

Advocacy messages (extract from PARIS21's advocacy strategy)

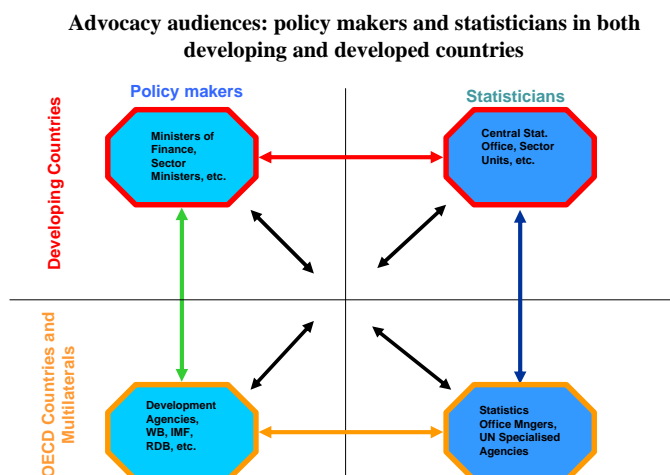
Introduction

The objective of PARIS21's advocacy strategy is to contribute to PARIS21's goal to "Develop a culture of evidence-based policy making and implementation which serves to improve governance and government effectiveness in reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)". The PARIS21 partnership aims to do this by stimulating "Greater demand, availability and use of better statistics and statistical analysis in national, international, and civil society decision-making". This is achieved by delivering key messages to key audiences through targeted advocacy materials and activities.

The target audiences for our advocacy are the four broad groups who constitute PARIS21's constituencies:

1. Policy makers, senior managers and funders in developing countries
2. Policy makers and funders in OECD countries and multilateral development agencies
3. Statisticians and analysts in developing countries
4. Statisticians and analysts in OECD countries and multilateral development agencies

These advocacy audiences and linkages between them are represented in the following diagram. The bottom half of the diagram represents donor institutions; that is, essentially OECD countries and multilateral organisations; that is, essentially OECD countries and multilateral organisations. The top half represents developing countries. The left-hand side represents policymakers and the right-hand side statisticians.



Advocacy aims and key messages

The aims and key messages that PARIS21 wants to promote with each group are:

1. Aim: Policy makers, senior managers and funders in developing countries make better use of statistics and provide an appropriate allocation from national budgets

Key messages:

- Role and importance of statistics in improving development outcomes
- Desirability of developing a culture of evidence-based policy and decision-making
- Integration of statistics into policy frameworks (PRs, SWAs, etc)
- Need for better statistics and better use of statistics to improve use of resources, including aid effectiveness
- NSDSs as a coherence framework to organise the development of their statistical system
- Appropriate and sustained financing for statistics from national budget

2. Aim: Policy makers, senior managers and funders in OECD countries and multilateral development agencies make better use of statistics and support statistical capacity building in partner countries

Key messages:

- Better understanding of the role and importance of statistics in improving development outcomes and integration both into national policy frameworks and donor country assistance strategies
- Need for better statistics and use of statistics to improve aid effectiveness, by informing aid allocations and monitoring implementation and outcomes, including aid channelled through partner government budgets
- Desirability of supporting the design and implementation of NSDSs to help countries to develop their statistical systems
- More financial and technical assistance, placed within the context of NSDSs (alignment and coherence)
- Donors and specialised agencies should coordinate better; and harmonise their demands for statistics and align their reporting procedures with national systems

3. Aim: Statisticians and analysts in developing countries make best use of available resources to produce quality statistics in support of national policy frameworks

Key messages:

- Role of statistics to under-pin development progress; and to address the key priorities for statistics

- NSDSs to serve as a coherence framework for all national/ official statistics and statistical programmes, however they are funded, including to coordinate donor programmes

4. Aim: Statisticians and analysts in OECD countries and multilateral development agencies provide quality technical assistance to support the development of statistics in partner countries

Key messages:

- Role of statistics in development and of new priorities for statistics to under-pin development progress
- Importance of NSDSs as a coherence framework and for technical assistance to be provided within the context of NSDSs
- Donors and specialised agencies should be better coordinated; and should harmonise their demands for statistics and align their reporting procedures with national systems
- NSOs to provide more technical support to developing countries (scaled up and better organisation and collaboration)

The **advocacy aims and messages** can be grouped into the following seven key messages about:

- Role and importance of statistics in improving development outcomes
- Evidence-based policy/ integration of statistics into policy frameworks
- Role of statistics for better allocation of resources and increased aid effectiveness
- NSDSs as a coherence framework
- Better coordination of donors
- Appropriate and sustained financing from national budgets
- More financial and technical assistance from donors, within context of NSDSs

These messages are developed in Annex 1, which presents both the generalised messages and any variations for different audiences. There is repetition in the messages, but this is intended because the messages are over-lapping.

Annex 1. Seven key advocacy messages

Role and importance of statistics in improving development outcomes

Key Points

- 1. Better use of better statistics is needed both to influence the design of development policies and programmes and to monitor their outcomes.**
- 2. The likely success of development policies in achieving their aims can be greatly enhanced by the use of statistics at key stages.**
- 3. In many of the poorest developing countries, the availability of statistics is inadequate to support effective development progress**

General message

The successful design and implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies, Sector-Wide Approaches, other national development policy frameworks and the Millennium Development Goals require better use of better statistics. Improved statistics are needed urgently to tackle the most pressing issues as part of the investment in the wider development frameworks and strategies.

Statistics enables the detailed analysis of complex social or economic problems, appropriate policy interventions and monitoring of the impact of government policies over time. But in many of the poorest developing countries the availability of statistics is currently inadequate to support effective development progress.

There are well documented examples of cases where the use of good statistics has had a positive effect on policy processes, as well as situations in which either the absence of statistics, or the failure to use them, has had a negative effect on policy impact. For example:

- In India, Population Census figures on the ratio of females to males have highlighted the key issue of reduced life expectancy amongst women.
- In Uganda, a public expenditure tracking survey helped to increase the proportion of non-wage funds reaching schools from 13% to between 80% and 90%.
- Using data to produce maps of poverty can highlight key areas for targeting interventions to reduce poverty.
- Population Census and survey data played a key part in design of relief efforts when Mozambique suffered devastating floods in 2000 and to assess the distribution of needs on Montserrat after the volcanic eruption in 1997.

- In Tanzania an innovative pilot scheme which compared data on the local disease burden and the distribution of local health expenditures had a major impact on health outcomes.
- In Mexico the decision to make cash transfers to mothers, rather than to fathers, to secure higher benefits to children's health and education was based on evidence from research studies.

But

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- in Malawi absence of accurate data about food production and the contents of the strategic grain reserve delayed an effective response to famine.
- most of the rural population of southern Africa has been beyond the reach of HIV/AIDS surveillance systems.

Variation in message for different audiences

- Statisticians face new challenges and priorities in meeting the data needs of MDGs, PRSs and other development policies.
- Statisticians need to be aware of, and advocate for, the above message but also need to put their houses in order in order to be well placed to meet these needs.

Evidence-based policy/ integration of statistics into policy frameworks

Key Points

1. **Monitoring and reporting on publicly agreed indicators, using reliable statistics, are a core part of Poverty Reduction Strategies. Reliable statistics also lie at the heart of the Millennium Development Goals and the new results measurement system agreed for the 14th replenishment of the International Development Association.**
2. **Progress is being made, but much more still needs to be done to enable all countries to produce better statistics for national and international use by the time of the next major reviews of the Millennium Declaration in 2010 and 2015.**
3. **Support for statistics should be channelled through locally owned national statistical development strategies that will themselves support Poverty Reduction Strategies.**

General message

The demand for good quality statistical data is increasing. Timely and reliable statistics are a key input to the broad development strategy that is often referred to as “managing for results”.

Better use of better statistics leads to better policy and better development outcomes. However, low-income countries vary greatly in the quantity and quality of information available to policy-makers and in the extent to which this information is used:

- **In Vicious circle countries** statistics are weak and policy-makers make little use of them. Evidence-based policy-making is not practised which results in poor policy decisions and poor development outcomes
- **In data supply-constrained countries** although statistics are weak they are increasingly used by policy-makers. However, data deficiencies reduce the quality of decision-making which results in poor development outcomes.
- **In data demand-constrained countries** the quantity and quality of statistics are improving, but they are not used for decision-making because policy-makers lack the incentives and/or the capacity to utilize them. This results in poor policy design and poor development outcomes
- **In virtuous circle countries** statistics are improving and are being increasingly used for decision-making. The production of improved statistics is matched by their increased use in decision-making. These two processes mutually reinforce each other and result in better policy design and better development outcomes

Statistics need to be integrated into policy frameworks, both national and international, and into donors' country assistance strategies. Progress is being made, but much more still needs to be done to enable developing countries to produce better statistics by the time of the next major reviews of the Millennium Declaration in 2010 and 2015

NSDSs can help countries meet these challenges. A good statistical development strategy, adequately funded and successfully implemented, can make a big difference to the performance of a national statistical system and help resource starved statistical services to break free from the vicious cycle of under funding and under performance.

How does an NSDS fit into country processes? An NSDS should be aligned with wider national development programmes and strategies. In many countries, the processes of preparing and updating these programmes and strategies provide an important opportunity to identify data needs and to highlight the priority areas where investment and improvements are needed. An NSDS will provide a framework for mobilising, harnessing, and leveraging resources (both national and international) and a basis for effective and results-oriented strategic management

Variation in message for different audiences

- Set within the context of desirability of developing a culture of evidence-based policy and decision-making (all, but with focus on policy makers)

Role of statistics for better allocation of resources and increased aid effectiveness

Key Points

- 1. Investment in statistical capacity will pay for itself many times over by improving the efficiency with which Governments allocate resources between public sector services.**
- 2. Better statistics will help donors by informing aid allocation decisions and by facilitating improved monitoring of the implementation and outcomes of previous investments: including aid channelled through direct budget support.**

General message

Statistics are needed to ensure that scarce resources are used more effectively by improving the allocation of available funds to meet identified needs efficiently. Managing for results requires statistics to provide baseline estimates and to track progress. The trend towards spending aid through national budgets as direct budget support means that aid is more vulnerable to bad public policy decisions than ever before.

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness stressed the need to:

- Put control in the hands of partner countries
- Align donor support with partner countries' development strategies, institutions and procedures
- Harmonise donor actions to be collectively more effective
- While monitoring implementation and outcomes within a framework of mutual accountability.

This requires a sound statistical base for more effective aid.

But better statistics are needed most importantly for greater effectiveness of public expenditure generally, however it is funded, and much more remains to be done to ensure the better use of better statistics as part of the enabling environment for development. This means that governments and civil society need to demand better statistics and donors should stand ready to support this according to partner country priorities, either directly or indirectly as part of budget or sector support.

The NSDS approach enshrines the principles of: country ownership, leadership and demand focus; being developed in a consultative and inclusive way; comprehensive and coherent; and integrated into national development policy processes.

Variation in message for different audiences: None

NSDSs as a coherence framework

Key Points

- 1. The NSDS approach looks at statistical capacity building across the whole national statistical system; and through a development and management lens. It provides a linkage between statistical and information strategies and national development policy frameworks such as poverty reduction strategies.**
- 2. An NSDS will provide a vision for where the NSS should be in five to ten years and provide a robust framework and action plan for building the statistical capacity to meet both the current and future data needs of Governments.**
- 3. Donors must avoid distortion of national priorities and ensure that they place their support within the context of well designed nationally owned NSDSs, in order to build long-term capacity for producing and using data.**

General message

An NSDS is a strategic approach to planning statistical capacity building across the entire national statistical system (NSS), encompassing data production, analysis and use, and all actors in the system, including line ministries.

An NSDS can help by:

- Addressing data limitations which are constraining development progress
- Providing a framework for prioritising the use of limited resources
- Integrating statistics within policy processes
- Providing a robust and coherent framework for all statistics and statistical capacity building programmes across the NSS
- Acting as a catalyst for change.

The NSDS approach looks at statistical capacity building through a development and management lens; and looks at development policy and best management practices through a statistical lens - all in pursuit of better development outcomes. A good strategy, adequately funded and successfully implemented can make a big difference to the performance of a national statistical system and help those countries locked in the vicious cycle of under funding and under performance to break free.

International initiatives have tended to focus on specific indicators or just one kind of activity such as household surveys. While, in many cases, these programmes have been able to improve data availability, often these improvements have not been sustained. Often there has been weak country commitment and ownership, and capacity has actually been reduced as

scarce resources have been taken away from other activities. A basic problem has been that many of these programmes have been designed to meet immediate data needs rather than to build long-term capacity. Relatively few activities have been part of a well-coordinated and prioritised programme, addressing organisational and institutional constraints as well as producing statistical data. Although it is vital that many of these international activities continue, it is equally important that developing countries regain control and that international support is placed within the context of an NSDS.

NSDSs should:

- provide a coherent overview of national statistical needs and priorities across the whole statistical system, including the information needs of sectoral ministries
- And take a long-term view of needs and sustainability issues, looking both to, and beyond, immediate data needs.

For their part, donors must avoid distortion of national priorities and make best use of scarce national and international resources. They need to ensure that they place their support within the context of well designed nationally owned NSDSs, in order to build long-term capacity for producing and using data.

Countries need to be in control and be allowed to coordinate international support to improve its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

Variation in message for different audiences

- NSDSs as a coherence framework to organise the development of their statistical system (developing country policy makers)
- More financial and technical assistance, placed within the context of NSDSs (donor country policy makers)
- NSDSs to serve as a coherence framework for all national/ official statistics and statistical programmes, however they are funded (developing country statisticians)
- TA for statistics should be placed within the context of NSDSs (donor country policy makers and statisticians)

Better coordination of donors

Key Points

1. **By funding activities solely to meet their own information needs donors actively distort national statistical activities, reducing efficiency and encouraging duplication of effort.**
2. **A well thought through policy relevant NSDS will help national governments coordinate donor activities by providing a coherent strategy for donor support.**
3. **Donors should seek to provide basket funding of nationally owned, policy relevant statistical activities and avoid sponsoring or funding activities not covered by the NSDS.**

General message

Donor coordination is as important for statistical activities as for other aid investments. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness stresses the need for donors to harmonise their support and align activities with partner countries' strategies, institutions and procedures. By promoting statistical surveys and other activities that meet their own special interests without regard for the wider national context donors actively distort national efforts, reducing efficiency and encouraging duplication of effort.

A well thought out, policy relevant statistical strategy (NSDS) will help national governments who are seeking to improve their statistical systems to present a coherent and convincing case for co-ordinated funding to donors.

Donors, for their part, should work towards providing co-ordinated funding of nationally owned, policy relevant statistical activities and avoid sponsoring or funding activities not covered by the NSDS.

Specialised UN agencies have a joint role in supporting development and promoting and monitoring activities in their own specific areas of specialisation. They should seek to promote their agendas in a sympathetic way that explicitly acknowledges the often fragile state of statistical systems in developing countries and avoids over-burdening them.

Variation in message for different audiences

- Use NSDSs to help to coordinate donor programmes (developing country statisticians)
- Donors and specialised agencies should be better coordinated; and should harmonise their demands for statistics and align their reporting procedures with national systems (donor country policy makers and statisticians)

Appropriate and sustained financing from national budgets

Key Points

- 1. Statistics deserves its fair share of funding from government budgets, no more and no less.**
- 2. Effective statistical systems require a long term investment strategy with predictable annual financing streams.**
- 3. Funding for building statistical capacity must be increased. But for better use of better statistics governments should also invest in building analytical skills to improve their ability to use information effectively in developing and implementing appropriate policies.**

General message

Statistics are just one among many demands upon government finances. But they deserve a fair share of funding from government budgets and in many cases an increase is needed.

Statistics must be seen as a key cross-cutting component when governments allocate resources and given an appropriate share of national budgets. The successful design and implementation of PRSs, Sector-Wide Approaches and other national development policy frameworks will be dependant on the availability and use of timely, relevant statistics. And unless sufficient funds are allocated to build appropriate statistical capacity this simply will not happen.

Moreover as sustainable statistical capacity takes time to build, and is easily lost with stop/go financing, investment in this area requires a long term investment strategy with predictable annual financing streams. The NSDS approach provides an ideal basis for developing such a strategy.

However, building statistical capacity will have no impact unless governments can also increase their ability to use this information in developing and implementing appropriate policies. Currently even when countries do produce statistics many lack relevant analytical skills and developing these should be tackled at the same time as improving the supply of data.

The contributions made by developing countries are the most important for sustainability as success depends on country commitment and ownership. However for many low income countries in the foreseeable future additional support and technical assistance from donors is likely to be required.

Variation in message for different audiences: None

More financial and technical assistance from donors, within context of NSDSs

Key Points

- 1. All donors agree on the importance of statistics to underpin development. However too few take individual responsibility for providing appropriate financing or technical assistance. Donors should actively consider integrating support for statistical capacity building into their country assistance strategies and/or channelling funding for this purpose through regional and international development agencies.**
- 2. Donors must resist funding statistical activities that solely meet their own special interests in favour of supporting comprehensive and coherent nationally owned strategies.**

General message

While most donors recognise the importance of statistics, few see them as a priority in their own right. Statistics are just one amongst many demands made upon development funding but they deserve a fair share of funding and an increase is needed.

Statistics must be seen as a key cross-cutting component when aid resources are being allocated. The successful design and implementation of PRSs, Sector-Wide Approaches and other national development policy frameworks will be dependant on the availability and use of timely, relevant statistics. And unless sufficient funds are allocated to build appropriate statistical capacity this simply will not happen.

Moreover as sustainable statistical capacity takes time to build, and is easily lost with stop/go financing, investment in this area requires a long term investment strategy with predictable annual financing streams. The NSDS approach provides an ideal basis for developing such a strategy.

However, building statistical capacity will have no impact unless governments can also increase their ability to use this information in developing and implementing appropriate policies. Currently even when countries do produce statistics many lack relevant analytical skills, and developing these needs to be tackled at the same time as improving the supply of data.

The contributions made by developing countries are the most important for sustainability as success depends on country commitment and ownership. However for many low income countries in the foreseeable future additional support and technical assistance from donors is likely to be required.

Variation in message for different audiences

- More attention is needed from technical partners to the provision of technical assistance to enhance and sustain the capacity of national statistical services (donor country policy makers and, particularly, statisticians).

Donor country NSOs need to provide more technical support to developing countries (scaled up and with better organisation and collaboration)