

# **collecting statistics**

on

## **agricultural population and employment**

**fao statistics division**

with the cooperation of  
**the united nations fund for population activities**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
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## PREFACE

The dearth of information on rural and agricultural populations and employment was well recognized in the FAO Programme for the 1980 World Census of Agriculture (WCA) where countries were urged to develop this segment of statistics by utilizing the agricultural and population censuses both as means to compile data and as a framework for implementing more frequent surveys within an integrated statistical system. In Resolution No. 14/75 on the Programme for the 1980 WCA, the Eighteenth Session of the FAO Conference held in November 1975, besides urging member nations to carry out their national census of agriculture, requested FAO to "promote, in consultation with the United Nations and other interested international organizations, the fullest possible compatibility between the results of the agricultural and population censuses, particularly with respect to agricultural population".

While there have been significant improvements in the quality and coverage of statistics in most developing countries, the collection of adequate data on labour force, manpower and the socio-economic characteristics of the rural and agricultural populations has not had an adequate share in such improvements. This situation is perhaps not entirely due to lower priority accorded to this sector of statistics within the national statistical programmes, but also because there has been a lack of adequate guidelines on the appropriate concepts, definitions and methods needed for the collection of useful information for national and international purposes.

This Guide is intended to assist countries in the planning and execution of programmes for the collection of agricultural population and employment statistics which are a major component of the statistics needed for agrarian reform and rural development. It supplements the general guidelines contained in the Programme for the 1980 WCA and presents a comprehensive framework of almost all the relevant statistical components characterizing agricultural population and employment and other related fields such as small-scale and part-time farming, locality or community statistics, under-employment, farm typology, the role of women in agriculture, etc.

It is hoped that the experience of countries in the use of this Guide, coupled with its use in related training programmes, will result in an increase of the availability of data on agricultural population and employment and in the improvement of their quality. Users of this Guide will no doubt note that, while an attempt has been made to cover almost all relevant programmes for collecting data on agricultural population and employment, a large measure of flexibility is retained in the recommendations and proposed statistical programmes, leaving it to countries to select and decide on the appropriate programmes to be implemented, in a manner consistent with the stage of their statistical development and their current and future data requirements.

The preparation of this Guide was mostly the work of an FAO Consultant, Doctor J.B. Simaika, formerly FAO Regional Statistical Adviser for Africa. In preparing this Guide, the Consultant undertook extensive consultations with the interested international and regional organizations and with a large number of national and international experts. FAO wishes to acknowledge and express its appreciation of the contributions made by all those consulted and their useful comments on a related report and a preceding draft of this Guide (FAO documents ESS/MISC/75-4 of May 1975 and ESS/12 of October 1977 prepared by the same Consultant).

Last but not least, FAO acknowledges the generous financial support of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) for most of the activities involved in the preparation of this Guide.

Users of this Guide are kindly invited to communicate their comments on its contents and to convey the results of their experience in its use to the Director, Statistics Division, FAO, Rome, Italy. We would also appreciate receiving copies of methodological and practical material describing their censuses and surveys relating to agricultural population and employment and their reports containing the resulting data.

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