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Strategic Plan for Renewable Natural Resources Statistics of Bhutan

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Strategic Plan for Renewable Natural Resources Statistics of Bhutan



**An implementation of global strategy to improve
agricultural and rural statistics**

Introduction

- ✓ Statistics have always been an integral part of social and economic development. It is the basis for scientific and evidence based decisions for national development policies and programs. This is more important for a developing country like Bhutan;
- ✓ Bhutan's small and developing economy is based largely on natural resources, which provide the main livelihood for more than half of the population;
- ✓ The Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MoAF) bears a special responsibility in poverty alleviation and equitable socio-economic development as it has a direct link with the majority of the country's poor and rural population;
- ✓ Given the importance of the sector in the country's socio-economic development, its statistical information system has to be robust that meets the changing needs of changing times. Hence building an efficiently coordinated NR statistics system is deemed critical;

SP-RNRS Development Process

- ✓ Recognizing the need to develop a strategic plan to improve RNR statistics, the Royal Government of Bhutan in general and the MoAF in particular, have welcomed the partnership with the Global Strategy (GS) to Improve Agriculture and Rural Statistics;
- ✓ The GS recognizes that the improvement of RNR statistics, requires its integration into the National Statistical Development Strategy (NSDS);
- ✓ A sequence of steps are recommended by the GS to prepare a Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Rural Statistics (SPARS) to enable integration of agricultural statistics into the NSDS. In the Bhutanese context, the SPARS is called the Strategic Plan for RNR Statistics (SP-RNRS);
- ✓ The SP-RNRS is based on the three pillars of the global strategy - 1) identification of minimum set of core data, 2) integration of RNR statistics into the NSDS and 3) foster sustainability of statistical system through governance and capacity building;

SP-RNRS Development Process (contd....)

- ✓ Led by MoAF and National Statistics Bureau (NSB), the SP-RNRS is being prepared by the stakeholders of RNR statistics in Bhutan with the help of FAO's financial and technical assistance;
- ✓ The SP-RNRS process follows a logical sequence in line with the recommendations made by the FAO;
- ✓ Firstly, "In-depth Country Assessment (IdCA) of the National System for RNR Statistics in Bhutan" was conducted in August 2014;
- ✓ Secondly, "Country Proposal for improving RNR Statistics in Bhutan" was prepared in November 2014;
- ✓ Lastly, the "Roadmap for the SP-RNRS", which was finalized in September 2015 is guiding us in formulation of this SP-RNRS in an organized way;

Summary of Gaps Identified by IdCA

- ✓ Within MoAF, several departments collect and produce statistics, whereby coordination is difficult; there is no adequate capacity and technology to handle statistics; limited budget for statistical activities is also a biggest bottleneck;
- ✓ Inefficient coordination and poor statistical capacity consequence duplication of efforts/resources, poor quality, inconsistent statistical data and poor access to data;
- ✓ Bhutan's Statistics Act is yet to be endorsed by Cabinet/Parliament for implementation;

How SP-RNRS is expected to help fill the Gaps

- ✓ SP-RNRS is expected to bring improvements in coordination of statistical activities and in capacity enhancement by fostering sustainable governance and capacity development programs;
- ✓ While in the process of SP-RNRS preparation, a permanent RNR Statistics Committee (RSC) with its members representing major RNR statistical stakeholders has been already formed as part of the bringing improvement in governance to participate in preparation of SP-RNRS and as well as in its implementation;
- ✓ For better overall coordination of RNR statistical activities, a Chief level officer with experience in relevant subject matter has already been posted in the RNR Statistical Coordination Section;
- ✓ Concerning improvement of statistical quality , the SP-RNRS (*still in draft form*) recommends adoption of appropriate frames (from PHCB) and appropriate technology to improve data acquisition, processing, management and dissemination of data;

How SP-RNRS is expected to help fill the Gaps (contd.....)

- ✓ Towards improving estimation of livestock products, a pilot study was conducted in a district and the result was appreciated by the livestock department. The livestock department wants to replicate the same study for 3 more districts in order to mainstream the technology in the annual livestock census;
- ✓ Similar activity will also be conducted in 2-3 districts to bring improvement in crop statistics with modest support from FAO;
- ✓ The SP-RNRS is being prepared in line with Roadmap, NSDS, RNR Statistical Framework, Global SPARS Guidelines and other government plans and policies such as RNR sector's 11 Five-year Plan etc.
- ✓ The SP-RNRS will integrate statistical information with e-agriculture platform to improve dissemination of and access to data.

Status and way-forward of SP-RNRS Preparation

- ✓ The latest version of SP-RNRS (version 1.3) updated after the RSC meeting in Phuentsholing was circulated to RSC members in the first week of January 2016;
- ✓ After incorporating the comments from the RSC, the document will be submitted to Global Strategy Office in Bangkok for feedback/comments by February 2016;
- ✓ The SP-RNRS document is expected to finalize and endorsed by the government (MoAF/NSB) towards end of March 2016.

