

**Improving the coordination of technical cooperation programs  
in statistics at the sub-regional level  
Progress Report - September 2007**

Prepared by the World Bank

**Progress to date**

Terms of reference have been prepared and circulated for comment. Since no major changes have been proposed, these terms of reference will be used as is. They are attached for reference. The objectives of the task team are:

1. To complete an inventory of technical cooperation programs in statistics being implemented by CCSA members on a sub-regional basis and to recommend a process to update the inventory as projects are completed and new projects started;
2. To prepare recommendations and guidelines on good practice in the design and management of sub-regional technical cooperation programs in statistics and to disseminate these to CCSA members
3. To collate and disseminate, as far as is feasible, relevant material on the design and implementation of sub-regional technical cooperation programs on statistics

There have been no meetings of the task team, although discussions have taken place between the World Bank and Eurostat, since the European Commission is the most active agency working at the sub-regional level.

**Outcomes and future work program**

In discussions with PARIS21 on the work of Task Team 1, it is clear that the reporting system being proposed by this team, which will be based on the OECD Creditor Reporting System, supplemented by questionnaires to be used at the country level, could also generate information about technical cooperation projects working at the sub-regional level, or with specific groups of countries. Further discussions may be needed as and when the proposal from Task Team 1 is approved by the PARIS21 Steering Committee, to extend the coverage to include sub-regional entities.

As yet, no work has been done on objectives 2 or 3 above. However, both the World Bank and Eurostat are preparing training materials and guidelines for the management of statistical capacity building projects. In the case of Eurostat, this involved the preparation of a detailed guide. Since the European Commission already has a specific mandate to work at the sub-regional level, the guide will include material relevant to these kinds of operations. It is anticipated that the guide and the World Bank training material will be

completed, at least in a first draft by December 2007. Discussions will then be held to identify what further work may be needed to put together guidelines specific to sub-regional projects.

### **Some issues**

There are potentially a number of issues relating to technical cooperation programs and projects working at the sub-regional level. These include the following.

- The definition of a sub-region and whether there are any major differences between projects that work with a group of countries and those that involve the participation of a specific sub-regional agency.
- The distinction between programs that are designed to build sub-regional capacity directly, for example supporting the development of a statistics unit within a secretariat and those that deliver support to national statistical systems using a sub-regional entity as the implementing agency.
- The fact that we do not yet have guidelines for the development of regional statistical development strategies, in parallel to NSDSs at the national level.
- The need to identify cost-effective mechanisms to deliver support for capacity building and improved data services to fragile states and small island countries, which have been identified as a special group, but where as yet, we do not have many examples of effective capacity building.

### **Questions for the Committee**

There are potentially two ways these issues could be followed up from January 2008 onwards. These are as follows.

1. The work of the task team could be taken forward as part of Task Team1, since the reporting process being developed will include sub-regional projects and programs. In this case PARIS21 will take formal responsibility for further development.
2. The work of Task Team 3 continues, coordinated by the World Bank, but works closely with PARIS21 and Task Team 1.

In either case, the possibility of holding a technical discussion in collaboration with an existing meeting in the first four months of 2008 will be discussed and a report will be prepared for discussion by CCSA at its next meeting.

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