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# Communication and publicity

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# Purpose of census communication and publicity

- **AIM** - to sensitize the public about the purpose of the census of agriculture and, ultimately, to ensure the cooperation of holders to provide complete and accurate data.
- It is an essential part of the census preparations and has to be planned timely taking into account local conditions.



# Importance of the census communication and publicity

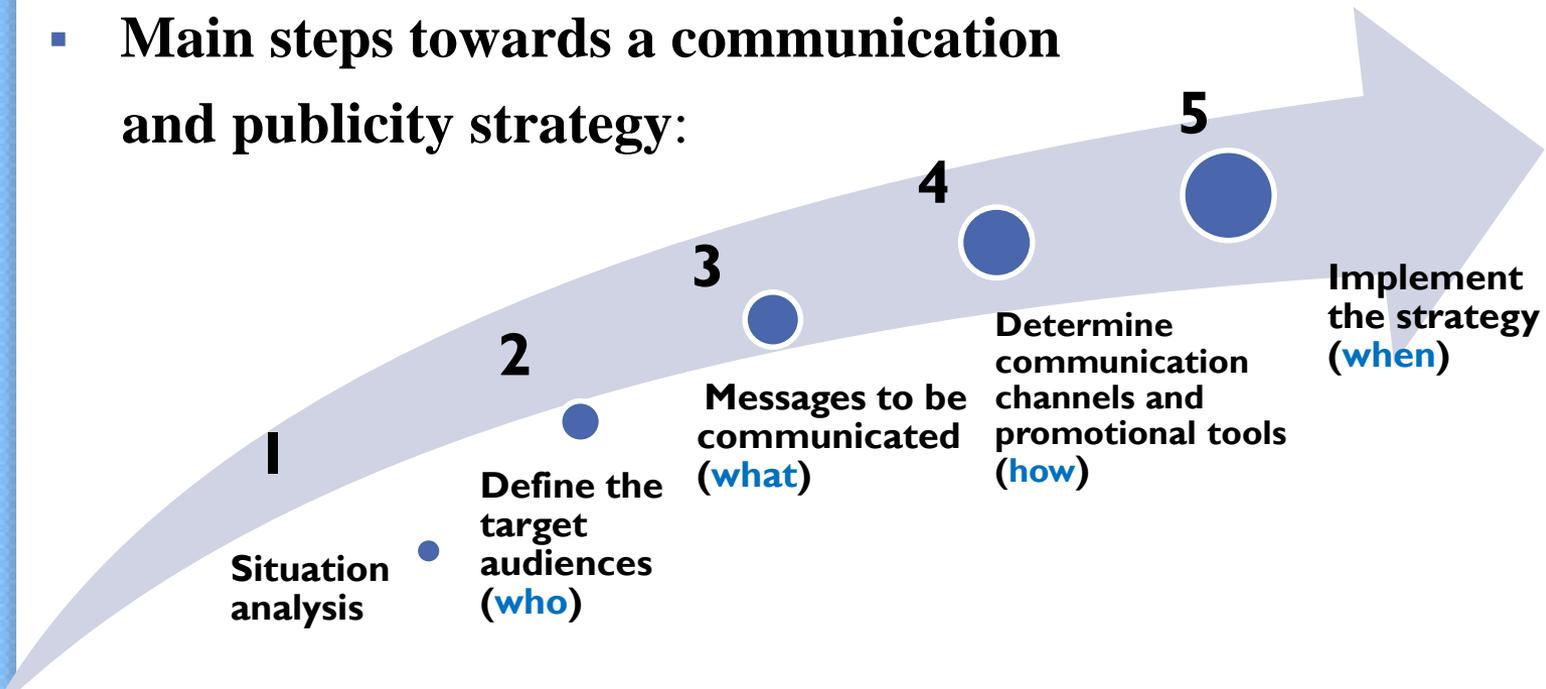
- An effective **communication programme**, together with adequate publicity and information campaigns, play an essential role in ensuring the success of the census of agriculture.
- **The programme should:**
  - **Achieve** public acceptance and cooperation;
  - **Build** trust about the confidentiality of census data ensuring that they will not be used for tax purposes or used against them in any way;
  - **Sensitize** the holders and the public in general about the purpose of the census as well as to inform them of the type of information to be collected and its use, primarily to achieve full cooperation of respondents;
  - **Promote** census results at the time they become available.
- A well-planned publicity campaign is essential to create a favourable environment for the collection of census data.

# Responsible of the campaign

- **The Census Agency/Steering Committee :**
  - should develop/approve a coordinated communication programme and publicity campaign;
  - should work with the aid of publicity experts;
  - may establish a special sub-committee to manage the census publicity campaign.
- **The regional and local census committees** would also normally be involved as agents for publicity in their respective areas to take into account local context.

# Development of communication programme and publicity strategy

- **The strategy is concerned with deciding:**
  - ❑ **WHO** are the target audiences
  - ❑ **WHAT** are the key messages
  - ❑ **HOW** and **WHEN** the activities to be carried out.
- **Main steps towards a communication and publicity strategy:**



# 1. Situation analysis

It includes an examination of internal and external factors that may influence public support and cooperation of respondents and is aimed at identifying the best solutions to implement a targeted and cost-efficient comm. and publicity strategy.

It should comprise:

- **The context:** geographic, economic, political, administrative, demographic, social and cultural aspects.
- **Features of communication** for development, opportunities and constraints (existing ICT infrastructures, including Internet and mobile phone).
- **Characteristics of the population:** socio-cultural and gender specificities, communication habits, including traditional and modern media. Opportunities and constraints.
- **Perception of the census** and why some individuals or groups may not accept it.
- **Institutions/entities** and **available resources** in the communication sector: existing mass media; other media; other channels, places, communication networks and languages.

## 2. Target audiences

The Strategy is usually expected to reach **three target groups** more or less corresponding to the various census stakeholders, namely:

**1<sup>st</sup> Rural populations:** heads of households, agricultural holders

**2<sup>nd</sup> Intermediary actors.** This group serves as interface between policy makers and the rural population. It has an influence on the rural environment and depending on country situation, includes: the civil society, decentralized services, journalists, development projects and programs, NGOs, village chiefs, groups of influential people (e.g. religious leaders, community leaders, teachers, and representatives of grower's organizations and farmers' associations).

**3<sup>rd</sup> The national government,** in particular, the relevant ministries such as Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Forest, Ministry Environment, Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning and development partners, particularly in developing countries.

# 3. Messages

**Well balanced messages** should be communicated, including:

- **Make holders and other audiences aware** of the census and its objectives;
- **Educate them about the benefits** (to them and to the country) of the census;
- **Inform the holders that privacy and confidentiality will be protected;**
- **Remind holders about their legal obligation** and **duty** to take part in the census and provide truthful information;
- Explain to them **what** to do, **when** and **how** the holdings will be enumerated, including dates, duration, ways of data collection, target population, number of visits, etc.;
- **Express thanks to the holders** for taking part in the census;
- **Disseminate census results**

### 3. Messages (cont'd.)

- **Publicity has to be directed** at educating the holders, who are to supply the census information.
- **Publicity must dispel fears** about the agricultural census as a mean for increasing of taxes or other measures that could affect them and it should emphasize that the inquiry is confidential and primarily for their own benefit.
- **It should be explained in simple words** how the agricultural census is an essential basis for formulation and implementation of various development programmes and thereby contribute to raising their standard of living.
- **It should also be explained, in simple language,** how inaccurate information supplied by them will adversely affect the planning of various programmes intended to support agricultural producers and improve their living conditions.
- If the agricultural census involves a sample component, holders must be explained in plain words **why a holder will be selected for interview and not the neighbour.**

# 3. Messages: logos & slogans

## Logos (examples):

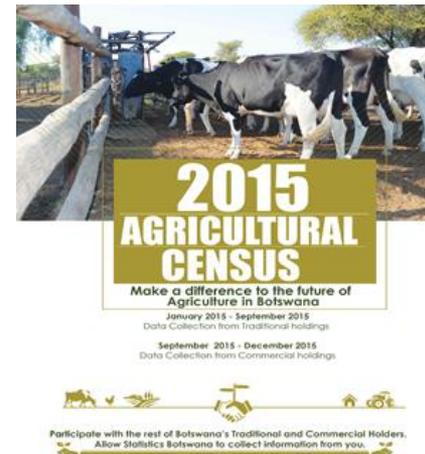
Philippines 2012



France 2010



Botswana 2015



## Slogans (examples)

*“There’s strength in numbers”* (USA 2012)

*“Make a difference to the future of agriculture in Botswana”* (Botswana 2015)

*“We count on our people”* (Uruguay 2011)

*“The agricultural sector also counts”* (El Salvador 2007-2008)

## 4. Communication channels & promo tools

### Promotional tools:

- Meetings with the highest national and regional authorities.
- Design, production and distribution of promotional materials like flyers, brochures, information notes wall posters, banners, caps, T-shirts, brochures, notebooks, booklets, pamphlets, calendars, USB sticks, cinema films/videos/slides exhibited in rural areas, etc.



### Mass communication (radio, television and press)

- Use of state and rural **radio** and **TV stations**, and popular programmes on agriculture.
- Design and dissemination of **press products** (commercials, reports, documentaries, press releases, press kits, etc.).
- New media (**social networks** such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs).
- **Text messages** on mobile phones (in collaboration with Telecom companies).
- Organizing a press lunch in order to provide an opportunity for journalists to be better informed on the various census operations.
- Purchase spaces in the most read newspapers
- Census stands in the national exhibitions and agricultural fairs.

## 4. Communication & promo tools (cont'd.)

### **Social mobilization**

- Rural community service announcements, agricultural extension agents and school teachers spreading the word.
- Educative dramas & plays broadcasted in the main national languages.
- Use of town criers to make public announcements on the census in rural areas (particularly in Africa).

### **Institutional communication**

- Dissemination of a short newsletter with regular updates.
- Call center (telephone inquiry service to address any specific questions on the census).
- Setting up an Internet website on the agricultural census office (with FAQ to be updated continuously).

### **Interpersonal communication**

- Direct contact and networking with relevant audiences of the target groups and collection of feedback. Meetings can be organized and regular contacts held with the group if intermediary actors.

# 5. Implementing the strategy

**Implementation involves a series of actions which could include:**

1. Organizing successive media events to launch the census campaign.
2. Effective media advertising and active media program of information dissemination in the major national languages.
3. Influencing key public members to support the census publicly
4. Building support through third-party endorsements such as grower associations, farmer cooperatives and influential NGOs.
5. Being proactive in public debates about the agricultural census and associated issues.
6. Organizing data users meetings (to request feedback and obtain buy-in on questionnaire content).
7. Training census staff to act as media spokespersons or to answer enquiries
8. Developing lists of expected questions, as well as FAQ, and standard answers on key issues and update them during the census implementation.

## 5. Implementing the strategy (cont'd.)

9. Monitoring the public debate and media coverage.
10. Developing specific campaigns for each target audience
11. Recruiting census enumerators through advertising
12. Village meetings and community service announcements.
13. Educating and informing religious leaders, community leaders, village headmen, elders and other persons of influence.
14. Distributing posters and pamphlets with the census logo and slogan for placement in suitable locations in rural areas.
15. Broadcasting short and catchy songs with census message lyrics in different languages thorough radio and television.
16. Organising contests with the agricultural census theme (such as drawing competitions for children) for selecting the census logo.
17. Lectures in rural schools (children pass the message on to parents and other relatives)



# Timing and duration of the communication program and publicity campaign

The publicity for the agricultural census should start gradually and reach a climax at the time of the census enumeration. A time-table for the communication program could be:

- **Early publicity:** news items and contributions to the regular agricultural radio, TV programmes, etc. informing about general aims and purposes of the census and cover the broader issues.
- **During the pre-test and pilot:** promotion of those tasks and reinforcement of the census objectives and main characteristics.
- **Near the beginning of the actual census:** the procedure for conducting the census and details of the information being collected.
- **During the field work:** the campaign should concentrate in ensuring collaboration of holders. They have to be convinced of the importance of their answers to the census.
- **When the final results are released:** keep the holders informed about the findings of the census undertaking.

# Monitoring

- The implementation of a communication program and publicity campaign requires early and continuing monitoring about the reactions to the census plans and attitudes of holders, key persons and main stakeholders.
- The census agency should monitor:
  - ❑ **holders' opinion** through surveys to evaluate attitude to the census.
  - ❑ **the mass media** to assess the effectiveness of publicity campaigns through an analysis of mass-media publications concerning the issues of the census and their audiences.
- Feedback from the monitoring allows fine-tuning implementation of the communication program and enables detection and prevention of possible negative comments and wrong perceptions on, and attitudes to the census as well as the preparation of adequate responses.

# Budget

- **It is important that sufficient resources are allocated in the census budget to ensure a quality outcome** (*The costs associated with the preparation and implementation of a communication program and publicity campaign for the census are usually underestimated in the planning phase*).
- **Communication strategies can use a limited budget**, for examples:
  - ❑ The use of government-operated mass media with national and rural coverage;
  - ❑ Commercial stakeholders that make use of census data may offer their communication channels to publicize the census.
  - ❑ Low-cost communications strategies, utilizing new media platforms.
  - ❑ Mobile communications companies can send free texts reminding subscribers of the census date and the importance of the census
  - ❑ Religious leaders can spread the census message during services
  - ❑ Public utility companies can print a reminder of the census date on utility bills
- **Investment in good communication have a real impact on the quality of data from the census of agriculture.**

# Country example

## Uganda agricultural census (UCA) 2008/2009

### Publicity and Community Mobilization Plan

- National Mobilization Teams (MTs) were formed with the broad goal of working towards achieving community awareness and response to the Census. The objectives were to:
  - i. Explain individual benefits and importance of the UCA to the population and mobilize all people to accurately answer the questions;
  - ii. Explain key contentious issues in the questionnaires;
  - iii. Address rumors, misconceptions and fears that the people may have;
  - iv. Identify trouble shooters and give them correct information.
  
- There were 13 MTs comprised of UBOS and MAAIF staff (Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries). Each team covered about 7 districts with the following roles:
  - i. Made courtesy calls on the district leadership, District Planners, Information Officers and the Secretary for Production;
  - ii. Made standard presentations to selected local government officials;
  - iii. Distributed flyers and posters to participants;
  - iv. Ensured that focal officers had hand bills to distribute to opinion leaders in the EAs;
  - v. Met the UCA district supervisors and compiled list of issues arising in the area.



**MANY THANKS**