

## Concept Note

### **Briefing on the Implementation of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics in Asia Pacific**

*13 November 2014,*

*Bangkok, Thailand*

#### **Background**

The *Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics* initiative is the outcome of a three-year effort initiated by the UN Statistical Commission and supported in the Asia Pacific region by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP); as well as national statistics offices, agricultural ministries, and other government and private institutions producing and using agricultural statistics in the region.

Implementation of the Global Strategy in Asia Pacific is guided by a [Regional Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific](#) (RAP), which was endorsed by the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS) at its twenty-fourth session in October 2012 (RAP Publication 2012/22) and subsequently, by the ESCAP Committee on Statistics at its third session in December 2012 (E/ESCAP/CST(3)/17, decision 3/6), and finally by the Global Steering Committee on 26 February 2013. The RAP was drafted with the objective to not only rebuild statistical systems producing agricultural statistics, but also to meet the emerging data requirements and the need to monitor cross-cutting issues throughout the region.

Implementation of the RAP began in early 2013 with the establishment of a Regional Steering Committee (RSC), which acts as the ultimate decision-making body at the regional level, and a Regional Office, which acts as the secretariat to the RSC and is responsible for technical assistance aspects of the implementation. Since its establishment, the RSC has endorsed eight countries for implementation of Global Strategy activities in the region with the intention of covering twenty by the end of the 2017. These eight countries comprise: Bhutan, Fiji, Georgia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Samoa, and Sri Lanka. In addition, work in Bangladesh is being done under a related project supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. In most of these countries (all except Myanmar and Georgia), technical assistance and training activities have begun with in-depth country level assessments of capacity to produce agricultural and rural statistics developed in coordination with national stakeholders and development of proposals for short-medium term high priority projects needed to improve agricultural and rural statistics. Building on these assessments, countries will in time be supported to develop a Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Rural Statistics (SPARS) that will outline and propose a long-term direction for the improvement of agricultural and rural statistics in the country.

The Global Strategy at its core was developed as a multi-donor initiative that provides a flexible framework for the contribution of multiple development partners throughout the duration of the project. In this vein, advocacy efforts, such as these, to promote and include international development partners in the process are critical to achieving the goals laid out by the RAP and the Global Action Plan for the Global Strategy.

## **Objective**

The objective of the briefing is to bring together members of the international development community to facilitate a broader consultation on the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for the *Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics* in Asia Pacific. The main areas of focus will be to brief participants on progress made on the implementation of the Global Strategy, to provide an open forum for development partners to share their ongoing activities for agricultural statistics in the region, and to outline opportunities for greater collaboration in the future. The meeting will also provide an opportunity to the representatives of the pilot countries to meet the potential resource partners.

## **Outputs**

Outputs of the meeting are:

1. Development partners are briefed on the ongoing activities under the Global Strategy in Asia Pacific and are aware of opportunities and modalities for potential collaboration;
2. Experiences and best practices on the implementation of activities relating to Global Strategy are shared among pilot countries.
3. Awareness of donors and other partners of the project enhanced with an aim to promoting their interest of possible funding support.

## **Participants**

Participants of the meeting will include members of the international development community comprising of dignitaries from embassies based in Bangkok, and representatives from bilateral agencies (AusAid, CIDA, DFID, AFD, GIZ, etc) which have worked with FAO at country level, and multilateral agencies such as the UN and the World Bank. A total of approximately 30 participants are expected to attend.

## **Duration**

The Briefing will last half a day and is scheduled for the morning of 13 November 2014.

## **Venue**

The workshop will be held in Bangkok, Thailand at:

FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific  
Main Conference Room  
Phra Athit,  
Bangkok 10200, Thailand

## **Sustainability of the activity**

One of the main outputs of the Briefing will be to develop a working relationship with international development partners in the region to advocate the goals of the Global Strategy and to mobilize resources to support future activities planned under the RAP-GS.