

**Thematic Evaluation Series**

# **Evaluation of FAO's statistical work**

**Annex 7. Logical map of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations**

# Evaluation Questions

# Findings

# Conclusions

To what extent is FAO's **Statistical Governance** adequate and effective in meeting organization's needs and contributing to international governance of agricultural statistics?

To what extent has FAO proved relevant and effective in providing **Quality Statistics** to internal and external stakeholders?

To what extent is FAO providing relevant and effective statistical **Capacity Building** to Members?

- 1. Statistics remains core to FAO's overall mandate and strategic goals. The delivery and production of agricultural statistics has been designated an Outcome in the Strategic Framework and this has elevated its status in a sustainable development context, although it has not been matched by an increase in budget.
- 2. FAO's Internal governance structure for statistical work does not effectively support its statistical activities.
- 3. OCS's mandate to coordinate the SDGs is widely appreciated and respected, both internally and externally, and has contributed to an improvement in the visibility of FAO's statistical activities.
- 4. \*Gender mainstreaming in statistical programmes and projects varies from division to division. The core strength of OCS's work on gender is manifest in its support for SDG 5 indicator methodology.
- 5. Limited resources (financial, human and IT/infrastructure) have been invested in statistical activities.
- 6. FAO's statistical system only partly meets the information needs of internal and external users and is not fully equipped to receive their feedback.
- 7. Despite improvements to the production and dissemination of FAO statistics, additional work is required to achieve fully coordinated processes capable of delivering the expected level of quality
- 8. While progress has been made, FAO's statistics production and dissemination process has failed to respond adequately to changing circumstances.
- 9. FAO statistics is only partly compliant with the Organization's SQAF.
- 10. FAO's normative and methodological work on the SDGs has been well done and is recognized internationally.
- 11. The need for capacity development in agricultural statistics is high due to countries' low capacity to produce quality statistics in response to demands for data. FAO does not always meet these needs comprehensively due to the limited allocation of net appropriations and a dependency on extrabudgetary resources. Nonetheless, the capacity-development support that FAO provides on statistics is relevant.
- 12. Capacity development has focused on data generation and collection and, to some extent, data analysis and dissemination. The use of data and statistics for sustainable policy- and decision-making needs to be better promoted.
- 13. FAO's support for Members in developing and integrating Strategic Plans for Agriculture and Rural Statistics (SPARS) into NSDS has largely been through GSARS, financed entirely by extrabudgetary funds. A lack of core budget means it is unclear whether this support can continue through FAO's decentralized offices. Similarly, strengthening coordination mechanisms for national statistical systems has not been a priority.
- 14. FAO's capacity development in terms of the SDG indicators is in the early stages. The Organization has primarily focused on spreading awareness of the 21 indicators and, more recently, specific indicators in selected countries. It has not yet aligned and coordinated this work with FAO's normative work at country level.
- 15. As a leading advocate of gender-disaggregated data, FAO has made efforts to bolster Members' capacity to collect such data for analysis. And while collection has been improving, it is not yet systematic across all of FAO's statistical activities.

1. FAO's internal statistical governance does not form a solid basis for well-coordinated, coherent and satisfactory statistical work. While its statistical work remains relevant to its Strategic Framework – even more so in the era of the SDGs and “no-one left behind” – the profusion of divisions involved in statistical activities and confusion over their roles and responsibilities has diluted its effectiveness. Regional knowledge is insufficiently used to shape methodologies and standards.

2. The regular programme resources allocated to FAO's statistical activities, including support work, are not commensurate with the objectives of the statistical workplan. FAO's dependence on extrabudgetary resources for statistical capacity-building creates uncertainty as to the sustainability of that capacity development to support core statistical activities.

3. While progress has been made on quality, the statistics produced and disseminated by FAO are only partly compliant with the SQAF.

4. Legacy tools and current procedures are (often) constraints on progress towards a coherent, modern statistical system. Insufficient harmonization of current procedures, IT support and infrastructure are further limiting progress.

5. FAO's coordinating role and methodological work on the SDGs has raised its profile in the international statistical community, while its outreach work on national standards has increased awareness. Linking FAO's capacity-development work on SDG indicator implementation with its regular activities at country level is crucial to creating statistical and policy alignment.

6. FAO's statistical capacity-development activities are still focused on setting up data-collection systems and pay insufficient attention to how statistics can be embedded in national evidence-based policymaking systems. Gender disaggregation should be systematically incorporated into all FAO statistical activities.

7. Support for strengthening national statistical systems is not systematically integrated into the thinking and planning of FAO's decentralized offices.

\* Finding 4 on gender is a cross-cutting finding which links to all conclusions. Red is high priority and yellow is low

## Conclusions

1. FAO's internal statistical governance does not form a solid basis for well-coordinated, coherent and satisfactory statistical work. While its statistical work remains relevant to its Strategic Framework – even more so in the era of the SDGs and “no-one left behind” – the profusion of divisions involved in statistical activities and confusion over their roles and responsibilities has diluted its effectiveness. Regional knowledge is insufficiently used to shape methodologies and standards.

2. The regular programme resources allocated to FAO's statistical activities, including support work, are not commensurate with the objectives of the statistical workplan. FAO's dependence on extrabudgetary resources for statistical capacity-building creates uncertainty as to the sustainability of that capacity development to support core statistical activities.

3. While progress has been made on quality, the statistics produced and disseminated by FAO are only partly compliant with the SQAF.

4. Legacy tools and current procedures are (often) constraints on progress towards a coherent, modern statistical system. Insufficient harmonization of current procedures, IT support and infrastructure are further limiting progress.

5. FAO's coordinating role and methodological work on the SDGs has raised its profile in the international statistical community, while its outreach work on national standards has increased awareness. Linking FAO's capacity-development work on SDG indicator implementation with its regular activities at country level is crucial to creating statistical and policy alignment.

6. FAO's statistical capacity-development activities are still focused on setting up data-collection systems and pay insufficient attention to how statistics can be embedded in national evidence-based policymaking systems. Gender disaggregation should be systematically incorporated into all FAO statistical activities.

7. Support for strengthening national statistical systems is not systematically integrated into the thinking and planning of FAO's decentralized offices.

## Recommendations

1. FAO should revise its statistics governance to ensure better coordination and coherence of its statistical work.

2. FAO needs to redefine the function of regional statisticians by allocating sufficient resources to allow them to contribute to strategic activities at headquarters level and to operational activities at country level.

3. FAO needs to reprioritize regular programming resources for statistical activities and maximize the effective use of extrabudgetary funding with a more strategic capacity-development plan.

4. FAO needs to accelerate actions to improve the quality of its data and IT infrastructure support.

5. FAO should increase the coverage of its statistical capacity-development initiatives to enable countries to collect, produce and disseminate accurate, reliable and timely statistics and to use statistical information, including gender-disaggregated.

6. FAO decentralized offices should contribute systematically to the development and implementation of relevant NSDS sectors at country level.

## Priorities and Resource Implications

**Rec 1: high priority but low resource implications.**

**Rec 2: medium priority with low resource implications.**

**Rec 3: medium priority with low resource implications.**

**Rec 4: high priority with high resource implications.**

**Rec 5: high priority with high resource implications.**

**Rec 6: medium priority with low resource implications.**