

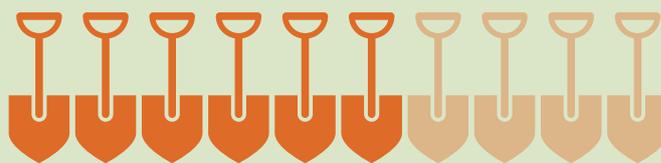
BHUTAN

Country Challenges

Bhutan is a small, landlocked country with a large percentage of its land area marked by mountainous terrain. Though almost 60 percent of its population is employed in agriculture, only about 14 percent of its land area is devoted to it, making up only about 16 percent of GDP. Bhutan has introduced the Statistical Act of Bhutan, but it has not yet been passed by the country's Parliament. A National Statistical Development Strategy, developed with assistance from the World Bank, has also not been fully implemented, due to lack of a legal statistical framework for it. In addition, Bhutan's Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MoAF) has developed a renewable natural resources statistical framework, but several Ministry departments collect statistics, making coordination difficult. A lack of human resources continues to make collection and use of agricultural and rural statistics challenging. Technical capacity is also weak in agencies other than the National Bureau of Statistics.



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Almost 60 percent of the population in Bhutan is employed in agriculture



Global Strategy Solutions

The In-depth Country Assessment (IdCA) by the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics in Asia Pacific recommended a number of actions for Bhutan, starting with improved human capacity building. The IdCA also recommended improving statistical operations through reorganizing them within the MoAF for more efficient use of human resources and improved coordination. Efficiency can be improved by more sharing of statistical activities between producer agencies. Also, survey design and frames should be revised to ensure better accuracy of core data items. Finally, the Renewable Natural Resources Statistical Framework should be expanded to include agencies outside the MoAF.

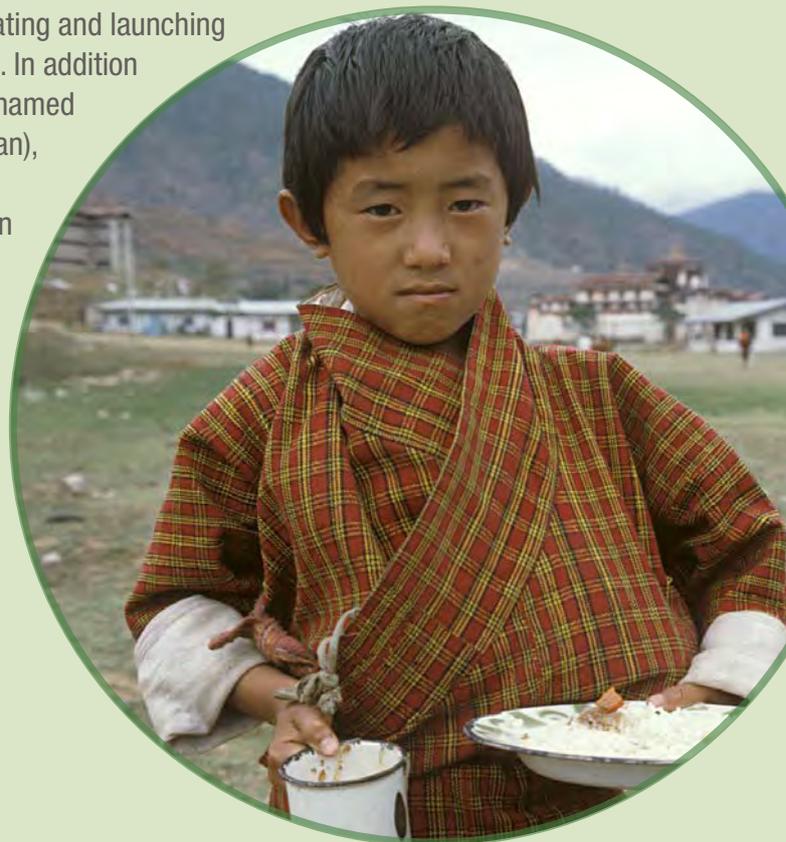
Current Country Work

The Global Strategy in Asia Pacific is collaborating with the Bhutan National Statistics Bureau and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests to activate an ambitious plan that will meet the country's agricultural and rural statistics needs. The plan will concentrate on the following actions.

- Improve crop and livestock statistics
- Develop a strategic plan for agricultural and rural statistics
- Improve institutions and increase the knowledge and skills of statisticians and staff
- Gather updated environmental data
- Undertake land-cover mapping
- Conduct a renewable natural resources census
- Conduct a Bhutan living standards survey
- Conduct a Bhutan labour force survey

Towards a Statistics Secure Future

Bhutan has made notable progress towards its goal of creating and launching a strategic plan for agricultural and rural statistics (SPARS). In addition to the In-depth Country Assessment, the SPARS proposal (named Improving Renewable Natural Resources Statistics in Bhutan), and full plan have been drafted. The IdCA and a completed SPARS roadmap have already been endorsed by the Bhutan government. Two related actions – improvement of both livestock and crop statistics – are also underway. A pilot survey and report on improvement of livestock statistics has been completed. The Government has also convened and made permanent a Renewable Natural Resources Statistics Committee, which will guide preparation and implementation of the SPARS.



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