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Agricultural statistics assessment in Cameroon: developing the Agricultural Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF)

Abstract N.24:

In recent years, agricultural statistics assessments have been carried out in several countries under a framework provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The implementation of this framework in Cameroon has resulted in the publication of a national report on metadata for agricultural statistics in September 2009. The report is an evaluation of the capability of the National System of Agricultural Statistics (NSAS) to generate a standard set of agricultural data and metadata defined by FAO. A series of frameworks and management tools can be used to assess and improve the quality of data produced in various statistical fields. Example is the Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF) of the IMF. The DQAF is a flexible structure for the qualitative assessment of national statistics through a five dimensions (assurances of integrity, methodological soundness, accuracy and reliability, serviceability, and accessibility) of data quality and a set of prerequisites for data quality. Its covers the various related features of governance of statistical systems, statistical processes, and statistical products. DQAFs has have been elaborated in fields such as national account statistics, international trade balance statistics, money supply statistics, financial statistics and producer and consumer price indexes.

The paper analyses the steps through which metadata for agricultural statistics in Cameroon, collected under the framework provided by FAO, can be used to map the quality standard indicators recommended by IMF under the DQAF. These metadata cover aspects such as the efficiency of agencies involved in the production of agricultural statistics, existing statistics laws and rules, consultative bodies, demand for agricultural statistics, outputs of the system, opportunities and difficulties facing the NSAS, etc. The approach used is a stepwise process which starts from the existing metadata on agricultural statistics and gradually moves towards fulfillment of the indicators behind the DQAF. The first point focuses on the structure of both general frameworks looking for possible relationships that can exist. Next is an attempt to link metadata for agricultural statistics in Cameroon to DQAF indicators. Finally, the paper identifies drawbacks of the FAO framework to meet IMF DQAF indicators and suggests additional points that can be included in future reports.