



Expert Meeting 2

Developing Sector Strategic Plans for Agricultural and Rural Statistics and Integration into the National Strategies for Development of Statistics

04 DECEMBER 2012, 14:00 – 17:30

RED ROOM, WFP HEADQUARTERS

Summary Report

I. Introduction

One of the major activities for the Action Plan of the Global Strategy is the development of Sector Strategic Plans for Agricultural and Rural Statistics (SSPARS) which begin the process of improving agricultural and rural statistics. These form part of National Strategies for Development of Statistics (NSDS) which provides countries with a vision and strategic plan across the entire national statistical system. The development of the NSDS based on sector plans is now seen as the cornerstone of NSDS development.

However, the inclusion of agriculture into NSDSs has remained low and, in addition, agricultural statistics faces the unique challenge of coordination among multiple producers and users which cut across a variety of sectors. Specific guidelines on the development of agricultural sector strategic plans for statistics therefore need to be developed to address these challenges.

II. Objectives

- 1) An annotated outline for the *Guidelines on Sector Strategic Plans for Agricultural and Rural Statistics* (including content of sector plans) agreed by the expert group.
- 2) Identify key challenges in development and implementation of sector strategic plans.
- 3) Identify best practice examples from country experiences addressing the key challenges.

III. Timetable

CHAIR: Ms. Anna Sarotte, Paris21	
14:00 – 14:05	Overview of the current situation in developing SSPARS and link to the Global Strategy (Mr. Naman Keita, FAO)
14:05 - 14:25	Presentation of country experiences: Laos and Tanzania
14:25 - 14:35	Discussion of country experiences
14:35 - 14:45	Presentation of concept note on key challenges (Ms. Nancy Chin, FAO)
14:45 - 15:30	Discussion of concept note
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee-break
16:00 – 16:10	Presentation of country experiences: Mozambique
16:10 - 16:25	Presentation of annotated outline of the proposed <i>Guidelines on Sector Strategic Plans for Agricultural and Rural Statistics (SSPARS)</i> (Mr. Christophe Duhamel, FAO)
16:25 - 16:40	Presentation of case study of Peru on agricultural sector plan design and implementation following the annotated outline (Mr. Miguel Galmes, consultant to Peru)
16:40 - 17:20	Discussion - annotated outline of the proposed <i>Guidelines on SSPARS</i>
17:20 - 17:30	Conclusion

IV. Main conclusions

Country Ownership

- Work should be done in priority by staff in the countries (Ministries or/and National Statistics Office (NSO)'s), consultants should only facilitate and priority should be given -if necessary- to local consultants and south-south co-operation.
- A SSPARS coordinator is needed to lead the work, rather than having it scattered among various employees which leads to lack of commitment as they are busy getting out the normal data. The heads of Statistics need to understand the importance of continuity and releasing staff time for this.
- The process is not quick – can take at least one year to design plan and countries are pressing to have things done quickly, which then leads to hiring an external consultant. As such there might be a need to build in some quick results/improvements to statistics to keep stakeholders happy while the plan is being developed. E.g. in Mozambique the sample design of the annual agricultural survey was also funded by same funding as SSPARS design. Also the Annual Surveys and Forecasting data were reconciled, which provided quick results so users could see advantage of planning.

Broader Scope of Agriculture

- If possible design at the same time as other sectors for joint advocacy material and building capacity across sectors. It was agreed that it is better to have the sub-sectors as part of the SSPARS rather than having their own plans. Mozambique fisheries is developing its own plan to integrate into SSPARS.
- The SSPARS should synchronize with the NSDS, with the agricultural development plans and the countries budget cycles. This isn't done well at present and the GS could do some research on this.
- Might be difficult to link between sectors – suggestions were having joint publications, joint trainings and taking advantage of personal relationships as e.g. in Laos. Another idea was to have a shared statistical service, where statisticians rotate among Ministries and the NSO as in India and UK (statistical “cadre”) but it needs a change of the overall system.
- For integration into NSDS: To mainstream agriculture and coordinate data production may need high level government decision as in Ethiopia, now CSA is the official source.
- Ministries may be reluctant to have a joint SSPARS – e.g. Morocco – especially if their systems are already funded or better than the agricultural statistics. Sub-sectors should be included from the beginning for ensuring a better dialogue and an appropriate mainstreaming in the SSPARS.
- However some sub-sectors may want to remain independent and advocacy work is crucial in that case.

Users

- Need to engage those who are not currently interested/informed in SSPARS, especially Ministries of Finances. Targeting just the Ministry of Agriculture is not enough. Need to develop incentives to get budgets across the institutions, not institution by institution. This point also applies to getting other sub-sectors involved in SSPARS development.
- The SSPARS must build, like NSDS's, on the **National Sector Development Plans** and statistics should be recognized as a development sector and integrated into national plans (development plans or PRSPs or regional agricultural policies such as for ECOWAS).

Prioritizing

- Debate on how to encourage prioritization. Some say statistical development priorities should be linked to agricultural and other national policy development priorities, then funding will be automatically easier. Others said that policy priorities change very rapidly so this is not a safe

option – by the time you develop the statistics the priority will have changed. Anyhow some flexibility is required for managing potential policy changes.

- Prioritization should address the different categories of user needs – for M&E; for modeling and for policy development.
- As with country ownership, need to limit expectations of users, if it is to be supported by government in future.

Advocacy

- Need to distinguish between key users and advocacy targets and how you are going to address both in the plan. They should have different treatments.
- Associate resource partners and finance institutions from beginning of process, e.g. Mozambique and the Global Strategy Process.
- Need to have a champion for the process within government. From the highest level such as the Minister of Agriculture or Minister of Planning or eventually the Statistician General of NSO, even if some consider it is not sufficient. In Uganda the Governor of the Central Bank was the champion for statistics.
- It helps if the statistical institution has already proven to be credible, visible and useful to the Ministry of Finance (budget holder) as with UBOS in Uganda. Also in Mozambique the President of the NSO has the rank of a deputy minister and the Council of Statistics is chaired by the Prime Minister. A high profile for statistics is useful.
- Need to involve the media in advocacy.

Tools

- Set up a user forum for agricultural statistics to exchange experience and to share knowledge with younger statisticians.
- Most useful are examples – include in Guidelines examples of other countries workplans, Terms of References, meeting agendas, budgets etc. This was planned.

Country Assessments

- Questionnaires can be a starting point for identifying stakeholders (covering both producers and users).



ANNEX 1: List of participants

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