

5. Relationship of population and/or housing censuses to other types of censuses and other statistical investigations

(a) Census of agriculture

1. 44. While the population and housing censuses have a close relationship, their relationship with the agricultural census is less well defined. However, as the result of increasing integration within programmes of data collection, the relationship between the population and housing census and the agricultural census is now far closer than in the past and countries are increasingly looking at new ways to strengthen this relationship.

1. 45. One issue in relating the two censuses is that they use different units of enumeration. The unit of enumeration in the agricultural census is the agricultural holding, which is the techno-economic unit of agricultural production, while the unit of enumeration in the population census is the household and the individual within the household. In many developing countries, however, most agricultural production activities are in the household sector and households and agricultural holdings are very closely related, often in a one-to-one relationship. Establishing links between the two censuses is particularly relevant for such countries.

Definitions, essential features and uses of population and housing censuses

1. 46. The agricultural census collects various household/individual data for members of the agricultural holder's household. The *World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2010*⁹, recommends the collection of data on household size and limited data on demographic characteristics and economic activity of members of the holder's household, as well as some limited information on persons working as employees on the holding. Users may find some agricultural activity data from the agricultural census more comprehensive than from the population census because the latter normally investigates only the principal economic activity of each person during a short time reference period and this may not identify persons connected with agricultural activity on a seasonal or part-time basis. On the other hand, the population census provides data on agricultural employment and agricultural population, which is not available from the agricultural census because it only covers households associated with agricultural holders. To get a complete picture, agricultural data users will need both agricultural census data and population census data.

1. 47. In planning the population and housing census, every opportunity for developing the relationship between this census and the agricultural census should be explored. This can take several forms. Definitions used in the population and housing censuses should be compatible with those used in the agricultural census so that meaningful comparisons can be made between the two data sets. The population and housing census can also be of use in the preparation of the agricultural census, such as in the demarcation of enumeration areas, the preparation of the frame for the agricultural census or, if applicable, the sample design.

⁹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Statistical Development Series No. 11(Rome, 2005)

1. 48. In planning the national census programme, consideration should be given to the possibility of collecting additional agricultural information as part of the population and housing census exercise that would facilitate the preparation of the frame of agricultural holdings in the household sector for a subsequent agricultural census. This could be done as part of the pre-census cartographic work and/or listing exercise or by adding an additional question to the census questionnaire. In the latter case, an additional item at the household level could be included on whether any member of the household is engaged in own-account agricultural production activities. Alternatively, additional data at the individual person level could be collected to identify persons involved in agricultural activities during a longer period, such as a year. These new items are included in the principles and recommendations (see para. 2.381–2.390). Where countries choose to adopt this approach of using the population and housing census to establish a frame for the agricultural census, the agricultural census should be synchronized with the population and housing census and conducted as soon as possible after the population and housing census, while the frame is still up to date.

1. 49. The opportunity for linking population and agricultural census data should also be explored. This could add considerable analytical value to data sets from both censuses and save on data collection costs. Much of the demographic and activity status data collected in the population census are also collected in the agricultural census. If data from the two censuses could be linked, it would no longer be necessary to collect these data again in the agricultural census.

1. 50. Some countries conduct the data collection for the population and agricultural censuses as a joint field operation. Normally, each census retains its separate identity and uses its own questionnaire, but field operations are synchronized so that the two data collections can be done at the same time by the same enumerators. Occasionally, the two censuses are merged into one. This may have a number of advantages, but its effect on field operations and data quality needs to be carefully considered.