



Seventeenth Meeting of the  
Global Steering Committee (GSC)

13 November 2018

**Draft Summary Record**

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## **DATE, TIME, VENUE**

**DATE:** 13 November 2018

**TIME:** 14:00-17:00 hrs (Rome Time)

**VENUE:** Iraq Room, FAO Headquarters

## **GSC MEMBERS REPRESENTATIVES**

AfDB: Ben Paul Mungyereza  
Bhutan: Chencho Dukpa  
DFID: Olivia Beecham  
Eurostat: Veronika Radermacher  
FAO: José Rosero Moncayo  
INEGI Mexico: Arturo Blancas  
Italy: Simonetta Di Cori  
Lao PDR: Savanh Hanephom  
Paris 21: Johannes Jutting (via teleconference)  
Philippines: Romeo Recide, Co-chair  
Tanzania: Titus Mwisomba  
UNESCAP/SIAP: Jan Smit  
UNECA: Joseph Ilboudo  
World Bank: Haishan Fu, Co-chair (via teleconference)

## **OTHER PARTICIPANTS/OBSERVERS**

Global Office (GSC Secretariat): Christophe Duhamel, Weronika Forowicz, Marya Hillesland, Aida Khalil, Arianna Martello, Diana Sotomayor, Francesca Zoppi

AfDB: Vincent Ngendakumana, Estelle Addiko, Nejma Lazlem  
ENSEA: Hugues Kouadio  
INEGI Mexico: José Hernandez  
Malawi: Mercy Kanyuka  
FAO/Office of Evaluation (OED): Luisa Belli (Evaluation Team), Hubert Paulmer (Evaluation Leader), Nanae Yabuki (Evaluation Manager)  
FAO: Valérie Bizier (OCS), Andrew Sobey (RAP), Sangita Dubey (RAP), Anthony Burgard (RAP)  
Naman Keita

## AGENDA

- **AGENDA ITEM 1** – Final Evaluation Report
- **AGENDA ITEM 2** – Second Global Action Plan
- **AGENDA ITEM 3** – Closure and No Cost Extension

## OUTCOMES

During the opening session, Mr. Recide welcomed all the participants and introduced the agenda of the meeting. He then gave the floor to Hubert Paulmer to present the final evaluation report.

### 1. **AGENDA ITEM 1 – for endorsement: Final Evaluation Report**

Hubert Paulmer presented the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the final evaluation that took place from June to October 2018. Hubert Paulmer explained that conclusions are based on individual interviews, a review of hundreds of documents as well as other information collected and analysed. He mentioned that recommendations also take into account the lessons learned in the first phase, and are targeted at the GSC, the Global Strategy team, the second phase Task Team as well as the resource partners.

#### Discussion:

Veronika Radermacher suggested to further emphasize the need to link SPARS with overarching regional strategies such as SHASA in Africa.

Ben Paul Mungyereza pointed out the importance of having the SPARS integrated in the NSDS since NSDS is part of the national plans. He confirmed that AfDB is committed to the SPARS and that this should be mentioned in the evaluation report. Hubert Paulmer agreed to include this in the evaluation report.

Jan Smit commented that it is a very comprehensive report. He mentioned that issues with staff are highlighted in the findings but there are not recommendations made based on these findings. He then asked if the evaluation team would have something to recommend on this regard. Hubert Paulmer explained that recommending the changes in the staffing policy of international organization is outside the scope of this evaluation.

Joseph Ilboudo stated that the second global action plan should be more focused in the integration of agricultural statistics into the NSDS. He pointed out as well that scholarships have been particularly positive. He closed by saying that the Global Strategy has to insist on the use of data for decision making.

Regarding conclusion 1 (*Global Strategy has raised the profile of agricultural and rural statistics globally and specifically, in Africa and Asia-Pacific. However, it is largely unknown beyond its primary stakeholders despite its contributions as the largest ever global effort to*

*improve sustainable agricultural and rural statistics in developing countries*), Olivia Beecham asked if this was a new conclusion or if it was realized before. Hubert Paulmer explained that following several discussions with partners, it was evident that technical and agricultural related partners are very well aware of the programme but development and resource partners are not.

José Rosero congratulated the evaluation team's work and stated that he appreciated the level of detail in the report. Regarding recommendation 7 (*Ensure continued but higher involvement and contribution from FAO as a technical partner at various levels (especially at regional, sub-regional and country level) for short-term and long-term sustainability of improvements made in agricultural and rural statistics*), he mentioned that integration of the Global Strategy methodologies and tools into the FAO's work should be added so the Global Strategy work can continue. He stated that the programme should go beyond Africa and Asia and the Pacific regions and he pointed out that a recommendation on how to involve other regions is missing. Hubert Paulmer confirmed that expanding globally is part of recommendation 1.

*INEGI from Mexico suggested (by email) to add a recommendation in the final report on how the regions other than Africa and Asia could be involved in the second phase of the Global Strategy.*

**Decision 1:** The final evaluation report of the Global Strategy is provisionally endorsed. One week is being given to the GSC members (strict deadline: Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> COB) to provide additional comments. The GSC will be again consulted through a written procedure for final endorsement by mid-December 2018.

## **2. AGENDA ITEM 2 – for endorsement: Second Global Action Plan**

Johannes Jutting, chair of the second Task Team, began by introducing the Second Global Action Plan process. He explained that the second Global Action Plan is a result of a comprehensive process and was personally pleased that the term "Capacity Development" was changed to reflect the idea that development is a process of learning as opposed to "blocks" that are imposed onto others. He was also personally pleased to see the arena on the use of data.

Following Johannes Jutting's opening, Naman Keita presented the draft of the Second Global Action Plan for endorsement.

### Discussion:

José Rosero began the discussion by saying that the Action Plan is comprehensive. He asked for clarification in how the priority levels were determined. He suggested that there are some gaps that need to be filled. For example, in arena 5, he mentioned that there are no activities that support countries in doing reports, agendas, and development of capacity. He also asked how the translation of activities into policies will be done. In arena 3, he felt that the training of managers was missing. Managers are important because they are the ones who deal with

operations. In arena 2, he felt that there were missing linkages between SPARS, the SDGs, and regional agendas.

Joseph Ilboudo (UNECA) asked for clarification on the modular approach and was concerned that the Global Office would have such a prominent role of coordination. He asked about the role of AfDB and UNECA and the strategy for Africa, and how exactly implementing partners fit in to the next phase.

Mr. Keita explained that all of Mr. Rosero's comments on outputs in the different arenas can be addressed. He explained that the work that is being done now started with a first task team, and that the recommendations and idea for the module approach was already endorsed. He also explained that the selection criteria for choosing partners is in the Global Plan. The idea is to broaden the partnership but with appropriate measures for monitoring its implementation. Additionally, he explained that the Global Strategy's Governance system was complex, and that it is amazing it was even working. There is a strong need for it to be simplified in the next phases.

Mercy Kanyuka –as an observer- emphasized Mr. Rosero's point on needing to focus on managers in arena 3. She explained that there is a lack of knowledge of the Global Strategy by managers and directors in Malawi and that there is a need to disseminate the information about the Global Strategy at appropriate forums.

Ben Paul Mungyereza pointed out that the proposed regional technical advisory boards should represent people in the field. He was not certain that even if a simplification of governance is needed, the role given to regional boards would be the same as that of the existing regional steering committees.

Olivia Beecham suggested that there is a need to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation approach that will be used. She also asked how often the projects will be reviewed and what the process will be if projects go wrong and adjustments need to be made. She also asked how exactly the impacts of the programme will be measured.

Jan Smit welcomed that the proposed phase 2 would focus primarily on technical assistance and training, with partnerships with regional training centres to be strengthened, training programmes on agricultural statistics to be extended, and e-learning and distance training to be promoted. He expressed concern about the proposed governance and implementation arrangements at the regional level, also in light of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics at its recent session having expressed strong support for the development of a second phase, using the same modalities as in the first phase. He also expressed concern about the proposed Principle seven on partnerships, acknowledging the importance of broad engagement with all relevant partners, but wondering whether implications with respect to the administrative burden on the Global Office and the ability of partners to engage, also given their requirements for planning and budgeting their programmes of work, had been thoroughly assessed. He asked whether more emphasis on rural statistics was needed, also from the perspective of "no one left" behind in the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and for better connection with ongoing regional programmes and initiatives. Finally, noting the lack of support for CIS countries (the Asian countries of which are also ESCAP members) in phase 1, he inquired about the possibility of redefining regions for phase 2.

Naman Keita explained that partners will be determined based on selection criteria spelled out in the Action Plan. He explained that in AfDB there were some issues with staffing that needed to be addressed. He stated that the monitoring and evaluation point is well taken, and that this will be strengthened in the next draft. He confirmed as well that programmes of the Global Office and partners need to be planned in advance in order to attract good staff and ensure solid partnerships. He said that the need to emphasize rural statistics is well taken. He explained that attention has been given on how SDGs and other international initiatives are incorporated, as there are already specific programmes within FAO and other partners (it is important to complement and not to overlap). He explained that the priorities given to investments were determined based on the success from the first phase and demand from countries.

Valérie Bizier -as an observer- added that nearly all the comments made by the steering committee are already addressed in the document but maybe they need to be highlighted or rewritten to be more clear. Adding to what Naman Keita said, she also emphasized that there are other initiatives in FAO that the Global Strategy needs to be complementing but not overlapping.

Christophe Duhamel (GSC Secretary) provided some additional important clarifications particularly in terms of (i) the governance structure (i.e. giving regions a more powerful role on technical activities through the regional technical advisory boards and putting less emphasis on administrative and financial procedures at regional level); (ii) the indicative nature of the list investments proposed; (iii) the need to develop a specific approach for setting up a results framework that would be adapted to the modular approach and (iv) the importance of building flexible tools and mechanisms that will fit the evolving needs of the beneficiaries.

*INEGI provided some written comments through email. They asked for clarification on how the priority levels of the proposed investments were determined and how these priorities will work once the programme is operational. INEGI also suggested to emphasize within the document of the second Global Action Plan the role of the Regional Technical Advisory Boards.*

**Decision 2:** The GSC endorsed the Global Action Plan on the basis that it address the specific requests of the members. This is to be prepared by the Task Team. A narrative indicating how and where changes have been brought to the proposal will be annexed to the final draft document to be submitted by mid-December to the Global Steering Committee.

### **3. AGENDA ITEM 3 – for information and endorsement: Closure and No Cost Extension**

The Chair gave the floor to Weronika Forowicz from the Global Office. She reported that after careful and extensive internal consultations it has been decided that all programmatic activities of the Global Strategy to improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (Global Strategy) must be closed by December 31, 2018. Additionally, the Global Office requested a no-cost extension for all implementing partners to finalize all the remaining non-operational

activities concerning the Programme closure until October 31, 2019 using the remaining funds of 2018.

Discussion:

Joseph Ilboudo enquired about the scholarship programme within the Global Strategy, since some students already began their studies with the use of the scholarship for the 2018-2019 school year. Ms. Forowicz stated that unfortunately, all operational activities must be closed by December 31, 2018 and that there is no room for continuation in Phase One.

**Decision 3:** The Global Steering Committee (GSC) approved the proposed budget for closure.

**Next GSC meetings:**

The Global Office will organize procedures through written consultation for endorsing the final documents of the evaluation and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Action Plan by mid-December 2018.