



## MODERNIZATION OF AGRICULTURE STATISTICS IN SUPPORT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

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### Abstract

The effective monitoring and implementation of the new Sustainable Development Agenda requires a profound transformation and modernization of agriculture statistics to address the growing demand for more complex and inter-linked data on food security and nutrition, on productivity of the farms as well as on sustainable and efficient use of natural resources. The new indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, to be endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2016, will require the production, at national, regional and global levels, of a large amount of new data measuring the interaction between agriculture and environment, between use of sustainable farming practices and productivity of small farmers, between economic activities of rural people and food security.

These emerging demands clash with a rather bleak status of national agricultural systems and, more generally, of agricultural statistics. Methods in use for compiling agricultural statistics are rather old as well as inefficient and, consequently, not sustainable for many developing countries. Agricultural data are often collected in institutional and methodological isolation, which limits greatly their policy relevance.

A strategic approach to the modernization of agricultural statistics is needed to address these evolving and widening data needs. Mainstreaming agriculture into the national statistical system is one of the key pillars at the core of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (GS) endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission at its 41<sup>st</sup> Session in 2010 and now in full implementation. The GS promotes a multi-year integrated programme of agricultural surveys which links the social, economic and environmental dimensions of farm activities, adopts advanced statistical methods, partly borrowed from other statistical domains, and exploits the technological opportunities offered by the current data revolution. This approach is also in line with the new FAO guidelines for the 2020 Round of the World Programme on the Census of Agriculture.

This presentation will provide an overview of some of the main achievements of the Global Strategy and FAO in terms of integration of statistical methods and development of innovative and cost-effective tools which have been successfully tested in some pilot countries.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development Goals Indicators, Data revolution, Mainstreaming Agriculture into the National Statistical System, Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, Integrated programme of Agricultural Census and Surveys.