



Record of the Proceedings

Chair: Shaida Badiie, World Bank

Thursday, 5 June 2008

I. Opening Statement

1. The chair welcomed participants and presented the day's programme. She commented that traditionally these donors meetings address PARIS21 funding issues and review reports of the World Bank's Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB); however, today's meeting will include a new item, the proposed Statistics for Results Facility (SRF) which is in a sense the offspring of PARIS21 and TFSCB.

II. Adoption of Agenda

2. The agenda was adopted without modifications.

III. Statistics for Results Facility

3. The PARIS21 Secretariat Manager presented the SRF. The facility's goal is to "accelerate the strengthening of statistical systems in participating countries, so that there is a sustained improvement in the production of reliable statistics in order to better measure and manage for development results." This objective is perfectly consistent with the PARIS21 and Managing for Development Results (MfDR) agendas. The SRF is an attempt to scale up and streamline support to statistical capacity building, with its primary focus being on the implementation of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). Specifically, the facility is intended to provide additional resources to complement national and donor resources to implement NSDS through a sector-wide approach (SWAp). It emphasises a user-producer-donor partnership to provide better co-ordinated and harmonised financial aid and technical assistance. This approach builds on the achievements and developments over the last 10 years, including those of PARIS21, the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS), and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Pressure to scale up support has come from the Hanoi Roundtable on MfDR, including follow-up meetings in Washington and Paris. The SRF represents a new way of working, plus a fund to provide incentives to work in this way. It places attention firmly at country level, with donors and countries working more closely together, and closer links between sector-wide plans for statistics and needs of development policy. The facility can help in many ways, including:

- **Strengthening national partnership arrangements:** A defined group of key stakeholders will help develop, agree, and implement a plan for improving statistics that are relevant for results. These arrangements will build on existing mechanisms (e.g., using existing monitoring & evaluation groups or others) and link with other groups. It is important that a key policy body (as well as the national statistical office) exercise a leadership role to ensure that efforts respond to needs. A lead donor should be identified.
- **Developing an agreed NSDS implementation or statistical improvement plan:** If an NSDS already exists, the national partnership will develop and agree a plan for implementing it. The plan will be costed, consultative, and results-focused, identifying and mobilising technical assistance needs. If the country is not ready for a full NSDS, the national partnership will develop a prioritised statistical improvement plan, a sort of interim NSDS similar in function to an interim PRSP.
- **Filling financing gaps:** The primary focus will be to raise resources at the national level through the national partnership. In the case of a demonstrated financing gap, the facility can provide funds through a flexible World Bank trust fund. Initially, two donors have pledged to finance the facility



(Netherlands and the United Kingdom). A Management Committee composed of contributing donors, the World Bank, and PARIS21 will provide oversight of the funds.

4. The proposed governance arrangements recommend that the national partnerships be led by country authorities themselves, with support provided at the global level by the PARIS21 Steering Committee, MAPS Advisory Group, and a Management Committee, along with a Secretariat housed in the World Bank. In the initial pilot phase, the Management Committee will identify candidate countries and invite their participation, who will be required to define national partnerships and develop agreed statistical improvement plans. After the pilot phases, countries will submit official requests for support. The grants will be supervised either by the World Bank or by another donor. If the grant is supervised by the World Bank, it will be implemented by national authorities and supervised by the World Bank country team (typical case) or implemented and supervised by the World Bank country team (in cases of weak national implementation capacity). If the grant is supervised by another donor, the funds will be transferred either directly to the donor or to a central fund and implemented according to that donor's procedures. In both cases, the use of SWAPs and harmonised approaches are encouraged.

5. The following three country examples (and possible pilot countries) offer interesting situations in which the SRF could effectively intervene:

- **Ghana:** The local partnership is forming, with AfDB/EC/DFID/World Bank. DFID/World Bank are taking the lead. Local donor funds are to be pooled in a World Bank trust fund for Ghana. A funding gap is likely although the NSDS is not yet fully developed.
- **Mozambique:** The country has a fully developed and costed NSDS for 2008–2012, with the government promoting a national partnership effort with donors. Denmark is the lead donor agency (pooling Danish and Norwegian funds). Funds have been identified to implement the NSDS, but a gap remains.
- **Afghanistan:** A multi-donor scoping mission is being organised by the Asian Development Bank, who have also agreed to be lead donor in a national partnership and will provide some grant financing.

6. At the global level, participating donor agencies are asked to support the facility, commit to its principles, and contribute financially to the fund. Regional statistical agencies provide a co-ordination framework for the provision of technical assistance by national statistical offices from both developed and developing countries. At the country level, donor agencies are asked to participate in and/or lead national partnership arrangements, consider scaling-up support to statistics, adhere to Paris Declaration principles, provide joint funding of NSDS implementation, and help countries with their funding proposals. Pilot countries are asked to strengthen the user–producer dialogue, design an NSDS implementation/statistical improvement plan, develop partnerships with donors, and prepare a funding proposal if needed. Statistical agencies are asked to provide co-ordinated technical assistance and support to participating countries.

7. The Secretariat Manager concluded by offering some discussion points: how can we make this new approach work in all countries, what can we do to speed up progress, what can we do to help countries which are not in the pilot phase, how can we ensure that we see results from the pilots, how can donors and statistical agencies from donor countries use this new initiative to make their statistical support more effective, and how can we scale the facility up after the pilot phase?

Discussion

8. Participants applauded the SRF's focus on Paris Declaration principles: ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results, and mutual accountability. The representatives from Ghana and Mozambique described how their respective situations are in line with the goals of this facility. In Ghana, the NSDS will be launched by end June, with a technical advisor provided by the UK and stationed in the



World Bank office in Accra to assist in co-ordinating support and with the management of the funds for the strategy's implementation. Joint UK–World Bank missions to the country also helped Ghana bring other donors on board. Mozambique began implementation of its current system-wide strategy in January 2008 and has set up a steering committee of all nine co-operating partners, chaired by the National Statistical Institute. Chairing by the country has helped ensure ownership, a critical element to the strategy's success.

9. Some participants sounded a note of caution regarding the need for and the allocation of additional funds. The Eurostat representative called on the SRF to mobilise the resources already available rather than propose new funds. The Swedish representative advised against the SRF becoming yet another vertical fund and questioned who would assess the funding gaps from a neutral angle. The representative from South Africa commented that the facility should be used as a catalyst for domestic resources to finance national statistical systems. The Dutch representative clarified that the intention of the facility is to decrease the fragmentation of statistical initiatives and provide the necessary scaling-up of resources.

10. Participants requested various clarifications on the framework document, which the chair proposed be explicitly addressed in the next version of the note. Namely, these points are: the difference between the facility and the TFSCB, greater emphasis on the facility's sector-wide approach, better co-ordination at the national level, national ownership, pooling resources already available to fill gaps, bringing other stakeholders into the governance arrangements, provision of technical assistance, and support to fragile states and non-IDA countries. The chair closed by thanking participants for a very useful discussion and concluded that there was general support for the SRF. She expressed her desire that the chair of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) writes to all donors to call on them to support the SRF.

IV. PARIS21 Funding and Donor Issues

11. The Secretariat Manager presented the current funding situation of the Secretariat. The Secretariat's budget is composed entirely of voluntary contributions and follows OECD financial rules. In addition to direct funding to the Secretariat budget, there also exists parallel funding (e.g., DFID secondment to the International Household Survey Network programme and funding of the satellite programmes). Many donors participate in PARIS21 funding and over extended periods. The Secretariat is discussing with new, potential funders as well. He thanked those donors who have agreed to an extension of grant closing dates, as disbursement periods are sometimes quite short. He then presented the costing for the 2009–2010 period, sketching a brief outline of where figures have been allocated in the work programme relative to previous years. He then presented the funding needs for the upcoming biennium (1.1m euros in 2009 and 2.7m euros in 2010). On behalf of the PARIS21 Secretariat, he thanked all the many donors who have placed their trust in PARIS21 to carry out this important work.

Discussion

12. Many of the donors present expressed their strong support to PARIS21 as well as their intentions to fund the PARIS21 Secretariat in the coming years, as outlined below:

- **World Bank** contributions will continue at the same level as 2007 – 2008. This will be for the core work programme, as well as for the International Household Survey Network and Accelerated Data Program (1 million and 2 million dollars respectively for the satellite programmes).
- The **United Kingdom** intends to continue to provide financial support and is considering 1–2 million euros over the next two years. The UK representative commented that it would be useful to show the 2007 expenditure in the same table with planned 2008 planned expenditure and 2009–10 planned expenditure. She also asked for clarification on why the expenditure is proposed to increase so dramatically.
- **Spain** intends to contribute 1 million euros for the next four years (i.e., 250k/year).



- **Greece** announced that they will contribute financially for the first time, proposing 200k euros for 2009–2010 (i.e., 100k/year).
- **Belgium** announced that they will continue to contribute. By end 2008, they will deliver 200k euros, but for 2009–2010, supplementary amounts will be decided after the Accra High Level Forum in September.
- **Norway** intends to contribute at least at the same level as in 2007 but have not yet made a decision on the specific size of the contribution. The Norwegian representative recommended that PARIS21 issue a joint donor agreement to enable donors to pledge directly to it. The representative proposed that the donors meeting be moved from the Spring to Autumn session so that they can be more precise in the level of contribution.
- **Ireland** is not yet in a position to say how much they can contribute for 2009–2010, but this issue is being discussed at headquarters. The Irish representative supported the Norway proposal to revisit this point in the Autumn meeting.
- **France** is currently unsure which governmental body will be in charge of support to statistics, now that French co-operation is being reorganised. Once that issue has been resolved, France can determine how much will be offered to PARIS21 and the TFSCB.
- **Sweden** announced that they still had not yet decided if they will prioritise support to statistics, but there are indications that statistics will be a high priority. They are monitoring this situation and will inform the Secretariat as soon as decisions have been finalised. They will have a clearer picture in the Autumn.
- **Switzerland** intends to contribute in 2008 at the same level as previous years. As their co-operation programme is also in a process of reorganisation, it is not yet known how high on the agenda support to statistics will be.
- The **Netherlands** have set aside some funds for PARIS21. The Dutch representative welcomed the revised PARIS21 logframe which helps define results and in turn helps him justify his contribution to PARIS21. The Netherlands are looking forward to seeing the baseline data on partnership progress later this year.
- **Canada**, who supports statistical capacity building through several mechanisms, is considering renewed funding to PARIS21 in the future and is looking forward to the evaluation results in 2010.

13. The director of the OECD's Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD), host of PARIS21, thanked all donors and commented that institutional arrangements between PARIS21 and DCD are very strong. He said that it is very encouraging to see that PARIS21 funding levels so far are at the same level as before, in particular as the PARIS21 programme is more important than ever. The Secretariat Manager thanked all donors for the support expressed. He explained that the increase in the budget between 2008 and 2009 is due to the Consortium meeting plus work at the country level (which is more expensive than work at regional level). He confirmed that we can indeed come back to donor issues in the Autumn meeting. The chair concluded by saying that there has been a clear expression of support for PARIS21 work. The Autumn meeting could help in giving us a more complete picture of the level of this support.

V. TFSCB Management Report

14. The chair of the TFSCB Internal Management Committee (IMC) presented the TFSCB Progress Report. He affirmed that the TFSCB is closely aligned with the results agenda and the MAPS. He emphasised that although the TFSCB is administered and managed by the Bank, once a project is approved, it is country-owned and -executed. The fund supports three types of projects: (1) development of NSDS, (2) non-NSDS statistical capacity building projects, and (3) the participation of developing country statisticians at major international conferences. The TFSCB tries to maintain a 60%/40% balance between NSDS and non-NSDS projects approved. There is a ceiling of US\$400k per project, with a maximum implementation period of three years. Projects can be country-specific, regional, or global in scope.



15. There have been three separate funds in the history of the TFSCB. The emphasis continues to be on the preparation of NSDSs. The second fund (TFSCB II) has approved 72 projects: 38 of these are active, 20 are completed and closed, and 14 have been approved but are not yet active. Twenty-five non-NSDS projects were rejected. The most recent fund (TFSCB III) started in 2007 with a new fee structure. So far, it has committed over US\$0.5m to two projects, with an additional US\$3.3m in projects approved in the recent May 2008 window. A total of US\$15.57m is expected to be available in TFSCB III to commit to new projects, assuming the donors approve rolling over the TFSCB I balance into the current fund. The World Bank will contact the donors individually to request this. Contributors to TFSCB III include Canada, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. Some of the TFSCB II contributors have not contributed to the third phase.

16. The high demand for accessing the fund is expected to continue. Following the 2007 Hanoi Roundtable and subsequent discussions on scaling up, the TFSCB will need to support the move from preparation to implementation of NSDSs and can act as a bridge until the SRF is up and running.

17. The World Bank representative then presented a few issues for discussion: what should be the role of the TFSCB in the scaling-up initiative and the SRF, how can the TFSCB provide support to countries emerging from conflict and with special statistical needs, should the current ceiling on project size be adjusted (for instance, to US\$500k), should there be a joint evaluation with PARIS21, and should the TFSCB consider funding projects within the Poverty Analysis and Data Initiative (PADI)? He also requested that participants think about how to participate in the funding of the next round of the International Comparison Program, which will require significant funds. A few options were presented, including a mega trust fund or a small central fund with regional funds complementing it.

VI. TFSCB Advisory Panel Report

18. The chair of the TFSCB Advisory Panel presented the results of its fifth meeting and its report to the TFSCB Consultative Group. He presented the following 12 recommendations that the Advisory Panel has issued:

1. Eight years after the creation of TFSCB, the extent to which countries have produced an NSDS and have implemented and updated it should be assessed.
2. It is important to maintain a good balance between project proposals on social and economic statistics and increase the number of projects in the domain of environmental statistics.
3. IMC should track whether the emerging interest in social statistics is a general trend or a temporary spike.
4. A study should be conducted to better define the framework for priority data needs in countries still in conflict, the specific ways to collect them, and how the NSDS process can be utilised in post-conflict countries.
5. Regional strategies for the development of statistics have to be prepared, in particular in regions or sub-regions composed of poor, small countries.
6. For efficiency, a single international organisation may be assigned to the financial management and secretarial work relating to the pooled resources on meetings. If the regulatory provisions of these official organisations do not permit management by a single official organisation of such a pool, then an independent international organisation such as the International Statistical Institute (ISI) involved in similar activities might be assigned this task with certain guidelines.
7. A more permanent source for financing developing countries' participation at international conferences, congresses, seminars, and workshops (rather than repeated applications to TFSCB) should be sought.
8. A working group (composed of representatives of TFSCB management, PARIS21, and the international organisations with interests at stake) should examine whether the case of meetings



organised by official international bodies has to be dealt with in a different way from the case of meetings organised by scientific NGOs.

9. TFSCB may and should encourage capacity building proposals from basic training centres based on a framework and action plan developed after an analytical study of their current status on their academic programmes, resources, capacities, and effective delivery of services.
10. A more permanent source for financing the delivery of scholarships should be sought.
11. A study should be prepared to propose the best ways of providing feedback on best practices and guidelines for improving the practices.
12. TFSCB should be provided with funding in the coming years and its mandate expanded so that they can finance the updating of NSDS and preparations required to convert them into action plans for implementation.

Discussion

19. Opinions were divided on the issues of TFSCB disbursement speed and its funding of developing country statisticians at international conferences. While some felt that the sluggishness of grant disbursement was a reality that had to be recognised, others argued that it represented a key constraint for recipient countries trying to design their NSDS. And although some participants were cautious about using TFSCB funds to finance the participation of developing country statisticians at key international meetings, others pointed out that few funds exist to ensure that the developing country voice is heard in these fora, in particular for UN statutory meetings.

20. Participants also raised the issue of NSDS quality, urging PARIS21 and the TFSCB to be more actively involved in NSDS preparation and the monitoring of quality. The Secretariat Manager clarified that the Secretariat prefers to use peer reviews to assess NSDS quality rather than impose an external model or format for strategies which does not align with national specificities.

21. The chair took note of the recommendations to look at the quality of NSDSs, issues specific to fragile situations and small island states, and regional efforts. Participants expressed moral support for PADI and urged a repurposing of the TFSCB to address training issues.

VII. Closing Remarks

22. The chair closed the meeting by pointing out that, in 2003–2004, this event was a meeting of a small group of donors talking mostly about resources. But today's participation shows that the partnership has come a long way by addressing strategic and higher-level issues.