



FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA WORKING GROUP ON AGRICULTURAL AND LIVESTOCK STATISTICS
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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Report on the Global Strategy desk assessment of country capacity in agricultural statistics

LAC countries capacity

LAC countries have a long tradition of collecting agricultural and rural statistics and the present situation is diverse among countries.

However, the following weaknesses could be pointed out:

- Lack of developed and NASS
- Lack of integration of agricultural statistics into the NSS
- Insufficient funds allocated for agricultural statistics
- Lack of adequate technical tools, statistical methodology and survey framework to support data-production efforts
- Lack of capacity to analyze data with a policy perspective
- High mobility of trained staff in agricultural statistics
- Difficulty of access existing data and lack of metadata and indication of quality.

LAC countries capacity (Cont')

On the other hand, the LAC region shows some strengths in the production of agricultural statistics:

- Many countries undertake agricultural censuses on a regular basis
- Strong National Statistical Institutes in many countries of the region. In several cases these Statistical Institutes are responsible for agricultural censuses and/or surveys.
- Long tradition in university statistical education.
- Important amount of resources mobilized from donors and lending organizations providing technical assistance in statistical activities and policies in the region.

Global Strategy Country Assessments in LAC

The starting point in the implementation of the Global Strategy is to carry out country assessments which will involve two stages:

1. This first stage will establish baseline information on a country statistical capacity. It will involve all countries of the LAC region and it will be undertaken through a standard questionnaire (CAQ).
2. the second, more in-depth stage of the country assessment which will be the basis for preparation of a country proposal for technical assistance and training based on the choice of the appropriate methodologies.

Global Strategy Country Assessments in LAC

(Con't)

- The CAQ will collect information from the national statistical offices and statistical offices in the ministries of agriculture and other institutions producing agricultural and rural statistics.
- The CAQ is structured in four sections designed to assess the situation of the agricultural statistics in the country:
 1. Institutional environment
 2. Core data availability
 3. Main statistical activities
 4. Critical constraints in the Agricultural Statistical System.

Pilot Country Assessments in LAC

- In the first RSC Meeting in Mexico in September 2012, the committee decided to test the questionnaire as originally was (without the changes introduced in the meeting) in three countries in the Region present at the meeting. Colombia, Mexico and Peru volunteered and committed themselves to complete the questionnaire and send it to FAO for its evaluation. Ecuador also sent the questionnaire completed for evaluation later on.

Results Pilot Country Assessments

Legal and administrative framework for the collection of statistics

- All four countries have a legal and administrative framework for the collection of statistics and the government agencies specified in the legislation to undertake statistical activities are their National Statistical Offices (NSO).
- Colombia, Mexico and Peru also have an active legal framework for Agricultural Statistics, Ecuador does not mention one.
- in Colombia, Mexico and Peru exist an active National Statistics Committee that covers agricultural statistics activities in the broad sense of the word agriculture. Ecuador has not answered this question.

Results Pilot Country Assessments (Cont')

Structure of the National Statistical System

- Colombia and Ecuador have a statistical system with a main operating office for general statistics but partially decentralized by sector and an established coordinating mechanism to gather statistics from other sectors, including agriculture. Also, there is a functioning mechanism to establish coordination among different agencies producing statistics.
- Mexico and Peru, they have a statistical system fully decentralized by sector, with a formal coordinating authority. Also both have a functioning mechanism to establish coordination among different agencies producing statistics.

Results Pilot Country Assessments (Cont')

Strategic framework

All four countries have active National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). Peru also has developed a National Strategy specific for agriculture statistics for the period 2013 – 2017.

Dialogue with data users

While in Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico exist formal forums for dialogue among suppliers and users of agricultural statistics; in Peru this forum is informal.

Results Pilot Country Assessments (Cont')

Availability of core data

- All four countries report that they have data on crops (production, area sown and harvested, and yield) and livestock (total numbers by species) that is at least reliable.
- All countries but Colombia reported to produce reliable fisheries and forestry products data.
- All countries have at least reliable external trade (including prices) monthly data from administrative records.
- All countries indicated that they do not produce environmental data.

Results Pilot Country Assessments (Cont')

Statistical methods and practices

- The 4 countries assessed had population censuses regularly every ten years or every five years.
- Colombia has not done an agricultural census in the last 20 years but there is one planned for 2013. Ecuador has done the last agricultural census in 2000, and the next one is planned for 2014. . Mexico has agricultural censuses regularly every five years more or less; the last one was done in 2007 and the next one is planned for 2013. Peru had its agricultural census in 2012 after 18 years since the previous one which was done in 1994.

Results Pilot Country Assessments (Cont')

Statistical methods and practices (cont')

- All countries in this assessment use international standard classifications, calculate the consumer price index and have national account that include agriculture in some form.
- Also these countries have agricultural, fisheries and forestry surveys although these do not seem to be done regularly. These countries also perform regular household budget surveys.

Results Pilot Country Assessments (Cont')

International cooperation in agricultural statistics

While Colombia and Ecuador reported that they have not received any kind of international cooperation for agricultural statistics during the last three years, Mexico and Peru reported to have received significant technical assistance covering agricultural statistics mainly from FAO and from the Interamerican Development Bank (only Peru).

Results Pilot Country Assessments (Cont')

Critical constraints

1. Up-to-date information technology hardware and software:
2. Lack of availability of funds for planned field-oriented statistical activities:
3. Number of staff in all categories:
4. Low level of demand for statistics:
5. Sound methodology implemented for agricultural surveys:
6. Office space
7. Transport equipment for field activities:
8. Lack of appreciation of importance of statistical activities at the policy-making level:
9. Lack of support at political level in the Government for statistical activities:
10. Turnover of professional staff:
11. Technical skills of the available statistical staff
12. Development and update of Sampling Frameworks:
13. Interagency Coordination:

Conclusions

- From the analysis of these assessments common strengths and weaknesses in countries agricultural statistics start to emerge. The 4 countries evaluated here have fairly strong statistical legal frameworks, while they need further development in agricultural surveys.
- They also have similarities in the critical constraints, with seven constraints shared by three or more countries.
- These pilots testing of the questionnaire also served the purpose of testing it and resulted in some changes in the questionnaire itself but moreover in its filling guidelines.
- It was apparent in these assessments that not all institutions that collect agricultural, fisheries, aquaculture, forestry, environmental and rural statistics were consulted to fill in the questionnaire.

POINTS FOR ADVICE/RECOMMENDATION BY THE WORKING GROUP

- For countries to thoroughly complete the questionnaire received in the NSOs according to the guidelines, including all the institutions that collect agricultural, fisheries, aquaculture, forestry, environmental and rural statistics.

Thank you