

Record of the Proceedings

Chairs: Pali Lehohla & Eckhard Deutscher

I. Opening Statement

1. The chair of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) commented that the PARIS21 Consortium meeting had delivered a clear message that without statistics there can be no decision-making. Statistical development is converging more and more closely with development in general, including the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. He praised the Dakar Declaration for the Development of Statistics (DDDS) for its very clear language. Development has a specific, professional language which is not always easily understood by other parts of society. The DDDS, on the other hand, is understandable and clear. In particular, the Declaration calls for a strong commitment on partnership and co-ordination, which were highlighted as priorities during the Consortium proceedings.

2. The developing country co-chair said that the Partnership's achievements are phenomenal. The questions from 10 years ago are quite different from those today. Ten years ago the door to policy-makers was locked shut to the statistical world; today the door is open and policymakers are talking to us. Statisticians can no longer be simple technocrats; they need to be leaders. Statistics have never seen as many resources as they have in the last five years. The question is how well the Partnership is going to use those resources, recognising that still more are needed.

II. Results from the Consortium Meeting

3. The Secretariat Manager briefly presented the results from the Consortium meeting. He felt that the meeting had been very successful, as it helped renew the partnership. All participants agreed that PARIS21 should scale up support to statistics, raise the visibility of statistics, and raise statistics as a political — and not just technical — issue. Aid effectiveness and mutual accountability were cited frequently. Some 440 people attended, including over 350 from abroad. Less than 100 were sponsored by the Secretariat and another 50 were sponsored by other institutions. This shows a strong commitment from our partners. The variety of attendees — Pacific, Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia, statisticians, policymakers, media, civil society, academia — shows this commitment. PARIS21 should involve the diversity of the partnership more in the future. He said that the Secretariat is looking forward to the implementation of the DDDS. He called on partners to share their experiences in and reactions from presenting the DDDS in their own institutions. He affirmed that the new strategy for the partnership — once approved — would be translated into new governance arrangements, a new logical framework, and Programs of Work and Budget for each biennium.

Discussion

4. Steering Committee members highlighted the need to scale-up co-ordination efforts and the key role PARIS21 — and in particular its Secretariat — ought to play in this. PARIS21 should make

clear to the “bad donors” when they are duplicating efforts and where there are gaps to be filled. The representative from France commented that the establishment of partnerships at the country level would enable PARIS21 to identify cases in which donors are behaving poorly. The Secretariat should continue to support the creation of these national partnerships. The representative from the United Kingdom suggested that PARIS21 leverage engagement in statistical development from the major development issues, including sector-specific and cross-cutting international processes. For example, PARIS21 should play an active role the preparatory process leading up to the 2010 UN Summit. The IMF representative encouraged the organisation of regional High-Level Forums on advocacy, as was done recently in Trinidad-and-Tobago for Caribbean states. Several participants called on PARIS21 to engage a wider partnership, *inter alia*, to mobilise greater resources for statistics. Users such as those from civil society and private sector should be brought into the fold, as should donors who have been less active or collaborative in supporting statistics. The DAC chair countered that financing will not be easier in the future. He therefore committed himself to raising the need for more financing to statistics in his discussions with DAC finance ministers.

III. Report back on earlier discussions on the Future Strategy for the Partnership

5. The developing country chair outlined the process by which the future strategy for the partnership had come to being. The PARIS21 Bureau met on 4 November to discuss the strategy and reworked it into a shape more suitable for discussion in the informal meeting of 16 November. Participants in the informal meeting suggested some changes, which the Secretariat has since incorporated into the version available today. The strategy identifies areas for improvement for the future, including getting supply closer to user needs. The DDDS converges on section D of the strategy. The Secretariat Manager explained that the strategy draws on the evaluation, the DDDS, and “PARIS21 at Ten” document. In terms of process, the next step is the redrafting of the logical framework, governance arrangements, and work programme for 2011–12. All of these items will be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting in Paris.

Discussion

6. Participants again underscored the role of PARIS21 in partner co-ordination and mobilising financial resources. The Steering Committee requested that the strategy be time-bound and suggested a five-year timeframe with a mid-term review. The title of the document is now “Strategy for the Partnership 2010–2014.”

IV. PARIS21 Work Programme for 2010 (Updated)

7. In presenting the PARIS21 work programme for 2010, the Secretariat pointed out that the Steering Committee had already formally approved it in previous meetings. The programme to be presented is an updated version, which does not yet include the results of the evaluation nor those of the Consortium. The Secretariat then outlined the five main objectives of the work programme: (i) fostering the partnership, (ii) pursuing NSDS country-based activities, (iii) implementing advocacy strategies, (iv) improving the tools, and (v) securing funding.

8. The Secretariat then outlined the current budget situation and announced that discussions have recently been held with three new donors. The Secretariat mentioned the establishment of a

new task team (citing the slogan developed by the Health Metrics Network: “Evidence that Evidence Matters”) to determine how to measure the use of evidence in decision-making. He then requested a decision on the date of the next Steering Committee meeting.

Discussion

9. Several participants asked how the Secretariat identified its priority countries, and the Eurostat representative specifically suggested prioritising those where the needs are perceived to be greatest, for example those in which the World Bank statistical capacity indicator has fallen during the lifetime of PARIS21, in particular below 40; these are mainly in Africa. A further consideration of indicators of statistical capacity also be useful. The Secretariat clarified that an explicit demand from countries was an initial prerequisite and asked that donor partners share information on their programmes with countries so that the Partnership can co-ordinate properly. Participants called on the Secretariat to include a more proactive co-ordination of partners in the work programme, as emphasised in the Consortium meeting. They also called on PARIS21 to engage more with regional institutions (*e.g.*, ACBF, AU, UNECA, AfDB, and Arab research institutes), advocate to donors in addition to countries, facilitate more peer reviews, and develop a strategy for engagement with crisis states. Several participants asked if a discussion on the evaluation report could be convened to finalise and approve it, and the World Bank encouraged the Secretariat to report on the satellite programs’ activities and budget, along with those of the core Secretariat. It was agreed that the PRESS report should be compiled every year and published annually, at least on the PARIS21 web site. The meeting noted a letter from the Chair of SDMX asking for SDMX to be systematically included in NSDSs.

10. Lastly, on the date of the next Steering Committee meeting, after several proposals, no final objection was expressed to the dates of 3–4 June 2010 in Paris, with a seminar on the Thursday and the Steering Committee on the Friday. The meeting will be organised around the OECD Committee on Statistics and the Conference of European Statisticians, which will be held from 7–10 June 2010 in Paris.