

Update on development of an e-learning course on investing in statistical capacity - September 2007

Prepared by the World Bank

Background

At the CCSA meeting in September 2006, the World Bank announced that it was embarking on a project to develop an e-learning course on investing in statistical capacity. The purpose of this note is to update members on progress.

The proposed outline of the course is set out below, with a total of 12 modules proposed for the time being, although others could be added later as required. A consultant has been engaged to prepare text and a specialist software company has been contracted to translate the text into an e-learning format.

Progress to date

Although progress has been a little slower than originally envisaged largely because of the time required to prepare the material and to put it into an e-learning format, by September 2007, the first few modules are now available and text has been prepared for two more. This work is being financed jointly by the World Bank and PARIS21. It is anticipated that the complete course will be ready by about May or June 2008. Although the modules have been prepared in English initially, PARIS 21 is arranging for them to be translated in both French and Spanish.

Target audience and use of the course

Originally the target audience for the course was intended to be staff working for the World Bank or other development agencies who have, or who may expect to have, responsibility for the management of statistical capacity building programs and projects in developing countries. No formal knowledge of statistics has been assumed, although everyone taking the course is expected to be familiar with basic development processes and instruments, including poverty reduction strategies, the Millennium Development Goals, the comprehensive development framework, the basics of project design and implementation and the basics of monitoring and evaluation.

As development of the course has progressed, however, and in discussion with PARIS21, it has become clear that much, if not all of the material will be of relevance and value to staff working in statistical agencies in developing countries, especially those with responsibility for managing the implementation of projects and development programs.

Course delivery

The course is intended to be delivered as a self-learning course through the Internet. Participants will register and will then be guided through the material one module at a time. Each module includes a number of exercises and tests so that participants can judge their own progress, but each participant will decide when to go on the next module and which order to follow. Participants will also be able to decide whether to take just a few modules or the full course.

The length of time required to complete the course will depend on the participants. Each module is designed to take about two hours to complete in detail, although background readings and other material will be provided which might take longer to read and absorb in full.

Next steps

A number of CCSA members have already expressed interest in this project and we would like to continue to share information and to review the modules as they are developed. In principle, there is quite a wide audience for the material and we would like to make sure that the contents and its presentation are in a format that is suitable for use with a number of different audiences. In most cases, the modules are based on existing material that is already in the public domain. In almost all cases, however, there is a need for additional case-study material and any help in this regard from other CCSA members would be very helpful.

As the course is developed, we would also like to make the course available to other agencies and to have the possibility of agencies preparing new modules for their own use. It would be helpful if the CCSA could give some guidance as to how this could be done most effectively. Our estimates suggest that the cost of preparing the text for one module is of the order of \$5,000 to \$7,000 and another \$12,000 is required to put it into the e-learning format. Translation requires about another \$2,000 to \$5,000 per language, depending on whether the translation is done in-house or not.

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Modules

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| <p>Module 1: Introduction – Why statistics matter</p> | <p>Contents</p> <p>Overview of the importance of official statistics in the development process Discussion of demand for statistics and processes such as PRSP, MDG monitoring, IDA14 monitoring, and the results agenda Overview of demand at sub-national, national and international levels More than indicators needed for policy purposes Data disaggregated by gender, income levels, and other characteristics of the population Official statistics as a public good</p> <p>Resources</p> <p>PARIS21 Why Statistics Measuring Up to the Measurement Problem: The Role of Statistics in Evidence-Based Policy-making PARIS21 video Measuring the Change in World Poverty</p> |
| <p>Module 2: National statistical systems, organization, activities and principles</p> | <p>Contents</p> <p>Overview of official statistics and producers and users Governance of statistical systems, need for legislation, role of Statistical Councils, importance of political independence, location in government Organization of statistical systems, review of centralized and decentralized systems, regional structures, institutional status Key activities and frameworks e.g. SNA, classifications, household surveys, censuses, registers Coordination between producers and with users, framework for national statistics Setting priorities and managing scarce resources (staff, money, assets) Interaction with stakeholders including the international community, and the role of international organizations</p> <p>Resources:</p> <p>PRSP sourcebook, UN Handbook of Statistical Organization: The Operation and Organization of a Statistical Agency, UN fundamental principles of official statistics Case studies of different statistical systems</p> |

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| <p>Module 3: Assessing statistical systems, tools and processes</p> | <p>Content</p> <p>Assessing supply and demand The dimensions of data quality The Data Quality Assessment Framework and the PARIS21 Indicators of statistical capacity building General Data Dissemination System and Special Data Dissemination Standard WB Indicators of statistical capacity Peer review</p> <p>Resources:</p> <p>Literature on data quality GDDS Guide DQAF documentation, PARIS21 report on statistical capacity building indicators Peer reviews Case studies (e.g. PARIS21 task team report on six country studies)</p> |
| <p>Module 4: National Strategies for the Development of Statistics</p> | <p>Contents</p> <p>Why NSDS? Overview of the NSDS process, links to PRSP, getting started Developing a “road-map” Assessment Developing a vision Setting priorities Preparing an implementation plan</p> <p>Resources:</p> <p>PARIS21 NSDS Guide and other material PARIS21 NSDS Knowledge Base Case studies and examples (e.g. DECDG 2006 assessment of existing NSDS)</p> |
| <p>Module 5: Managing NSDS development</p> | <p>Contents</p> <p>Focusing on national statistics Leadership and establishing a team Identifying stakeholders The consultative process Role and use of consultants Financing NSDS preparation and the Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building Preparation of project documentation</p> |

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| | <p>Resources:</p> <p>PARIS21 NSDS Guide and other material PARIS21 NSDS Knowledge Base TFSCB Guidelines EU guidelines on MISP STATCAP documentation Case studies and examples</p> |
| <p>Module 6: Strengthening coordination, management and the legislative framework</p> | <p>Contents</p> <p>Aspects of modern statistical legislation The case for autonomy Coordination mechanisms Accountability and reporting of statistical systems Strengthening management</p> <p>Resources</p> <p>Examples of modern statistical legislation UN Handbook of Statistical Organization: The Operation and Organization of a Statistical Agency Examples of coordination mechanisms Examples of Statistics Councils and other accountability frameworks</p> |
| <p>Module 7: Building statistical infrastructure</p> | <p>Contents</p> <p>Overview of statistical infrastructure and importance of registers, frames and classifications Providing the basis for household surveys Improving establishment surveys Classifications and data standards Developing databases and data archives</p> <p>Resources</p> <p>UN and other classifications? SNA93 GDDS and DQAF Handbooks on surveys and censuses Overview of Devinfo Material from IHSN Case studies</p> |
| <p>Module 8: Investing in data collection and dissemination</p> | <p>Contents</p> <p>Prioritizing data collection Developing a survey program</p> |

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| | <p>Data dissemination strategy Developing a data release calendar Documentation/dissemination of metadata Dissemination of data in electronic formats Improving the quality and utility of outputs</p> <p>Resources Survey program for MDG monitoring IHSN Microdata Management Toolkit Case studies</p> |
| <p>Module 9: Improving administrative data systems</p> | <p>Contents Overview of administrative data systems including management information systems Assessment of data quality and the performance of MISs Options for improving data quality Examples from health and education</p> <p>Resources UIS guidelines Health Metric Network guidelines and other material Case studies</p> |
| <p>Module 10: Human resource development</p> | <p>Contents Developing human resource development strategy Training needs analysis Staff assessment and appraisal Building training capacity and developing a training program</p> <p>Resources UN Handbook of Statistical Organization: The Operation and Organization of a Statistical Agency Royal Statistical Society training material Case studies</p> |
| <p>Module 11: Costing and financing a capacity building program</p> | <p>Contents Costing a statistical program Investment and recurrent costs Integration with PRSP implementation plan Integration with MTEF and budget processes Integration with donor strategies (e.g. WB's CAS) Financing options for donor funds (e.g. pooling of funds, twinning arrangements. Etc.)</p> |

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| | <p>WB's STATCAP financing program</p> <p>Resources PARIS21 material Case studies and examples</p> |
| <p>Module 12: Implementation of a capacity building program</p> | <p>Contents Leadership and ownership Coordination and management Steering committees and other management structures Monitoring and reporting mechanisms Targets and indicators Financial management and procurement issues Donor supervision Advocacy?</p> <p>Resources Case studies and examples WB procurement and financial management guidelines</p> |