



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



AFRICAN
COMMISSION ON
**AGRICULTURAL
STATISTICS**

28th SESSION

4-8 December 2023

Johannesburg (South Africa)

AFCAS 28

LEVERAGING
DATA & STATISTICS
FOR AGRIFOOD
SYSTEMS
TRANSFORMATION
IN AFRICA

Lessons from the WCA 2020, emerging issues and proposed outline and strategy for the WCA 2030 guidelines

Eloi OUEDRAOGO, Statistician
Agricultural Census Team
FAO Statistics Division



AFRICAN
COMMISSION ON
**AGRICULTURAL
STATISTICS**

AGENDA ITEM 8:

Progress in the
implementation of the WCA
2020 in Africa and the world



Background

- FAO is the UN agency responsible for providing census methodological guidelines to countries through the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA) .
- The current round is the WCA 2020, which ends in 2025.
- FAO is developing the new WCA 2030 guidelines, for the period 2026-2035.
- This work started with review of lessons, consultations with stakeholders, and preparation of a Concept Note, followed by the preparation of a first draft.
- Part of the consultation is the discussion with countries on possible areas of revision and improvement for the preparation of the new WCA 2030.



WCA 2020 – Main changes

- 1. Four methodologies:** the classical, modular approach and two new modalities: the integrated census/survey modality and the combined census modality with use of administrative data.
- 2. Essential and frame items:** all essential items must be collected while frame items provide data for frames.
- 3. New and revised themes:** theme “Intra-household distribution of managerial decisions” was revised to better capture the gender role. Two new themes “Fisheries” and “Environment/Green House Gases (GHG)”.
- 4. Use of IT:** emphasis on the use of CAPI, CAWI, geo-referencing, interactive outputs and web-based data (infographics, and interactive maps), archiving, and access to anonymized micro-data.



Findings on the implementation of WCA 2020 – 1/3

- An online survey sent to all member countries in 2022 showed that:
 1. The classical census (55% of the countries) and combined census with admin registers (35%, in the EU) are the most popular methodologies. The modular approach (9%) is mainly used in Africa.
 2. Complete enumeration is the main type of enumeration (82% of the countries).
 3. The main source of census frame is the last population census (46% of the countries), followed by the last agricultural census (41%) and administrative registers (18%).
 4. CAPI (66%) and CAWI (34%), and Post (28%) overtook PAPI (26%) as the main data collection mode. Telephone interviewing (CATI, 22%) is gaining ground.
 5. A growing number of countries rely on the use of technologies such as GIS and interactive online databases to disseminate results.



Findings on WCA 2020 – 2/3

- **In terms of coverage of census items, the online survey showed that:**
 1. Some recommended essential items have been covered by 70% or less of the countries:
 - “No. of permanent crop trees”, “Household size”, “Use of pesticides”, “Livestock system”, “Main purpose of production”, “Presence of aquaculture”, “Area irrigated”, “Working on holding is main activity”, and “Area permanent crops”.
 2. Some optional themes were infrequently covered:
 - Intra-household decisions (gender role), Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), GHG emissions, and Fisheries.



Findings on WCA 2020 – 3/3

Some practices of concern:

- Census questionnaires continue to be overloaded in many countries.
- Items that are not structural (e.g. production) and belong to sample surveys are forced into the census.
- Juridical holdings are excluded in some countries.
- Geo-referencing is not used for the location of holdings.
- In some countries, censuses are sample-based (mainly in Africa), providing structural data on farms, but not fulfilling key objectives: data for small admin units, benchmark data, complete frames, and measurement of rare events.
- In some countries, there are significant delays in publication of the census results or not adequate dissemination



Possible areas of work in the WCA 2030 – 1/4

- **The context to be considered when preparing the new guidelines :**
 - The WCA 2030 will take into account the current and emerging global development priorities (2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals) and other critical policy matters, with a prominent focus on addressing climate change.
 - The use of new technologies and innovations in agriculture has accelerated in the past decade and should be considered by the statistical system, either census or sample surveys.
 - Measuring the impact of development policies and programmes leads to expanding data requirements to be met by the agricultural census and the integrated system of agricultural surveys.



Possible areas of work in the WCA 2030 – 2/4

The context to be considered when preparing the new guidelines :

- Special attention will be given to identifying and establishing the relevance and coherence of WCA 2030 to their main and specific objectives;
- WCA 2030 will continue to play a key role in the collection of structural statistics on the agriculture sector in many countries as well as it will provide the baseline and frame for other agricultural surveys;
- WCA 2030 will incorporate to the extent possible the requirements of the new development agenda, the use of new technologies and innovations in agriculture, and emerging policy, keeping in mind that the AC is a complete structural survey.



Possible areas of work in the WCA 2030 – 3/4

Proposals for the preparation of the new guidelines :

- Key role of the census: providing structural data on agriculture and the foundation for the system of agriculture statistical surveys.
- Censuses provide what sample surveys cannot: data for small admin units, benchmark data, complete frames, and measurement of rare events (unusual crops or livestock).
- Census questionnaire should then focus on structural items.
- Non-structural items could remain in the guidelines but kept separately in one part of the document (in an annex).
- For subsistence farms, recommend a smaller set of census items.
- Census without juridical holdings is incomplete.
- The use of geo-referencing of holdings will improve the presentation of census results using GIS and enable integration with other datasets.
- Coverage of landless holdings (e.g. hydroponic, pig, and poultry farms).
- Limited contribution to SDG indicators.



Possible areas of work in the WCA 2030 – 4/4

Explain more clearly that:

Structural items needed for small administrative areas, benchmark, frames and to measure rare events must be collected by complete enumeration.

- Structural items that do not meet the above conditions could be collected by sample enumeration (e.g. a module).
- Differences between the modular approach and the integrated census/survey modality.
- If a 'census' is fully sample-based, it would be deemed a farm structural survey.
- Some items could be considered structural:
 - Use of machinery and tools;
 - Non-residential buildings (e.g. for livestock or poultry);
 - Use of organic practices;
 - Use of technologies (e.g. automated steering, sprayers, drones, robotic milkers).



Possible Highlights of the proposed changes 1/3

1. Close alignment and relation to the **AGRIS (50X2030 initiative)**;
 - Limit WCA 2030 to structural data only (with some flexibility of including non-structural items for countries with poor statistical system);
 - The non-structural items and related definitions will be kept in a separate Annex;
 - Items will continue to be classified as essential, frame and additional and those needed to compile SDGs indicators will be identify.
2. Revision of the modalities for census taking from 4 modalities to 3 modalities:
 - (1) **the classical** – all essential items are collected ;
 - (2) **the modular** - core module includes frame items needed to be summarized at the lowest level, while other essential items and additional items to be collected by sample-based supplementary modules
 - (3) **the registered-based census** - allows getting information of many census items on a cheaper, faster and more complete way.



Possible Highlights of the proposed changes 2/3

3. Use of advanced data dissemination tools and integration of institutional users in the data analysis and dissemination process should continue to be promoted. The access and use of microdata will continue to be promoted and the guide will stress data confidentiality where needed.
4. The WCA 2020 emphasized the extensive adoption of digital, mobile, and geoinformation technologies, along with the data revolution (such as PDA, GPS, and CAPI), and the WCA 2030 will persist in advocating for these strategies. Furthermore, the utilization of Big Data presents novel prospects, both in constructing the framework for non-household farms and in enhancing data validation and editing procedures.
5. WCA 2030 will continue to distinguish 3 types of items: essential, frame and additional:
 - Essential items – those imperative for national purposes and international comparability;
 - Frame items – deemed necessary for the establishment of frames for supplementary census modules or follow-up surveys;
 - Additional items - are other items that countries consider useful given their particularities. The Programme should strongly insist in the need of maintaining additional items to a minimum.



Possible Highlights of the proposed changes 3/3

6. New items proposed to be introduced under WCA 2030:
 - Number of parcels (frame item);
 - Area of temporary crops planted (essential item);
 - Presence of hydronics/vertical cultivation (frame item).
7. Deleted items/themes:
 - Theme 11: Household food security (because corresponds to household surveys and not to the agricultural census);
 - Theme 15: Environment/greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
8. Items changing themes:
 - Theme 10 (WCA2020)- Intrahousehold distribution of managerial decisions and ownership of the holding) move to the pertinent themes.



Process and development of WCA 2030 1/2

Activity	Period
Consultations	
Internal consultations at FAO (ESS division, Regional Statisticians)	May - present
External consultations: countries, experts, int'l organizations	Planned
Methodological review	
Methodological review of ag-census in Asia-Pac, Africa, Americas, Europe	Ongoing
Prioritize recommendations and lessons learnt	July- Sep 2023
Technical papers/presentation	
Discussion papers in regional & international meetings: AFCAS (2023)....	Ongoing
Writing	
Concept note and draft workplan	September 2023
Annotated outline for WCA 2030 and technical roles assigned	July –September 2023
Preparation of 1 st drafts of the WCA 2030	Jan 2024



Process and development of WCA 2030 2/2

Activity	Period
Validation	
Peer review of draft WCA 2030: countries, experts, int'l organizations, regional and intern'l meetings	Late 2024
Adoption by governing bodies: UNSC, FAO	2025
Publication and dissemination	
Revision, edition, layout and publication	2025
Dissemination seminars	2026 onwards



Discussion: Questions & recommendations

- Views on the proposed areas of work in the WCA 2030:
 - On what the new guidelines should stress on;
 - On what it should explain better.
- Process and areas for collaboration.

Thank you for your attention!

For more information, please visit:
<https://www.fao.org/food-agriculture-statistics/resources/events/afcas/en/>

**AFCAS 28
LEVERAGING
DATA & STATISTICS
FOR AGRIFOOD
SYSTEMS
TRANSFORMATION
IN AFRICA**

