

UPDATE: COVID-19 IMPACT ON PARIS21 PROGRAMME OF WORK 2020

CURRENT SITUATION (AS OF 27 MARCH 2020)

The global outbreak of COVID-19 in the first quarter of 2020, and the related prevention and mitigation measures taken worldwide, have affected the workforce of the Secretariat and the implementation of the Secretariat Programme of Work 2020 (POW 2020), which was designed in November-January 2020. There is no anticipated impact on Secretariat fundraising for 2020 at this time.

PARIS21's partners, in particular national statistical offices (NSOs) in low- and middle-income countries, are vulnerable to the impact of the pandemic and are calling for timely, strategic support. These NSOs are strained by the ongoing crisis, which causes delays in basic data collection activities such as surveys and censuses. Meanwhile, more urgent and highly granular data demands are rising which require a coordinated response by NSOs to aid governments in mitigating crises. It is expected that national statistical systems may be required to reprioritise statistical activities to respond to new and abrupt data demands, coordinating with different state agencies, the private sector and the general public.

The PARIS21 Secretariat is leveraging the corporate knowledge and practice of its host, the OECD. It shows proximity with its partners in listening to new needs and situations. It shows agility in providing alternative schedules, or implementation plans, so that results can still be delivered in line with the proposed POW 2020.

As of early April, the POW 2020 as it is presented to the Board for approval is still valid. The Secretariat will continue to monitor the evolving situation and will make any required adjustments, building on the emerging practices highlighted in this note. The likely scenario is to progressively resume the activities based on physical presence of our staff and consultants in June/July, while maintaining a

conservative approach towards the autumn planning. Considering that the COVID-19 crisis has had a significant effect on our work, PARIS21 intends to maintain and scale the key, smart solutions and continue to adjust its services and tools. However, PARIS21 expects an increased demand for missions of its staff (country projects) in the summertime if and when some of the on-hold activities resume.

INITIAL RESPONSE BY PARIS21

The Secretariat response thus far has been twofold: putting in place agile adjustments to priorities and modalities of intervention, and starting new activities directly relevant to COVID-19 and crisis management.

Putting in place agile and innovative adjustments to priorities and modalities of intervention

In order to mitigate the delay or cancellation of pre-COVID-19 POW deliverables and increase efficiency, the Secretariat has embarked on:

- Effective guidance and frontloading pre-COVID-19 normative work:
 - Launch of the PARIS21 Academy, including e-learning courses on PARIS21 initiatives and tools (ADAPT, gender statistics, skills, data viz toolkit), including step-by-step modules, blended training and other resources.
 - Reprioritisation of normative work, including increased virtual knowledge sharing and technical guidance (i.e. Statistical Capacity Monitor, Capacity Development 4.0 Guidelines, revised National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) Guidelines, gender mainstreaming in NSDS).
- Increased focused communication with partners and beneficiaries:

- Country-level support, i.e. weekly check-in calls with beneficiary countries, remote technical support and more focused guidance.
- Streamlined global and regional knowledge sharing with partners, including introduction of more frequent and more-focused webinars and events (i.e. allowing countries to connect and share their crisis mitigation practices).

Many PARIS21 activities, especially at the national and regional levels, involve travel and/or on-site presence to support partner countries (Table 1). Therefore, the measures currently undertaken aim to adopt new ways of working in order to provide better support and to empower our partners. Many of our partners are also struggling with extensive changes and crisis management, both of which add to issues of remote connectivity. PARIS21's most affected activities relate to country missions by PARIS21 staff and consultants (i.e. trainings, pilots), and the organisation of regional events (i.e. conferences, workshops and fora). When these activities are not possible, they are postponed in consultation with partners.

Table 1. PARIS21 activities on hold or postponed

| PILLAR / LEVEL | GLOBAL | REGIONAL | NATIONAL |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--|--|
| KNOWLEDGE & INNOVATION | - | Regional workshops and events | National workshops and pilots (e.g. CGD, Statistical literacy) |
| ADVOCACY | - | - | National workshops and events (e.g. CRESS launch) |
| COORDINATION & MONITORING | - | Organisation of related events and workshops (e.g. workshops, Generation Equality Forum) | National workshops and consultations (e.g. NSDS or gender workshops) |
| TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE | - | - | - |

Table 2. PARIS21 activities maintained with new approaches, or frontloaded timelines

| THEME / LEVEL | GLOBAL | REGIONAL | NATIONAL |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| KNOWLEDGE & INNOVATION | Normative work and data science innovation: ADAPT, NSDS Guidelines, CD4.0 Guidelines, Statistical Capacity Monitor, Trust initiative, P21 strategy | | Remote guidance (e.g. ADAPT, CGD, new data source pilot) |
| ADVOCACY | Participation in global fora, task teams and initiatives (e.g. Bern Network, COVID-19 impact on NSOs, PRESS) | Convening stakeholders to remote webinars to discuss impact of COVID-19 | |
| COORDINATION & MONITORING | Normative work on SDG Monitoring, VNRs, Coordination Virtual Annual Meetings | Participation in regional video-conferencing events | Remote guidance (e.g. mainstreaming gender in the NSDS) and webinars with national stakeholders |
| TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE | - | - | Remote technical assistance (eg: ADAPT, NSDS) |

Launching new, directly relevant activities

- PARIS21 has formed a Rapid Action Task Force to document the impact of COVID-19 on NSOs, identify strategic solutions to mitigate the effects of the current crisis and to share country experiences and coping strategies. PARIS21 is collecting information from partner countries on the scope of the impact of COVID-19 on their current and future statistical activities, including data-collections and new data demands.
- PARIS21 is increasing production of normative work, including projects surrounding the impact of COVID-19 on specific data collections (i.e. innovations put in place by partners, impact on gender data and that of

vulnerable groups, statistical work streams that have been left behind) and NSO communication (COVID-related online dissemination).

- PARIS21 will be providing more tailor-made and individual, country-oriented capacity development solutions which can be put in place in a cost- and capacity-efficient manner (i.e. reducing the number of face-to-face ADAPT workshops in order to focus on more efficient data-input activities, and improved communication of impact and outcomes).