

# PARIS21 Secretariat

## International Household Survey Network (IHSN) DGF 401006-06

### Final Progress Report April 2006 - June 2007

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#### **1. Background**

The International Household Survey Network (IHSN) was set up in September 2004 as part of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS). The Network brings together survey producers, sponsors and users. It aims to foster better use of survey data for policy making and monitoring.

A Management Group comprising representatives of major international survey sponsors approves the IHSN work program and its priority objectives that include:

- Better coordination of international household survey programs.
- Promotion of international standards and best practice.
- Harmonization of data collection instruments.
- Fostering better use of existing survey data, by establishing a central survey repository and developing tools and guidelines for improving survey documentation, dissemination and preservation.

Since April 2006, the IHSN core program is implemented as a satellite program of the PARIS21 Secretariat at OECD. It is supported by the World Bank MAPS Development Grant Facility (DGF). A grant of \$0.9m was allocated for year 2006 under the Grant Agreement DGF 401006-06. The grant was signed on 28 March 2006, with a closing date on 31 December 2006. The closing date was extended to 30 June 2007 as per the amendment signed on 7 December 2007<sup>1</sup>.

This final progress report is submitted in accordance with the Framework for Cooperation (Section 4 of the Grant Agreement DGF 401006-06). It covers the grant period.

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<sup>1</sup> A second grant of US\$0.75m was allocated for year 2007. A third grant is being concluded for year 2008.

## **2. Activities financed by the grant**

The main activities implemented over the grant period included:

### ➤ **Development of the IHSN Microdata Management Toolkit**

- The latest version of the Toolkit was released in June 2007 and is available on the IHSN website: [www.surveynetwork.org](http://www.surveynetwork.org). The Toolkit and its documentation are available in English, French, Russian and Spanish. The Arabic and Portuguese versions are being finalized. Regular support and upgrading has been provided by the software developers and feedback from users has proved to be extremely useful.
- The demand for the Toolkit is growing fast. The pilot Accelerated Data Program (ADP; another PARIS21 satellite program supported by the DGF) provides support to interested countries. Many users have been trained, in Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Pacific and the Middle-East, through national and regional training workshops.
- Other international agencies have adopted or are supporting the use of the Toolkit, including AFRISTAT, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), UNICEF, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Inter-American Development Bank, and the World Bank.

### ➤ **Development of the IHSN National Data Archive**

- A pre-packaged data archive website, called the National Data Archive (NADA) has been developed and is being tested. Developed as a user-friendly open-source application, this web application provides ADP participating countries with a recommended formulation of a dissemination policy, pre-designed data access request forms, and a DDI-based easily searchable cataloguing system. All components can easily be customized and integrated in existing data producer's websites.

### ➤ **Development of microdata anonymization tools**

- Microdata anonymization tools have been developed and are being tested. They will be ready for use through the standard statistical software (STATA, SPSS). They should be available on the IHSN website before the end of 2007.

➤ **Development of a strategy and tools for harmonization of survey methods**

- The “Question Bank” application has been developed (no publicly available yet).
- The "Question bank" will harmonize data collection instruments, with a view to make data more consistent across sources. The question bank will provide guidelines on specific issues, recommended frequency of data collection, questionnaire design and interviewer’s instructions, editing, analytical tools, tabulation plan, etc. for each module. It will be a central feature for implementing Task 2 of the ADP. Various agencies (ILO, FAO, WHO, UNESCO, HMN and others) have expressed interest and some have started working with the IHSN:
  - Work has been undertaken with the Education Policy Data Center of the Academy of Educational Development for the production of material for harmonization of survey modules related to education.
  - Work has been initiated with FAO on gender and agriculture statistics, community level agriculture surveys and coordination between population and agriculture censuses.
  - Work has been undertaken with ILO on migration and initiated on remittance surveys.

➤ **Production of guidelines on data documentation, dissemination and preservation**

The production of a series of IHSN technical papers has been initiated. The following have been produced:

- “Microdata Dissemination: Policy Guidelines”: draft being reviewed.
- “Quality in Household Surveys: A Reference Guide for Data Managers” (including a survey quality assessment framework): draft being reviewed.
- “Quick Reference Guide for Data Archivists”: available in English on the IHSN website; the French version will be soon available.
- “Guidelines on Microdata Anonymization”: first draft available (to be finalized after completion of the development of anonymization tools).
- “DDI Checklist for Quality Assurance in Microdata Documentation” finalized, with an interactive PDF form, has been developed.
- IHSN Guidelines for undertaking an inventory of microdata are available (English and French).
- Methodology for producing Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) from censuses and surveys has been initiated.

➤ **Maintenance of the IHSN Central Survey Catalog**

- Work has continued to populate the survey catalogue. An extensive search for recent surveys has been undertaken. Identified surveys have been uploaded with relevant metadata.
- The IHSN survey catalog lists more than 3,200 surveys and censuses. About 1,000 surveys have been added to the catalog during the grant period.
- The catalog web-service application has been improved.
- An Excel-based application has been developed for easy data entry and administration.
- The IHSN “Country questionnaires” bank complements the catalog.

➤ **Maintenance of the IHSN Information System on Planned Surveys and Censuses (ISPS)**

- The ISPS web application developed and is available on IHSN website.
- Limited content has been entered in the system and the regular maintenance of the system is a big issue.

➤ **Maintenance of the IHSN Website**

- The IHSN website is being maintained and improved.

➤ **Management Group Meeting**

- The IHSN Management Group met as required to report progress on activities and discuss work programs. The minutes of the meetings are available at PARIS21.
- The IHSN Status has been re-drafted.

➤ **Human resources**

- The PARIS21 Secretariat has recruited in April 2007 a Project Officer and a Technical Officer of the ADP and IHSN.
- The PARIS21 Secretariat has recruited an administrative assistant for the grant period.
- DFID recruited one statistician in January 2007 to coordinate the activity “Harmonization of survey methods”.

During the grant period, 36 contracts were processed with individual consultants, private companies and public institutions. The terms of reference and the summary of the outputs delivered under each contract are available upon request at the PARIS21 Secretariat.

### 3. Results achieved compared to the grant objectives

#### Status of deliverables

Deliverables (as per Grant Agreement FY06, Annex 1)	Status
i. Final version of the <i>information system on on-going and planned survey activities</i> available on the IHSN website, (...) and a system in place for regular updating of the database content	<p><b>Completed</b> The web infrastructure and the database are available.</p> <p><b>Completed; but new strategy needed</b> The agency who accepted to take the lead on this activity has not delivered the output. Maintaining the system is much more complicated than anticipated. A new strategy to maintain the system has to be found.</p>
ii. Technical guidelines available on the IHSN website for the design and implementation of specialized surveys	<p><b>Partially completed</b> Some tools and guidelines are completed (see above), others are on-going. This multi-year activity will continue to be a core activity of the IHSN for the period 2007-2008, in the framework of the development of the IHSN Question Bank.</p>
iii. Central survey catalog regularly updated, and survey metadata available to the public on the IHSN website	<p><b>Completed</b> The web infrastructure and the database are available. The catalog is regularly updated with contribution from a growing number of partners.</p>
iv. <i>Microdata Management Toolkit</i> available (with user's guide), in English and French.	<p><b>Completed</b> Also available in Spanish, Russian and Arabic and soon in Portuguese.</p>
v. <i>Handbook on Microdata Documentation, Dissemination and Preservation</i> available to the public.	<p><b>Partially completed</b> Instead of producing a comprehensive Handbook, the decision was made to produce a collection of technical publications (see above).</p>

#### Financial situation

All the funds available have been spent by the end of the grant period. More details are given in the financial reports attached.

## **4. Main issues and recommendations**

1. 1 year grants impose a very heavy administrative burden. Moreover, the implementation of activities is seriously complicated by these short grant periods: all contracts have to be closed by the grant deadlines and activities that are overlapping between two consecutive grants are difficult to handle. It is recommended that the grant periods should be lengthened to 2 years.
2. The interest from IHSN member agencies for the Question Bank will require additional resources in the very short term. It is recommended that the IHSN budget should be increased to at least USD 1,0 m per year. Moreover many expenses are made in Euro and the original budgets in USD did not anticipate the recent changes in the exchange rate.
3. The IHSN and the ADP complements each other, for the mutual benefit of both IHSN members and ADP pilot countries. It is recommended that the two programs continue to be implemented in close relation.