



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Food and Agriculture Microdata Catalogue: A new platform for evidence based decision making

*FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA Working Group on Agricultural And
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Michael Rahija, Statistician

Office of the Chief Statistician, FAO

OUTLINE

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WHAT ARE MICRODATA?

Microdata are unit-level information usually collected through surveys, census, and administrative systems. Microdata contain information on individuals, households, business, geo-geographic areas, etc and are rich input into policy analysis, research, and highly disaggregated (e.g. by gender, migration status, indigenous, age group, etc.) statistics.

MICRODATA \neq NATIONAL LEVEL TIME SERIES

FARMER LEVEL PRODUCTION \neq NATIONAL LEVEL PRODUCTOIN

FAM \neq FAOSTAT, AMIS, ETC.

WHY IS FAM NEEDED?

- FAO and member states **increasingly rely on microdata.**
- National governments and international organizations are embracing microdata dissemination as way **to derive additional value** from their **data assets**, and stimulate research which can be translated into development outcomes.
- **Donors and development partners** have started conditioning resources and assistance on the dissemination of microdata.
- **Sharing microdata** adds transparency to FAO's work, and promotes Open Data.
- **There is no single platform** which catalogues all agriculture and food security related datasets in the world.

WHAT IS THE FAM CATALOGUE?

- The Food and Agriculture (FAM) catalogue (microdata.fao.org) aims to be a one-stop-shop for finding micro datasets related to agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food security.
- FAM was launched on July 15th including more than 350 datasets including those used to compute the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), and national level datasets on agricultural census and surveys from Nepal, Nigeria, and Rwanda.

WHAT IS THE FAM CATALOGUE?

- **IT:** Based on the National Data Archive (NADA) developed by the World Bank and used by the World Bank, WHO, IHSN, SPC, Millennium Challenge Corporation, and around 40 countries and is the best tool for disseminating micro datasets. Link: <http://www.ihsn.org/nada>
- **Metadata Standard:** The Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) is the international metadata standard for survey data archiving. Adopting DDI allows easy data sharing and ensures that potential users adequately understand the datasets. Info: <https://www.ddialliance.org/>
- **Data protection, confidentiality, and policy:** OCS has drafted a microdata dissemination policy which adopts the UN Principles on Personal Data Protection and Privacy principles as well as the forthcoming Data Protection and Privacy policy of CIO.

HOW CAN COUNTRIES USE THE FAM?

1. Disseminate metadata, microdata, or both

- As a result of FAO's international profile, and high visibility, FAM will receive more traffic than any single national platform. Accordingly, this makes microdata/metadata shared through FAM more visible.
- FAO will provide quality checks, and add potentially additional information to metadata which is then shared with countries and can improve the national platform.
- All of FAM metadata is presented in English which makes it easier for users to find that do not speak the original language.
- Avoid cost of maintaining national platform.

HOW CAN COUNTRIES USE THE FAM?

2. Access microdata from other countries

- Microdata and information on survey processes in other countries can be used to improve national data collection methods.
- Microdata from other countries may be useful for filling data gaps, and improving estimates.
- Opportunities to strengthen country collaboration through shared data collection methodologies.

HOW CAN COUNTRIES USE THE FAM?

Disseminate metadata only

- If countries already have a NADA platform, it is very simple for FAO to re-share the metadata by downloading the DDI file.
- If countries publish microdata, but not using NADA, then upon request FAO can develop the DDI metadata.
- In both cases, FAO will ask the country for final approval prior to publication.
- In both cases, FAO will provide a link for downloading the data to the national site.
- No legal agreement required.

HOW CAN COUNTRIES USE THE FAM?

Disseminate microdata & metadata directly

- A country can request microdata be shared directly through FAM to avoid the maintenance cost of their own platform under the following conditions:
 1. They agree to remove all personal identifying information and anonymize further as needed.
 2. Provide all related materials and required metadata.
 3. Sign a legal agreement authorizing FAO disseminate through FAM.

HOW CAN COUNTRIES USE THE FAM?

Access microdata from other countries

1. Anyone can browse the catalogue and search for datasets without registering.
2. If the dataset is contained in an external catalogue, the user will be routed to the external catalogue to download the dataset.
3. Otherwise, to download dataset directly from FAM, the user can instantly register.
4. For each dataset, a short request form describing how the data will be used is required.

A QUICK TOUR OF MICRODATA.FAO.ORG

To show:

- Collections
- Metadata
- Related Materials
- Data Dictionary
- Microdata download

NEXT STEPS

- If you are interested in contributing data to the FAM catalogue either only metadata, or also microdata, please write to FAM-Catalogue@fao.org.
- In the coming months, FAO will be re-publishing data on agricultural censuses from Armenia, and from Indonesia. Additionally, we hope to publish pilot surveys on measuring post-harvest losses from Namibia, and Zimbabwe.
- We will contact Colombia, Mexico, and Uruguay to discuss making their agricultural census microdata sets discoverable in FAM.

Thank you!

Michaelaustin.Rahija@fao.org

FAM-Catalogue@fao.org