



## Launching Ceremony of the Global Strategy

03 DECEMBER 2012, 09:00 – 12:30

**SHEIKH ZAYED CENTRE, FAO Headquarters**

### Summary Report

#### A. OVERVIEW

The **High Level Stakeholders Meeting on the Global Strategy: *From Plan to Action*** organised by FAO, in collaboration with our key partners, on **3-5 December, 2012** at FAO and World Food Programme (WFP) Headquarters, Rome, Italy.

The aim of the meeting is to officially launch the Implementation of the *Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics* for a renewed coalition of partners to support the Global Strategy. The meeting also provides an opportunity to update the stakeholders with the status of the activities carried out so far under the umbrella of the Global Strategy.

#### B. ORGANISATION

**Time:** From 09:00 to 12:30 on 03 December 2012

**Venue:** Sheikh Zayed Centre, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

**Participation:** 77 participants including representatives of 17 countries and several resource and technical partner institutions (see Annex 2).

- Participants were welcomed by Mr. **Jomo Sundaram**, Assistant Director General, Economic and Social Department of FAO and Ms. **Joyce Luma**, Chief of WFP's Food Security Analysis Unit.
- The meeting was chaired by Ms. **Mary Bohman**, Administrator of the Economic Research Service (ERS), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA);
- The keynote speech was delivered by Ms. **Frances Harper**, Team Leader, Global Statistics Partnership Department, Department for International Development (DfID) of the United Kingdom. (full speech is available in Annex 3)
- There were six (6) presentations made on the progress of the implementation of the Global Strategy at global and regional levels.
- There were three (3) presentations delivered by country representatives on their own experience in implementing activities under the umbrella of the Global Strategy. (detailed agenda is available in Annex 1)

#### C. MAIN POINTS DICUSSED

##### 1) **First discussion session:** Global Action Plan to Implement the Strategy

##### Advocacy

- There were several comments on sustainability of the programme and obtaining long term country support. It was pointed out that for this to happen there is a need to ensure long term demand for statistics from users. It was clarified that countries also need to take up the challenge to mobilize resources for themselves
- The Participating Partners expressed that it was expected that during the launching ceremony major emphasis was going to be placed on the funding GAPS.

It was clarified that advocacy materials would be assisted by the GS and that the GS agenda addresses emerging data needs in countries.

#### Data Collection

- Questions were asked about whether the GS will be carrying out data collection activities and how. It was also pointed out that data collection projects should be carried out in collaboration with ongoing programmes in order to avoid duplications.

It was clarified that the project is about capacity building, not data collection which should be funded nationally. The programme will not only address the respond to the decreasing capacities in agricultural statistics but will also be responsive to emerging capacities.

#### 2) **Second discussion session: Regional Action Plans**

- Africa RP - Questions were asked on why the grouping of countries took place before the country assessment and which criteria was used to group them. It was also requested whether the coordination mechanisms mentioned were in place before or a result of the regional plan and to clarify why there were national action plans when this is not part of the GS.

It was clarified that these were existing coordination structures; the grouping was a preliminary grouping based on earlier work during development of the action plan and would be refined based on the country assessment.

#### **D. CONCLUSIONS**

- The point was made that it is important to integrate with other data collections such as the population census. The integration of the GS with other statistics would be key to its success and this is important for sustainable statistical systems. It is therefore important to make use of all data collection opportunities for agriculture statistics and to encourage integration with the rest of the statistical system.

The example was given of ERS and NASS who have already started to integrate into the NSS through the Inter Agency Coordination Group for Agricultural Statistics - which is an across government coordination group for all agricultural statistics producers.

- Both BMG and Italian Cooperation announced its contribution. BMG reiterated the importance on implementing for success and impact as the best way to mobilize additional resources.
- The point was made that the research activities should ensure that the research results are tangible.
- It is important to learn from other countries in each region, not just from the international organizations. For example Brazil will be using the table computers in the farm survey 2014. Countries must become self sustaining systems capable of innovating, using the global public goods of the GS. The GS must promote alternatives ways of mobilizing additional resources, with special focus on south-south cooperation, and facilitate the government to government linkages that would allow sharing of the experiences.
- The point was made that the data users must be included. Encouragement from the user community will provide advocacy for statistics and is key for the long term.
- The GS was requested to document all the progress and achievements. It was suggested to clearly identify the baselines in order to better assess the impact. It was also reminded that this is the first round but there might be second one if we succeed.

## ANNEX 1: Detailed Agenda

<b>Chair: Ms. Mary Bohman (ERS – USDA)</b>	
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome speech ( <i>Ms. Joyce Luma – WFP</i> and <i>Mr. Jomo Sundaram, FAO</i> )
09:15 – 09:30	Keynote speech ( <i>Ms. Frances Harper, DfID</i> )
09:30 – 09:45	GLOBAL ACTION PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY: overview of the plan, achievement and future perspectives ( <i>Mr. Pietro Gennari, FAO</i> )
09:45 – 10:00	Discussion
10:00 – 10:15	REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR AFRICA: Progress of the implementation of the Global Strategy in the region ( <i>Mr. Vincent Ngendakumana, AfDB</i> )
10:15 – 10:30	REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: Progress of the implementation of the Global Strategy in the region ( <i>Mr. Romeo Recide, Philippines BAS</i> )
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	<b>Coffee-break</b>
11:00 – 11:10	LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: Progress of the implementation of the Global Strategy in the region ( <i>Mr. Flavio Bolliger, IBGE</i> )
11:10 – 11:20	NEAR EAST: Progress of the implementation of the Global Strategy in the region ( <i>Mr. Mohamed Barre, FAORNE</i> )
11:20 – 11:30	CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) COUNTRIES: Progress of the implementation of the Global Strategy in the region ( <i>Mr. Alikhan Smailov, Statistics Kazakhstan</i> )
11:30 – 11:45	Discussion
11:45 – 11:55	Country presentation, Ethiopia ( <i>audio-presentation</i> )
11:55 – 12:05	Country presentation, Peru
12:05 – 12:15	Country presentation, Pakistan ( <i>audio-presentation</i> )
12:15 – 12:30	Closing remarks
<b>12:30 – 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch break</b>



## ANNEX 2: List of participants

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## ANNEX 3: Keynote speech during the Launching Ceremony

### Key Note Speech of Frances Harper, DFID

#### On the Occasion of Launching Ceremony of the *Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics*, Rome, 3-5 December 2012

Dear colleagues,

It is a privilege to be here on the important occasion of the launch of the *Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics*; and particularly to be delivering the keynote speech on behalf of DFID, the UK's Department for International Development. We have seen significant progress over the last couple of years, in moving the Global Strategy from "A Concept" to "A Plan" and now we are ready for "Concrete Actions" towards its implementation. The next three days will therefore be crucial in making that happen.

The latest figures released in the recent State of Food Insecurity report show that around 15 percent of the developing world's population is still under-nourished. That's 850 million people. And one of the reasons DFID is here today – and one of the reasons we are committed to supporting the Global Strategy - is to help tackle this, and the many other global development challenges.

There is no doubt that the world has changed since the Millennium Development Goals were adopted in the year 2000: we are now operating in a more complex environment with, one could argue... more complex challenges. The economic downturn, increased volatility in food prices, and the increasing effects of climate change are challenges which were not as prominent before, or at least not as well recognised. The world now is evolving at a faster pace, and needs more policy relevant and more frequent information on how these challenges are affecting people's lives.

Colleagues:

Progress in reducing the number of under-nourished people has slowed in the last couple of years. And investments in agricultural and rural infrastructure have been far below the levels required. Yet there is no doubt that agricultural growth contributes significantly to the reduction of poverty and hunger – because, as we know... the majority of the poor live in rural areas and depend upon agriculture for their livelihoods.

To make "nutrition-sensitive" and "pro-poor" sustainable policies, we need data on agricultural activities which is linked to social and environmental dimensions. But unfortunately, in many developing countries... relevant and reliable data are not always available. Where they are available, they are not always amenable to the kind of integrated social and environmental analysis that policymakers need.

Poor data on food and agriculture make it difficult to know the precise magnitude of the problem. But it also makes it difficult to find solutions: designing appropriate policy interventions; tracking their implementation; learning what works and what doesn't work; and ensuring we deliver maximum benefits for the poor... all of these require good data.

And yet... we know that the quality and availability of agriculture statistics has actually been declining in recent years. That's the bad news. The good news is that... through this Global Strategy, we will work together to reverse this negative trend. The Global Strategy will provide technical assistance and training to countries, backed up by relevant and innovative research on the most cost-effective methodologies.

The Global Strategy will be implemented through a governance mechanism involving many partners at regional, sub-regional and national levels. DIFID is honoured to be one of the leading resource partners alongside the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Italian Cooperation, in an effort to meet the challenge of improving agricultural and rural statistics.

The Strategy focuses on building statistical capacity, strengthening institutions and improving technical standards. The intended **outcome** is an increase of the number of countries with the capability to produce a minimum set of core data, provide analysis, disseminate results and increase the use of data by decision makers – in order to meet the current and emerging statistical demands of national and international stakeholders.

DFID believes that “working together makes a difference”. Partnership not only increases the resources available, but it also sends a unified message to countries, avoids duplication of effort, and ensures synergy of actions. All of which should increase the chance of the strategy delivering concrete, sustainable results.

DFID funds a number of statistical capacity building initiatives – including the World Bank Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building and the Statistics for Results Facility. Our aim is – together with our partners - to help countries formulate evidence-based policies through sustained improvement in the production, availability, quality and use of statistics. Building on these aims... we were delighted to support the Global Strategy, and recognized that this partnership with FAO, WB, BMGF, regional development banks, UN regional commissions and others would provide us with a unique opportunity to build capacity in this crucial area, to ensure “value for the money” and to deliver real results in developing countries.

Dear Partners:

A key element we seek to ensure in all of our work is country-ownership. In the Global Strategy we saw this from the beginning, with strong country consultation and effective country participation in the development of the Strategy itself. It will also be central to implementation - with an early activity being a comprehensive assessment of country needs and priorities, to identify the appropriate intervention required by each country. I am pleased to note that this work is starting with Country Assessments. We need to ensure these are carried out in a participative manner, involving all stake holders at the country level: from data producers to data users; from central statistics agencies as well as agriculture and other sector ministries; from civil society organizations to high level policy makers, from government officials to other donor partners interested in the agriculture sector.

This participative approach will remain important once country needs have been identified, and as they are developing their Sector Strategic Plans for Agricultural and Rural Statistics. Ownership of these plan and commitment to resource them will be critical in ensuring progress in agricultural and rural statistics.

Another element of the Strategy is research. And I am pleased to learn that leading experts from all continents are here with us to support our efforts with their technical knowledge.

An assessment of methodologies used for data collection across countries indicates that the technical advances of the digital revolution are yet to be fully harnessed in many developing countries. The research agenda of the Global Strategy aims to fill this gap. What is important for us is to develop methodologies which are “appropriate for a given country situation”.

In deciding the appropriate methodologies and technologies, we also need to consider cost-effectiveness. The feasibility of any methodology or technology to improve statistics for a specific country will be determined by the local conditions. In developing the methodologies, we will therefore need to generate a



range of options, and evaluate their relative strengths and weaknesses, so that each country is in a position to find what is most suitable for its own context.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Before concluding, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to FAO and WFP for jointly hosting this event. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work of the many local staff supporting this meeting.

I hope the next three days will inform us of the latest information on the status of the strategy. I hope it will encourage us to share knowledge and experience on preparatory work done so far. And most of all I hope it will inspire us to find solutions and agree concrete actions to take the Global Strategy forward – so that it can make real improvements in the quality, availability and use of agricultural and rural statistics; to inform better policies; and ultimately to deliver real results for poor people.

With these words I wish us success in our deliberations, and a pleasant stay in Rome to those who, like me, have travelled to attend this meeting.

Thank you.

