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para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

March 2005

**TECHNICAL REVIEW MEETING ON
WORLD PROGRAMME FOR THE CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE 2010
Rome, Italy, 9-10 March 2005**

SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

- 1.1 Mr. Haluk Kasnakoglu, Director, Statistics Division, FAO welcomed the participants and explained the background of the Meeting. He outlined the expected outcome of the Meeting and opened the Meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Overview of the New Agricultural Census Programme

- 2.1 There was general consensus that the integrated approach to the Programme of agricultural censuses and surveys was sound, as it promoted the collection of data in a more systematic and cost-effective manner.
- 2.2 It was considered that the modular approach to the agricultural census was suitable, as it provided countries with greater flexibility to collect a wider range of data.
- 2.3 It was noted that the new approach would require countries to pay close attention to census planning in terms of timetable of the various modules, mechanism for coordination among collaborating institutions, data processing, and budgeting. Additional training materials would need to be provided to help countries implement the new programme.
- 2.4 In general the meeting endorsed the content of the agricultural census publication. The publication would provide broad guidelines on the new programme, with further material on operational issues to be presented in later publications. Complementary publications on census taking methodologies might also need to be updated.
- 2.5 The confusion over the census reference date was noted; this issue should be clarified in the presentation of the census programme.

Agenda Item 3: Data Items (Summary of Comments from Divisions)

- 3.1 The meeting highlighted the need to clarify the use of complete and sample enumeration in the core census module.
- 3.2 It was agreed that the definition of a parcel should be modified to reflect single tenure type.
- 3.3 For the core module, it was agreed that a new item on irrigation should be included and that consideration be given to including an item on machinery.
- 3.4 The meeting also recommended that the suitability of including crop production in the supplementary module should be considered.
- 3.5 The implications of defining a holder in such a way as to possibly comprise two or more persons were discussed. This issue needed to be further considered.
- 3.6 The need to consider alternative statistical treatment to area under mixed crops was also highlighted.

Agenda Item 4: Co-ordination of Population and Agricultural Censuses

- 4.1 Promotion of the linkages between the agricultural census and the population census was strongly recommended by the meeting as a way of enhancing the analysis of data and reducing the resource burden of census taking.
- 4.2 The Canadian experience in synchronizing the two census operations was reviewed, and the advantages of this approach were highlighted.
- 4.3 It was recognized that there was a competition for inclusion of items in the population census, but the possibility of including one or two agriculture-related items should be explored in discussions with the United Nations Statistics Division.
- 4.4 It was noted that the population census covered the household sector only. For complete coverage of agricultural holdings, the non-household sector would need to be covered using farm registers or other administrative sources.
- 4.5 The need to give more attention to the methods of linking population and agricultural census data was highlighted.

Agenda Item 5: Classifications for Agricultural Census

- 5.1 There was broad consensus that the classifications to be used for the agricultural census, particularly for crops, livestock and machinery, need to be harmonized with standard international classifications like ISIC and CPC, and with SNA.

- 5.2 It was agreed that the crop classification should only provide broad categories, leaving the details such as crop variety to be added by the countries as per their requirement.

Agenda Item 6: Feasibility of Concept of Sub-holding/Sub-holder

- 6.1 There were favourable comments on the use of the sub-holding/sub-holder concepts as a means to measure the role of women in the management of the holding. It was noted that the data collection would be challenging, and that further clarification of these concepts should be provided in the census document.
- 6.2 The suitability of the term “farm operator”, as used in Canada, was discussed. This should be considered as part of the sub-holding/sub-holder concept.
- 6.3 It was noted that time use survey might be a better way to measure women’s role in agriculture. This could taken-up as a thematic agricultural survey.

Agenda Item 7: Use of Cut-Offs for Defining Operational Holdings

- 7.1 The presentation showed the variety of size cut-offs used by different countries in the agricultural census, and highlighted the difficulties this creates for the analysis of data and for making international comparisons.
- 7.2 It was agreed that the definition of a holding should remain unchanged in regard to the coverage of all agricultural production activity, although it was recognized that many countries need to apply minimum size cut-offs. Countries should be strongly encouraged to set those cut-offs as low as possible.

Agenda Item 8: Role of Agricultural Census in Monitoring of MDGs, and Measurement of Household Food Security and Poverty

- 8.1 The meeting stressed the importance of using the agricultural census to monitor MDGs.
- 8.2 The meeting endorsed the proposal to broadly cover food security related items in the census supplementary module. It was stressed that food security was a complex topic, but lessons existed and should be drawn upon.
- 8.3 There was some discussion on the inclusion of a household food security related item in the core census module, but it was felt that this was not suitable.
- 8.4 It was agreed that available objective indicators, rather than subjective indicators, could be readily used for inclusion in supplementary module and further methodological work should go into other items for inclusion in the supplementary and thematic modules.

Agenda Item 9: Community-Level Data

- 9.1 The collection of community-level data through the agricultural census was strongly supported, as it provides a simple and cost-effective approach to collecting useful data.

- 9.2 It was agreed that the community-level data to be collected through agricultural census should mainly cover agriculture-related topics. The items should be objective and physically verifiable. The data collected should exclude items that were more suited to direct collection from holdings. The recommended draft items should be reviewed in the light of country experiences.
- 9.3 It was noted that the identification of the respondent would depend upon the country situation, but single respondent was preferable to a group of respondents for a community.
- 9.4 It was noted that the community-level information provided a useful source of data for MDG monitoring, particularly when they were pooled with data collected from other sources within GIS frame-work.
- 9.5 Problems with the definition of the community to be covered by the community-level collection were raised. This issue needed to take into consideration the administrative set-up in the country. It was reported that there were often problems in defining community boundaries.

Agenda Item 10: Inclusion of Aquaculture in the Agricultural Census

- 10.1 There was general agreement as to the importance of collecting aquacultural data in association with the agricultural census.
- 10.2 It was felt that, on statistical grounds, aquaculture should not be considered as part of the agricultural census, because it was treated by ISIC as a separate economic activity. However, there was strong support for undertaking an aquacultural census at the same time as the agricultural census.
- 10.3 It was agreed that aquacultural data were important only for some countries. Therefore, the agricultural census programme should provide an option for countries to synchronize the aquacultural census with the agricultural census, if they wished to do so.

Agenda Item 11: Rural versus Agricultural Census

- 11.1 There was extensive discussion on whether the scope of the agricultural census should be widened to also cover other rural households not engaged in agricultural production.
- 11.2 It was noted that data item such as employment for all rural households was important, but other surveys, especially the population census, might be better suited for collection of these data. It was noted that linking of the population and agricultural censuses would go a long way towards addressing the rural dimension issue.
- 11.3 It was considered that the inclusion of the community-level collection would help to satisfy some of the needs for rural data.

- 11.4 It was agreed that a chapter would be included in the agricultural census document to assist those countries that wished to cover all rural households in their agricultural censuses.

Agenda Item 12: Themes for Agricultural Survey Programme

- 12.1 It was noted that the agricultural survey programme to be presented in the agricultural census publication would be very extensive if it covered all agricultural surveys. It was agreed that FAO should focus its thematic surveys on those related to the agricultural holding. This would omit some key surveys such as time use.
- 12.2 It was emphasized that themes for surveys should be prioritized.
- 12.3 The problems that countries were likely to face in implementing the Programme were highlighted, and the importance of providing guidelines to help countries in this regard was stressed.
- 12.4 It was recommended that FAO promoted linkages between the Programme of agricultural censuses and surveys and the national survey programme.
- 12.5 The problems in keeping the sampling frames from the agricultural census up-to-date were noted. This matter should be given more attention in the agricultural census document.

Agenda Item 13: Summary and Conclusions of the Meeting

- 13.1 The experts considered the conclusions reached in various technical sessions and broadly agreed with them. The points made during this session were incorporated in this Summary document.

Agenda Item 14: Closing of the Meeting

- 14.1 Mr. Haluk Kasnakoglu, Director, Statistics Division thanked the participants for their contribution to the Meeting on behalf of FAO.