



Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics and its Regional Action Plan

Jairo Castaño
Senior Statistician
FAO, Asia and the Pacific

*High-Level Regional Consultation on Policies to Respond to High Food Prices
in Asia and the Pacific Region*

Bangkok, 1-2 Oct 2012



Background: Agriculture poorly integrated into NSDS

- In 2009, a Paris21-review found that only 10% of International Development Association (IDA) countries had included agriculture more-or-less appropriately in the NSDS (Nat'l Strategy for Development of Statistics) 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.
- Agriculture activities often part of informal economy → not well covered by statistics reporting systems.
- Statistical legislation covering the whole statistical system not always appropriate or laws are neglected;
- Lack of coordination between NSOs and MoAs or deficient intra-sector coordination.
- Low profile of statisticians in agriculture ministries; disorganized statistical functions.



Emerging needs in national agriculture statistics

- Growing demand to monitor MDGs, especially on food security.
- Emerging issues such as biofuels, global warming, environment impacts.
- Rising food prices and lack of reliable market information for monitoring price volatility.



The Global Strategy

- In the light of this, the 40th UNSC session (2009) asked World Bank and FAO to lead the preparation of a “**Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics**”.
- After an in-depth assessment, Global strategy was prepared based on 3 pillars:
 - 1. Minimum set of core national data items:** e.g. about 10 crops and 4 livestock species account for over 95% of world production of cereals, meat and fiber.
 - 2. Integrate agriculture into national statistics system:** Common Sampling Frame, a survey & census programme framework, integrated databases, geo-referencing.
 - 3. Better governance and capacity building:** establish a National Statistics Council to coordinate stakeholders' efforts; training, equipment, info technology.



Pillars of the Global Strategy

Data requirements and
Conceptual Framework

Pillar 1

Menu of indicators
Minimum set of
“core-national”
data items`

Pillar 2

Integrate
Agriculture into
National Statistics
System

Methodology to
Integrate
Agriculture

Integrated
Database

Integrated Survey
Framework

Master
Sample
Frame

Pillar 3 - Governance and Statistical Capacity Building



Global Strategy: Adoption and Planning

- A key recommendation of the GS: agriculture be integrated into national statistical systems.
- The UNSC adopted the GS in Feb 2010 and a Action Plan in Feb 2012.
- The Action Plan includes the following components:
 1. a comprehensive technical assistance programme;
 2. an articulated training programme; and
 3. a well targeted research agenda.
- FAO proposed a twin approach:
 - i. a global action plan; and
 - ii. coordinated regional action plans.



Progress made: Regional Action Plans

- African Action Plan 2011-15 adopted in 2011 (FAO, AFDB, UNECA, others).
- In Dec 2010, ESCAP Committee on Statistics endorsed FAO's proposal to develop an Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific.
- Steering Group for Agricultural Statistics (SGAS) established under ESCAP's Steering Group for Improving Economic Statistics.
- It includes 15 members countries, ADB, DFID, IFAD, SPC, IASRI. ESCAP-FAO joint secretariat.
- FAO, ESCAP and ADB are implementing partners.



Milestones for the development of the Regional Action Plan

Milestone	Date
1 st meeting of Steering Group	Nov 2011
Compilation of country questionnaires	Dec 2011
Draft versions of training, research and technical assistance components	Jun 2012
Draft version of the Regional Action Plan 2012-17	Jul 2012
2 nd meeting of the Steering Group	Jul 2012
New draft version of the Regional Action Plan	Aug 2012
Consideration by legislative bodies:	
Global Steering Committee	Oct 2012
AP Commission on Agric. Statistics (APCAS)	Oct 2012
ESCAP Committee on Statistics	Dec 2012



Highlights of the Regional Action Plan

- The first phase of the plan is 2013-2017.
- Starts with establishment of a Regional Office and a Regional Steering Committee.
- In-depth country assessments missions to assess capacity to produce a minimum set of core data.
- Missions will result in country proposals to improve agricultural statistics on the basis of technical assistance, training and research.
- It may include preparation or revision of sector strategic plan of the NSDS to integrate agri-statistics into the national statistical system.



Highlights of the Regional Action Plan

- The Plan will start with a small set of pilot countries.
- Criteria for selection (i) have political will and commitment; (ii) importance of agriculture; and (iii) need for assistance.
- A national mechanism for coordination will be required, but will be decided by each country.



Conclusions

- The regional AP of the global strategy is an historical opportunity for countries to develop sustainable agricultural statistical systems.
- It would require dialogue and cooperation among data producers to avoid duplicating efforts when integrating agriculture into the NSDS.
- Beneficiaries: countries showing political will and commitment to implement the pillars of the global strategy.
- Advocacy is essential to ensure country commitment and adequate national resources for compiling country-specific minimum set of agricultural statistics on a sustainable basis.
- High-level authorities like yourselves can play a key role advocating the Plan within your countries.



Thank you for your attention