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Background

1. The *Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics* (MAPS) is a global action plan for improving development statistics. MAPS is an integral part of the international results agenda, which was developed following the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development in 2002. It was proposed and agreed at the Second International Roundtable on Managing for Development Results held in Marrakech in February 2004, following recommendations of the First Round Table on Better Measurement, Monitoring, and Managing for Results (Washington DC, 2002), which called for better coordinated support to statistical capacity-building by development agencies and for the harmonization of approaches to results measurement, monitoring, and reporting.

2. MAPS comprises of six coordinated actions, representing a coherent action plan to meet the measurement challenge of the international development agenda. The plan focuses on key statistical issues relevant to the poorest countries, including the long-term goal of building sustainable statistical systems, and shorter-term actions to provide estimates of high profile outcome indicators, such as those used for monitoring Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It has received wide support from the international statistical community, donor agencies, and developing countries.

3. Actions aimed at the national level are:

- (i) mainstream strategic planning of statistical systems within national development processes;
- (ii) prepare for full participation in the 2010 round of population censuses; and
- (iii) increase financing for developing statistical capacity from countries and development partners.

4. Those aimed at the international level are:

- (iv) set-up an international household survey network to improve the effectiveness of international household survey programs;
- (v) make improvements in key data sets related to MDG monitoring; and
- (vi) increase the accountability for international statistics.¹

Implementing MAPS through global partnership

5. Implementation of MAPS relies heavily on the partnership of existing organizations and institutions and on existing governance arrangements. A large number of institutions need to work together if MAPS is to be successful. Clearly, members of statistical systems in both developing and developed countries have a key role. International agencies and networks are also important, particularly to take leadership of key activities.

¹ *The Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics. Better Data for Better Results. An Action Plan for Improving Development Statistics.* Presented at the Second International Roundtable on Managing for Development Results, Marrakech, Morocco, February 4-5, 2004.

6. An Advisory Board has been formed to provide strategic direction, coordinate and monitor MAPS activities, and advise agencies involved in implementation. A small MAPS Unit to support the Advisory Board and MAPS implementation is located in the World Bank.

7. The MAPS Advisory Board includes representatives from various constituencies, including producers and users of statistics at national, regional and international levels. The Board also contains representatives from bilateral and multilateral development agencies, and from statistical institutes of developed countries. The first meeting of the Board took place in November 2005, in Washington, D.C. Current membership is given in Attachment.

8. The cost of implementing MAPS has been estimated to be around \$146m per year, over and above existing commitments of both national governments and development partners. Of this, it is estimated that around \$118m per year is needed to help countries improve their statistical capacity, and around \$24-\$28m per year is needed to support the international statistical system. Various donors are providing resources in support of MAPS activities; for example, through the Bank's Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building to support small projects, particularly those to develop national strategies for statistical development. Starting from the current financial year, the World Bank is providing some \$7.5m annually through the Development Grant Facility to support the efforts of international partners.

Progress on action 1

Mainstream strategic planning of statistical systems within national development processes

9. Promotion of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) has been incorporated as a key theme of the work program of PARIS21, which is supported by the World Bank and other partners. PARIS21 has developed a number of tools and guidelines to help countries who wish to develop an NSDS, including a list of "essentials", and methodologies and good practice to help with the NSDS process.

10. The World Bank's multi-donor Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building provides resources to developing countries who wish to prepare NSDSs. In Sub-Saharan Africa, according to the information maintained by the World Bank, some twenty countries have completed or adopted an NSDS, and a further ten countries are currently developing a strategy. Seven countries have a "roadmap" for an NSDS. Only five countries are listed as having no plans to develop an NSDS, although the NSDS status of a further five countries is unknown.

Progress on action 2

Preparation of the 2010 round of population censuses

11. The UN has created a World Program for supporting countries in the 2010 census round, which will provide advocacy, expertise, and international standards. Financial contributions are provided by the World Bank and by other partners. Major activities include the updating of the UN "Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses", developing common standards for outputs, facilitating exchange of experience

and advice, and assisting data dissemination. The Program will focus on regional cooperation.

12. The World program does not include funding for census-taking operations themselves and based on experience during the last round (2000) there are likely to be considerable shortfalls. For low-income countries in Africa, the cost of operations for the 2010 round is estimated to be over \$700m in total.

Progress on action 3

Countries and partners to increase financing for developing statistical capacity

13. A number of high profile reports have called for increased financing for statistics. The Millennium Project report to the UN Secretary General² included a section on the MAPS and the need for increased financing. The Commission for Africa³ also supported the MAPS agenda and recommended that donors provide an additional \$60m to African countries to support its implementation.

14. Although some additional financing has been requested and is being provided for some countries (for instance Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Kenya through the World Bank's STATCAP lending program), much more is needed, particularly to finance the implementation of NSDSs. Approaches based on cofinancing, or "basket-funding," for example to support PRSP monitoring, have been successful in some countries.

Progress on action 4

Setting up the International Household Survey Network to improve the effectiveness of international household survey programs

15. The International Household Survey Network (IHSN)⁴ was set up in September 2004. The work program focuses on coordination of international household survey programs, promotion of international standards and best practice, harmonization of data collection instruments, establishment of a central survey repository, and the development of tools and guidelines for improving survey documentation, dissemination and preservation. The IHSN operates as an informal network, with a "virtual" secretariat at the World Bank. A Management Group oversees activities of the IHSN.⁵ The World Bank's Development Grant Facility will provide around \$0.9m a year toward support for the IHSN work program from 2006.

² UN Millennium Project. 2005. *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*. New York. See <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org>

³ Commission for Africa. 2005. *Our Common Interest: Report of the Commission for Africa*. See <http://www.commissionforafrica.org>

⁴ See <http://www.internationalsurveynetwork.org>

⁵ Members are PARIS21 Secretariat, International Labour Organization (ILO), the UK's Department for International Development, UNICEF, UN Statistics Division, World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Bank

16. Good progress has been made in setting up the central survey repository and tools for microdata documentation, dissemination, and preservation (the survey dissemination “Toolkit”). Over 2,300 household surveys are documented in the repository; over 630 of these surveys are in Africa. All major international surveys are included, including Living Standards Measurement Study surveys, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, Demographic and Health Surveys, and Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire surveys. Many African countries have expressed interest in using the survey dissemination toolkit. Progress is also being made in the challenging areas of survey coordination and harmonization, although this is more difficult.

Progress on action 5

Improving key datasets for MDG monitoring

17. A number of important initiatives have been implemented by UN agencies to help improve the data set for estimating indicators needed for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals (and other development goals). For instance, UNDP has implemented a training program on statistical “literacy,” working in partnership with UNICEF and UN Statistics Division. In 2005, UN Statistics Division launched MDG Info, a software tool for accessing key indicators based on the DevInfo software first developed by UNICEF. Other agencies and international organizations are working to improve indicator estimates through the UN MDG Inter-Agency and Expert Group, and through programs to improve their own statistical methods and the statistical capacity of countries. In 2006, the World Bank’s Development Grant Facility will support UNESCO’s Institute for Statistics and UN-Habitat to carry out special efforts to improve education and urban indicators (with grants of \$1.78m and \$0.2m respectively).

18. A new initiative proposed for implementation by PARIS21 in 2006 is to pilot an Accelerated Data Program. Funding is being provided by the World Bank for activities in 12 pilot countries, of which at least 6 will be from Africa. This program aims to provide comparable data estimates over a five year period, by utilizing existing data, improving existing systems, or, in some cases, providing co-financing for household survey activities.

Progress on action 6

Improving the accountability for international statistics

19. A set of principles governing international statistics was agreed by the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) in September 2005 and have subsequently been endorsed by most international statistical agencies. Inspired by the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, they signal a strong commitment by agencies to improve international statistics, including statistics related to development. The African Development Bank and UN Economic Commission for Africa have both expressed their commitment to the principles.

Attachment

Composition of the MAPS Advisory Board (November 2005)

Carla Abouzahr	Manager, Interim Secretariat of the Health Metrics Network, World Health Organisation
Jim Adams	Vice President, Operations Policy and Country Services, World Bank (Chair)
Shaida Badiie	Director, Development Data Group, World Bank (Secretary)
Grace Bediako	Government Statistician, Ghana Statistical Service and Co-Chair of PARIS21
Siobhan Carey	Chief Statistician, Department for International Development, UK
Paul Cheung	Director, UN Statistics Division
Jean-François Divay	Chargé de mission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France
Rob Edwards	Director, IMF Statistics Division
Ivan Fellegi	Chief Statistician, Statistics Canada, and Chairman of the OECD Statistics Committee
Charles Lufumpa	Manager, Statistics Division, African Development Bank
Richard Manning	Development Assistance Committee Chairman, OECD, and Co-Chair of PARIS21
Michel Mouyelo-Katoula	African Development Bank
Mamadou Ndoye	Executive Secretary, Association for the Development of Education in Africa
Béla Prigly	Director, International Relations Division, Statistics Canada
Antoine Simonpietri	Manager of PARIS21
Dennis Trewin	Australian Statistician, Australian Bureau of Statistics