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**THE PARIS 21 INITIATIVE AND POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century

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PARIS 21
PARTnership In Statistics for development in the 21st Century

What is PARIS21?

PARIS21 is a new international process by a global consortium of policy makers, statisticians, and users of statistical information in support of development. It is not a new international agency; it works through existing agencies.

What is it for?

PARIS21 aims to build statistical capacity as the foundation for effective development policies by helping to develop well-managed statistical systems that are appropriately resourced.

In the longer term PARIS21 aims to help to promote a culture of evidence-based policy making and monitoring in all countries, but especially in poor developing countries. This in turn will serve to improve transparency, accountability and the quality of governance.

"Without good quality statistics countries are ill placed to plan and monitor their own development effectively. Badly informed decisions waste scarce resources, particularly affecting poor people who are least able to cope".

Clare Short, 1999

What can it do?

The PARIS21 consortium promotes and assists strategic planning to meet the information needs of national development frameworks. It is a source of international expertise and encourages South-South co-operation. It facilitates lesson learning and the sharing of best practice. It fosters more effective dialogue and co-ordination in international technical co-operation. It will create and disseminate advocacy materials.

PARIS21 aims to raise awareness and demand for statistics and analysis. PARIS21 has only limited funds for regional workshops, but its membership includes both bilateral and multilateral development agencies. The aim is to build on existing national, regional and international work and to generate a step increase in resources devoted to building statistical capacity. PARIS21 acts as a catalyst, stepping aside as the development partners take this work forward on a country-by-country basis.

How does it do it?

The membership guides what PARIS21 does. During 2000 and 2001 PARIS21 will organise a series of regional workshops to raise awareness and explore the scope for regional co-operation. These will be followed by national and regional capacity building efforts, bringing together users and producers of statistics and civil society in a policy context.

The initial focus, in line with current policy attention, is on helping countries to maximize use of existing information in preparing national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) while laying the foundations for sustainable statistical capacity building to help in implementing them. This includes all HIPC and other low-income countries, and covers those piloting the UN's Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the World Bank's Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF).

How can countries take part?

Governments that want advice and assistance with developing sustainable statistical capacity can approach PARIS21 through a number of channels. These include country-based representatives of the UN, World Bank or IMF, or the Secretariat.

PARIS21 principles

PARIS21 is a practical example of applying partnership principles to development co-operation. These principles recognise that the most important contribution to development is made by the people and governments of developing countries. They emphasise the need for country ownership and leadership, shared longer-term international and local commitment and better co-ordinated technical co-operation.

PARIS21 applies the *Practical Guidelines for Technical Co-operation in Statistics* adopted by the UN Statistical Commission in March 1999. These stress the need for statistical development to be well planned, to take a broad view of both information needs and supply, to be driven by priority user needs, and to build on existing systems.

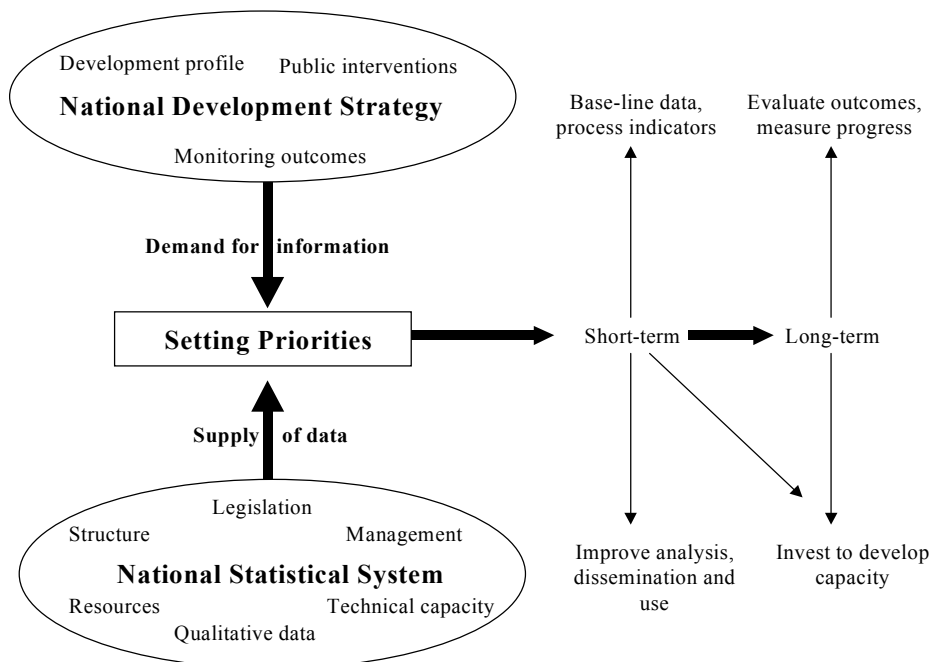
"Statistics are the eyes of the policymaker."

Keith Muhakanizi, Director of Economic Affairs, Uganda, 1999

Setting short and long-term priorities to match the supply and demand for data in support of national development strategies

The national development strategy process generates demand for three main types of data: for setting a baseline; for selecting public interventions with a high and sustained impact; and for monitoring outcomes. The national statistical system, defined in its widest sense, supplies the data. Its main components include: the overall structure; the legislative framework; management and co-ordination processes; resource availability; and the technical skills and expertise of its people.

In the short-term, the aim is to generate the priority statistics and indicators needed for the national development strategy and improve the dissemination, analysis and use of existing data. In the longer term, the objective is to improve the capacity of statistical systems to support key policy, management and monitoring needs, including understanding of the impact of interventions, which requires investment in strengthened capacity.



PARIS21 in Context

PARIS21 was launched at a meeting of senior statisticians and policy makers from countries and agencies held in Paris in November 1999. The meeting was an initiative of the UN, OECD, World Bank, IMF and the European Commission in response to a UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution on indicators and statistical capacity building. The meeting was co chaired by the Chairs of the UN Statistics Commission and the OECD Development Assistance Committee. Clare Short, UK's Secretary of State for International Development, gave the keynote speech.

The ECOSOC resolution was part of the co-ordinated UN follow up to the global conferences of the 1990s. Those conferences produced many quantified development goals for periods up to 2015. There was a resultant upsurge in the demand for indicators to measure progress.

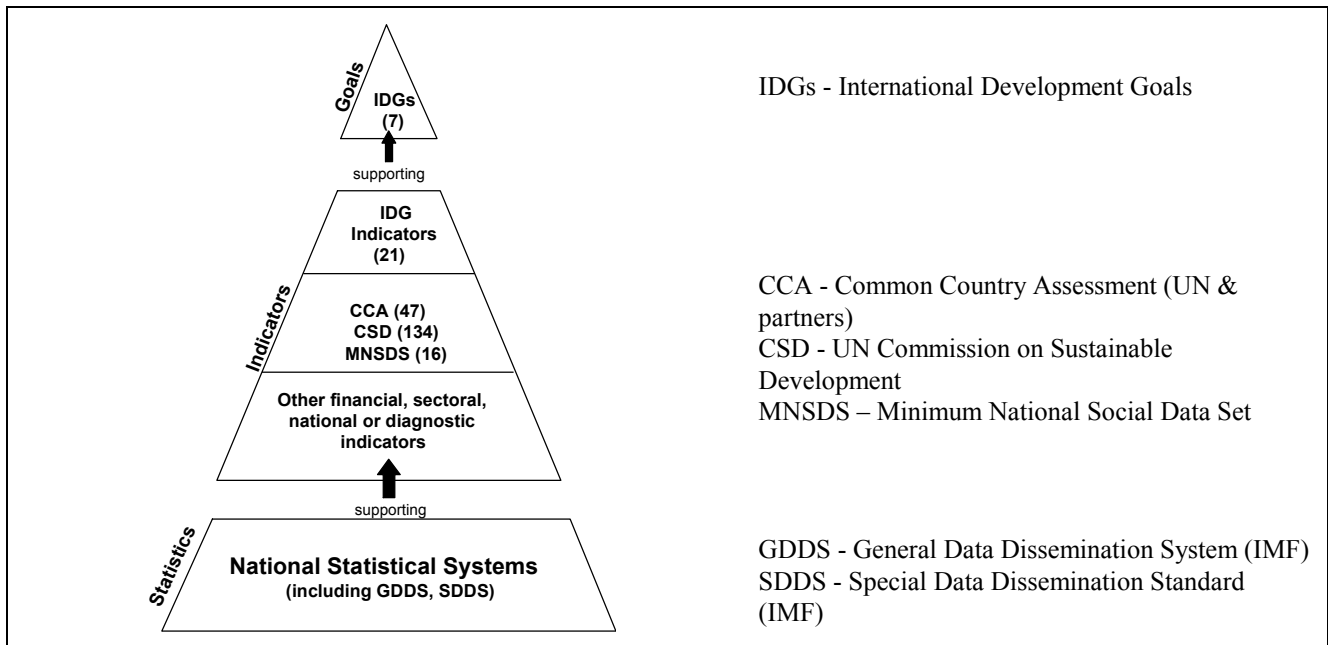
For many countries this upsurge showed the lack of timely, comparable and comprehensive data that PARIS21 is designed to address. While PARIS21 is aimed at all the statistics a country requires to set and monitor its economic and social development, the selection of some UN conference goals for regular monitoring has increased awareness of the crisis in statistics that led to the PARIS21 initiative.

A major example of selectivity are the seven international development goals: by 2015 to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, provide universal access to primary education and reproductive health services, reduce infant and child mortality by two-thirds and maternal mortality by three-quarters, and by 2005 to attain gender equality in primary and secondary education and the implementation of national strategies for sustainable development. Some 21 indicators have been selected to measure progress towards these goals.

PARIS21 is key to efforts to have reliable statistics to monitor these goals as well as other complementary indicator lists such as the UN *Common Country Assessment* indicators and the *Minimum National Social Data Set*.

The key point is that statistical capacity is needed not only to monitor progress but also to achieve it. Identification of need and comprehensive knowledge of resources and constraints are all crucial information for a government seeking to set and implement appropriate pro-poor policies. Without timely and reliable statistics policy makers are blinded and the decisions they make flawed.

This pyramid illustrates the dependency of the international development goals and indicator sets on national and regional statistical systems, supported by existing systems and standards.



Membership

PARIS21 members include people from governments, regional, and international organisations, professional bodies and academic institutions. In November 2000 there were almost 400 members from over 100 countries representing 196 agencies. Over two thirds of country members are from developing countries. Membership is open to anyone with practical experience and a wish to collaborate to improve policy-making through reliable, pertinent statistics.

How do Members Participate?

PARIS21 has the following task teams, which operate mainly by e-mail. Members are invited to sign-up to those to which they can make a contribution.

Task Teams	
1) Advocacy Products	Making the case for better information
2) Information Exchange	Statistical capacity building projects and events
3) Sequenced Information Strategies	Process and experience with strategies
4) Indicators	Poverty monitoring and statistical capacity
5) Methodologies and Technologies	New developments and costs
6) Census	Funding and management of censuses

PARIS21 Secretariat

PARIS21 is serviced by a small secretariat based in Paris, as part of the Development Co-operation Directorate of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The work of the consortium is guided by a steering committee with representatives of developing and transition countries from each region of the world, bilateral donors, and the UN, OECD, World Bank, IMF and EC.

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PARIS21 and Latin America Regional¹ PARIS21 Workshops proposals

1. Background to PARIS21

The PARIS21 Consortium was established in November 1999 at a senior expert meeting jointly organised by the UN, World Bank, IMF, OECD and with support from the European Commission and bilateral donors. Representatives from developing and transition countries from all regions of the world were also participants at the meeting.

Results of a Senior Expert Meeting on Statistical Capacity Building, 18-19 November 1999

- ⇒ By the end of 2000 to initiate statistical capacity building programmes in HIPC countries qualifying for enhanced debt relief, as part of their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and in other countries producing Comprehensive Development Frameworks and/or UN Development Assistance Frameworks.
- ⇒ To create a PARIS21 consortium to continue the dialogue of the meeting among organisers and participants to promote well co-ordinated, effective statistical initiatives at the national, regional and international levels and to provide an annual “state of progress” report to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

These two resolutions were acted on as follows; and b) the **PARtnerships In Statistics** for development in the **21st Century** (PARIS21) Consortium was established. It now has around 500 members representing almost all-major donors and a high proportion of developing countries and countries in transition. The Consortium is serviced by a secretariat based in OECD/DAC in Paris.

A second Consortium meeting was held in June 2000, which established task teams and agreed to hold regional meetings in order to strengthen the partner developing country voice and develop proposals appropriate to the specific needs of each region. It is these regional workshops which provide the starting point for the process to develop country information strategies with the major stakeholders.

2. Regional Workshops & DAC Partnerships

The PARIS21 Consortium follows closely the DAC Partnership Principles. These were clearly set out in the report “*Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation*”, adopted in 1996 by the DAC at the level of Development Co-operation Ministers and Heads of Agencies. Work within OECD has continued to define what is meant by development partnerships, and a checklist was agreed in 1998. The first two items on the checklist help to define the role of the regional workshops in PARIS21.

¹ NB: The term region refers to groups of countries which may not coincide with the UN definition of region or the constituency of UN regional Offices.



“1. Donors should encourage recipient partners to formulate their own development strategies – setting out the local priorities, plans and instruments for implementing such strategies. The process should systematically involve civil society, as well as consultation with external partners. Where such locally-owned strategies are compatible with internationally agreed goals, donors should work to implement their aid programmes in a co-ordinated manner on the basis of such locally owned strategies and accept their discipline.

2. Donors should stimulate and help strengthen recipient partner-led co-ordination of development co-operation... ”²

The theme of country-owned strategies and partner-led co-ordination is continued in the context of poverty reduction, in the more recent statement from the DAC High Level Meeting in May 2000 “*Partnership for Poverty Reduction: From Commitment To Implementation*”³

Partnership with developing countries that have ownership in the process is the foundation of our co-operation. The main responsibility for combating poverty lies with the government and the people of each developing country. The role of development co-operation is to support national policies based on self-reliance and responsibility by the partner countries. Ownership and partnership -- involving in particular national and local government, but also civil society and the private sector in both donor and partner countries -- based on a shared view of countries’ needs, capacities and objectives are the foundation of our co-operation with partner countries. This requires the building and strengthening of the developing country’s own capacity to diagnose and act on its anti-poverty agenda and other development issues.

PARIS21 is part of this process for strengthening ownership, partnership and partner-led co-ordination in the area of statistics for effective evidence-based policy making, in particular in support of poverty reduction strategies. PARIS21 focuses on the need for better communication between policymakers, data users and statisticians; on building capacity to produce the priority statistics required; and on capacity building to analyse and communicate the results.

The regional workshops are the first step in developing the partnership in statistics at the operational level.

3. Why Develop the PARIS21 Partnerships at the Regional Level?

3.1 A Stronger Country Voice

The relationship between donors and recipient partners is an unequal one. The PRSP condition of country-ownership places the onus on the country to develop policies with donor support. Within regions and sub-regions there may be similarities in country conditions and in possible policy solutions. There is much scope for lesson learning between countries, not only for recipient countries but for donors too. In this way a grouping of countries with similar problems, perceptions and needs is more powerful in expressing requirements and in adapting programmes to fit local conditions.

² OECD DAC “*Strengthening Development Partnerships: A Working Checklist*”

³ OECD DAC “*Statement by the DAC High Level Meeting*”, Paris, 11-12 May 2000



3.2 Economies of Scale

Secondly there are economies of scale, in countries where resources are scarce, many of the capacities which need to be developed may not be feasible for individual countries. For example in the area of poverty analysis, much of the work on developing trends over time, dealing with data inconsistencies and in smoothing out data series is carried out by international organisations. In many cases the methods and procedures are not available to the country statisticians and policy makers, and there may be little ownership of the final data. At the present time the skills and institutions required to undertake this work may not be available within countries. However it may be feasible to develop these skills regionally, either within regional bodies or within research organisations.

Some regions have found it cost effective to share training, data collection instruments, technical advisers and so on. To do this, regional organisations will need to be strengthened.

3.3 Data Dissemination and Data Quality

Many regional organisations have already started to develop the capacity to collect statistics and information from their member countries and make these more widely available to other government users and to civil society. The regional organisation could have a key role in maintaining data quality. Its proximity and accountability to member countries ensures the ownership and validity of the data. If well developed, the databases could be a more accessible source of information to civil society and other interest groups. It would also have the advantage of enabling comparisons to be made across countries within the region, better enabling governments to be held to account.

3.4 Regional Workshops Requested by the Consortium

The meeting of the PARIS21 (Partnerships in Statistics for the 21st Century) Consortium in June 2000, called for sub-regional workshops. There has been criticism that PARIS21 is only for Africa, and there is a need to adapt the principles to suit different regions. Partnerships stress country ownership. The essence of ownership is being involved in the design and implementation of a programme and being responsible for its conception and its outcomes. The Process in Latin America should follow these principles closely.

4 The Process for Developing the Workshops

4.1 Introductory Activity – Where and When to Run Workshops

The initial contact will be through ECLAC, the Conference of Latin American Statisticians and the Bureau of the Conference of Latin American Statisticians. The Bureau will act as a reference group to help guide the PARIS21 secretariat in the development of proposals for the region. Latin America has not had much opportunity to participate actively in the development of PARIS21 to date, therefore the assistance of the Bureau will be vital to develop and tailor the rollout of the initiative to the region. Additionally maximum use will be made of events already planned within the region to obtain views and feedback on the any proposals. The first such opportunity is presented by the Conference of Latin American Statisticians.



4.2 Who should be the Regional Umbrella Organisation?

A crucial requirement for the success of any regional workshop will be the existence of local capacity to take forward the resulting work and build upon the impetus created by the workshop. There are some existing regional groupings of countries, within Latin America, together with regional institutions, which can form a basis for a workshop participation and follow-up. It is probable that regional PARIS21 partnerships will need special development and may require annexing to other organisations in some circumstances

4.3 Preparing for the Workshop – Advocacy for the Regional Umbrella Organisation

The Consortium, and interest in the Consortium in countries is generally focussed on statisticians. Senior level staff or the decision making body of the regional organisation may have little knowledge of PARIS21 or the statistical needs of PRSPs. This can be the case where regional bodies span PRSP and non-PRSP countries. The non-PRSP members are often the stronger members and may not give priority to PARIS21. The regional body is itself a powerful influencing body for policy makers in the region and careful advocacy work will be required, prior to developing the workshop. The PARIS21 consortium emphasises south-south co-operation and many donor members have indicated willingness to fund activities in this spirit.

4.4 Applying the Partnership Principles to the Workshop Development

Partnership principles dictate that the ownership of the agenda lies with the regions and the countries involved. The main goals of any workshop and agenda must be lead by representatives from within the region, supported by the PARIS21 secretariat and with input from those donors who may provide funding for follow-up action. It is important to invite the right type of participant and as important to invite the right number. If 7 or 8 countries are to be involved then it is a problem to keep the workshop to manageable proportions, and to obtain the key personnel influencing the PRSPs, statistical producers, civil society, the private sector and donors. If there is to be the maximum amount of dialogue then the numbers need to be limited to fewer than 70 persons.

Development Partnerships have no clear “owner”. The process of workshop development requires clear definition of roles and responsibilities, this is particularly problematic in publicising the meeting and in giving Consortium partners advance warning of the workshop. There is a need to define with the partners;

- What name heads the workshop
- Who signs and issues the invitations
- Are all members of the PARIS21 Consortium free to attend the meeting
- Who is responsible for the administration of the meeting
- Responsibility for planning of the meeting logistics
- The role of the host country
- The role of the regional organisation
- The role of the PARIS21 Secretariat
- The role of the Donor “Founding Parents”
- The role of the sponsoring donors



4.5 Using the International Partnership Effectively

The development donor partners need to be kept informed of the workshop programme to integrate their activities with those of the Consortium. For example the Secretariat needs to be kept informed of complementary activities in the region, events which could link to the workshop, and competing demands on the time of country participants.

At the same time the network of country donor representatives and programme managers must be used to ensure that appropriate participants attend the workshop in order to initiate the country partnerships. The World Bank and UN Resident Representative involvement is key to the success of the operation, and workshop organisers will need to use this network.

5. Conduct of the Workshop

5.1 Style of the Workshop

The regional workshop is the first step in forming the regional partnership. The regional workshops will provide a forum in which stakeholders in countries and the region can express their needs from the partnership. Experience and capabilities that already exist within the region will be shared. While there will be some formal presentations, these will be minimised to allow the maximum time for discussions and dialogue. Presentations will be scheduled in order to share information and to facilitate discussions.

Countries will also get a chance to explore with donor's areas of mutual interest, which may result in the re-orientation of existing projects or the development of new programmes. The sharing of information about current and proposed programmes with in the region should lead to better co-ordination of donor support to country polices and PRSPs.

5.2 Follow –up

Countries would be offered the possibility of a follow-up regional event, within 6 to 12 months of the initial workshop. This would enable countries to make initial explorations and plans at the country level, which would then be reported back to a second regional event. It may be possible to link these follow-up workshops to the World Bank Institute's programme on "Poverty Analysis: Learning and Capacity Building in Support of PRSPs". This programme is designed to improve the analytical capacity of countries in the area of poverty reduction, build links with policy makers and to improve the accessibility of existing data.

5.3 Timing

Preparations should start at least 3 months in advance of the planned date. Preparation includes advocacy work with the umbrella regional organisation and the country heads of statistical offices. The workshop is around 3-5 days in length.

To attract senior people to the workshop the agenda will need to be organised on a modular format to accommodate the time pressures senior officials. It is anticipated that not all the participants would attend for the full number of days.



5.4 Cost

Depending on the number of participating countries, and the length of the workshop the cost will be in the range of US\$100,000 to \$150,000. This estimate is based on country teams of 6-7 people for approximately 10 -12 countries. It includes conference centre hire and facilities, hotel costs, per diems and travel.

5.5 Content

A typical workshop could include some of the following topics, some of these could be run in parallel sessions to suit the different participants and the need for country groups to start developing initial plans of action.

- Introduction to the statistical and information needs of PRSPs.
- Progress with PRSPs and lessons learned from the participating countries.
- Best practice from other regions.
- Priority sectoral information demands.
- Experience in developing statistical strategies or (SIS).
- The benefits of developing partnerships and partnership principals.
- Introduction to PARIS21.
- Regional context and support.
- Advocacy and developing evidence based policy making.
- Improving communications.
- Donor roundtable, support for PRSPs and possible PARIS21 follow-up action.
- Starting the development of country partnerships and plans of action.
- Next steps.

5.6 Workshop Objectives

The objectives of the meeting could include encouraging the participants to;

1. Develop partnerships within the region between information users, information producers, the supporting donor agencies and regional agencies. This involves building partnerships at both the country level and the regional level.
2. Provide information about the Poverty Reduction Strategy process as a background against which countries can plan the development of the statistical systems and other information needed to promote evidence based policy making, efficient resource allocation and monitorable policy outcomes.
3. Improve the dialogue between information users, including policy makers and civil society, and the national producers of statistics. This dialogue is the beginning of the process necessary to agree the steps for developing a strategy (and for reviewing any existing strategy) to support the priority information needs of governments.
4. Start the process of developing a country owned programme of action to develop statistical capacity within countries and the region in support of poverty reduction strategies and other major policy instruments.



5. Country teams will start the process of developing an initial plan for follow-up action, building on existing capacities, in those countries wishing to participate in the initiative.
6. Include regional research and analytical institutions in the process to ensure the further development of regional analytic capacity and capabilities.
7. Promote best practice and lesson learning within the region by exploring the methodologies and processes used by different countries to provide priority statistics and information to data users.
8. Explore the possibility of common regional approaches and the sharing of capacity within the region.

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