


a **Global
Strategy**
to improve
**Agricultural
and Rural
Statistics**

***A partnership effort to strengthen
agricultural statistics***






Throughout the world, rural people are suffering from the recent food crisis and market volatility, as well as the impact of climate change and its effects on agriculture and food security. The weakness in data and information systems related to food and agriculture in many countries is considered a key constraint for designing short term interventions and longer term policies at country and global levels.

Decisions about investments to foster agricultural growth as well as policies to reduce food insecurity need to be based on sound statistical information.

To address the weakness in basic data and information availability in developing countries as well as emerging data and information needs, a Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics has been developed by the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and endorsed in February 2010 by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC). The Strategy was also strongly supported by the FAO Council and Conference. The Global Strategy is the result of an extensive consultation process with national and international statistical organizations as well as Ministries of Agriculture. An Action Plan to Implement the Global Strategy has been also prepared following the same process.



The availability and quality of agricultural statistics has declined, just at the wrong time.

The Strategy is a global effort to improve and ensure the sustainability of agricultural and rural statistics in countries. Agriculture includes livestock, aquaculture, forestry production and small scale fisheries in addition to crops. It also addresses emerging data related to the impact of agriculture on the environment and climate change.

The purpose of the Global Strategy is to enable developing countries to build sustainable statistical systems that will produce accurate and reliable agricultural and rural data to guide policy analysis and decision-making in the 21st century. Its three main pillars are:

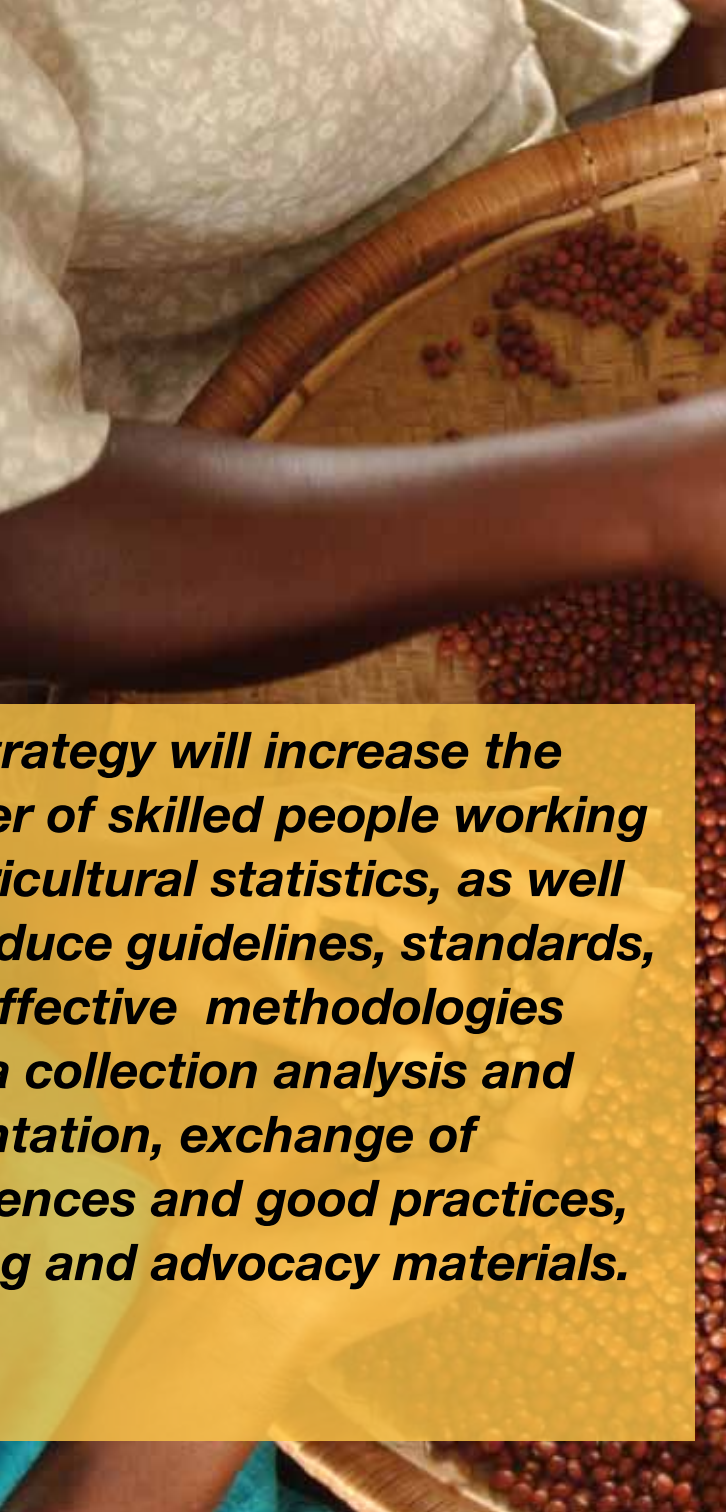
- produce a minimum set of core data and determine national priorities
- integrate agricultural statistics into national statistical systems
- foster the sustainability of agricultural statistics through governance and statistical capacity development

The Action Plan provides the global framework and governance structure that will lead to the establishment of improved national statistics systems supported by global and regional coordinated statistical capacity development efforts through technical assistance, training, and research. The Plan provides a detailed proposal of the specific activities to be undertaken at country, regional and global level as well as the linkages between the technical components.

The preparation of the Action Plan followed a regional approach with regional partners taking the lead. The global plan was developed by FAO and the World Bank in parallel with the development of the African plan (lead by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa) which was the first regional plan.

The establishment of a Global Trust Fund for Agricultural Statistics and the Regional Fund for Africa will allow for effective implementation of the programme.

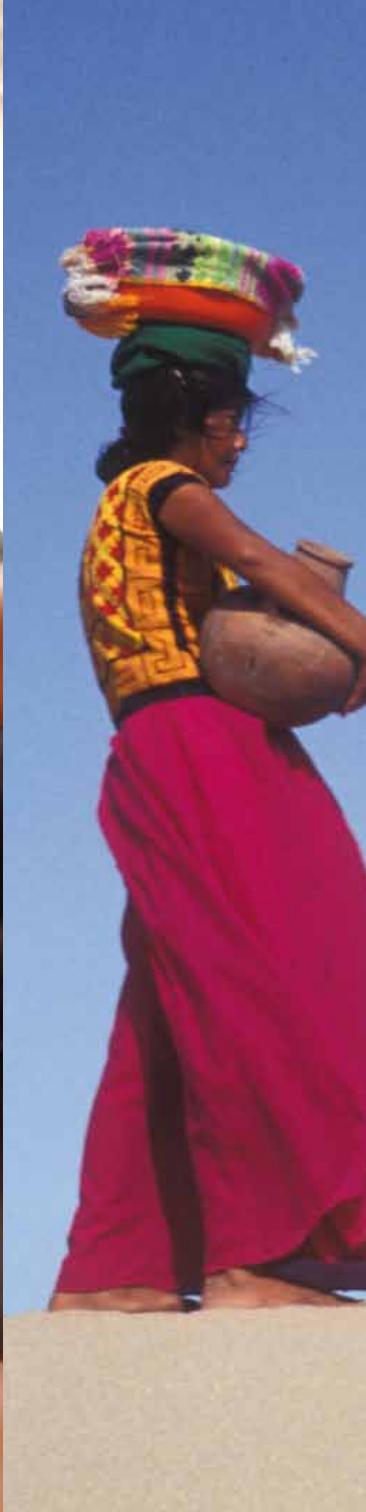
A Global Office will be established in FAO to develop and coordinate research and to support technical assistance and training. A global direction will avoid duplication of efforts in developing advanced and cost-effective methodologies and tools for data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination.



The Strategy will increase the number of skilled people working on agricultural statistics, as well as produce guidelines, standards, cost-effective methodologies in data collection analysis and presentation, exchange of experiences and good practices, training and advocacy materials.



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A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

The Strategy is a partnership between key organizations such as FAO, the World Bank, AfDB, EUROSTAT, other UN organizations, National Statistical Offices around the world as well as global resource partners and regional actors (Regional Development Banks, UN Regional Economic and Social Commissions, the South Pacific Community). It builds on the technical knowledge, experience and comparative strengths of institutions across the world.



It took many years for agricultural statistics to deteriorate to their current state, but the implementation of the Strategy provides a new start.

INTEGRATION

By integrating agricultural statistics into the economic, social and environmental domain, the strategy becomes a comprehensive, cost-effective exercise which avoids duplication of effort and the release of conflicting statistics ensuring the best use of resources.

PUBLIC GOODS

The aim is to help countries leverage public goods such as cost-effective methods and good practices, and thereby reinforce food security, nutrition, and the sustainable management of natural resources at the global level.

COUNTRY DRIVEN

The implementation of the Strategy will be country driven and will take into account other ongoing statistical capacity building and development activities. Through sound statistics, countries will address priority development issues on their national agenda.

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***The Strategy is a global effort.
To make it work we need more partners.***