

Fifth International Conference on Agriculture Statistics
Theme 3: Global Strategy Implementation Components
Session 3.3: Technical Assistance Component

Draft text :

Technical assistance for Agriculture Statistics: World Banks role and GDDS II and Sierra Leone experiences.

By Ronald Luttikhuizen (World Bank) and Momodu Kamara (Sierra Leone)

1. Introduction.

As we all know the present food situation in Africa is not good. This is caused by a number of factors, first of all the numbers of the population, and secondly the structure of the food production. At present there are about 820 million inhabitants in SSA. Of those 73% live below 2.00 USD PPP per day. (For the 2.5 USD PPP per day the number is 80%.) For the 1.25 USD PPP per day the number is 50.9%. Although the relative numbers (shares/ratios) are going downwards since 1990, the absolute numbers for all categories are going upwards. This means that in absolute terms more and more people are living in poverty, and will have problems in feeding themselves. This means that the food situation in Africa will become more critical as it is.

Food is used for two purposes: to feed the producers and to be sold to generate income. Africa is the continent with a very large share of subsistence activities. People produce food they consume themselves. The good thing about this is that people live close to their own food. The other side is that relatively many human resources are involved in the food production, and investments to gain economies of scale are difficult to achieve. The rural population in Africa is 64% of the total. Most of them feed themselves of their own lands. The cash revenues that are generated by agriculture are mostly used for the consumption of other goods. Agriculture is not a business that generates much business profits that leads to national savings and investments. However, we know that we do not have enough information about agriculture activities in Africa. More agriculture statistics for Africa are needed.

The land actually used for agriculture is relatively small in Africa (1%). The area of land that is considered to be arable is 8.3%. This means that more land can be used to produce food and that with the introduction of new agriculture production techniques more production and income can be realized.

However, at present our knowledge about all this is too limited. The new global strategy on agriculture statistics tries to address the improvement of the knowledge about these matters. Technical assistance is needed in Africa to improve the production of relevant statistics. We can formulate ideas about how

the statistical capacity in Africa can be improved. However these ideas need to be based on the reality and therefore we also need to understand the present situation of agriculture statistics in Africa.

This presentation will address this matter, specifically by the contribution of Mr. Momodu Kamara. The first part of Ronald Luttikhuisen describes the operational work of the Bank in statistical cooperation, knowledge management (the Virtual Statistical System) and will present some views about the experiences in assisting African countries in Agriculture Statistics during the last 4 years as part of the IMF and World Banks GDDS II project.

2. Financial Mechanism.

The Financial Mechanisms that the World Bank uses to support statistical work in Africa. There are Loans and Grants.

A Loan is an agreement between a country and the World Bank that they will receive money for a special purpose. This loan can be given as a Loan only for that purpose as a part of the general budget support that the country receives. The Stat cap loans are the Loans that are given to support statistical systems. The country has to apply. The country has to agree to pay it back and to pay interests.

Grants are amounts that are given to a country free of interest and they do not have to pay it back. Grant are mostly financed by donors. The WB has been support statistics for a long time with the Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building. Over 100 projects have been support in the last 10 years.

A new system is the Statistics for Results Facility, funded by the UK and The Netherlands as donors. This is a program that will support substantial changes in statistics in those developing countries that are approved by the Board. At present 4 African countries are supported: Ghana, Nigeria, DRC, Rwanda. This program is intended to support ongoing plans of improvement.

The Development Grant Facility is used to support work in statistics that is carried out by other international organizations. This is part of a partnership program of the DECDG unit.

Staff of the World Bank unit (DECDG) supervise how the various projects are implemented.

A special project is the International Comparison Project (ICP). This project aims at the construction of the PPP for all countries in the world. In this case the WB also manages this project with their own staff and is responsible for hiring of the consultants. The project is funded by a special ICP trust fund.

In the case of the Loans and the Grants the Bank enters into formal agreements with the clients (Governments) in which is defined how the money should be spent and the project should be managed. This is to guarantee the fiduciary responsibility of the Bank. This means that the Bank must be able to show to the donors how the money has been spent.

3. World Bank Project (Governance) Process

The World Bank uses their own internal procedures to implement TA projects.

There is a well defined and harmonized process of a series of steps that have to be followed.

Project Concept Note - The first outline of the project and its implementation process.

Project Concept Note review - Discussion and finalization of the Project.

- Identification / Technical appraisal missions - These are missions to define the content of the project in general terms.

Technical documents.

Pre -Project Appraisal Doc - First technical outline of the project.

Project Appraisal Doc - Detailed outline of the project with all factors that need to be considered.

- Negotiations with Countries Government - Discussions with the partners / client to agree about this project

Agreement, involving legal authorities - Legal formalization of the agreement of the project.

Grant Agreement and Loan agreements.

Importance of fiduciary task.

5. Project Appraisal Document (PAD)

The project design should cover a number of topics.

Strategic Context - What is the strategy of the country (development plan) and how does this project fit into the strategy.

Project Development Objectives: What needs to be achieved. This is the technical part about the results and the process that will be used.

Project Beneficiaries: Who should profit from the project and in which way.

Project description:

- Project Components: detailed technical descriptions of the activities that will be carried out.
- Project Financing: description of the financing of the project.
- Lending Instrument: Loan or Grant, and their respective conditions.
- Project Cost: Detailed presentation of the budget and cost components.
- Lessons learned and applied What efforts have been made to understand the issues and how have these been taken into account.

- Implementation - How will the project be realized.
- Institutional - What legal and other formal measures are taken.
- Results monitoring and Evaluation - The process and the defined steps will be observed and reported.
- Sustainability - What steps have been identified that the activities will be continued.
- Key Risks - Risks considered and measures proposed to deal with these.

6. Pillar I: Minimum Set of Core Data by countries and international organizations.

According to the global strategy it is important to define a global set of core indicators. Here we can make a distinction between the process of defining these and the actual list of indicators. Of course the process can be that each country sends in its list of indicators, alternatively countries can work together to come up with such a list. This demands a coordination framework for these countries. A coordination framework is a set of rules on regional decision making about how these indicators will be selected and agreed upon.

An indicator is mostly one variable divided by another variable ($\text{GDP per capita} = \text{GDP} / \text{total population}$). Sometimes it is more complex and involves more variables, sometimes it is simple and only one variable or the change thereof is requested. Essential is however that these variables are always the results of specific statistical processes. An indicator (when several variables are involved) is based on several statistical processes. This can imply that when there is a core set of indicators the countries in a region are required to conduct similar surveys. This means that countries may be expected to agree on common agriculture statistical frameworks that need to be implemented. This means that regional TA approaches with extensive training and advising may be considered to support these countries (economies of scale). This can be useful for those countries that have weak statistical systems.

Considering the limited resources in many of these countries there is a clear need for priority setting and the use of the cheapest and most durable solutions. In many cases household surveys can be done at reasonable costs and generating relatively high quality data.

When we speak about a core set of indicators we in fact speak in many cases about a core set of surveys.

7. Pillar II: Integrating agriculture (and rural statistics) into national statistical system

When regional TA projects are considered there will be a trade off. Countries will have to give priority to the regional agreed surveys, instead of hanging on to (perhaps) the nationally preferred surveys. The European Statistical system is based on this principle. Regional projects have many advantages. They have economies of scale, countries can learn from each other. The only disadvantage is that they may have to give up some of their own national priorities.

When we want to integrate agriculture and rural statistics in the national statistical strategies and programs we have to look at the strategy and its process. The strategy is about what we want to achieve.

When countries want to have comparable data (or agriculture and on other topics) they need to define in most cases comparable surveys. This will lead to comparable national statistical development strategies (NSDSs).

There are different objectives at the national level to be considered.

- To have the ag stats as part of the NSDS. This is an essential condition in the view of the World Bank in order to be able to support these statistics.
- To have enough money to finance the strategy. This may mean: to have more competition for budgets between projects.
- To have an adequate legal and institutional framework. This demands increased institutional coordination.
- To have the agreement at the national level that all surveys will be technically coordinated. This demands technical coordination.

8. Pillar III: Governance and statistical capacity (IMF DQAF Framework to be used.)

Institutional coordination is a pre-condition for technical coordination.

Institutional coordination: Institutions need to agree to cooperate in a productive way. To realize this large numbers of institutional agreements have to be put in place. The NSDS can stipulate those.

Technical coordination: When it comes to the implementation of an agreed framework of surveys, technical coordination has to be put in place as well.

This means:

- To have a process that helps to decide about which concepts and which methods are applied in order to have well coordinated and harmonized results across different surveys.
- To agree on those methods which are sustainable over time and will create reliable time series across these identified surveys.
- When comparability is requested across countries another aspect is added, output harmonization versus input harmonization.

When the aim is to have regional comparable results there are two options:

- a. Output harmonization. This means that it is assured that the countries use the same or similar concepts and that the estimates that are made are comparable because of the design of their surveys, to the extent possible. However, the countries remain responsible for the actual design and results of the surveys. This demands some sort of international mechanism of coordination.
- b. Input coordination. In this case the countries agree to use similar survey methods and similar concepts and they aim at working in identical ways to the extent that is possible. This will have a strong effect on the international comparability over these countries. This demands an even stronger form of international coordination. The countries to agree to use similar survey methods and the same concepts.

Both ways of working are used in for instance the European Union. Both approaches need to be supported by a regional international organization.

Statistical TA activities have to consider three main issues.

Governance: is the management and organization in place to manage the projects? What arrangements have been developed by the country to support this project? Project management should be in place: needed are highly structured and well planned projects. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) can be used as a tool to reinforce existing arrangements between then partners in this project.

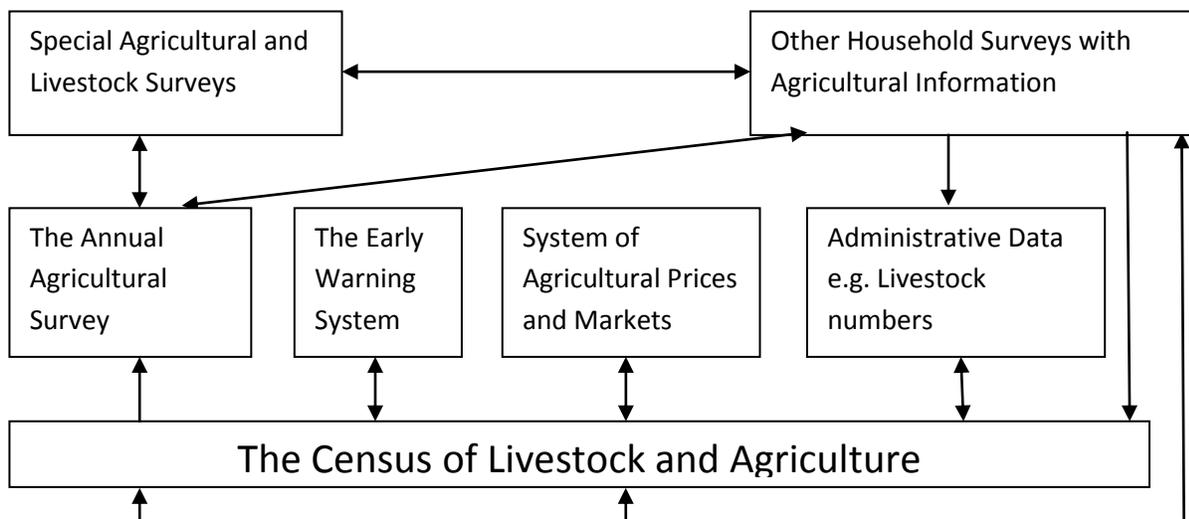
The producer should meet the basic requirements to be able to implement the project. These requirements should be defined, inspected and tested before the project can start. Also the producer should report on the methodological soundness of the methods that will be applied. They should assess and report on the accuracy and reliability of the work that is done. They should be able to guarantee the dissemination of the results to the intended users.

In order to be effective the project should look at the analytical capacity of the users as well. How useful is that to make statistics that cannot be used in the country? This may lead to the advices to provide training of users as part of the project.

9. The Agriculture Statistics Framework

Technical Coordination using a national Agriculture statistical system.

I. Components of a National Agricultural Statistical System



10. Virtual National Statistical System and statistical knowledge

The VSS is an internet portal to help statisticians in developing countries access information about the production of official statistics. It provides information directly and through links to other internet resources. There are two key elements to the organization of this portal, ACTIVITIES and THEMES.

The aim of this website is present information about how statistical systems and organizations operate and what knowledge is needed to work in these organizations. The objective of this site is to allow statisticians of developing countries to get easy and unlimited access to this information and to use it for any purpose they deem useful. The website has direct information about the topics presented, but also indirect information through its portal function. Moreover the website gives access to the training courses with the World Bank and courses at other places.

ACTIVITIES include both general and specific aspects of statistical production processes, and are organized into nine groups according to a “value chain”. The general description of the statistical production processes in statistical organizations can be presented by using the following categories or groupings of activities:

1. Institutional issues: how can a satisfactory institutional framework be developed?
2. Internal and management issues: how can a satisfactory internal organizational and management structure be implemented?
3. ICT: what Information and Communication Technology tools are needed?
4. Registers and sampling frames: what essential statistical infrastructure is needed, like business registers, sampling frames, and classification systems?
5. Surveys: how can information be collected with surveys?
6. Methods: what are appropriate statistical methods?
7. Integration frameworks:
8. Dissemination: what is a satisfactory publication and dissemination strategy?
9. Use of statistics: what do users need? How can statistical frameworks – like national accounts – be used?

THEMES are based around subject matter topics, broadly classified according to a standard classification of official statistical activities developed by the UN Economic Commission for Europe, OECD, and Eurostat. They are grouped into five areas:

1. Social and demographic statistics
2. Economic statistics
3. Environment and multi-domain statistics
4. Statistical methods
5. Strategy and managerial issues of official statistics

The ACTIVITIES menu is on the left side of the screen and the THEMES menu is on the right side. When a specific activity is selected, relevant themes are shown on the right hand side. This helps to identify the relationships between general, specific and detailed levels of information.

Further, many concepts within the site are part of both ACTIVITIES and THEMES – methodology for instance; methods are important from a general perspective as well as from a specific perspective. However the content presented in each case is different.

For both activities and themes, information is presented in tabbed pages: Introduction, Methods, Tools, Country Experiences, and Training. For the themes, there is also Indicators and Documents. Users can place comments on any of the pages of the site.

In addition the site allows its user to become directly involved. This is done by the VSS Wiki part of the site. The Wiki part is offering two main functions. On the one hand it is possible to upload the site with information that the users of the site want to share with others. This can be done by using the same structure of the VSS site or to generate other additional structures. On the other hand it is possible to start Discussions groups. The users can define a topic and invite other users to participate. It is possible to use this Discussion features as Questions and Answers or for in-depth topical discussions. It is possible to have both of these features for the level of the world (general), or by geographical domain. In this case the geographical areas of the World Bank are used. The VSS Wiki is intended to increase the level of interactivity of the site. The possibility has been created to have this site also operational in the French language, at least at the level of the general concepts. Translation in other languages will only be considered when the English version is accepted and there is a demand for these other languages.

The VSS site has the potential to offer additional services, like “What is new?” and “Marketplace”. These will be considered in the future.

11. GDDS II - Regional experiences in agriculture stats

GDDS II project:

Starting list of 7 topics, called the topical Modules

18 countries each selects 2 topics.

In total the countries created 36 projects.

In each of the Modules there were 5 – 6 countries.

Each Module went through the same structured process.

A Module is based on a Structured approach: for 5 countries in 3 years

At the national level the experts had to take their own responsibility.

At the regional level, Africa, they worked together and shared information.

Considerable economies of scale were realized.

Step 1. Launch workshop: Countries were informed (trained) and defined their own country priorities.

Step 2. Per country 3 individual missions: Countries defined their own terms of reference.

Step 3. Final closing and evaluation workshop. Countries reported on their results.

GDDS Implemented:

- 100 expert missions, separate topics. Of which 16 on agriculture.
- 17 workshops, many group discussions, of which 2 on agriculture
- Three training courses; of which 2 on Agriculture for Mozambique and Swaziland

Participants: Ghana, Swaziland, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Uganda

- Website: www.worldbank.org/data/gdds

12. TA experiences

Much attention has been paid in the past and recently about the best methods to implement TA in statistics. I want to refer to "Some Guiding principles for good practices in technical cooperation for statistics", from the UN Economic and Social Council of 1999, as Ben Kiregyera did in his paper.

At this moment I just want to add some additional observations. I want to address the need for Technical coordination across countries and the mechanism that can be used, based on past and recent projects in TA.

The World Bank normally works on a Country by Country basis. Money only can be used and given to countries basis on the formal agreements with the countries. These are country executed projects. Only when there is a World Bank executed project the Bank can start creating regional projects.

But countries can agree by themselves to also participate in regional projects. Perhaps with support of the AfDB and the UNECA.

Regional Structured and Integrated approaches work well: for countries and regions (groups).

Regional projects and regional dimensions add value to national experts.

Planning and mapping out of each action in advance is essential. This demands the involvement of an international organization, at least as a facilitator to come to agreements between the parties involved.

The lesson learned of these regional projects are:

- Project design should cover all aspects till final result.

- Projects staff and int. experts should work (more) closely together
- Project leadership, at the country and at the regional level, should take responsibility for outcomes, not just process.

13. Some questions about the World Banks views on the TA for Agriculture statistics.

Why is this presentation mostly about the bureaucratic process to provide technical assistance?

The main aim was to inform the audience about what the World Bank DECDG unit is doing and how the Bank works. Our future role in this project will be defined at a later stage.

What about the statistical challenges posed by the Global Strategy?

On the one hand the Global Strategy is ambitious in its nature about what would be good to achieve under ideal conditions. It is not so much telling how this should be realized. Much of which is mentioned in the proposal will even be a challenge for developed countries. For developing countries and for Africa the implementation of the Global Strategy is a different story. The WB recommendation is here to use the DQAF as a diagnostic and planning framework. The developing countries can use this DQAF framework to define whether the preconditions for making these statistics are met. Secondly they need to define which investments are needed (country by country) to develop the needed methods. When countries work together they can develop regional approaches from which they can profit. But regional approaches need a regional leader, preferably to be done by an international organization. Of course FAO, AfDB, UNECA are the natural candidates.

Can technical support being provided to develop the master sample frame for agriculture and implement the integrated survey framework?

To develop a master sample a proper frame is needed. Most suited is of course the latest Census. Area frames can be used as well. Until now there is not yet defined a proper approach to combine these two frames for developing countries. At the country level there is a possibility to coordinate the design of surveys that are considered to be needed. When there are no surveys done, or only of poor quality than it will be easier to coordinate the questions in newly developed surveys compared with the situation with existing surveys. In the latter case the coordination of questionnaires is much more difficult. Of course it will all depend on the resources available. It seems that in Africa even data collection may be a serious problem since farmers often do not seem to be able to reply to all questions or are not willing to cooperate as requested. Recall issues is one of the problems. This has to be taken into account with the design of these surveys.

How will the technical support develop the statistical capabilities of the staff at the national level?

This depends on what is actually agreed in each country. I personally would favor approaches where the focus is on the final results. In many cases the staff in a country has not and will not have the technical capabilities to do all that the work is needed. Often they can only do part of the work that is needed. That is why the project should be designed in such a way that experts can step in to fill the gaps of the capacities when they occur. Ideally, this should be part of the design of any project in which statistics are the final outcomes of these activities.

How can the technical support guide the research needed to develop statistical methods for problems unique to developing countries?

In my view research projects can be designed as pilot projects to develop methods in close cooperation with the countries where these methods should be implemented. Which pilot project will be chosen will depend on a case by case examination.

Are there any examples of statistical development coming out of technical assistance to countries?

The GDDS II project has assisted five countries and we have some results. The GDDS II project website has all the documents for others to use and share. The most important conclusion is that we cannot be too optimistic about what can be achieved. We need highly structured and well planned approaches that allow incremental and step by step implementation.

14. Effectiveness of TA in statistics

When we want to assess the effectiveness of statistical projects it starts with the assessment at the start.

- Are the necessary conditions in place? When not: large projects should not start, unless the necessary provisions are made to improve the needed capacity.
- The legal and institutional framework needs to be sufficient. When not: MOUs can be used to provide the additional parts of the framework.
- Large projects should have from the start Monitoring and Evaluation tools integrated in the project.
- Monitoring is about how the process is implemented. Milestones need to be defined and observed. Both the milestones in time as the intermediate outputs.
- TA Evaluation is to assess during the process and at the end what quality of the work has been realized. Quality is about the work done and the results. These aspects need to be observed and measured while using well defined standards.
- Results, the statistical outputs, can be defined more or less sharply.
- Outcomes can more or less be observed.
- Impact is the most difficult to assess and to value. Many factors have an influence on processes. The impact of statistics is perhaps the most difficult aspect to assess of all.

Value for money is often in the eye of the beholder. But to assess whether data is used that is soundly created is easily to observe. It is intended that quality data that is “fit for use” will outgrow data that may be “fixed for use”.

I now leave the floor for the contribution of Mr. Momodu Kamara of Sierra Leone about their experiences. Mr. Kamara participated in the GDDS II project and will inform on his experiences from the country perspective.

II. SIERRA LEONE LESSONS IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN AGRICULTURE STATISTICS,

1. OVERVIEW OF THE AGRICULTURE STATISTICS

The Agricultural Sector which comprises of the Livestock, Fisheries and Forestry sub-sectors, among others, remains the backbone of the economy of Sierra Leone, contributing about 46 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and employing over eighty percent of the population.

However, Agricultural Statistics was on the decline for the past decade characterized by the lack of Technical Assistance in the collection and analyses of Agricultural surveys.

The ten year civil conflict also affected the domestic revenue generating machinery leading the country to be more dependent on donor funds (over 80% source for budgetary support).The consequences of the war and the lack of funds to improve the data generating and management systems in the Agricultural sector has incapacitated the timely, relevant., consistent, comparable and reliable collection of vital Agricultural Statistics in the country for the past two decades.

Unlike the pre-war years when the agricultural statistics met expected output in its functions, It performance during the post war years to date have not be as would be required. The division has lost experienced staff in key areas such as subject matter specialist and even numerical strength at field workers, or enumerators' level. There is therefore an apparent weakness in the technical capacity of the division to lead in the generation and management of agricultural statistics and data which are necessary to operationalise its objectives.

The out puts in the agricultural statistics include the following

- Conduct and design survey instrument methodology
- Design questionnaires, hand books and training manuals.
- Design and conduct trainings on data collection techniques as well as data processing
- Production of reports, statistical bulletins and statistical digest.
- Management information system for food and agriculture, including a National food security and Early warning system.

Annual Agricultural production surveys are implemented as core module of the Sierra Leone Agricultural Statistics to produce current Agricultural data and filling gaps where they exist.

The indicators on which these surveys collect data include, Characteristics of the agriculture household, Land ownership and utilization, Planted Area, Yield and production, Amount of input used, Used of Labour, Agricultural price, Livestock and Poultry Statistics.

The problems identified in the conduct of these surveys include:

- The practice of mixed cropping, shifting cultivation, incompletely harvested crops, continuous cropping still exists to a large extent.
- Timing of data collection.
- Unstandardised weights of measurement.
- Fragmented farm holdings.
- Majority of respondents are unable to give accurate response (Respondents Fatigue).
- Under reporting and the use of different reference periods for different Livestock types.
- Inadequate tools (GPS) to measure farm size.

The above problems are envisage as a result of the following

- a. Majority of the farmers are illiterate and as such do not understand the importance of data collection.
- b. Land tenure system encourage farmers to farm on fragmented holdings
- c. Inadequate and irregular availability of funds hampers the timely collection of data..

Nonetheless, the implementation of the National Strategy for the development of Statistics by Statistics Sierra Leone, The assigning of statistician in Agriculture and other line ministries and the establishment of a planning and coordination committee has created a positive impact on the institution and staff.

2. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

The Sierra Leone Agricultural statistics has benefited since 2007 from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, under the auspices of the General Data Dissemination

System (GDDS) Phase I and II project. The project aims at improving and strengthening Statistical capacity, and encourage member countries to improve their data by providing a frame work for evaluating needs for data improvement and setting priorities.

The Agriculture module was launched in a seminar held in Maputo in February 2007, during the launching, Sierra Leone identified three areas in which we requested for assistance.

- Strengthening Agricultural statistics in Sierra Leone.
- Provision of training in the analysis of Agricultural Statistics using the software package (SPSS) to Statisticians from Statistics Sierra Leone and the Ministry of Agriculture.
- We also requested the creation of a publicly accessible Data base of Agricultural Statistics to form the basis of a time series. This data base should be place on Statistics Sierra Leone Website.

Nonetheless, we can influence this Technical Assistance through feedback and report writing.

3. SUCCESS OF THE GDDS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- 1 Statisticians at ministry of Agriculture and Statistics now have access to SPSS Software and can now used it for analysis in future surveys
- 2 Staff capacity has been built in survey analysis
- 3 Availability of enough documentation which can be used for in –house training.
- 4 With the inception of the Technical assistance through the GDDS project, there has been improvement in the National Accounts estimates as agriculture is a major contributor .

Before the close of the Technical Assistance, we were able to learn the following;

- a. The use and application of SPSS software to analysis our agriculture production survey data.
- b. Learn how to used SPSS to create analytic data for use in public data base.

Despite the above, Sierra Leone still need to seek further Technical Assistance to continue building staff capacity in the area of analysis with other software packages, Data management and best practices for the conduct of our annual production surveys, International Standards, Methodologies and good practices for generating quality Statistics.

4. SHORTCOMINGS WITH THE AGRICULTURE STATISTICS

Although the Government has made Agricultural development a top priority, yet, having access to high quality information about Agriculture in Sierra Leone will be very helpful nationally and internationally. Development priorities in the Agricultural sector requires statistical checking through evaluation and monitoring units as well as statistical data collection and analysis to meaningfully plan, track progress and measure impact. Statistical capacity building is therefore essential.

Retrospect the following shortcomings have been identified with our Agricultural statistics system.

- Weak Statistical Capacity: the agricultural statistics is currently not technically equipped to make key contribution that will facilitate the generation of quality statistics. In the area of competent data collection, processing and analysis key staff lack the equipment and capacity to undertake these critical actions, .In the area of agrometeorological stations, all have sized to be functional for many years.
- Inadequate budgetary support
- Data gaps on some key development indicators.
- Absence of sector data base policy for planning and reporting
- Poor analytical and report writing skills
- Inadequate coordination between data users and producers.
- Poor conditions of service, bureaucratic traditional mind set that makes it difficult to work effectively for and with client and partners.

5. Actions already taken to address Short comings

- Creation of an inter-agency co-ordination forum of statistics activities (MOU has been signed with Statistics Sierra Leone under the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics)
- Agricultural Statistics staff in post in all thirteen Agricultural districts
- In situation where Annual survey is not conducted because of inadequate funding, Crop area measurement and yield studies are conducted

- Government & its development partners have commissioned an Agricultural Tracking Survey

6. Priorities

The priority of Agricultural Statistics will be to strengthen the institution and staff through capacity building in statistical packages (trainings, seminars and survey equipment). Building human capacity is essential both at field and institutional level to ensure that the potential for agricultural statistics is met and that the institution responsible for generating agriculture statistics is ultimately develop the necessary management and technical expertise.

- Develop an effective and efficient marketing information system to provide the right signal to participants as the existence and transmission of complete and accurate marketing information is the key to achieving both operational and pricing efficiency in the marketing system.
- It is our vision to achieve a coordinated and improve agriculture statistics market Information system Argo met data statistics that are relevant, have integrity and are easily accessible.

-Resources mobilization for the conduct of Annual production surveys is also another priority but with inadequate budgetary allocation, Annual production surveys cannot be conducted every year.

7. A. SHORT TERM PLAN

To eradicate these short comings, the following short term plans has been put in place.

- Effective mobilization of political will.
- Mobilizing Resources in support of Agricultural statistical activities
- Promoting Inter-agency coordination and setting up of a sector data base

B. LONG TERM PLAN

The long term plan is to promote the implementation of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics with Statistics Sierra Leone.

- To promote the implementation of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics with Statistics Sierra Leone.

- Continue to seek more Technical Assistance for capacity building of staff with the ultimate aim of conducting an agricultural census.

8. Staff Issues

Frequent staff turnover because of poor condition of service also threaten the Agricultural statistics system. Against this background, the Agricultural Statistics needs a wide range of training especially on International Standards, Methodologies, survey analysis and report writing. Training and human resource development is the key to successful capacity building for any statistics system and not just for the production of agriculture statistics.

The agricultural Statistics have dedicated staff in all thirteen Agricultural districts, projects and surveys are implementer at national level to have representative sample. In situation where Annual survey is not conducted because of inadequate funding, Crop area measurement and yield studies are conducted.

9. Conducting surveys & Census

In the area of surveys and censuses, The Government and it development partners has commissioned a nationally representative household survey which will comprise the bulk of data collection effort hereafter known as the agricultural Tracking Survey (ATS).It is being implemented as a collaborative effort by three different Institutions -Ministry of Agriculture, Statistics Sierra Leone and Abdul Latiff Jamal poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) in march this year. The results of this survey will serve as a base line.

There are also plans for the conduct of an agriculture census, but time and date depends on availability of funds. We still have gaps in data analysis but Statistics Sierra Leone is taking the lead in all data analysis.

10. ICT Support

The current level of Information Communication and Technology maturity in agricultural statistics with regards to systems application and technical infrastructure is quite low. Since there's no support in ICT, the literacy and competency level of employees vary, but specific expertices in data analysis and management are lacking and will undoubtedly affect the ability to produce accurate and timely reports.

11. EVALUATION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Technical Assistance received from IMF and World Bank has created a positive impact on staff performance and efficiency. On the overall, the TA was valuable and able to address some statistical needs of our country. The World Bank project team and the experts also did a good job.

Missions one, two and part of mission three went well as there was high level of Commitment and participation on participants and experts, Objectives of both participants and experts were met.

Part of mission three did not go well (Creating a publicly accessible database on Agriculture Statistics). Because of the lack of appropriate data file prevented the data from being put on line.

The creation of a publicly accessible data base would have been better and useful. However the Technical Assistance was valuable, appropriate, and timely and its addresses our Statistical information needs.

12. Message to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Since better Agricultural Statistics depends on better statistics overall, it's incumbent on the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to strengthen coordination, Capacity building, Standard Settings for the generation of high quality Statistics. The food and agriculture organization competence in agriculture statistics and planning is understood across Government and among Sierra Leone development partners, Given The food and agriculture Organization traditional role in providing assistance to Government in Agriculture statistics .FAO continued interventions is both desirable and necessary. Given the interest in coherent and comprehensive agriculture statistics by all the development partners as well as the Governments, the food and agriculture organization could play a lead role in strengthening, coordination, human capacity building, and standard settings for the generation of high quality statistics. Finally the food and agriculture organization should approve and fund the Technical Cooperation programme (TCP) in Sierra Leone.

