

Partner Reporting System on Statistical Development

Progress Report of Task Team

Prepared by PARIS21

1. Since the last Progress Report in February 2007, the Task Team responsible for designing a reporting system on partner support to statistical development has met twice -- on May 18 and June 25. The activities of the TT have advanced and following some further consultation its conclusions and recommendations will be incorporated in a draft proposal on the reporting system, to be presented for approval at the PARIS21 Steering Committee meeting in November 2007.

Main activities

2. The activities of the Task Team over the last six months include:

- ***a feasibility study on the use of the Creditor Reporting System (CRS) for the reporting system:*** With the principle of building on existing reporting systems, the Task Team commissioned a feasibility study to assess how the CRS of the OECD could be used to identify donor support to statistical development. The main conclusions of this study are that:
 - the CRS could serve as a source to identify the statistical support provided by OECD bilateral donors;
 - information on activities of multilateral technical and financial partners and sub-national organizations incomplete in the CRS, implying that information on statistical support from these partners needs to be collected in another way;
 - information collected at country level (based on PARIS21's country verification exercise in 2006) appears to supplement CRS data.
- ***a questionnaire for the reporting system:*** based on agreed-upon classifications of statistical areas and of financial and non-financial support, the TT agreed to the core content of a questionnaire for the reporting system. Eurostat has converted the questionnaire into an Access format, which the Team found to be user-friendly and a positive step toward the design of the reporting system. The questionnaire will be tested during Eurostat's reporting exercise on Africa for the EC and EU member countries, planned for September 2007.
- ***draft proposal on the reporting system:*** the Team recommends the following main features of the reporting system:
 - ***mandate:*** the mandate of the reporting system is to be given by the PARIS21 Steering Committee and endorsed by the CCSA.
 - ***audience:*** the reporting system is for statisticians and policy-makers of recipient countries and technical/financial partners.
 - ***coverage:*** all developing countries
 - ***core content:*** the key information requested for each statistical activity includes the statistical area, the timeframe of the activity, nature of the support (financial or non-financial), and financing information.

- **source of information:** the system will rely initially on technical/financial partners, but will gradually receive information also from recipient countries (see below)
- **reporting periodicity:** annual, covering ongoing statistical activities from 2006 to the reporting date.
- **output:** in the short term, the output would be (i) a database on a “read-only” basis; (ii) an annual report on findings for the general public and on progress in statistics for partners; and (iii) information on the PARIS21 website.
- **database:** a database structure needs to be developed that simplifies data management, including data tabulation and easy updates. Public accessibility to the database would require approval by each development partner. The design and development of a web-accessible database will be assessed after PARIS21’s proposed exercise in Africa (see below), including a timetable and estimated cost.

Reporting at country level – the AFRISTAT experience

3. At the request of AFRISTAT, the PARIS21 Secretariat assisted AFRISTAT in developing a training program for its member states on the reporting system. To launch this initiative, a pilot exercise was carried out in Mali, using a questionnaire, based on the one mentioned above but adapted to country needs. A manual to accompany the questionnaire and a guide on managing the reporting mechanism for staff responsible at the country level were drafted. AFRISTAT plans to complete training on the reporting system in each member state by September 2007 and to present preliminary results of country information at its Steering Committee meeting at end-October 2007. The lessons drawn from this pilot initiative will define future steps in promoting a partner reporting system at the beneficiary country level.

Next Steps

4. **Reporting exercise in Africa:** If the main features of the reporting system are approved by the Bureau of the PARIS21 Steering Committee in September 2007, its Secretariat plans to complete Eurostat’s reporting exercise in Africa by covering non-OECD bilateral partners, international, regional and sub-regional institutions in late 2007. The results of the two exercises could be presented at the FASDEV meeting, tentatively expected in the spring of 2008.

5. **Reporting exercise in other regions:** Following the Africa exercises, the reporting system could be extended to other geographical regions, either all at once or one at a time. Possible candidates include Asia, Central America and the Middle East.

6. **Letter from PARIS21:** To ensure high-level support to the reporting system at the partner level, the Task Team recommends that a letter from the co-chairs of PARIS21 be sent to heads of partner agencies in charge of statistics and development cooperation. The letter would advocate the importance of reporting on statistical support, as part of the Managing for Results Agenda, and request strong cooperation in responding to the request for information. A similar letter could be addressed to heads of national statistical offices to ensure their buy-in and support for the reporting mechanism.

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