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OVERVIEW OF FAO ACTIVITIES ON RELEVANT FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES SINCE THE 23RD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

I. Introduction

The last Session of the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics was held in Rabat, Morocco from 4th to 7th December 2013. Since then, the Statistics Division of FAO (ESS) as well as other statistics units and the FAO Regional Office for Africa have worked closely with member countries to build their capacities in food, agricultural and rural sector data collection, analysis, dissemination and how to use the above statistical data.

As in the past, FAO's support to African countries in terms of statistical data during the last two years was coordinated between the FAO Statistics Division team at the Headquarters and those at the Regional Offices: the Regional Office for Africa for Sub-Saharan countries, the Regional Office for Near East and North Africa countries, members of AFCAS.

Activities undertaken covered several areas: Food and agricultural statistical data collection, processing, validation and dissemination; as published in reports and in other sources including the world database on food and agriculture (FAOSTAT). Activities equally covered statistical data capacity building and a support for member countries in generating agricultural statistics through the implementation of the FAO field program.

Issues concerning setting of standards, norms and the methodology for data generation, analysis and dissemination as well as the general governance and coordination of statistical data activities within the FAO were equally covered.

II. Food and Agricultural Data Collection and Dissemination Activities

Data compilation is an essential activity of FAO and part of its core mandates. This is extended to various data areas (production, trade, fertilizers and pesticides, land, employment, food balance sheet and statistics on food security, pricing, population, environmental statistics, investments, forest). This enables the FAO to regularly update its statistical data published on FAOSTAT.

Activities are planned and executed with strict deadlines: the administration of questionnaires in the countries, collection, compilation and processing of data for onward update of the database. Dates for new updates are indicated on the website informing users of when to expect new updates. Many of the Statistics Division teams and those of other divisions are fully engaged in this process.

A lot of effort went into the publication of the FAO statistical yearbooks. The 2012 and 2013 editions were published using the new format. The 2014 edition of the Regional yearbook for Africa was published and disseminated in 2014 and the production of the 2015 Pocketbook is being finalized.

These documents are available for download online at:
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3107e/i3107e00.htm>

III. Normative Activities and Methodological Development

Since the last AFCAS session, the Statistical Division of the FAO undertook several methodological and normative activities in collaboration with regional offices. These activities include agricultural census, the implementation of research activities in the framework of the global strategy for rural and agricultural statistics enhancement.

The Research unit of the global strategy published and disseminated guidelines and methodological documents covering emerging areas in agricultural statistics. These areas include:

- online training programs on "Guidelines for linking population census to agriculture census with the experience of selected countries";
- technical report on "linking list sampling frames to list area-sampling in agriculture surveys", "Enhancing the use of GPS, GIS and remote sensing for setting master samples", "Developing effective and precise methods for using remote sensing in agricultural statistics";
- working documents on "enhancing methodologies for the use of administrative statistics in national agriculture statistics systems" and "spatial disaggregation and the estimation of small areas in agriculture surveys";
- guides and guidelines on "environmental economic account system," "enhancing aquaculture and fishing statistics through an agricultural census framework", "integrated survey framework" "evaluation of country capacities in producing rural and agricultural statistics", "guidelines for developing strategic plans for producing agricultural and rural statistics";
- manuals for "estimating greenhouse gas effect in agriculture", "statistics on production costs"

All these documents are available for download on the global strategy site:
<http://www.gsars.org/fr/category/publications/>

The FAO worked to finalize and publish the world agricultural census program guide for the period 2016 - 2025. This guide is to be used by countries in the implementation of their agricultural census for the period 2016-2025. Two volumes would be published during the period. The first volume would be on the program, the concepts and definitions. The second volume will deal with methodological and operational issues of the census implementation. The world program documents are available on the FAO website: www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-wca/wca-2020/en/

With respect to classification, the FAO collaborated with the UNSD in the update process. In collaboration with the Departments of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Forestry, the Statistics Division of FAO formulated a detailed proposal for the review of CPC Ver. 2.1. and a list of agricultural supplementary code. This version was published as an official annex entitled "CPC extending to agricultural statistics". It gives additional details on agricultural produce by adding 2 supplementary positions to the 5 proposed CPC Ver. 2.1.

The 2012 SH version, in force since January 1st 2012, outlines 300 more new agricultural produce and fish products. The amendment proposed by the FAO makes the SH version more adapted and more useful for the purposes of agriculture and fisheries statistics. It equally sets more accurate correspondence and harmonization with the CPC.

The FAO has, as of March 2012, elaborated and submitted a proposal for the review of SH 2017 to the WCO. The document comprises 83 proposed amendments under the agriculture produce sub-section, fish and forestry products, fertilizers and farm machineries. The FAO is currently partaking in preparing an explanatory notes and it is equally engaged in the HS 2022 review.

Finally, the nomenclature database is still operational and continues to be of help to many users consulting the database for various purposes.

IV. Capacity Building Activities and Field Program

Capacity building and field program are the two core areas for which member countries fall on the FAO.

Agricultural Census Project

The ESS, RAF and RNE give technical support to member countries in Africa on the program and in the field project framework. The main areas benefiting from such supports are: agricultural census for which the support is mainly in the preparation and organization of agricultural census activities, the design and implementation of agricultural surveys and sustained systems for generating standard agricultural data.

Operational, institutional and technical capacity buildings are matters of priority for all projects on national agricultural statistics systems with specific emphasis on the governance aspect of statistical agencies, large scale operations, data collection, processing and dissemination procedures, including the implementation of Countrystat platform. Technical Cooperation Programs (TCP) and the FAO trust fund often fund the projects.

The most recent activities undertaken since the last AFCAS session are:

- TCP project formulation in support of agricultural census and drafting of key project documents for the following countries' agricultural census project: the Comoros, Mali, Senegal, Angola, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia.
- Operational implementation support for the census projects for the following countries: Côte-d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Mali, Namibia, Ghana, Senegal, Mauritania, Mauritius and Angola.
- Support to the UEMOA Commission for the conduct of a feasibility study for a harmonized and synchronized agricultural census in its member countries.

- Technical capacity building support in agricultural statistics for countries of the East Africa Community;
- Support for the implementation of "Space Statistics project - support for Ethiopia to improve its agricultural statistics system" funded by the BMGF.

The last two years were characterized by intense activity for the review of the Guidelines for the World Agriculture Census Programme 2020. Two volumes shall be published and made available to member countries. Volume 1, on the program, the concepts and definitions, is already published. Volume 2 on operational issues of the census is at its drafting stage.

Activities undertaken for the implementation of the Global Strategy to improve agricultural and rural statistics.

Following the adoption of the Global strategy and action Plan for Africa in 2010 and while awaiting the establishment of a trust fund and governance structures at the world and regional levels, the FAO developed an intermediary project which benefited from BMGF funding. The project was entitled "Agricultural Statistics Capacity Building in Pilot Countries: Phase 1: "Assessment of agricultural statistics systems in pilot countries" to support 9 countries (7 in Africa and 2 in Asia). This project was aimed at assessing the national statistics system of each country and developing a project for national action plan for the implementation of the global strategy at national levels in 2011.

The project is aimed at developing a framework and national agricultural statistics systems evaluation tools and how assessment is done in the selected countries (Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria, Bangladesh and India).

Project resources enabled the project to experience progress in the conception and the development of normative works (developing of evaluation questionnaires, questionnaires testing in the pilot countries, developing of the framework, guidelines and tools for the evaluation per country) and progress in country capacity building through technical workshops for better implementation of evaluation activities. Selected countries have really benefited from the financial support of the project without which the evaluation would not have been possible. The project served as a catalyst for putting in place governance structure of project at the national levels and has accelerated the implementation of the evaluation exercise. The evaluation process was finalized in all project countries in 2014 with a short term action plan proposed and validated as advocacy tools for fund mobilization from partners and governments of six (6) African countries.

The Setting up of CountryStat System for Sub-Saharan African Countries

The various projects rolled out by the FAO with the support of donors (BMGF, UEMOA, SADC, EAC, Italian Cooperation) were crowned with appreciable results. The platform was established in 57 countries including 37 African countries.

The platform is operational in 24 African countries spread across two sub-regions groupings (UEMOA, and EAC) and being developed in 13 countries. The agricultural census program constitutes a springboard for adopting and putting in place the system in the countries.

Food Security Statistics

The FAO Statistics Division supports countries to adopt norms, methodologies and instruments for analyzing food access and consumption data. The Division equally builds the capacities of national statistics institutions and other components of the statistics systems in adopting methodologies for

generating data on food security. In this vein, the FAO has developed, in collaboration with the World Bank, the free stand-alone software, 'ADePT-food security Module (FSM)' for processing data on food consumption collected during national households surveys in order to obtain a set of indicators for food security decision making at national and sub-national levels. A user manual was developed and it's available on FAO's website.

During the last two years, the FAO undertook capacity building activities in this area in Africa. A workshop on food security analysis using data collected during national household surveys was organized in 2014 for 5 African countries (the Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone). Another regional workshop was organized during the third quarter of 2015 for SADC countries.

The FAO developed a regional project in 2014, financed by the Italian Cooperation entitled "Capacity building for monitoring food insecurity in the Sahel" for five countries of the Sahel region (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad) where food insecurity is an issue of priority. The project aimed at enhancing food insecurity monitoring in the countries as well as capacity building activities through regional and national workshops on the use of ADePT in developing food balance sheet.

V. Establishment of a statistical governance mechanism within FAO

Since 2012, the FAO undertook to put in place an internal governance mechanism for statistical activities to ensure the implementation of efficient and coordinated statistical activity within its apparatus. As a result, structures were put in place including the creation of a Chief Statistician post for the Inter-Departmental Working Group on statistics (IDWG). The Chief Statistician who also doubles as the Director of the Statistics Division is the leader of the FAO statistics system. The role of the IDWG on statistics is to promote the coordination and cooperation between departments and units of FAO and ensure coherence in the production and development of food and agricultural statistics. The working group validates and approves methodologies, common conceptual frameworks and innovations and ensures the implementation of norms within the institution. It holds regular meetings to discuss relevant issues on its mandate. Regional statisticians are members of the IDWG on statistics. The FAO Statistics Division organized the first meeting of the International Advisory Group on FAO Statistics (IAGFS) in 2013. The IAGFS plays the role of a peer review assessment on the quality of data generated and disseminated by the FAO.

**LIST OF MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 23RD AFCAS SESSION AND
THEIR STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION.**

Recommendations of the 23rd session	Status of implementation
<p>1. <u>recommended</u> that the FAO establishes a world commission on agricultural statistics in order to: (a) Ensure a better coordination and standardization of activities and recommendations of regional commissions and structures; (b) organize a world forum for national representatives to enable them review and adopt methodological approaches and standards; <i>and</i> (c) put in place a peer review process of published data and the methodology used by the FAO.</p>	<p>The process of establishing the World Commission in ongoing. A first proposal was submitted at the FAO Board meeting. Recommendations for the review of the proposal were made. The FAO peer data review process started with the first meeting of the IDWG on statistics.</p>
<p>2. <u>recommended</u> to member countries and regional organizations in Africa, including the FAO-RAF, to strengthen their partnerships and collaborations in terms of international classification.</p>	<p>2. Under the auspices of the Global Strategy, the guide on international classification of agricultural statistics was developed and shall be made available to countries. FAO continues its collaboration with the Statistics Division of United Nations on classifications.</p>
<p>3. <u>recommended</u> the documentation of sustained use of new technologies such as GPS, computer assisted personal interview (CAPI) and remote sensing.</p>	<p>3. The FAO has, within the framework of Global strategy, worked in these areas and has published literature reviews and working documents thereon.</p>
<p>4. <u>recommended</u> the enhancement of work methodology for livestock statistics, due to its importance in Africa, including specialized surveys on livestock in national survey programs.</p>	<p>4. The FOA has worked on enhancing production statistics and the productivity of livestock in the framework of the research component of the global strategy. The process would lead to the publication of a methodology guide in this field.</p>
<p>5. <u>recommended</u> the strengthening of collecting sex-disaggregated data in WCA 2020, especially concerning land ownership and /or land management and bring on board clear directives on how they are collected. Further recommended the inclusion of variables for recording climate change impacts and other emerging issues affecting the environment and agricultural production.</p>	<p>5. In 2014, the FAO has organized in Uganda a meeting of experts on sex-disaggregated data on land ownership and land management in agricultural census. The meeting brought on board inputs to the review of the guide of the world agriculture census program 2020.</p>
<p>6. <u>recommended</u> that the FAO continues to</p>	<p>6. The FAO has developed, in collaboration</p>

<p>collaborate with individual countries and at regional levels in order to support their analysis and estimations of greenhouse gas emissions.</p>	<p>with many partners, a three year project aimed at building country capacities for a sustainable national system for managing greenhouse gas inventories for 7 West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Vert, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal and Togo). The project underpins the quality of greenhouse gas inventories in agriculture and forestry taking into account country specifics.</p>
<p>7. <u>recommended</u> that the FAO continues to work on measures to promote investment in agriculture, and require of member countries to proceed with country profile and information on investments reviews and report same to FAO before publishing them on FAOSTAT.</p>	<p>7. The FAO continued its work on cost of production (CoP) in agriculture and supported 3 selected countries in field testing of the first methodological orientations. A meeting of experts was organized to finalize CoP manual.</p>
<p>8. <u>recommended</u> that the FAO continues working on the cost of production (CoP) in agriculture, and encourage countries to proceed with a critical examination of emerging methodological issues, in order to bring on board recommendations and suggestions to the manual.</p>	<p>8. The FAO compiled new series of data on investment comprising of capital stocks, agricultural machineries, and government expenditure. Other series on foreign direct investment in agriculture shall be integrated in coming years.</p>
<p>9. <u>recommended</u> the creation of opportunities to promote exchange of experience on the FAO methodology used in estimating the prevalence of undernourishment. Encourage countries to supply all the necessary data needed to estimate the prevalence of undernourishment.</p>	<p>9. The FAO compiled new series of data on investment comprising of capital stocks, and agricultural machineries</p>
<p>10. <u>recommended</u> that countries draw their own food balance sheet with particular emphasis on the provision of reliable and detailed information on the use of food. It is as a result recommended that the FAO assists countries in the following areas: (a) the process of compiling food balance sheet; (b) the adoption of enhanced most recent methodologies; and (c) building of necessary statistics capacities.</p>	<p>10. The FAO has developed projects for enhancing food security monitoring and capacity building for compiling food balance sheet and extracting food security statistics from analysis of data from household surveys. Capacity building to integrate food access indicators by using food insecurity scale experience</p>
<p>11. <u>recommended</u> that the Voices of the Hungry project gathers data from many countries and that the findings be integrated in the series of indicators on food security of FAO.</p>	<p>11. Results of food insecurity scale experience were accepted by the FAO as validated results of the research. Food security indicators emanating from this shall be part of the set of indicators on food security. Through the Gallup Poll, the FAO</p>

	<p>gathers data from more than 150 countries. The Gallup license is valid till 2017. Request shall be made before countries in order that the module be integrated in their periodic household surveys.</p>
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