



11th Meeting of the Global Steering Committee (GSC)

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FAO Headquarters



PROPOSAL FOR A NEW OUTPUT FOR THE GLOBAL OFFICE

OUTPUT 5

Countries supported in the Design and Implementation of an Integrated Agricultural Survey Programme

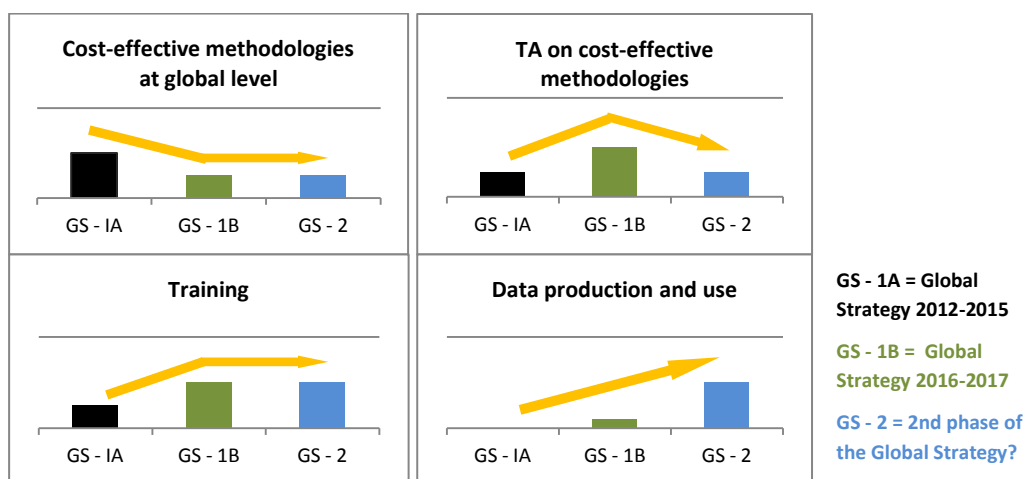
RATIONALE

The Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, endorsed in 2010 by the United Nations Statistical Commission, is the largest ever coordinated effort to strengthen the capacity of national agricultural statistics systems and ensure their sustainability. Its aim is to substantially increase the availability of agricultural and rural statistics worldwide and their use for the design of more effective food security and agricultural development policies. It provides the conceptual and institutional framework for the identification of the Minimum Set of Core Data (MSCD) required to meet current and emerging demands, for the integration of agriculture into the National Statistical System, and for the establishment of the necessary coordination mechanisms and capacities at country level.

Currently in its first phase of implementation (2012–2017), the Global Strategy is focused on the development of cost-effective tools and methodologies for data collection and analysis, on building national technical and institutional statistical capacities and on the design of Strategic Plans for Agricultural and Rural Statistics (SPARS). By the end of this phase in 2017, a large number of developing countries is expected to have a more coordinated and sound national agricultural statistical systems as well as a critical mass of agricultural statisticians who possess the necessary skills for adopting the most advanced agricultural statistical methods. Since the Global Strategy does not offer funding for national data collection activities, the initiative needs to be complemented at country level by additional advocacy efforts to raise the necessary resources to ensure that the SPARS are funded in a sustainable way and put into action.

While the goal of Phase 1 of the Global Strategy (2012–2017) is to support countries in acquiring new statistical skills and capacities, the next phase of the Global Strategy's implementation should focus on helping countries to adopt cost-effective statistical methods for producing relevant, timely and reliable data and to disseminate and use these data through open data access policies. This means, in particular, supporting countries in implementing an integrated agricultural survey programme to collect on a regular basis the Minimum Set of Core Data and in building the necessary statistical infrastructure to ensure its long term sustainability.

The proposal presented in this document is to create a new output under the Global Office's work plan to start supporting countries in the design and implementation of an integrated agricultural survey programme. This output should be considered as an effort to ensure a smooth transition from capacity building efforts towards effective data production in countries. This could also constitute a key element of the Global Strategy's future work programme. This transition is illustrated in the graphs below:



PROPOSAL

The activities proposed within this new Output 5 seek to establish the necessary conditions for countries to collect reliable agricultural data, in a sustainable way. The proposed activities are the following:

- i) finalization and field testing of the AGRIS methodology (completing AGRIS research activities under the Global Office's 2015 work programme); and
- ii) development and testing of coherent survey options on integrated agricultural surveys in line with other initiatives – particularly the World Bank Living Standards Measurement Study-Integrated Surveys on Agriculture (LSMS-ISA) – as well as of improved techniques for the integration of surveys with complementary data sources e.g., administrative and spatial data.

(i) Finalizing the development of AGRIS methodology

The Agricultural Integrated Survey (AGRIS) is designed to enable countries to produce on a regular basis high quality data on the technical, economic, environmental and social dimensions of the agricultural holdings, to rationalize the use of their limited human and financial resources and to optimize survey design and data collection frequency. As such, AGRIS presents a unique opportunity to build on the guidelines and methodological innovations made available by the Global Strategy, and to have a real impact on the data collection systems at country level.

Within the framework of the Global Office's research agenda, the AGRIS methodology is already at an advanced stage of development. A concept note describing the rationale, survey design and implementation plans for AGRIS have been produced (Annex 1). The concept note also illustrates the activities and workplan for developing a complete methodological toolkit. The plans are to complete the toolkit over the next few months and to test the various options and modules in a limited number of countries by the end of the first semester of 2016. Work on the sampling methodology and the design of the generic questionnaires (core module and selected rotating modules) is currently underway. Some of these activities are implemented in collaboration with key international partners (World Bank, ILO, etc.) and will provide the basis for a more formal partnership being pursued in order to operationalize some of the on-going harmonization efforts and methodological developments into countries' agricultural survey programs.

(ii) Developing and testing coherent survey options on integrated agricultural surveys in line with other initiatives

Among the various potential data sources on the agricultural and rural sectors, integrated multipurpose farm and household surveys play an ever-greater role in providing the core data necessary to design, monitor and evaluate national agricultural policies and to respond to international data requirements. Several initiatives are already in place to encourage countries to generate core sets of agricultural data: i) since 2009, the World Bank, as part of its Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS), has developed the LSMS – Integrated surveys on agriculture (LSMS-ISA); this is an innovative approach aimed at integrating the collection of data within an LSMS framework based on households; ii) the US Agency for International Development (USAID) promotes its own core Agricultural and Rural Development Surveys (CARDS), with the intention of supporting and

accelerating the implementation of the Global Strategy; iii) the Global Strategy itself, through the development of Agricultural Integrated Surveys (AGRIS), aims to accelerate the collection of data for agricultural holdings.

The second set of activities planned under Output 5 foresees the development of harmonized guidelines and packages that integrate farm survey (AGRIS) and household survey (LSMS-ISA) approaches, and that serve as a tool for testing the technological innovations promoted by the Global Strategy. This output, piloted in a limited set of countries, could be used as a basis for a more formal partnership and for the establishment of a joint agricultural survey hub. The hub would be instrumental to scale-up countries' adoption of integrated agricultural survey instruments which can respond to national policy needs and be aligned with regional and international reporting commitments (e.g. the SDGs).

2015 BUDGET FOR THE NEW OUTPUT

The Global Office will contribute a total amount of USD 384,877 out of its budget for 2015. In this regard a new revision of the Global Office's integrated budget is being proposed (see the specific item on the Global Steering Committee's agenda).

In addition to this contribution, FAO Statistics Division will provide a direct contribution for a total of USD 385.000 for 2015.

This will make available a total of USD 769,877 to begin the implementation of Output 5 in 2015: USD 300,000 for the development of the AGRIS methodology, USD 300,000 for tests of AGRIS approach in pilot countries and USD 169,877 for starting the development of harmonized guidelines and packages that integrate AGRIS and LSMS-ISA approaches in close collaboration with the World-Bank LSMS-ISA team.