

Government of Italy

FAO

Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Evaluation

of

**Strengthening National Food Security Information System  
(GCP/VIE/024/ITA)**

**Report of the Evaluation Mission**

## **Preface**

The following document represents the views of the independent evaluation mission on the performance and achievements of the project Strengthening National Food Security Information System (GCP/VIE/024/ITA). The project began its operations in March 2001; its planned duration is until March 2004. A forerunner project Pilot Project for the Development of the National Food Security Programme (GCP/RAS/140/ITA-VIE) began in 1992 and ended in 1998. The present evaluation focuses mainly on the current phase of the project in order to provide recommendations on possible changes in the orientation of the project as well as on further steps necessary to consolidate progress and ensure achievement of objectives.

The evaluation was initiated with a view to providing the Government, FAO and collaborating agencies with an independent and objective assessment of the results of the project. The mission started on 27 October 2003 and will end on 11 November 2003; the mission met with officials and experts in Hanoi and visited one province involved in the project (Bac Kan) to hold discussions with collaborators in provincial offices and communes.

The mission's main views regarding the projects are presented in the summary, followed by more specific conclusions and recommendations. The main body of the report will present additional views and amplifications, while the annexes provide information on the mission background as well as statistical information on the main features of the project.

Evaluating the project was a challenging task given the complex nature of the project and the limited time available for the mission. The evaluation mission is most appreciative of the efforts made by the project CTA, the project director and coordinator, the staff of the FAO Representation and government officials, to welcome and support the mission. They, as well as a range of other individuals, provided information and discussed issues in a frank and constructive manner.

### The Evaluation Mission

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## List of Acronyms

AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
CMS	Crop Monitoring and Forecasting System
CPO	Country Project Officer
CPRGS	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD provincial office)
DFID	Department for International Development
DP	Department of Planning, MARD (current designation)
DPP	Department of Planning and Projection, MARD (former designation)
EC	European Commission
EOD	Starting Date of Assignment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAOR	FAO Representative
FAORAP	FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
FAOSTAT	FAO's major statistical database
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System
FNSS	Food and Nutrition Surveillance System
FSIS	Food Security Information System
FSIU	Food Security Information Unit, Statistics Division, DP, MARD
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSO	General Statistical Office
HFSS	Household Food Security Survey
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HIS	Health Information System
HMS	Hydro-meteorology Service
HQ	Headquarters
ICARD	Information Centre on Agricultural and Rural Development, MARD
IT	Information Technology
KIMS	Key Information Management System
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIS	Market Information System
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIN	National Institute of Nutrition
NTE	Project Ending Date
PEM	Protein Energy Malnutrition Programme
PPER	Project Performance Evaluation Report
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
Prodoc	Project document
RGM	Routine Growth Monitoring System
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SIAP	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
SOE	State Owned Enterprise
SPFS	Special Programme for Food Security (FAO)
TWG	Technical Working Group on Food Crop Forecasting
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
Unicef	United Nations Children's Fund
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
WAICENT	World Agricultural Information Centre (FAO)
WFP	World Food Programme
WFS	World Food Summit
WFS:fyl	World Food Summit: five years later

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam has a population of approximately 80 million, of which about 80% have their main source of income in agriculture. Since the introduction of doi-moi (renovation) policies in the 1980s, agricultural output has continued to grow and the country has become a major rice exporter. However, the average size of an agricultural holding is only 0.7 hectare, and the average farming household comprises 4.8 persons. Fluctuations in the production and supply of rice due to weather, natural calamities and inadequate transport can render the nutritional status of large groups of the population vulnerable. Despite rapid economic progress, sections of the population below the poverty line could still face problems of sufficient access to food. In response to this situation, the Government formulated in the early 1990s a comprehensive national food security programme under which the Vietnamese agriculture had the prime objective to ensure food supplies and improve nutritional levels of the diets for the whole community, providing not only sufficient calories but also higher levels of proteins, fats and vitamins.

To assist Viet Nam in this task, the Government of Italy provided the financial resources for the FAO-executed "Pilot Project for the Development of the National Food Security Programme" (GCPS/RAS/140/ITA-VIE), which started in October 1992 and concluded in October 1998.

The successor project "Strengthening National Food Security Information System" (GCP/VIE/024/ITA) began its operations in March 2001 with a budget of US\$ 1,484,131 (donor government contribution, this was increased to US \$1,539,218 following the Tripartite Review meeting in September 2002; expected counterpart contribution in cash was VND 1,675,000,000, in kind VND 1,325,000,000); its planned duration is until March 2004. The evaluation focuses mainly on this phase.

Under the overall development objective of contributing to the achievement of food security through sustainable agricultural diversification, rural development and alleviation of poverty by providing reliable information to support the national food security and poverty alleviation programmes, the project has pursued four immediate objectives: (i) strengthened capability of MARD to design and implement an expanded marketing information monitoring system capable of providing real-time data on prices (farmgate, wholesale and retail), stocks, volume and flow of marketed commodities; (ii) strengthened food crop monitoring and production forecasting system capable of producing reliable information on the situation of major food crops at provincial level on a monthly basis through an operational inter-agency coordinating mechanism; (iii) a model for a sustainable system of periodic assessment of household level demand and access to food designed and implemented on a pilot basis in selected provinces; and (iv) capacity of MARD to analyse statistics and information related to food security including national food crop situation and outlook and food balance sheets as well as to formulate policies, prepare development and strategic plans, produce quality reports and disseminate information collected.

Towards the attainment of these objectives, important results have been achieved, including:

- the introduction of a more reliable Crop Monitoring System (CMS), which simplifies reporting and includes information on weather, crop and market conditions;
- the development of a Market Information System (MIS) providing quality data on assembly, wholesale selling and supply prices for MARD's 10-day and monthly market reports;
- the enhancement of MARD's capacity to analyse food security information and prepare high-quality food security reports, as documented in more reliable food balance sheets for Viet Nam, annual State of Food Security reports, and special studies on food security topics;
- the implementation of national, provincial and district workshops and training seminars as well as the organization of fellowships and study tours, leading to an improved knowledge by national officials not only of agricultural statistics and food security issues;
- the upgrading of information technology and communication facilities in MARD HQ and provincial offices in order to improve the storage, reporting, analysis and dissemination of food security information (including the establishment of the FSIU website), as well as the introduction of electronic reporting forms and provision of email accounts to national and provincial offices.

Furthermore, the project has initiated other activities which will improve the information on agricultural and food security in Viet Nam:

- the development, in collaboration with MARD, NIN and MOLISA, of a pilot Food and Nutrition Surveillance System (FNSS) to monitor household food security in Bac Kan province;

- the setting up of a Technical Working Group (TWG) on Crop Forecasting, which has brought together different institutions involved in the forecasting process and provided a forum to discuss disparities: the forecasts prepared by the TWG are reported to match well with final production data.

The mission also noted certain constraints in the project, which could jeopardize future impact. These constraints relate to the fact most institutional collaborators are being reimbursed by the project for their inputs, and that project operations depend to a large degree on the incentive payments to field staff for data collection. (The Project Document stipulated that Government would gradually take over these costs so that the continued operation of these activities would be assured). The start in 2003 of the household food security monitoring activities in Bac Kan province means that the Food and Nutrition Surveillance System (FNSS) will have had only a short test run before the project comes to its scheduled end. Technical as well as institutional issues still have to be addressed before the FNSS will be firmly established. At the national level, there appears to be duplication in data collection activities (e.g. market and price data), and even within MARD it seems that the arrangements for collecting, processing, analysing and disseminating data could be rationalized.

The Government's Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) adopted in 2002 has confirmed food security as an important Government priority (despite the abolition of the National Food Security Committee in 2001). However, the potential contribution of improved food security information and agricultural statistics to monitoring efforts under CPRGS<sup>1</sup> has not received the attention it deserves: the CPRGS proposes only relatively crude food security indicators<sup>2</sup>, important documents produced by the FSIU (such as the State of Food Security in Viet Nam reports) do not seem to have reached their full potential target audience, and MARD's Food Security Information System (FSIS Viet Nam) database, created with project assistance, is currently accessible only for internal MARD (DP) users. Generally, it appears that information sharing, pooling of resources and coordination could be improved among national institutions as well as among international development agencies.

Yet, the food security information concept promoted by the project is appreciated by officials and collaborators in Hanoi as well as in the provinces. Comprehensive and consistent agricultural and food security statistics are seen as a precondition for successful agricultural, economic and social development in Viet Nam, and the project has played an important part in this regard.

The mission views the current situation both as a consolidation and a pilot phase: the pilot CMS system as well as the market information system introduced by the previous project have been refined and extended, whereas the household food security monitoring system set up in Bac Kan province is still in its infancy. The 'Expected End-of-Project Situation' has been reached for several important project components (CMS considerably strengthened, MIS covering expanded number of commodities, food balance sheets integrated into the country's agricultural statistical service), while other expected outcomes (model for a sustainable household food security monitoring system implemented in selected pilot provinces, wider dissemination outreach of the FSIS information materials and studies with a user-producer feedback mechanism, improved capacity in the Departments of Planning and Projection and Agricultural and Rural Development Policy of MARD) have not yet achieved their full potential.

For these reasons, the mission recommends that the project and MARD review the sustainability of main activities (including operational budgets required as well as formalized institutional arrangements), and identify constraints that could affect the attainment of project objectives that have not yet been fully achieved. The review should result in the preparation of two different scenarios: the first should outline how project-initiated activities (especially CMS, MIS and crop forecasting activities) will be continued based on national resources, at the same time identifying potential shortfalls as well as possible areas of reduced activities. The second scenario should present distinct project proposals that indicate how the identified constraints could be overcome with donor support. Particular attention should be given to household food security monitoring. The evaluation mission report makes some suggestions in this regard.

The mission recognizes that improving food security information in Viet Nam is a challenging task, as the country faces substantial constraints in terms of human as well as institutional resources. Under the circumstances, the project has performed well. The momentum it has built can be kept: this will require continuing attention given to food security issues at policy-making levels as well as sustained efforts to harmonize and coordinate the various information systems providing data for food security and poverty monitoring.

<sup>1</sup> In addition, there are monitoring and evaluation activities regarding the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and possibly the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

<sup>2</sup> Related only to quantitative (not qualitative) food security, and not giving enough attention to disaggregated data and issues of food access and availability.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### *The way forward*

#### Short term (current project)

The project has effectively consolidated, fine-tuned and expanded the activities begun under the predecessor project. In addition, new initiatives have been successfully introduced and significant results have been achieved regarding capacity building within MARD. In the remaining project period, the mission recommends the following activities to be undertaken:

- Review of the sustainability of main activities (including operational budgets required as well as formalized institutional arrangements), and identification of constraints that could affect the attainment of project objectives (particularly those that have not yet been fully achieved);
- Preparation of two different follow-up scenarios:
  - Scenario One to outline how project-initiated activities (especially CMS, MIS and crop forecasting activities) will be continued based on national resources, including an identification of potential shortfalls as well as possible areas of reduced activities
  - Scenario Two to present distinct project proposals that indicate how the identified constraints could be overcome with donor support. Particular attention should be given to household food security monitoring;
- Circulation of the Follow-up Paper together with the project's Terminal Report to the Government, the donor and FAO not later than January 2004;
- Holding the Tri-partite Review meeting foreseen in the project document in late February 2004, to discuss the Terminal Report recommendations as well as the scenarios presented in the Follow-up Paper.

#### Longer term (follow-up)

Regarding the longer term follow-up, the mission proposes the following considerations:

- The CMS and MIS are relatively well established as part of DP's regular workload: the Government needs to reaffirm its commitment to fund the operational costs needed to continue this work, and should consider strengthening DP in order to establish the capacity to adjust and expand the system;
- There will be a need for training and retraining of staff at various level, especially at provincial level – a training needs assessment and draft training plan should be prepared;
- Price and forecasting information generated by the project is so far intended mainly for institutional users – a system should be identified how this information could be made more accessible to farmers and the wider public;
- The regular statistical and analytical publications should be continued and their diffusion (via MARD's website and through hard copies) encouraged;
- The role of the DP vis-à-vis other Government units engaged in gathering and disseminating information (within MARD as well as within other ministries or public sector agencies) should be clarified;
- Efforts should be made to link more effectively with the main institutions involved in the CPRGS, including MPI as well as relevant international agencies – there should be regular consultation and coordination with poverty alleviation initiatives managed by other institutions and agencies, in order to avoid duplications;
- The role of valid agricultural and food security statistics as a precondition for successful agricultural, economic and social development in Viet Nam should be stressed – the vigour of a market economy is not sufficient per se to eliminate either poverty or malnutrition;

Concerning in particular the Food and Nutrition Surveillance System (FNSS) set up on a pilot basis in Bac Kan province, the mission makes the following recommendations:

- Review the coordination as well as the financial requirements regarding the continuation of the Food and Nutrition Surveillance System with a view to ensuring the consolidation and expansion of the system;
- The skills acquired by staff involved in the Bac Kan FNSS need to be reviewed and, where appropriate, upgraded;
- The quality of data coming out of the pilot FNSS in Bac Kan needs to be checked in order to receive reliable results;
- Especially for household food security monitoring, there is a need to strengthen formal cooperation between MARD, Health (NIN) and MOLISA in controlling food insecurity, child malnutrition and poverty alleviation;

- Although the country has achieved a remarkable progress in food security at national level, food insecurity still exists especially in poor regions, remote areas and among vulnerable groups of the population – these are compelling reasons for the extension of the Bac Kan model to at least some other high-risk provinces;
- In general, the various instruments used in food and nutrition surveillance in MARD (CMS, MIS, FBS) Ministry of Health (e.g. Routine Growth Monitoring System, NIN: nutritional status and food intake) MOLISA (poverty situation) and GSO (e.g. Living Standards Survey) should be regularly reviewed and consolidated to ensure quality and consistency – this is an area where assistance from international agencies could be sought.

### **Project document**

The project document clearly documented the need for reliable food security information in Viet Nam, and was logically consistent in its sequence of planned activities, outputs and objectives. However, with the benefit of hindsight, there was also an element of over-optimism present in the project document. Some expected developments (e.g. regarding the recruitment of at least four additional statistical officers and the funding of operational costs) overestimated the capacity of MARD to take on new personnel and also was not in line with the usual modus operandi of projects in the country.

Most risks that could be anticipated were listed in the project document<sup>3</sup>: In the course of project implementation, it has become apparent that higher levels of incentive payments than anticipated were still required (a condition that is reportedly shared by most projects in Viet Nam), and that the expected recruitment of new staff would not be possible due to hiring restrictions by the Government. The perceived risk of inadequate coordination could be extended also to the international agencies in Viet Nam: there is evidence both of duplication of efforts and of insufficient sharing of information.

### **Institutional arrangements**

The project established a Food Security Information Unit (FSIU), for operating and managing MARD's Food Security Information System (FSIS), with the Director of the Department of Planning and Projections nominated as National Project Director, while day-to-day operations were handled by the Chief, Statistics Division as National Project Coordinator.

Major collaborators outside MARD have been the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) and the General Statistics Office (GSO) as well as the Hydro-meteorology Service (HMS), Agro-Meteorology Research Centre, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), and provincial offices of the Ministry of Health in Bac Kan. In order to rationalize existing food crop production monitoring and forecasting activities, an inter-agency technical working group (TWG) on food crop forecasting was formed with FSIU, DP, GSO, Department of Agriculture and Forest Extension, Department of Plant Protection, specialized rice research institutes, and DARD offices in key paddy growing provinces as members.

The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) as a key ministry in the country (and coordinating body for the CPRGS) was generally expected to collaborate with the project, and was specifically mentioned to participate in the crop forecasting TWG. However, apart from participation in the first Tri-partite Review (TPR) meeting in 2001, MPI has not been involved in project activities.

**Recommendation:** In view of the relevance of food security information for poverty reduction monitoring, efforts should be made to link more effectively with the main institutions involved in the CPRGS, including MPI, as well as with international agencies.

### **Technical and operational backstopping**

Technical backstopping, apart from email and telephone contacts, consisted of nine visits by four FAO staff members. These were useful to review progress, discuss future project initiatives and provide technical guidance and inputs, including training<sup>4</sup>. The project also received four operational backstopping visits by staff from FAO's Regional Office as well as from FAO HQ. Both technical and operational backstopping have been relevant and without problems. However, it has to be noted that for lengthy periods the project had to operate without an FAO Representative (the project CTA often acting as FAOR); this may have affected the position of the project vis-à-vis the donor community in Viet Nam, as well as added to the workload of the CTA.

<sup>3</sup> Listed risks were: a) inadequate coordination between, and within, national institutions; b) unavailability of national staff to work on full time basis; c) inadequate technical level of staff; d) language problems in the communication between the national and international staff.

<sup>4</sup> Some visits were actually undertaken on a consultancy basis.

## **Government support**

Government support on a technical and administrative level has been in line with most expectations expressed in the project document: the FSIU as well as the Technical Working Group (on crop forecasting) have been established, strong links with NIN, MOLISA and GSO as main collaborators have been developed (the absence of MPI remains a concern), and the expansion of the CMS as well as the MIS has received strong support.

However, the budgetary and human resources actually allocated to the project have remained below the expectations expressed in the project document. The envisaged recruitment of at least four additional statistical officers to work full time has not taken place, and the expectation that the costs of field data collection would gradually be taken over by the Government has not materialized. At the national level, there appears to be duplication in data collection activities (e.g. market and price data), and even within MARD it seems that the arrangements for collecting, processing, analysing and disseminating data could be rationalized.

## **Project management**

Project management had to operate a project whose design was ambitious in relation to the resources available. The project's managers have effectively consolidated and expanded the activities begun under the predecessor project. In addition, new initiatives have been successfully introduced and significant results have been achieved regarding capacity building within MARD.

### ***Immediate Objective One: Strengthened capability of MARD to design and implement an expanded marketing information monitoring system capable of providing real-time data on prices (farmgate, wholesale and retail), stocks, volume and flow of marketed commodities***

The main aim of the project was to provide market information to support Government policy-making and planning, rather than to provide information for farmers and traders. The capability of DP to supply MARD with this information has certainly been strengthened due to project activities. The MIS provides an expanded range of data on prices and offers some indication of market arrivals: the system gives timely and accurate statistics that are in line with international standards. In addition, several special market studies (litchis, tea, sugar, coffee, rice, fertilizers and organic food) have been undertaken to provide better insight. The central FSIU and provincial collaborators are conscientious and well trained and the data collection and analysis system is functional. Some overlapping of competences with parallel initiatives (within MARD – e.g. ICARD – as well as outside) was noticed.

### **Recommendations:**

- The collection of timely and reliable statistics on food commodities has become a routine part of MARD activities. In order to avoid overlap, MARD should take care to develop an information management system that integrates and coordinates the statistical and communication initiatives within MARD. In particular, with reference to Statistical Law No. 04/2003/QH11, which will become effective by the beginning of 2004, a standard methodological framework for the collection and analysis of data price, produced and stocked volumes is needed.
- Regarding duplication of efforts with agencies outside MARD, the Government should take steps to rationalize and coordinate price collection activities in Viet Nam, and to establish better administrative procedures for information sharing and for charging for data services.

### ***Immediate Objective Two: Strengthened food crop monitoring and production forecasting system capable of producing reliable information on the situation of major food crops at provincial level on a monthly basis through an operational inter-agency coordinating mechanism***

The project has fine-tuned and expanded the Crop Monitoring System initiated under the predecessor project: the system produces ten-day and monthly estimates of major food crops of generally good quality, and seasonal forecasts of paddy and rice crops. The seasonal forecasts are worked out by an inter-agency Technical Working Group which draws together most relevant Vietnamese institutions. In the latter case, the project provided not only technical assistance but also acted as a catalyst to improve institutional collaboration among governmental bodies.

**Recommendations:**

- A system of timely and reliable statistics on crop monitoring and production forecasting should proceed as part of the daily work at MARD. MARD should review how the project activities could be integrated with other activities undertaken within the same Ministry, using GSO methodological standards.
- A decision should be taken as to whether the 10-day crop reporting is still required (and whether data accuracy is adequate to justify the short reporting interval), or whether the monthly CMS would suffice for regular reporting purposes.
- Further efforts should be made to coordinate the forecasting work undertaken in the different agencies and to develop further crop forecasting methodologies. Consideration should be given to the need for, and feasibility of, producing forecasts for other crops.

**Immediate Objective Three: A model for a sustainable system of periodic assessment of household level demand and access to food designed and implemented on a pilot basis in selected provinces**

Field work under this objective has had a late start: the establishment, in collaboration mainly with MARD, NIN and MOLISA, of a pilot Food and Nutrition Surveillance System (FNSS) to monitor household food security in Bac Kan province took place only in 2003. The pilot monitoring system is a comprehensive package of food and nutrition monitoring activities, which would be integrated into the existing nutrition surveillance activities and would eventually replace the child malnutrition survey and the sentinel system. The FNSS incorporates administrative data from other sources such as MOLISA and Ministry of Health as well as from surveys. (However, collaboration between the relevant institutions has so far taken place only on a pilot basis.) Eventually, the FNSS will have three elements: (i) a reporting system in a sample of communes to provide regular administrative data on food security, including data from the RGM and data on poverty and hunger from MOLISA; (ii) data from national Household Food Security Surveys (every three years); and (iii) quick assessments of the food and nutrition situation in times of food crisis.

**Recommendations:**

- The main objectives of the FNSS should be to: regularly monitor household food access and nutrition conditions, to identify nutritional trends and problems, especially for vulnerable groups, to provide information regarding access to food, and to analyse how people cope with food shortages.
- The statistical skills of FSIU staff are of a good standard. However, more training on risk analysis would allow for more insight on data collected at the individual and family levels.
- FSIU has shown the capability of managing and developing the FNSS on a pilot basis. However, unlike the CMS and MIS, the FNSS to a significant degree relies on data collection by non-MARD field staff. MARD, as the designated agency for food security, should give priority to this activity and work out formal cooperation agreements with the relevant institutions. The further expansion of the system to other provinces and its consolidation may depend on the availability of international assistance.
- On a national level, the food security information system needs to be coordinated with ongoing poverty alleviation initiatives managed by other institutions and agencies, in order to avoid duplications.

**Immediate Objective Four: Capacity of MARD to analyse statistics and information related to food security including national food crop situation and outlook and food balance sheets as well as to formulate policies, prepare development and strategic plans, produce quality reports and disseminate information collected**

MARD's capacity to analyse food security information and prepare high-quality food security reports has been significantly enhanced through the implementation of national, provincial and district workshops and training seminars as well as the organization of fellowships and study tours<sup>5</sup>. This has led to an improved knowledge by national officials not only of agricultural statistics and food security issues. The results of capacity building are evident from more reliable food balance sheets for Viet Nam, annual State of Food Security reports, and special studies on food security topics. The upgrading of information technology and communication facilities in MARD and provincial offices has improved the storage, reporting, analysis and dissemination of food security information, and the establishment of the FSIU website has made MARD information more easily accessible.

<sup>5</sup> However, some planned positions within DP could not be filled due to limitations regarding new recruitment in MARD.

However, the potential contribution of improved food security information and agricultural statistics to monitoring efforts under CPRGS has not received the attention it deserves: the CPRGS as the main policy document in the field of food security and poverty reduction, proposes only relatively crude food security indicators, and important documents produced by the FSIU (such as the State of Food Security in Viet Nam reports) do not seem to have reached their full potential target audience<sup>6</sup>. MARD's Food Security Information System (FSIS Viet Nam) is currently accessible only for internal MARD (DP) users.

**Recommendations:**

- MARD should review its information dissemination policy, and prioritize its publications. Institutional overlap should be reduced. In view of its national relevance, the State of Food Security report should be considered as a flagship publication for MARD. The FSIS Viet Nam database should be made available for the public, and publicized widely;
- Staff training has shown good results, but the recruitment of qualified young staff would have enhanced the capability of the FSIU further. Following the departure of the project CTA, there will likely be a need for additional staff in the unit, as well as for additional specialized training;
- Efforts should be made to link more effectively with the main institutions involved in the CPRGS, including MPI, as well as relevant international agencies. Coordination bodies set up for broad development strategies such as the CPGRS and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as for the UNDAF process should involve the Department of Planning in view of its food security mandate.

**Gender aspects (gender equity in project implementation and results)**

The project document did not provide any specific reference to gender. The project's section on Target Beneficiaries mentioned the rural poor as ultimate beneficiaries. The project achieved a near gender balance in most training events held at MARD HQ, and in study tours and English training courses. One national training course had a 70/30 male/female ratio.

In terms of statistical representation, biometric and school enrolment indicators by gender are important food security indicators. The Vietnam Women's Union constantly pointed out the heavy conditions of Vietnamese women.

**Recommendation:** Biometric measures and school enrolment rates are indirect indicators of food security and poverty. The nutritional status and social conditions by gender should be better highlighted with direct indicators of indigence and inadequate diet, collected at the household level or at school. The conditions of aged persons living alone, by gender, and the condition of mothers of large families should also be represented with specific indicators.

<sup>6</sup> However, FSIU publications were widely quoted in a DFID country report.

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam has a population of approximately 80 million, of which about 80% have their main source of income in agriculture. Up to 1985, Vietnam was a food deficit country. Due to the doi moi (renovation) policies beginning in 1986, the country has transformed itself from a centrally controlled economy into a dynamic market economy and food production has increased dramatically. The country has become a major rice exporter. However, the average size of an agricultural holding is only 0.7 hectare, and the average farming household comprises 4.8 persons. Fluctuations in the production and supply of rice due to weather, natural calamities and inadequate transport can render the nutritional status of large groups of the population vulnerable. Despite rapid economic progress, sections of the population below the poverty line could still face problems of sufficient access to food. In response to this situation, the Government formulated in the early 1990s a comprehensive national food security programme under which the Vietnamese agriculture had the prime objective to ensure food supplies and improve nutritional levels of the diets for the whole community, providing not only sufficient calories but also higher levels of proteins, fats and vitamins.

To assist Viet Nam in this task, the Government of Italy provided the financial resources for the FAO-executed "Pilot Project for the Development of the National Food Security Programme" (GCPS/RAS/140/ITA-VIE), which started in October 1992 and concluded in October 1998. That project initiated a pilot Food Security Information System (FSIS) with the main function of timely provision of information on the national food security situation, especially information regarding rice. The pilot FSIS set up two related sub-systems: crop monitoring and forecasting system (CMS) and market information system (MIS). A planned household food security and nutrition surveillance system (FNS) did not materialize.

## 2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN

The current project "Strengthening National Food Security Information System" (GCP/VIE/024/ITA) began its operations in March 2001 with a budget of US\$ 1,484,131 (donor government contribution, this was increased to US \$1,539,218 following the Tripartite Review meeting in September 2002; counterpart contribution in cash VND 1,675,000,000, in kind VND 1,325,000,000); its present planned duration is until March 2004.

Under the overall development objective of contributing to the achievement of food security through sustainable agricultural diversification, rural development and alleviation of poverty (by providing reliable information to support the national food security and poverty alleviation programmes), the project has pursued four immediate objectives:

- (i) strengthened capability of MARD to design and implement an expanded marketing information monitoring system capable of providing real-time data on prices (farmgate, wholesale and retail), stocks, volume and flow of marketed commodities;
- (ii) strengthened food crop monitoring and production forecasting system capable of producing reliable information on the situation of major food crops at provincial level on a monthly basis through an operational inter-agency coordinating mechanism;
- (iii) a model for a sustainable system of periodic assessment of household level demand and access to food designed and implemented on a pilot basis in selected provinces; and
- (iv) capacity of MARD to analyse statistics and information related to food security including national food crop situation and outlook and food balance sheets as well as to formulate policies, prepare development and strategic plans, produce quality reports and disseminate information collected.

The project approach was to address its immediate objectives through seventeen (later expanded to eighteen) planned outputs: five related to the Market Information System, five related to the Crop Monitoring System and crop forecasting, two (later three) related to household food security monitoring, and five related to capacity building within MARD and the production of analytical documents. The immediate objectives were accompanied by success criteria, which gave a good indication of what were the expected results at the end of the project.

### 2.1 Assessment of Project Design

The project document clearly documented the need for reliable food security information in Viet Nam, and was logically consistent in its sequence of planned activities, outputs and objectives. However, with the benefit of hindsight, there was also an element of over-optimism present in the project document. Some expected developments (eg the stipulation that "the existing personnel complement of the Statistics Division will be

augmented through the recruitment and appointment of at least four additional statistical officers who will work full time with the project ..." and ... "the National Institute of Nutrition and the General Statistics Office will be co-opted to assist the project in the formulation of sustainable models for household food security monitoring ... NIN will make available to the project its technical staff to perform tasks in support of household food security monitoring") overestimated the capacity of MARD to take on new personnel and was also not in line with the usual modus operandi of projects in the country. Some expectations related to human resources and institutional development (eg under project strategy "the project will liaise with relevant actors in the international community in the country with planned or on-going projects, which may impact on food security concerns to establish synergy and effect optimal use of resources", and under project justification "the project should exert all efforts to establish strong coordination with DARDP with respect to the department's ongoing and planned food security-related activities to effect optimal use of scarce resources") were based on optimistic assumptions concerning the project's influence and the responsiveness of administrations and individuals.

Also concerning the household food security monitoring objective (which, unlike the other objectives, could not build on previous initiatives), the project document displayed optimism: it expected "methodology and reporting forms for periodic monitoring of food security conditions of households established and tested in pilot surplus and deficit provinces." Eventually, a pilot project could be set up in one province.

The project document established as beneficiaries successively: (i) staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, including related staff at the province, district and commune levels; (ii) the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as a whole, and in particular, MARD and the National Food Security Committee, and the National Institute of Nutrition, which require improved analytical tools as well as timely and reliable data for determining situation and outlook of the country's food security; and (iii) ultimately the entire population of Vietnam, particularly those living in food deficit areas, the rural poor and those affected by nutritional risks, as the project will enable the Government to stabilize the supply and improve the access to basic foodstuffs.

Most risks that could be anticipated were listed in the project document: a) inadequate functioning of national coordination between, and within, national institutions; b) unavailability of national staff to work on full time basis, as agreed; c) inadequate technical level of staff; d) language problems in the communication between the national and international staff associated with the project, particularly at the province and district level. Of these, some have materialized to varying degrees. In the course of project implementation, it has become apparent that higher levels of incentive payments than anticipated were still required (a condition that is reportedly shared by most projects in Viet Nam), and that the expected recruitment of new staff would not be possible due to hiring restrictions by the Government. The observed risk of inadequate coordination could be extended also to the international agencies in Viet Nam: there is evidence both of duplication of efforts and of insufficient sharing of information.

The project document also indicated broad success criteria for each immediate objective, which reflected the "Expected End-of-Project Situation". A logical framework matrix, which is sometimes used to present objectives, outputs and activities as well as assumptions, progress indicators and sources of verification was not included. A three-year workplan was prepared as an integral part of the project document and regularly revised to reflect changes in the general environment as well as in the pace of project implementation.

### **3. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

In terms of institutional collaboration, the project document listed collaborators within MARD as well as outside. In first place, the then Department of Agricultural and Rural Development Policy (DARDP) was mentioned: "It is therefore imperative that a strong and functional coordinating mechanism be clearly established between DPP and DARDP to further enhance the efficiency of MARD and insure smooth project implementation." The second major collaborator identified was the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN): "The Project Implementation Team will establish strong co-ordination with NIN in the formulation of specific activities to be undertaken as regards the household food insecurity and vulnerability component of the project." Third actor in this field was to be the General Statistics Office (GSO): "The National Institute of Nutrition and the General Statistics Office will be co-opted to assist the project in the formulation of sustainable models for household food security monitoring."

Other expected collaborators mentioned were: Department of Agriculture and Forestry Extension, provincial Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), VINAFOOD I and II, national academic and research institutions. Of these, particularly provincial Departments of Agriculture, the Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (for crop forecasting), and MOLISA have become involved in project activities. In addition, the Bac Kan provincial offices of the Ministry of Health has been a partner in the household food security monitoring system.

The project document also stipulate the firm establishment of a permanent institutional mechanism, the Food Security Information Unit (FSIU), for operating and managing MARD's Food Security Information System. The FSIU was established early in the lifetime of the project, but the expectation that MARD would assign four officers to the Unit to work full time with the FSIS did not materialize due to staffing restrictions within MARD. The Director of the Department of Planning and Projections was nominated as National Project Director, while day-to-day operations were handled by the Vice-Chief, Statistics Division as National Project Coordinator.

In order to rationalize existing food crop production monitoring and forecasting activities, the establishment of an inter-agency technical working group (TWG) on food crop forecasting was foreseen, to consist of: Ministry of Planning and Investment, General Statistical Office, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, National Institute of Nutrition, Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology and Vietnam Northern Food Corporation (VinaFood I). In the course of project implementation, the following membership emerged: FSIU, DP, GSO, Hydro-meteorology Service (HMS), Agro-Meteorology Research Centre, Department of Agriculture and Forest Extension, Department of Plant Protection, specialized rice research institutes, and DARD offices in key paddy growing provinces.

Annual tri-partite reviews by the Government, Donor Agency and Executing Agency have been held as stipulated in the project document.

#### 4. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

In the following section, budget information is based on the latest available budget revision "F" (June 2003). The review of the project's implementation status is derived from project progress and other reports, and observations of the mission.

##### 4.1 Project Budget and Expenditure

Table 1: Budget and Expenditure

	PRIOR YEARS	2002	2003	Revised total	Original Total
	Expenditure	Budget	Budget	Revision "N"	Budget
<b>Salaries Professional</b>	314,483	247,255	215,579	1,087,158	664,000
<b>Salaries General Service</b>	17,901	14,925	14,925	61,054	133,000
<b>Consultants</b>	119,781	268,600	250,201	683,999	195,000
<b>Contracts</b>	0	190,000	60,000	250,000	222,000
<b>Overtime</b>	4,704	10,000	10,000	34,459	
<b>Travel</b>	49,487	84,542	114,385	279,836	222,000
<b>Training</b>	59,092	125,000	90,000	339,112	236,000
<b>Expendable Equipment</b>	17,498	20,000	20,000	68,013	65,000
<b>Non Expendable Equipment</b>	110,981	40,000	10,000	234,924	43,000
<b>Hospitality</b>	0	0	0	0	
<b>Technical Support Services</b>	6,812	18,000	18,000	42,812	
<b>General Operating Expenses</b>	33,210	45,000	47,000	234,608	1,085,000
<b>Superv. / Adv. Tech. Services</b>					60,000

<b>General Overhead Expenses</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Chargeback</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Chargeout</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>73,3949</b>	<b>1,063,322</b>	<b>850,090</b>	<b>3,315,975</b>	<b>1,946,520</b>
Support Cost	95,413.37	138,231.9	1,105,11.7	419,906	253,048
Special Factor			85,938		89,925
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>829,362.37</b>	<b>1,201,554</b>	<b>1,046,540</b>	<b>3,735,881</b>	<b>2,289,493</b>

Note: Due to changes in FAO's accounting procedures and financial software, the budget categories used in the original project budget changed in subsequent budget revisions.

## 4.2 Activities and Outputs

### 4.2.1 Outputs under Immediate Objective One: Strengthened capability of MARD to design and implement an expanded marketing information monitoring system capable of providing real-time data on prices (farm-gate, wholesale and retail), stocks, volume and flow of marketed commodities

*Success criteria: Design of market information monitoring system revised incorporating expansion in commodity and subject matter coverage. A system for monitoring market arrival designed and implemented in selected major wholesale markets. A system for monitoring commercial stocks established and implemented in pilot surplus and deficit provinces. A series of studies on commodity marketing systems. Design of market information publication improved and dissemination system expanded to include farmers and private enterprises with user-producer feedback mechanism.*

#### Output 1.1: Price monitoring system (Improved design and implementation of a reliable province-level farm gate, wholesale and retail price monitoring system for main food items)

Work on this output started at the beginning of the project with assessing the various sources of price data and coordinating with other agencies in the collection of data, and the introduction of a new monthly Crop Monitoring System introduced in six provinces in July 2001. A new monthly bulletin "Food Market Report" was launched in January 2002 (stopped after three issues; re-launched on permanent basis as Food Market Monitor in March 2003 – see also 1.5).

The project developed a collection of farm-gate prices for various agricultural commodities as part of the new monthly Crop Monitoring System (CMS), which was introduced in May 2002. In August 2002, a Survey of Key Market Locations to collect supplementary price data, such as assembly and wholesale prices, for major commodities was introduced on a pilot basis. The Survey of Key Market Locations now covers nine provinces, representing all regions of Vietnam comprising 47 key markets for major crops in Vietnam. Provincial staff were trained to enter the data into a provincial market database (Microsoft Access) and submit weekly data to Hanoi by e-mail. Data are being analysed in Hanoi and the provinces. A Market Information Group has been established within Statistics Division to monitor and analyse market data from the Survey of Key Market Locations and other sources. Widespread use is made of the information available from other sources on the Internet.

#### Output 1.2: Market arrival system (A system for monitoring market arrival of staple and horticulture crops designed and implemented in selected major wholesale markets)

Work started in 2002, and information on market conditions and market arrivals is now being regularly collected in the Survey of Key Market Locations (see Output 1.1).

#### Output 1.3: Stocks assessment (Stocks [government, commercial and household] assessed at least on an annual basis)

The project undertook a review of available data on food stocks, and data collected have been presented in the "Food Market Report". In addition, some stocks information is obtained from the Survey of Key Market Locations. Work has started on a Survey of Household Paddy/Rice Stocks, which will measure the seasonal

patterns of paddy/rice stocks and provide information on the decision-making of farmers in relation to buying and selling paddy and rice<sup>7</sup>.

Output 1.4: Rapid marketing assessment (Rapid production/market assessment studies for main food commodities)

The first study was an assessment of the rice market in the south of the country in the light of drought conditions and the low level of exports in July/August 2002 done by MARD staff, with assistance from International and National Consultants. Other in-depth market assessments of important commodities (litchis, sugar, coffee, tea, organic food and fertilizer) have been included in the Monthly Market Monitor (see Output 1.5).

Output 1.5: Marketing information disseminated (Design of market information publication improved and regularly disseminated to government institutions, private enterprises, farmers and the tri-media with feed-back mechanism)

The new monthly series "Food Market Report", issued from January 2002, was discontinued after several issues because the Government felt that there was a greater need for market reports issued every ten days. Efforts then went into providing market information, based on the project activities, for inclusion in the FSU's ten-day crop report. The ten-day reports were improved to include additional market data from various sources, including the Survey of Key Market Locations and the Internet. Starting 2002, the Food Security Information Unit (FSIU) also operates a website, which presents recent ten-day reports in English and Vietnamese.

A new monthly report titled "Food Market Monitor" was introduced on a regular basis in March 2003. The report provides an overall assessment of domestic and international market trends, as well as in-depth assessment studies on commodities of interest. The ten-day and monthly market reports are mainly disseminated via the FSIU website. The website is now the primary means of dissemination of crop and market information in the FSIU and is widely accessed in Vietnam and elsewhere (positive feedback via email has been received).

4.2.1 Outputs under Immediate Objective Two: Strengthened food crop monitoring and production forecasting system capable of producing reliable information on the situation of major food crops at provincial level on a monthly basis through an operational inter-agency co-ordinating mechanism

*Success criteria: An inter-agency technical working group on food crop forecasting established and meeting regularly. National food crop forecasts compiled and integrated into the country's agricultural statistical programme. Standard province level reporting forms with appropriate instruction manuals and supporting computerized data entry and processing programmes established. A statistically sound province-level sampling design to identify reporting units. Regular surveys undertaken. Regular CMS reports prepared and disseminated by the Food Security Information Unit of the Statistics Division.*

Output 2.1: Technical Working Group on Food Crop Forecasting (TWG) (Functional Inter-Agency Technical Working Group of Food Crop Forecasting organized and established)

During the initial project phase, draft Terms of Reference for the TWG were drawn up, preliminary meetings held with relevant institutions and individuals, and an agreement was signed with the Hydrometeorology Service to provide monthly weather data and weather forecasts to be used for crop forecasting, and to participate in the TWG. However, planned meetings of the TWG were postponed to 2003 because of the delay in introduction of the CMS (which was to provide key data for input to the forecasting system) and rescheduling of other project activities. The first meeting of the TWG was held in January 2003. The Group contains all key institutions involved in crop forecasting, including the Departments of Planning and Projection, Plant Protection, and Extension within MARD, as well as the General Statistical Office, the Hydro-Meteorology Centre and other specialised rice research institutes. The first meeting established the modus operandi of the Group and agreed on a schedule for the preparation of forecasts. By end-2003, the TWG had met six times.

Output 2.2: Crop Monitoring System (CMS) (Commune level baseline data updated to provide basis for selection of commune (or district) level reporting units for the CMS; Design for province level sample reporting units (districts or communes) selection on the basis of a statistically valid sampling design; Data collection instruments, instruction manuals and computerized data processing programmes designed and implemented)

<sup>7</sup> Stocks data for many trading or food processing companies are not available, although these are considered insignificant. There are no regular data sources for household food stocks, which may be significant: farmers often retain surpluses after the harvest while waiting for prices to increase; farmers in the north also commonly store surpluses for the winter. The National Reserve also keeps stocks of food for national emergencies – confidential reports are submitted monthly to key Government Ministries.

for food crop monitoring system in all provinces of the pilot region, in parallel with the existing system for agro-ecological region-level information)

At the beginning of the project, the existing CMS was reviewed and an amended reporting form was developed to provide more detailed data on rice to help in crop forecasting, as well as additional data on the plantings of other crops. Price data were also included. The data collection system was re-developed to provide province and district data. The field system was upgraded to provide for reporting by fax to ensure that data are submitted quickly. A national consultant was employed to re-design the computer processing system using more up-to-date software. The new CMS was introduced on a pilot basis in six provinces in July 2001 and continued into the first months of 2002. The results were evaluated and reporting forms and instruction manuals were amended accordingly. The computer processing system was also amended to accommodate the changes to reporting forms and to improve the data entry, editing and output facilities.

However, the introduction of the CMS was postponed until May 2002 because of concerns about its funding once the project was finished. In April and May 2002, training courses were held around the country to train field staff in reporting for the CMS. The CMS involves each district submitting crop reports by fax to the FSIU each month. The data are entered and processed, and output tables are prepared by the FSIU as well as reports (in English and Vietnamese) presenting results. The project has also assisted the FSIU in the preparation of ten-day reports, based on its ten-day reporting system. The reports are available in English and Vietnamese on the FSIU website.

Output 2.3: Crop forecasting (National forecasts for paddy and maize production issued by TWG before onset of harvest)

With the delay in the formation of the TWG, formal forecasts were not made until 2003. However, using information from the CMS, ten-day reports, meteorology, and other sources, FSIU did some forecasting work for rice production in 2002, which was presented in the ten-day and CMS reports.

The TWG had met six times by end-2003 and has produced three rice forecasts: first winter/spring forecast, second winter/spring forecast, and summer/autumn forecast. Results were issued in a publication disseminated via the FSIU website.

Outputs under Immediate Objective Three: A model for a sustainable system of periodic assessment of household level demand and access to food designed and implemented on a pilot basis in selected provinces

*Success criteria: Modules for assessing household level demand and access to food designed. Methodology and reporting forms for periodic monitoring of food security conditions of households established and tested in pilot surplus and deficit provinces.*

Output 3.1: FIVIMS (An information system established, covering all available data related to household food security in Vietnam)<sup>8</sup>

Work under this output started with an inventory of food security data available in Vietnam, and assessing the need for additional data in the context of the FIVIMS guidelines. MARD staff were trained in the use of the FAO food security mapping software KIMS and some maps were prepared. A backstopping mission from ESAF was undertaken in August 2001 to review the FIVIMS work undertaken to date and help plan future work. During 2003, database systems covering meteorology, crop production, livestock, food supply, value of production, and agricultural production indexes were being developed. Computers and communication facilities were installed in all 61 provinces, and staff training provided, to help improve the flow of food security information to the FSIU. The FSIU website provides current information on food security conditions in Vietnam.

In late 2003, version 1.0 of *FSIS Viet Nam*, the FSIU's food security information database system, is almost ready to be released. It contains data on crop and livestock production, production indexes, value of production, food supply and nutrition, and weather. During the reporting period, the project also assisted in the establishment of a network in the Department of Planning of MARD, which will be used to provide all staff in the Department with access to the data contained in *FSIS Viet Nam*.

<sup>8</sup> The Project Progress Report March - August 2001 introduced one project output FIVIMS, in variance with the original project document. (Only two outputs were specified under this Immediate Objective.) Beginning with the Project Progress Report September 2001 – February 2002, the heading for this output was changed to An Information System Established, Covering All Available Data Related to Household Food Security in Vietnam.

*Output 3.2: Assessment of household food security (Methodology for periodic assessment of household level demand and access to food)*

Work under this output started with assistance from a United Nations Volunteer (UNV) working in the FAO Representation in reviewing all nutrition surveillance activities undertaken by the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN). Discussions were held with NIN on the steps needed to improve and develop the existing nutrition monitoring systems to provide data on household level demand and access to food, especially based on the Sentinel System and the Routine Growth Monitoring System. Several meetings were held between MARD and NIN to discuss the arrangements for the work to be carried out.

Work on operationalization of the methodology for the household food security system started in earnest with the recruitment of an international consultant in March 2003. The system was finalized in consultation with MARD, National Institute of Nutrition and UNICEF. The proposed system has two main elements: (i) a regular household survey to collect data on malnutrition and household food security risk factors; and (ii) regular household food security monitoring data from various administrative sources. Also, a detailed assessment was undertaken of data on hunger and poverty available in the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) with a view to its use in monitoring household food security. MOLISA is responsible for the Government's hunger and poverty eradication activities and its data could be valuable to the project.

*Output 3.3: Pilot implementation of household food security system (Pilot-basis implementation of household-level food security monitoring system)*

Work under this output did not start until 2003, when the methodology for the household food security system had been finalized. A household-level food security monitoring system was introduced on a pilot basis in Bac Kan province, which provides regular food security monitoring data. This includes monthly child underweight data from the Routine Growth Monitoring System (published on website). Work has also begun on developing a computer system to process the poverty data that comes out of the administrative system of the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA) in Bac Kan.

In addition, a household food security survey of 432 households was conducted in July 2003. The results have been presented in a report issued jointly by MARD and NIN in October 2003.

*Outputs under Immediate Objective Four: Capacity of MARD to analyse statistics and information related to food security including national food crop situation and outlook and food balance sheets as well as to formulate policies, prepare development and strategic plans, produce quality reports and disseminate information collected*

*Success criteria: Regular publication programme on crop situation and outlook published under the leadership of MARD. National food balance sheet compiled and integrated in the country's agricultural statistical programme. Staff trained in statistical methods, operations and analysis, forecasting, monitoring and evaluation, economic and policy analysis, development and strategic planning, and technical report writing and publication. Expanded dissemination programme of food security information system publication and reports to include government, farmers, private enterprises, research and academic institutions, media and general public.*

*Output 4.1: MARD-wide training programme (MARD-wide training programme on statistical methodology and operation, statistical, economic and policy analysis, monitoring and evaluation, development and strategic planning and technical report writing)*

Work began with the development of a training programme for MARD staff and the preparation of a preliminary plan for a study tours and fellowships. The training programme also included some English language training.

*Output 4.2: Pool of trained staff (A pool of national, provincial and district technical staff of MARD trained in sampling design, data collection, processing analysis, forecasting, monitoring and evaluation, policy formulation, development and strategic planning and technical report writing and publication)*

Training to upgrade staff capabilities has been a major activity of the project. Apart from substantial on-the-job training for FSIU staff, in-country training courses included: training of data processing staff of FSIU in network administration; a workshop in Food Balance Sheets; training of provincial staff in the use of computers provided by the project; a food security seminar in support of the Government's preparations for WFS:yl; training courses for field staff in each province for the CMS reporting; training courses for market reporters in nine provinces; a training course on Microsoft Access and PowerPoint for FSIU staff; a workshop on household food security; training of provincial market information staff in processing and analysis of market data and in

preparing market reports; training of provincial staff in data processing and preparation of crop situation reports; training of staff in the use of SPSS; training of field staff in the collection of data for the survey of household food security in Bac Kan; and a workshop to officials in Bac Kan province to present the results of the household food security survey.

Study tours and fellowships included: a study tour for two participants to China to study market information systems (April 2002); a study tour to three countries for four participants to observe Food Balance Sheet activities (June 2002); Analysis and Interpretation of Statistics (2 persons, July-September 2002; 2 months); and Strategies, Tools and Techniques for Building Client/Server Applications (1 person, September-November 2002; 3 months). Funds were also provided for one person to attend a workshop on market information in Yangon, Myanmar.

However, the intention to recruit several additional young qualified staff to boost the technical capability of the FSIU could not be fully implemented due to continuing MARD restrictions on the recruitment of new staff. The Project Progress Report March 2003 - August 2003 stated: "the Government continues to face increasing problems in assigning sufficient staff for project activities. The Statistics Division of the Department of Planning and Projection, which is responsible for implementing the project, has only limited staff and they also have a range of other responsibilities. There is still no one working full-time on the project."<sup>9</sup>

Output 4.3: National food balance sheet (National food balance sheet compiled within the Department of Planning and Projection)

An International Consultant in Food Balance Sheets (FAO staff member) trained staff in two visits (November 2001, May-June 2002) in preparing food balance sheets (FBS), and arrangements were made for GSO and NIN to be involved in the FBS work. Food Balance Sheets for 1997-2001 were completed, and a report presenting the results was issued in August 2002. A Vietnamese translation of the the FAO report *Food Balance Sheets - A Handbook* was published in July 2002.

Output 4.4: Food security situation reports (Regular Food Security Situation reports of the National Food Security Committee prepared and disseminated)

The first food security situation report "The State of Food Security in Vietnam" was finalized in October 2001 to help the Government in its preparations for the WFS:Vn. The report was prepared in English and Vietnamese and was widely disseminated to Government and international agencies. The second issue of "The State of Food Security in Vietnam" was finalized in December 2002, and provided updated data as well as additional material on food security issues. Over 600 copies of the first issue of the report were distributed to Government and international agencies; the number was less for the second issue.

Output 4.5: Special studies (A set of special studies on important food security related variables, post-harvest losses, industrial uses of agricultural outputs, etc.)

Work on a special study on the relationship between poverty and food insecurity, based on an analysis of the Vietnam Living Standards Survey, was completed and a report on the study was issued in June 2002. Another special study of the relationship between farm characteristics and poverty/food insecurity, based on analysis of the Vietnam Living Standards Survey, was completed and a report on the study issued in December 2002.

Work is under way on several special studies: a study of cropping patterns to better understand seasonal factors in food security; an analysis of food consumption and malnutrition based on data from the Food Consumption Survey; a study of food security based on data from the Agricultural Census; and an analysis of paddy and rice prices based on the Survey of Key Market Locations.

<sup>9</sup> This is partly explained by the fact that the Government had recruited three additional staff for Statistics Division prior to the beginning of the project and was therefore not able to recruit any additional staff.

#### **4.3 Technical and operational backstopping, government support, project management**

Technical backstopping, apart from email and telephone contacts, consisted of nine visits by four FAO staff members. These were useful to review progress, discuss future project initiatives and provide technical guidance and inputs, including training<sup>10</sup>. The project also received four operational backstopping visits by staff from FAO's Regional Office as well as from FAO HQ. Both technical and operational backstopping have been relevant and without problems. However, it has to be noted that for lengthy periods the project had to operate without an FAO Representative (the project CTA often acting as FAOR); this may have affected the position of the project vis-à-vis the donor community in Viet Nam, as well as added to the workload of the CTA.

Government support on a technical and administrative level has been in line with most expectations expressed in the project document: the FSIU as well as the Technical Working Group (on crop forecasting) have been established, strong links with NIN, MOLISA and GSO as main collaborators have been developed (the absence of MPI remains a concern), and the expansion of the CMS as well as the MIS has received strong support.

However, the budgetary and human resources actually allocated to the project have remained below the expectations expressed in the project document. The envisaged recruitment of at least four additional statistical officers to work full time has not taken place, and the expectation that the costs of field data collection would gradually be taken over by the Government has not materialized. At the national level, there appears to be duplication in data collection activities (e.g. market and price data), and even within MARD it seems that the arrangements for collecting, processing, analysing and disseminating data could be rationalized.

Project management had to operate a project whose design was ambitious in relation to the resources available. The project's managers have effectively consolidated and expanded the activities begun under the predecessor project. In addition, new initiatives have been successfully introduced and significant results have been achieved regarding capacity building within MARD.

### **5. ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL RESULTS**

#### **5.1 Immediate Objective One: Strengthened capability of MARD to design and implement an expanded marketing information monitoring system capable of providing real-time data on prices (farmgate, wholesale and retail), stocks, volume and flow of marketed commodities**

The main aim of the project was to provide market information to support Government policy-making and planning, rather than to provide information for farmers and traders. The capability of DP to supply MARD with this information has certainly been strengthened due to project activities. The MIS provides an expanded range of data on prices and offers some indication of market arrivals: the system gives timely and accurate statistics that are in line with international standards. In addition, several special market studies (litchis, tea, sugar, coffee, rice, fertilizers and organic food) have been undertaken to provide better insight. The central FSIU and provincial collaborators are conscientious and well trained and the data collection and analysis system is functional. Some overlapping of competences with parallel initiatives (within MARD – e.g. ICARD – as well as outside) was noticed.

#### **5.2 Immediate Objective Two: Strengthened food crop monitoring and production forecasting system capable of producing reliable information on the situation of major food crops at provincial level on a monthly basis through an operational inter-agency coordinating mechanism**

The project has fine-tuned and expanded the Crop Monitoring System initiated under the predecessor project: the system produces ten-day and monthly estimates of major food crops of generally good quality, and seasonal forecasts of paddy and rice crops. The seasonal forecasts are worked out by an inter-agency Technical Working Group which draws together most relevant Vietnamese institutions. In the latter case, the project provided not only technical assistance but also acted as a catalyst to improve institutional collaboration among governmental bodies.

#### **5.3 Immediate Objective Three: A model for a sustainable system of periodic assessment of household level demand and access to food designed and implemented on a pilot basis in selected provinces**

<sup>10</sup> Some visits were actually undertaken on a consultancy basis.

Field work under this objective has had a late start: the establishment, in collaboration mainly with MARD, NIN and MOLISA, of a pilot Food and Nutrition Surveillance System (FNSS) to monitor household food security in Bac Kan province took place only in 2003. The pilot monitoring system is a comprehensive package of food and nutrition monitoring activities, which would be integrated into the existing nutrition surveillance activities and would eventually replace the child malnutrition survey and the sentinel system. The FNSS incorporates administrative data from other sources such as MOLISA and Ministry of Health as well as from surveys. (However, collaboration between the relevant institutions has so far taken place only on a pilot basis.) Eventually, the FNSS will have three elements: (i) a reporting system in a sample of communes to provide regular administrative data on food security, including data from the RGM and data on poverty and hunger from MOLISA; (ii) data from national Household Food Security Surveys (every three years); and (iii) quick assessments of the food and nutrition situation in times of food crisis.

#### **5.4 Immediate Objective Four: Capacity of MARD to analyse statistics and information related to food security including national food crop situation and outlook and food balance sheets as well as to formulate policies, prepare development and strategic plans, produce quality reports and disseminate information collected**

MARD's capacity to analyse food security information and prepare high-quality food security reports has been significantly enhanced through the implementation of national, provincial and district workshops and training seminars as well as the organization of fellowships and study tours<sup>11</sup>. This has led to an improved knowledge by national officials not only of agricultural statistics and food security issues. The results of capacity building are evident from more reliable food balance sheets for Viet Nam, annual State of Food Security reports, and special studies on food security topics. The upgrading of information technology and communication facilities in MARD and provincial offices has improved the storage, reporting, analysis and dissemination of food security information, and the establishment of the FSIU website has made MARD information more easily accessible.

However, the potential contribution of improved food security information and agricultural statistics to monitoring efforts under CPRGS has not received the attention it deserves: the CPRGS as the main policy document in the field of food security and poverty reduction, proposes only relatively crude food security indicators, and important documents produced by the FSIU (such as the State of Food Security in Viet Nam reports) do not seem to have reached their full potential target audience<sup>12</sup>. MARD's Food Security Information System (FSIS Viet Nam) is currently accessible only for internal MARD (DP) users.

## **6. SPECIFIC TOPICS AND ISSUES**

### **6.1 Cost-Effectiveness**

International consultants (5 short-term contracts) in data processing, market information, food balance sheets, nutrition statistics, household food security

National consultants (short-term contracts) in data processing, crop forecasting, market information, food balance sheets, statistical analysis and training

Food Security Information Unit (FSIU) at MARD: National Project Director=Director of Department of Planning (PD), National Project Coordinator, 8 part-time staff of the Statistics Division; provincial and district support staff, 2 drivers, 1 translator/interpreter, 1 administrative assistant

Collaborating institutions:

National Institute of Nutrition (NIN)

General Statistical Office (GSO)

Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA)

Vietnam Women's Union

Hydrometeorology Service (HMS)

90 personal computers installed, with modem and e-mail account

LAN created in DP-MARD

In provinces computers and email to improve data storage, reporting, dissemination

FSIU website ([www.mard.gov.vn/fsiu](http://www.mard.gov.vn/fsiu)) in English and Vietnamese

Office equipment

Vehicles

### **Crop Monitoring System (CMS) established, producing reliable information on rice production**

<sup>11</sup> However, some planned positions within DP could not be filled due to limitations regarding new recruitment in MARD.

<sup>12</sup> However, FSIU publications were widely quoted in a DFID country report.

**CMS based on the existing system for agro-ecological region-level data collection and regular provincial-level surveys**  
**A functional inter-agency Technical Working Group (TWG) meets regularly and produces forecasts for paddy and maize production**  
**Forecasts and comments are disseminated through a paper series and the FSIU website**

Timely and reliable provincial-level farmgate, wholesale and retail price monitoring system for main food items  
 Collecting information for:  
 Ten-Day Crop and Market reports  
 monthly "Food Market Monitor" which provides an overall assessment of domestic and international market trends, as well as in-depth studies on specific commodities  
 Reports are diffused on paper and through the FSIU website

**6.2 Sustainability**

Most institutional collaborators reimbursed by project for their inputs  
 Project operations depend to a large degree on incentive payments to field staff  
 Only a short test run of Food and Nutrition Surveillance System (FNSS) in Bac Kan  
 At national level duplication in data collection activities (even within MARD)

FSIU contribution to monitoring efforts under CPRGS not fully recognized  
 Important documents produced by the FSIU (such as the State of Food Security in Viet Nam reports) have not reached full potential target audience  
 MARD's Food Security Information System (FSIS Viet Nam) database currently accessible only for internal MARD (DP) users  
 Information sharing, pooling of resources and coordination could be improved among national institutions as well as among international development agencies  
 Need to strengthen formal cooperation between MARD, Health (NIN) and MOLISA in controlling food insecurity, child malnutrition and poverty alleviation  
 Extension of the Bac Kan model to other high-risk provinces  
 Various instruments used in food and nutrition surveillance in MARD (CMS, MIS, FBS), Ministry of Health (e.g. Routine Growth Monitoring System, NIN: nutritional status and food intake), MOLISA (poverty situation) and GSO (e.g. Living Standards Survey) should be regularly reviewed and consolidated to ensure quality and consistency – this is an area where assistance from international agencies could be sought

**6.2 Training (Human Resources Development) Activities: Successes and Constraints**

- 6 fellowships
- 3 SIAP, Tokyo, Japan
- 3 AIT, Bangkok, Thailand
- 5 study tours (2 China, 1 FAO-Indonesia-Thailand, 1 Australia, 1 Myanmar)
- Various in-country training courses and workshops
- Training courses: 1,643 participants
- Workshops and seminars: 190 participants
- English training: 18 participants

**Training and research activities improved FSIU staff skills in database management, data processing and analysis, sample design, food balance sheets, crop forecasting, research report writing and data disseminating**

**Training of in-country counterparts improved capabilities in data collections, processing and analysis**

- **English language courses facilitate use of Internet and access to international reference material**

**Gender aspects (gender equity in project implementation and results)**

The project document did not provide any specific reference to gender. The project's section on Target Beneficiaries mentioned the rural poor as ultimate beneficiaries. The project achieved a near gender balance in most training events held at MARD HQ, and in study tours and English training courses. One national training course had a 70/30 male/female ratio.

In terms of statistical representation, biometric and school enrolment indicators by gender are important food security indicators. The Vietnam Women's Union constantly pointed out the heavy conditions of Vietnamese women.



## ANNEXES

### *Terms Of Reference for the Evaluation Mission*

#### PROJECT GCP/VIE/024/ITA

#### 1. Background

##### 1.1 Introduction

The development objective of Project GCP/VIE/024/ITA is to provide “reliable information to support national food security and poverty alleviation programmes and effectively use the same to support policy and planning exercises so that timely decisions can be taken by Government with respect to the food and nutritional status of the population.”

The four immediate objectives of the project are:

- Strengthened capability of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) to design and implement an expanded marketing information monitoring system capable of providing real-time data on prices (farm-gate, wholesale and retail), stocks, volume and flow of marketed commodities.
- Strengthened food crop monitoring and production forecasting system capable of producing reliable information on the situation of major food crops at provincial level on a monthly basis through an operational inter-agency coordinating mechanism.
- A model for a sustainable system of periodic assessment of household level demand and access to food designed and implemented on a pilot basis in selected provinces.
- Capacity of MARD to analyze statistics and information related to food security including national food crop situation and outlook and food balance sheets as well as to formulate policies, prepare development and strategic plans, produce quality reports and disseminate information collected.

The project is a follow-up to an earlier project – GCPS/RAS/140/ITA – which started in October 1992 and finished in October 1998. The present project was intended to build on the results of the earlier project.

The Project Document for the current project was signed in June 2000. FAO is the executing agency. The Government implementing agency is Statistics Division, Department of Planning and Projection, MARD. The project started in March 2001 and is of three years duration. It is expected that the project will be completed on schedule in March 2004.

The Project Document provided for inputs of US \$ 1,484,131 from the Government of Italy. This was increased to US \$1,539,218 following agreement at the Tripartite Review meeting in September 2002. Total expenditure to 3 July 2003 was US\$ 1,047,473. Government inputs to the project were valued at 1,675 Million VND in cash and 1,325 Million VND in kind.

The main inputs provided by the project were:

- the services of a Chief Technical Adviser for 33 months, plus five short-term international consultants in market information, data processing, food balance sheets, nutrition statistics, and household food security;
- funds for four fellowships, four study tours and various in-country training courses;
- non-expendable equipment, including 87 computers and accessories for installation in MARD and the provinces;
- 50 months of national consultant inputs, especially in the fields of market information, data processing and crop forecasting, and contractual services with national institutions to support project activities;
- operating expenses and reimbursement to the Government for the cost of project support staff (two drivers, one administrative assistant and one interpreter/translator).

A revised project work plan was prepared at the beginning of the project. This included some minor adjustments to project activities in the light of improvements in the national food security situation in Vietnam, the availability of new sources of data, proposed changes in statistical methodology, and organisational changes within MARD.

##### 1.2 Activities and outputs

###### Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

Activities under these three outputs, which were related to the development of systems for monitoring prices, market arrivals and stocks, were carried out together as part of the overall development of the market information system. A Market Information Group was established in the Statistics Division to oversee the collection of market information and to monitor market trends. A market information system was developed and implemented, consisting of: (i) retail prices obtained from existing sources; (ii) farm-gate prices collected monthly from each district; (iii) wholesale/assembly prices and market arrivals/conditions data collected weekly from 45 key market locations; and (iv) stocks information collected from a variety of existing sources and from a small household survey. The Statistics Division prepares ten-daily and monthly market bulletins for

dissemination as printed publications and via the Internet. The reports present market data as well as an analysis of market trends.

#### Output 1.4

Rapid production/market assessments have been included as part of the market assessment work of the Market Information Group. Several studies have been conducted and results have been presented in the ten-daily and monthly market reports.

#### Output 1.5

The ten-daily and monthly market bulletins have been designed to complement price reports already available in Viet Nam, with emphasis given to presenting in-depth analysis of market trends. The bulletins are produced in an attractively designed format, in Vietnamese and English. A food security information website was developed and this is the primary means of disseminating market information. Over 5,000 users accessed the website during its first nine months and good feedback has been received.

#### Output 2.1

The Inter-Agency Technical Working Group on Food Crop Forecasting has been established and includes representatives from all key institutions involved in crop forecasting in Viet Nam. The Group met three times during the first half of 2003 and will meet regularly throughout the rest of the year.

#### Output 2.2

The monthly crop monitoring system was developed and introduced nationally in May 2002. Monthly bulletins presenting the results are prepared, in English and Vietnamese. The project has also helped to improve MARD's ten-day crop bulletins. The ten-daily and monthly crop bulletins are shown on the food security website.

#### Output 2.3

The Technical Working Group has prepared two rice production forecasts for the 2003 winter/spring rice crop and will prepare five more forecasts throughout the rest of 2003 for the various seasonal rice crops. Forecasts are issued in a bulletin, which is available in Vietnamese and English and disseminated via the website. No forecasts have been prepared for maize because it is not an important food crop.

#### Output 3.1

This output, which relates to the development of a food security database, was added after the initial review of the project workplan highlighted the need for more work in support of FIVIMS. A plan for the information system has been developed. Database systems for meteorology, crop production and crop monitoring have been prepared. Work on other elements of the system will be completed by the end of 2003.

#### Outputs 3.2, 3.3

These outputs relate to the periodic assessment of household level demand and access to food. The methodology was developed in collaboration with the National Institute of Nutrition, and involved the use of monthly data obtained as a by-product of existing nutritional programmes, supplemented by data from a sample survey. The system is currently being implemented in one province (Bac Kan). First results are expected in August 2003.

#### Outputs 4.1, 4.2

Training activities completed to date include study tours on market information and food balance sheets, two fellowships on data analysis and one fellowship on data processing. In-country training has covered data processing, presentation of data, food balance sheets, basic computer skills, and data collection methods for field staff. A national food security seminar was also held. English language training has also been provided. The training programme will be finalized in 2003 with one fellowship (in basic statistics), study tours in crop forecasting and market information, and in-country training in data analysis and sampling.

#### Output 4.3

Food balance sheets for 1997-2001 were prepared in 2002. A report presenting the results was published in August 2002 (in English and Vietnamese) and was widely disseminated. A Vietnamese translation of the FAO food balance sheet handbook was also published. The food balance sheet for 2002 has been prepared and will be published in late 2003.

#### Output 4.4

The National Food Security Committee has been abolished and the Statistics Division has assumed overall responsibility for food security in Viet Nam. An annual series of food security situation reports has been introduced. The reports, titled "The State of Food Security in Vietnam", present food security indicators and an

assessment of food security conditions in Viet Nam. Reports for 2001 and 2002 have been published, in English and Vietnamese, and widely disseminated to Government and international agencies.

#### Output 4.5

Several special food security studies have been undertaken. Two studies of the relationship between poverty, agriculture and malnutrition were carried out based on data from the Vietnam Living Standards Surveys. Results were published as Occasional Papers. Further studies on food consumption patterns and cropping systems are currently under way.

#### 1.3 Problems encountered

The main implementation problems are:

- unavailability of technical staff to work full-time on project activities;
- incentive payments to staff for project activities and the implications for project sustainability;
- constraints to sharing information and collaborating with other national institutions.

#### 2. Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation is intended, as the project draws to a close, to assess the extent to which the project objectives have been achieved and provide recommendations to the Government of Viet Nam, FAO, and the Government of Italy on further steps necessary to consolidate progress. Any further need for external assistance will be identified.

The mission should critically assess the impact of the assistance provided under the current and previous projects on the work of the Statistics Division and the action needed to ensure that the activities initiated by the projects can be sustained and further developed.

#### 3. Scope of the evaluation

The mission will assess the:

- 1) Relevance of the project to development priorities and needs.
  - 2) Clarity and realism of the project's development and immediate objectives, including specification of targets and identification of beneficiaries and prospects for sustainability.
  - 3) Quality, clarity and adequacy of project design including:
    - clarity and logical consistency between inputs, activities, outputs and progress towards achievement of objectives (quality, quantity and time-frame);
    - realism and clarity in the specification of prior obligations and prerequisites (assumptions and risks);
    - realism and clarity of external institutional relationships, and in the managerial and institutional framework for implementation and the work plan;
    - likely cost-effectiveness of the project design.
  - 4) Efficiency and adequacy of project implementation including:
    - availability of funds as compared with budget for both the donor and national component;
    - the quality and timeliness of input delivery by both FAO and the Government;
    - managerial and work efficiency;
    - implementation difficulties;
    - adequacy of monitoring and reporting;
    - the extent of national support and commitment, and the quality and quantity of administrative and technical support by FAO.
- Project results, including a full and systematic assessment of outputs produced to date (quantity and quality as compared with workplan and progress towards achieving the immediate objectives). The mission will especially review the status and quality of work on:
- the collection and analysis of market information;
  - the crop monitoring and forecasting programme and the operations of the Technical Working Group on Food Crop Forecasting;
  - the pilot implementation of the household level food security monitoring system;
  - food balance sheets and other food security analysis studies;
  - the dissemination programme for food security information through publications and the Internet.
- The prospects for sustaining the project's results by the beneficiaries and the host institutions after the termination of the project. The mission should examine in particular:
- the technical capacity of statistical staff in MARD to manage the ongoing food security information system;
  - the capacity of agricultural field staff to continue to provide food security data;
  - the ability of MARD to fund ongoing food security information activities;
  - the problems likely to arise in collaboration between MARD and other agencies in continuing food security information activities.

- The cost-effectiveness of the project.

Based on the above analysis, the mission will draw specific conclusions and make proposals for any necessary further action by Government and/or FAO/donor to ensure sustainable development, including any need for additional assistance and activities of the project prior to its completion. The mission will draw attention to any lessons of general interest.

#### 4. Composition of the mission

The mission will comprise:

- Team leader with experience in agricultural policy and planning, with some background in food security information and project evaluation (FAO);
- Specialist in agricultural statistics (Government of Italy);
- Specialist in food security policy (Government of Viet Nam).

Mission members should be independent and thus have no previous direct involvement with the project either with regard to its formulation, implementation or backstopping. They should preferably have experience of evaluation.

#### 5. Timetable and itinerary of the mission

The mission should be carried out in October 2003. The tentative itinerary is as follows:

Day 1 International members assemble in Rome; briefing by FAO, Rome.

Day 2 International members travel to Bangkok.

Day 3 International members briefing by FAORAP, Bangkok.

Day 4 International members travel from Bangkok to Hanoi; briefing by FAOR, Hanoi; meeting with Italian Embassy; meeting with MPI.

Day 5 Visit to project office; briefing by project management; interviews with project staff; review of project activities and outputs; review of information dissemination programme.

Day 6 Visit Long Bien market in Hanoi to observe market information activities; meet market information staff of Hanoi province; travel from Hanoi to Bac Kan.

Day 7 In Bac Kan province: meet with Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to discuss crop monitoring; meet with Department of Health to observe household food security work; field trip to observe nutrition surveillance activities.

Day 8 Travel from Bac Kan to Hanoi; meeting with ICD of MARD; visit National Institute of Nutrition, General Statistical Office and other agencies to discuss collaboration in project activities.

Day 9 Field visit to Hung Yen province to observe agricultural conditions and study market information work.

Day 10 Report writing.

Day 11 Report writing.

Day 12 Presentation of mission findings to project management and Government officials.

Day 13 Review report; debriefing FAOR; international members travel from Hanoi to Bangkok.

Day 14 International members debriefing FAORAP, Bangkok.

Day 15 International members travel to Rome.

Day 16 International members debriefing FAO, Rome.

Day 17 Finalize report.

#### 6. Consultations

The mission will maintain close liaison with representatives of the Italian Embassy and FAO and the concerned national agencies, as well as with national and international project staff. Although the mission should feel free to discuss with the authorities concerned anything relevant to its assignment, it is not authorized to make any commitments on behalf of the Government of Viet Nam, the Government of Italy, or FAO.

#### 7. Reporting

The mission is fully responsible for its independent report, which may not necessarily reflect the views of the Government, the donor or FAO. The report will be written in conformity with the headings shown in the Annex. The report will be completed, to the extent possible, in Viet Nam and the findings and recommendations fully discussed with all concerned parties and, wherever possible, consensus achieved.

The mission will also complete the FAO Project Evaluation Questionnaire.

The mission leader bears responsibility for finalization of the report, which will be submitted to FAO within two weeks of mission completion. FAO will submit the report to the Government and donor together with its comments.

## ***Itinerary and persons met***

### **27 October (Mon) Rome**

#### *FAO Headquarters*

(International mission members meet<sup>13</sup>)

Mr Marcello Gorgoni, Senior Adviser, FAO/Italy Panel

Mr Aleksander Zaremba, Senior Programme Officer, TCAP, FAO HQ

Mr Christian R Lovendal, Food Security Economist, ESAF, FAO HQ

Departure for Bangkok

### **28 October (Tue) Bangkok**

Arrival Bangkok

### **29 October (Wed) Bangkok**

#### *FAO-RAP*

Mr Hiroyuki Konuma, Deputy Regional Representative

Mr Frederick Baker, Senior Statistician, FAORAP, Bangkok

Mr Daniele Salvini, Country Project Officer, FAORAP, Bangkok

Mr Kimihiko Eura, Agricultural Statistics Expert, GCP/RAS/184/JAP

### **30 October (Thu) Hanoi**

#### *FAO Representation Viet Nam*

(Mission joined by Mr Ha Huy Khoi, Representative of Government of Socialist Republic of Viet Nam)

Mr Jack Colwell, Chief Technical Adviser, GCP/VIE/024/ITA

Mr Pham Gia Truc, FAO Programme Assistant

#### *Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development*

Mr Trang Hieu Dung, National Project Director, Director, Department of Planning, MARD

Mr Ha Hai Ly, National Project Coordinator, Chief, Statistics Division, Department of Planning, MARD

### **31 October (Fri) Hanoi**

#### *National Institute of Nutrition (NIN)*

Mr Nguyen Cong Khan, Director

Mr Le Danh Tuyen, Chief, Nutritional Surveillance Unit

#### *General Statistical Office*

Mr Nguyen Sinh Cuc, former Director, Agriculture Department

#### *Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology*

Mr Nguyen Van Viet, Director, Agrometeorological Research Centre

### **1-2 November (Sat-Sun) Hanoi**

Literature Study, Report Writing, Rest

### **3 November (Mon) Bac Kan Province**

(Accompanied by Mr Trang Hieu Dung, Mr Ha Hai Ly, Mr Jack Colwell, Mr Bui Khanh Ban-NIN)

Travel Hanoi - Bac Kan

#### *Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)*

Mr Ma The Chuong, Vice Director

Mr Nguyen Duy Thanh, Head Planning Division

Mr Doan Manh Dung, Collaborator CMS

#### *Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA)*

Ms Hoang Thi Tao, Director

Mr Chu Dang Bao, Vice Director

Ms Nong Thi Ha, Deputy Chief, Social Policy Division

Mr Vi Nguyen Quyen, Deputy Chief, Administration

<sup>13</sup> Bultemeier met previously with Mr Hiek Som, Chief Statistical Development Service, Statistics Division, FAO HQ, Rome

**4 November (Tue) Bac Kan Province**

*Mother and Child Health Centre, Ministry of Health*

Ms Loc Thi Tieu, Director

Ms Ha Thi Xuyen

Mr Nguyen Thi Van

*Visit to My Phuong Commune Health Service, Ba Be district*

Travel Bac Kan – Hanoi

**5 November (Wed) Hanoi**

*Visit to Long Bien Wholesale Market*

Ms Mai Thi Phuong Anh, Trade Promotion Officer

Mr Nguyen Van Ha, Marketing Information Consultant

*Ministry of Planning and Investment*

Mr Le Hong Thai, Director General, Department of Agricultural Economy

*International Cooperation Department of MARD*

Mr Le Van Minh, Director

**6 November (Thu) Hanoi**

*Information Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (ICARD)*

Mr Dang Kim Son, Director

*Italian Embassy*

Mr Pietro Sequi, Director of the Development Cooperation Office

**7 November (Fri) Hanoi**

Internal Meetings

**8-9 November (Sat-Sun) Hanoi**

Report Writing, Internal Meetings

**10 November (Mon) Hanoi**

Debriefing

Flight Hanoi-Bangkok

**11 November (Tue) Bangkok**

Debriefing RAP

Departure Bangkok

**List of Project and Counterpart Staff**

Name	Function	Dates of Service	
		Starting Date	Concluding Date
INTERNATIONAL STAFF			
J.A. Colwell	Chief Technical Adviser/ Agricultural Statistics	5 Mar. 2001	4 Jan. 2004
R. Stoeckel	Data Processing	24 Sep. 2001	6 Oct. 2001
M. Campeanu	Food Balance Sheets	3 Nov. 2001 25 May 2002	1 Dec. 2001 23 June 2002
J. Jansonius	Market Information	24 Apr. 2002 22 July 2002	27 Apr. 2002 22 Aug. 2002
C. Martinez Diaz	Food and Nutrition Statistics	8 Feb. 2003 2 June 2003	8 Mar. 2003 22 Aug. 2003
H-J. Wiemer	Household Food Security	28 Feb. 2003	31 Mar. 2003
C. Lovendal	TSS-Food Security Economist	17 Aug. 2001 18 May 2002 12 Aug. 2003	4 Sep. 2001 1 June 2002 26 Aug. 2003
F. Baker	TSS-Statistics	18 June 2002 6 Aug. 2003	22 June 2002 8 Aug. 2003
D. Salvini	TSS-Operations	23 Sep. 2002	27 Sep. 2002
H. Som	TSS-Statistics	14 July 2001 23 Sep. 2002	20 July 2001 27 Sep. 2002
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF			
Nguyen Duc Ngoc	Interpreter/translator	9 Apr. 2001	31 July 2003
Nguyen Cong Luan	Driver	1 May 2001	31 Dec. 2002
Nguyen Phi Khanh	Driver	1 Mar. 2001	5 Mar. 2004
Le Thi Yen	Administrative Assistant	1 Mar. 2002 22 Sep. 2002	21 July 2002 5 Mar. 2004
Duong Thi Thuy Nga	Administrative Assistant	22 July 2002	21 Sep. 2002
Nguyen Gia Hiep	Driver	10 Feb. 2003	5 Mar. 2004
NATIONAL CONSULTANTS			
Nguyen Van Viet	Crop forecasting	15 Oct. 2001	14 Dec. 2002
Nguyen Trong Tuyen	Data processing (25 months)	25 Sep. 2001	30 Sep 2003
Nguyen Van Ha	Market information (24 months)	25 Feb. 2002	31 Jan. 2004
Huynh Ly	Food balance sheets	19 May 2003	18 July 2003
Tran Thanh Do	SPSS training	6 Aug. 2003	8 Aug. 2003

Nguyen Chi Thanh	Data processing	20 Aug. 2003	26 Aug. 2003
Pham Quang Minh	Translation services	1 Sep. 2003	31 Dec. 2003

## NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL

Ha Van Dang	National Project Director	7 Mar. 2001	30 Nov. 2001
Trang Hieu Dzung	National Project Director	1 Dec. 2001	5 Mar. 2004
Ha Hai Ly	National Project Coordinator	7 Mar. 2001	5 Mar. 2004
Tran Thi Hien	Statistician	7 Mar. 2001	5 Mar. 2004
Nguyen Thi Chieu	Statistician	7 Mar. 2001	5 Mar. 2004
Nguyen Phi Hung	Computer Specialist	7 Mar. 2001	5 Mar. 2004
Tran Ngoc Ha	Statistician	7 Mar. 2001	5 Mar. 2004
Le Thi Yen	Statistician	7 Mar. 2001	28 Feb. 2002
Dinh Thi Ngo	Statistician	7 Mar. 2001	31 July 2002
Ha Thi Nga	Statistician	7 Mar. 2001	31 Sep. 2002
Nguyen Pham Bich Huong	Statistician	1 Sep. 2002	5 Mar. 2004
Duong Thi Thuy Nga	Statistician	1 Sep. 2002	31 Oct. 2004

**List of Fellowships, Study Tours and Training Seminars Organized by the Project**

Participants	Purpose	Location	Dates
<b>FELLOWSHIPS</b>			
Ha Hai Ly Le Thi Yen	Analysis and Interpretation of Official Statistics	SIAP, Tokyo, Japan	22 July-20 Sep. 2002
Nguyen Phi Hung	Strategies, Tools & Techniques for Client Server Applications	AIT, Bangkok, Thailand	4 Sep.-26 Nov. 2002
Nguyen B Huong	Statistical Methods	SIAP, Tokyo, Japan	5 Oct.-26 Nov. 2002
Do Viet Nguyen Hoang Dan	Development of Web-accessible Client/ Server MS SQL Server	AIT, Bangkok, Thailand	13 Jan.-23 Mar.03
<b>STUDY TOURS AND WORKSHOPS</b>			
Ha Thi Nga Tran Ngoc Ha	Market information system	China	3-8 Apr. 2002
Huynh Ly Tran Thi Hien Le Danh Tuyen Hoang Phuong Tan	Food balance sheets	FAO Indonesia Thailand	Rome, and 23 July-2 Aug. 2002
Nguyen Van Ha	Regional workshop on market information	Yangon, Myanmar	3-7 Feb. 2003
Ha Hai Ly Nguyen Thi Chieu Phung Kim Thoa Nguyen Van Viet	Crop monitoring and forecasting; market information systems.	Australia	13-26 Sep. 2003
Nguyen Van Ha Le Thi Yen Nguyen Nhiem Nguyen Thi Dung	Market information systems	China	12-19 Oct. 2003
<b>IN-COUNTRY TRAINING</b>			
132	Training course for crop monitoring reporters	Six provincial centres	July 2001 (one-day courses)
6	Workshop on mapping	KIMS Hanoi	Aug. 2001 (half day)

110	Training course on basic computer skills for provincial staff	Hanoi, Hue, Ho Chi Minh City (six courses)		Oct. 2001-Mar. 2002 (four-day courses)
150	National seminar on food security	Hanoi		Nov. 2001 (one and a half days)
14	Workshop on food balance sheet methodology	Hanoi		Nov. 2001 (half day)
8	Training of trainers course for crop monitoring system	Hanoi		Apr. 2002 (one day)
1,239	Training course for crop monitoring reporters	55 provincial centres		Apr.-May 2002 (one-day courses)
12	Workshop on food balance sheet results	Hanoi		June 2002 (half day)
10	Training course on Microsoft Access and PowerPoint	Hanoi		Nov. 2002 (seven days)
63	Training course for market reporters	Hanoi and eight provincial centres		Sep.-Dec. 2002 (one-day courses)
8	Workshop on household food security monitoring	Hanoi		Feb. 2003 (half day)
7	English training	Language Hanoi	Link,	Apr.-June 2003
4	English training	Language Hanoi	Link ,	May-July 2003
8	Training course on collecting & processing market information	Hanoi		26-28 May 2003
10	Training course on collecting & processing market information	Hanoi		16-18 June 2003
18	Training course on Household Food Security Survey	Hanoi		2-4 July 2003
15	Training course on analysis of crop monitoring data	Hanoi		14-18 July 2003
15	Training course on analysis of crop monitoring data	Hanoi		21-25 July 2003
15	Training course on SPSS	Hanoi		6-8 Aug. 2003

7

English training

Language Link , Aug.-Oct. 2003  
Hanoi

**Project Inventory (Equipment)**

Quantity	Item	Cost (US\$)
1	Toyota Landcruiser	23 125
4	Compaq Deskpro EX815 computer; UPS; external modem; voltage stabilizer	5 890
2	Laser printer HP2100	1 749
1	Motorola mobile phone	127
1	Ricoh FT-5840 photocopier with automatic document feeder, sorter and stand	8 719
1	Canon B155 fax machine	477
3	Telephone sets	158
-	Office furniture (1 office desk, 1 office chair, 1 meeting table, 6 chairs, 1 side table)	443
22	Compaq Deskpro computer; external modem; UPS; Laser printer HP2100; voltage stabilizer	39 228
28	Compaq Deskpro Evo D380 computer; external modem; UPS; Laser printer HP2100; voltage stabilizer	38 574
16	Compaq Deskpro Evo D380m computer; external modem; UPS; Laser printer HP2100; voltage stabilizer	22 042
1	Panasonic KXFT73 fax machine	160
2	Compaq Deskpro Evo D380m computer; external fax/modem; Laser printer HP1200; UPS; voltage stabilizer	2 797
2	Compaq Deskpro Evo D380m computer; CDRewriter; fax/modem; Laser printer HP1200; UPS; voltage stabilizer	3 490
1	Compaq Evo D510S computer; fax/modem; Laser printer HP1200; UPS	1 753
1	Photocopier accessories	2 781
11	COMPAQ Deskpro Evo D320; UPS; voltage stabilizer	9 103
8	HP Laser printer 1150	3 118
8	External fax/modem	356
10	Network cards and accessories	3 552
1	Notebook IBM Thinkpad R40	1 774
3	Compaq Deskpro Evo D320	2 205

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