CONCEPT NOTE

Virtual Training

on

SDG indicator 2.4.1.
“Proportion of Agricultural Area under Productive and Sustainable Agriculture”

Version 8 – 04 September 2020
# Summary

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GOAL 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

**Target 2.4**

*By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.*

**SDG Indicator 2.4.1**

*Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture*

\[
SDG2.4.1 = \frac{Area \text{ under productive and sustainable agriculture}}{Agricultural \text{ land area}}
\]

**Tier II**

*An internationally agreed methodology does exist; but very few data points are available*

**Context**

In September 2015, countries adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This Agenda will shape their development programmes in a transformational way for the next 15 years. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 objectives, adopted by all United Nations Member Countries, aimed at ensuring by 2030 a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future for all. They call on all countries to act in a global partnership to end poverty and suffering, by adopting strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth while safeguarding the planet.

The successful achievement of the SDGs is closely associated with countries being able to address sustainable development in a holistic and comprehensive way across sectors, and in their capacity to monitor progress against targets set by the 2030 Agenda.

Each Goal includes Targets and Indicators. Targets embrace the specific conditions that must be satisfied in order to achieve the relevant Goal. SDG indicators, such as 2.4.1, are tools used to measure concrete progress towards the achievement of SDG Targets. Countries are tasked with monitoring and reporting on transformational change by means of SDG indicators. As the basis for policy decisions, effective monitoring offers countries vital information to design more effective initiatives, programmes and projects to better address development needs. Agriculture and natural resource management are at the heart of this process and as such are featured across almost all of the SDGs.
FAO serves as custodian agency of 21 indicators, working closely with countries to develop their capacity on data collection and monitoring, especially as it pertains to sustainable food and agriculture. In particular, several indicators have recently been reclassified as Tier II, which means that they now have an internationally recognized methodology and are ready for data collection for the first time. This include farm-level data needed for monitoring SDG indicator 2.4.1 - Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture.

The area under productive and sustainable agriculture captures the three dimensions of sustainable production: environmental, economic and social. The measurement instrument - farm surveys - will give countries the flexibility to identify priorities and challenges within the three dimensions of sustainability. Land under productive and sustainable agriculture will be those farms that satisfy indicators selected across all three dimensions.

The SDG indicator 2.4.1 is at the core of transformational change towards more sustainable and productive agriculture. Due to the impact of COVID-19 FAO will provide in depth virtual trainings and guidance on how to calculate this indicator and its key aspect of implementation and reporting.

**Objectives**
The overall objective of this virtual training is to provide (government officials responsible for monitoring SDG indicator 2.4.1) capacity development on the methodology, data gaps, data collection and analysis relevant to sustainable food and agriculture, starting from available national and subnational (farm-level) information and associated reporting processes.

More specifically, a 3 half-days virtual training will be organized between September and October 2020 to:

- Provide training to build capacity of technical staff on SDG indicator 2.4.1 methodology and compilation and interpretation of sub-indicators.
- Introduce the tools for data collection (including alternative data sources).
- Identify available national and sub-national data useful to analyze sustainable food and agriculture and identify existing relevant reporting processes.
- Understand the data gaps.
- Discuss the country plans to collect data on the indicator in the short/medium/long term.
- Brainstorm additional mechanisms/frameworks to measure and monitor sustainable agriculture.

As the online training will be composed of participants from 6 or more countries, therefore there will be an opportunity to share good practices and experiences. The training will provide the participants a platform to discuss and share their strategies for overcoming the potential challenges regarding data collection, analysis and reporting of SDG indicator 2.4.1.
Expected Outputs
This virtual training will help the counterparts assess current availability of national and sub-national data useful to assess sustainable food and agriculture, the measurement challenges of the SDG indicator 2.4.1, design effective data collection mechanisms, and ultimately provide the basis for designing improved, data-driven policies. More particularly, the expected outputs are the following:

- Train the national staff on the methodology and tools for SDG indicator 2.4.1, so that its adoption at the country level can be supported.

- Assessment of the current situation in terms of: technical capacity of countries to monitor SDG indicator 2.4.1, available data, sub-indicators that can be compiled and data gaps.

- Assessment of country data status in terms of available national statistics of relevance for reporting on sustainable food and agriculture in other international contexts (SDGs, Climate Change, FAO) and as possible proxies for SDG indicator 2.4.1.

These assessments will be instrumental in planning and developing an action plan for national data collection and reporting.

Participants
The participants of the training will include the National Focal point for SDG 2.4.1 (if already identified), as well as any additional relevant Officers from the National Statistical Office, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment and other agencies relevant to sustainable agriculture.

The virtual training will accommodate 5 speaking participants per country (more are welcome but only as listeners). This is to ensure an equal balance of active attendees from the different countries and an easy management of the discussions during the training.

Background Material
All material (in English and some in Arabic, French and Spanish) are available at this link http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/241/en/

- Methodology
  - Methodological Note (in Arabic, English, French and Spanish)

- Data collection and reporting
  - Survey Questionnaire/Module (in Arabic, English, French and Spanish)
  - SDG 2.4.1 data collection questionnaire (in Arabic, English, French and Spanish)
  - Sampling Guidance for SDG Indicator 2.4.1 (draft)
  - Guidelines on Data Analysis and Reporting (draft)
  - Instructions Manual on Data Entry Operations (draft)
  - Enumerators Manual (Farm Survey Module) (draft)

Participants are suggested to take the SDG indicator 2.4.1 e-learning course (following this link https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=503) prior to the virtual training to get familiar with the subject and terminologies. The course has been developed to facilitate understanding of the
main concepts underpinning the methodology and to support countries in the analysis and reporting for SDG indicator 2.4.1. The course consists of 4 lessons (total duration 2.5 hours):
- Lesson 1 Introduction to SDG Indicator 2.4.1
- Lesson 2 Key features of SDG Indicator 2.4.1
- Lesson 3 Collecting the data
- Lesson 4 Analysing and reporting

**Working language**
The working language of the virtual training will be English.

**Agenda**
In total 3 virtual trainings have been organized for the three regions, each training will be of a duration of 3 half-days, with two sessions per day of 1.5 hours each. The proposed dates and group of countries (still tentative) are as follows:

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<th>Dates (Tentative)</th>
<th>Group of Countries</th>
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<tr>
<td>8-9-10 September 2020</td>
<td>Afghanistan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan and Viet Nam</td>
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<tr>
<td>22-23-24 Sept 2020</td>
<td>Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Mexico</td>
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<tr>
<td>13-14-15 October 2020</td>
<td>Armenia, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Norway, Oman, Russia and United Arab Emirates</td>
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Exact timings will be establish in accordance with the time difference between Rome (Italy) and standard time of the respective region. Every day has to be considered as a commitment of about 3 hours. However, the general commitment is expected to be more, since the SDG indicator 2.4.1 team will give food for thought and possibly exercices for the next day.

**Draft agenda**

### SDG indicator 2.4.1

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<td>Session 3</td>
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<td><strong>Break</strong></td>
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<td>Session 4</td>
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**Day 2**

| Session 1 | SDG 2.4.1. Data collection tools (survey questionnaire and alternative data sources) | FAO | 40 |
| Session 2 | SDG 2.4.1 in the context of AGRIS and 50x2030 | FAO (AGRIS team) | 30 |
| **Break** |                                                  |     | 5  |
| Session 3 | FAO SDG 2.4.1 data collection questionnaire    | FAO | 25 |
| Session 4 | Findings of the pilot tests of SDG 2.4.1 questionnaire | FAO | 15 |
| Session 5 | Best practices exchange session: Agricultural data collection and reporting mechanisms (Canada experience) | FAO/Canada | 30 |
| Session 6 | Q&A / Discussion / Wrap-up                      | All | 35 |

**Day 3**

| Session 1 | Indicator 2.4.1 Short/Medium/Long term expectations | FAO | 30 |
| Session 2 | Brainstorming on additional mechanisms/frameworks to measure and monitor sustainable agriculture (i.e. Proxies for 2.4.1 & PROSA framework) | FAO | 60 |
| Session 3 | Data reporting to FAO (with focus on FAOSTAT)       | FAO | 15 |
| **Break** |                                                  |     | 5  |
| Session 4 | Discussion on challenges in data collection and reporting on SDG indicator 2.4.1 and action plan to overcome these | All | 50 |
Evaluations
When joining the first session, participants will be asked to reply to some questions, e.g. whether the e-learning course has been taken prior the virtual training, and other questions.
At the end of the three days, attendees will be asked to evaluate the course anonymously filling a questionnaire. This will help the SDG indicator 2.4.1 team to improve the structure and organization of it for future events. Moreover, participants will be also provided with an evaluation test to assess themselves against the knowledge acquired during the virtual training. This will serve as a proof to understanding if everything has been captured correctly. The test results will be automatically shared anonymously with the SDG indicator 2.4.1 team.
Annex: Guiding steps for conducting the trainings:
This section summarizes the tools and processes that needs to be adopted to ensure a seamless experience during the virtual trainings.

a. Getting online
A good internet connection is needed for participating in the virtual training. The online presence is for about 3 hours per day, which means that a large quantity of internet data (Megabytes) will be used. Participants that don’t have an unlimited internet package, should check before and after each session the available Megabytes to ensure that it covers the training sessions.

In case the participants have video quality issues, the following actions are recommended:
- Close other applications that use the internet, especially those that play music or video.
- Cancel any file transfers in progress.
- If the above fails to resolve the issue, participants may need to increase the bandwidth. In this case they need to contact their Internet Service Provider (ISP) to get more information regarding the download and upload speeds and make request to the ISP accordingly.

It is strongly suggested:
- To use a PC/laptop instead of the mobile phone/Ipad/tablet for the virtual training as theoretical sessions could be complicated/heavy to follow on handheld devices.
- That participants are well settled, comfortable and with a clear vision of the monitor/screen.
- Have a USB headset with microphone and earphones.
- Have a webcam, one that is built-in to the computer or that connects to the computer via USB.

b. Communication application (Zoom)
The virtual training will be organized using the Zoom software program (https://zoom.us). Briefly, Zoom is a videoconferencing software program compatible with Windows, macOS, iOS, Android, and Linux. It is noted for its simple interface and usability, specifically for non-tech people. Features include one-on-one meetings, group video conferences, screen sharing, plugins, browser extensions, and the ability to record meetings and have them automatically transcribed. Participants do not have to download the app if they are using Google Chrome or Firefox as they can click on a link and join from the browser directly. Note that Zoom is not compatible with Safari for Macs.

Zoom can be downloaded for free following this link https://zoom.us/download.

System Requirements
- An internet connection: Broadband wired or wireless (3G or 4G/LTE). The minimum bandwidth required is 600kbps (up/down), however, the recommended one is 1.5 Mbps (up/down). Participants can check their Internet bandwidth using the speed test available at this link https://www.speedtest.net.
- A microphone – one that is built-in to the computer or a USB plug-in or wireless Bluetooth.
- Built-in headset jack for laptop or desktop. Even if the laptop or desktop has speakers, participants are suggested to plug in their headset so that the sound from the speakers does not cause an echo in the Zoom meeting. Any headset with a 3.5mm plug can be used.

*Supporting Videos*
- A 1 minute video that shows “how to join the meeting”:
  https://www.youtube.com/embed/hIkCmbvAHQQ?rel=0&autoplay=1&cc_load_policy=1
- A 10 minutes video that shows the meeting controls (both for guests and host):
  https://www.youtube.com/embed/ygZ96J_z4AY?rel=0&autoplay=1&cc_load_policy=1

Be informed that FAO will be recording the training for potential future use. If participants have issues in showing their visage, they are requested to turn off the camera and inform the SDG indicator 2.4.1 team in advance.

*General Rules*
- Participants must settle themselves in a silent room/environment. Virtual meetings with several participants often result in noise issues that disturbs the trainer and/or whomever is trying to talk.
- Participants must mute themselves, always! and are asked to raise the hand virtually when and if they want to talk.
- Sessions will be interspersed with short breaks (5 min every about hour and an half). At the end of each day there will be a Q&A session and discussion.