

Concept Note

Third meeting of the Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics

13-14 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.

Members of the Steering Group for Agricultural Statistics (SGAS) in Asia Pacific in early 2012 drafted a Regional Action Plan for the Asia Pacific region under the Global Strategy initiative 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. This Regional Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific has since been 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.

As part of the first phase of technical assistance activities being carried out in Asia Pacific under this Action Plan in 2013, an initial set of countries was endorsed by the Regional Steering Committee for Asia Pacific in its first meeting on April 9-10, 2013 and a second set in its second meeting on November 1, 2013. As of 2014, the Global Strategy in Asia Pacific is undertaking implementing activities in nine countries including: Bhutan, Fiji, Georgia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Samoa, and Sri Lanka; as well as in Bangladesh for a related project supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It was agreed upon by members of the Regional Steering Committee that regular meetings would be held at least biannually to monitor and provide further guidance to the implementation process.

Objective

The objective of the meeting is to bring together members of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) to facilitate a broader consultation on the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for the *Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics*. The three main areas of focus will be on the progress made in the implementing countries, on the development of, and agreement on additional countries for in-depth country assessment in 2015 and approval of a workplan and budget for 2015.

Outputs

Outputs of the meeting are:

1. Provide RSC members with timely updates on the activities being carried out by the implementing partners so far in 2014;
2. Selection of additional countries by RSC members for further implementation in 2015 under the *Global Strategy* initiative;
3. Detail to RSC members the process of in-depth country assessments being carried out in Bhutan, Fiji, Georgia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Samoa, and Sri Lanka; as well as in Bangladesh for a related project supported by the Gates Foundation;
4. An approved workplan and budget for 2015.

Participants

Participants of the meeting will include nominated members of the Regional Steering Committee comprising of national government representatives from China, Fiji, India, Japan, the Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam; as well as representatives from APAARI, IASRI, SPC, DFID, ADB, UNESCAP-SIAP, and FAO. A total of 24 participants are expected to participate in the 3rd RSC meeting.

Duration

The 3rd Regional Steering Committee meeting will last two days and is scheduled for 13-14 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 Regional Steering Committee will be endorsement of target countries for further implementation of the Global Strategy in 2015. The endorsement in this respect will review the guidelines of the implementation process and seek feedback from member countries on the suitability of planned activities for the benefit and efficiency of subsequent phases of the Global Strategy initiative.