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AFRICAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

Twenty-Seventh Session

15 – 18 November 2021, Virtual Host – Dakar, Senegal

AGENDA ITEM 3

Implementation of the Recommendations of the 26th AFCAS Session

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I. INTRODUCTION

Under the governance of the Office of the Chief Statistician (OCS), the FAO Statistical Division (ESS) and the FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF), as well as other FAO statistical units, have collaborated closely to strengthen the capacity of Member States in the collection, processing, analysis, publication and dissemination of food, agricultural and rural statistical data. Aspects relating to the establishment of standards, norms and methodologies continued to be covered in order to ensure international comparability, harmonization and the use of modern technological tools for better statistical collection and production.

This paper presents an overview of the main achievements of the 88 keys recommendations of the 26th Session of the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS) concerning the following points: (i) FAO's activities in food and agricultural statistics relevant to Africa region since the last session of the commission; (ii) Measuring the Sustainable Development Goals; (iii) Measuring food security statistics; (iv) World Programme of the Census Agriculture; (v) 50 x 2030 Initiative; (vi) Open data in agricultural statistics; (vii) Water use, fisheries and forestry statistics; (viii) Partners; (ix) Any other business.

II. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 26TH SESSION OF AFCAS

Agenda item 3: **FAO's activities in food and agricultural statistics relevant to Africa region since the last session of the commission**

- FAO has ensured the improvement of its internal coordination mechanisms, giving a larger role to FAO country offices for monitoring the filling of FAO statistical questionnaires. In May and June 2021, all FAO country offices were trained and sensitized on their role to support FAO data collection processes and resources mobilization on statistics at national level.
- A new module was included in FAO's Country Annual reporting mechanism, which aims to monitor country offices' results and also monitor to which extent country offices engaged in resources mobilization activities for statistics. This new module will collect information on their level of engagement with national counterparts on FAO data collection processes as well as overall support to Food security and agricultural statistics, including SDG indicators under FAO custodianship in more general terms.

- Due to COVID-19 Travel restrictions, FAO organized a virtual Regional Training on SDG indicator 2.3.1: “Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size” and SDG indicator 2.3.2: “Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status” in the framework of the Organization’s capacity building effort to accelerate the adoption and implementation of the newly developed SDG methodologies (Tier II indicators). This Regional Training took place virtually from October 11 to 14, 2021 in French and English with the support of a team of simultaneous interpreters: 16 African countries were invited, including Anglophone and Francophone countries; 12 countries with more than 50 participants attended the training. The training should help participants in evaluating the availability of micro data needed to compute indicators 2.3.1 and 2.3.2, understanding its measurement challenges and what could be an effective data collection and reporting mechanism.
- With the financial support of BMGF and EU, FAO has started the implementation of the activities of the Phase 2 of the Global Strategy to Improve Agriculture and Rural Statistics (GSARS 2021-2023). The overarching objective of the Phase 2 of the GSARS is to build stronger capacities in national agricultural statistical systems for accountability reporting and policy making, building on the foundations established during Phase 1. In this context, four main components have been identified: (i) Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Rural Statistics (SPARS) (Implementing agency: FAO); (ii) Training (strengthening of the technical capacities of statistical staff, improved graduate programs on agricultural statistics and facilitated access to scholarships) (Implementing agency: Paris 21, UNECA and FAO) ; (iii) Cost-effective methods (Implementing agency: FAO); (iv) Increase in data analysis and dissemination capacities (Implementing agency: FAO). The 25 targeted African countries cover three Economic Communities (ECOWAS1, COMESA2 and SADC3).

Agenda item 4: Measuring the Sustainable Development Goals

- FAO has used the results of the statistical capacity assessment of FAO-relevant SDG indicators to design and implement FAO’s capacity development programmes on SDG monitoring.
- FAO regularly communicate on SDG indicators under its custodianship through a dedicated newsletters and regular events. All SDG focal points and National Statistics Office (NSO) leads have been added to the distribution list targeted by these communications.
- FAO worked with AFCAS Member States that did not participate in the SDG Gap Assessment Questionnaire in order to collect their information and generate their country profile. Two additional country profiles have been published. In addition, through exchanges between FAO (SDG-questionnaires@fao.org) and countries, the profiles of AFCAS member countries and the list of national focal points for each indicator have been updated.

Agenda item 5: Measuring food security statistics

- FAO continued to promote the use of FIES and to strengthen the capacity of countries in FIES tools and methodologies.
- FAO has undertaken several actions on food loss measurements in Africa region: (i) Publishing of field test reports on Measurement of Harvest and Post-Harvest Losses in 2020 (Malawi – Maize, Rice and Groundnuts; Zimbabwe - Maize); (ii) Meeting with Tanzania Ministry of Agriculture to discuss Food Loss Index & SWOT analysis of FAO PHLs data collection tools in May 2021; (iii) National Workshop on Post-Harvest Losses and Digitization in June 2021 in Senegal; (iv) Presentation of papers on Cost-effective priority actions for Food Loss and Waste (FLW) measurement within Africa and Measurement of Harvest and Post-Harvest Losses (Minimum Losses by Commodity and Region) at the Third All Africa Post Harvest Congress and Exhibition - 3rd AAPHCE in September 2021; (v) Supporting in 2020-2021 data collection efforts through Inquiry and objective measurement funded by FAO-OCS (implemented by the Central Statistical Agency in Ethiopia) and through The Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agricultural Policies (MAFAP) Project in Zimbabwe and Ghana.

Agenda item 6: World Programme of the Census of Agriculture

- After the organization of the Regional Workshop on the Operational Guidelines of the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020 (WCA 2020) for French-speaking African countries in Bujumbura, Burundi, in June 2020, FAO organized the Webinar on the Operational Guidelines of the WCA 2020 in Tanzania on 24-26 November 2020 for the Anglophone African region. A total of 42 participants attended the Webinar, of which 34 were representatives from 17 countries (Botswana, Eritrea, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe).

Agenda item 7: 50 x 2030 Initiative

- The 50x2030 Initiative is implemented through a unique partnership between the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). 50x2030 is a 10-year (from 2019 to 2030), ~US\$500 million initiative that aims to increase the capacity of 50 low and lower middle-income countries to produce, analyse, interpret, and apply data to decisions in the agricultural sector that support rural development and food security. In total, the 50x2030 Initiative will work with 30 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA); 15 countries in East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) and Central and South Asia; and countries 5 in Latin American and the Caribbean. The 50x2030 Initiative has entered its second year of operations, already with 24 countries involved (including 13 African countries: Burkina Faso, Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda), either by implementing activities, planning their 50x2030 program or initiating a formal partnership.
- FAO uses RULIS (Rural Livelihood Information System) as a platform to disseminate indicators at the sub-national level obtained from household and farm level survey data collected within the 50x2030 Initiative and related projects.

Agenda item 8: Open data in agricultural statistics

- Since the last AFCAS session, additional guidance on the FAM Catalogue was provided to FAO member states through a webinar conducted in October, 2020 with about 27% of attendees from African countries. FAO has also provided technical assistance to Uganda to make available a new collection of Forest Inventory datasets in FAM. The Organization has re-disseminated microdata related to country level agricultural surveys, such as Annual Agricultural Surveys from Senegal, Uganda and Seasonal Agricultural Surveys from Rwanda as well as microdata from many other countries through 3rd parties like the World Bank microdata catalogue.
- FIES datasets in the Food Security collection from various African countries have also been disseminated through the Catalogue annually. Finally, additional datasets disseminated through the FAM Catalogue include the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis datasets collected by FAO in many African countries e.g. Uganda, Nigeria and Madagascar and Agricultural Productivity datasets received from Syngenta for 14 African countries

Agenda item 9: Water use, fisheries and forestry statistics

- FAO continued to support different African countries in supporting their fisheries and aquaculture statistics. With the Fishery Committee of the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), FAO is collaborating to support the Secretariat and countries to align the regional database to the Coordinating Working Party of Fisheries Statistics (CWP) reference harmonization standard, in addition to ensuring consistency and comparability with the FAO capture production database. A training was organized to FCWC staff in early February 2020 in Rome followed by online sessions for data harmonization of the national Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) fisheries inventories with the FCWC Regional Database of catch and effort of small-scale fisheries. The exercise concluded with the FIRMS and fishery statistics capacity development data workshop held virtually in October 2020.

- In May-June 2021, six capacity building Data Collection and Management Workshops were organized virtually for each FCWC Member State with the goal to finalize the pending inventories and to expand the FCWC regional database to industrial fisheries, under a Technical Cooperation Project (TCP/RAF/3709) funded by FAO Regional Office for Africa for FCWC.
- The FCWC Regional Database on small scale fisheries is operational and currently hosts time series of data for the recent year (2020, 2019, and 2018) and for most of the FCWC Member States. Its structure is ready for reception of industrial fisheries statistics on catch and effort.
- FAO is also supporting Zambia for the development of the collection of aquaculture statistics in the region.
- In January 2021, FAO concluded the three years activity of support to Djibouti for the setup of system for fisheries statistics based on Open ARTFISH. A workshop was organized to assess the progress in implementation of the data collection system and the production of statistics.

Agenda item 10: Partners

- Given their critical role of leadership training, UNECA and statistical training centers will be involved in the implementation of the Phase 2 of the Global Strategy to Improve Agriculture and Rural Statistics (GSARS 2021-2023).

Agenda item 11: Any other business

- The AFCAS Secretariat, in collaboration with the FAO Sub-Regional Office for West Africa, contacted the Senegalese Government and obtained the virtual organization by Senegal of the 27th Session of the AFCAS in November from 15 to 18, 2021.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure better development of statistical data collection and production systems in African countries, 88 Key Recommendations were approved by the 26th Session of the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS).

Too many recommendations kill recommendations. For the next AFCAS sessions, and to ensure better follow-up actions, it would be advisable to limit the number of recommendations to limit the number of recommendations in order to retain 10 to 15 recommendations relevant for the development of statistical data collection and production systems in Africa.