



Consortium Meeting, 17 and 18 October 2002

INTERVENTION FROM ALBANIA

SUPPORTING FOLLOW UP IN THE COUNTRY, WHAT HAS TO BE REQUIRED? CASE INSTAT.

In this short presentation we will try to divide it into two parts the first one will describe briefly what questions stand in front of Albanian statisticians, the second one how PARIS 21 can be used to come near to the answer of those.

Background situation

It is clear that official statistics, in Albania nowadays had changed their role and had improved their deliveries in comparison with 1990. But from the other hand it is also true that in front of Albanian statisticians there are still unanswered questions:

Why are we failing to provide the statistics needed for development?

What is making us fail to give information in due time?

What can we do to improve the coverage and the institutional framework?

Statisticians are part of the problem and also part of the solution. They are part of the problem because they have often failed to provide the data needed and to market their products to potential users. I do see this point especially in a society that is an emerging democracy, where the "freedom of information", gives the rights to use any type of information in place of statistical information, some times misleading the potential users to take the real decision. But some other times, statisticians are not there to provide what is needed. I do believe that this can be a common effort in country level, to try to use statistics information in the process of decision making and also to try to understand the needs for it.

A small office in a small country, with small resources has a lot of difficulties. The statistical process has to be the same, apart of the size of the office, but the timeliness of data is rather different. Do the potential stockholders recognize that? What they are going to do to support the statistical production?

In a country where economic and social reforms are taking place, the statistical office has to be able to manage the improvement of coverage and institutional framework.

There is a private sector emerging, thus why methods need to be applied to have all them, newly created business and new statistical units, in the reporting system, but their obligatory respondent attitude has to be put in place by laws or bylaws. Can a statistical office do this alone?

It will be very hardly! They need support. Let see where this can be more important, meanwhile the role of the Statistical office is in place.

- Planning

One of the core function of a statistical office is the planning process, that means to transform the policy questions into a series of steps, that will result with the desired information being available, within a specified parameters of time, quality and resources.

In this specific moment of executing their role the statistical offices need a support and a transparent debate with their respective governments, which priorities statistics can meet within government agenda, for how long they will arrive in require output. How much this will cost, and where the resources will be given?

- Executing and processing

The collection of the data during census or surveys activities, nowadays has been increase due to a considerable efforts made by the donors. On the way of this process statistical offices have to ensure that data collection are carried out in unbiased way and that confidentiality is assured. These very strong conditions in the executing role of an office have to face a question how sustainable the statistical system will be, and out to protect the statistical confidentiality.

Now we are in a very beginning point where this problem has to be faced since the beginning of the planning system. Can the statistical office alone convinced the government that the investments made by donors is census or surveys activity, has to be put in place with governmental support? How they had to convince that a statistical product once being realized must be transformed in a routine?

New technologies has to replaced the old one, and the timeliness of data will be revised, helping in such a way the above mention principles to be applied better.

- Coordination and standardization

This function of a statistical office can be seen both ways as an internal matter also as an external matter. For those offices training to approach their system with the models of an international one, the external coordination versus internal coordination is more a in house partnership, and I do believe that for those who the international standards are meet the statistical office from all point of views will take a very unique function in the governmental exercise of a country.

If several project on statistical matter are in place, it is important that a mass of critical thinkers in statistics in national level has to be created. But a little bit of attention has to be given because vast quantities of data that have been inadequately processed in a way, which creates a demand and provides users with what they need. The training of statisticians too often focuses on the technical and methodological aspects of the profession, and ignores the demand side of the statistical system. They

have to set up the set of important indicators, describing very detailed methodologies, and being open for discussion with several media and research users.

- Dissemination

The new role of the statistical information in the democratic societies transforms the product of statistics from a governmental one in a public good. Thus is why the dissemination process really take an important role to ensure the principal of transparency, neutrality and accessibility.

The users need to apply pressure on statisticians to provide the service they need, and the statistician's will need to recognise the users problems if they are not to loose ground in the race to inform development processes.

What can PARIS 21 brings in Albania case.

It is rather difficult to say which will be the best way to use PARIS 21 in Albania reality. Nevertheless it need a little bit of an explanation how this initiative had been understand in the country reality. Albania has considered herself as an external beneficiary of PARIS 21. But more inform you are, better use of the delivering outputs you can do, and also better use of PARIS 21.

Today the Institute of Statistics of Albania, is coming here after carried out some very important activities like Census of population and LSMS as part of GPRS. After we have looked very briefly in what situation the Albanian statistics are, there is strong demand from to bring PARIS 21 in the country level.

Having in mind that PARIS 21 has as objective :

- Increase political support for statistics
- Developing policy making culture on the base of reliable statistical data

INSTAT is asking to organize in accordance with modalities proposed by PARIS 21 an advocacy workshop in the country level to promote the use of statistics for policy decision ; case census of population.

Albania is situated in Balkan peninsula, and in that region it is not only Albania that had carried out census, but also Croatia, Romania, FYROM is undergoing, so the use of this workshop has to be even regionally.

The decision to organize the workshop under the umbrella of PARIS 21 is coming; Because looking towards the increase of awareness around to the excellent Initiative and the use of it in the country level is; it will be better demonstrate to the policy makers, that the process we are following those days during the workshop as an awareness all over the globe, and we are one of those countries.

Considering both activities that INSTAT has done during 2001–2002; in population census and , and carrying out of LSqsuring the living standards survey some efforts will take place to ,ake some analyses the poverty from, both sources.