeting would be devoted to learning lessons from two regional workshops and from two example country follow-ups. There would be a limited number of speakers, with longer to present. Breakout groups in the afternoon would discuss the lessons and task teams. On the second day some groups would report back to the plenary with more time allocated for discussion. The meeting would close with a speech from a policy maker, talking about using statistics in a policy context. The participants list would be circulated earlier in the meeting; participants were asked to register beforehand to facilitate this.

94. The Steering Committee meeting would be a full half-day to take forward the business raised in the Consortium Meeting. It would look at the work programme and financing of PARIS21. The World Bank Trust Fund meeting would be on Monday 30 September.

95. The green advocacy pamphlet would be reviewed. The Secretariat appreciated that this was needed quickly. These proposals were accepted by the meeting.

Session 12. Concluding Remarks by Chairman – Guest Charumbira

96. The Consortium will have a new Chairman from April 2002. He or she will be appointed from the Bureau of the UN Statistical Commission. Mr Charumbira was thanked for his major role in the success of PARIS21 and for chairing the Consortium and Steering Committee meetings to date.

97. The DAC Chairman, Jean-Claude Faure sent apologies that he could not attend the closing session. He had affirmed his continuing commitment to the Consortium and satisfaction with progress to date.

98. The Chairman thanked the Consortium for their confidence in him and for an interesting two years. He thanked the Interim Manager and the Secretariat and interpreters for their hard work.