

Statistics in development cooperation - coordination

Statistics Explained

This article is part of a [set of background articles](#) providing an 'outline of knowledge' of international statistical cooperation between the [European Union \(EU\)](#) and developing countries, for non-statisticians needing to deal with statistics in development programmes and projects. The outline serves as an entry point and introduction to the much more detailed [Eurostat](#) publication 'Guide to statistics in European Commission development cooperation', downloadable in [PDF format](#) in English, French and Spanish (further down referred to as 'the *Guide*').

Many developing countries have weak statistical systems and mechanisms for measuring results. Good, reliable statistics are essential for measuring progress in reaching development goals and provide essential information about the effectiveness of policies and programmes. They help governments improve their policies and to be transparent and accountable about the delivery of development results. Reliable statistics are a key element towards better measurement, monitoring and management of the results of [development assistance](#).

In statistics-related fields, as in other areas, donors specialise in a limited number of technical fields, provide financial support across wider areas and leave some subjects altogether to other development partners. To avoid both duplication and the involvement of development partners in statistics actions outside their areas of expertise, coordination with the development community at large is essential.



Why is coordination important to support statistics in the context of development?

More and better aid requires coordination and cooperation, both between donors and between donors and recipients.

Since the [UN Millennium Declaration](#), several international summits have emphasised the importance of donor

coordination. In parallel, development of statistics has been promoted as a means for enhancing the efficiency of aid.

Key instruments dealing with the coordination of support to statistics

- The [Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics \(MAPS\)](#) (2004)

"16. The international community has been quick to demand more and better data, but it has been slow to provide additional resources or to examine critically its own practices. The recommendations directed at the international agencies call for greater accountability and coordination of their statistical programs and increased financial support for statistical capacity building at the country level ."

- The [Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness](#) (2005)

Harmonisation as a correlative of coordination: *"Harmonisation - Donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective"*

- The [Dakar Declaration on Development of Statistics](#) (2009)

"3. In order to ensure more effective co-ordination at all levels, by 2014: a. International and regional mechanisms for coordination and cooperation should work more effectively, taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries as well as integration processes. b. Governments, with the assistance of development partners, should establish national partnerships for statistics, where such partnerships do not exist already. Coordination of statistical programmes, both internationally and in countries, must be strengthened and consultation between statistical producers and key user groups must be improved at all levels, making use of existing institutions, partnerships and forums, wherever possible. "

Who are the key technical and financial partners (TFP) supporting statistical development?

A wide range of international organisations and cooperation agencies support statistical development.

The Guide's Part B "Statistics in development" introduces international statistical cooperation, its main instruments, themes, actors and actions.

Practical information about the technical and financial partners active in statistical cooperation

1. In the *Guide*

- Box 2.9: Selected publications and databases of international organisations
- Box 2.11: Activities of international organisations in statistical cooperation
- Box 2.12: Selected regional organisations with statistical activities

2. The [Global Directory of Partners in Statistical Capacity Development](#) :

- is an online directory published by PARIS21;
- gives updated information on overall goals, objectives and main intervention areas of over 100 development partners.

Eurostat collaborates with several international actors and maintains a close partnership with two international entities specialised in statistics: [PARIS21](#) (global level) and [AFRISTAT](#) (sub-Saharan level).

• **PARIS21: the partnership in statistics for development in the 21st century**

- A consortium of United Nations, [World Bank](#) , [International Monetary Fund](#) , [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development](#) and the [European Commission](#) .
- Founded in 1999; the PARIS21 Secretariat is hosted by the [OECD Development Co-operation Directorate \(DCD-DAC\)](#) in Paris.

- Overall goal: "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 \(MDG\)](#) . "
- Tasks:
 - partners coordination,
 - advocacy (incl. [National Strategies for the Development of Statistics - NSDS](#)),
 - technical assistance,
 - tools coordination ([Accelerated Data Programme - ADP](#) ; [International Household Survey Network - IHSN](#)),
 - maintenance of a knowledge base.
- **AFRISTAT: The Economic and Statistical Observatory for sub-Saharan Africa**
 - An international organisation with 19 Member States (Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Republic of Congo, Republic of Guinea, Union of the Comoros, Togo).
 - Founded in 1993, the AFRISTAT General Directorate is located in Bamako.
 - Overall goal: to strengthen, develop and support the National Statistical Systems of AFRISTAT Member States.
 - Tasks:
 - elaboration of common methodologies,
 - harmonisation of concepts and nomenclatures,
 - improvement of the [dissemination](#) and the use of statistical information,
 - economic and social analyses and notes for the Member States,
 - contribution to the organisation of life-long learning,
 - support to the instruction of projects funded by international donors.

The technical and financial partners' support to statistical development: what and where?

The PARIS21 consortium plays an important role in donor coordination for statistics.

Key tools elaborated and updated by PARIS21

1. The [Partner report on support to statistics \(PRESS\)](#) :

- PRESS provides a snapshot of support to statistical capacity development worldwide;
- PRESS is updated and published annually by PARIS21;
- The information sources are the central services of the key technical and financial partners;
- European Commission contribution to PRESS is coordinated by Eurostat;
- Key content of PRESS:
 - (a) support to statistical development - commitments by recipient country,
 - (b) support to statistical development - commitments by donor,
 - (c) support to statistical development - commitments by recipient statistical activity,
 - (d) planned support to statistical development, by donor.

2. The [NSDS status report](#) :

- The NSDS status report is a report on country progress in designing and implementing [National Strategies for the Development of Statistics \(NSDS\)](#) ;
- The NSDS status report is regularly updated by PARIS21, with the help of the technical and financial partners;
- The NSDS status report provides an up-to-date overview of where [International Development Association \(IDA\)](#) and [lower middle income countries](#) currently are in their NSDS processes.

Eurostat's statistical cooperation unit

Eurostat's statistical cooperation unit provides an advisory service to EU external relations services, EU delegations, national statistical authorities and Eurostat units to aid them with respect to development policies, and to assist in relations with international organisations and in matters of common statistical interest with non-European regions or countries.

Guide examples and practical information

The international statistical co-operation framework

- [B.1.3 Managing for Development Results](#)
- [B.1.4 The follow-up of the Busan High Level Forum](#)

Main actors and their activities

- [B.2.4 The role of international and regional organisations with statistical activities](#)
- [C.6.1 Statistical strategy](#)

European Commission support to statistics development

- [B.1.5 EU development policies: the 'Agenda for Change', budget support and the European Consensus on Development](#)
- [C.7.3 Providing European Commission support for statistics](#)
- [C.7.4 European Commission types of action in statistics](#)

Other articles

- [International statistical cooperation](#) (online publication)
- [Statistics in development cooperation](#) (online publication to which this article belongs)

Dedicated section

- [International statistical cooperation](#)

Publications

- [Guide to Statistics in European Commission Development Co-operation](#)

External links

- **European Commission support to statistics development**
 - [Agenda for Change](#) (2011)
 - [European Consensus on Development](#) (2006)
 - [Evaluation of the Commission Support for Statistics in Third Countries](#) (2007)
- **International statistical cooperation framework**
 - [Busan Action Plan for Statistics](#) (2011)
 - [Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics](#) (2009)
 - [Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)
 - [Managing for Development Results](#)
 - [Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics](#) (2004)
 - [Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness](#) (2005) and the [Accra Agenda for Action](#) (2008)
- **Main actors and their activities**
 - PARIS21: [Global Directory of Partners in Statistical Capacity Development](#)
 - PARIS21: [Partner Report on Support to Statistics](#) (PRESS)