



FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA WORKING GROUP ON AGRICULTURAL AND LIVESTOCK STATISTICS
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Twenty-sixth Session

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**Overview of FAO activities in the
Latin America and Caribbean region
since the 25th Session of ALSLAC**

Objective

- To provide an overview of the main activities undertaken by the FAO Regional Office and the FAO Statistics Division in the Region since the last FAO-IICA meeting in November 2009

Technical Assistance – Agricultural Census

- Agricultural censuses are considered one of the basic building blocks of the Agricultural Statistical System.
- 6 countries in LAC conducted AC since the last meeting.
- FAO has provided technical assistance in five of these countries, namely Haiti, Grenada, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru through projects under its Technical Cooperation Programme.

TA – Agricultural Census (Con't)

- 6 countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Costa Rica and Ecuador) are planning their censuses in the near future.
- Projects are being prepared and are at different stages of approval and implementation, to provide technical assistance to Bolivia, Dominican Republic and Colombia.

TA – Agricultural Statistical Systems

- Developing an Agricultural Statistical system requires for all the sector statistics to be integrated and coordinated.
- FAO is providing technical assistance in this area.
- In some cases, this assistance is provided together with or after the assistance to conducting the agricultural census which provides the basis for the system (Nicaragua, Peru and Suriname).
- Mexico is also receiving technical assistance from FAO

TA – Market Information Systems

- Guyana is developing a Market Information System that includes an Agricultural Information System (mainly crop production information) for which the Ministry of Agriculture of Guyana requested technical assistance from FAO.

TA – Agricultural Surveys

- Costa Rica: to revise the survey design and estimation methodology.
- In addition, support is being provided to Costa Rica with the design and estimation of the survey on fruit, vegetables and fish consumed by families with children at school.
- Guatemala: the assistance is provided under a special programme for Food Security to improve agricultural information for decision making.

TA – Food Balance Sheets

- FAO also provides technical assistance in new methodology for calculation of food balance sheet and indicators of under-nourishment. Colombia under the project is receiving technical assistance in this area.

TA – Sub-regional

- A sub-regional project is providing support with the establishment of a food and nutrition security information and early warning system for the CARICOM Sub-region.

Capacity Building

- In June 2011, in partnership with the INE of Uruguay and the NASS of the US, FAO organized a Regional Workshop on Agricultural Census and Surveys. 19 countries from LA participated.
- In April 2012, in partnership with the INEI of Peru and the Andean Community, FAO organized in Lima, Peru two meetings attended by 6 countries:
 1. SEMINARIO SOBRE LOS CENSOS AGROPECUARIOS: MEJORES PRÁCTICAS INTERNACIONALES
 2. REUNIÓN DE EXPERTOS SOBRE LOS CENSOS AGROPECUARIOS

Global Strategy

- The ASWG was established by the SCA of the ECLAC in 2011. This group is chaired by Brazil.
- The ASWG met for the first time in Aguascalientes, Mexico in 2012.
- The Regional Action Plan was developed and presented in different forums.
- The Country Assessments are in process.

Classifications for Agricultural Statistics

- FAO has been going through an important process in terms of increased participation in the review of international classifications, such as the Central Product Classification of the United Nations (CPC) and the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS), and their implementation in the FAO statistical system.
- The decision has been taken to implement the CPC in FAO as the reference classification for agricultural products in the production domain.

Classifications for Agricultural Statistics (Cont')

- Contributions from countries are critical in the development and maintenance of the statistical classifications used by the Organization.
- A questionnaire on national classifications used for agriculture and food products has been designed in order to assess countries' practices and the extent to which international standards are used, with a particular reference to the CPC.
- 196 countries have been contacted, **33 from LAC**. 81 replied, **7 from LAC**.
- 134 classifications used, of which 70% are coherent with CPC or other international standards aligned with CPC.

FAOSTAT

- In the last 2 years a thorough revision of the Statistics Division data dissemination systems has occurred.
- The main objective of this restructuring was to reach a larger number and broader type of users, and to build a more efficient data sharing mechanism.
- This strategy is in line with the emerging “open data” approach, which provides the conceptual framework for broader collaboration on systems and data integration at the global level. Open Data is expected to establish a more efficient flow of agricultural-related data across countries and regions.

FAOSTAT (Con't)

- FAO's overall objectives in this area include:
 - A. Increasing accessibility to quality and timely information
 - B. Strengthening capacity to develop and carry out multi-sector data analysis
 - C. Improving data exchange, i.e. efficiently link FAO internal and external databases
 - D. Playing an active role in the establishment and consolidation of a global information network and community

FAOSTAT (Con't)

- In 2012, a new FAOSTAT data dissemination system (FAOSTAT3) was launched.
- This innovative system is based on an open-source software platform called “FENIX”.
- Features include:
 - browsing and analysis of data
 - advanced interactive data download
 - cross-domain data search by using free-text
 - data exchange through web services.

CountrySTAT

- The CountrySTAT project is a major effort to strengthen national capacity of the participating countries toward improving data management and harmonization using the FAOSTAT standards.
- CountrySTAT is conceived to be complementary to FAOSTAT and is the basis for scaling FAOSTAT- related activities and outputs to national and sub-national contexts.
- CountrySTAT is an open-source information system capable of managing relevant data originating from a variety of national sources.
- The CountrySTAT approach is the result of a collaborative work carried out by the members of a network of national and international institutions who make official data to be uploaded to the system on a regular basis.
- CountrySTAT is therefore the effort of a community rather than the output of one organization.

CountrySTAT (Cont')

- Each CountrySTAT system is nationally owned and managed which means that the focal institution in each country leads data coordination, technical working group meetings in order to bring together the main providers of agricultural data that is harmonized and validated before being made available, and trainings to ensure that the system has reliable data following the FAOSTAT standards.
- A great deal of the accuracy and timeliness of FAOSTAT data depends on the capacity of the National Statistics Offices and the Ministries of Agriculture around the world to produce, compile and transmit quality information and release it to FAO. Therefore, strengthening FAOSTAT directly impacts CountrySTAT and ultimately means also strengthening national partners.

Regional Yearbook

- In 2012, the Statistics Division of FAO launched a Statistical Yearbook with a very new look and feel.
- Presents a visual synthesis of the major trends and factors shaping the global food and agricultural landscape and their interplay with broader environmental, social and economic dimensions.
- it strives to serve as a unique reference point on the state of world food and agriculture for policy-makers, donor agencies, researchers and analysts as well as the general public.

Regional Yearbook (Cont')

- The novelty of the Yearbook is not only the content, but the efficient method of production sets a precedent for dissemination.
- The publication is generated with the statistical software R in combination with the typesetting program LaTeX, both open source software.
- Thus far, two global Yearbooks have been released.
- In 2012, two regional Yearbooks –from Europe and Central Asia and Africa – have been produced and in 2014 it'll be produced for all regions including LAC.

POINTS FOR ADVICE/RECOMMENDATION BY THE WORKING GROUP

- In order to increase the relevance of the statistical activities in the LAC Region and increase the impact of this forum on the development of effective agricultural statistics systems in the region, the Working Group may wish to:
 - Requests that the next FAO Regional Conference reviews the current status of the FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA Working Group on agricultural and livestock statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean, and make relevant recommendations to establish a Regional Commission on Agricultural Statistics.

Thank you