



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

SPARS

STRATEGIC PLANS FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL STATISTICS



GUIDELINES

Publication prepared in the framework of the Global Strategy to improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics

SPARS

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AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL
STATISTICS

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Acronyms

AfDB	Africa Development Bank
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program
CAQ	Country Assessment Questionnaire
DQAF	Data Quality Assessment Framework
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National product
GSBMP	Generic Statistical Business Process Model
IdCA	In-depth Country Assessment
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INE	National Statistical Institute
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MfDR	Managing for Development Results
MINAG	Ministry of Agriculture
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
NASS	National Agricultural Statistical System
NSDS	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
NSS	National Statistical System
NSO	National Statistical Office
PEDSA	Strategic Development Plan for the Agriculture Sector
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SCA	Steering Committee on Agricultural Statistics
SPARS	Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Rural Statistics
SRF	Statistics for Results Facility
S-TWA	Sub-sectoral Technical Working Committee
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TFSCB	Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (World Bank)
TWA	Technical Working Group on Agricultural Statistics
UNSC	United Nations Statistical Commission
WB	World Bank

Preface

The development of these guidelines falls under the framework of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics. The Global Strategy provides the framework essential to meet the current and emerging data requirements and the demands of policy makers and other data users. Its goal is to contribute to greater food security, reduced food price volatility, higher incomes and greater well-being for rural populations through evidence-based policies. The Global Action Plan of the Global Strategy is centered on 3 pillars: (1) establishing a minimum set of core data; (2) integrating agriculture in the National Statistical System (NSS); and (3) fostering sustainability of the statistical system through governance and statistical capacity building.

The second pillar (i.e. integrating agriculture in the NSS) recommends that countries design and implement Strategic Plans for Agricultural and Rural Statistics (SPARS) in the framework of the National Strategies to Develop Statistics (NSDS) to support the integration of agriculture into NSSs.

These guidelines are the result of a comprehensive effort to develop a standard methodology to design strategic plans for agricultural and rural statistics in line with the NSDS methodology developed by PARIS21. The guidelines present a set of operational tools, methods and good practices that have been developed through a long process, taking advantage of country experiences and existing material on statistics strategic planning developed over the last 10 years. Countries will be expected to use the SPARS as a platform for long-term sustainable development of agricultural and rural statistics, as a coordination platform for producers and data users and as a means to address immediate needs and direct priority assistance. The guidelines will be regularly updated thanks to the feedback and experiences of the countries that are implementing the SPARS.

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The document was edited by Norah de Falco, FAO/Global Strategy.

¹ All documents can be found at: <http://www.paris21.org/Knowledge-Base>

Objectives

Specific reasons have led to the development of SPARS guidelines. Some of these reasons are:

- evidence that the agricultural sector had not been sufficiently mainstreamed into the first round NSDSs nor mainstreamed at all, as opposed to the need to raise the profile of agricultural statistics;
- the recognition of the importance of SPARS as part of one of the three pillars of the Global Strategy to improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics;
- the need to address issues specific to the SPARS process because of the extreme complexity of the agricultural and rural statistical systems, which include a great number of sub-sectors and stakeholders, which produce, compile and use agricultural statistics;
- the need to propose a simplified approach compared with the NSDS approach, tailored to the needs of the agricultural sector and focused on the practical processes aimed at designing the strategy in an efficient and rapid manner.

The SPARS guidelines' scope is to provide a coherent and logical structure for countries that are going to design and implement SPARS, to integrate them effectively into the NSDSs and into the National Development Plans. They aim to provide countries with specific guidance as they implement their respective statistical plans. Furthermore, the guidelines will serve as a reference document for developing countries that are implementing the Global Strategy, as they provide a comprehensive set of recommendations and procedures aligned to the NSDS guidelines developed by PARIS21.

In particular, these guidelines are designed to support staff in the sector in mainstreaming agricultural statistical systems into the National Statistical Systems (NSSs) and can be systematically used without further reference to other documents. Another purpose of these guidelines is to assist countries in which the NSDS process has not been developed or implemented yet, in formulating SPARS as a temporary response prior to the development of the NSDSs.

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