

Seventh meeting of the DAC network on Gender Equality

OECD Headquarters Paris

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## **Workshop on aid effectiveness – how strengthening and using country systems can help achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment**

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### **Session IV**

#### **Collection and use of sex-disaggregated data – towards improved public management: the experience of PARIS21**

##### **1. PARIS21 - The Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) was founded in November 1999 by the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the European Commission in response to the UN Economic and Social Council resolution on the goals of the UN Conference on Development. PARIS21’s goal is 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.

The work of PARIS21 is guided by a Steering Committee of statisticians and policymakers, with equal representation from donor organisations (bilateral and multilateral institutions) and recipient countries (developing countries and regional development banks). PARIS21 is served by a Secretariat hosted by the OECD’s Development Co-operation Directorate in Paris, France. The Steering Committee has a Bureau subgroup that provides guidance and support to the Secretariat and its work programme.

PARIS21 also implements two programmes — the Accelerated Data Program (ADP) and the International Household Survey Network (IHSN), established as recommendations of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics in 2004.

## 2. Building capacity of National Statistical Systems

PARIS21 facilitates the mobilisation and leverage of resources (both national and international) for the implementation of **National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)** in all low-income countries. An NSDS is a dynamic process providing a strategy and action plans for strengthening statistical capacity across the entire National Statistical System (NSS) including line ministries. The NSDS provides a vision for where the NSS should be in five to ten years and sets milestones for getting there. It presents a comprehensive framework for continual assessment of evolving user needs and priorities for statistics and for building the capacity needed to meet these needs in a more co-ordinated and efficient manner.

The Partnership intervenes on several levels:

- **International:** advocating for increased use of statistics and increased support to statistical development and providing methodological guidance and best practices on strategic planning processes.
- **Regional:** organising regional workshops to share experiences across countries on improving the user–producer dialogue and carrying forward NSDS processes. (PARIS21 has organised nearly 40 such events over the past 10 years.)
- **National:** facilitating and providing technical assistance for the design and implementation of NSDSs through adequate co-ordination between stakeholders and creation of country-level donor co-ordination mechanisms.

The table below presents a summary of the strategic planning situation in International Development Association (IDA) borrower countries based on information available on 30 April 2009. Of the 78 IDA countries, 58 (74%) are either designing, awaiting adoption of, or are implementing NSDSs. This includes 36 (90%) of the 40 IDA countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the region where PARIS21 has been active ever since it first launched its operations in the early 2000s.

*Summary table of NSDS status for IDA countries (June 2009)*

	Countries currently implementing a strategy		Countries currently designing a strategy or awaiting adoption		Countries with strategy expired or without strategy and currently planning an NSDS		Countries without a strategy nor planning one		TOTAL
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
AFRICA	18	45%	18	45%	3	7.5%	1	2.5%	40
ASIA and PACIFIC	12	44.4%	4	14.8%	9	33.3%	2	7.4%	27
LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN	3	33.3%	2	22.2%	2	22.2%	2	22.2%	9
EUROPE	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%	2
TOTAL	33	43.6%	25	30.8%	14	17.9%	6	7.7%	78

In general most of the countries that are not in the midst of an NSDS process are in general special cases, for example, fragile or small island states. For the rest, the main concern for the immediate future is to implement NSDSs, through a continuous, flexible, and well managed strategic planning

process, which both builds capacity and generates the data needed to reinforce development progress through to 2015 and beyond.

The **success of countries** in moving from planning to implementation of an NSDS **depends as much on the preparation processes as on the final document itself** – including, in the design processes, involvement of policy-makers, level and breadth of consultation, early engagement with donors, and use of, or building of, local expertise. Implementation is also affected by the extent of integration of an NSDS into higher level national policy, the range of its coverage of the national statistical system, the preparation of a sequenced and prioritised reform programme, and the establishment of a results framework for the NSDS.

Not all the countries have secured donor funds to finance the preparation of their NSDSs. Key issues include: the need to prepare effective and realistic implementation plans; effective engagement with donors; the difficulty faced by countries in managing reform and reorganisation while maintaining and improving statistical outputs; the load placed on statistical agencies in dealing with different donors' reporting and management procedures; and for NSDS teams to identify and report on appropriate outcome and output indicators.

To support countries in these efforts over the next few years, PARIS21 has accelerated its activities targeting the creation of country-level partnerships. Countries are encouraged to establish national partnerships, identifying a lead donor with whom national authorities can regularly liaise on matters concerning statistical development. In 2009 priority countries for PARIS21 are Honduras, Bolivia, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Angola, Malawi, Djibouti, Burundi, Laos, Bangladesh, Papua Niugini and Samoa.

### **3. Engendering statistics**

Gender statistics are not only concerned with sex-disaggregated data. While sex-disaggregated data are concerning collection and tabulation of data separated for women and men, gender statistics are concerned with the compilation and analysis of data recognizing that gender-based factors have impact on the social condition, allow analysis of participation and contribution to social and economic areas and allow for measurement of the outcomes of women and men's participation to the economy. The demand in terms of gender statistics is high since it is:

- Addressing the issues of inequalities and empowerment of women
- Raising consciousness and persuading policy-makers and other stakeholders to take into account the gender dimension in policy and decision-making (including to convince donors on the importance of supporting women in the informal economy)
- Challenging unhelpful stereotypes in society that misrepresent women's contribution to social and economic life

Poverty Reduction Strategies show the crucial need of statistics, even if most of the proposed indicators still relate mainly to economic dimension and less on household and society aspects. For example, in Liberia, when the Poverty Reduction process started, no one knew the exact population, the poverty rate, the literacy rates, the labour force or detailed health statistics. Many of these crucial statistics started to emerge when surveys were launched for the Poverty Diagnosis enabling a more enlightened approach to policy development.

### **3.1 Statistical response to the demand in developing countries: still weak**

In 1995 the Platform for action at the UN World conference on Women recommended that national capacity needs to be strengthened to produce gender statistics and reinforce gender mainstreaming in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring for giving a clearer understanding of the contributions women make to national development. Among the various sources three are important for addressing gender-related issues:

#### ***PHC (Population and Housing Census)***

Population and housing censuses are the most important statistical means for collecting data on the population characteristics of a country, being part of an integrated statistical system. They provide a unique basis for population counting and are used to construct a solid framework to develop sampling frames for other surveys. The capacity to produce gender statistics is only effective if gender aspects are mainstreamed into these censuses. However, despite the utmost importance of this tool, some countries do not succeed in carrying out this cornerstone of the statistical system. This is particularly the case of countries in situations of conflict or post-conflict (for example, the last census in Angola dates back to 1970 and decision has still not been taken by the government for the 2010 round).

#### ***Civil and vital registration systems***

Civil and vital registration systems are an important source of administrative data where occurrence and characteristics of vital events (birth, death, marriage, divorce, adoption) are registered according to country standards. Generally this information represents an important source of data disaggregated by sex and may be combined with other sources of information for providing gender-sensitive information such as infant mortality rate or maternal mortality rate. Unfortunately, many developing countries do not have civil and vital registration systems that meet the reliability and completeness criteria.

#### ***Time Use surveys, Labour Force surveys***

Economic activities are divided into productive and non-productive activities, productive activities being those associated with work while non-productive mainly comprise personal activities. According to the System of National Accounts (SNA), production excludes all household activities that produce domestic or personal services for own final consumption. Since women are predominantly involved in “unvalued and invisible activities” their contribution to the economy is not captured in the framework of the standard SNA. In order to overcome this problem, statisticians are trying to capture unpaid work and household production through specific surveys. An example are Time-Use Surveys (TUSs) where paid and unpaid work is analysed allowing the capture and evaluation of the entire economy. A recent example from Philippines (2000-2006) showed that women contribute to 38% of the conventional Gross National Product, but 47% after adjustment taking account of unpaid work (and this is still probably underestimated). Despite the consensus of the importance of TUSs less than 10% of countries on the African continent have undertaken this kind of surveys.

Unfortunately many of developing countries have not taken the necessary steps in addressing properly gender issues in the production and use of statistics due to several factors: the lack of capacity to deliver the needed quality and timely information, the limited understanding of gender-related issues and concerns as well as the fact that gender is a cross-cutting issue within the overall statistical system. There is also a lack of strong commitment to gender statistics development in the whole NSS, hence a lack of mainstreaming of gender statistics in statistical programmes. In addition it is important to highlight the low profile of statistical offices and statistical units in line ministries and the overall lack of technical skills and infrastructures.

### **3.2 Better gender mainstreaming through NSDSs**

Mainstreaming gender within the National Statistical System is of paramount importance: this is where PARIS21 role could have an impact through the development of NSDSs, since NSDSs provide a linkage between statistical and information strategies and national development policy frameworks, such as Poverty Reduction Strategies, specific national sectoral policies including gender-related policies or international demand such as the MDGs.

It is crucial that the NSDS process be stakeholder driven. Both its design and implementation should be done in a participatory and inclusive manner to guarantee the ownership of the process and ensure the delivery of NSDS outcomes in terms of relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. Mainstreaming gender or even better engendering the whole National Statistical System through the NSDS process should be better taken into account in the future. In particular efforts should be made for engendering specific sectoral strategies: in the agricultural sector where women are prevalent or in trade.

The NSDS process advocates for better strategies for better data. Intrinsically, a country launching such a strategic planning process in the field of statistics should be able to produce better gender statistics data and contribute to better measurement of societal progress. However, efforts should be focused on the following issues:

1. At first we consider that improvements in terms of availability, quality and use of existing survey data could be easily reached through appropriate tools. The ADP (Accelerated Data Program) could contribute to fill some important gaps and allow analysts and researchers to have better access to multiple sources of information.
2. Advocacy - as a strategic issue - is important because change is needed: awareness-raising efforts will be necessary for ensuring a large participation and involvement of stakeholders on these gender-related issues. Improvements have also to be made into the NSDS methodological guidelines, this work will be engaged in 2010.

To consider the past, present, and future of statistical development, the PARIS21 Partnership is organising its Consortium meeting in Dakar, Senegal from 16 to 18 November 2009. The event will bring together some 400 high-level participants — policy makers, statisticians, analysts, civil society, and private sector representatives from developing and developed countries, and multilateral organisations — to discuss statistical capacity building in developing countries and review the achievements and future contribution of the PARIS21 Partnership and its Secretariat. Gender-related issues will be an important element of discussion within the specific theme “Demand for better statistics and use of data”.