
Coordination of capacity building activities

Progress Report of Task Team 1: Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS)

Prepared by PARIS21

Introduction

1. At the twelfth session of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities, participants requested that Task Team 1 present the finalized project inventory of the Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS) at the February 2009 meeting of the CCSA together with a short note on how to meet the “information sharing objective” more effectively. The present report therefore addresses both requests: a presentation of the results of the 2008 PRESS round and some suggestions on improving the response rate to future rounds of PRESS.

Overview of Results: 2008 PRESS Round

2. For the 2008 round of PRESS, the PARIS21 Secretariat reached out to a broad spectrum of development partners to gather information on their statistical activities active during 2006–2008. The responses received from 46 (out of 83) partners represent an inventory of ongoing activities in support of statistical development. This information allows an estimate of annual disbursements and commitments, by partner (see annexes 1 and 2) and by recipient country.

3. In late 2008, the results were published in a two-volume set. Volume I presents a textual overview of results. Volume II presents the statistical tables, sorted by recipient country, development partner, and statistical activity. The PARIS21 Secretariat also produced a global directory of partners in statistical capacity building and a leaflet summarising the general objectives of PRESS, the background to its creation, and the results of its 2008 round. Copies of the two volumes, directory, and leaflet were sent in hard-copy form to all national statistical offices throughout the world, all technical and financial partners who provided information to PRESS, and other key partners. Electronic copies can be downloaded from http://www.paris21.org/pages/other/?id_news=113.

4. For the period 2006–2008, the *key financing results* from the reported information indicate that:

- Worldwide financial disbursements to statistical development amounted to roughly USD 550 million.
- Sub-Saharan Africa received well over half of total statistical support. Of the remaining geographical regions, Asia and Middle East / North Africa received the lowest amounts of reported disbursements, at little over USD 30 million each for the three-year period.
- Three partners (European Commission, World Bank, and United Kingdom) provided nearly three-quarters of total support.
- Fifteen countries (Nigeria, Kenya, Mozambique, Ukraine, Rwanda, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Uganda, Pakistan, Viet Nam, Ghana, Niger, Honduras, and Sierra Leone) had

estimated commitments, exceeding USD 11 million, equivalent to nearly half of the total estimated commitments worldwide.

- For most recipient countries, disbursements represented less than 0.1% of their GDP.
- Nearly 20% of total disbursements were not allocated to specific countries, but rather to multi-country, regional, and global statistical activities.
- The share of total active commitments that were approved prior to 2006 represent over 60% of the total; the annual average commitment level for 2006 and 2007 was roughly USD 150 million.
- The World Bank's Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building provided grants to 23 countries for the design of a national statistical strategy and 11 others for strengthening their national statistical system.

5. A review of the *results by statistical areas* shows that:

- The category “general statistical items and methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis” (category 4) received extensive support, particularly for population censuses and household surveys, which represent over one-quarter of all commitments. The status of the 2010 round of population censuses is as follows: 25 countries have conducted a census; 73 are planning one; and 5 have not yet set a date for conducting it.
- The ICP-Africa program has benefited all Sub-Saharan African countries (except Eritrea and Somalia) in the elaboration of price indices and national accounts.
- Of the 78 International Development Association (IDA) countries, 23 are currently designing a statistical strategy or have designed one that awaits government adoption (30%), 37 are currently implementing a strategy (47%), 15 do not have a strategy in place but are planning to design one (19%), and 3 neither have a strategy in place nor are planning to design one (4%). Countries in the midst of a strategic planning process — that is, those who are designing, awaiting adoption of, or implementing statistical strategies — therefore account for 60 of the 78 total IDA countries (77%).
- Institutional development is highly supported in a number of ways: for the design of strategic statistical planning, strengthening the national statistical systems, human resource development, and/or provision of technological resources.
- STATCAP projects are ongoing in Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Kenya, Tajikistan, and Ukraine (with several others being planned).
- Twinning arrangements between the statistical office of a development partner and that of the recipient country are ongoing in a number of countries (Mozambique, Malawi, and Albania), funded mainly by Denmark and Norway; while others are being planned by Sweden and Canada in Sub-Saharan African and South American countries.
- Sector statistics and formal statistical training seem to be two key areas not receiving much partner financial support.

6. Fifteen development partners, including the major players in statistical support, provided information on their **planned statistical activities**, including six STATCAP programs supported by the World Bank and the twinning arrangements mentioned above. The reported future activities appear to be strongly focused on strengthening institutional capacity of statistical systems, with a more limited focus on support to population censuses and household surveys.

7. The results of the PRESS 2008 exercise highlight a number of **key messages** for the period 2006–08, including:

- **Financial support to statistics is relatively small.** This was confirmed by the share of statistical support as part of Official Development Assistance bilateral commitments – less than half of one percent.
- **Statistical support is concentrated in a few countries.** As indicated above, 15 countries (out of 119 covered by PRESS 2008) benefit from more than half of all estimated commitments.
- **Partner collaboration in statistical development,** though found in various forms, **needs to be strengthened.** At country level, a few recipient countries have adopted a form of donor collaboration mechanism in statistics, which could serve as examples for other countries.
- **The focus of much of the statistical support seems to be toward institutional development and support to large activities** (population censuses and household surveys). This could be partly explained by underreporting of statistical components in larger projects or in projects where the decision is taken at the country level and never reported to the partner's headquarters.
- **More in-depth studies of the PRESS results are necessary.** At the country level, a comparison of financing needs and actual support received would be useful for the financing strategy of NSDS. A closer review of support (or lack of support) to population censuses would be interesting for collaboration among partners, especially in countries where the census is planned, but for which funding is not yet secured.

Future Rounds of PRESS

8. The results outlined above were presented at the November 2008 PARIS21 Steering Committee meeting, where participants approved the proposal to mainstream PRESS work into the PARIS21 Secretariat regular work program. Task Team members have agreed to dissolve their activities and transform the team into a quality advisory group to advise and monitor the implementation of future rounds of the PRESS.

9. The PARIS21 Secretariat intends to produce annual PRESS reports in the future, to be published at the end of each year. The coverage will be expanded to include non-OECD bilateral donors. PARIS21 will also encourage partners to monitor their support to statistics, both at the headquarters and country office level.

Suggestions for Improving Response Rate to PRESS

10. The broad objective of PRESS is to improve stronger collaboration among development partners in the area of statistics. In this light, it is essential that the information received from partners be as complete as possible. It has been noted that a number of partners have difficulties in providing details of their support because the information is found at the level of their country offices. This appears particularly true of UN agencies (such as the UNFPA and WHO) and the EC, who provide significant technical support at the country level. To address this issue, over the past year, Eurostat has begun gathering information on EC statistical projects and components within larger projects/programs and compiling it with other documentation to develop an on-line knowledge base (“DISC”) of statistical activities. This effort has greatly improved knowledge on EC support to statistics among partners.

11. Regarding the response rate of UN agencies to PRESS, it is clear that stronger feedback mechanisms on statistical support are necessary between UN agencies country offices and their headquarters. To begin this process, there must a strong commitment from the agencies' leaders (or relevant statistical staff) to the objectives of PRESS, and relevant agency staff that would respond to PRESS must be identified as the key contact person(s). A few suggestions to move forward on this initiative include:

- A wide distribution of PRESS 2008 documentation at country office level, accompanied by a clear message from agencies' heads on the utility of PRESS results for country planning/management purposes and donor collaboration in statistics
- A review of existing reporting systems of agencies to (i) understand what data is being collected and how; (ii) highlight ways of improving data collection on statistical support at country level; and (iii) improve feedback to headquarters
- Working with existing donor collaboration mechanisms (that are in place in a number of countries in different forms) to identify statistical support.

12. The PARIS21 Secretariat is ready to assist UN agencies in this endeavor and share its experiences with other partners.

**ANNEX 1: PRESS – Summary of Estimated Annual Disbursements, by Partners and Geographical Region, 2006-2015
(USD millions)**

Partner	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	TOTAL
World Bank	24.8	32.5	30.6	26.2	18.3	6.3	2.9	1.1	0.2	-	142.8
EC	66.6	77.0	68.1	34.7	8.5	3.4	1.4	1.0	0.6	-	261.3
UK	30.6	31.5	25.1	14.1	9.4	1.4	0.8	0.1	-	-	113.0
IMF	5.5	9.9	4.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19.7
AfDB	5.2	1.8	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.7
Other bilaterals	30.6	21.2	12.4	9.2	5.8	3.3	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.2	84.2
Other partners	21.3	29.9	21.4	13.4	2.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	91.4
TOTAL	184.7	203.9	162.5	97.6	44.6	15.0	6.3	3.2	1.5	0.7	720.1
Region	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	TOTAL
Africa	104.7	119.1	85.3	49.3	26.7	7.7	3.2	2.1	1.2	0.6	399.9
Asia	13.8	8.7	9.6	6.0	4.6	2.3	0.8	0.4	0.1	-	46.2
Europe and Central Asia	16.1	17.4	14.4	9.5	1.9	1.3	-	-	-	-	60.7
Latin America & Caribbean	10.7	19.1	11.4	8.3	5.6	2.5	1.3	0.5	-	-	59.5
Middle East & N. Africa	10.6	9.1	10.7	10.3	2.9	0.5	0.2	0.1	-	-	44.5
Unallocated	30.1	29.7	30.8	13.9	2.5	0.9	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.2	109.2
TOTAL	186.2	203.3	162.2	97.2	44.1	15.0	6.3	3.2	1.5	0.8	720.0

N.B. Totals may not add due to rounding.

**ANNEX 2: PRESS – Summary of Active Commitments, by Partner,
Pre-2006 – 2008 (USD thousands)**

Partner	Pre-2006	2006	2007	2008	TOTAL	Planned
BILATERAL PARTNER						
Australia	6,260	1123	104		7,488	
Belgium	1,273	185			1,458	xx
Canada	1,109	1,366	9,379		11,854	xx
Denmark	16,340	168		6,778	23,286	
Finland	250				250	xx
France	1458	3086	4123		8667	
Germany	1,852		3,105		4,956	
Ireland	452				452	
Italy	1,056	301			1,357	
Japan	32,059	2,489			34,548	
Luxembourg		1,362			1,362	
Netherlands	17,857		103	1,300	19,260	
New Zealand		716			716	
Norway	7,325	1,512	1,765		10,602	
Portugal	554				554	
Spain		683			683	
Sweden	7,172				7,172	xx
Switzerland	2,632	3	750		3,385	
UK	107,300	32,780	32,795	22,484	195,359	xx
USA	1,912	180	4,938	1,865	8,896	
MULTILATERAL PARTNER						
European Commission	257,694	41,386	40,192	3,000	342,272	
Health Metrics Network			6,900	6,700	13,600	
IMF (FY07-FY08)			9,502	10,213	19,715	
UNESCO-UIS	2,052				2,052	
UNICEF	7,000	12,408	38		19,446	
UNCTAD				402	402	
UNIDO	536				536	
ILO *	100	20	135		255	
UNSD		11,828			11,828	

Partner	Pre-2006	2006	2007	2008	TOTAL	Planned
World Bank	112,220	14,400	36,150	8,370	171,140	xx
World Tourism Org.			466		466	
REGIONAL ORG.						
Africa Development Bank	18,670			325	18,995	
Asian Development Bank	3,450	1,100	1,500		6,050	
EFTA	99				99	
Inter-American Development Bank	14,340	150	6,850		21,340	xx
Islamic Development Bank		298	1,150	269	1,717	
UNECA		7,000			7,000	
UNECE		1,135		100	1,235	
UNECLAC	600		298		898	
UNESCAP	709	875	938		2,522	
UNSIAP **					-	
SUB-REGIONAL ORGS.						
ACBF	7,149	5,244	5,700		18,093	
ASEAN	489		538		1,027	
CARICOM					-	
Caribbean Development Bank			921		921	
CEMAC ***					-	
CISSTAT **					-	
TRAINING INSTITUTES						
SESRIC		50		75	125	
TOTAL COMMITMENTS	631,968	141,848	168,339	61,479	1,003,634	

* Refers only to projects for the Asia-Pacific Region.

** Amounts not reported.

*** Projects financed by EC.