SOME PRACTICAL HINTS FOR MAMS-RELATED PROJECT TASKS

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File Management

- Back up your work often (at least once every work day)!
- Steps when backing up your work:
  1. Run clean.bat
  2. Zip the contents of your model directory (NOT including the save [or zip – see below] subdirectory)
  3. Put date in your file name (so you know when it was created). Possible naming scheme for Tunisia's work on April 3:

     MAMS-Tun-2007-04-03a.zip,

     MAMS-Tun-2007-04-03b.zip,

     Etc.

File Management

- Create a “zip” subdirectory (next to the “save” subdirectory) – put your zip files there.
- A good way of backing up: share zip file across all members of the country team.
- When discussing problems via e-mail, asking for backstopping: always send the complete zip file (not individual files; the different files are highly interrelated; run clean.bat first).

File Management

- Only keep necessary files in your model directory (necessary = needed to run the model in GAMS). Keep underlying data files, analysis, papers, etc. in other directories.
- After having created the full set of country-specific data files, do NOT change the names of the files that you are currently running (i.e., your “current” version of DMOD2.GMS never changes name; if you want to keep an alternative version of DMOD2.GMS for future reference, give it a different name: DMOD2-SUPER.GMS.

File Management

- A good software for comparing text files (like DMOD2.GMS in two different .zip files) is important. Options:
  - Total Commander (www.ghisler.com)
  - Winmerge (winmerge.org)

File Management

- Rationale for the above rules:
  - Put a limit on the size of files that you share with other.
  - Make it easier for others (and you) to understand (recall) exactly what files you are running and what has changed between different work sessions.

Making progress

- Teams are heterogenous; different team members may be doing different things.
- For GAMS, your model directory includes documentation. The website www.gams.com provides many other materials.
- For CGE modeling in GAMS, possible steps:
  1. Exercises in General Equilibrium Modeling Using GAMS and Key to Exercises in CGE Modeling Using GAMS. Hans Lofgren. www.ifpri.org/pubs/microcom/micro4.htm
  2. A Standard Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) Model in GAMS. Hans Lofgren, Rebecca Lee Harris, and Sherman Robinson with assistance from Marcelle Thomas and Moataz El-Said. www.ifpri.org/pubs/microcom/micro5.htm

Making progress

- Project will address training needs.
- Sources for learning about MAMS and its data:
  - workshop presentations (.PPT files)
  - the technical model document (Lofgren – Diaz-Bonilla)
  - the Excel data sheet
  - model in GAMS
  - other MAMS applications
  - project website
- Communicate – inside team; with backstopping group (problems, needs, …)

Making progress

- Easy switch between two model versions: “MDG” and “non-MDG”; “non-MDG” version is very flexible in terms of disaggregation.
- Easier to make progress and solve problems step by step.
- Model is “validated” through simulations, review of results, adjustments in data/assumptions. (You can’t just set up the database; press a button; solve the model; report and analyze results.)

Making progress

- Given the above, possible steps in testing model and data development.
  1. run “non-MDG” version using macro database. (See the “test-macro” database.)
  2. run “non-MDG” version using meso database. (A database that includes the same sheets as “test-macro” but “full” disaggregation of activities, commodities, institutions, and factors). (Labor stock growth by education is exogenous; model does not address MDGs and education outcomes and system.)
  3. run “MDG” version using MDG database. (See the “test-MDG” database; same as (2) except for the addition of data related to logistic and CE functions for MDGs and education.)