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Eleventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the
Statistical Conference of the Americas of the
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Quito, 2-4 July 2012

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

1. **Coordinating country:** Brazil
2. **Member countries:** Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Peru (confirmed); Dominican Republic, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay (to be confirmed).
3. **Advisory bodies**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (to be confirmed)
4. **Technical secretariat**
FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
5. **Programme for 2012-2013:¹**
 - (a) **Objectives**

General objective

To improve and harmonize agricultural statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean and define the implementation plan for the global strategy in the region, taking into account the current status of statistics in the region, the training of teams and the design of a feasible work programme for improvement under the global strategy.

Specific objectives

Promote the global strategy in the region

- Consolidate the regional steering committee established by the Working Group on Agricultural Statistics
- Seek funds for the implementation of the global strategy in the region
- Produce and disseminate Spanish versions of the global strategy documents
- Promote mobilization activities relating to the global strategy
- The way in which countries are organized in the context of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC shows that it is appropriate to establish this working group

Institution-building

- Strengthen the mechanisms for coordinating national activities relating to agricultural statistics, for example by creating national statistical councils
- Promote integration between national statistical institutes and ministries of agriculture
- Mobilize resources for agricultural statistics
- Promote improvements to legislation on agricultural statistics

¹ The activities will be discussed and approved at the first meeting of the Working Group on Agricultural Statistics in August 2012.

Assess the statistical capacities of countries

- Compile agricultural statistics in the region
- Prepare and carry out a questionnaire to identify the current status of agricultural statistics and the programmes being developed to improve them
- Identify the coverage of household surveys on living conditions and consumption in rural areas
- Determine which countries will participate in the in-depth evaluation pilot programme (second level evaluation of the global action plan)

Training for institutions

- Disseminate the global strategy proposals and evaluate them in the context of needs in the region
- Identify common gaps in the specific skills of the technical teams dealing with agricultural statistics in the countries
- Determine the regional centres or institutions which are responsible for compiling agricultural statistics
- Develop training tools based on the global strategy which are adapted to the regional situation
- Organize regional training courses and workshops
- Involve all countries in the exchange of experiences

Technical assistance

- Adapt the recommendations of the global strategy to regional needs
- Identify good practices in the region with a view to establishing a technical assistance team
- Support the preparation, implementation and evaluation of national implementation plans

Development of methodologies

- Identify subjects of relevance to the region
- Conduct studies on the development of methodologies
- Carry out pilot tests on new methodology techniques
- Prepare and disseminate methodological documents in Spanish

(b) Main activities proposed for the period 2012-2013

- Working group meetings on environmental statistics (starting in August 2012)
- Country evaluations
- Preparation of the regional plan of action
- Training and technical assistance
- Financing arrangements
- Dissemination of the global strategy
- Support the organization of the sixth International Conference on Agricultural Statistics (October 2013)

(c) Expected outcomes to be presented to the seventh meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC (November 2013)

- Preparation of the regional plan of action on the global strategy
- Basic assessment of the statistical situation in the countries
- Dissemination of the global strategy in the region

6. Progress to date

In April 2012, a meeting of member countries of the working group was held in the context of the fourth National Agricultural Census (CENAGRO) conducted in Lima. The meeting covered the following issues: general guidelines for the work plan and its priorities; organization of the working group for the tasks established in the implementation plan for the global strategy; distribution of tasks and responsibilities; place and date of the first formal meeting of the working group; and the availability of and need for resources for that meeting.

The member countries undertook to create a wiki platform to facilitate communication among group members, prepare draft terms of reference for the meeting planned for August 2012, send the Spanish versions of the global strategy document and the summary to all members and seek funds to carry out the activities planned.

The National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) of Mexico will host the two-day meeting planned for the week of 30 July to 3 August for the purpose of defining the work schedule, terms of reference, the distribution of tasks and responsibilities, the communication strategy and the composition of the global strategy executive committee.

The group coordinator has been working with FAO and the global strategy executive committee. In addition, remote meetings have been held with the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and INEGI to discuss the financing of the first meeting of the working group.