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### Statistical Commission

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**Items for information: statistical capacity-building**

### Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century

#### Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session,\*\* the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS21) on statistical capacity-building, which is presented to the Commission for information. The report outlines the efforts of the Partnership to promote the use of better statistics as a central part of the enabling environment for development progress, in particular through support to countries in the design, implementation and monitoring of national strategies for the development of statistics, through advocacy and by encouraging donor collaboration in statistical support programmes. The report includes the results from the PARIS21 Consortium meeting held in Dakar in November 2009 and, in its annex, contains the Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics, which the meeting endorsed. The Commission is requested to take note of the report.

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\* E/CN.3/2010/1.

\*\* See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 4 (E/2009/24)*, chap I.A.



## **Report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century on statistical capacity-building**

### **I. Introduction**

1. The overall goal of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS21) is to develop a culture of evidence-based policymaking and implementation that serves to improve governance and government effectiveness in reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. PARIS21 focuses its efforts on assisting developing countries in the design, implementation and monitoring of national strategies for the development of statistics<sup>1</sup> in order to have, inter alia, nationally owned and produced data for all Millennium Development Goal indicators and development policy needs.

### **II. Progress of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS21) in 2009**

2. PARIS21 supports national strategy processes primarily through the following types of activities: (a) regional programmes; (b) advocacy and the development of statistical advocacy tools; (c) promotion of donor collaboration; (d) development of a methodology for national strategies; (e) reporting on country progress; and (f) satellite programmes. The progress made in 2009 under these activities is described below.

#### **A. Regional programmes**

3. In 2009, PARIS21 organized regional national strategy seminars for small island developing States (in New York in February 2009), Arab States (in Egypt in May 2009) and Caribbean countries (in Trinidad and Tobago in July 2009). The PARIS21 secretariat also facilitated peer reviews in Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mozambique and the Niger and directly assisted 22 countries (Angola, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bermuda, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Comoros, the Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon, the Gambia, Haiti, Honduras, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Malawi, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Qatar) in national strategy-related processes or in the preparation of interventions at donor round tables.

#### **B. Advocacy and the development of statistical advocacy tools**

4. Among its 2009 advocacy activities, PARIS21 finalized a statistical advocacy resource toolkit and co-produced, with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, an advocacy film on women and statistics. PARIS21 also delivered advocacy messages during selected international and regional events and helped 20 countries in the preparation of advocacy material.

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<sup>1</sup> See E/CN.3/2005/18.

### C. Promotion of donor collaboration

5. PARIS21 conducts an annual exercise, the Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS), that gathers information from financial and technical partners on their support to statistical development. It is important to recognize the limitations of these data, given that not all donor support is captured in these exercises (especially where it is embedded in a broader sector programme), disbursements are often estimated by dividing a project amount evenly across the project period, and double-counting is filtered out as much as possible, although some may still leak through.

6. The following points emerged from the 2009 PRESS round,<sup>2</sup> covering the period 2007-2009:

(a) Africa received over half of the total support, in terms of both commitments and disbursements. From 2007 to 2009, Africa received \$422 million in disbursements (54 per cent of global totals), while Asia received \$150 million (19 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean \$71 million (9 per cent), and Europe \$48 million (6 per cent). A further \$95 million (12 per cent) was disbursed for global, non-country-specific projects and programmes;

(b) Three partners (the European Commission, the World Bank and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) provided over half of the total support;

(c) Estimated disbursements to 13 countries (Afghanistan, Albania, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, the Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Ukraine) totalled nearly 40 per cent of worldwide estimated disbursements and 55 per cent of total country-specific disbursements.

### D. Development of a methodology for national strategies for the development of statistics

7. In 2009, PARIS21 produced the following methodological studies: (a) "Success factors in reforming a national statistical system in developing countries: the case of Tunisia"; (b) "A national strategy for the development of statistics (NSDS): a proposal for the structure of the final document"; (c) "Financing national statistical activities"; (d) "The quality approach in NSDS design"; and (e) "User-friendly presentation of statistics: guide to creating a dissemination strategy and dissemination guidelines for developing and transition countries", co-produced with Statistics Norway. In addition, PARIS21 commissioned a review of progress in statistical development since its creation ("PARIS21 at ten — improvements in statistical capacity since 1999"), as well as three papers to drive discussions at its Consortium meeting: "Demand for better statistics and use of data"; "Strategy for statistical development: an introductory note"; and "Partnership for the development of statistics".

<sup>2</sup> Details available at <http://www.paris21.org/pages/partnership/press/>.

## **E. Reporting on country progress**

8. In November 2009, PARIS21 produced a report<sup>3</sup> on progress in designing and implementing national strategies in International Development Association (IDA) borrower countries and lower-middle-income countries. The report indicates that:

(a) Of the 79 IDA borrowers, 24 are currently designing or awaiting government adoption of their national strategies. A further 36 are implementing their strategies. A total of 76 per cent are therefore currently engaged in a national strategy process. In Africa, 36 countries on the continent are designing or implementing a statistical strategy;

(b) Of the 39 lower-middle-income countries, 31 are designing or implementing strategies; 77 per cent of IDA and lower-middle-income countries combined are therefore engaged in a national strategy process;

(c) Of the 118 countries covered by the report, only 9 (8 per cent) are without a strategy and are not currently planning one. Most of those countries are the most vulnerable — countries in conflict situations or small island developing States.

## **F. Satellite programmes**

9. The PARIS21 secretariat continues to implement two satellite programmes: the International Household Survey Network ([www.ihsn.org](http://www.ihsn.org)) and the Accelerated Data Programme ([www.ihsn.org/adp](http://www.ihsn.org/adp)).<sup>4</sup> This is being done in close collaboration with the World Bank and other partners. In 2009, the Programme has supported 52 countries worldwide under its Task 1 (microdata documentation, archiving and dissemination). ADP Task 2 (assessment of data quality and harmonization/improvement of survey methods) was piloted in Cameroon with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and in Nigeria with the World Health Organization/United Nations Children's Fund Joint Monitoring Programme. The African Development Bank and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community are contributing to the implementation of Task 1 at the country level. Sustainable capacities have been built in some countries that no longer need direct support from the Accelerated Data Programme. It is expected that the activities of the International Household Survey Network in the harmonization of survey methods will increase in coming years. The Network tools promoted by the Accelerated Data Programme will continue to be updated and improved.

## **III. Results of the November 2009 PARIS21 Consortium meeting**

10. From 16 to 18 November 2009, PARIS21 convened its Consortium meeting in Dakar.<sup>5</sup> Over 400 participants from more than 100 countries gathered to consider the state of statistical development in developing countries, determine what,

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<sup>3</sup> Available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/19/41515158.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> See E/CN.3/2007/25.

<sup>5</sup> Documentation available at: <http://www.consortium-paris21.org>.

precisely, remains to be done, and agree on the next steps to be taken and the roles and responsibilities of the various partners over the next decade. Participants endorsed a Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics (see annex), which addresses these objectives and outlines a five-point call to action for the Partnership on issues relating to: strategy implementation, the mobilization of technical and financial resources for statistics, the coordination of donor support in the area of statistics, meeting the needs of data users, and the development of statistical tools and methodologies.

11. In the margins of the Consortium meeting, the PARIS21 Steering Committee convened a meeting at which it approved a new strategy for the period 2010-2014, outlining five main objectives for the Partnership: (a) stimulate increased demand for and better use of data; (b) facilitate the coordination of stakeholders to better address a changed agenda; (c) advocate for increased involvement on the part of national stakeholders in statistical development; (d) promote better-quality and effectively implemented national strategies; and (e) enhance the status of statistics in major international initiatives.

#### **IV. Future directions of the work of PARIS21**

12. In 2010, in addition to assisting in the implementation and monitoring of the Dakar Declaration, PARIS21 will help organize a High-level Forum on national strategies for Pacific island countries, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. In the margins of the 2010 session of the Statistical Commission, PARIS21 will organize a special side meeting to consider how to address the statistical issues specific to fragile and post-conflict States. A task team will be convened to update the guidelines on national strategies and enrich them with experiences gained over the past five years. In order to better mainstream the sectors into national strategies, specific support in the development of agricultural statistics will also be provided to four countries in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Support for country-level activities relating to the strategies will continue, and PARIS21 will conduct the 2010 round of the PRESS.

## **Annex**

### **Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics**

#### **Preamble**

At the PARIS21 Consortium meeting, held in Dakar, Senegal, from 16 to 18 November 2009, the participants unanimously affirmed that an effective and efficient statistical system is an essential element of good governance and that urgent action is still required if the data needed to monitor the Millennium Development Goals are to be provided by 2015. The meeting recognized that a lot has been achieved since 2000, but reaffirmed that much still remains to be done to deliver the vision of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS). Concerted and coordinated actions are required to make more effective use of statistical data to support poverty reduction policies and programmes and to strengthen and sustain the capacity of statistical systems, especially in developing countries. There is a collective responsibility to support the compilation, publication and use of statistics to ensure that, in the words of the Millennium Declaration, “globalization becomes a positive force for all the world’s people”.

#### **Values and principles**

The Consortium called upon all partners to recognize that official statistics are a public good and that their production and dissemination is a core function of all Governments. To promote trust and accountability, Governments should support and develop their statistical systems in line with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics as well as various regional declarations and codes. In addition, the Consortium called upon everyone involved in the development of statistics to commit to the following four principles:

1. All countries must be encouraged and supported to define their own priorities, integrating user needs, and set out their own development pathways for statistics, from collection to dissemination, respecting internationally recognized quality standards.
2. All partners should promote the development of statistical systems and methods that anticipate and respond to new and emerging requirements for data at all levels.
3. Efforts to improve statistics should support, strengthen and sustain the institutions and agencies that make up national statistical systems.
4. Development partners should help strengthen and use developing countries’ statistical systems in line with the Accra Agenda for Action.

## Call to action

The Consortium called on all partners to take action in five key areas.

**1. By 2014, the focus of attention should have moved from preparing strategic plans to implementing them with sustainable funding and technical capacity, so that:**

(a) **All countries that are committed to improving their statistical systems have been able to put their national strategies for the development of statistics into effect;**

(b) **Development assistance to statistics is being provided within the framework of nationally approved strategies, respecting the principle of alignment under the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.**

Significant and important progress has been made in strengthening statistical systems, especially in developing countries, through MAPS and a number of regional processes. The need for countries to set their own development priorities for their statistical systems through the preparation of national strategies has been widely accepted; the need now is to move from preparation to implementation.

**2. Governments and development partners should place all essential global statistical programmes on a sustainable financial and technical footing by 2014.**

The international statistical system consists of three main pillars: national statistical systems, which are operated, managed and largely financed by Governments; international governance of statistics, including the development of standards; and global statistical programmes, which should be integrated, as far as possible, into national programmes. All three components are essential and must be supported and developed over the next five years.

**3. In order to ensure more effective coordination at all levels, by 2014:**

(a) **International and regional mechanisms for coordination and cooperation should work more effectively, taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries as well as integration processes;**

(b) **Governments, with the assistance of development partners, should establish national partnerships for statistics where such partnerships do not exist already.**

The coordination of statistical programmes, both internationally and within countries, must be strengthened, and consultations between statistical producers and key user groups must be improved at all levels, making use of existing institutions, partnerships and forums wherever possible.

**4. By 2014, statistical systems in all countries should better meet the needs of users, operating in an efficient, cost-effective and results-based manner, in line with the core requirements of independence and integrity.**

The managers of all official statistical agencies have an essential role to play in ensuring the quality and integrity of the statistics they compile and publish. They must also be open and accountable for the resources they use and their decisions and actions. Where development aid is being provided to help build capacity, the need for accountability is even stronger.

**5. By 2014, the international community should support a programme of research and development to modernize statistical tools and technologies and to promote their use, especially in developing countries.**

Statistical activities, involving the compilation and manipulation of large data sets, have been transformed in recent years by the use of information and communications technology. In many countries, however, basic statistical procedures have changed little in this time. There is a need for the promotion of existing tools as well as the development of better tools at all levels, but especially in the collection of source data and in data analysis and presentation. There is also a need to develop robust methods that are cost-effective in small countries.

### **The way forward**

In order to achieve the vision of the Dakar Declaration, the Consortium proposed that the following actions be taken:

1. The PARIS21 secretariat, in collaboration with other partners, monitors the implementation of the Dakar Declaration and compiles and publishes an annual report on progress.
  2. A follow-up Consortium meeting is convened before the end of 2014 to follow up and report on progress in implementing the Declaration.
  3. All partners and members of the Consortium undertake to continue to advocate for statistics and to mobilize resources to implement the Declaration.
  4. By the end of 2010, the Dakar Declaration for the Development of Statistics is presented formally to all relevant processes and institutions.
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