



PARIS21 STEERING COMMITTEE Meeting

13 June 2002
OECD, Paris

Proceedings

Session 1: Morning Session

Welcome by Chairman and Adoption of Agenda

1.1 Chairman Pali Lehohla, Statistician-General of Statistics South Africa, opened the meeting by welcoming participants and asking that they introduce themselves. The Chair reported apologies received from Dr. Hasan Abu-Libdeh and regretted that the situation in Palestine allowed the representative for the Arab States to be present only in spirit. The Chair formally thanked Mr. Guest Charumbira's contribution to and leadership of PARIS21 during his tenure as co-chair of the Consortium. The Chair said that PARIS21's positive progress is largely thanks to Mr. Charumbira. The Chair then asked the participants to adopt the agenda.

Presentation of the PARIS21 Progress Report

1.2 As an introduction to the presentation on the progress report [see document *P21SC1(2002)1*], the Secretariat said that they have become convinced that the PARIS21 mandate can be achieved. The recent meetings in Tunisia, South Africa, and the Andean Community demonstrated the commitment of policymakers and data producers to achieve goals common to them and to PARIS21. However, the Secretariat cautioned that PARIS21 will have difficulty in meeting the enormous demands of countries for support.

Comments on the PARIS21 Progress Report

- The UK representative commented that PARIS21 was originally conceived to act as a catalyst then to allow the bilateral donors to move in, but according to the progress report this does not seem to be happening quickly enough. The Secretariat agreed to consider a strategy for dealing with the accelerating demand for country work, but PARIS21 may need funds for quick-acting support to countries, if that is acceptable to the Committee and the host organisation OECD.

Regional Workshops

1.3 The Secretariat reported that the recent Andean Community workshop was a success because it led to fruitful country dialogue and a programme of future country workshops and action. The PARIS21 Secretariat has decided to divide the West Africa workshop into two sessions to facilitate manageable country participation. More preparatory work must be done on the country level before the workshop. For the Asia region workshops, PARIS21 has decided to divide Asian Development Bank countries into four workshops (8–12 countries each). During the recent Tunisia meeting, PARIS21 and its partners discussed where and when to hold an Arab States workshop. PARIS21 and the countries and organisations concerned are now making concrete plans for the workshop.

Comments on Regional Workshops

- The Francophone Africa representative questioned if the proposal of smaller groups at workshops is a good idea, since the strength of these events is in exchanging information and experiences from as many sources as possible. The Swiss representative commented on the need to respond effectively to the expectations raised by regional workshops. He also said that although PARIS21 is intended to act as a catalyst, it needs to help countries look forward and propose follow-up to the workshops.

Country Follow-up

1.4 The Secretariat spoke of the recent workshop in South Africa and mentioned that country-level demand for PARIS21's services is accelerating. PARIS21 needs additional skills (beyond statistical skills) to assist countries. In particular, facilitation skills before and during the workshops are required, as are planning skills for poverty monitoring and expertise for developing plans for an entire statistical system. The Chair echoed this plea for facilitation skills. He also mentioned that the reality of developing indicators needs to be discussed and experience shared between countries.

Task Teams

Statistical Capacity Building Indicators (SCBI) Task Team

1.5 The SCBI task team convenor gave a presentation that outlined the team's efforts in indicators of statistical capacity. A questionnaire had been developed to collect the information needed for the indicators. The team has developed qualitative (process-type) indicators that would be usable with any statistical output, as well as quantitative (resources and output-based) indicators that would be usable for any data-producing agency. [Note: see page 2 of the questionnaire in document *P21SC1(2002)3.4* for more information.] In a country, the questionnaire is intended to be distributed by the data-producing agency responsible for statistical coordination to statistical units within Ministries and data-producing agencies. The convenor asked the Steering Committee to look at the questionnaire and provide feedback in order to finalise its content and format.

Strategic Statistical Development Plan (SSDP) Task Team

1.6 The Secretariat expressed regrets that the SSDP task team convenor could not attend the meeting but was pleased to announce that he will join the Secretariat in September 2002. The team hopes to develop SSDP guidelines by the end of the year. [See document *P21SC1(2002)3.2* for more details.]

Advocacy Task Team

1.7 The Advocacy Task Team Convenor announced that the team's work was more or less completed in July 2001. [See document *P21SC1(2002)3.1* for more details.] The convenor then offered some observations on improving the effectiveness of task teams: (1) teams work best when there is a specific product and a clear time period; (2) convenors should clarify before starting work the level of administrative backup (provided by the Secretariat or otherwise) available to the team; and (3) there ought to be a method of incorporating the materials produced by a team onto the agendas of events outside of PARIS21.

Rural and Agricultural Statistics Task Team

1.8 In the absence of the task team convenor, the Secretariat reported that there was a preparatory meeting in Rome last week in anticipation of a full meeting in Paris 16–17 September 2002. The Secretariat is confident that in September the team will have a good product to present to donors to promote rural and agricultural statistics. [See document *P21SCI(2002)3.5* for more details.]

Census Task Team

1.9 The Census Task Team Convenor said that the team's meeting in Pretoria, South Africa in November 2001, had been very successful, thanks to partnerships with different actors. Since the Pretoria meeting, Trevor Manuel, the Minister of Finance for South Africa, as part of the NEPAD agenda was acting as a census ambassador to more than 10 countries. However, other progress was limited by human and advocacy resource availability.

General Comments on Task Teams

- The World Bank representative said that PARIS21 needs to define its products very clearly and that teams should not be open-ended groups. They should define their own life cycles and eventually close. Teams should be integrated in order to merge resources. The Advocacy task team convenor said that the Steering Committee should ask teams to propose a business plan with indications of where resources will come from. Teams, prior to closing, should also produce a final report. The Secretariat said that they need input from the Steering Committee to review the performance of task teams. The Swiss representative volunteered to review the Advocacy team. DFID and the EU also volunteered to review teams.

Creation of New Task Team

1.10 The EU representative presented a proposal for a new task team on co-ordinating indicators. The team is intended to assist in identifying appropriate indicators; translate them into appropriate resources and possible support; reconcile long-term and short-term needs; and determine what indicators exist and what others should be developed. The team anticipates a two-year work programme. The World Bank and Eurostat would convene the first meeting 12 September 2002 in Luxembourg, and the team will include the work already underway with the World Bank, MDBs, and all other relevant agencies. The team will not produce a product per se, but rather illuminate the current situation by using five to ten countries as case studies. The team's main focus would be co-ordination of indicators and their proliferation, how more consistent indicator data could be made available and the coherence of the information disseminated by organisations.

Comments on the Creation of New Task Team

- The IMF Representative supported the creation of a team that would shed light on ongoing initiatives and help communicate the information to the stakeholders involved. She cautioned that coordinating and monitoring activities would be too ambitious. She noted that there would be a need to define more clearly the use of the term “indicators,” by delineating the difference between MDG and SCB indicators. The UK representative strongly supported the creation of the team, citing the need for coherence between global and country requirements, particularly if different organisations' databases tell different stories. He also commented that the task team should

consider the issue of co-ordination of support to statistical capacity building generally, as well as co-ordination of indicators. The UNSD representative referred to the work that has been carried out by ECOSOC, and the report of the group on the indicators, which reported to the UNSC. He also drew the attention of the meeting to the MDG database which is available on the UNSC website. The Swiss representative supported the creation of the team and recommended a short-term focus and a regular progress report. The UNDP representative suggested that a revised Terms of Reference (TOR) for the team be circulated within the Steering Committee to avoid duplication of activities.

Participation in Studies

1.11 The Secretariat announced that they have been involved in special, topical studies on poverty analysis and statistical needs for indicators at the request of international organisations and countries.

Information Sharing

1.12 The Secretariat mentioned the newsletter as an example of a PARIS21 effort to share information and announced that future issues will emphasise country-level activities. The CIS Countries representative asked that future issues of the newsletter be translated into Russian. He also proposed that there be a training seminar in the CIS region on poverty reduction issues, as the region is currently facing the challenges of measuring poverty reduction, and Kyrgyzstan had experience to offer to the region. The Secretariat also reported that the website is being updated. Another product of the Secretariat was in production, a video filmed partly during the South Africa workshop, which contains interviews with Clare Short (UK Secretary of State for International Development), Trevor Manuel (South African Minister of Finance), and workshop participants from anglophone Africa. A rough cut is already available for viewing. The Secretariat is also developing a documentation database that is intended to co-ordinate PARIS21's activities and be used as a knowledge base. The Secretariat then asked that the Steering Committee permit a donor exchange pilot programme.

PARIS21 Management: Membership

1.13 The Secretariat reported that the Consortium membership database has been updated and that a new category has been created (Partner Non-members). An HTML version of the membership form will soon be made available online.

PARIS21 Evaluation

1.14 The Secretariat reported that an interim evaluation of PARIS21 is planned for June 2002, with the comprehensive evaluation to follow in June 2003. The evaluation's TOR has been proposed, and candidates have been identified to carry out the evaluation. The Secretariat asked for the Steering Committee's input on the TOR and guidance on how to proceed.

Comments on PARIS21 Evaluation

- The World Bank representative reminded the Steering Committee that the World Bank has allocated US\$100,000 for the full evaluation. She said that the interim evaluation will help set the framework and indicators for the comprehensive evaluation. The French representative recommended that the interim evaluation be postponed by six months to enable the new

management structure of PARIS21 to take effect. The UK representative said that since the PARIS21 work plan is in place until December 2003 an interim evaluation is needed; however, it could be a very light evaluation. The EU representative commented that the evaluation is intended to look at the whole process and not just the Secretariat; therefore, the evaluation is important. After some debate, the Chair concluded that the Steering Committee appeared to think that a fully fleshed-out evaluation in June 2003 is necessary but that an interim evaluation is not. Instead, well-defined criteria should be developed by the Secretariat soon, ready for the comprehensive evaluation in 2003.

Joint Session with the OECD's Development Assistance Committee

1.15 This session was postponed and may be reconvened during the October 2002 Consortium meeting.

Session 2: Continuation of Morning Session

PARIS21 Management: Consortium Meeting

2.1 The Consortium meeting was scheduled for 17–18 October 2002. The Secretariat pointed out that one seat on the Steering Committee was vacant (Asian representative) and the results of the Asian election must be ratified by the Consortium meeting. It was suggested that PARIS21 should rethink the need for or the function of a Consortium meeting, since regional workshops are already being held in most regions this year.

Comments on PARIS21 Management: Consortium Meeting

- The UNDP representative commented that the last Consortium meeting lacked structure and focus. He felt that clear outputs should be planned from Consortium meetings. The World Bank representative suggested that the October 2002 meeting could be postponed to allow enough time to develop the agenda and output. The anglophone Africa representative said that a Consortium meeting is necessary to bring a global experience together all in one room. He suggested that it could be held once every two years. The French representative said that it would be difficult to postpone this year's meeting. He suggested that a partial meeting (with a reduced list of participants) could be held one year, then a full meeting the following year. The UK representative suggested that an invitation to the Consortium meeting could be extended to recent regional workshop organisers and participants to discuss the results. The OECD representative pointed out that in January 2004 the Secretariat's location is up for renewal and therefore a Consortium meeting in 2003 is essential. The Secretariat commented that with their full work programme, organising a useful Consortium meeting with good speakers would take up valuable time and resources. The World Bank representative recommended that the Secretariat circulate a revised Consortium meeting agenda to the Steering Committee. After further debate, the Chair concluded that the October 2002 Consortium meeting will take place, but be limited in scope. PARIS21 will re-evaluate the function and scope of these meetings. A full Consortium meeting will be postponed until October 2003, and the Secretariat will circulate to the Steering Committee a new proposal for the October 2002 meeting.

PARIS21 Africa Chapter

2.2 The anglophone Africa representative informed the Committee that a PARIS21 Africa Chapter was approved by CODI in 2001, but that no further progress had been made. He formally requested the Steering Committee's opinion of establishing the Chapter in order to provide PARIS21 with a focal point and to mobilise best practices and experience across the continent. To consult the proposal's TOR, see document *P21SC1(2002)7*.

Comments on the PARIS21 Africa Chapter

- The UK representative asked what additional value the Chapter would add to the work already being undertaken by regional and sub-regional organisations. The outgoing Chair suggested that this issue be held over until after PARIS21's comprehensive evaluation. The French representative said that an Africa Chapter is not a good solution. A "mini" PARIS21 devoted just to Africa would be closed to external experiences. The Chair proposed that the TOR be refined and resubmitted to the Secretariat. He suggested a small resource or task force attached to the Chair's office could be a focal point for PARIS21 in NEPAD. PARIS21 must estimate the resources involved in creating and maintaining the Chapter and keep any proposal light in bureaucracy. The Steering Committee will re-evaluate the feasibility and utility of the Chapter.

World Bank Trust Fund Report

2.3 The World Bank representative commented that the World Bank Trust Fund is running out of funds and that new pledges of support are needed. For more details on his report, consult document number *P21SC1(2002)8*.

2.4 The Secretariat made a plea to donors to continue funding the Trust Fund, the Secretariat, and country-level activities.

2.5 The representative of France requested information about which activities in the Trust Fund had arisen from PARIS21 action and was also reassured that funds were not being used for survey running costs.

PARIS21 Financial Report

2.6 The Secretariat presented the PARIS21 financial report. See the annexes of document number *P21SC1(2002)1*. The Secretariat commented that INSEE/France has provided the Secretariat with a full-time staff person beginning in October 2002. He also said that PARIS21 is US\$2 million short for next year and that the Secretariat is seeking more funding from bilateral and multilateral donors.

2.7 The OECD representative said that in September 2002, PARIS21 could bring up financing issues at a possible OECD meeting about OECD's assistance to statistics.

2.8 The French representative requested that the Secretariat demonstrate its full cost and from where all of its funding originates. The Secretariat agreed to this proposal after this year's activities are complete.

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