

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS

DFID Department:	Evaluation Department
Title:	EVALUATION OF SUPPORT TO STATISTICAL CAPACITY BUILDING
Planned Date:	September 2007 – April 2008

A. BASIC INFORMATION

1. This proposal, in the form of terms of reference for a consultancy, is intended for the Paris Declaration evaluation secretariat, for consideration as a thematic study under the evaluation of the Paris Declaration.

B. BACKGROUND

2. Reliable statistics are needed to make policy, measure progress and report on development results at international, national and local levels. The issues of weak statistical capacity and the impact that has on development processes and aid effectiveness is well documented .

3. ‘Mutual accountability’ and ‘managing for results’ are cornerstones of the Paris declaration. At the third International Round Table on Managing for Development Results in Hanoi, participating county teams identified inadequate investment in statistics as a key constraint on managing for better development results and gave strong support to the Marrakech Action plan for Statistics (MAPS). Both the second and third round table and the follow up meeting in Washington in April 2007 agreed that reliable and timely statistics are essential for improving development results and aid effectiveness.¹

4. The results round table is one of the 8 Round Tables in the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. The 2006 survey on monitoring the Paris Declaration points out the importance of statistical systems and the increased interest from governments in strengthening these.

5. Across countries, there are a wide range of structures used for national statistical systems. In some countries the National Statistics Office (NSO) coordinates and manages the production and dissemination of all national statistics. In others, there is a key ministry (e.g. Office of the Prime Minister or Ministry of planning) with responsibility for coordinating the production and use of national statistics; and in some, there is limited coordination and each Ministry produces statistics for their own and wider use.

6. Increasingly, more and more countries are developing national plans or strategies for the development of statistics. This tool is being used to document planned statistical production and highlight resources and support required to implement these plans. Across countries these plans vary. Some include the production of all national statistics

(including statistics produced by the NSO, Ministries of Health, education, gender, industry, trade, transport etc.); others are limited to the work of the NSO.

7. The support development partners give to statistics likewise varies. Some development partners focus on support to national planning processes, others prefer to fund particular products and some developing ‘twinning’ arrangements, for example. Although there have been a number of reviews carried out by development partners relating to support to statistical capacity building (SCB) and the strengthening of national statistical strategies, there is no clear evidence of what works and what does not. A review of models of technical assistance for statistical development¹ concluded ‘the evidence to date is sparse; it does not appear to favour one approach for delivering technical assistance over another. Indeed the evidence in some areas is conflicting’.

8. There is some evaluation evidence available. For example, The African Capacity Building Foundation report ‘Strengthening national statistical systems in Sub-Saharan Africa’ highlights good practices which led to improved statistical capacity in Uganda. However country level evidence of what works and what does not is very limited indeed. Reviews conducted by development partners tend to be limited to their own work. There is virtually no evidence which compares different modalities in different country situations.

9. Despite the clear evidence gap, development partners are increasingly funding support to national statistics systems. In the absence of clear understanding of the most appropriate approaches, funding remains channelled in a range of different and not always coordinated ways. There is thus a real need and great demand for evidence which looks at what works most effectively and what types of support are sustainable in different countries.

Support for this study

10. PARIS21², a key coordinator and body with excellent contacts in the field of statistics, which represents several partner countries development partners, is very supportive of this study and committed to providing assistance to design and implement this study. Two partner countries (Uganda and Kenya) have already expressed interest in participating in this evaluation. The UK and Sweden have also expressed commitment.

11. Partnerships are not only important on the country side but also on the donor side and it is planned to encourage a wide reach of interest across donors who use different approaches to supporting statistical capacity building.

C. OVERALL OBJECTIVES

12. This study has two broad objectives:

¹ A review of models of technical assistance for statistical development, PARIS21 (This paper is provisional)

² Partnerships in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century –is a global partnership of national and international statisticians, developing professionals, policy makers, analysts and other users of statistics who are committed to making a real difference to the contribution of statistics to development progress.

- To develop a framework that can evaluate different types of statistical interventions in different country contexts
- To document existing evidence regarding what type of support to statistical capacity building is most effective and sustainable, to feed into the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra (September 2008).

D. SCOPE OF WORK AND METHODOLOGY

13. As with the wider Paris Declaration evaluation, this thematic study will look at statistical capacity building from both the country and the development partner perspectives. Involvement of partner countries will be through the steering group and, though organisation of and participation in country studies.

Evaluation questions

14. The overarching question which this study aims to try and address is:
What development partner approaches to statistical capacity building have been most effective in different circumstances and why?

15. Evidence from the following more specific questions will be used to try and explore this high level question. It is not expected that this study will produce a definitive answer that shows the most effective approach in every situation, however it should prove a useful first step along the route to addressing this key issue and help focus development partner attention on the need to work further together in this area.

- a) What types of approaches to SCB are used in different country contexts?
- b) Which approaches are most valued by partner countries and development partners, and why?
- c) What is the relationship between approaches taken (including levels of expenditure) and improved performance? (*For example: What are the reasons for rapid increases in statistical capacity identified in some countries with development partner support? Why has statistical capacity not appeared to rise notably in some countries with development partner support?*)

16. The consultants will conduct a desk review of existing development partner assessments, two donor case studies and two country case studies. Two partner countries (Uganda and Kenya) have already expressed interest in participating in this evaluation.

From this body of evidence the consultants will:

Provide a global picture of:

- What support is provided by development partners to improve the production and use of statistics? Support should be broken down by country, development partners and type. What are the most common approaches in statistics assistance?
- What different modalities or approaches are used to identify and deliver statistical support requirements, including development partner alignment under national statistical strategies or corporate plans, twinning arrangements, specific requests for national governments etc.?

- What factors (e.g. governance, political, donor support) lead to capacity development of statistical systems? What do stakeholders perceive as the most important contributing factors?
- What does statistical capacity look like to different stakeholders? What do different development partners and country partners define as or perceive as improved statistical capacity building?
- What are the common lessons identified from evaluations of support to statistical capacity?
- Which countries have national statistical planning tools (NSDS, statistics master plan, corporate plan etc)? How are they used? Do they have budgets? Are their budgets linked to national budgets and do they include funding requirements, or funding allocations? Are they Government owned? Are they being implemented? What value is placed on national statistical planning tools?
- Is development partner support harmonised in the statistical sector?

For a limited number of countries:

- Are there links between demand and supply of statistical information? (Given the limitations of this study, user needs should focus on one area e.g. PRS monitoring).
- Is there Government buy in for evidence based policy making?
- Are statistical producers, at the country level harmonised?
- Are donors harmonised at the country level?

17. The review of available evaluations will include the evaluation conducted by France in the early 1990s which led to them supporting the establishment of AFRISTAT, subsequent evaluations of AFRISTAT; IMF's evaluation of their TA; European Commission's recent evaluation of their statistical support; and Norway's review of ten years of statistical cooperation. The desk review will also cover evaluations of projects, including those conducted within twinning arrangements.

18. Other relevant literature includes the light touch evaluation of PARIS21, the review of the World Bank trust fund, review of the IMF's GDDS, a review of PRS monitoring called "Beyond the numbers"

19. This literature review will be complemented by two development partner studies to identify support currently being provided, modalities used to identify needs and processes to harmonise and align support.

20. It is proposed, in this first phase, to select two country case studies and conduct an in-depth analysis of support received, outcomes, (impact?) from project reviews and views of partner governments. The evaluation will cover the National Statistical System if possible, and at the very least, the National Statistical Office.

21. For areas which can not be studied in depth, in this first phase, consultants should include hypothesis of how the issues can be addressed in the second phase of this study.

E. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

22. An inception report outlining options for an initial framework, setting out the main approach, specific questions for country and development partner case studies; and the logic behind the options proposed. . The inception report must be presented by 30th October 2007 in electronic format plus 5 hard copies.

23. Individual development partner case study and country case study reports should be produced by end of February 2008.

24. The literature review and full synthesis report is required by 30 March 2008.

F. COMPETENCY AND EXPERTISE REQUIREMENTS

25. The consultants will require expertise and experience in five main areas:

- a) Statistical capacity building and monitoring systems; good understanding of national statistics offices and country monitoring systems, international statistical systems, different modalities used by development partners to provide support in this area. At least two team members must be expert in this area.
- b) Institutional evaluation/organisational analysis skills.
- c) Familiarity with evaluation issues including the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, evaluation approaches, cost-effectiveness analysis and the analysis of resource allocation decisions are also essential skills for this work.
- d) Presentation of findings: the team leader/ report drafters must demonstrate the ability to write clearly in plain English, free from jargon, and the team must contain at least one presenter with experience of presenting findings to a policy audience.
- e) Country case studies for the evaluation are being considered at present. The team will need to organise their own work and logistics.