



منظمة الأغذية
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New Developments in the FAO Statistics Division

Independent evaluation of FAO's role and work in statistics

The 2008 independent evaluation of FAO statistics found that: (i) the countries' response rate to FAO statistical questionnaires had been steadily declining since 1980s; (ii) FAO budget allocated for statistics work had been much reduced over the last fifteen years; (iii) FAO's influence in agricultural statistics was weakening; and (iv) there was little cooperation among different statistics production units within FAO. It made many recommendations for improving this situation. Three of the most important ones were:

- Strengthen the capacity to produce agricultural statistics at the country level;
- Increase resources for statistics work at FAO to deal among others with the capacity building at country level and develop methodology to meet existing and new statistical demand and challenges of the 21st century;
- Create a mechanism for coordination of statistical activities within FAO.

Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics

Aware of the above situation, the international community took the initiative to develop a Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics. This was done under the auspices of the United Nations Statistical Commission which is the World apex body in global statistics, with FAO playing a leading role and with the cooperation of many development partners and association of developed and developing countries. The Global Strategy was developed during 2008 and 2009. The final version was endorsed by the UNSC at its 41st Session in New York in February 2010. A separate paper on the Global Strategy will be presented at this APCAS Session.

Resources for statistics at FAO

Following the recommendation of the independent evaluation of FAO statistics regarding resources for statistics work at FAO, the Organization created 8 new statistician posts as part of its Regular Programme Budget for the biennium 2010-11. In addition, as part of the structural reorganization of the programming exercise of its budget, FAO created seven Impact Focus Areas for mobilization of extra budgetary resources. One of them is entitled Impact Focus Area on Capacity Building in Information and Statistics.

Priorities areas in statistics during the biennium 2010-11

Five priorities of the FAO Statistics Division were selected as follows:

- Restore the credibility of FAOSTAT
- Re-establish FAO as the global leader in agricultural statistics
- Support countries' agricultural statistical system
- Strengthen data analysis and support Departmental flagship publication
- Coordinate FAO Statistical system

Organizational structure of the FAO Statistics Division

There has been a major reorganization of the structure at FAO during the last two years, with the main part implemented in early 2010. The structure of the Statistics Division was revised as part of this process and in line with the new management objective of the Organization in general and of the Economic and Social Development Department in particular. The main feature of the new management objective is the results-based work planning and programming. The structure of the Division is outputs-oriented and there are five teams, each responsible for a set of priority outputs: Production and Trade Statistics Team; Census and Surveys and National Systems of Statistics Team; Supply Utilization Accounts, Food Security and Social Statistics Team; Economic and Environmental Statistics Team; and CountrySTAT, Statistics Systems and Data Dissemination Group.

Coordination of statistical activities at FAO

Two internal bodies have been created within FAO for the coordination of statistics programmes and activities:

- Statistics Programme Coordination Committee; and
- Coordination of Statistical Activities Working Group.