



STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES STATISTICS IN THE PACIFIC WORKSHOP

CONCEPT NOTE

Proposed Dates: 5th-8th October 2015

Venue: Nadi, Fiji

A. Background

The *Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (GS)* initiative is the outcome of an international effort endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission and is implemented 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). The GS aims to rebuild the capacities of statistical systems producing agricultural statistics to meet the core and emerging data requirements and to monitor the sustainable development goals. These objectives are guided by the three pillars of the GS which outline a multi-pronged approach through technical assistance, training and research.

Implementation of the GS in Asia Pacific is guided by a Regional Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) with an initial target to reach 20 countries by 2017. Implementation has thus far started with in-depth country level assessments of capacity to produce agricultural and rural statistics in 15 countries, including Samoa, Fiji and Papua New Guinea in the Pacific area. Since 2013 considerable experience has been gained and lessons learnt while undertaking in-country work in the Asia and the Pacific region. It has been widely recognized that institutional arrangements for coordinating statistical activities and sharing responsibility between national statistics offices (NSOs) and line ministries significantly impact the development of agricultural statistics in the countries.

The overarching framework for statistics work for Pacific Islands is provided by the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS). In the Pacific, many of the smaller islands struggle with limited manpower and financial resources and the emphasis of the TYPSS is on employing regional solutions to address national statistical development challenges. Areas of overlap between the TYPSS and the GS are: collection of a core set of agriculture indicators through the National Minimum Development Indicators (NMDI) database; assisting countries to develop cross sectoral (including agriculture) National Statistics Development Strategies (NSDSs); and the inclusion of agriculture questions into regular household surveys and censuses (e.g. household income and expenditure surveys and the



population census). Despite this agricultural statistics remains a weak area for many Pacific countries and urgently requires the attention of regional policy makers.

In the past FAO support to Pacific countries has been focused on the conduct of agricultural censuses with limited follow-up to collect current statistics. Relatively few Pacific islands have established survey calendars for regular collection of data on crops, livestock and fish. Agricultural practices differ in many respects to many of the other countries where the GS is being implemented and there is a strong argument for a more tailored approach within the region, particularly for the smaller islands and territories. Furthermore, it is recognized that within the resources from the GS it may not be possible to reach out to all countries in the Pacific by 2017 therefore a regional strategy could help more Pacific islands to benefit from the GS.

FAO has prepared its next World Programme for Census of Agriculture (WCA 2020) which will guide the agricultural censuses during 2016-25. The programme proposes new approaches to establish a system of integrated surveys and cost-effective ways of data collection. In tandem, a number of technical developments are taking place as part of research component of the GS. AGRIS, a survey system, has been developed to serve as a model survey system for many countries. Open source CAPI software has been developed to meet the requirement of agricultural surveys. A number of other guidelines and research outputs are available to countries for strengthening their systems.

In this context FAO and SPC are proposing to work together to provide Pacific islands with the opportunity to benefit from greater technical assistance, research and capacity building on agricultural and rural statistics in the longer term.

The first step is to convene a workshop on 'Strategic Planning for Agricultural and Rural Statistics in the Pacific'. The workshop will bring together experts and researchers from countries and international organisations. It will make countries aware of latest research in the field of agricultural statistics and provide a forum to discuss the specific needs of Pacific countries, particularly the need and efficacy of a Pacific Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Fisheries Statistics.

B. Objective

The overall objective of the Workshop is to improve the collection and use of agricultural and rural statistics in the Pacific. This will be done by bringing together key stakeholders to take stock of the



current situation of agricultural and fisheries statistics, with a view to developing a shared vision on scope and coverage of a proposed Pacific Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Fisheries Statistics.

It will also share the latest methodological developments brought out by FAO with the framework of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics and the World Programme of Census of Agriculture 2020. Recent work carried out by Pacific countries on agricultural and fisheries statistics will also be presented.

C. Key outputs

- Information on global methodological approaches and innovations shared with participants, including those advocated in the World Census of Agriculture 2020;
- Best practices and experiences shared among participating countries on applicable approaches to integrate agriculture into their national statistical systems;
- Clear recommendations provided by countries on how their long term needs for agricultural and rural statistics collection and use can best be supported by a regional plan.

D. Topics to be covered

- Importance of agricultural and rural statistics for policy analysis in the region;
- Global Strategy – background
- Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy and its relationship to Global Strategy work;
- World Census of Agriculture 2020
- Global strategy – experiences in Samoa and Fiji
- Global strategy – research outputs and new methodologies
- AGRIS – Agricultural Integrated Survey concept
- CAPI methodologies
- Data dissemination tools in the Pacific
- Use of household income and population census for collection of statistics
- Roundtable on the need for and steps towards the development of a Pacific Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Fisheries Statistics

E. Participants

Participants are anticipated to include:



- Delegates from Pacific islands from the national ministries of agriculture and/or fisheries;
- Delegates from Pacific islands national statistics offices;
- Representative of the TYPSS Programme Steering Committee;
- Experts from FAO and SPC;
- Other relevant development partners.

F. Timing and venue

The workshop is scheduled for four days between the 5th and 8th of October 2015 and will be held in Nadi, Fiji.

G. Follow up activities

Recommendations from the participants on the development of a Pacific Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Rural Statistics is one of the main outputs of this workshop.