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PARIS21 ANNUAL REPORT ON 2010-11 ACTIVITIES AND THE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

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ANNUAL REPORT BY THE PARIS21 SECRETARIAT ON 2010–11 ACTIVITIES AND THE FUTURE PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET

Background

1. PARIS21¹ is an international partnership of policymakers, analysts, and statisticians, from countries and development agencies across the world. The partnership aims to stimulate greater demand, availability, and use of better statistics and statistical analysis in national, international, and civil society decision-making. This is achieved through advocacy, methodology development, information-sharing, promotion of donor collaboration, resource mobilisation, and other support for countries.

2. The main thrust of PARIS21 work consists in assisting developing countries (in particular, lower-income and lower middle income countries) in the design, implementation, and monitoring of national strategies for the development of statistics (NSDS) in order to have, *inter alia*, nationally owned and produced data for all Millennium Development Goal indicators and all development policy needs. The overall goal of the Partnership is to develop a culture of management for development results.

3. The PARIS21 Secretariat's programme of work is structured along the following lines: (i) **co-ordination** of stakeholders to better address an evolving agenda, (ii) **advocacy** for increased use and development of statistics, (iii) promoting better-quality and effectively implemented **NSDSs**, and (iv) improving **knowledge for statistics**, by stimulating increased demand for and better use of data. Progress in each of these programme components is outlined below.

Progress in PARIS21 Activities in 2010 and the First Half of 2011

Co-ordination

4. To promote effective collaboration among development partners, the PARIS21 Secretariat has developed a Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS), which collects and analyses information on support to statistical development in developing countries from financial and technical partners. PRESS facilitates an easier exchange of information on statistical activities being carried out and planned in recipient countries.

5. The exercise draws on information provided in the DAC's Creditor Reporting System (CRS) for DAC members and supplements these data through an adapted online questionnaire. While the PRESS does collect data on commitment and disbursement levels, it is not intended to be an accounting exercise but rather a tool for collaboration. It provides a snapshot of who is doing what and where.

6. In 2010, PARIS21 conducted the third PRESS round, covering the period 2008–10. Among the key messages that emerged are the following:

¹ The Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) was launched at a meeting convened by the DAC in November 1999. See summary record [DCD/DAC(2000)4]. The Partnership's Secretariat is hosted by the OECD's Development Co-operation Directorate.

- Despite the recent financial crisis, PRESS figures suggest that global estimated commitments to statistical development have actually increased over the past three PRESS rounds (covering the periods 2006–08, 2007–09, and 2008–10). However, looking more closely at the numbers over the 2010 PRESS round, the individual years of this three-year cycle have seen a sharp decline in commitments.
- Furthermore the share of aid to statistics relative to total ODA has declined. In the period 2006–08, the share was 0.23% and in 2007–09 it had decreased to 0.19%. Disaggregated ODA figures that would allow the calculation of this percentage for the period 2008–10 were not available at the time the present report was written; however, ODA flows from DAC members in 2010 have reached the highest real ODA level ever. Furthermore, a recent OECD survey suggests that most donors will increase aid over the coming three years, albeit at a reduced rate. Therefore, since the trend in support to statistics would appear to be downward and ODA figures for 2010 and beyond are expected to rise, the share of aid to statistics relative to total ODA is likely to sink even further in the future.
- Statistical support is highly concentrated: a mere fifteen countries (Nigeria, India, Mozambique, Afghanistan, Kenya, Sudan, Ukraine, Haiti, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Malawi, Pakistan, Albania, Burkina Faso, and Mali) had estimated commitments that combined to equal 45% of total estimated commitments worldwide and 48% of total country-specific commitments.
- Applying the DCD–developed methodology for measuring aid fragmentation, PRESS figures reveal that 37.5% of aid relationships among the top 15 recipients were “non-significant”. These relationships represented only 4.0% of aid to statistics to these countries.
- In terms of alignment with NSDSs, the PRESS data suggest that a little less than a third of aid to statistics is aligned with nationally owned strategies.

7. Based on feedback from PRESS reporters, the PARIS21 Secretariat has resolved a number of technical issues related to the online questionnaire in order to strengthen the user-friendliness of the interface. In addition, in early 2011, PARIS21 and UNESCAP conducted a joint assessment of the PRESS and produced a number of recommendations for fine-tuning the system. For instance, PARIS21 has produced a guide for PRESS reporters that provides detailed explanations on how to complete the online questionnaire. The 2011 Round of the PRESS was launched in May 2011, and its results will be published in Q4 2011.

Advocacy

8. Since its creation, PARIS21 has played a key role in advocating for increased involvement of national stakeholders in statistical development and enhancing the status of statistics in major international initiatives. Among its 2010 advocacy activities, PARIS21 supported 22 countries or regional entities in producing booklets promoting their national statistical system and strategic planning processes and in organising advocacy seminars or donor roundtables. NSDS–linked advocacy material was widely produced on demand and disseminated by the countries in specific national and regional events. Advocacy products ranged from booklets, summaries, leaflets, and posters to video clips. The first-ever celebration of World Statistics Day on 20 October 2010 generated even further demand from countries. As an example, with PARIS21 support, El Salvador produced a poster to mark the occasion, an NSDS booklet that was distributed during the NSDS launching event to high-level participants, along with an NSDS–oriented advocacy clip that was viewed during this same event. As a CENTROESTAD (Statistical Commission of SICA) member, El Salvador also collaborated with PARIS21 to produce a regional booklet on the harmonisation of regional statistics and their importance for the Central American integration process.

Support to NSDS Processes

9. The NSDS is the centrepiece of PARIS21's work. In 2010, the PARIS21 Secretariat directly supported 35 countries or regional entities in NSDS and regional strategy processes (including mainstreaming agricultural statistical development in three countries), in conducting peer reviews, and in preparing interventions at donor roundtables. Among the many NSDS success stories in which PARIS21 has been involved, the Lao PDR case stands out. PARIS21 supported Lao PDR in consolidating three separate strategic planning processes into a single NSDS, drawing on the priorities and input of actors within the national statistical system and the community of donors. In addition, PARIS21 conducted joint missions with the FAO to help the country in designing a strategy to develop agricultural statistics that is integrated into their NSDS. The NSDS process that Lao PDR has conducted has already resulted in several positive outcomes: a new statistics law, an official national advocacy day, the upgrading of the Department of Statistics into a sub-ministry, renewed trust and interest by the government, agreement to establish a national statistical council and a national partnership (country–donor co-ordination group), and a considerably raised profile for the statistical system as a whole. The Laotian example has achieved such impressive results that the World Bank–managed Statistics for Results Facility (SRF) Catalytic Fund has extended an invitation to the country to apply for funds to support strategy implementation.

10. The Secretariat regularly reports on worldwide progress in designing and implementing NSDSs, covering International Development Association (IDA) borrower countries, lower middle income countries, and all countries in Africa. Of the 118 countries covered in the NSDS reports, 89% have adopted the NSDS approach as of March 2011. This includes 96% of African countries. Nearly 46% of countries globally were implementing a statistical strategy, 29% were designing a strategy, and 14% were planning one. Most of the countries that are not in the midst of an NSDS process are in general special cases, for example, fragile or small island developing states.

Knowledge for Statistics

11. At the recommendation of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics Advisory Board and with the approval of the PARIS21 Steering Committee, DAC, OECD Budget Committee, and OECD Council [see C/M(2006)6], the PARIS21 Secretariat implements two satellite programmes — the International Household Survey Network (IHSN) and the Accelerated Data Program (ADP) — as partnerships with the World Bank and with the active participation of many other international partners.

12. The ADP and IHSN have been very successful in improving data archiving/dissemination and harmonising survey methods in developing countries. The tools and methodologies that these two programmes offer to the Partnership have been instrumental in stimulating increased demand for and better use of data.

13. The ADP has provided direct support to 55 countries worldwide under its Task 1 (microdata documentation, archiving, and dissemination). In collaboration with UNECLAC, the ADP has also provided training and support to an additional 12 countries. ADP Task 2 (assessment of data quality and harmonisation/improvement of survey methods) is still in a pilot phase. Cameroon and Ethiopia have embarked on the establishment of their National Question Bank (based on the IHSN Question Bank application), to foster survey methodology harmonisation and the use of international standards. In collaboration with the World Bank, Task 2 activities were also implemented in the Philippines for the assessment of household surveys. Demand for Task 2 is high but the available resources do not allow ADP to scale up that activity for the moment.

Future Directions of PARIS21's Work

14. Among the activities that PARIS21 will undertake over the course of the next few months are the 2011 Round of the PRESS and an exercise called the Country Report on Support to Statistics (CRESS) in three pilot countries (Cameroon, Ethiopia, and Malawi). The CRESS is a country-led exercise to gather all data relating to the funding of the entire national statistical system (NSS) whether deriving from national resources or donor support. The ultimate objective of the CRESS is to improve efficiency of the NSS through better co-ordination and better information sharing. It should be noted that Senegal is conducting a full public expenditure review on statistics with support from the World Bank. PARIS21 is advising on the CRESS component of this review.

15. In addition, PARIS21 intends to make a strong push for statistical development at the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4). The Partnership will issue a report on progress in implementing the Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics and a Busan Action Plan for Statistics (BAPS), as a follow up to the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS) from 2004. The Busan Action plan will describe how statistical capacity development has supported analysis/decisions in specific critical areas (*e.g.*, climate, finance, food security). It will outline what has been achieved — referencing all previous and ongoing processes — and what is left to be done. The BAPS will attempt to provide an updated framework for responding to the international development community's increasing demands for data to manage for results and ensure mutual accountability.

Financial Situation

16. As voluntary contributions to the PARIS21 Secretariat have not matched the ambition of the work that its Board has proposed they undertake, the PARIS21 Executive Committee agreed on a proposal for cutting back on activities and reducing the number of staff within the Secretariat. Despite these changes, the Secretariat still has a considerable shortfall for the coming years: 32% for the 2012 programme of work, 51% for 2013, and 77% for 2014.

Issues for Discussion

17. The DAC is invited to:

- a) note document [DCD/DAC(2011)26]; and
- b) comment on the future directions of PARIS21's work and the financial situation, outlined in paragraphs 14 through 16.