
[Final] Minutes of the 2018 PARIS21 Board Meeting



Photos available on flickr: <http://bit.ly/2qiOUcD>

On 5 April 2018, PARIS21 held its Annual Board Meeting in Bern, Switzerland, bringing together representatives from 21 countries, 22 international and regional institutions and 3 civil society organisations/foundations/private sector. All documents and presentations are available for download on the [PARIS21 website](#). Results from the satisfaction survey are available in the Annex.

Content

- 1) Board Meeting Minutes [DRAFT]
- 2) Annex: Satisfaction Survey Results

1. Board Meeting Minutes [DRAFT]

Chair: Ms Lisa Bersales, Philippines (excused), replaced by Mr Pieter Everaers (EUROSTAT).

I. Welcome Statement

The Chair asked the Board members to approve the agenda.

Decision: The agenda was unanimously adopted

II. Update on work in 2017

Welcome to new members and report on Executive Committee meetings

The Chair welcomed the participants and introduced the new Board members. The Chair then asked the Board to approve the new Executive Committee members, including the 6 standing members and 4 rotating members – DFID, Philippines, Canada and South Africa.

Decision: The new Board members and Executive Committee were unanimously approved

Annual PARIS21 Progress Report (2017)

The PARIS21 Secretariat presented the 2017 Progress Report along the 4 pillars of the approved Strategy (Knowledge-Sharing and Innovation Incubator, Advocacy, Co-ordination & Monitoring and Technical Support). Highlights of PARIS21's work in 2017 include:

- 33 countries were directly engaged in 2017
- 57 countries were reached through regional activities
- In particular: 12 SIDS, 7 Fragile States and 37 Regional Organisations & Partner Agencies were involved in PARIS21 activities
- The following activities were highlighted under the four pillars of the PARIS21 strategy:
 - Knowledge-Sharing and Innovation Incubator
 - Cross Regional Forum on SDG implementation: Data, Institutions and Funding
 - Task Teams on Capacity Development 4.0
 - Open Assessment Repository (OAR): statistical capacity measurement today and proposals for improvement
 - Advocacy
 - Active in High Level groups (UNECE, Praia, SDMX, CCSA, IAEG-SDGs) and issue partner of HLG-PCCB for 2030 Agenda
 - Data Visualization module in the Communications Toolkit
 - OECD Development Co-operation Report on Data for Development
 - Competition for best data story by journalists in Rwanda
 - Co-ordination & Monitoring
 - Supported the First NSDS in Libya

- ADAPT functionalities developed to enable M&E of data plans (incl. NSDS) and empower co-ordination
- SDG Indicator 17.18.2 on Statistical Legislation upgraded from Tier III to II
- Technical Support
 - Development of a National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) in Cameroon
 - Advanced technical support on ADAPT in 8 countries to improve data planning
 - Review and revision of statistical laws in Grenada, Somalia and CAN region

Impact Stories (2018)

The Secretariat and members from the Board presented three Impact Stories from 2017. The aim of the presentations was to highlight the various activities and the impact they had on countries and partners. The following three activities were presented:

- New statistics act in Grenada
- First NSDS in Libya
- ADAPT and SDG readiness in Mongolia

Discussion

Before opening the floor to discussion, the Chair congratulated the small PARIS21 Secretariat team for the excellent work implemented.

The participants focused their comments on the importance of capacity development and its overall link to the SDGs. Participants thanked PARIS21 for their work and engagement at the national and regional levels. In particular Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives and Suriname all appreciated the relevance and agility of the support provided. SPC and COMESA echoed their appreciation on their appropriate involvement in PARIS21 regional activities, which further leveraged their impact. DFID and Statistics Norway also recognised the richness and relevance of the work done. Norway and the Caribbean Development Bank, while recognising the great work done, also discussed the possible benefits of further prioritising activities in the programme of work, especially in the current context of limited resources in which the Secretariat evolves. Bolivia suggested more support could be provided to Latin America.

The Secretariat explained how activities were prioritised into the POW, based on country status priorities, and also those of PARIS21 donors. The cross-cutting aspects of statistical advocacy were further discussed, with appreciation for the recent development of PARIS21 advocacy profile with the USG as the new PARIS21 Data Champion for Statistical Capacity.

III. Update on work in 2018

Programme of Work and Budget (2018)

The PARIS21 Secretariat presented the proposed work programme for 2018 and stressed that the work programme can still be adjusted later depending on availability of funds and new demands from countries. PARIS21 presented the current financial situation and alerted the board to the important funding gap for 2019.

DfID, the current chair of the NSDS Guidelines Expert Reference Group, presented the newly incorporated updates into the NSDS and summarised the decisions taken during the last NSDS Guidelines Expert Reference Group meeting. DfID provided further updates on the work that will be undertaken in 2018 to further improve and update the guidelines.

The PARIS21 Secretariat introduced three new initiatives for 2018.

- The PARIS21 Secretariat presented the upcoming “Statistical Capacity Development Outlook” flagship report. The report will be accomplished by an online “knowledge and best practices repository.” Combined, these resources will support countries in their efforts to improve statistical capacity, provide performance information on capacity development and improve statistical capacity development approaches.
- The PARIS21 Secretariat also presented the PARIS21 Advisory Unit, a United States-based non-profit organisation, which would be able to accept grants and tax-deductible contributions from individuals and ultimately bring in additional funds to the PARIS21 Secretariat. PARIS21 mentioned that the legal department of the OECD has approved the creation of such an entity. PARIS21 informed the Board about its willingness to further investigate the option by conducting a study and present results during next board meeting.
- Lastly, the PARIS21 Secretariat presented a future study, which will assess the feasibility of establishing a Global Fund on Development Data. The study, which will be funded by Switzerland, will aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of the opportunities and risks of setting up a global fund.

Discussion

The Board commended the Secretariat for its 2018 work programme, which continues to support developing countries, particularly fragile states and small island developing states (SIDS). Board members highlighted the following key items for the Secretariat to consider and the Secretariat provided initial reflections on the points raised:

- Call from several members to set priorities when planning activities, in particular in light of the financial situation over the next three years
 - The Secretariat replied that the proposed work programme follows the 2015 strategy and implementation guidelines as set out by the Board; in view of the comments and pending on available resources, the Secretariat will focus on key activities that are essential for target countries
- A few members called for more co-ordination with regional actors to implement activities for a wider selection of countries, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean

- While PARIS21 activities are selected based on country requests, the Secretariat will further foster its engagement with regional actors to carry out activities
- Ensure the funding situation for the Secretariat in 2019 and beyond
 - The Secretariat will continue to discuss funding opportunities with partners and advance efforts to broaden its funding base; the Secretariat also called upon existing members to consider increasing non-earmarked contributions in order to ensure the effective implementation of the Programme of Work
- Members discussed PARIS21's role in supporting the implementation of the CTGAP while also reiterating PARIS21's scope and strength in helping countries develop a wide range of statistical capacities
- Include Board members and other partners in the creation of the Statistical Capacity Development Outlook; some members offered their support and guidance, which the Secretariat has gratefully acknowledged
- Strong support and advice from members on the PARIS21 Advisory Unit; the Secretariat has noted these points and will revert to members for additional guidance
- **Decision:** The Board approved the Programme of Work and Budget 2018 and the study on the PARIS21 Advisory Unit.

IV. Partner Announcements

The Chair called on Board members to make announcements on recent Capacity Development activities.

- UNESCAP highlighted opportunities for collaboration and mentioned its policy-data integration work and the potential to linkup with PARIS21's ADAPT. UNESCAP also encouraged greater engagement in the area of CRVS.
- France appreciated the focus on Africa and stressed the need for innovations in data space.
- Dominican Republic acknowledged that as a member of the PARIS21 Board, Central America and the System of Central American Integration (SICA) would be represented in the partnership.
- FAO welcomed collaboration on the use of data and statistics for policy-making and suggested joint-work in testing ADAPT for costing purposes and CD4.0.
- Somalia thanked PARIS21 for the invitation to join its Board and outlined its work in the area of capacity development.
- UNECE announced some of its upcoming events, including one on the SDGs. It underlined that its capacity development strategy aligned with CD4.0.
- Eurostat provided details about its work with PARIS21 (especially in Africa), as well as activities in the context of the European Neighborhood Policy East and South.
- NORAD mentioned its Knowledge Bank initiative.
- AfDB mentioned Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA) and requested PARIS21's support.

- Kyrgyzstan informed the Board of its upcoming Census.

V. New approaches to Capacity Development

Progress on CD4.0: what has been done

The Chair invited the CD4.0 Task Team co-chairs to provide updates on their recent activities. Open Data Watch provided an overall update on the work, with a focus on the “Conceptual Framework” subgroup. Open Data Watch highlighted the aspects of political economy within statistical capacity and the need to focus on soft skills and national ownership.

The “Operationalisation” subgroup was presented by the National Statistical Office Mongolia. Mongolia mentioned the subgroup’s focus on implementation aspects of Capacity Development 4.0, such as providing recommendations on how to improve data literacy or fostering soft skills. The success criteria from the various organisations were identified and it was noted that CD4.0 guidelines have yet to be developed.

The “Measurement” subgroup was presented the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). IADB mentioned the overlaps between existing assessments and identified measurement areas, which are not being fairly covered by existing questionnaires. PARIS21’s Open Assessment Repository (OAR) tool was mentioned as a way to analyse the various assessments.

Scene Setting: Presentation of CD4.0 survey results

UNSD and the PARIS21 Secretariat jointly presented the CD4.0 survey results. The objective of the survey was to identify priorities for the medium-term for capacity development and to better understand the current practices of capacity development. Ninety-two NSO heads from all UN regions responded, equating to a response rate of 47%. The survey results identified the following priorities: "Coordination" - within NSS and with data providers; "Management" - for planning and reporting; and "Communication" - within NSS, with data providers and users. It was mentioned that the survey has been very useful in many international fora.

VI. Breakout sessions: towards guidelines for implementation

Board members broke out into 3 groups to discuss how to effectively implement CD4.0 activities.

Group I: Alignment

- Facilitated by CEPEI and NORAD

The Alignment group looked at how to align international co-operation programmes to beneficiaries’ needs; as the CD4.0 survey indicated an inverse relationship between international training and satisfaction of needs. The proposals were split into demand and supply. For aligning with demand, donors should listen more to the beneficiary needs and avoid approaches that identify “no other alternatives”. At the same time, the need to find intermediate solutions that fall between full

customisation and complete standardisation were also raised. For facilitating the supply side, beneficiaries should have a clear view of what their stakeholders need (e.g. from their NSDS, NDPs). Other categories to look into would be characteristics of the aid itself and of the process, as well as the before and after.

Group II: Soft skills

- Facilitated by Italy and UNICEF

The Soft skills group reflected on the mismatch between supply and demand of trainings and the mechanisms to deliver these trainings. Following the first list of proposals and discussions, the group concluded that because of the top down delivery of trainings without proper assessment, a mismatch between the supply and demand of soft skills trainings occurred, leading to a low level of country satisfaction. Therefore, the group decided to structure the proposals into two blocks. Block one looked at the demand side and proposed ideas of how to identify the needs. Once the need is properly identified, the mechanism of delivering the training comes into play. The group proposed to address the demand side through better planning of capacity development needs (i.e., comprehensive assessment of capacity needs; monitoring and evaluation of outcomes; and training plan on soft skills). On the supply side, the proposal is to establish partnerships, institutionalise peer learning (i.e., mentoring, secondments, coaching) and the exchange of practices among NSOs, and establish stronger technical co-operation.

Group III: Costing

- Facilitated by UN Women and Eurostat

The Costing group started by clarifying the scope of the exercise to focus on the costing and budgeting of training activities. The group discussed how to design and implement programmes that solve the issues around funding and costing by grouping actions into 4 clusters:

1. Joint identification and assessment of needs (gap analysis, costing, tools, etc.)
2. Co-ordination, communication, transparency and information sharing
3. Harmonised budget lines for donors, recipients and technical partners
4. Dedicated investments in new training tools, etc.

The group also discussed the possibility of PARIS21 setting up a training marketplace, and that further effort was needed to incentivise training on both the supply side and the demand side.

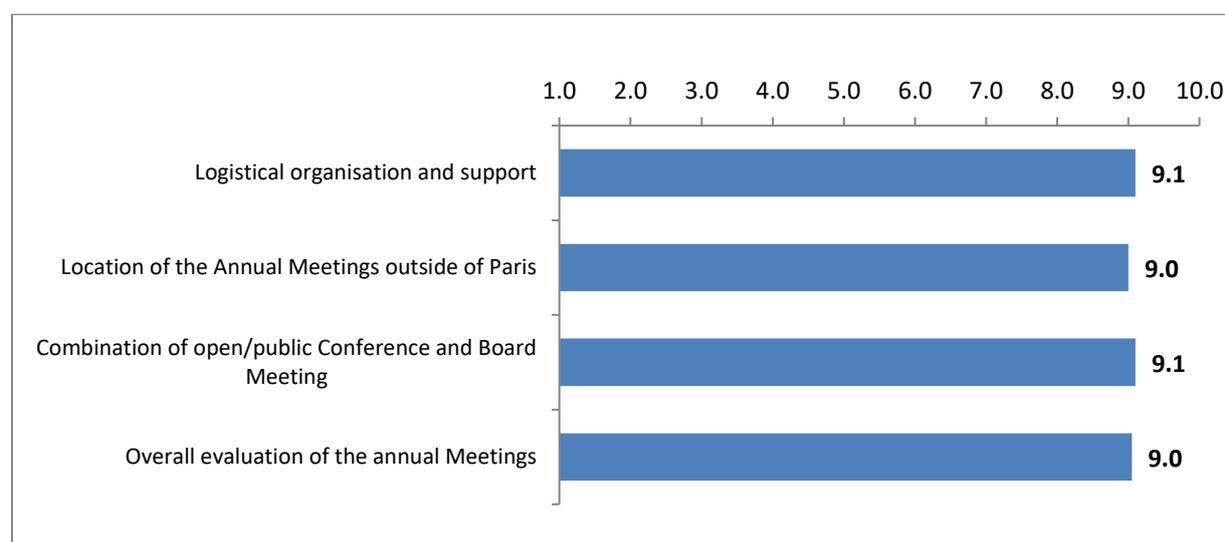
2. Satisfaction Survey Results

Summary of the Results

Below is a summary of the responses received in the Satisfaction Survey for the Annual Meetings covering the conference “Truth in Numbers: the role of data in a world of fact, fiction and everything in between” on 4 April and the PARIS21 Board Meeting on 5 April. This satisfaction survey was only distributed on day 2; the respondents are thus only Board Members and one observer. For each question, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale from 1 to 10, 10 being the highest level of satisfaction. 42 people out of 53 participants to the Board Meeting filled out the form, representing a 79% response rate.

Based on the below analysis, key takeaways include providing more time for discussion and interactive time and improving the relevance of the breakout session. Other recommendations include inviting more panellists from developing countries and having a stronger focus on aspects relevant to developing countries for future conferences, and improving the partner announcement for future Board Meetings.

Figure 1. Average score for overall evaluation of the 2018 Annual Meetings
[from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high)]



Top scores (excluding the overall evaluation of the conference, of the Board Meeting and of the Annual Meetings)

9.1

Quality of the documents
provided during the Board
Meeting

9.1

Logistical organisation and
support

9.1

Combination of
open/public
Conference and Board
Meeting

9.0

Location of the Annual
Meetings outside of Paris

Bottom scores (excluding the overall evaluation of the conference, of the Board Meeting and of the Annual Meetings)

7.9

Length of
discussion/interactive time
during the Conference on
4 April

8.2

Use of interactive
questions during the
Conference on
4 April

8.2

Usefulness of breakout
session during the Board
Meeting on
5 April

8.3

Selection of capacity
development session in
the afternoon on
5 April

Average scores for the conference “Truth in numbers” and the PARIS21 Board meeting

Figure 2. Average score for Conference “Truth in Numbers” – 4 April 2018
[from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high)]

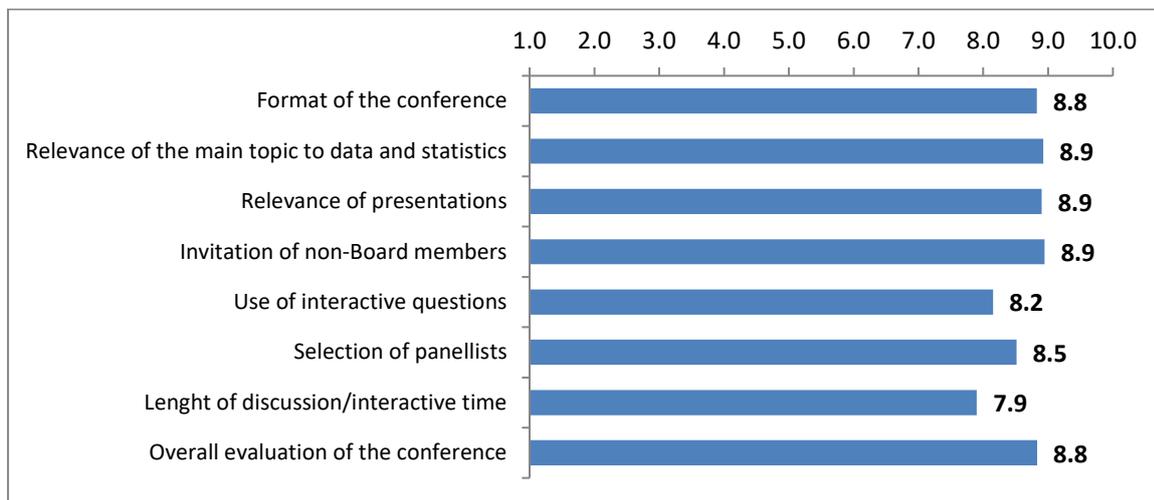


Figure 3. Average score for the Board Meeting – 5 April 2018
[from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high)]

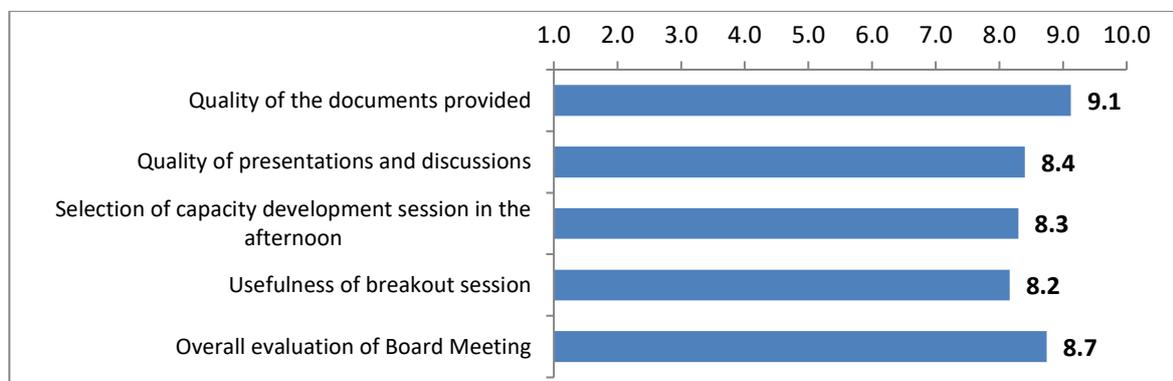


Figure 4. Average score of previous Annual Meetings
[from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high)]

