



HLF-4 Side Event: Statistics for Transparency, Accountability, & Results

— Record of the Proceedings —

1. At the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4), PARIS21 and the World Bank held an official side event on 1 December 2011 entitled “Statistics for Transparency, Accountability, and Results.” The event was attended by some 60 participants — users and producers of data hailing from developing and developed countries, universities, and international agencies. The agenda is available in Annex I.
2. The PARIS21 Secretariat Manager, Mr. Mohamed El-Heyba-Lembrabott Berrou, acted as moderator and opened the proceedings by announcing that the meeting would present the content of and consider implementation arrangements for the Busan Action Plan for Statistics¹.
3. The UK Secretary of State for International Development, Mr. Andrew Mitchell, delivered the keynote address. He outlined the commitment of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) — the largest bilateral provider of aid to statistics — in supporting statistical capacity development globally. DFID recognises the key role statistics play in providing the evidence needed to measure and document results, increasing the transparency and effectiveness of policy making, and supporting public accountability. The United Kingdom is proud to have collaborated so closely with PARIS21, the World Bank, and others in developing the Busan Action Plan for Statistics. He closed by expressing his country’s firm support for the Action Plan and encouraged all stakeholders to participate in its implementation, in particular on the important issue of gender statistics.
4. The World Bank’s Director of Gender and Development, Ms. Jeni Klugman, praised the Action Plan for recognising that better data are needed on gender equality and women’s empowerment in order to properly design and implement development policies. The Plan rightly calls for the mainstreaming of gender statistics into system-wide National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) and for improvements in gender data collection methods, in particular to measure female entrepreneurship, time use, access to finance, and gender-based

¹ Available at http://www.paris21.org/sites/default/files/Busanactionplan_nov2011.pdf



violence. She also applauded the Plan's approach to working closely with the Interagency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics, existing statistical capacity development initiatives, national statistical offices, and other stakeholders, in supporting country efforts to produce data based on established indicators for monitoring the progress of gender initiatives. Co-ordination in gender data is crucial. Baselines are low and data gaps are large, so some quick wins will be possible.

5. The President of Afghanistan's Central Statistics Organization, Mr. Abdul Rahman Ghafoori, expressed his strong support for the Action Plan. He highlighted the difficult challenges in collecting data in a fragile state such as his own, where a short-term, emergency focus is the norm, decision making becomes personality based, most institutions are destroyed, and statistics are overlooked. In post-conflict situations, strategies for developing capacity are even more important. The Busan Action Plan will be key in supporting the efforts of all developing countries to strategically develop their statistical systems.

6. The Director of the World Bank's Development Data Group, Ms. Shaida Badiee, announced that the HLF-4 outcome document² that was agreed the night before reaffirms the importance of statistics and explicitly references the Busan Action Plan. Paragraph 18c reads: "We will partner to implement a global Action Plan to enhance capacity for statistics to monitor progress, evaluate impact, ensure sound, results-focused public sector management, and highlight strategic issues for policy decisions." This renewed action plan builds on the successes and lessons of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS), which was agreed at the 2004 Second International Roundtable on Managing for Development Results. Since the MAPS, some tasks remain and some new demands have emerged. Although great strides have been made in promoting and designing NSDSs throughout the world, there has been limited progress in implementing these strategies. The co-ordination of donors supporting statistics must also be improved. There remain important gaps to fill in poverty, gender, agriculture, and geo-spatial statistics. Open data and open government initiatives are raising expectations for better statistics. The Busan Action Plan addresses these outstanding and emerging issues to propose five main actions: (i) implement statistical strategies according to national priorities, (ii) facilitate public access to data through

² The full text of the final outcome document is available at: <http://oe.cd/hlf4>



standards and new technologies, (iii) increase knowledge and skills needed to use statistics effectively, (iv) track outcomes of global summits to encourage recognition of the need for developing national statistical capacity, and (v) ensure financing is robust and funding mechanisms responsive. To build a global consensus for action under the Plan, the presenter proposed the following next steps:

- Capitalise on the momentum provided by the HLF-4 with a rapid implementation
- Seek endorsement of the Plan by the United Nations Statistical Commission (Feb 2012)
- Consult with lead agencies on thematic priorities (*e.g.*, gender) (Dec 2011 – Feb 2012)
- Discuss initial implementation priorities with PARIS21 Board (March 2012)
- Agree on targets and indicators to measure progress
- Monitor implementation through existing institutions

7. The moderator handed the floor to the representative from the UNFPA to read a prepared statement on behalf of his institution's Executive Director. He announced that UNFPA is committed to join PARIS21 and the World Bank to make the Busan Action Plan for Statistics a reality and formally requested that UNFPA be included in the group of agencies identified to lead in supporting national implementation strategies. He said that the UNFPA works with partners from all sectors of society in over 120 countries to develop capacity in acquiring, analysing, reporting, and disseminating data — particularly sex- and age-disaggregated data — to inform policies and programmes. UNFPA's current work is based on the commitments of the 2004 Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics, the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, and the 2009 Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics. The HLF-4 is an excellent opportunity to reaffirm commitments and agree on further actions to improve the statistical capacity at the country level.

8. The moderator then turned to the representative from the Philippines who read a statement on behalf of the Secretary of Finance who led the country's delegation at the HLF-4. The Philippines committed to draw on the five actions outlined in the Plan when formulating the next Philippine Statistical Development Plan. They will continue to share their statistical expertise and experience with other developing countries, will invest in statistics in their country, and use their data for good governance and better development outcomes.



9. Interventions from the floor were universally supportive of the Action Plan. The representative from South Africa noted the challenges ahead in statistics and called for boldness of action to address issues such as the management and openness of data. The representative from the University of Ottawa cautioned against losing sight of the need for qualitative results and data at the programme/project/sub national level. The representative from the University of Birmingham highlighted demands for data on debt management systems. The representative from Eurostat urged providers of development co-operation to align their support with NSDSs, as this improves country ownership. Actions under this Plan, as well as indicators of performance, should be at the country level. The representative from Development Initiatives, who support the International Aid Transparency Initiative, recommended attracting new stakeholders to the cause of statistical capacity development by highlighting the importance of sectoral (*e.g.*, health, agriculture, education) data rather than statistics per se. They also called on statisticians to produce new, quality data rather than simply allow researchers to develop increasingly sophisticated analyses of old data. He also asked how the international community can capture other types of aid flows under Official Development Assistance (ODA). The representative from Malawi looked forward to the implementation of the Plan, in particular to support developing countries in the implementation of their NSDSs.

10. The chair of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee, Mr. Brian Atwood, called on developing countries to allocate more resources to their national statistical systems. A country cannot be an effective state without a functional statistical system. In this regard, the Busan Action Plan for Statistics is a clarion call. The Action Plan reinforces the HLF-4 outcome document, and the outcome document reinforces the Action Plan. He closed by congratulating PARIS21 and the World Bank for proposing, designing, and agreeing such an important initiative.

11. The moderator brought the proceedings to a close by commenting that the implementation of the Busan Action Plan for Statistics starts now.



Annex I: Agenda

1 December 2011 (13:30 – 15:00)

location: room MH 201 – Bexco Conference Center

| Chair: Mr. Brian Atwood, Chair of the Development Assistance Committee, OECD | | |
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| <u>Time</u> | <u>Agenda Item</u> | <u>Presenter</u> |
| 13:30 | Introductory Remarks | Moderator |
| 13:35 | Keynote Address | Mr. Andrew Mitchell, Secretary of State for International Development, United Kingdom |
| 14:05 | Development Bank Perspective | Ms. Jeni Klugman, Director of Gender and Development, World Bank |
| 14:15 | Developing Country Perspective: Data Producer at Ministerial Level | Mr. Abdul Rahman Ghafoori, President Central Statistics Organisation, Afghanistan |
| 14:25 | Overview of Busan Action Plan for Statistics | Ms. Shaida Badiie, Director of Development Data Group, World Bank |
| 14:35 | Reactions from the Floor | All Participants |
| 14:55 | Concluding Remarks | Chair |