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Agriculture in island countries: Challenges and way forward.

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Country Presentation

Agriculture in island countries: Challenges and way forward.



Maldives

Subject: Technical contribution from Maldives on Apcas 27

- The Republic of Maldives consisting of an archipelago of atolls situated vertically across the equator in the Indian Ocean. There are an estimated 1,192 islands separated into a series of 26 natural coral atolls where 194 are inhabited islands, 55 islands are designated for industrial use (including agriculture) and approximately 800 islands are uninhabited. These islands stretch over a country area of 850,000 square kilometres, where 99% is sea and only 1% is land area. The islands are low lying with an average height of one metre above sea level.

Agriculture in island countries (Maldives): **Challenges** and way forward.

- Agriculture production has been constrained by the availability of arable land, poor soil conditions that are not conducive to a whole range of agricultural products and a shortage of fresh water for irrigation.
- Limited agriculturally suitable land.
- Agricultural development is relatively limited in Maldives; with coconut, banana, chilies, betel leaf, water melon, papaya, pumpkin and cucumber being the major crops grown.
- As the country is very dispersed conducting a survey is very expensive. Majority of the budget goes for transportation.
 - The frequency of thematic surveys in between censuses and large scale surveys are irregular/not being conducted – main due to budget constraint
 - Lack of a sampling frame

Agriculture in island countries (Maldives): **Challenges** and way forward.

- ▶ Commercial / industrial farmers are registered. But these registers are not updated.
 - ▶ Small scale farmers specially backyard farmers are not registered and those farmers who have registered, they is no proper mechanism to update these information
 - ▶ Lack of administrative registers that updates on a more frequent basis
- ▶ Lack of technical knowledge/statistical expertise at sectoral agencies
 - ▶ How to estimate the total production in the country
- ▶ Majority of the data compiled at sectoral level are at national level where it lacks the human capacity and proper mechanisms for the data collection at island level
 - ▶ As the Islands are dispersed conducting surveys at island representative level creates additional human and transport costs

Agriculture in island countries (Maldives): Challenges and **way forward.**

- The frequency of thematic surveys in between censuses and large scale surveys are irregular/not being conducted – main due to budget constraint
 - To overcome this, it has been decided that during the population & housing census a separate module would be attached. sampling frame can be established using this information
 - Planned for 2020 (will depend on the budget)
- Lack of administrative registers that updates on a more frequent basis
 - To overcome this, currently NBS is developing an online survey form and will be launched during this April 2018
 - First phase: focus only for the main industrial production
 - Second phase: find a way to capture the small scale farmers

Agriculture in island countries (Maldives): Challenges and **way forward.**

- Lack of technical knowledge/statistical expertise at sectoral agencies
 - How to estimate the total production in the country
 - **To overcome this, we are planning to develop a proper sampling methodology for the Male' market price collection**
- Majority of the data compiled at sectoral level are at national level where it lacks the human capacity and proper mechanisms for the data collection at island level
 - As the Islands are dispersed conducting surveys at island representative level creates additional human and transport costs
 - **To overcome this, we can explore new technology such as GPS and the drone technology etc as possible means to address the data collection challenges and minimise transport cost**
 - **However need technical assistance in these kind of work**

Agriculture in island countries

(Maldives): Challenges and **way forward.**

- ▶ In 2016, Maldives participated to conduct a pilot survey about Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE). And as these data are important for SDG, we want to integrate such information in regular agricultural and fisheries surveys
 - ▶ And take account the differenced between fishery households and agricultural households in how they operates, assets owned and etc and differentiate these two categories (fishing and agriculture) separately. In Maldives context fishery is the main activity after tourism.



THANK YOU.....