



Oxford Policy Management

Independent Evaluation of the International Household Survey Network (IHSN) and Accelerated Data Program (ADP)

Final report

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report presents the results of an independent evaluation of the International Household Survey Network (IHSN) and the associated Accelerated Data Programme (ADP). Oxford Policy Management, a UK based consulting company has been contracted by OECD to carry out the evaluation.

The objectives of the evaluation are: (i) to assess the impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of both the IHSN and ADP and of their institutional arrangements; (ii) to assess the relevance of both programmes in the context of the evolving statistical capacity development agenda; and (iii) to provide guidance on how the programmes could be strengthened and improved in the future.

The evaluation was carried out over a six month period and the main evaluation instruments were: a review of all relevant documents, stakeholder interviews, five country case studies, and two eSurveys covering data producers and users.

The report falls into two parts: the evaluation of IHSN/ADP activities over the period since inception, and an assessment of the options open to IHSN and ADP.

The International Household Survey Network (IHSN) was established in 2004 following the adoption of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics at the Second Roundtable on Managing for Development Results in February 2004. The Accelerated Data Programme (ADP) was launched in 2006, to assist developing countries to implement improved practices in survey design and implementation and in microdata management.

The IHSN/ADP has been implemented jointly by PARIS21 and the World Bank. The objectives of the Network are: (i) to improve coordination of internationally sponsored survey programmes; (ii) to increase the availability of coordinated and practical technical and methodological guidelines for all stages of the survey life cycle; (iii) to establish and promote access to a central survey data catalogue; (iv) to develop and promote the adoption of standards, tools, and guidelines that allow data producers to document, disseminate, and preserve microdata; and (v) to improve collaboration between data producers and users. The ADP is a technical assistance and training programme to help developing countries adopt and use the standards, tools and guidelines generated by IHSN. Its objective is to increase the use and value of survey data, in particular to help data producers and users in developing countries make better use of existing data and to align survey programmes and statistical outputs to priority data needs.

When the IHSN and the ADP were established no log-frame or intervention logic was defined and there has been no formal monitoring and evaluation system as such. A logical framework for IHSN and ADP was developed in 2011, but this has only been in place for one year. In order to assess the OECD DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, the evaluation team developed two theories of change to determine whether the activities and outputs of the IHSN and the ADP have been appropriate and have led to the desired outcomes and impacts.

Findings

The evaluation concluded that the establishment of IHSN and ADP was a **relevant** response to the recommendations of MAPS and its mission has continued to remain relevant. The two programmes have fulfilled a good part of their remit, and have filled a clear niche. No other

statistical programme has focused on archiving surveys and increasing access to microdata. However there are parts of the original mission that have not been addressed, especially improved coordination of internationally sponsored survey programmes and improved collaboration between data producers and data users.

In terms of **efficiency**, for IHSN most outputs have been achieved. For ADP, Task 1 outputs have been achieved in a significant number of countries. Task 2 activities have only started at a fairly late stage and have yet to result in significant outputs.

The evaluation finds that the use of financial and human resources by both IHSN and ADP has been quite economical. There has been good use of South consultants and efforts to promote South-South sharing of expertise and experience. The number of full-time equivalent staff in both programmes has been kept remarkably small for the results achieved; by situating ADP at OECD the management fees for the Secretariat have been kept at a lower level than other comparable programmes. However, more effort could have been made in recent years to shift some of the costs to recipient organisations.

The picture is less clear when we come to evaluate **effectiveness**. Although many countries and some international organisations have set up their own survey catalogues based on the IHSN National Data Archive (NADA) application, this has not, as far as the evaluation can tell, led to an increased use of existing survey data.

Access to microdata appears to have increased in a number of countries. Figures collected in 2013 indicate that in many countries significant numbers of users are registering with NADAs, but there is no information as to what microdata sets they are downloading and how they are using them. In the countries with the highest number of registered users, it was previously possible to access microdata but the introduction of a NADA has made access easier. Many countries in Africa are not using those elements of the software which permit almost automatic download of microdata and also register usage. Undoubtedly, IHSN has created greater awareness of what microdata are available.

The IHSN catalogue has been a very useful reference tool, but has had inadequate promotion. At the country level, National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) are not doing as much as they could to improve access, and in some cases, see microdata management tools as more important, in that they have helped them document and organise their own data sets better.

At present, IHSN/ADP has not been effective in improving the coordination of surveys. Better documentation may have led to more emphasis on quality control of surveys, but overall, there has been little documented effect on survey quality. IHSN has not operated as a network in the usual sense of the term, with the secretariat tending to engage with its partners on a one-to-one basis. In order to make progress towards achieving greater coordination of surveys, there will have to be more effort towards working collaboratively with partners.

In terms of **impact**, IHSN/ADP has improved data availability, both through the IHSN catalogue and through assisting countries to establish their own NADAs. It has had limited impact on the collaboration between data producers and data users and has not had any impact that the evaluation could find on the coordination of internationally sponsored survey programmes. It has contributed to an environment of more open data, but it remains to be seen what impact it may have on the use of household survey data beyond internationally renowned academic institutions and the research departments of international organisations. IHSN could do more in terms of advocacy and promotion, but could also strengthen collaboration with partner organisations whose mandate focuses more on data usage.

The **sustainability** of the outputs achieved by IHSN/ADP has quite limited financial implications. There are three established outputs; the maintenance of the software (including the NADA and the microdata toolkit), the use of the microdata toolkit to archive data at national and organisational level, and the maintenance of country NADAs. The first of these is a matter of programmer time and institutional commitment. It is important as there has been an implicit, and at times explicit, commitment by the IHSN to the countries that have adopted the toolkit and established NADAs, but the financial implications of this are not high.

For the other two outputs, the sustainability is very much dependent on the capacity and commitment of NSOs. In the countries where the NSO has reasonable staffing levels, a good IT capacity and a degree of financial autonomy, the NADA has been maintained and surveys have been documented and added to the archive as they have been carried out. Sustainability does seem a major issue, however, in countries where the NSO is more dependent on external funding and where there is relatively high staff turn-over. It is important that data archiving and the maintenance of a national data archive become institutionalised within national procedures if the achievements of the IHSN and the ADP are to be sustained.

The **governance** of IHSN has been quite light touch since its inception. The Management Group has met annually at most, with gaps in some years. It discusses a proposed work plan and provides guidance on IHSN priorities. IHSN and ADP develop annual work plans and provide six-monthly financial and progress reports, which are submitted to the World Bank. However the level of detail required is not high. There are quite limited opportunities for partner organisations to participate in management decisions, and no formal role for other stakeholders, such as heads of NSOs.

There is no formal M&E system in place. It is not clear that anyone has the obligation to match work plans against progress reports, and there are no measurable performance indicators as far as the evaluation is aware. Reporting against the funding recently provided by DFID has required IHSN to report against targets and milestones, but this is new and it is not clear as yet what, if any, effect this will have on programme management. The evaluation feels that the identification of and reporting against some higher level indicators would bring about a greater strategic focus for the programme, which would be appropriate as it reaches maturity and can no longer be regarded as a pilot programme.

Overall, the evaluation team concludes that both IHSN and ADP have made considerable achievements since their inception in 2004 and 2006. The initial mandate was very ambitious and has been narrowed down to a more practical set of objectives. Software tools have been developed for data archiving and for setting up NADAs and ADP has helped train NSO staff to use these, and to archive surveys more effectively. Some progress has been made on improving access to microdata, though there are still legal, political and, in some cases, technical issues to address at national level. A start has been made to improving data and survey quality but progress has been slow. There are still challenges of cooperation, both at national and at global levels.

The future programme

Looking forward, the report makes recommendations for the future development and IHSN and ADP. It also recognises that this development will need to take into account the evolving international statistical architecture, the implementation of the Busan Action Plan for Statistics (BAPS) and, especially the evolving development agenda for the period from 2015 onwards, when the current Millennium Development Goals will come to an end.

While IHSN and ADP have interacted with many of the main actors in the international statistical system, so far there has been no direct involvement with the United Nations Statistical Commission

(UNSC). The UNSC brings together heads of national statistical agencies from UN member states from all regions of the world and it is the decision making body for the setting of statistical standards, the development of concepts and methods and their implementation at the national and international levels. If the standards, guidelines and recommendations that IHSN develops are to continue to be widely used then it will be important for UNSC to be involved.

The international statistical architecture has evolved over time, typically in response to a specific need or concern and as a result is complicated and extensive. It is continuing to change, although not always in a planned or consistent way. One, not always intended, outcome of this complexity is the actual and potential duplication of both activities and statistical products, especially software tools. Many developing countries have expressed their frustration with this situation and it is an area where the IHSN or its successor could make an important contribution.

There are a number of implications for IHSN and ADP that come directly from the implementation arrangements for BAPS. Most importantly, BAPS updates and strengthens the mandate for IHSN and ADP activities, requiring that work to develop and implement standards for data preservation, documentation and dissemination continues and is extended. In addition, the link with open data, providing for full public access to statistics, is emphasised.

In the discussions around the post-2015 development agenda, there are also important implications for IHSN and ADP. In particular the emphasis on better data and the call for a data revolution present an important opportunity. It will be important to ensure that the development of IHSN is linked directly with the proposal for a Global Partnership on Development Data.

The evaluation report proposes that the work of IHSN/ADP should be continued after 2015 at least until 2020. The proposals are divided into two distinct components: the short term from now until the end of 2015; and the period from 2015 onwards.

Short-term recommendations

Between now and the end of 2015, the assumption is that the work programme will proceed largely in line with existing priorities and objectives. The changes that are proposed are largely incremental and it is anticipated that they can be implemented within the current resource envelope.

The main short-term recommendations are: (i) to reaffirm the involvement of partners in the Network and to strengthen the Management Group; (ii) to initiate the involvement of IHSN with the United Nations Statistical Commission; (iii) to promote raised awareness of the importance and availability of microdata through improved advocacy; (iv) to ensure that IHSN-type activities are included in national and regional strategies for the development of statistics; (v) to develop a strategy for engagement and disengagement with ADP partner countries; (vi) to facilitate greater experience sharing between countries; and (vii) to develop a more coherent programme of publications.

Longer-term proposal

For the longer term, in response to the terms of reference, the evaluation team has developed a scenario for the development of the statistical environment post-2015. The team believes that the most likely scenario for post-2015 is one where the demand for data will continue to increase, national statistical systems will continue to be the main source of development data, but there will be an increasing focus on and interest in alternative data sources.

The scenario suggests that increased demand for statistics will continue to be translated into demand for the products and services of national statistical systems, especially surveys and

censuses. At the same time though, the limitations of these data sources will mean that other kinds of data will be more widely used. NSOs will need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their survey programmes and also find ways to make use of other kinds of data. In particular there is likely to be an increased interest in exploiting “*big data*” to provide a much more disaggregated analysis of the changes that are taking place, in as close to real time as possible.

Based on the findings from the evaluation and the expected scenario for post-2015, the evaluation team recommends that the Network be extended to operate over the period from 2015 to 2020, and proposes some key adjustments for the way forward. The aim is to build on the achievements of the first eight years, but with a number of important changes to respond to the evolving environment for statistics. In particular, the network should be positioned as a component of the Global Partnership on Development Data.

It is proposed that the network will support the maintenance and development of standards, tools and guidelines for the documentation and use of microdata and will promote their adoption and use by countries and international agencies.

The proposed institutional structure of the proposed programme consists of a small secretariat, a small permanent technical team, and temporary technical teams established to undertake specific tasks as required. Members of the network would carry out much of the work programme based on in-kind contributions and some financial support from the network. Where required the inputs from network members will be supplemented by inputs from the secretariat and the permanent technical team.

The outputs and activities to be carried out under the proposed programme may be considered under two main categories. First are those activities related to the assessment and analysis of existing data and the improvement of national data programmes, including, but not necessarily limited to, household surveys and censuses. Second, those technical activities such as the inventory, documentation and dissemination of microdata; these include the development of software tools and guidance within the framework of appropriate standards, including the DDI.

The network should aim to remain engaged with the UN Statistical Commission. For some or all parts of the technical work programme this could be done by setting up an Inter-Sectoral Working Group, following the model used to prepare SNA2008. Another possibility would be to establish a “Friends of the Chair” (FOC) Group. The purpose of this group would be to review and reach agreement on the use of tools and standards.

The evaluation team recommends that the continuation of ADP as a separate technical assistance programme does not really make sense after 2015. It is recognised that there is likely to be a need to promote outreach and the widespread adoption of the tools and guidelines as well as advocacy generally. It is clear, though, that the existence of separate technical assistance funds targeted at a specific set of actions does not really fit in with the logic of BAPS or the approach of supporting countries to identify their own priorities through the NSDS process.

In the longer term, technical assistance should be provided through general support to NSDS implementation rather than through separate funds under the control of different technical programmes. Where technical assistance needs to be provided by the network, it should not be provided by the secretariat directly. Rather we recommend that technical assistance is provided from consultants with the required expertise and experience or by members of the network. As far as possible, technical assistance should aim to have a multiplier effect, for example by the training of trainers. Direct support to countries should be minimised and should generally be provided through existing TA projects and programmes.

The secretariat of the network should be established within an existing institution with a global mandate and a clear interest in microdata management. Options for the location of the network secretariat include: the Development Data Group in the World Bank; the PARIS21 Secretariat; or the UN Statistics Division.

The permanent technical team of the network does not necessarily need to be in the same location as the secretariat and the decision as to where it should be located should be made independently. The possible options for the location of the permanent technical team include: the Development Data Group in the World Bank; the PARIS21 Secretariat; the UN Statistics Division; and an existing research centre or agency, outside the traditional international statistical architecture, with an international mandate and expertise in microdata management and use.

Governance arrangements should not be very complicated or heavy and should build on existing processes. It is suggested that the work of the network and accountability to the funding agencies would be managed through a Network Management Group. This Group would approve work programmes and budgets, provide advice on priorities and strategies and decide on the allocation of resources.

Membership of the network should be extended to include national statistical agencies as well as international agencies and other organisations with an interest in its work.

The resource requirements for the proposed programme are of the order of just under \$22 million in 2013 prices for a period of 5 years. A second option, based on a smaller budget, would eliminate the technical assistance budget, increase the commissioning fund and reduce the size of the secretariat. The estimated cost of the second option over five years is \$14.5 million in 2013 prices.

The evaluation team looked at several possible funding models and recommends that the most appropriate funding model would be to identify a group of donor agencies and establish a multi-donor trust fund. It will be important to ensure that management of the trust fund does not unduly constrain the work of the network. It would need to allow multi-year financial commitments to be made and be able to transfer funds on the basis of agreed work programmes approved by the Management Group.

It is recommended that consideration be given to modifying the name of the network to indicate that household surveys are not the only focus of the work programme. One important factor in favour of retaining the International Household Survey Network name is that it is well recognised and has a good reputation for the quality of its work and the tools. Against this is the need for the name to reflect the breadth and depth of the network's activities.

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------|--|
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| ADP | Accelerated Data Program |
| AfDB | African Development Bank |
| ANADO | Archives Nationales des Données |
| ANDA | Archivo Nacional de Datos |
| ASI | Annual Survey of Industries (India) |
| BAPS | Busan Action Plan for Statistics |
| BAS | Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (Philippines) |
| BEAMS | BLES Electronic Archived Microdata System |
| BEANS | BAS Electronic Archiving and Network Service |
| BLES | Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics (Philippines) |
| BSP | Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas |
| CEPAL/CELADE | Centro Latinoamericano y Caribeño de Demografía |
| CSA | Central Statistical Office (Ethiopia) |
| CSI | Chief Statistician of India |
| CSO | Central Statistical Organisation (India) |
| DAC | Development Co-operation Directorate, OECD |
| DGF | Development Grant Facility |
| DCDS | Direction de la coordination et la développement de la Statistique |
| DDI | Data Documentation Initiative |
| DFID | Department for International Development, U.K. |
| DHS | Demographic and Health Survey |
| EC | Economic Census (India) |
| EDQAF | Ethiopian Data Quality Assessment Framework |
| ENADA | Ethiopian National Data Archive |
| ENBC | Enquête Nationale sur les Budgets et la consommation des Menages |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| FNRI | Food and Nutrition Research Institute (Philippines) |
| IAEG | Inter-Agency Expert Group |
| IASSIST | International Association for Social Science Information Services and Technology |
| IEG | Independent Evaluation Group (World Bank) |
| IHSN | International Household Survey Network |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| INS | Institut National de la Statistique |
| ISIC | International Standard Industrial Classification |
| ISPS | Information System on Planned Surveys and Censuses |

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| ISSP | India Statistical Strengthening Project |
| IT | Information Technology |
| LSMS | Living Standards Measurement Study |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MAPS | Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal |
| MG | Management Group |
| MICS | Multiple Indicator Cluster Study |
| MOSPI | Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (India) |
| NADA | National Data Archive |
| NSCB | National Statistical Coordination Board (Philippines) |
| NSDS | National Statistical Development Strategy |
| NSO | National Statistical Office, National Statistics Office (Philippines) |
| NSODA | National Statistics Office Data Archive |
| NSS | National Statistical System |
| NSSO | National Sample Survey Organisation (India) |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OPM | Oxford Policy Management |
| PASTAGEP | Programme d'Appui au Système Statistique National et à l'Etat Civil |
| PARIS21 | Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century |
| PBS | Promotion of Basic Services |
| PSDP | Philippines Statistical Development Plan |
| PSS | Philippines Statistical System |
| PUF | Public Use Files |
| REDATAM | REtrieval of DATa for small Areas by Microcomputer |
| RSDS | Regional Statistical Development Strategy |
| SDDS | Special Data Dissemination Standard |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| ToC | Theory of Change |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| UNDG | United Nations Development Group |
| UNESCO UIS | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Institute for Statistics |
| UNSC | United Nations Statistics Commission |
| WB | World Bank |
| WB-DECDG | World Bank, Development Economics Development Data Group |
| WFP | World Food Programme |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |

1 Introduction

The International Household Survey Network (IHSN) was established in 2004 following the adoption of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS) at the Second Roundtable on Managing for Development Results in February 2004. Its objectives are to improve the availability, accessibility and quality of household survey data within developing countries and to encourage its use by researchers, governments and policy makers. Since its inception, IHSN has developed guidelines, tools and software to improve data collection practices and to help data producers improve the documentation and archiving of survey and census microdata. IHSN has also developed an on-line survey catalogue to enable users to browse and search surveys.

The Accelerated Data Program (ADP) was launched in 2006 to assist developing countries to implement improved practices in survey design and implementation and in microdata management.

Oxford Policy Management has been asked to carry out an evaluation of the IHSN/ADP and to make recommendations for its future strategy. Although IHSN and ADP were included in an evaluation of MAPS in 2008 and an IEG review of global statistics programs in 2011, this is the first evaluation focusing on IHSN/ADP alone.

1.1 Purpose of evaluation

The terms of reference¹ identify the main objectives of the evaluation as being: (i) to assess the impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of both the IHSN and ADP and of their institutional arrangements; (ii) to assess the relevance of both programs in the context of the evolving statistical capacity development agenda; and (iii) to provide guidance on how the programs could be strengthened and improved in the future.

The evaluation has two concerns: first, to review what has been achieved so far and to evaluate both programs using internationally recognised standards and methods of evaluation; and, second, to use the results to provide guidance on how both programs could be strengthened in the future. The final report (this report) is required to be split into two equal sections, the first focusing on the backward looking evaluation and the second forward-looking including a future scenario and recommendations.

1.2 Approach and methodology

The evaluation was carried out over a six month period. During the inception period, visits were made to the two centres for the Secretariat, the OECD in Paris and the World Bank (WB) in Washington D.C. Based on these initial interviews, and a preliminary analysis of documentation provided by ADP, an inception report was presented, which set out the methodology to be applied in the course of the evaluation.

The main evaluation instruments were:

- Document review - an assessment of the administrative reports, mission reports, earlier evaluations, and technical outputs of IHSN and ADP
- Stakeholder interviews - interviews were carried out in person or by telephone of key staff in member organisations of IHSN, including the World Bank and OECD. Other stakeholders were also interviewed where possible. The list of interviewees is given in Annex H.

¹ See Annex A

- Case studies - short trips of around three days were undertaken to five countries which have been involved with IHSN/ADP: Ethiopia, Niger, India, Philippines and Colombia. The countries were chosen by ADP and represented a range of situations and length of engagement with ADP. All were countries where ADP activity was judged to have had positive outcomes. Based on the short visits, background documentation and interviews, short case studies were written up and are presented in the annexes.
- Two eSurveys were carried out. One was of producers of statistics which was sent out to ADP country focal points as well as heads of statistical agencies found in the PARIS21 contact list. The other was of data users. This was posted on the IHSN, ADP and PARIS21 websites. The link to the survey for users was also shared with heads of statistical agencies and ADP focal points with the request to distribute it to users in their own networks. Selected international and national networks of researchers were contacted directly with the request to participate.

Neither IHSN nor ADP had log frames or theories of change when they were established. There have been no sets of indicators against which they report, or to assess progress, until very recently, in 2011. In order to have some framework against which to assess outcomes and impact, the evaluation team developed a theory of change for each, which was discussed with the IHSN and ADP Secretariat. After some changes this was validated, and has been used to structure the evaluation report. The theories of change are presented in Chapter 2.

1.3 Report structure

The report falls into two parts: the evaluation of IHSN/ADP activities over the period since inception, and an assessment of the options open to IHSN and ADP.

Chapter 2 gives a brief overview of the establishment of first IHSN, then ADP. It presents a timeline of the activities carried out and also presents the theories of change developed by the evaluation for both IHSN and ADP.

Chapter 3 presents the findings of the evaluation, drawing on all sources of information available to the team. These are divided into the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, plus a discussion of governance.

Chapter 4 examines the changing international context and assesses the likely demand for surveys and other forms of statistics in the light of the Busan Action Plan for Statistics and the post-2015 post-MDG agenda.

Chapter 5 presents short-term recommendations for IHSN and ADP based on the evaluation findings. For the longer term a scenario is developed, where there is an increased demand for data, national statistics continue to be the main source for development data, but there is an increasing interest and focus on alternative sources of data. Proposals for the future development of IHSN and ADP are presented under this scenario.

Annexes C-G contain the five country case studies that were carried out as part of the evaluation, and Annex I includes a report on the two eSurveys.

2 Evolution of the IHSN and ADP

2.1 Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics

In February 2004, the Second Roundtable on Managing for Development Results brought together representatives from developing countries and development agencies in Marrakech, Morocco. The aim was to discuss how to strengthen and harmonise both country activities and agency support to monitoring and evaluation for reporting on development results. One of the outcomes was the adoption of a global plan for statistics, the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS) - a specific set of actions to build statistical capacity and to support evidence-based decision making. The actions were grouped into two sets: The first set of recommendations addressed national needs and the second set addressed international responsibilities. A key action point of MAPS in the second set was the creation of an International Household Survey Network to bring survey sponsors and survey users together. In doing so, the international community acknowledged the critical role played by sample household surveys in generating the data needed in developing countries to support the planning, implementation and monitoring of development policies and programmes. The network was expected to facilitate the sharing of information and the mobilization of international support for more efficient approaches to conducting household surveys in developing countries. It also was expected to establish a global information centre containing household survey and metadata and identify good dissemination practices that promote analysis and research.² The International Household Survey Network (IHSN) was established in September 2004.

The Accelerated Data Program (ADP) was launched in 2006, as part of the implementation of MAPS. ADP was created to undertake improvements needed for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals, by providing financial and technical assistance to improve survey programmes in participating countries. The ADP takes advantage of tools and guidelines developed or provided by the IHSN.

2.2 IHSN/ADP objectives, activities, governance and funding

In line with its original mandate rooted in MAPS, the key objectives of the IHSN are currently stated as:³

- Improved coordination of internationally sponsored survey programs, with emphasis on timing, sequencing, frequency, and cost-effectiveness
- Availability of coordinated and practical technical and methodological guidelines for all stages of the survey life cycle
- Availability of a central survey data catalogue to inform data users of the availability of survey and census data from multiple sources
- Availability of standards, tools, and guidelines that would allow data producers to document, disseminate, and preserve microdata according to international standards and best practices
- Improved collaboration between data producers and users

In order to achieve these objectives, IHSN's main activities are to maintain a central catalogue of survey metadata from official statistics producers in developing countries, produce guidelines and reference materials, and to develop/maintain software tools for the documentation, preservation, anonymisation, cataloguing, dissemination, and archiving of survey metadata and microdata. The

² The Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (2004), action 4

³ <http://ihsn.org/home/content/about/objectives>

IHSN is an informal network (i.e., it is not a legal entity) and the voluntary membership is currently limited to organisations and agencies providing financial and/or technical support to the implementation of survey programmes in developing countries. IHSN does not provide technical or financial support to producers or users of official statistics in developing countries – this is administered entirely through ADP.

The central objective of ADP is to:⁴

- Increase the use and value of survey data, i.e., to help data producers and users in developing countries make better use of existing data and to align survey programs and statistical outputs to priority data needs.

In order to achieve this objective, ADP's key activities are stated as: establishment of national survey data repositories in participating countries; and to make existing survey microdata more widely and easily accessible. This includes:⁵

- Data inventory, documentation, dissemination and preservation (Task 1);
- Assessment and improvement of the quality of existing surveys, with a particular focus on improving the relevance, reliability and comparability of future data (Task 2); and
- Design of improved national survey programs and implementation of new data collection activities (Task 3).

As mentioned above, the IHSN was established in September 2004, with a small secretariat at the World Bank. Since 2006 and with the launch of the ADP, the IHSN/ADP has been implemented jointly by the World Bank and PARIS21 with a split secretariat in Paris and Washington. PARIS21 receives funding from the World Bank for this purpose. The IHSN/ADP Secretariat is overseen by a Management Group. This group is responsible for setting the overall policy direction and for approving the IHSN/ADP Secretariat's work programme. It should be noted however that the oversight provided by the Management Group (MG) is currently rather light, with MG meetings being rather informal and held at most annually (with gaps in some years). A detailed organogram of the IHSN/ADP can be found in Annex B.

IHSN was funded until recently primarily through the World Bank's Development Grant Facility (DGF), with DFID providing additional funding since mid-2011.⁶ ADP is funded similarly through the DGF and (since 2011) through DFID, with various in-country activities often implemented with additional funding from relevant international agencies (e.g. AfDB) and national development partners (e.g. GIZ, Government of Luxembourg). The amount of annual DGF funding varied slightly over the years but was around USD 1 million for the IHSN and around USD 2 million for the ADP. It is likely that DGF will support the programmes until 2016. DFID will contribute GBP 1.24 million over a period of five years from August 2011 to June 2016.

2.3 IHSN/ADP activities (timeline)

As stated formally in the above mandate, objectives and activities of the IHSN, it was established primarily to be a network that improves the coordination and quality of internationally-sponsored survey programmes in developing countries. After attempting initially to engage directly in coordination activities, IHSN soon realised that international agencies would or could provide only very limited information for the IHSN's newly developed Information System on Planned Surveys

⁴ <http://adp.ihsn.org/node/204>

⁵ ADP Final Report, DGF 401010-04

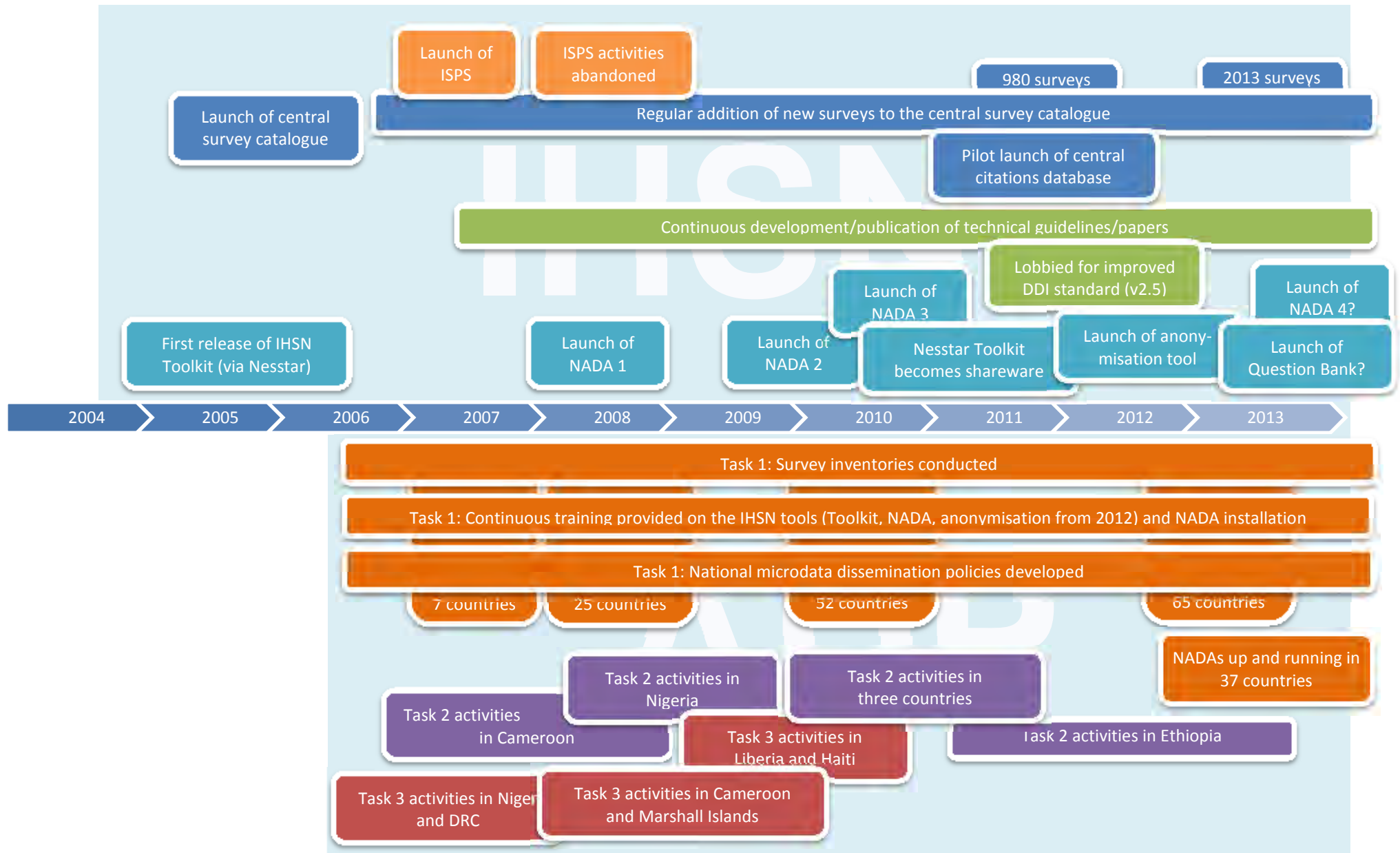
⁶ Prior to 2011, other institutions had provided in-kind support to IHSN, but the DGF was the only continuous grant to IHSN.

and Censuses (ISPS), and maintenance proved very difficult. Hence, this objective was largely abandoned and IHSN focussed more on its other objectives, namely the development of tools for data documentation/archiving/anonymisation/dissemination and the harmonisation of international survey methods and instruments through the production of guidelines and reference material.

Similarly, the ADP was initially established with the primary objective of providing financial and technical assistance to improve survey programmes in participating countries. Following some initial activities under Task 3 and due to the lack of funding required to achieve this objective, ADP shifted its focus mainly towards its activities of data inventory, documentation, dissemination and preservation (Task 1) and to a lesser degree to the assessment and improvement of the quality of existing surveys (Task 2).

The timeline in Figure 2.1 below illustrates these shifts in focus of IHSN and ADP, and provides an overview of the activities carried out since the initial shift. The upper half of the timeline shows key IHSN activities, grouped by colour into activities of: (a) internationally-sponsored survey coordination; (b) central cataloguing; (c) development of guidelines, standards and reference material; and (d) development of software tools. The lower half of the timeline shows key IHSN activities, grouped by colour into activities of the three task types.

Figure 2.1 Timeline of IHSN/ADP activities



As illustrated in Figure 2.1, IHSN has made continuous progress on its central cataloguing activities, with 2013 surveys registered in DDI-compliant format in the central survey catalogue at the time of this evaluation. Guidelines and reference materials were also produced and published continuously by IHSN in cooperation with various member and non-member partners. The software tools such as NADA, the Toolkit⁷ and the anonymisation tool were also maintained and developed for improved functionality and usability. The activities relating to coordination of internationally-sponsored survey programmes (namely the ISPS) were abandoned early on.

By 2013, ADP had conducted Task 1 activities in 65 countries. This included survey inventories, training on the IHSN software tools, installation of country NADAs (37 countries currently have NADAs up and running), documentation of survey backlogs, and finally the development of national microdata dissemination policies. A rough estimate by the IHSN/ADP Secretariat suggests that around 1300 surveys were documented in partner countries through direct ADP involvement and support. In addition, approximately 1500 surveys were documented by partner institutions themselves without direct ADP involvement. In contrast to the rapid expansion of ADP Task 1 activities, it was decided early on that Task 2 and 3 would be of lower priority. By the time of the evaluation, Task 3 activities had pretty much ended altogether,⁸ and Task 2 activities were being carried out in only one country.

2.4 Theory of change

A theory of change is the description of a sequence of interventions or activities which leads to a desired outcome. It can be used as a check on whether the activities and outputs of a project or programme are appropriate for leading to the desired outcomes and impacts and to explain the rationale – how things are intended to work. Theories of change can be used as organising frameworks to guide implementation and also evaluation.

The evaluation developed specific theories of change for IHSN and ADP, presented below. These theories of change were developed by first identifying the activities carried out by IHSN and ADP, then linking these, through relevant outputs, to outcomes and impacts as identified by mission statements as given on the IHSN and ADP websites. These were discussed with the secretariat. The priorities of ADP in particular changed over the period of the evaluation. However, because the evaluation covered the entire period since 2004, the theory of change was based on the initial mission statement and objectives. The two theories of change are set out in Figures 2.2 and 2.3 below.

⁷ The IHSN Toolkit was initially a slightly modified and IHSN-branded version of a commercial software developed by Nesstar Ltd. In the UK, IHSN paid Nesstar for the modification and licensing of the Toolkit to ADP partners. In 2011, Nesstar decided to provide the Toolkit free of charge to all users, and IHSN/ADP therefore decided to drop the special IHSN-branded version, thus simply recommending the general Nesstar Toolkit to ADP partners for survey documentation.

⁸ Apart from some minor engagement in Vanuatu since 2012.

Figure 2.2 IHSN theory of change

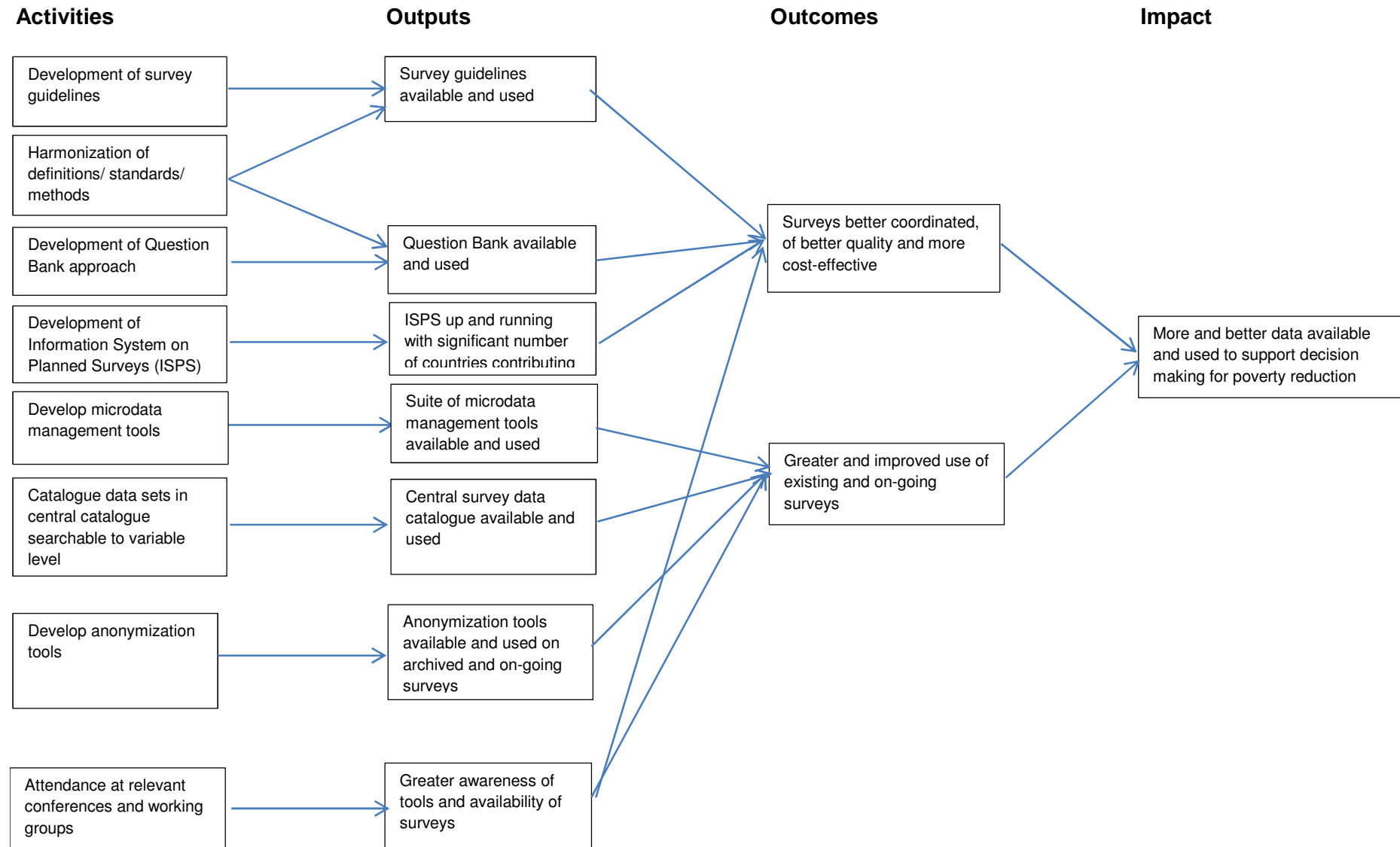
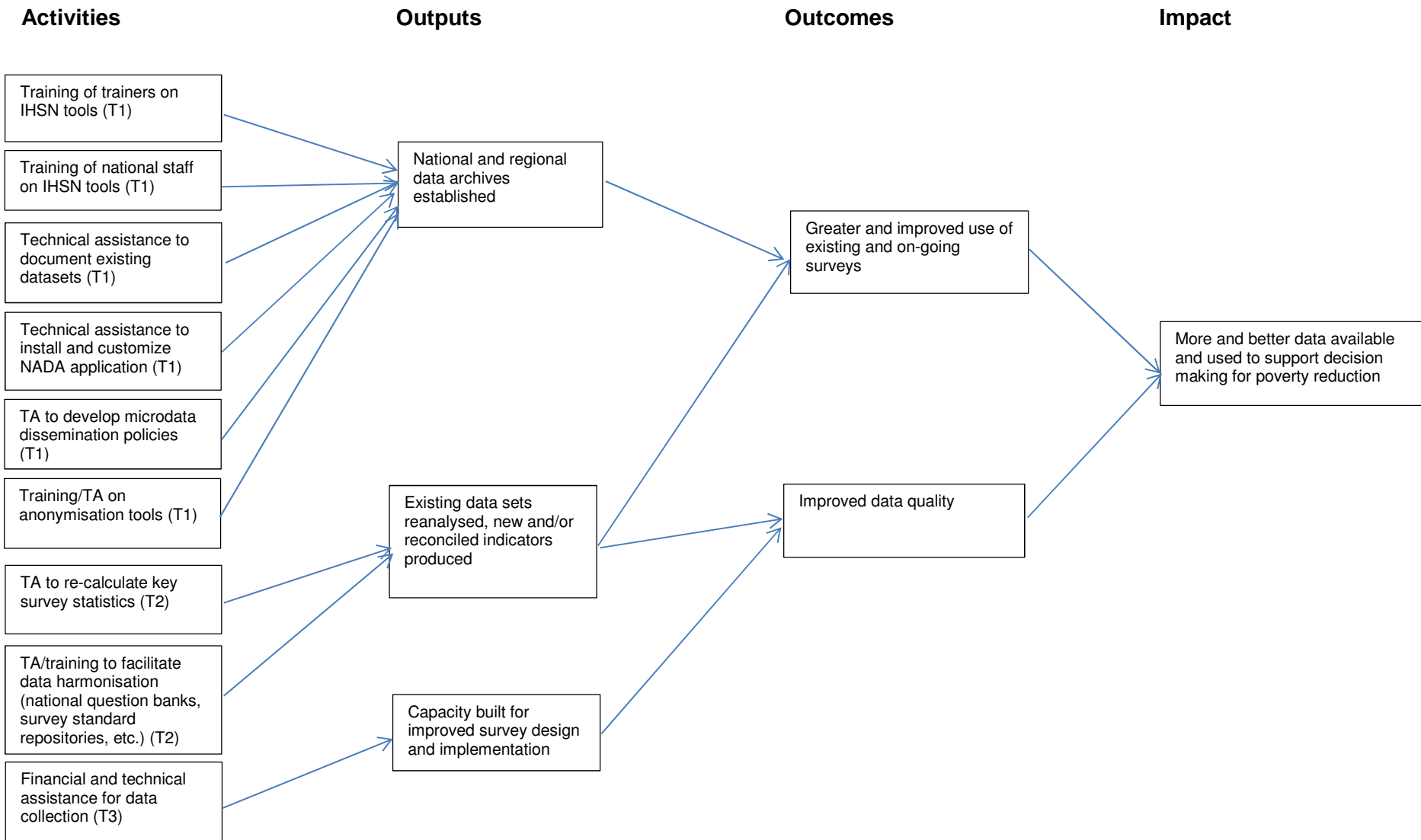


Figure 2.3 ADP theory of change



3 Evaluation findings

This evaluation has two main objectives; to assess how well IHSN and ADP have performed over the last 7-8 years and, building on that, to suggest an appropriate strategy or strategies for the future, according to likely changes of the global environment for statistics, and household surveys, in particular post-2015.

This chapter addresses the evaluation's findings on IHSN/ADP's past performance and is structured around the OECD DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. These can be linked to the different stages in the theory of change: output, outcome and impact, where efficiency measures aspects of the relationship between activities and outputs, effectiveness measures the relationship between activities and outputs and outcomes, and relevance addresses the overall appropriateness of the activities to the problem identified.

3.1 Relevance

As was discussed above, the IHSN/ADP was established as a component of the MAPS. This section examines the extent to which the activities undertaken by the IHSN/ADP are relevant to the issues and gaps identified in the MAPS report, to its partners' priorities and to the priorities of the countries that the ADP has assisted. There is also an assessment of the relevance of the overall focus on household surveys.

Under the fourth action agreed as part of MAPS, "Setting up an international household survey network", the need was identified for a mechanism to bring survey sponsors and users together. Stakeholders included the major sponsors of the global household survey programmes, the donors who finance much of the survey work carried out in developing countries and the national statistical offices which conduct the surveys. It was anticipated that the Network would be supported by a small secretariat. Three specific recommendations were made.

1. Organize a Household Survey Network for the purposes of sharing information and mobilizing international support for more efficient approaches to conducting household surveys in developing countries.
2. Develop a set of recommendations for household-based economic and social data, taking into account current and planned multinational survey programs and the needs of developing countries to monitor their own development progress.
3. Work with experienced data archivists and data users to establish a global information centre containing household survey and metadata and establish good dissemination practices, which promote analysis and research while protecting the confidentiality of survey respondents.

As described in Chapter 2 above, to address these recommendations, the IHSN was set up in 2004 and the ADP was subsequently established to provide technical assistance to developing countries in the implementation of the tools and guidelines developed by IHSN.

The mission statement of the IHSN, as presented on its website,⁹ is to improve the availability, accessibility, and quality of survey data within developing countries, and to encourage the analysis and use of this data by national and international development decision makers, the research community, and other stakeholders.

⁹ <http://www.surveynetwork.org/home/content/about/objectives>

The evaluation team interviewed a wide variety of staff of development organisations, and consultants and academics active in international statistics and no-one suggested that the work that IHSN and ADP was undertaking was not relevant. There were many, very positive endorsements of their activities. There was a general consensus that archiving of and access to household survey data was important for improving the evidence base for policy and for monitoring progress towards the MDGs and that no comparable initiative had existed in this area previously.

One of the major donors supporting statistical capacity building, DFID, was sufficiently convinced of the relevance of IHSN/ADPs work that in 2011 it signed a five-year agreement to provide support to IHSN to further its activities. DFID's Global Statistics Partnership team sees this as part of their overall support to National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS).

In all of the country visits that the evaluation undertook, again the work of IHSN/ADP was seen as relevant to improving the performance and capacity of the National Statistical Office (NSO) and the National Statistical System (NSS).

In most countries where ADP works, there are other programmes which provide support and technical assistance to NSOs and NSSs. Increasingly these are in support of NSDSs. Where IHSN/ADP has a comparative advantage is that it focuses on household surveys, and in particular data archiving. It has worked with consultants over the last seven years to build up a cohort of people who have particular skills in setting up NADAs and in training statistical staff to use the microdata tool set. It has developed a niche market in a small but important area which increases the utility and potentially the accessibility of household surveys.

A recent analysis¹⁰ of current NSDSs shows the extent to which the activities that ADP supports feature in NSDSs.

Table 3.1 Microdata in NSDSs

| | Current NSDSs | No of NSDSs with activities relevant to ADP | Online catalogue of surveys | Establishing national dissemination policies |
|--------|---------------|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Africa | 29 | 22 | 19 | 13 |
| Asia | 22 | 14 | 14 | 10 |
| Europe | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 54 | 37 | 34 | 24 |

This shows a high level of relevance for support to survey cataloguing, but that access to survey microdata may be of less priority to NSSs and national governments than better curating of their data.

The evaluation concurs that the mission statement of IHSN was and remains relevant. The following analysis examines to what extent the IHSN/ADP has achieved the objectives set out above.

¹⁰ Based on ADP analysis of NSDSs

3.2 Efficiency

In this section, the relationship between activities and outputs is discussed, whether outputs have been achieved and whether they have been achieved at an appropriate cost in terms of human and financial resources. IHSN and ADP are discussed separately.

3.2.1 Efficiency of IHSN

Survey guidelines available and used

IHSN has developed guidelines on designing survey programmes, implementing surveys, integrating surveys, and archiving and dissemination of microdata. These are available from the IHSN website. IHSN has also written or commissioned a number of working papers which are available on its website.

Amongst respondents to the eSurvey of data producers which was carried out as part of the evaluation, 52% were aware of the IHSN guidelines, but only 28% were aware of the working papers. The most used guidelines were those on archiving and dissemination of microdata. Those respondents who had used the guidelines were very satisfied with their quality. In general, in informant interviews, those who were aware of the guidelines felt they were of high quality. However, the evaluation felt that, based on interviews and country missions, the guidelines were not used to any great extent. NSOs relied on personal contact and missions from ADP consultants to provide guidance.

There is even less evidence on the use of the working papers. One respondent felt that these had been commissioned on an ad hoc basis and would have benefited from a more systematic approach to addressing priorities and gaps in the literature. The evaluation felt that the production of some of these papers had been supply-driven and that this could be seen as leading to a lack of coherence in the series as a whole.

Question bank available and used

IHSN has undertaken some activities to develop a question bank and also to harmonise definitions and standards for surveys. Work on the software for the question bank started in around 2011. The question bank application was originally intended to be used by the IHSN only. It was developed as a stand-alone PC application for generating and editing the content of the question bank (stored as a master XML file), with a Flash-based interface for disseminating on the web. As some countries requested access to the application, the IHSN decided to re-develop it using more advanced and non-proprietary technologies. The application is being developed as an open-source, database-driven web application. A new open-source version should be launched some time in 2013. IHSN has started the work on the question bank by undertaking a web-based searchable inventory of survey guidelines from multiple agencies, including descriptions of concepts, classifications and questionnaire modules.

In parallel IHSN has worked with a number of specialist agencies/ partners to improve the guidelines. It has been actively working with FAO on guidelines for household budget surveys and it is hoped that these will be produced by the end of 2013. Initial work was carried out with WHO on preparing standardised modules on health expenditure for surveys, but although a draft module was developed this was not taken any further because WHO could not find resources for testing and validation. The UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) is working with IHSN on the question bank, looking at how to generate consistent statistics on participation in education and on educational attainment. IHSN has also recently agreed a programme of work with ILO which

includes working together on the use of labour statistics in non-labour market surveys. The overall objective is to document practices, assess consistency with international recommendations and draw conclusions that could be relevant for the larger community, including those designing national surveys.

Harmonisation of definitions and standards for household surveys is a slow process, given the number of agencies involved. The United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) is the ultimate arena for the harmonisation of statistical definitions, but before that process can be started (and the process itself can take some considerable time) some consensus has to be reached. IHSN could be an appropriate forum for reaching that consensus.

It may be possible to build up more interest in this activity once the question bank software has been fully developed and the website is up and running. However IHSN should not underestimate the deeply held views in some agencies. The real challenge is not in developing the software but in reaching agreement amongst the different agencies. Although working with specialist agencies is a good starting point, at some stage sponsors of the large multi-sectoral surveys, such as MICS and DHS, will have to be included in the process.

Information System on Planned Surveys up and running

Coordination of the scheduling of large household surveys was one of the objectives in setting up the IHSN and the secretariat developed an information system which would be filled in by the various agencies to show when major national surveys were scheduled. This failed for a number of reasons: the only large scale survey programme that acknowledged that they undertook multi-annual planning was the DHS, and even here, this is limited by the five year contract under which the surveys are implemented; the fact that the decision to undertake a survey is made at country level in consultation with the national government; and the dependence of most countries on external resources for undertaking a major survey.

Nonetheless, greater coordination in the timing of surveys is universally acknowledged to be desirable. The question is how can that be achieved? Some agencies are actively trying to limit the number of stand-alone surveys that they undertake. WFP tries where possible to piggyback a food security module on to major surveys but, with the exception of a module attached to an LSMS survey in Malawi, has had limited success. Ideally coordination should take place at the national level, around an NSDS. Even where the NSDS contains a proposed schedule for surveys, however, funding availability can be a major constraint in implementing this. If IHSN had really operated as a network, as opposed to focusing on provision of tools and technical advice, it could have provided a forum for discussion of this issue and publicized any information on planned surveys that was available.

Suite of microdata management tools available and used

This is the area where IHSN has been most successful. The microdata management tools were developed at an early stage and the toolkit was released in 2005, building on software from Nesstar. IHSN contracted Nesstar to create a DDI metadata editor software, obtaining funding from a Japanese trust fund. This was released under the name "IHSN Metadata Editor which included additional offline functionality such as the CD-ROM builder. IHSN shared free licences with international agencies and with statistical agencies in developing countries, while IHSN paid Nesstar annually for maintenance and support. In 2011, Nesstar turned its editor into freeware at which point IHSN decided simply to refer its clients to the freeware version from then on.

IHSN developed its own NADA, an archiving tool which loads and displays the metadata prepared in the editor. This was launched in 2008 and is now in its fourth version.

The ADP has been important in assisting countries to adopt and implement both the microdata management toolkit and the NADA software, and this will be discussed further under ADP efficiency below. A very few countries have used the software without any technical assistance, but almost all the countries which now use the software have done so with ADP assistance, at least initially.

In the eSurvey of statistics producers, 76% had used the microdata management toolkit and of these, 83% rated the toolkit as very useful. A total of 64% of the respondents had used the NADA software and 89% of them rated it as very useful. No criticisms of the software were raised in the interviews or on the country missions. Where statisticians had contacted IHSN or ADP over technical software issues, they mostly reported that their queries had been dealt with promptly and effectively.

Central survey data catalogue available and used

The central data catalogue was launched in 2006 and is available on the IHSN website.¹¹ This contains the metadata for a range of surveys including, but not limited to national surveys which have been documented using the toolkit, and those sponsored or supported by the World Bank. Surveys have been added to the catalogue over time, and there are currently 2013 surveys in the database. The catalogue does not include the microdata, but in some cases includes a link to a website where the microdata can be accessed or requested.

The WB has also set up an external and internal catalogue of surveys.¹² The internal catalogue includes surveys for which datasets are not publicly available and various datasets which are strictly internal. The IHSN catalogue is a subset of the WB internal catalogue which is automatically populated by surveys which are not tagged as internal, thus ensuring that it is regularly updated. Currently there is a substantial backlog of surveys (over 2,000) waiting to go through quality control before being added to the IHSN catalogue. The IHSN website also contains links to other catalogues.

Just over 40% of the respondents to the eSurvey of data users had heard of the on-line catalogue and of these 68% had used it. It was generally considered a useful tool, though there was some disagreement about how comprehensive it was. There were only a small number of eSurvey respondents so care has to be taken in interpreting these results. Most of those using it had heard of it by word of mouth or by searching on the internet. The Secretariat accepts that the IHSN catalogue contains fewer surveys than are in the national NADAs.

IHSN has also helped a number of international organisations set up their own internal catalogue or archive, including WFP, WHO and FAO and work is starting with ILO. Sometimes ADP resources have been brought in to support this process. A continuing challenge is developing a common approach to accessing microdata files, both from international agencies and from countries, which is consistent with ethical concerns and legal requirements.

Anonymisation tools available and used on archived and on-going surveys

Anonymisation tools were posted on the IHSN website in 2012, but were deliberately not advertised because of the complexity of using them. A more user-friendly version was uploaded in 2013, but the use of the package still remains complex. It is difficult to get a good feel for how much use has been made of the package. Almost three quarters of the respondents to the producer eSurvey see data anonymisation as an area where they would need training in the future. This is consistent with the evaluation's experience in country visits. In the countries with greater

¹¹ <http://www.surveynetwork.org/home/survey-catalogs>

¹² <http://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php>

statistical capacity, there is more understanding of the importance of anonymisation, though this is not always carried out except at the most basic level before disseminating microdata. The problems of creating public use files that are truly anonymised is also seen as a hurdle in increasing availability of survey data by some of the international organisations.

IHSN is in the process of building its own expertise in this area, anonymising a large number of datasets as a desk exercise, producing a practice manual and training trainers to build up a pool of experts. When this has been done, ADP will start providing support to interested agencies in both developed and developing countries.

Data anonymisation is, in practical terms, also linked with national policy on data dissemination. These are both areas where a number of countries will continue to need support in the short term. This will be discussed further under effectiveness of the ADP below.

Greater awareness of tools and availability of surveys

Senior members in both IHSN and ADP have attended meetings and workshops to present the work that IHSN is doing and to promote data archiving. This has been an important starting point for working with international organisations, many of whom identify this as the first time that they were aware of IHSN and its work. What is perhaps less impressive is that this includes organisations who are part of the IHSN network, whom the evaluation would have expected to be already aware of IHSN's work. In some cases the lack of awareness is a result of staff changes. However it is also a result of the way the network functions, or does not function. Other than Management Group meetings, there does not appear to be any occasion at which the network meets and discusses activities and work plans. The last Management Group meeting was in the margins of a UNSC meeting and new organisations were invited to attend. This was a useful start to increasing the knowledge about IHSN, but the evaluation feels that the network should have a higher profile to disseminate its outputs and to advocate for greater access to microdata.

3.2.2 Efficiency of ADP

National and regional data archives established

This is Task 1 of ADP's mission, data inventory, documentation, dissemination and preservation. ADP has trained trainers and national staff on IHSN tools; it has provided TA to document existing datasets and has provided TA to install NADAs. Since the start of the ADP, the number of countries receiving ADP support has increased from 7 in 2007 to 65 in 2013. Much of ADP's time and effort has focused on training national statistical staff in the toolkit, and assisting them to document and archive existing surveys. In 2012, for example, 50% of missions were for training purposes and 32% were for technical assistance. Often training workshops would include documentation of surveys. ADP has taken the approach of training countries to carry out their own documentation and archiving, then reviewing and providing feedback on the process.

By 2013 NADAs were up and running in 42 countries, with 5 of these installed in 2013 and not yet fully functional. In 9 countries NADAs had been installed but, as far as ADP were aware, were no longer functioning. 2 regional NADAs had also been installed.

Existing data sets reanalysed, new and/or reconciled indicators produced.

There has been much less done on Task 2, the assessment and improvement of existing surveys. In the late 2000s, work took place in Cameroon in the education sector with UIS and in Nigeria in the water and sanitation sector in collaboration with the WB. There was also some joint work with FAO in Mali in the agriculture sector. All of these were reported to have had excellent results.

There was also some limited work in Bhutan on geocoding. However, progress at a more general level in setting up national question banks has been limited. There was a meeting at OECD in Paris in September 2010 where staff from Ethiopia and Cameroon were introduced to the concept of the question bank and the software as it then stood.

At that point, Cameroon was reported to have started work on a question bank already and Ethiopia had expressed interest and was working on a number of documents developing national concepts and standards. By 2011, the initial work in Cameroon had stopped despite support from ADP. The progress report commented “It is possible that INS is not at the stage of statistical processes industrialization; which would require this type of statistical standardization activities”.

In Ethiopia work has continued on Task 2. Four documents have been prepared on standard indicators and definitions. A workshop was held in late 2012, funded by ADP which also paid for the printing of the documents. The four documents covered:

- Standard concepts and definitions
- Naming and coding
- ISIC4
- International Labour classifications

The documents were printed and distributed to all regions, by CD and hard copy. CSA is now conducting a desk review of the NSS as to which sectors have agreed standards. This is seen by the CSA as a necessary precursor to establishing a national question bank. This work is also linked in to work on the Ethiopia Data Quality Assessment Framework which is supported by a WB project.

It is clear that, despite successful sector-level activities in a few countries, progress towards achieving the output of Task 2 has been slow. To some extent this mirrors the situation for IHSN with the question bank. However it also highlights the considerable hurdles that are faced in some countries in undertaking activities which necessarily involve the NSS as a whole as opposed to the NSO acting alone. The process can be slow and needs to bring a number of agencies on board both in principle and in practice.

Task 2 requires staff with expertise. At this stage, when it is still not fully rolled out, it is difficult for IHSN/ADP to rely entirely on external consultants for reasons of quality control and coordination. There may be need to bring appropriately experienced survey statisticians onto the staff or to develop closer working relation with staff in partner organisations who could assist with Task 2.

Capacity built for improved survey design and implementation

When ADP started, one objective was to provide support for individual countries to improve their capacity to design and implement surveys. In 2006, TA was provided to Niger to design and implement a household budget survey and in DRC to finance the editing, tabulation and analysis of a 1-2-3 survey which had been carried out in 2005 and never finalised.

In 2008, Liberia was assisted in the analysis and data processing of their Population and Household Census. Cameroon was assisted in the dissemination of results from its household survey, ECAM3. By the end of 2008, Task 3 was no longer seen as a priority by ADP and was to be implemented only in exceptional circumstances. However in 2009, support was being provided to the Marshall Islands in the implementation of a water access survey. It appears that this was undertaken in conjunction with starting Task 1. From 2010 onwards, Task 3 disappeared from the DGF grant agreements. Nonetheless, in 2011, ADP agreed to participate in work on a hybrid survey in Vanuatu, being led by the Secretariat of the South Pacific Commission.

Task 3 was always potentially very demanding of resources. In Niger, where the support was very important in ensuring the successful implementation of the household budget survey, the work was carried out by the same consultancy team that had helped design the previous HBS, so the amount of capacity built in the 1990s had been limited. Niger had six missions in 2006 and five in 2007, all from international consultants. Some of these were to do with training in the toolkit, but the majority were to do with Task 3. In addition INS staff were sent for training in Chile. It is difficult to identify the resources committed to Task 3 in DRC as this was undertaken by a consultancy company and does not appear in the data on missions undertaken. Cameroon had eight missions in 2008, again a mix of Task 1 and Task 3, but this was more than any other country in that year. The Marshall Islands do not appear in the list of missions for 2009. No further activity appears to have taken place there.

Initially the ADP was supposed to be an initiative to support data collection, but the available budget made that impossible. The evaluation questions whether, under those circumstances, Task 3 was ever an appropriate area in which ADP should have been involved? It acknowledges that it is difficult for countries to access funds for designing and implementing surveys, but the resources available to ADP to provide support in this area were very limited and may have taken resources away from Task 2 activities. Task 3 is a logical step onwards from Task 2, if Task 2 has developed practical guidelines on harmonised questions and indicators which can then be applied, but in isolation, Task 3 has simply provided *ad hoc* support which is unlikely to have had lasting results.

3.2.3 Efficiency of use of resources

Both IHSN and ADP have used their financial resources very economically. As Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 show, overheads have been low, and close to 90% of grant funding has gone directly to implementation. The secretariat has a small staff, both in Washington and in Paris, and although the division of the secretariat might in principle be a rather inefficient way of operating, in practice it seems to have worked quite well up until now, in large part because of the commitment of the two senior staff. A number of the key staff in Washington are WB staff members who have to balance time on IHSN with their other duties.

A more concerning source of inefficiency has been the funding process. Until 2012, both IHSN and ADP have been funded by a DGF grant which, although in place until 2015, is operationalized through an annual grant agreement. This can take time to put in place, and as a result, it is often well into the financial year before work starts on implementing the annual plan. This in turn results in underspends on a specific year and the need to request no-cost extensions. Reporting on the annual plan is delayed until the activities have been carried out, and the process continues.

Lack of multi-annual funding also has costs in terms of medium term planning, particularly for staff. This affects IHSN in particular, where there has been difficulty in keeping staff in Washington because of the inability to give any job stability. In one case, an IHSN staff has managed to get a WB staff contract, but that has implications in terms of the time committed to IHSN. Other staff are on short-term contracts, which have to be renewed on a regular basis. In addition, this makes it difficult for IHSN/ADP to commit to longer-term or large scale projects. It also makes it difficult to outsource significant parts of the work programme.

Table 3.2 Budget analysis of IHSN grants 2006-2012

| Year | Total spent | Management / administration / operational fees | | | Direct implementation / supervision | | |
|------|------------------|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | OECD overheads in Euros ¹ | % of total spent ² | Direct operating costs in Euros | % of total spent ² | Euros | % of total spent |
| 2006 | 302,638 | 40,795 | 13% | 0 | 0% | 261,844 | 87% |
| 2007 | 570,685 | 26,525 | 5% | 52,557 | 9% | 491,603 | 86% |
| 2008 | 609,953 | 65,858 | 11% | 24,581 | 4% | 519,514 | 85% |
| 2009 | 781,653 | 17,023 | 2% | 69,706 | 9% | 694,923 | 89% |
| 2010 | 719,816 | 0 | 0% | 39,815 | 6% | 680,001 | 94% |
| 2011 | 390,103 | 41,176 | 11% | 33,933 | 9% | 314,994 | 81% |
| 2012 | 579,133 | 32,546 | 6% | 13,964 | 2% | 532,623 | 92% |
| | 3,953,981 | 223,923 | 5.7% | 234,557 | 6% | 3,495,501 | 88% |

(1) Corresponds to the OECD voluntary contributions administration charge. This is an indirect cost applicable to all voluntary contributions accepted by the Organisation. It is deducted by the Organisation at acceptance of the voluntary contribution. In 2010, no IHSN grant agreement was signed between the OECD and the WB. Consequently, no OECD overheads were incurred. (2) This is a percentage of the total amount spent during the calendar year (independently from the grant agreement)

Table 3.3 Budget analysis of ADP grants 2006-2012

| Year | Total spent | Management / administration / operational fees | | | Direct implementation / supervision | | |
|------|------------------|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | OECD overheads in Euros ¹ | % of total spent ² | Direct operating costs in Euros | % of total spent ² | Euros | % of total spent |
| 2006 | 196,593 | 40,795 | 21% | 0 | 0% | 155,798 | 79% |
| 2007 | 1,720,775 | 70,734 | 4% | 26,100 | 2% | 1,623,941 | 94% |
| 2008 | 1,744,547 | 59,329 | 3% | 109,602 | 6% | 1,575,616 | 90% |
| 2009 | 1,357,330 | 36,623 | 3% | 77,164 | 6% | 1,243,543 | 92% |
| 2010 | 1,381,275 | 0 | 0% | 156,895 | 11% | 1,224,380 | 89% |
| 2011 | 1,320,349 | 68,153 | 5% | 121,326 | 9% | 1,130,870 | 86% |
| 2012 | 1,409,737 | 65,092 | 5% | 140,782 | 10% | 1,203,863 | 85% |
| | 9,130,606 | 340,726 | 3.7% | 631,869 | 7% | 8,158,011 | 89% |

(1) Corresponds to the OECD voluntary contributions administration charge. This is an indirect cost applicable to all voluntary contributions accepted by the Organisation. It is deducted by the Organisation at acceptance of the voluntary contribution. In 2010, no ADP grant agreement was signed between the OECD and the WB. Consequently, no OECD overheads were incurred. (2) This is a percentage of the total amount spent during the calendar year (independently from the grant agreement)

ADP has had to make strategic decisions in its use of financial and human resources. As discussed earlier, Task 3 has been de-prioritised because of the limited availability of resources. Nonetheless, ADP is seen as very responsive to requests from countries. There is little evidence of the programme turning down requests. It has also been quite opportunistic in the way it has worked with countries.

This proved to be a very effective way of building up the programme initially, but it may have resulted in a lack of strategic focus in more recent years. It was clearly important for IHSN to establish a large community of users to sensitise countries to data archiving and dissemination. However, after a few years, ADP could have focused on a few countries in more depth, completing Task 1, including a dissemination policy, and advocacy for open access for microdata, and then started work on Task 2 with the NSS as a whole. This could have resulted by now in one or two

country examples, which could be documented and used as examples for other countries giving NSOs evidence to use in arguing the case for a similar approach in their own country.

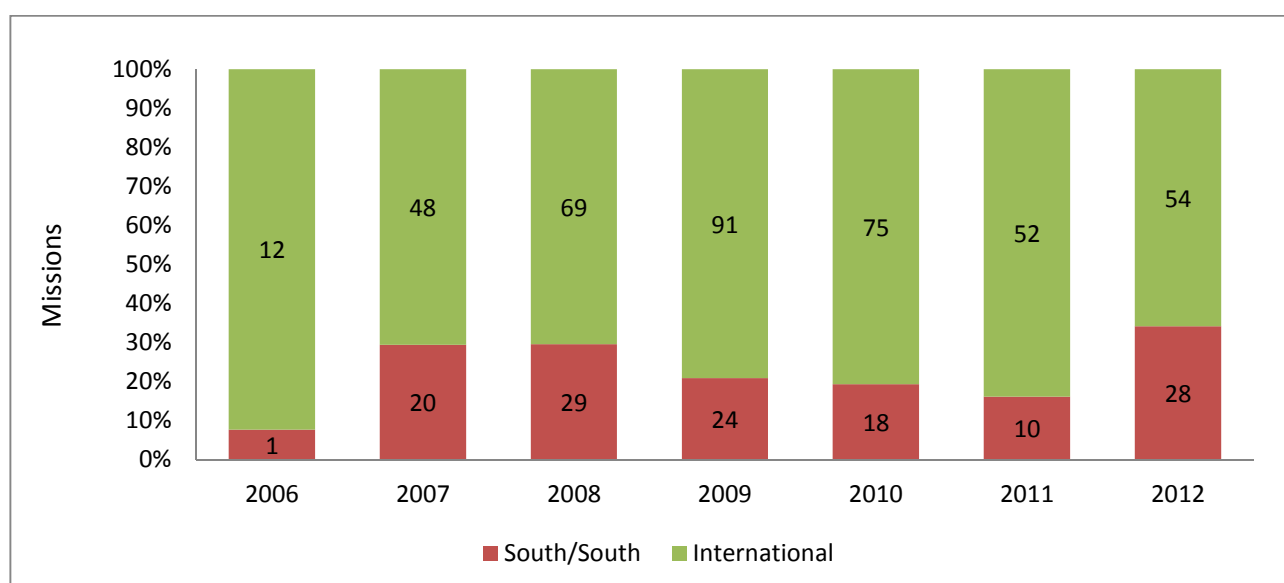
To some extent this approach has been taken with Task 2 in the last two years. At the meeting in OECD a road map was developed for both Ethiopia and Cameroon to progress with data harmonisation. However, this seems to have aborted in the case of Cameroon and progress has been slow in the case of Ethiopia. Once the question bank software is up and running, it is to be hoped that ADP will take a strategic approach to implementing it at country level.

There has also been a minor criticism of the choice of participants in training programmes. In some cases staff who are unlikely to use the toolkit have been included in training programmes. However, this is probably not within the control of ADP, and is more likely to be a concern where archiving is focused on the NSO, rather than the NSS overall.

One way of controlling costs of training and also improving sustainability is to promote the use of consultants from countries already using the toolkit and who can install and maintain NADAs. Figure 3.1 shows the number and percentage of South-South missions relative to the total number of missions carried out by ADP. This shows that a good early effort was made to increase the number of South-South missions, but that this seems to have fallen back a little in later years. The evaluation noted that even for NSOs where staff were encouraged to train in neighbouring countries there was an apparent lack of confidence in initiating training in their own countries without an external consultant present. The evaluation feels that more effort should be made to develop a cadre of trainers regionally, which NSOs and other agencies can call on, and to encourage self-reliance in internal training, particularly in those countries that have benefited from ADP support for a number of years. As far as the evaluation is aware, there has been no attempt to involve regional training centres in implementing ADP training programmes, with the exception of the Statistical Institute of Asia and the Pacific.

IHSN and ADP have also provided support to international organisations to train staff in software and help install NADAs. While initial support may be warranted, and an efficient way to help organisations improve their data archiving, the provision of on-going support in terms of funding six month consultancy contracts for WFP seems excessive. This is more support in terms of time than has been given to any individual country, and it is reasonable to suppose that an international organisation can find funding for this kind of activity from its own resources.

Figure 3.1 Use of South-South consultants



3.3 Effectiveness

In this section, the relationship between outputs and outcomes is analysed, along with an analysis of the factors which may be impeding a greater achievement of outcomes. As there have been no indicators identified by either IHSN or ADP to assess progress, the analysis is inevitably qualitative in nature.

3.3.1 IHSN

Surveys better coordinated, of better quality and more cost-effective

At present IHSN has not been effective in improving the coordination of surveys. As far as quality is concerned, the focus has been on developing the software for the toolkit and the NADA. Survey guidelines have been developed, but the evaluation found little evidence that these had been used by NSOs. In some countries working with NSOs on documenting surveys has led to more emphasis on quality control. Quality issues have been identified and sometimes resolved in this process. There may also be more consistency between surveys because previous surveys are more accessible.

The question bank may well prove to be useful in improving quality once it is up and running, but it will need considerably more promotion and advocacy than IHSN has undertaken with its other products. At present the focus is on building a searchable repository of existing guidelines from various international survey programmes. IHSN does not intend to rank these, but will look selectively at sectors where there are no internationally agreed standards, such as food consumption and gender. Some of the work done on helping prepare internationally recognised modules of questions should feed into this. It is clear from experience so far that this will require both financial and considerable human resources to undertake effectively. Some international organisations have committed considerable amounts of their own resources to developing survey formats and questions which are not always mutually compatible. These are barriers that any concerted action will have to address.

Although the IHSN has the term network in its title, it has not operated as a network in the usual sense of the term, with the secretariat tending to engage with its partners on a one-to-one basis. If the content and timing of surveys is to be better coordinated, then the IHSN will have to work more collaboratively with its partners. Coordinating the timing of surveys may be too difficult an initial step, and should probably be addressed at national, rather than global, level. However, the work done so far shows that progress can be made with survey content, with IHSN supporting the lead specialist agencies. The IHSN should provide an appropriate forum for this, if it can evolve into a network with a more transparent and inclusive governance structure.

Greater and improved use of existing and on-going surveys

IHSN has undertaken all the activities that were planned to support this outcome. Most of the outputs are in place. There is still some way to go to raise awareness and use of existing and on-going surveys. Much of the work will have to be done at national level, under the umbrella of ADP, but IHSN could do more to promote its outputs, particularly its guidelines and software on data anonymisation and on the risks and benefits of open data dissemination. It could also work with its network partners to advocate more dissemination of their survey data on line.

3.3.2 ADP

Greater and improved use of existing and on-going surveys

As discussed above, ADP has been successful in assisting up to 65 countries in archiving existing surveys, and by 2013 37 countries had NADAs up and running. In principle this should result in greater use of existing surveys. However, at the time of installing their NADA many countries did not have a formal policy governing the dissemination of microdata. Where researchers or international organisations had access to microdata it was often on an *ad hoc* basis, sometimes dependent on knowing someone in the NSO or implementing agency.

There are issues of confidentiality around disseminating microdata. When surveys are undertaken, respondents are usually assured of confidentiality and that the information will only be used for statistical purposes. Where there are relatively few respondents, either in a particular geographical area, or in business surveys, where there are relatively few establishments in a particular sector, it may be possible to identify individual respondents or groups of respondents unless the data are anonymised. Addressing these issues may have legal implications and even implications for the legal framework guiding the activities of the NSO. In addition, NSOs may feel that giving out microdata involves a loss of control of the information. Dissemination policies must be developed in compliance with existing legislation in many countries.

As part of her recent Ph.D. thesis¹³, Lynn Woolfrey of Datafirst carried out a survey in 2009 to find out how easy it was for a researcher to access official microdata from countries in Africa. She tried to contact 52 countries to ask for access to microdata. She was unable to access websites for 8 countries. Of the remaining 44, there were problems in contacting 21 countries either because no contact details were given on their website or because email addresses and fax numbers were unobtainable. Of the remaining countries 12 did not respond to emails or faxes, three responded initially, but the process came to an end without data being provided, two explained that they had no data sharing policy for research, one required a financial payment and the researcher to swear an oath of secrecy in person, two required payment and four provided microdata freely, either electronically or by post.

ADP had worked with or was working with 28 of these countries. In 12 of them, a NADA had been installed prior to 2009. Yet only one of these countries responded by providing microdata freely through the NADA. In two other cases data would have been available after payment of a fee. Payment for data is sometimes required by NSOs, and is not necessarily a barrier to access, depending on the level of the fee and the mode of payment.

A follow-up study in 2012¹⁴ showed that, of the 12 countries that had installed NADAs since 2009, only 2 were using the software to give access to microdata. In other countries, access to metadata had improved, but was more limited. In both 2009 and 2012, in a number of countries, the link to the NADA was broken, both from the NSO website and, in some cases, from the ADP website.

ADP has put considerable effort into assisting countries with developing their own dissemination policy. A total of 34 countries have received technical assistance in this regards, 17 of them in 2013. However, there is evidence from the progress reports that this is not a straightforward process. The reports indicate delays and problems in Cameroon, Mali and Niger in developing dissemination policies. The 2008 progress report suggests that a regional workshop at DG level might help progress in this area. As far as the evaluation can tell, no policy has been finalised in

¹³ Archiving Social Survey Data in Africa: an Overview of African Microdata Curation and the Role of Survey Data Archives in Data Management in Africa, Lynn Woolfrey, University of Cape Town, 2009.

¹⁴ L. Woolfrey, Leveraging data in African countries: Curating government microdata for research, Technical Paper 22, DataFirst, University of Cape Town, 2013

these countries. As of mid-2012, as far as can be assessed from the progress reports, no country has finalised a dissemination policy with support from ADP, though two countries, India and Tajikistan, already had a dissemination policy when they joined ADP.

Even where countries are disseminating microdata in the absence of a national policy, the processes are not automatic. Although the NADA software contains a process for requesting microdata, this is often only the first step and further forms, official requests, and sometime monetary payments can be required.

In all the countries visited by the evaluation, there was a process in place for applying for access to microdata. The NSO in Ethiopia estimates that since the launch of the NADA, they are receiving more than 10 requests a week, an increase over the previous situation. In India, where microdata were previously disseminated it is difficult to assess the overall impact, but there has been very positive feedback from existing users that the new format is much more user-friendly. In the Philippines, the demand for public-use files has increased since the NSO data archive was launched in 2010. In Colombia, the NSO was able to provide the evaluation with statistics on requests for microdata since the launch of the NADA in 2011, (see Annex G) and these show an increase over the past two years.

The eSurvey of statistics users asked about awareness of NADAs and whether respondents had used them. About 40% were aware of the existence of NADAs, and most of them had heard of them by word of mouth or through the internet. Just under 30% had actually used a NADA and only 9% had used a NADA to download microdata. The most common use was to review survey metadata. Respondents were asked about the accessibility of survey data as compared to five years ago, and there was felt to be a definite improvement, though respondents were unable to assess whether or not this was due to the activities of IHSN/ADP.

There has been some success in increasing access to microdata as shown by figures collected in 2013 for users' registration¹⁵ with country NADAs. Figures obtained by ADP¹⁶ show that in five countries (Colombia, India, Nigeria, Philippines and South Africa) there were more than 900 registered users. In another 17 countries there were over 100 registered users. There is no information on which, if any, surveys these users downloaded, nor what use was made of the microdata. These figures may be an underestimate of the number of microdata users, as in some countries microdata can be downloaded without registration. In the countries with large numbers of registrations, data users could access microdata previously. The evaluation cannot tell what effect the introduction of a NADA has had on usage. However it has made access easier and in some countries may have considerably improved access to microdata.

On the basis of the evidence presented above, the evaluation feels that the activities of ADP have made progress towards the outcome of greater and improved use of existing and on-going surveys. Documentation and dataset curation are important steps in improving access. However, there have been obstacles in terms of the need to develop national dissemination policies and to build capacity in anonymisation, particularly in countries with a less developed legal framework for statistical activity, some of whom are facing new and complex challenges. Much of the support that ADP is giving to these activities is quite recent, and perhaps, as one respondent to the eSurvey suggested, it would have been useful to start to address the issue of anonymisation at the same time as the NADA was installed. The challenges of anonymisation are undoubtedly more complex than those in cataloguing and documenting and it has taken IHSN time to develop a practical

¹⁵ Registration is not required to consult metadata and descriptive statistics but is necessary to download licenced and some public access microdata files.

¹⁶ Personal communication from Francois Fonteneau

solution. However, in some countries it is likely that the constraints facing increasing access to microdata are more political than technical and will require concerted advocacy to address.

Advocacy on the part of the NSO is another issue that the evaluation would like to raise. Increasingly, NSOs have to make the case for maintaining and even increasing the resources available to them on the basis of the value of their activities. The benefits of improved access to microdata should be part of that case. Yet the evaluation found in some of the countries they visited that researchers, and staff of ministries and donor organisations were unaware of either the NADA or the resulting availability of survey metadata and microdata. If ADP is to help increase the use of surveys at a national level, then it may have to assist NSOs in increasing their national profile, not just relying on their website to make their product better known. ADP has started undertaking microdata outreach workshops which should help to improve awareness.

In interviews, the issue was raised as to whether a major factor constraining the use of survey data is capacity to analyse microdata and whether there was need of a front-end application to help potential users. In some countries this is undoubtedly a factor, but there are a number of data portals that have been developed by international agencies such as UNICEF and the African Development Bank. These all use the same microdata as produced by the NSO and give basic aggregated data for the less sophisticated user. The evaluation does not feel that increasing capacity to use microdata, whether through training or provision of software is, or should be, within IHSN and ADP's mandate.

Improved data quality

As discussed above, ADP's Task 2 is at an early stage, apart from some successful sector-based activities, often taken jointly with other agencies. The programme has not had the resources to undertake Task 3 activities. Until Task 2 is more heavily developed and a number of national question banks are up and running, it is unreasonable to expect any progress towards this outcome. The outputs must precede the outcomes.

3.4 Impact

More and better data available and used to support decision making for poverty reduction

IHSN/ADP has improved data availability, both through the IHSN catalogue and through assisting countries to establish their own NADAs. It is very difficult to measure the impact of increased information and information use on decision making, but the actual use of information is an important first step. The IHSN has a citation catalogue on its website which allows users to bring up a list of the surveys cited in a specific publication (though not whether the study used microdata as opposed to aggregate published data). For some of the surveys in the IHSN survey catalogue there is a link to studies that have used that specific survey, though again no indication without checking the study itself on whether microdata have been used. These citations could, in principle, be used to find out how heavily cited the studies are, with a view to understanding how influential they have been. Even then, it would be difficult to take a view as to whether that had led to improved decision making. It is best to fall back on a position that if reliable data are used more regularly in analytical work, then understanding of poverty is likely to improve. On this basis, IHSN should be having some impact.

It is more difficult to assess this at national level. The evaluation could find no indication that NSOs were collecting any information as to how the data they were disseminating was being used, even though the standardised agreement for data users as suggested by ADP requires microdata users

to send the NSO a copy of their output, or at least keep them informed as to the use made of the data.

In terms of the broader mission statement of IHSN, it has had very limited impact on the collaboration between data producers and data users and has not had any impact that the evaluation could find on the coordination of internationally sponsored survey programmes.

It has contributed to an environment of more open data, but it remains to be seen if this will have any impact on the use of household survey data beyond internationally renowned academic institutions and the research departments of international organisations. IHSN could do more in terms of advocacy and promotion, but could also work more with partner organisations whose mandate focuses more on data usage. A more effective network could make a difference in this respect.

3.5 Sustainability

IHSN/ADP have established three outputs which will require future maintenance, either globally or nationally. These are the software for data archiving and cataloguing, the use of the archiving toolkit at national level and the establishment of NADAs, both nationally and within international organisations. Other outputs, such as the guidelines and working papers, do not require maintenance and have no sustainability implications.

The software that IHSN has developed, including the NADA software and the microdata management toolkit, is a global public good and will need some on-going maintenance and possible upgrading. IHSN/ADP has made commitments to the countries that have adopted the toolkit and established NADAs that there will be continued support for the software. This is important as in the past countries have invested time and effort installing software simply to find that the focus of the organisation producing the software has moved on and left its users without support. This will require institutional commitment, not least in the provision of programmer time, but the financial implications should not be high. So far IHSN has provided this to a high level of customer satisfaction.

IHSN is currently providing access to anonymisation software (Statistical Disclosure Control) produced by a third party. It is too early to say what continuing support, if any, will be required for this.

The other two outputs are principally at national level, and their sustainability will depend very much on the capacity and commitment of NSOs. Table 3.4 gives some indication of the sustainability of activities and outputs so far, over the period since 2006.

Table 3.4 Sustainability of ADP outputs

| | |
|---|----|
| No of countries identified as involved in Task 1 activities in 2012 | 63 |
| Countries involved in data documentation but no NADA in 2012 | 9 |
| NADA installed but no longer running | 9 |
| Countries with some ADP involvement but no longer involved in 2012 | 7 |
| New countries involved since mid-2012 | 4 |
| Countries who have documented surveys without ADP support | 50 |

Sources: ADP progress report, Jan-June 2012, ADP data

Some few countries have dropped out of the ADP programme, but most are still either directly receiving support or are continuing activities on their own. New countries are still joining ADP. A substantial majority of countries that have been trained in the use of the toolkit are continuing to

document surveys without ADP support. The picture is a little more mixed with respect to the NADAs. A sixth of the NADAs installed are no longer running, though it is not clear whether this is because of technical capacity, problems with servers, or a move away from an interest in data dissemination.

In the countries visited as part of the evaluation, where the NSO has reasonable staffing levels, a good IT capacity and a degree of financial autonomy, the NADA has been maintained and surveys have been added as they have been carried out. Sustainability does not seem a major issue. In countries where the NSO is more dependent on external funding and where there is relatively high staff turn-over, then there are more concerns. In Ethiopia, new staff are given basic training in the toolkit and data archiving has been built into the protocol for survey management. In other countries, staff training is dependent on externally led workshops. Here sustainability may be more of an issue.

It is clearly important that data archiving become part of the normal institutionalised activities of an NSO and that it should be built into survey design from the very beginning. Similarly, training in the toolkit should be part of the orientation of new staff. Many surveys are internationally sponsored or funded, particularly in Africa, and it is important that plans for data archiving are built into the design of these surveys and appropriately budgeted.

There may be a continued need for support from ADP for training in the short-term, particularly for new entrants into ADP. However, to the extent possible, NSOs should be encouraged to establish their own training programmes and training capacity. As more countries establish NADAs, a core of regional capacity will develop and this should be tapped whenever possible. Regional statistical organisations could also play a role here. These functions should become part of NSDSs, and could be supported through more general statistical capacity building programmes, rather than being seen as the responsibility of ADP.

3.6 Governance

3.6.1 Governance

For a relatively small initiative, the IHSN/ADP has quite a complex operational and management structure, as is shown in the organogram in Annex B. As described above, the Secretariat is split between Washington (WB) and Paris (OECD), with most IHSN activities carried out in Washington and most of ADP activities managed from Paris. Both IHSN and ADP are funded in part through satellite programmes of PARIS21, set up specifically to implement them.

Currently the IHSN has 22 members, more than half of whom are UN agencies. The others are international organisations or networks, with the exception of DFID, which is the only bilateral donor member. IHSN also has a number of partnerships with specialist technical organisations with whom they cooperate on technical issues.

IHSN has a Management Group (MG), which is composed of a subset of seven or eight of its members. These appear to have been selected at the inception of IHSN and have not been changed to any great extent during the subsequent period. The MG is supposed to meet on an annual basis but this is not fixed. There was no formal MG meeting between March 2010 and February 2013, though reports were circulated and there has been regular informal consultation.

The ADP is a partnership between the PARIS21 Secretariat, the WB and other technical and financial partners. IHSN and ADP activities are reported on at PARIS21 board meetings, which take place annually.

The IHSN/ADP MG does not have formal terms of reference, but it is expected to approve work plans and provide overall guidance for the direction of IHSN/ADP. Examination of the minutes of the MG shows that, with the exception of the first meeting in 2007 where it was suggested that a number of areas should be given low priority, there has been little formal guidance. The meetings have had more of an information sharing nature. There has been considerable consultation with individual MG members, at various times. However, governance has definitely had a light touch. The lack of tight governance has allowed IHSN and ADP to be flexible in their approach, to take advantage of opportunities as they have arisen, and has allowed them to innovate. One comment made to the evaluation was that it was still functioning as a small pilot programme.

The MG is quite small, and a request from one member to join it was turned down, on the basis that it would make the group too unwieldy. That may be the case, but it comes across as rather a closed shop. It is not clear what non-MG members receive from their membership in any concrete form. In 2013 there was a more general invitation to members and other interested parties to attend the MG meeting which took place on the fringes of a UNSC meeting. Representatives of beneficiary countries attended for the first time. This seems a positive step towards making the network more inclusive.

Careful thought needs to be given as to what benefits and responsibilities should come with membership of the IHSN. In interviews, a number of non-MG members expressed interest in joining the MG. Some positions on the MG could rotate. There is also the question of whether ADP beneficiaries should be able to become members of the IHSN. The IHSN/ADP reports are discussed at PARIS21 board meetings where developing countries are represented. Is this enough participation, or are there mutual benefits from opening out IHSN membership? These questions should be examined in the light of the future options open to IHSN/ADP, as discussed in the remainder of this report.

3.6.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

When the IHSN was set up a mission statement was developed, but there was no logical framework or intervention logic developed, not unusual for 2004. No indicators or targets against which to measure progress were set up either at that stage or later. Annual work plans are prepared towards the end of the summer and, in theory, presented to the Management Group, then given to the WB lawyers to ensure that they comply with the DGF requirements.

Reports are prepared on a six monthly basis for both IHSN and ADP against the DGF grant. The ADP report goes through PARIS21 to the WB and the IHSN goes directly to the WB. ADP also reports through the internal OECD M&E system, but this is quite limited. The six-monthly reports cover activities undertaken and future work plans, but there is no evidence that these are tracked, or that work plans are actually matched against activities undertaken. There is no formal M&E system as such.

This has changed somewhat since 2011, with the additional funding provided by DFID. DFID has a much more robust monitoring system for its grants, and IHSN/ADP has developed a log frame, indicators and targets against which to report. This has only been in place for a year. Two reports have been prepared. It is not clear what, if any, effect this may have on management of the two programmes.

M&E systems should be developed not just for reporting and accountability, but also to improve operation and management. It is difficult to assess whether or not decisions would have been made differently if there had been a more robust reporting and M&E system in place. The two programmes are run in collaboration with one another, and have shown no obvious

mismanagement or poor decision making. The evaluation recognises that IHSN/ADP is a small and tightly run programme, and does not feel it should have an unduly burdensome M&E system. However, it feels that the identification of and reporting against some higher level indicators would bring about a greater strategic focus for the programme which would be appropriate as it reaches maturity and can no longer be regarded as a pilot. All programmes should take a look at their longer-term objectives on a regular basis and a good M&E system helps them to do that.

3.7 Conclusions of the evaluation

Relevance

The establishment of IHSN and ADP was a relevant response to the recommendations of MAPS and its mission has remained relevant. The two programmes have fulfilled a good part of their remit, and have filled a niche. No other statistical programme has focused on archiving surveys and increasing access to microdata. However there are parts of the original mission which have not been addressed, especially improved coordination of internationally sponsored survey programmes and improved collaboration between data producers and data users.

Efficiency

For IHSN, most outputs have been achieved, with the exception of the information system on planned surveys which has been abandoned at an early stage because of a lack of cooperation. The question bank has proved to be more complicated and time-consuming than was initially realised and is still at quite an early stage, though in at least one country initial steps have been taken to realise this at a national level. IHSN staff have achieved greater awareness of the tools and availability of surveys through attendance at conferences and working groups, but the overall level of awareness would indicate that this may not be the best way of promoting IHSN tools and that this needs to be supplemented with other advocacy activities.

For ADP, Task 1 outputs have been achieved in a significant number of countries. This was undertaken in a fairly opportunistic manner, responding to demand. This was appropriate in the early years while the programme was effectively a pilot, but by this stage, there should perhaps be more emphasis on developing work-plans with countries, identifying milestones and defining time frames for graduating from Task 1 to Task 2. Task 2 activities have only started at a fairly late stage and have yet to result in significant outputs.

The evaluation finds that the use of financial and human resources by both IHSN and ADP has been quite economical. There are some decisions that we would query (the funding of medium-term consultancies to WFP to enable them to archive their own surveys, for example) but these have not taken large resources. There has been good use of South consultants and efforts to promote South-South interaction. The number of full-time equivalent staff in both programmes has been kept remarkably small for the results achieved; by situating ADP at OECD the management fees for the Secretariat have been kept at a lower level than for other, comparable programmes.

However, more effort could have been made in more recent years to shift some of the costs to recipient organisations. Countries should be encouraged, for example, to use more of their own staff in organising workshops.

Effectiveness

The picture is much less clear when we come to evaluate effectiveness. Although many countries and some international organisations have set up their own survey catalogues based on the IHSN NADA application, this has not, as far as the evaluation can tell, led to an increased use of existing

survey data. Access to microdata appears to have increased in a number of countries. Figures collected in 2013 indicate that in many countries significant numbers of users are registering with NADAs, but there is no information as to what microdata sets they are downloading and how they are using them. In the countries with the highest number of registered users, it was previously possible to access microdata but the introduction of a NADA has made access easier. Many countries in Africa are not using those elements of the software which permit almost automatic download of microdata and also register usage.

Undoubtedly IHSN has created greater awareness of what microdata are available. The IHSN catalogue is a very useful reference tool but has had inadequate promotion. At country level, though, NSOs are not doing as much as they could to improve access, and in some cases, see microdata management tools as more important, in that they have helped them organise their own data sets better. If ADP had focused on a few countries to work through the different stages from activities through to outcomes, particularly in terms of achieving greater use of existing surveys, this might have resulted in a better understanding of what is required, in terms of advocacy, political support and even legal and policy structures to enable a much greater increase in use of surveys and their data.

The issue was raised in interviews as to whether a major factor constraining the use of survey data is capacity to analyse microdata. In some countries this is undoubtedly a factor, but the evaluation does not feel that this is, or should be, within IHSN and ADP's mandate.

At present, IHSN/ADP has not been effective in improving the coordination of surveys. Better documentation may have led to more emphasis on quality control of surveys, but overall, there has been little documented effect on survey quality. ADP's Task 2 is at an early stage, though at a global level there is interest amongst some of the specialist international agencies in developing a specialised question bank, or internationally recognised modules of questions. However, this will take considerable human resources to undertake effectively, and there are, in some areas, inter-organisational barriers to address. IHSN has not operated as a network in the usual sense of the term, with the secretariat tending to engage with its partners on a one-to-one basis. In order to make progress towards achieving greater coordination of surveys, there will have to be more effort towards working collaboratively with its partners.

Impact

IHSN/ADP has improved data availability, both through the IHSN catalogue and through assisting countries to establish their own NADAs. It has had limited impact on the collaboration between data producers and data users and has not had any impact that the evaluation could find on the coordination of internationally sponsored survey programmes.

It has contributed to an environment of more open data, but it remains to be seen what impact it may have on the use of household survey data beyond internationally renowned academic institutions and the research departments of international organisations. IHSN could do more in terms of advocacy and promotion, but could also work more with partner organisations whose mandate focuses more on data usage.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the outputs achieved by IHSN/ADP has quite limited financial implications. There are three established outputs; the maintenance of the software, including the NADA and the microdata toolkit, the use of the microdata toolkit to archive data at national and organisational level, and the maintenance of country NADAs.

The first of these is a matter of programmer time and institutional commitment. It is important as there has been an implicit, and at times explicit, commitment by the IHSN to the countries that have adopted the toolkit and established NADAs, but the financial implications of this are not high.

For the other two outputs, the sustainability is very much dependent on the capacity and commitment of NSOs. In the countries visited as part of the evaluation, where the NSO has reasonable staffing levels, a good IT capacity and a degree of financial autonomy, the NADA has been maintained and surveys have been added as they have been carried out. Sustainability does not seem a major issue. In countries where the NSO is more dependent on external funding and where there is relatively high staff turn-over, then there are more concerns. In Ethiopia, new staff are given basic training in the tool-kit and data archiving has been built into the protocol for survey management. In other countries, staff training is dependent on externally led workshops. Here sustainability may be more of an issue.

It is important that data archiving and the maintenance of a national data archive become institutionalised within national procedures for sustainability of the achievements of the IHSN/ADP.

Governance

The governance of IHSN has been quite light touch since its inception. The Management Group has met annually at most, with gaps in some years. It discusses a proposed work plan and provides guidance on IHSN priorities. IHSN and ADP develop annual work plans and provide six-monthly financial and progress reports, which are submitted to the World Bank. However the level of detail required is not high. There are quite limited opportunities for partner organisations to participate in management decisions, and no formal role for other stakeholders, such as heads of NSOs.

There is no formal M&E system in place. It is not clear that anyone has the obligation to match work plans against progress reports, and there are no measurable performance indicators as far as the evaluation is aware. Reporting against the funding recently provided by DFID has required IHSN to report against targets and milestones, but this is new and it is not clear as yet what, if any effect this will have.

The evaluation recognises that IHSN/ADP is a small and tightly run programme, and does not feel it should have an unduly burdensome M&E system. However, it feels that the identification of and reporting against some higher level indicators would bring about a greater strategic focus for the programme which would be appropriate as it reaches maturity and can no longer be regarded as a pilot programme.

Summary

IHSN/ADP have made considerable achievements since their inception in 2004/2006. The initial mandate was very ambitious and has been narrowed down to a more practical set of objectives. Software tools have been developed for data archiving and for setting up NADAs, and ADP has helped train NSO staff to use these, and to archive surveys more effectively. Some progress has been made on improving access to microdata, though there are still legal, political and, in some cases, technical issues to address at national level.

A start has been made to improving data and survey quality but progress has been slow. There are challenges of cooperation, both at national and at global levels. This should be a focus of IHSN/ADP activity in the short-term.

4 The changing international context

In this chapter of the report we discuss how the international framework for statistics, including governance arrangements and coordination mechanisms, is changing and how this is expected to have an impact on the IHSN and ADP. Because of limitations of space, the coverage provides just an overview and reference is made, where possible, to other sources and descriptions of processes.

4.1 IHSN/ADP and the international statistical architecture

4.1.1 Overview

The international statistical system is concerned with a variety of tasks and roles. A complex and diverse international statistical architecture has evolved to support the development of standards and methods, the coordination and management of national statistical systems, the compilation of consistent international data sets on a wide variety of topics, but especially the indicators needed to monitor the Millennium Development Goals and the mobilisation and delivery of financial and technical assistance to developing countries.

Most of the data used internationally originate from national processes supported by the infrastructure - human, physical, and organisational - of national statistical systems. These data enter the international statistical system in a process through which different agencies review and further standardize national data to produce consistent, international data sets. Some international agencies also collect what might be termed transnational data, that is, data that transcend national boundaries in their production or coverage, for example the purchasing power parity statistics produced through the International Comparison Program.

The international statistical architecture has evolved over time, typically in response to a specific need or concern and as a result is complicated and extensive. It is continuing to change, although not always in a planned or consistent way. The main international agencies have their own mandates and concerns and their interest in statistics is driven primarily by their own internal needs for data and statistics to support their operations. As part of their operations many agencies compile and disseminate internationally comparable data sets on a wide variety of topics. Some agencies also implement programmes and projects to strengthen the capacity of statistical agencies and units in developing countries.

4.1.2 Many different actors and processes

There are many different actors and processes that have evolved to support the development of the international statistical system and the more effective use of statistics to reduce poverty and promote development. The main actors and processes that are relevant to the IHSN and ADP include the following.

At the apex of the global statistical system is the [United Nations Statistical Commission](#) (UNSC), which was established in 1947. It brings together heads of national statistical agencies from UN member states from all regions of the world. In particular, the UNSC is the decision making body for the setting of statistical standards, the development of concepts and methods and their implementation at the national and international levels. Under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council, the Commission has a coordination function, the promotion of an integrated system in the collection, processing and dissemination of international statistics and, in cooperation

with the specialized agencies, is expected to help developing countries in strengthening their statistical systems.

The compilation of international data sets has been taking place for a considerable period of time, but the emphasis on the need for consistency and, consequently, the need for much more complete metadata, became much clearer following the Millennium Summit and the efforts to compile the data needed to monitor progress towards the MDGs. The need to make the most effective use of fairly limited resources, as well as the recognition that effective coordination was going to be essential if data needs were to be met, has led to the establishment of coordination mechanisms including the [Inter-Agency and Expert Group \(IAEG\) on MDG Indicators](#).

In parallel, other processes, including the efforts to mobilise increased aid in support of the development effort implied by the MDGs, have been put in place. Led largely by the multilateral development banks, a focus has been placed on [Managing for Development Results](#). In return for increased levels of aid, donors and partner countries were concerned to know that aid was being used as effectively as possible and that it was making a difference. This emphasised the importance of measuring results throughout the development process. As well as setting in train a mechanism to improve aid effectiveness, the process also emphasised the need for better statistics. The [Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics](#) was a direct result of these efforts, agreed at the second International Roundtable on Managing for Development Results in 2004. As well as providing the initial mandate for IHSN, MAPS also highlighted the need to strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems if the challenge of providing the data to monitor the MDGs was to be met. The [Busan Action Plan for Statistics](#) (BAPS), agreed in 2011, updates MAPS, reinforcing the emphasis on strengthening the capacity of national statistical systems, but also taking into account what has changed and what has been achieved since 2004. One important difference between BAPS and MAPS is that the former is explicitly recognised as an outcome of the High Level Forum. The final [Busan Outcome Document](#) states (paragraph 18 c) "*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 statement provides important political support for BAPS and commits all the actors involved in the Busan conference to supporting the implementation of the Action Plan.

[PARIS21](#), while it was formally established just before the Millennium Summit, was set up in response to the challenges faced by both statisticians and decision-makers. It was designed to be a forum and network to promote, influence and facilitate statistical capacity development and the better use of statistics. Its goal is to develop a culture of Management for Development Results, which, since 2004, has been emphasised mainly by encouraging and assisting developing countries to design and then implement National Strategies for the Development of Statistics. PARIS21 has proved to be important in stressing the importance of strengthening the capacity of statistical systems in developing countries. Its annual reports to the UN Statistical Commission have been the main mechanism of developing the discourse at this level. The role of PARIS21 has evolved and is continuing to do so, especially in the context of BAPS as described below.

The World Bank's role in statistics has also evolved. It has been a major player in supporting statistical capacity building and in the development of household surveys. Since 2000, the focus of the Bank on statistical capacity building has increased substantially and it is one of the three most important providers of aid for statistics ([PARIS21 PRESS Report 2012](#)). Since 2004, the statistical work of the Bank has been managed within the context of MAPS and the Bank is now prioritising the implementation of BAPS.

The Bank has been a major supporter and developer of household surveys even before IHSN was launched. Its [Living Standards Measurement Study](#) has been in place since 1980. The programme is designed to collect data and generate statistics to identify how policies can be

designed and improved in a number of areas. These surveys have been important sources of data on poverty and the impact of policies on the poor. Efforts to document and archive these and similar surveys in many countries pre-dated the IHSN and provided the precursors of the IHSN tools. The microdata files documented with the support of the ADP using the IHSN tools have been and continue to be an important source of data to monitor trends in poverty and well-being and to support policy analysis. An important recent area of research and development has been in the design and implementation of panel surveys.

4.1.3 Duplication of activities and products

One outcome of the complex nature of the international statistical system is the actual and potential duplication of both activities and statistical products, especially software tools. Within the broad areas of data documentation and dissemination, a number of different tools have been developed in recent years in addition to those that have been developed by IHSN and disseminated by ADP. These include the following.

- [Devinfo](#) - is a database system for monitoring human development. It is a tool for organising, storing and presenting data to facilitate data sharing and supports the production of tables, graphs and maps. DevInfo originated as ChildInfo and is managed by UNICEF on behalf of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG).
- [CountrySTAT](#) - is a web-based software tool developed and promoted by FAO for managing and disseminating food and agriculture statistics at the national and subnational levels.
- [Open Data for Africa Platform](#) - The Open Data Platform is a software tool for extracting data, creating and sharing customized reports, and visualizing data in tables, charts and maps. Its aim is to provide a portal to provide access to development data and to enable them to be shared with different users. The Platform has been developed by the African Development Bank and has been launched in 40 African countries.
- [Redatam](#) - The REtrieval of DATa for small Areas by Microcomputer.(Redatam+SP) is a database management tool that supports the storage and retrieval of microdata and aggregated statistics. It has been developed by Centro Latinoamericano y Caribeño de Demografía (CELADE / CEPAL), based in Santiago, Chile. It has been installed and used in countries in Africa, Latin America and South-East Asia.

Most of the tools, with the exception of Redatam, are concerned with storing and disseminating macro indicators, usually in the form of time series; as such they are not formally competitors for the IHSN tools. Nevertheless, feedback obtained from the five case study countries as well as the on-line producer survey suggests that managers in statistical agencies in low income countries do not feel that they are able to identify the tools that best meet their needs. In many cases, the tools are provided as part of an assistance package from an aid agency. Those countries where resources for surveys and the management of their data are very limited find it very difficult to refuse this kind of assistance and they feel that they are required to accept and adopt the software tools since they are seen as part of the assistance package. Some objective advice on the relative merits and uses of the different packages would be welcomed.

It has not been possible for the evaluation team to review these or any other data management software tools and we are not in a position to suggest that any one is superior or not to the others. The main concern is with the duplication of products and the difficulties that many statistical agencies in low income countries have in assessing which tools are most appropriate for their particular situation. There is also a need to ensure that the duplication of tools dealing with macro indicators is not replicated in the field of microdata management. It will be important to ensure that the documentation and support provided with the tools, provides an adequate explanation, not only

of how the software works, but also of what their functions and capacities are. There may also be a need for more comparative analysis of different tools that enables statistical managers to make a proper assessment of how they could best be used.

Another actual and potential area of duplication is in the development and maintenance of central data repositories. To some extent, this problem is an indication of the success of IHSN in raising the profile of microdata and in developing standards and tools to document them and to describe the metadata. As discussed in Section 3.2, the IHSN central survey data catalogue has proved useful, although perhaps not as widely known as it should be. The catalogue, however, only provides links to the actual microdata and a number of agencies have already or are planning to establish their own repositories with access to microdata for their own internal analysis and use. This process, which is expected to increase, has a number of potential problems. National statistical systems face having to deal with requests for data and reaching agreements on their use from a number of agencies. Having different copies of data sets managed by different agencies presents obvious problems of duplication and difficulties in ensuring that any changes in data sets are included in all copies. There is a clear need for coordination.

4.1.4 Coordination and accountability

The duplication of both actors and products in the data management field as well as feedback from countries obtained during the evaluation indicate that effective coordination remains a serious challenge. A number of different processes to strengthen coordination and to promote accountability have been put in place in recent years. These include PARIS21 itself, especially through the Board and Steering Committee, as well as the MAPS Advisory Board established by the World Bank as part of the MAPS partnership established in 2006.

While coordination is, therefore, widely espoused, in practice it has often proved more difficult to put into effect. As discussed in Chapter 3, one of the objectives of IHSN, when it was set up in 2004, was to improve the coordination of internationally sponsored survey programmes, giving emphasis to timing, sequencing, frequency, and cost-effectiveness. Fairly soon after it was established, however, this objective was found to be very difficult to achieve and coordination efforts effectively ceased.

The problems facing more effective coordination are ones mainly of accountability and of limited resources. Each agency active in the international statistical system is governed by and is accountable to its own internal management and governance mechanisms. With resources for global public goods in statistics often in very limited supply, what is done is largely driven by agency-specific budgets and decision-making processes.

In the opinion of the evaluation team, the fundamentals of this situation are not likely to change much in the medium term. The multiplicity of actors is likely to persist and coordination will only really be effective when the incentives are sufficient to overcome the costs. Chapter 5 includes some suggestions aimed at strengthening coordination and improving accountability. Whatever decisions are made, however, about the future of the Network, it will be important to be realistic about what can be achieved in practice. This is not to discount the fact that demand for better coordination remains high, especially among the managers of statistical agencies in low income countries.

4.1.5 Implications for IHSN and ADP

The complexity of the international statistical system and the different channels for accountability are reflected in the existing governance arrangements for IHSN and ADP that were set out in Chapter 3. In the opinion of the evaluation team, this complexity, both in terms of governance and accountability and the related difficulties in ensuring effective coordination will remain, so any future arrangements will need to take this situation into account. The information from the case studies as well as interviews with stakeholders indicate that there is demand for coordination and for ensuring that the interaction with national statistical systems does not place undue burdens on local management. It will also be important to ensure that partners, who may not always be providers of finance, are nevertheless able to have some say in the design of work programmes and some oversight of their implementation.

4.2 Implementation of the Busan Action Plan for Statistics

The Busan Action Plan for Statistics provides the framework for the improvement of statistics in support of economic and social development over the medium term. It has three main objectives: (i) to fully integrate statistics in decision making, which involves increasing the use of data to inform policy and the inclusion of statistical capacity building in development programmes; (ii) to promote open access to statistics; and (iii) to increase resources for statistical systems. These objectives are principally to be achieved through five actions.

- **Action 1:** Strengthen and re-focus national and regional statistical strategies (NSDS/RSDS) with particular emphasis on improving statistical systems that address country-level development priorities.
- **Action 2:** Implement standards for data preservation, documentation, and dissemination that permit full public access to statistics.
- **Action 3:** Develop programs to increase the knowledge and skills needed to use statistics effectively for planning, analysis, monitoring, and evaluation.
- **Action 4:** Build and maintain results monitoring instruments to track outcomes of all global summits and high level forums.
- **Action 5:** Ensure financing for statistical information is robust and that funding instruments and approaches reflect the new modalities and actors in development finance.

A PARIS21 Task Team has been set up to review and make recommendations on implementation arrangements for BAPS. Its [report](#), discussed at the 2013 Annual PARIS meetings, indicates that both IHSN and ADP come under Action 2. Here the main concern is to keep up the momentum already developed through IHSN and ADP activities and to fill gaps, especially in relation to implementing open data policies and programmes in developing countries and improving tools and guidance on data anonymisation.

At the 2012 Annual PARIS21 meetings, the Board approved a proposal that PARIS21 will act as the BAPS Secretariat, and that the PARIS21 Secretariat together with the World Bank will report on progress to the post-Busan [Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation](#) and the UN Statistical Commission. In 2013, the Board approved the recommendations of the BAPS Implementation Task Team and agreed a reorganisation of the Secretariat to reflect more closely the requirements of BAPS.

There are a number of implications for IHSN and ADP that come out directly from the implementation arrangements for BAPS. Most importantly, BAPS updates and strengthens the mandate for IHSN and ADP activities, requiring that work to develop and implement standards for data preservation, documentation and dissemination continues and is extended. Second, the link

with open data, providing for full public access to statistics is also emphasised. There are, potentially a number of implications here, some of which are discussed further below and in Chapter 5. In particular, the [Board agreed](#) to establish a task team on emerging technologies, but ensuring that there is coordination with other groups working on “big data” issues to avoid duplication of effort.

4.3 Post 2015

A substantial international effort is in place to define and develop a development agenda for the period from 2015 onwards, when the current Millennium Development Goals will come to an end. As yet, this process is quite fluid, with many different actors and a number of important contributions. At the 2013 Annual PARIS21 meetings the Board called on the Secretariat (i) to move quickly to complete initial conceptual work as rapidly as possible, (ii) to stress PARIS21’s comparative advantage, which is the inclusiveness of its partnership and the strong pluralistic voice of countries/institutions and users/producers, (iii) to recognise and respond to the fluidity of the post–2015 MDG process over the coming months and (iv) to recognise that target setting is a political process and that the Secretariat is better served raising awareness on the challenges of filling data gaps once targets are established.

At the political level, the UN Secretary General has set up a [high-level panel of eminent persons](#) to make recommendations on the post 2015 development agenda. Their [report](#) published on May 31, 2013, makes a number of recommendations on goals and targets, focusing especially on the problems of extreme poverty. What is of interest to IHSN and ADP and, indeed, the whole of the international statistical community, is the emphasis given in this report to the need for a new data revolution. Chapter 4 of the report states:

“A true data revolution would draw on existing and new sources of data to fully integrate statistics into decision making, promote open access to, and use of, data and ensure increased support for statistical systems.

*To support this, the Panel recommends establishing a **Global Partnership on Development Data** that brings together diverse but interested stakeholders – government statistical offices, international organisations, CSOs, foundations and the private sector. This partnership would, as a first step, develop a global strategy to fill critical gaps, expand data accessibility, and galvanise international efforts to ensure a baseline for post-2015 targets is in place by January 2016.”¹⁷*

The implications for IHSN and ADP are clear. If this recommendation is put into effect, the impact for the international statistical system and programmes such as IHSN will be substantial and important new opportunities will arise. The potential role for the private sector and the links with what might be termed non-traditional sources of data, or “big data” are significant and are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

4.4 Open data

Open data can be defined as follows. “A piece of data or content is open if anyone is free to use, reuse, and redistribute it — subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute and/or share-alike.”¹⁸ The idea of open data, along with similar principles such as open source, open government and open access is not new, although the concept has been highlighted in the last few years by a number of initiatives by governments and institutions such as the World Bank to

¹⁷ A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development: The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda; 30 May 2013: http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf

¹⁸ <http://okfn.org/opendata/>

improve accountability by making as much information available as widely as possible, free of charge.

For official statisticians the idea of open data is appealing; it promotes access to their products and services and, potentially can add significantly to the use of statistics. Much of the work of IHSN and ADP has been in line with the open data concept, documenting surveys and censuses, standardizing their documentation and developing tools that promote access not just to the published aggregate statistics, but also to the microdata themselves. At the same time, however, open data also represents a real challenge. Concerns which have had and are likely to continue to have an impact on IHSN include the following.

- The problem of confidentiality and the need to protect the identity of individual respondents as required by almost all statistical legislation.
- For open data to be useful and useable, it is not sufficient to make the data available, metadata are also needed that identify what the data represent, how they have been collected and any limitations there may be on their use and interpretation. While IHSN has been assiduous in doing this for surveys, the same process and standards have yet to be developed and applied widely to other kinds of data, especially those generated as a by-product of government administration and data compiled by private sector businesses.
- For less developed statistical agencies with more limited capacity there are concerns about ensuring that the data are properly attributed and that where alternative statistics are compiled and disseminated that these are not designated as nor seen as being “official”.

These concerns are considered in Chapter 5 in the context of the medium-term scenario and the proposals for the future of IHSN and ADP.

5 Where should IHSN/ADP go from here?

The evaluation team believes that the work of IHSN/ADP should be continued after 2015 and we propose a time frame that will allow for activities to continue at least until 2020. In this chapter we present our recommendations for the development of IHSN and ADP for this period, which divides into two distinct components: the short term from now until the end of 2015, when funding is already in place and the potential for substantial changes in the activities and work programme is limited; and the period from 2015 onwards. More strategic decisions will need to be put into effect after 2015 for two important reasons. The first is the need to identify and secure new financing to meet the core costs of IHSN; the second is to ensure that the mandate, objectives and work programme of the Network are aligned with the new international statistical architecture that will be in place in the post MDG era.

5.1 Short-term recommendations

Our recommendations for the short term, up to 2015, are based on two main sources of information: the results of the evaluation set out in Chapter 3 and direct feedback from stakeholders obtained through interviews and the user and producer eSurveys. The assumption here is that the work programme will proceed largely in line with existing priorities and objectives. The changes we propose in the following sections are incremental and we believe they can be implemented within the current resource envelope.

5.1.1 Governance

The governance arrangements for IHSN and ADP and the reporting and accountability arrangements have been described in Chapter 3, along with the extent to which these have provided flexibility and the capacity to innovate. The advantages of flexibility have been clear as the work of the IHSN has developed and as ADP was being initially rolled out. While, in theory, IHSN reports through a number of different channels, in practice, accountability has been determined by the flow of funds. Now that IHSN is well established, however, and many countries have been able to document surveys and set up NADAs, the need for a clearer and more inclusive governance process is becoming apparent. Feedback received by the evaluation team, especially from international agencies that have an interest in surveys and survey data, suggests that strengthening accountability and providing for more voices to be heard in determining priorities will be important.

At the same time, it is clear that if IHSN is to continue in some form beyond 2015 it will be necessary to build and maintain a strong alliance of agencies that can advocate for its activities and which can support a comprehensive financing strategy. It will not be sufficient just for agencies simply to have expressed interest in the Network in 2004; developing and implementing a comprehensive work programme after 2015 will require much more active support. It is much more likely that this can be put in place if the agencies feel some ownership of the Network and have some involvement in its management.

A more comprehensive review of governance arrangements will need to be carried out as the future of IHSN is discussed and as its future mandate and reach is agreed. In the short-term, however, the evaluation team recommend that actions are taken immediately to reaffirm interest in the Network and to strengthen the Management Group. In particular the following steps are suggested.

1. All those agencies that are listed as being members of IHSN on the web-site, together with any others that have had some involvement or interest in the work and are concerned with

international surveys should be contacted and asked if they wish to remain or to become members of the Network,

2. Membership of the Network should involve some rights and some responsibilities. The rights could include receiving progress reports directly, rather than indirectly from the website. They could also include reviewing and commenting on the evaluation and contributing directly to any discussion about the future of IHSN after 2015. Responsibilities would include agreeing to share and exchange information.
3. All members could be asked if they wish to participate in a revised IHSN Management Group. This would involve participation in two meetings each year, one of which could be organised in the margins of the UNSC meeting in New York. The second, to be held in September or October, could be held virtually or could involve a physical meeting if required.
4. Depending on the response, it is suggested that the Management Group would include no more than 10 members. PARIS21 and the World Bank should be members automatically. The Management Group would review work programmes and progress and should play a key role in determining the future of IHSN and ADP

5.1.2 Involvement of IHSN with the United Nations Statistical Commission

At present, IHSN has no formal relationship with the UNSC, even though the Commission is the decision making body for the setting of statistical standards and the development of concepts and methods. PARIS21 makes a report on its statistical capacity building activities and this forms the basis for a discussion on capacity building at each Commission, but the work of the IHSN and ADP is not discussed separately and the use of important standards such as the DDI has not been reviewed or agreed. While many national statistical systems accept the standard and have adopted it de facto, it would probably be helpful if it were to be formally recognised by the UNSC.

The process of engagement with UNSC may take some time and is likely to require a minimum of two years to complete. It is recommended that a country that is a member of the Commission and is also an active user of the IHSN tools be asked to develop a proposal for consideration by the Commission. This proposal would need to be developed in coordination with the UN Statistics Division. This initial process should be completed before the deadline for submission of proposals for the 45th session of the Commission in February 2014.

5.1.3 Advocacy and awareness raising

Up to now, most of the advice and support provided to countries through the ADP has been concerned with the documentation of surveys and the establishment of national data archives. In most of the case study countries visited for the evaluation it was clear that the launch of the national data archive was an important step in making survey data and metadata more widely available and in promoting their use. At the same time, though, a number of potential users were not aware of the NADA or its potential and this was especially true for less experienced users.

The development of a national data archive and its launch can be an important process for a national statistical system. It can help to raise awareness of official statistics and the importance of surveys in generating data for policy analysis and monitoring. While this has been the case in some countries, in others awareness of the NADA is still limited and this potential has not been realised. It is recommended, therefore, that the IHSN/ADP Secretariat consider developing guidance and some advocacy material around data documentation, archiving and dissemination for use by countries. This could form part of an overall advocacy campaign on behalf of official statistics and the material could be developed in conjunction with and as a supplement to the advocacy material already developed and used by PARIS21. Countries where NADAs are being

developed and where a launch is being planned should also be encouraged and supported to prepare and implement a public relations campaign.

There is also a need to raise awareness of the IHSN Survey Catalogue. This is an important source of information about surveys worldwide and has been quite widely used. During the evaluation, however, it became clear that many potential users were not aware of the catalogue or how it could be used. This seemed to be particularly the case for less regular and less experienced users.

5.1.4 Ensuring that microdata archiving, documentation and dissemination is included in National Strategies for the Development of Statistics

The ADP has proved to be important in providing the support needed by countries to document their surveys, archive the material and set up national data archives. In the medium to longer term, the view from many stakeholders is that these activities should be part of the regular work programme of national statistical agencies. Since the main mechanism for strengthening statistical capacity in developing countries under MAPS and now under BAPS is the development and implementation of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics it will be increasingly important to ensure that microdata management is included explicitly in NSDSs if the initial efforts of the ADP are to be sustained.

Countries have different timetables for the national strategies and generally only formally update them once every three to five years. It will take some time therefore, to ensure that IHSN-related activities are properly included in all NSDSs and it is important to ensure that this process starts as soon as possible. It is recommended, therefore, that a start be made over the next two years to ensure that all NSDSs, as they are prepared or as they go through a mid-term review, include an explicit reference to microdata management, documentation, archiving, dissemination and use and identify what additional resources, if any, may be needed to support these activities.

The PARIS21 Secretariat monitors the NSDS process in all developing countries and its database could be used to identify when preparation is in progress or when a mid-term review is scheduled. In many cases all that will be needed will be some guidance, but in others there may be a need for some technical assistance. This has been provided in the past by ADP, but generally only on demand. In future it will be important to ensure that as many NSDSs as possible include a discussion on microdata management and archiving and include the resources necessary to develop NADAs. A recent review by the IHSN Secretariat indicates that out of 59 NSDSs which are current and being implemented, 37 or 63%, include microdata management and archiving in their NSDSs to some extent. The aim should be to ensure that all NSDSs prepared and approved between now and the end of 2015 include these concerns.

5.1.5 Developing a strategy for engagement and disengagement with countries

The process for countries to engage with IHSN has, to a large extent, been demand-driven and opportunistic, making use of a variety of mechanisms to raise awareness and then to mobilise demand for the IHSN tools and technical assistance. For a new programme, with a set of new and still developing tools, this was almost certainly the most appropriate approach. It meant that resources were directed where there was already some demand and where there was the greatest chance of success. While the process was not always successful, since there were some countries that were unable to sustain interest or commitment after the initial contact, it did lead to significant improvements in capacity and performance in many places.

As the programme matures, however, the evaluation team believes that the process of engaging with countries and, perhaps more importantly, disengaging, does need to be formalised to some extent. It is recommended, therefore, that a strategy for engagement and disengagement with countries be developed, together with some simple indicators of progress so that assessments of what has been achieved and any continuing commitments can be made from time to time.

The strategy should be developed separately for countries involved in Task 1 and Task 2 of the ADP and should include the identification of important milestones and target dates. Disengagement would take place for Task 1 when countries are assessed as having the capacity to document surveys, add them to their NADA and disseminate microdata and metadata without further technical support. Disengagement would not necessarily mean that countries would not be able to receive any further assistance - they might, for example, be invited to participate in regional or sub-regional workshops - but it would be a formal indication of having reached a certain level of capacity.

5.1.6 Sharing experience between countries

Much of the interaction of countries with ADP has been between the country and the Secretariat. Interaction between countries has taken place at initial awareness raising workshops that took place at the regional or sub-regional levels and also in those regions where ADP activities are carried out directly by regional organisations. In addition, some exchange of experience has taken place through the provision of technical support from some ADP countries to others - this seems to have been effective and has been welcomed by both the providers and recipients of this support. At the same time, though, feedback from a number of countries, including the five case studies, indicates that many statistical agencies would welcome the chance to interact and share experience and expertise more widely with their colleagues in other countries, especially at the senior management level. The evaluation team recommends therefore, that mechanisms be investigated to see how this could best be done without the commitment of significant new resources.

Since there are already many regional and sub-regional statistical meetings in the international programme, it may not be helpful to propose a whole new set, even if the resources could be made available. One alternative possibility may be to identify where some discussion of microdata management and dissemination could take place as part of an existing process. It might be possible, for example to add one or two sessions to regional statistical commissions or similar meetings. The additional costs are likely to be fairly small and may only involve some participation by the Secretariat. The aim of such a session would be for countries to share experience of using the IHSN tools and to discuss solutions to problems and concerns. In addition to the participation of staff from the Secretariat, it may also be possible to assist countries to prepare and distribute case studies of what has been achieved and how problems have been addressed.

5.1.7 Developing a programme of publications

As discussed in Chapter 3, the evaluation team found only limited evidence that the IHSN Guidelines and Working Papers had been widely read or used. This is not to say that they are of limited value, but rather an indication of perhaps there being only limited awareness of their existence. The evidence presented in Chapter 3 also suggests that the Working Papers in particular have generally been prepared when an opportunity arose and when the author or authors were willing and able to put the document together.

While the need to take advantage of emerging opportunities to prepare a Working Paper is acknowledged, the evaluation team recommends that the publication programme would have more

impact if it was planned and if it was better able to meet needs as identified by Network partners and by countries participating in the ADP. One possibility might be to get members of the Network more involved in identifying gaps in existing documentation and also in identifying authors and reviewing draft papers. As a starting point it is suggested that a publication programme for 2014 and 2015, to cover both Guidelines and Working Papers, be drawn up in consultation with the members of the Network and then be agreed with the Management Group at their next meeting in September or October 2013

5.2 The environment for statistics post-2015

The Terms of Reference require that the Evaluation Team should develop a scenario for the development of statistics in the post 2015 period, which the IHSN and any associated technical assistance programme will have to operate within. The scenario is described in more detail in the next section. Here we consider the main elements and factors that will affect and structure the environment for statistics from 2015 to 2020 and beyond.

First of all we share the belief expressed by the Director of the World Bank's Development Data Group at the recent PARIS21 Annual meetings that "*Demand for data is at an historic high, and data sources are expanding.*"¹⁹ This view was also put forward by the Manager of PARIS21 in discussions with the evaluation team. We concur that this high level of demand will continue and may even increase in the post 2015 period. The emphasis on accountability and the need to measure and demonstrate results in development will mean that, regardless of what precise goals, targets and indicators are agreed to replace the Millennium Development Goals, there will still be a need to compile data and report on a development progress in a number of different areas.

Second, it is possible and even likely that the international architecture supporting statistics will be strengthened. For example the Eminent Persons Group set up by the UN Secretary General to advise on the Post-2015 development agenda has recommended that a "*Global Partnership on Development Data*"²⁰ should be established bringing together different stakeholders including national statistical agencies, international organisations, civil society organisations, foundations and the private sector. Whether this will be a new process or whether it might be part of a revised mandate for existing initiatives such as PARIS21 remains to be seen. The key point is that it is only likely to increase awareness of the importance of data and the demand for statistical information.

Third, the Busan Action Plan for Statistics provides the framework for the development of statistics and of statistical capacity in the post 2015 period. Thus the mandate for IHSN- and ADP-type activities, especially developing and implementing standards for data preservation, documentation and dissemination is expected to be continued and even extended. It is also assumed that the emphasis on open data, providing for full public access to statistics, continues.

Fourth, there are a number of concerns and policy areas, especially in relation, for example, to security, migration, the management of natural resources and climate change that are not restricted to national boundaries. These trans-national issues require coordinated action at the regional and international level, but statistical systems are often well developed to provide consistent and coherent data for more than one country. The importance of these issues seems to be increasing and the demand for consistent data at the regional level is likely to increase.

¹⁹ URL: http://www.paris21.org/sites/default/files/minutes_PARIS21annualmeetings_2013.pdf

²⁰ URL: http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf

5.2.1 The scenario – Demand for data increases, national statistical systems continue to be the main source of development data, but there is an increasing focus on and interest in alternative data sources

In the short to medium-term, it is assumed that the increased demand for statistics continues to be translated directly into demand for the products and services of national statistical systems and that this demand, in turn, will result in an increase in the resources for statistical activities and an increased investment in capacity. In this respect, the environment for official statistics in most developing countries is expected to be supportive and beneficial. At the same time, though, it should not be assumed that national statistical systems will not need to increase and improve their efficiency and effectiveness. National budgets are likely to remain under pressure in most countries and funds for statistics will have to compete with many other potential uses. While it may be expected that the level of aid for statistics will increase, the recipients of this aid – national statistical agencies – will still need to develop realistic strategies and development programmes that can be implemented and which are able to deliver better statistics on time and within budget.

It is to be expected that both surveys and censuses will continue to provide important sources of data for monitoring global development progress and for policy management in countries. Different kinds of surveys, but especially those using households as the main sampling unit, are the only realistic source of data that can be used to analyse decision making and resource allocation by individuals and households. In developing countries, especially, household surveys are the only source of data to monitor and analyse changes in poverty and well-being. Even in advanced countries with sophisticated data registers and access to many different kinds of administrative data, household surveys continue to be important sources of statistics on topics such as well-being and labour market participation.

Household and other kinds of surveys, however, do have a number of well-known and widely acknowledged limitations. They are, in many circumstances, complex to design and manage. They tend to be expensive, especially when the complexity of the questionnaires requires teams of enumerators and when communications and transportation are difficult. They are also quite time consuming, requiring complex procedures to capture, validate, process and analyse the data. These problems become much more acute when data are needed as close to real time as possible and when detailed disaggregation of the population under study is needed for policy purposes.

It is inevitable, therefore, that other types of data, in particular those that are collected as a by-product of different administrative processes, will become increasingly important, even in low-income countries. As the economies of countries grow and as the reach of both central and local government expands, it is clear that statistical systems will need to make more effective use of these kinds of data. It will be important for countries to have access to guidelines, tools and standards for making use of administrative data and for compiling and disseminating comprehensive metadata.

The medium-term scenario that we believe is realistic, therefore, suggests that in parallel with the increased demand for “traditional statistical data” there will be an increasing demand for statistics from non-traditional sources. These will include administrative statistics, but, will also cover data derived from business activities, including those kinds of activities such as mobile communications and the use of the internet and social media, which have been growing very rapidly and which are likely to increase in importance in developing countries.

While national statistical systems will continue to be the source of many key data sets – it is unlikely that it will be possible to replace population censuses as the main source of demographic statistics in developing countries within the next ten years, for example – under the scenario it is to be expected that many data users will look to and make use of many other kinds of statistical data

that come from non-traditional sources. These may include the information already collected by private sector businesses as well as local and central government agencies and civil society organisations. These data, which have become widely known as “*big data*” can be characterised as “*data sources that are high volume velocity and variety of data that demand cost-effective, innovative forms of processing for enhanced insight and decision making*”²¹.

A recent review by the UN Economic Commission for Europe concludes that “*Big data has the potential to produce more relevant and timely statistics than traditional sources of official statistics.*”²² The paper suggests that national statistical systems are unlikely to lose the “official statistics” brand, but they could, over time, lose their reputation and relevance, if they do not get involved. Other evidence comes from the Eminent Persons Group, who state “*There have been innovative initiatives to use mobile technology and other advances to enable real-time monitoring of development results. But this movement remains largely disconnected from the traditional statistics community at both global and national levels.*” In the business field new applications using mobile technology are being developed and marketed, aimed initially at businesses in the developed world, but increasingly being used in developing countries as well.²³

For the following reasons, therefore, the evaluation team believe that the IHSN and any associated technical assistance programme will need to take into account non-traditional sources of statistical data and gradually, in association with other programmes and agencies, bring them within the ambit of official statistics.

- First and probably most important, is the need to compile and make available information more quickly, looking to provide information about economic activity, social impacts and household decision making in as close to real time as possible. Even with recent technological advances, especially the use of micro-computers and specialist software packages, the delays between the survey reference period and the eventual dissemination of the results can be significant and may make the data of limited use for managing service delivery, for example.
- Second, as the report from the Eminent Persons Group highlights, “... *data gathered will need to be disaggregated by gender, geography, income, disability, and other categories, to make sure that no group is being left behind.*” The capacity of survey data to provide highly disaggregated data, especially for small, but important groups of people or households, is limited and is not easily overcome.
- Third, surveys are expensive and difficult for statistical systems in low income countries to finance from their own resources. In many developing countries, especially those with limited infrastructure and scattered populations, survey costs will always be high and it is not clear that all countries will be able to continue to implement a comprehensive survey programme if aid donors believe that alternative sources of data are available.
- Fourth, new kinds of enterprises may come into being that are able to identify and put into effect business models that allow them to compile and disseminate data and generate a return on their capital. These could include charging for access to the data through specialist applications, or working on commission to aid agencies to generate the information they need to monitor their programmes and projects.
- Fifth, donor agencies that have previously commissioned surveys from national statistical agencies, either on an ad-hoc basis or as part of a support programme to implement an NSDS, may increasingly look to alternative sources for the data they need to report on results. These may include local private sector businesses or international polling companies for example.

²¹ <http://www.gartner.com/it-glossary/big-data/>

²² “What Does “Big Data “ Mean for Official Statistics” UN Economic Commission for Europe, 10 March 2013, URL: <http://www1.unece.org/stat/platform/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=77170622>

²³ For example see: <http://techpresident.com/news/wegov/24074/gauging-food-security-mobile-phone-survey>

Some of the issues that IHSN will need to take into account under this scenario include:

- How statistics will be compiled and disseminated; what metadata is available for users to understand what the data represent and how they can be used; and
- What procedures are in place to protect the identity of individuals; and how data from different sources can be compared and analysed?

Underlying this will be the need for procedures, processes and standards that support the documentation of the data, that provide for access to both the data themselves and the supporting metadata and that preserve the data so that they can be widely used. The assumption is therefore that there will still be a need for the kind of tools and guidelines developed by the IHSN; it is just that the data sets may change. Another concern will be how national statistical agencies can work with the owners of these big data sets. Understanding and analysis will be needed to identify what incentives, both positive and negative, will best enable statistical agencies to have access to the data.

Finally, the role of international agencies in the post-2015 environment needs to be considered. It is assumed that they will continue to have an important role in compiling the international data sets needed to generate the various indicators that will be in use post-2015. Duplication will need to be avoided and international data sets will need to be properly documented and regularly updated. Metadata will continue to be crucial in all of these processes.

5.3 Proposals for the development of IHSN

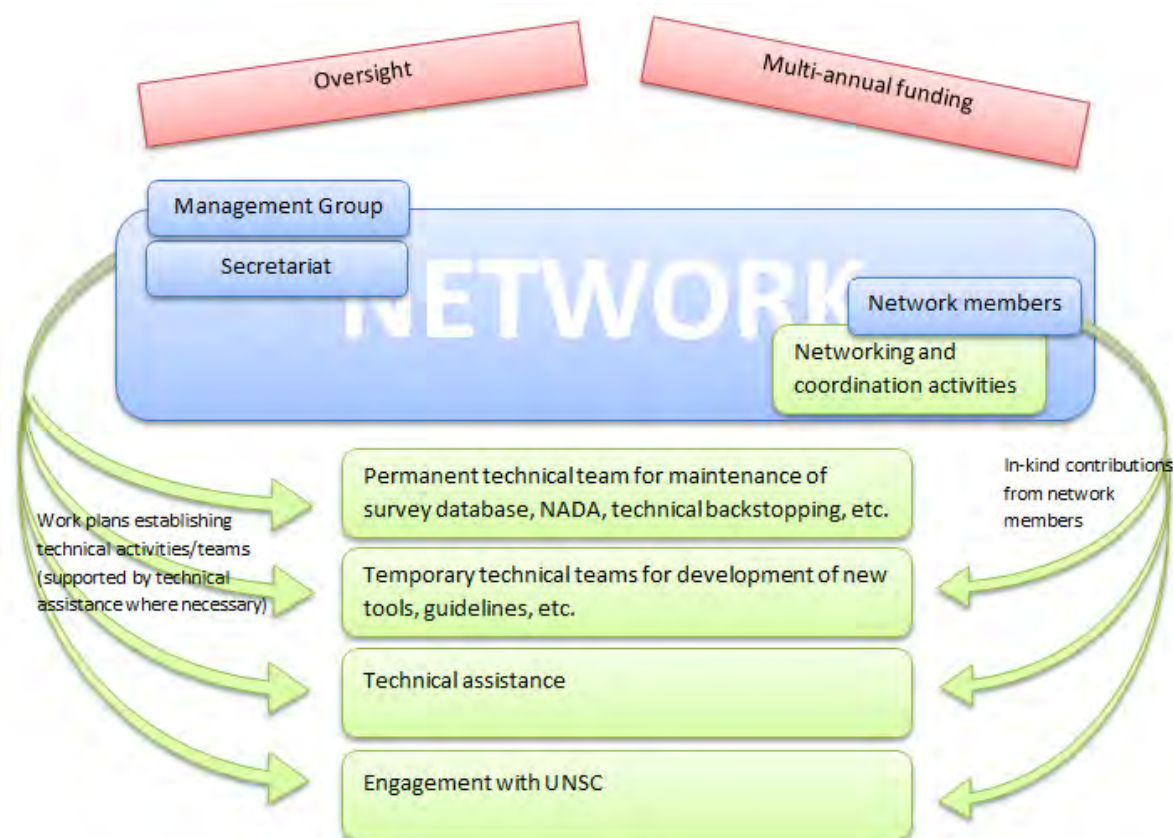
In this final section of the report we present proposals for the development of IHSN for the period from 2015 to 2020, focusing on work programmes, governance, institutional arrangements and financing. A draft logical framework is set out in Figure 5.2. This framework is only meant to be indicative; it will need to be accompanied by realistic goals, targets and indicators to monitor progress.

5.3.1 Overview

In order to build on and extend the work of IHSN and ADP, supporting the documentation and use of microdata and strengthening data processes generally, the evaluation team recommend that the network be extended to operate over the period from 2015 to 2020. It would build on the achievements of the first eight years, but with a number of important changes to respond to the evolving environment for statistics outlined above. In particular, we recommend that the network should be positioned as a component of the Global Partnership on Development Data proposed by the Eminent Persons Group.

We propose a network with a Management Group and a secretariat and a number of technical activities carried out by different teams. Based on multi-year work programmes prepared by the secretariat and approved by the Management Group, the network will support the maintenance and development of tools and guidelines and will promote their adoption and use by countries and international agencies. It is anticipated that much of the work will be carried out by members of the network, in some cases by commission, in others as part of a partnership. It is anticipated that the network will differ from the current IHSN in that it will include both national statistical systems and other data providers and users (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1 Overview of proposal



5.3.2 Goal and outcomes

It is proposed that the goal of the future programme should be directly focused on the post 2015 development agenda by helping to improve the availability of statistics to monitor progress and to support policy formulation and implementation. The extent to which progress is being made towards the goal will be determined by the completeness of data sets needed to monitor the post-2015 indicators and the number of countries that are assessed as having data of a reasonable quality to monitor progress.

Outcomes would then be expected in two main areas. First, increased use of microdata from different kinds of data processes, based on better documentation and availability of the data sets. And, second, improvements in the quality and effectiveness of future data processes, especially surveys and censuses, by making use of existing metadata and microdata and feeding this into the design and management processes.

5.3.3 Outputs and activities

In general the outputs and activities to be carried out under the proposed programme may be considered under two main categories. First are those activities related to the assessment and analysis of existing data and the improvement of national data programmes, including, but not limited to, household surveys and censuses. Second, those technical activities such as the inventory, documentation and dissemination of microdata; these include the development of software tools and guidance within the framework of appropriate standards, including the DDI.

Strengthening surveys and other data processes

It is recommended that the first area of focus for the proposed work programme, that is, the assessment and analysis of existing data and the improvement of national data programmes, would best be managed through a strengthening and extension of the existing network. In particular, it would make use of the various IHSN tools and guidelines and the capacity that has already been put in place in developing countries to document, archive, disseminate and make use of survey data. It is proposed, however that the focus is broadened beyond the microdata themselves to encompass a programme of work that helps developing countries improve the effectiveness and efficiency of future survey programmes. The network would support the design and implementation of surveys, as well as the better management and use of the microdata.

As outlined in Chapter 3, Task 2 activities, that is, the rolling out of tools and guidelines to help improve the quality of future surveys are, as yet, still in their initial stages. This component, therefore envisages a work programme that will develop and extend the existing material, that will support good practice in survey design and management and which will have some additional resources to help disseminate tools and guidelines and to support their take up and use. An important distinction, from the present structure of the network, is to include national statistical agencies as well as international organisations.

It is envisaged that the work programme would involve a number of activities as follows.

- Developing a network where national statistical agencies and other survey managers can exchange information and share problems, solutions and issues.
- Promoting the coordination of survey programmes at the national level, through the NSDS process and helping national statistical agencies to identify and implement their priorities
- Providing guidance and other material on survey design, including the dissemination of research results from other organisations.
- Expanding and developing the question bank and promoting the use of standardised questions where appropriate and possible.
- The development of appropriate training material on survey design and management and supporting the training of trainers where possible.

Technical activities

At the technical level, it is anticipated that a major component of the work programme would be the development of tools, guidelines and other material to support the documentation, the preparation of metadata, dissemination, archiving and evaluation of data obtained from both traditional and non-traditional sources. In particular non-traditional sources will include records from businesses, as well as different kinds of administrative processes and information kept by civil society organisations. If these data are to be useful in providing information about the development process and the well-being of people, then it will be essential that they are well documented and that the ways in which they can be used and analysed are understood. It will also be essential to have in place robust procedures to measure and monitor the quality of the source data and the extent to which statistical indicators derived from them are consistent and can be compared with indicators derived from other source data.

Carrying out these tasks and developing tools and other material that are widely accepted and used will not be easy and is likely to involve establishing partnerships with agencies that until now have not been part of the international statistical architecture. These may include international corporations that compile records relating to the use of mobile and other computing devices, as well as civil society organisations, other networks and local government. Issues that will need to

be resolved may include: the development of a framework for documenting and archiving metadata; tools to support the compilation of data files for analysis and for public use; how to link data from different sources; and procedures and how to ensure the confidentiality of data from individuals. It is anticipated that this option would need to work closely with organisations and people with an interest in both open data and big data.

At the same time, though, it will be important to continue the development and support the adoption of the existing microdata management and archiving tools and to promote their adoption and use as widely as possible. Further development and dissemination of tools and guidelines will also be required to manage the risk of disclosure of the identity of individual respondents and to prepare public use files where the risk of disclosure is kept below an acceptable level.

As discussed in Section 5.1.2 above, the Network should aim to remain engaged with the UN Statistical Commission. In the technical areas this could be done by setting up an Inter-Sectoral Working Group, following the model used to prepare SNA2008. Another possibility would be to establish a “Friends of the Chair” (FOC) Group. The purpose of this group would be to review and reach agreement on the use of tools and standards.

Consideration should also be given to developing and promoting consolidated archives of metadata and microdata, where possible and appropriate, at the regional and international levels. While microdata will continue to be owned and managed by the agencies that are responsible for their original production, there is a good argument for a central microdata library that would document what existed and which would provide a portal to both national and international data archives. There will also be a need as outlined in Section 4.1.3, for the network to promote and support more effective coordination of international and regional microdata repositories.

5.3.4 Technical assistance

The evaluation team recommends that the continuation of ADP as a separate technical assistance and training programme does not really make sense after 2015. It is recognised that there is likely to be a need to promote outreach and the widespread adoption of the tools and guidelines as well as advocacy generally. It is clear, though, that the existence of separate technical assistance funds targeted at a specific set of actions does not really fit in with the logic of BAPS or the approach of supporting countries to identify their own priorities through the NSDS process. In the longer term, support for statistical development in developing countries, including technical assistance, should be provided through general support to NSDS implementation rather than through separate funds under the control of different technical programmes.

The argument for the future IHSN programme outlined above to include resources to finance technical assistance and training, therefore, needs to be as follows.

- Resources are needed for advocacy to ensure that countries are aware of the programme and are able to understand what it is trying to achieve.
- Technical support and training should focus on promoting adoption of the tools and application of the guidelines.
- International resources should be used where they have the most leverage, for example, in training of trainers and in developing technical expertise at the regional level.
- Application of the tools and guidelines should focus on integrating microdata management and dissemination into the regular work programmes of statistical agencies and ensuring that these activities are given priority in NSDSs.

It is anticipated that technical assistance will not be provided by the secretariat directly. Rather we recommend that TA is provided from consultants with the required expertise and experience, or directly by members of the network. Much of the support will not be provided to countries, instead it will work more with intermediaries. Where support is provided to countries it will be important, as outlined in Section 5.1.5 above, that there is a clear strategy for engagement and disengagement.

5.3.5 Institutional arrangements

While a number of different institutional arrangements are possible and may well be feasible, the evaluation team recommends that whatever arrangements are put in place they should be based on the following principles.

- The arrangements put in place to manage the programme should make use, as far as possible, of existing structures and arrangements and should not result in additional bureaucracy.
- Use should be made of existing expertise and experience, involving as many of the existing participants in IHSN as possible. The comparative advantage of different agencies should be identified and exploited.
- Regular interaction with the UN Statistical Commission is desirable.

The recommended institutional structure of the proposed programme, therefore, is as follows.

- A small secretariat with a staff of no more than five people to support the work of the network. This team would manage the technical assistance programme, with almost all of the work being contracted out. It would also be responsible for supporting the proposed governance arrangements set out in the next section.
- The technical activities could be led by a permanent team of perhaps two or three programmers and other specialists. They would work closely with technical experts in other agencies and, where required, commissioned specialists.
- Much of the work programme of the network would be carried out by temporary technical teams, supported by in-kind contributions from members, supplemented as required by commissioned work, the secretariat and the permanent technical team.
- Membership of the Network should be open to national statistical agencies, international agencies and other organisations with an interest in its work. The evaluation team recommend that there should be a specific mechanism for agencies to become members and to maintain their membership, probably annually. The team also recommends that there should be no membership fee.

In line with the principles set out above, the evaluation team recommend that the secretariat should be established within an existing institution with a global mandate and a clear interest in microdata management. Options for the location of the secretariat can be identified as follows.

- Established as **part of the Development Data Group** in the World Bank. This would have the advantage of linking the network closely with an ongoing programme of statistical capacity building, data management and promotion of the open data agenda. Possible disadvantages include the complexities of managing resources and the need to use World Bank procedures for procurement and financial management.
- Be established as **part of the PARIS21 Secretariat**, based at OECD in Paris. The main advantage would be to make use of existing expertise as well as linking the work of the network directly with the implementation of BAPS. Under this option, it is anticipated that the team coordinating the network would simply be part of the PARIS21 Secretariat and

would no longer be considered as a satellite programme. This is expected to have the effect of reducing the visibility of the network as a separate entity, rather it would increasingly be seen as part of the regular work programme of PARIS21 supporting the implementation of BAPS.

- Be **part of the UN Statistics Division**, based in New York. This would have the distinct advantage of linking the network more closely with the UN Statistical Commission. Disadvantages include the lack of an existing programme and limited existing in-house expertise on surveys and microdata management.

The permanent technical team does not necessarily need to be in the same location as the secretariat and the decision as to where it should be located should be made independently. The possible options are as follows.

- **Part of the Development Data Group** in the World Bank. This arrangement would take advantage of the experience and technical expertise of staff who have already been involved in the development of the IHSN software tools and solutions.
- Be **part of the PARIS21 Secretariat**, based at OECD in Paris. The main concern here is that the PARIS21 Secretariat has no previous experience of software development and this expertise would need to be developed from scratch.
- Be **part of the UN Statistics Division**, based in New York. The advantages and disadvantages are similar to those outlined above.
- A fourth option could be to set up the permanent technical team **within an existing organisation** outside the traditional international statistical architecture. This could be an international research centre with an interest and expertise in data and survey management, or it could be an agency such as the Development Gateway Foundation. The selection of an appropriate hosting agency would probably need to be decided upon through a competitive tendering process. The advantage of such an arrangement would be to broaden the network, to link it closely to the research community and to promote closer links with data users.

5.3.6 Governance

Governance arrangements should not be very complicated or heavy and should build on existing processes. It is suggested that the work of the network and accountability to the funding agencies would be carried out through a Network Management Group. The Management Group would have the following functions.

- Approve work programmes and budgets and the allocation of resources
- Provide guidance on priorities, plans and projects.
- Monitor progress and approve reports on activities, outputs and outcomes
- Supervise the work of the secretariat
- In collaboration with the hosting agency, appoint the staff of the secretariat
- Support the mobilisation of resources and promote the network

It is suggested that the Management Group should be made up of no more than 10 members as follows:

- A representative from the World Bank
- A representative from PARIS21

- A representative from the hosting organisation, if this not the World Bank or PARIS21
- Two representatives from developing country national statistical systems
- Two or three representatives from international agencies
- One person with a direct involvement in big data or open data
- Two representatives from donor agencies

The Management Group would need to meet at least twice a year either virtually or physically and keep formal records of its decisions. It is recommended that work programmes should be prepared on a multi-annual basis, updated annually. It is also recommended that the Chair of the Management Group should be appointed by the members and should be in post for a period of no more than two years, or at least four meetings.

5.3.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

It will be important that the work programme agreed by the Management Group is properly monitored and that its relevance to the overall objectives of the Network is assessed. Figure 5.2 contains a draft logical framework for the Network, setting out proposed goals, outcomes and outputs and indicators for measuring these.

An agreed log frame should be the basis for developing an M&E system against which the secretariat reports on a biannual basis to the Management Group. This should be undertaken regardless of any requirements from funding agents and/ or the trust fund. The M&E reports should be understood not only as important for accountability but also as a key management tool to assess overall progress.

The Network Secretariat should, as a matter of priority, review the proposed log frame and adjust it to agreed goals and work plans at the start of its operations and develop baselines, where necessary, milestones and targets, so that progress towards outcomes and goals can be effectively assessed.

5.3.8 Resources and financing

The resource requirements for the proposed programme are summarised in the draft logical framework in Figure 5.2. It is suggested that financing needs will be as follows.

- A secretariat of five professional staff, including the following roles.
 - A team leader with a broad statistical background and expertise in data management and good communication skills;
 - An experienced technical specialist
 - A dissemination/outreach specialist
 - An advocacy/communication specialist
 - An experienced administrator and contract manager
- A small permanent technical team of two or three programmers and/or similar specialists
- Funds to support a technical assistance and training programme of up to \$2 million per year initially, but then tapering down to about \$0.75 million by 2020
- Funds to commission temporary technical teams for research and development of perhaps \$500,000 per year, supplemented by contributions in kind from members. These funds should not be used to finance the staff costs of member agencies.

The estimated total cost of this kind of programme is of the order of just under \$22 million in 2013 prices over a period of 5 years. It is possible that some agencies may be able to provide contributions in kind, for example, making staff available to work on different parts of the programme.

A second option, based on a smaller budget, would eliminate the technical assistance budget, increase the commissioning fund and reduce the size of the secretariat to no more than four people. Under this option it is assumed that all technical assistance would be provided by network members through their existing programmes and budgets. The estimated cost of the second option over five years is \$14.5 million in 2013 prices.

The evaluation team looked at several possible funding models, including the possibility of putting some kind of subscription in place, where members of the network would pay an annual fee to support the work programme. The feedback received suggests that it would be difficult to make this work and that a fee of anything more than about \$50,000 per year would not be realistic. The possibility of finding at least 80 agencies all willing to make this level of contribution would seem to be small, since agencies would be able to benefit from the tools and other materials anyway. It is recommended, therefore that the most appropriate funding model would be to identify a group of donor agencies and establish a multi-donor trust fund. It may well be possible to include some non-traditional donors, especially those with an interest in big data, provided that the programme is closely linked to the Global Partnership on Development Data.

One possibility for the trust fund would be for it to be managed by the World Bank. In order for it to be used effectively, however, it will be important to ensure that multi-annual commitments can be made and that resources can be transferred easily and quickly to other agencies. Decisions on disbursement will be based on multi-annual work programmes approved by the Management Group.

5.3.9 Naming the network

It is recommended that consideration be given to modifying the name of the network to indicate that household surveys are not the only focus of the work programme. One important factor in favour of retaining the International Household Survey Network name is that it is well recognised and has a good reputation for the quality of its work and its outputs. Against this is the need to signal the network's interest in all types of surveys and data. It is also recommended that the name Accelerated Data Program be dropped once the Bank's DGF funding comes to an end.

Figure 5.2 Draft Logical Framework for the network

| Narrative | Indicators | Means of verification |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Goal: To support the post 2015 development agenda by improving the availability of statistics to develop policy and monitor progress</p> | <p>Completeness of data sets for the post-2015 indicators Number of countries with data that can be used to monitor progress</p> | <p>International data sets Review of national statistics</p> |
| <p>Outcomes: More effective data processes in place to generate consistent and good quality indicators Countries able to report on progress against the post2015 indicators</p> | <p>Quality assessments of data series and indicators Data gaps in international and national databases</p> | <p>National and international quality assessments International databases</p> |
| <p>Outputs: Standards are developed for the documentation and curation of different data sources Tools for documentation, archiving and curation of different data sources are developed and used Guidelines for documentation and archiving are developed and used Quality of data from different data sources improves Cost-effectiveness of surveys and other data processes improves Countries have the capacity to apply the standards and use the tools Data sets documented, archived and disseminated where appropriate National data archives include data from different sources</p> | <p>Standards developed and agreed Tools prepared and disseminated Guidelines prepared and disseminated Assessment of data quality Measures of cost-effectiveness and developing benchmarks Number of countries applying the standards and using the tools Number of data sets documented Number of NADAs including different data sets</p> | <p>Standards accepted and agreed in relevant forums Progress reports Progress reports Progress reports Progress reports Progress reports Progress reports</p> |
| <p>Activities: Development of standards, tools and guidelines Training, technical assistance and outreach Coordination with other data agencies and processes</p> | <p>Resources:USD million per year (Option 1) Secretariat USD 1.5 million Permanent TT USD 0.9 million Commissioning USD 0.5 million TA (average) USD 1.4 million Total USD 4.3 million (Option 2) Secretariat USD 1.2 million Permanent TT USD 0.9 million Commissioning USD 0.8 million Total USD 2.9 million</p> | |

References

IHSN/ADP programme data:

- Mission reports from ADP consultants and staff
- IHSN/ADP final reports
- IHSN/ADP progress reports
- IHSN/ADP grant agreements, extensions and financial database
- NSDS review study

Meeting minutes:

- IHSN Management Group meetings
- PARIS21 Board meetings

Published reports:

- PARIS21 (2012): Partner Report on Support to Statistics PRESS, 2012 ROUND
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Other documents:

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- The Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics: Better Data for Better Results, An Action Plan for Improving Development Statistics
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