



Integration of Agriculture into the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) in Lao PDR

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Agriculture poorly integrated into NSDS

- A 2009 Paris21-review found that only 10% of International Development Association (IDA) countries had included agriculture more-or-less appropriately in the NSDS process.
- In general, NSDS quality regarding agriculture is extremely low, including vital areas such as food security.



Underlying factors for poor integration

- In many countries the first generation NSDS was NSO-centric;
- Lack of coordination between NSOs and Ministries of Agriculture or deficient intra-sector coordination.
- Agriculture activities often part of informal economy and, therefore, usually not well covered.
- Low technical capacity within Ministries of Agriculture, including lack of adequate statistical methodology.
- Insufficient funding allocated for agri-statistics activities.
- Statistical legislation covering the whole statistical system is not always appropriate or laws are neglected;



The FAO-PARIS21 Pilot Project

- Of 27 IDA countries in Asia-Pacific, 20 (74%) are either implementing an NSDS or have one awaiting government adoption.
- In the context of the Global Strategy, FAO and PARIS21, developed *a draft guide to integrating agriculture statistics into the NSDS*.
- And launched a pilot project in 3 countries : Lao PDR (NSDS just approved), Mozambique (NSDS under implementation) and Peru (NSDS not yet implemented).



The FAO-PARIS21 Pilot Project: Objective

- OBJECTIVE: to better mainstream and integrate the agricultural statistical system into the NDSS.

- OUTPUTS:
 1. An agricultural sector strategy for the development of statistics (ASSDS) adequately funded.
 2. Advocacy for agricultural statistics.
 3. Improved co-ordination with NSDS partners/donors on funding for agricultural statistics.



The role of agriculture in the Lao economy

- LAO PDR is located in Southeast Asia and has a population of about 6.2 million.



- Two-thirds of the country's population live in rural areas. The agricultural sector accounts for 75% of the labour and 35% of the GDP.
- Integration of agricultural statistics in the NSDS is critical for Lao PDR due to agricultural sector's importance for the national economy.



Agricultural Statistics in Lao PDR

- Lao agricultural statistics are produced by MAF.
- These heavily rely on the reporting system, administrative records and other non-systematic collection of information.
- There are no systematic and standard ways of collecting agricultural information in districts.
- Hence, the information being gathered may either be under-estimated or over-estimated depending upon the purpose of the respondents.



NSDS in Lao PDR

- The Department of Statistics (DoS) is the country's NSO.
- Lao PDR's NSDS, known as the Strategy for the Development of the National Statistical System (SDNSS), was approved in May 2010.
- Followed by a new Statistical Law approved in July 2010:
 1. DoS changed name to Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB);
 2. LSB raised to a semi-autonomous sub-ministry;
 3. creates a National Statistical Council-type of organization;
 4. establishes statistical units in line ministries where these do not yet exist.

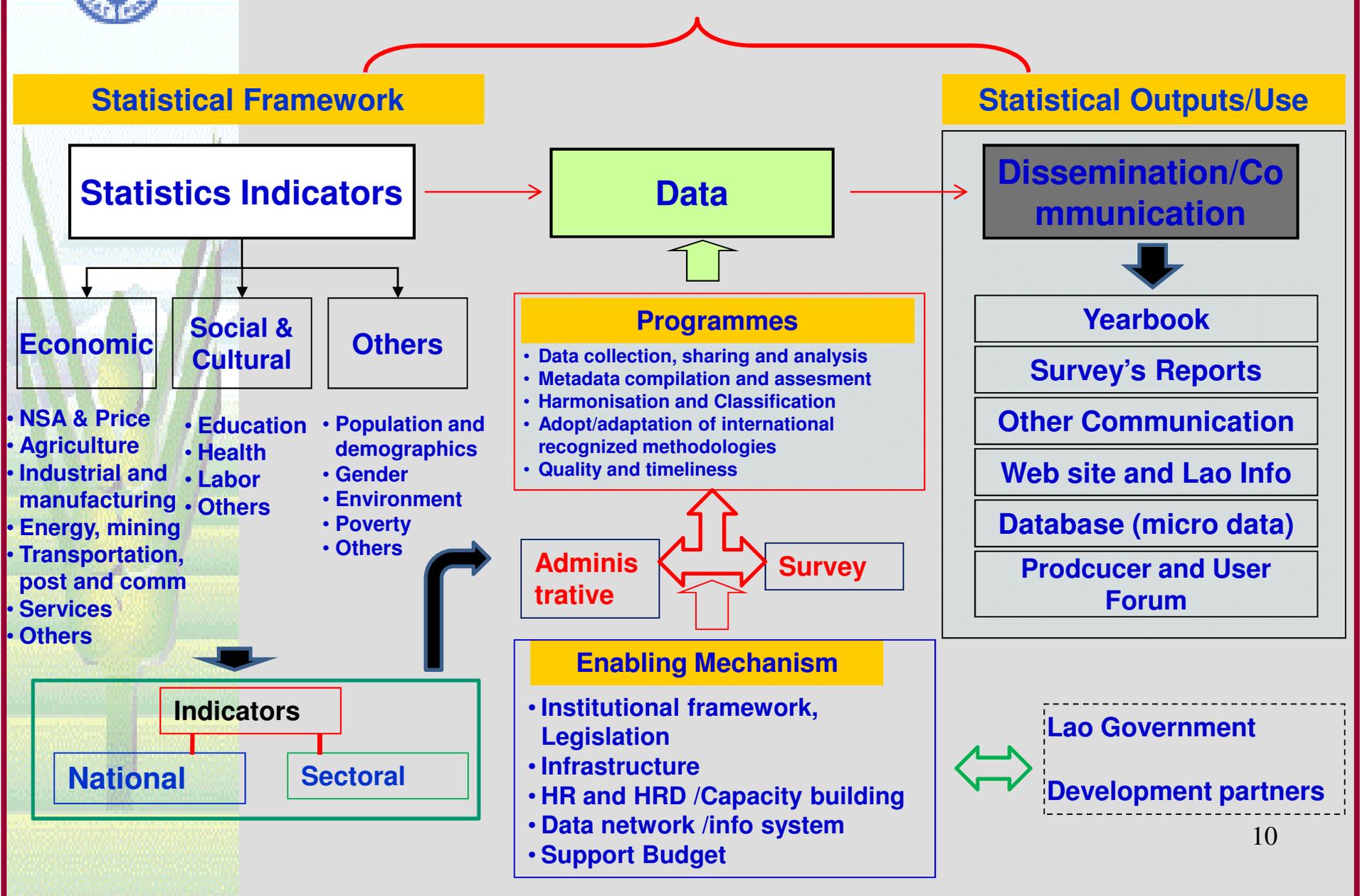


NSDS in Lao PDR

- Lao SDNSS 2010-2020 has seven goals, nine strategic objectives and 12 work programmes.
- To be implemented in two phases: 2010-15 and 2016-20.
- The SDNSS completion in 2020 timed to coincide with the national goal of graduating out of LDC status.
- Estimated budget: US\$28.3 million. Development partners expected to meet 52% of cost (mainly for surveys and censuses).
- The implementation of SDNSS will be roll out during the launch of the first Lao Statistics Week in October 2010.
- LSB conducted an inventory of 800+ indicators for the National Development Plan and MDGs. LSB and MAF agreed on seven national, 42 sectoral and 38 provincial indicators related to agriculture.



Lao SDNSS development framework





SDNSS and Development Partners

- SIDA was the main donor for statistical activities in Laos. ADB, UNDP, and World Bank have expressed willingness to help fill its gap.
- ADB wants LSB self-reliant by 2020; UNDP to provide bridge resources (US\$300,000/year) to the NSS until a five-year support programme starts.
- World Bank about to fund US\$5 million to support Lao SDNSS over five years for: (i) Economic Statistics, (ii) Poverty Statistics, (iii) ICT, and (iv) Policy Framework.
- However, funding of agricultural statistical activities by these donors is still unclear.
- UNDP has urged PARIS21 to facilitate the partnership of donors to support the Lao SDNSS.



Recommendations (1/3)

- The PARIS21-FAO mission made the following recommendations to the Lao government:
 1. **Establish a reflection group:** to formulate an ASSDS anchored to the SDNSS. Should be inter-ministerial in nature, including LSB, MAF, the Central Bank, etc.
 2. **The group should assess** the Strategy's relevance to Lao context and decide on the pillars' main features:
 - i. Min. set of core data of national interest that the country will be able to supply (e.g. rice, vegetables, tobacco, maize, meats).
 - ii. a common sampling frame for censuses and surveys
 - iii. Better governance and continuous capacity building



Recommendations (2/3)

- 3. Develop ASSDS aligned to the SDNSS:** to be partially integrated in the SDNSS' mid-term review by 2015 and fully integrated in the next SDNSS.
- 4. Base discussions on strategic/policy documents:** to ensure that the agricultural statistics strategy responds to user needs for agricultural data.
- 5. Form a country–donor co-ordination group:** to facilitate constructive donors-NSS dialogue as part of the implementation of the SDNSS. LBS in the driving seat and facilitated by UNDP. Use PRESS as reference.



Recommendations (3/3)

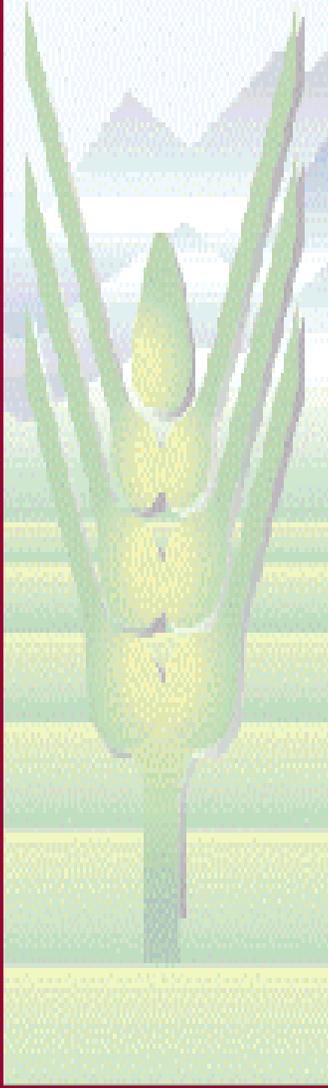
6. **Prepare advocacy material on SDNSS:** to raise awareness and promote the integration of agriculture into the SDNSS ahead of the next donor meeting.

7. **Apply to WB Trust Fund for Stats Capacity Building (TFSCB):** to fund consultations/strategy design activities above.



Conclusions

- The integration of agriculture into the Lao NSDS process has better chances to succeed if:
 1. LSB took the lead in:
 - a. Creating a co-ordination mechanism with the agricultural sector.
 - b. allocating adequate government funds to statistical development.
 - c. facilitating constructive donors-NSS dialogue.
 2. Adequate technical tools and statistical methodology were adopted for agricultural data collection. Modernisation is badly needed.
- FAO and PARIS21 intend to conduct a second joint mission later this year to follow-up on progress.



Thank you for your attention