

Final Record of the Proceedings

Chairs: Pali Lehohla & Eckhard Deutscher

I. Welcome Statement

1. The chair of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) underscored that statistics play a crucial role in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as in development co-operation in general. We need to ensure that data are available to underpin development processes. This is why we have this partnership we call PARIS21. PARIS21 finds itself at an important moment in its history. The long-time manager of its Secretariat has moved on, and we now have a new manager. In addition, later this year we will hold a Consortium meeting in Dakar to consider future perspectives and celebrate the Partnership's 10th anniversary. The chair welcomed the new members to the Steering Committee, Mrs. Maral Tutelian-Guidanian from Lebanon representing the Middle East and Mr. Mohamed Taamouti from Morocco representing North Africa. He then outlined the objectives of the meeting, which are to agree five specific decisions (see annex).

II. Adoption of Agenda

2. The representative from Eurostat requested that the agenda item on the Statistics for Results Facility (SRF) be reinstated from the draft version. Although the World Bank had originally requested to withdraw this point, they agreed to provide a brief update on SRF progress. It was agreed to integrate the point into the agenda under "Other Business". The agenda was adopted without further modification.

III. Progress Reports

3. Two reports on progress in specific work were then presented.

PARIS21 Progress Report

4. As an element of the overall tracking progress of activities and outputs, the Secretariat presented its activities carried out between October 2008 and April 2009. In its regional programmes, the Secretariat has participated in various international and regional meetings, has organised support to NSDS processes in seven countries (Burkina Faso, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Honduras, and Tajikistan) and supported regional events (Strategic statistical planning for Small Islands Developing States, Maghreb workshop on NSDS, UNECA regional workshop on NSDS implementation, CARICOM advisory group and Steering Committee). On advocacy, assistance to two countries has been provided on producing relevant booklets (Honduras and Mauritius) on the basis of the statistics advocacy toolkit, a new leaflet on PARIS21 has been produced in five languages, and the advocacy film on "Women and Statistics" finalised with UNECA. In terms of partnership, the two most important exercises have been the conclusion of the PRESS 2008 round along with the launching of the 2009 round and preparations for the Consortium meeting. On statistical reporting, NSDS sheets have been updated, while in the field of studies new guidance has been produced on system reforms (the case of Tunisia), quality of NSDSs, and costing of national statistical systems.

Discussion

5. All participants highlighted the importance of collaboration through the partnership: the UNECA participant and African Development Bank representative mentioned the importance of organising joint



missions, recalling the recent examples of Angola, DRC, and Côte d'Ivoire. The World Bank representative hailed the useful role PARIS21 played in Tajikistan, while the Eurostat representative reminded participants of the willingness of EU participation in PARIS21 activities through the EU delegations network; if Paris21 missions were advertised in advance, other partners might also be able to alert their representatives in the field. The manager of the PARIS21 Secretariat confirmed the importance of such partnerships, particularly when strategies are to be implemented. PARIS21 was encouraged by the South-East Asia representative to assist countries who have not yet started the NSDS process, while the North Africa representative insisted on the need to have clear indicators on the effectiveness of NSDS implementation. The representative from East Asia called on the Secretariat to extend its support to middle-income countries. The participant from Palestine insisted on the platform that NSDS provides for the development of the statistical system and advocated for an increased support in poor countries for the whole system. The UNDP representative recognised that huge progress had been made since the inception of PARIS21 activities 10 years ago; however, progress is still to be made on the efficient use of information and on capacity building needs of users. The participant from Luxembourg highlighted the importance of good communication with users through appropriate channels, for example national councils of statistics. The HMN participant stressed the importance of advocacy work and the need to increase communication aspects.

International Household Survey Network (IHSN) and Accelerated Data Program (ADP)

6. The PARIS21 Secretariat and World Bank representative delivered a joint presentation on progress in the IHSN and ADP programmes. The ADP has expanded its geographical coverage in Asia, the Pacific, and Europe. Seventy countries will be covered by the end of 2010. But the most visible output is that new data catalogues on countries' websites are now updated without ADP support. For IHSN, the work programme for 2009–2012 which will be discussed in the next IHSN Management Group meeting. The examples of Nigeria and Cameroon were presented to highlight the benefits of ADP and IHSN on data quality and data harmonisation.

Discussion

7. Participants emphasised the considerable, useful work of the ADP/IHSN programmes since 2006. The UNDP representative mentioned the importance of ADP work in producing country MDG reports for 2010. The participant from Luxembourg called on greater attention to be paid to connections between data users and analysts. The African Development Bank representative reaffirmed his willingness to ensure participation of African countries in the ADP. The FAO participant encouraged IHSN/ADP to consider harmonisation at the global level rather than the national level in light of the limited resources of the programmes. On the issue of harmonisation of guidelines at the global level, participants were reminded that the IHSN could play a role even if it does not have the technical or moral capacity to do so: the question of harmonisation through standards concerns international agencies. The aim of IHSN is primarily to make differences transparent. Nevertheless, the IHSN question bank at the country level allows harmonisation of the data collecting process (*e.g.*, Cameroon). The IMF representative highlighted the success of the data update by countries themselves regarding the Fund's own experience with the General Data Dissemination System. This success is due to the nature of data (survey microdata), the user-friendly toolkit, and the single update needed for the DDI standard. The low costs of the survey documentation compared to the availability of reliable data obtained explain the success of the ADP/IHSN programmes in countries.

IV. PARIS21 Evaluation

8. The PARIS21 Secretariat presented the 2009 evaluation's objectives, the overall organisation of the work as well as the expected timeframe. An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) is in place and will oversee the overall evaluation process. The recruitment of the evaluators is ongoing through a tender process



launched by the World Bank. Despite some delays, the results of the full-scale evaluation are still expected for end of September, in time for presentation at the November Consortium meeting in Dakar.

Discussion

9. Some members of the Steering Committee suggested extending the composition of the ERG to representatives of partner countries. The Secretariat explained that the ERG is composed, among others, of the PARIS21 Bureau which itself includes representatives from developing countries. Some members of the Steering Committee expressed their concern that the available timeframe was too short. It was however agreed that the link with the Consortium meeting in Dakar should be kept at all costs. The Secretariat also reassured the Steering Committee on the feasibility of conducting a full-scale evaluation within the available timeframe.

10. Some participants requested that a strategy for the future of PARIS21 be discussed prior to Dakar. The Secretariat insisted on the difficulty of organising another Steering Committee meeting one month before Dakar. The Steering Committee finally agreed that a small committee be formed to review and discuss the strategy once the evaluation report is available in September. This small committee will then report back to the full Steering Committee either through written consultation or in another form.

V. PARIS21 Work Programme

11. The PARIS21 Secretariat reminded the Committee that the overall work programme for 2009–2010 was approved at the June 2008 Steering Committee. He noted that the updated work programme for 2009 took into account priorities and new orientations. The presentation of the work programme included five main items: (1) NSDS regional programmes; (2) Partnership; (3) Costing; (4) Financing Needs; and (5) Next Steering Committee and Donors meeting.

12. *NSDS Regional Programmes:* PARIS21 will continue to intensify country-level and regional-level activities. The main objective of the regional programmes is to facilitate the implementation (or design) of NSDSs. The extended geographical coverage is in conformity with the PARIS21 mandate and in line with the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics key action 1 (all low-income countries to design an NSDS). PARIS21 will still focus on Africa but particularly on fragile states, Anglophone and Lusophone Africa. Activities in under-represented regions, such as Asia and Caribbean, will be launched progressively. PARIS21 will also continue encouraging national partnerships for funding statistics (in line with Statistics Results Facility) and providing assistance to create national sub-groups of donors on statistics. Country-advocacy programmes will continue to be facilitated as well. Ad-hoc support on advocacy will be provided. Focus will be put on less-developed countries, and advocacy action will be carried out on the basis of the Advocacy Toolkit. Regional activities are carried out in collaboration with bilateral donors, multilateral agencies, and national stakeholders of the statistical system. Several regional events that PARIS21 will support are in the pipeline: a Maghreb Workshop in Algiers in July 2009 and an NSDS workshop and High Level Advocacy Forum for the Caribbean in Trinidad in July 2009.

13. *Partnership:* The two major partnership activities for the remainder of 2009 are of course the next round of the PRESS and the organisation of the Consortium meeting. The PRESS round is ongoing; some completed questionnaires have been received and are being processed. The special theme of the report is still to be decided. Reporting on the results of PRESS 2008 took place in February 2009, in New York, during the CCSA meeting, and a second one on PRESS 2009 will take place in Bangkok in September 2009.

14. *Costing:* The budget has been revised in order to take into account finalised figures for the Consortium and the shift of the evaluation from 2010 to 2009 (as decided at the last Steering Committee). These adjustments did not have any impact on the total budget already agreed in November 2008. The



regional programmes and the advocacy activities were reshaped according to prioritised needs, the programme of studies was lightened, and the task team budgets postponed.

15. *Financing needs:* PARIS21 currently has a gap of 14% for 2009–2010 and 53% for 2009–2012.

16. *Next Steering Committee and Donors meeting:* The Secretariat presented a draft agenda for the Steering Committee/Donors meetings to be held in the margins of the Dakar Consortium. It was emphasised that only one half-day will be available to cover both meetings. The agendas are therefore somewhat compact.

Discussion

17. Participants offered several suggestions on how to improve PARIS21 work. The DAC chair called on partners to improve collaboration. The representative from the Netherlands underlined the importance of being more pro-active when engaging with countries, to help them to be more result-focused. The FAO participant encouraged PARIS21 to help countries better integrate the agricultural sector into NSDSs. The participant from Luxembourg suggested that PARIS21 go beyond advocacy, beyond NSDSs and focus more on the capacity of communication between users and producers. The UNSD representative reported that several consultations were held with the UN agencies regarding the PRESS questionnaire. The results confirmed that UN agencies will not be able to provide the requested information in PRESS, as was already mentioned at the CCSA meeting in February 2009. Consultations between UNSD and UN specialised agencies did not yield comprehensive information for the exercise. The PRESS report should therefore be clear in stating that its results are not comprehensive. The Eurostat representative responded that in order for PRESS to be an effective co-ordination tool it needs to be as comprehensive as possible. He pleaded the UN agencies to make a special effort.

18. The World Bank representative questioned whether PARIS21 could sustain its heavy work load at country level, given the limited resources within the Secretariat. He encouraged partners to mobilise resources to help deliver the partnership's vision. The World Bank itself will continue to support PARIS21, although its financial contribution was likely to decrease. The French representative indicated that while the creation of donor subgroups on statistics was very important, donor representatives at the country level do not show much motivation. It is the responsibility of the donors around the table to raise awareness on this subject. He added that he was very pleased that UNDP was again present at the Steering Committee and that its involvement in the debate at country level would be very useful.

19. This item was closed by concluding that the draft agendas for the November meetings were approved with one modification: the inclusion of a discussion on the Partnership's future strategy during the point on the "Results of the PARIS21 Evaluation". The Secretariat will explore the possibility of organising an evening or breakfast discussion in Dakar to consider the future strategy in light of the results of the Consortium and evaluation. The developing country chair clarified that the aim of the next Steering Committee is to take forward inputs from the evaluation, Consortium, and other processes to define where PARIS21 has come from and where it should go.

VI. Role of PARIS21 in major international programmes

20. The representative from Eurostat highlighted the enormous challenges for national statistical offices and the global statistical system ahead, in a context of growing demand for increasingly diversified statistics and reduced financial resources available because of the present economic crisis. Eight international initiatives were mentioned to illustrate the forthcoming challenges: (1) the next round of population censuses, (2) the next round of agriculture censuses, (3) indicators for MDG monitoring, (4) International Comparison Program 2011, (5) the implementation programme for the System of National Accounts 2008, (6) the enhancement of agricultural statistics, (7) the development of environment and



climate change statistics, and (8) the project 'measuring progress of societies', under leadership of the OECD. The challenges are numerous: budget, expertise, leadership, support from policy makers, and co-ordination of donors. Each organisation has its own role to play in rising to these challenges. PARIS21 could play a role in advocacy, support to NSDS, co-ordination of partners, and co-ordination of the leadership. It was suggested to start from these projects in organising the strategy of the international community in support to statistics, donor coordination and last but not least the future strategy for Paris21

Discussion

21. Agreement was clear on the need to renew the mandate of PARIS21 rather than re-create it. It was suggested that PARIS21 could be more programme-oriented along the lines as presented. There was general agreement on the fact that NSDS was a success but that it is now the right time to shift the target towards NSDS quality and implementation. The nature of PARIS21 as a partnership between policy makers and statisticians was also stressed in the context of the above mentioned global projects, and more involvement of the policy makers is required in the future. It was also underlined that PARIS21 should keep the perspective from developing countries and their priorities. The international programmes are also important and could be better served by PARIS21 creating momentum. Advocacy and co-ordination were reaffirmed as key roles for PARIS21.

VII. Consortium Meeting Preparations

22. The PARIS21 Secretariat, the participant from Senegal, and the representative from Eurostat delivered a joint presentation on preparations for the Consortium meeting planned in Dakar from 16 to 18 November 2009. They presented the draft version of the Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics (DDDS), the process for supporting the DDDS, and the proposed slogans for the meeting. The presenters also solicited the help of countries and institutions to obtain posters and a large participation from their colleagues.

Discussion

23. Discussion centred mostly on the text of the DDDS. The representative from the Netherlands recommended more precise and action-oriented language in the text, in particular on the funding of statistical development and donor alignment with NSDSs. The OECD representative cautioned against toughening up the language in advance, since precise targets and tough language could scare away ministers from attending. He recommended, based on his experience with the Accra Agenda for Action, that the DDDS be an advance paper to be completed and improved during the meeting itself. The participants should not be presented with a "final" text for them to validate with little input on their part. The World Bank representative requested that reference to and reaffirmation of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS) objectives and action plan be more explicit in the text. He also encouraged the drafters to make the five DDDS action points as crisp as possible in order to capture the attention of high-level people. The Francophone Africa representative regretted the absence of statistical training in the DDDS, and the IMF representative raised the issue of quality. The Eurostat representative and participant from Norway called on the Consortium organisers to build on the experiences from previous events, such as the Accra and Hanoi forums.

24. Lastly, the Committee selected the official slogan for the Consortium as follows: in English "*Statistics for development: Renewing the Partnership*" and in French "*Les statistiques au service du développement : renouveler le partenariat*".



VIII. World Statistics Day

25. The UNSD representative presented a proposal for a World Statistics Day (WSD), to be held on 20 October 2010. Although the topic had been discussed for some time, it was raised once again in 2008 with a questionnaire sent to countries for feedback. One hundred NSOs responded with information regarding their own statistics day and their thoughts on a World Statistics Day. The results are available on the UNSD website. A logo for the event is being designed and a strategic document produced. This strategic document will be presented at the next UN Statistical Commission. More information will be provided on a website to be developed.

Discussion

26. Several participants made reference to the observance of Africa Statistics Day on 18 November of every year. They expressed their desire to keep this day and recommended allowing each country or region to observe its own day and yet have a World Statistics Day added. The UNSD representative responded that the WSD celebration is a one-off event and is not intended to replace the national or regional day. The UNECA participant proposed that some special events be organised to bridge the gap from October 20 to November 18. The UNSD supported this suggestion. The chair called on UNSD to engage communication experts to propose a catchy slogan and an appealing logo.

IX. Other Business

27. As requested during the adoption of the agenda, the World Bank representative presented progress in the Statistics for Results Facility (SRF). He summarised the development of the SRF and commented that the idea of the approach had come as a result of the Hanoi Roundtable in 2007. There was a general consensus that a concerted effort to improve statistical capacity and investment in statistical system was necessary. The SRF is a way to make the approach operational and provide a vehicle and background for scaling up investment in statistics. He emphasised that the SRF was more of an approach and a way to mobilise both international and national resources to support NSDS. After Hanoi, several meetings were held to define the new approach, which is centred on results and treats statistics as its own sector, employing a system-wide approach. The approach would assure better donor co-ordination and respect Paris Declaration principles. In addition to serving as a co-ordination mechanism for international support, the SRF would promote a better local partnership including: reviewing NSDS; developing realistic and sustainable plans; encouraging donors to pool funding and decrease transaction costs; and identifying a lead donor for the country partnership. A discussion on the SRF was held with Eurostat in March in the framework of their annual meeting of the Advisory Group for the coordination of EU technical cooperation on statistics in Sub-Saharan Africa. This meeting of member states focused on the possible roles which Advisory Group members could undertake in the context of the SRF, focussing in particular on the way of working rather than the fund itself. The World Bank representative suggested that the SRF be viewed as a "catalytic" fund. The process of setting up the fund is not yet complete.

28. The Eurostat representative commented that EU countries are very attracted by this approach. He emphasised several points that he felt were of particular interest: advocacy for statistics for results, national partnership groups, PARIS21's role of sharing information on country-level groups, co-ordinated technical assistance and the importance of PRESS as a way to communicate the work being done, twinning arrangements for bilateral aid, and the mobilisation of training support. The chair urged partners to ensure that the partnership access, and not lose, all the resources that the SRF is making available. The PARIS21 Secretariat Manager commented that PARIS21 can work with countries as a facilitator. The approach does not necessitate the formality of funding, but the approach can be encouraged. However, scaling up does add some viability to the SRF approach. It was agreed that the SRF would be a standing item on the agenda of Steering Committee meetings henceforth.



X. Overview of Decisions Taken

29. The chair reviewed the decisions taken by the Committee over the course of the meeting's proceedings. An overview is available in Annex I below.

Annex I: Overview of Decisions Taken

#	Decision for the Steering Committee
1	<p>Does the Committee agree with the Consortium themes, sub-themes, and meeting structure submitted by the Consortium Scientific Committee?</p> <p><i>The Committee agreed with the proposed themes, sub-themes, and meeting structure and highlighted the need to address the topics of training and developing indicators of statistical development.</i></p>
2	<p>Does the Committee agree with the draft text of the Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics (DDDS)?</p> <p><i>The Committee was largely in agreement with the draft text of the DDDS, but requested some modifications: including, stronger emphasis on reaffirming the spirit of the MAPS and the RRSF, greater succinctness in the call to action so that it can be easily summarised in a few words, and reference to NSDS quality. Although it was felt that the text could include stronger language on targets, it was recognised that the DDDS should remain sufficiently flexible and open so as not to discourage policy makers and other participants from participating in the Consortium or from contributing to the final text.</i></p>
3	<p>Does the Committee agree with the proposed process for garnering support for the Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics (DDDS)?</p> <p><i>The Committee expressed no objections to the proposed process. The Committee is requested to indicate to the Secretariat how they can support the DDDS.</i></p>
4	<p>What is the Steering Committee's preference for the Consortium slogan?</p> <p><i>The Committee expressed its preference for slogan # 2 ("Statistics for Development: Renewing The Partnership") in English and slogan # 1 ("Statistiques au service du développement : Renouveler le Partenariat") in French.</i></p>
5	<p>Does the Committee agree with the draft agendas for the November 2009 Steering Committee and Donor Meetings?</p> <p><i>The Committee agreed with the draft agendas with one modification. The third point of the Steering Committee agenda is to be modified to read "Results of the PARIS21 Evaluation / Future Strategy for the Partnership". The Secretariat will explore the possibility of organising a meeting in one of the evenings/mornings of the Consortium to review (and prepare the Steering Committee discussion on) the strategy for the future.</i></p>