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Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries (GCP/RAS/184/JPN)

Report of the Second Focal Points Meeting

Bangkok, Thailand, 27 to 28 March 2003



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
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Second Focal Points Meeting of the Project *Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries (GCP/RAS/184/JPN)*

**Royal Princess Hotel, Bangkok
27-28 March 2003**

Introduction

1. Senior agricultural statistics officials from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam as well as representatives of the Government of Japan and experts from FAO Headquarters and the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, took part in the second meeting of the focal points of the project, *Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries*. Pakistan and Fiji could not participate in the two-day session. Sixteen countries are members of the project. (See Annex 2 for list of participants).
2. The meeting was convened to review progress in the intra-regional exchange of food and agricultural statistics and strengthening of national capacities to use the data for reducing food insecurity and poverty. The participants also discussed future activities of the project, which was initiated by FAO in 2001 in response to the need expressed by member countries of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS). The Government of Japan is funding the project. (See Annex 1 for the timetable and agenda).
3. The session was held after the pilot-testing of the Regional Data Exchange System, which has been developed by the project to support policy and decision-making in Asia-Pacific countries towards realization of the 1996 World Food Summit goal of reducing global hunger by half by the year 2015.

Opening session

Agenda Item 1

Opening statement

4. In his inaugural address, He Changchui, Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific traced the development of the project, reiterating that its main objective was to set up a computer-based regional agricultural data exchange system for participating countries. Dr He expressed his gratitude for the Government of Japan's generous contribution in support of the development of agricultural statistics and information in the region. (See Annex 3 for opening speech).
5. Emphasising that timely availability of reliable agricultural data is essential for effective policy and decision-making in support of sustainable agriculture and rural development, Dr He urged the participants to give a human face to the statistics and

to make every effort to ensure that these are used for the just and noble cause of the region's fight against hunger.

6. Referring to the regular publication of national statistics and the introduction of modern information technology systems for data processing, analysis and dissemination in many countries, the FAO Regional Representative said improvements in food and agricultural statistics were expected to benefit national agricultural development, food security and poverty alleviation.
7. Dr He pointed out that the second meeting of the project focal points provided a forum for the introduction of the Regional Data Exchange System and the discussion of future project activities. Participating countries were the ultimate beneficiaries of the project and it was necessary to make the system user-friendly, cost-effective and sustainable, he stressed.
8. The meeting was also a timely opportunity to review the participating countries' needs and expectations from the project. Considering the time and resource constraints inherent in any project, FAO was continuing to coordinate with other development partners to find ways to assist participating countries, he added. In conclusion, the FAO Regional Representative wished the meeting a successful and fruitful outcome.

Overview and objectives of the meeting

9. As an introduction to the statement by the representative of the donor government, the Agricultural Statistics Expert of the project, Kimihiko Eura presented an overview of the activities, which began in December 2001 as a follow-up to the project *Improvement of Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries* (GCP/RAS/171/JPN).
10. The current project was developed in response to the need expressed by APCAS member countries for sound national statistical systems capable of (a) providing data and information for planning and policy-making for the food and agriculture sector with the aim of raising the living and nutritional standards of their people, especially the rural poor; and (b) exchanging the data with other countries to support national, regional, and global food security programmes and policies.
11. Mr Eura explained that the project's two immediate objectives were: (a) the phased implementation of the master plan as formulated by the first regional project for the exchange of data on food and agriculture in electronic format among participating countries and FAO; and (b) strengthening of national capacity to analyze, use and disseminate food and agricultural statistics in support of national agricultural development policy and planning, including food security and poverty alleviation.
12. In order to achieve the above objectives, the project has developed the Regional Data Exchange System (RDES) as an Internet-based facility for storing and exchanging agricultural sector statistics.

Statement from the donor government

13. Addressing the meeting on behalf of the donor government, Michiya Otsuka, Senior Statistician in the Office of International Affairs, Statistics and Information Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan, thanked all country focal point persons for their attendance. Japan recognized the continuing efforts of FAO throughout its history, to improve agricultural statistics, especially in the Asia and Pacific region, he said. (See Annex 4 for address).
14. Japan considered it vitally important for countries in the region to generate and share reliable statistics for the food and agriculture sector, he added. Accordingly, at the 16th APCAS meeting in Tokyo in 1996, Japan had proposed a joint undertaking for the improvement, standardization and exchange of agricultural statistics in the Asia and Pacific region. Launched in December 2001, the project had developed a system for the exchange of food and agricultural statistics in the region. Pre-tested in Lao PDR in December 2002, the system was now ready for full-scale implementation, he said.
15. The Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific countries would be implemented successively in member countries after the Second Focal Points meeting. On completion of the process, member countries would be able to utilize the data for planning and implementing agricultural policy, especially to strengthen food security.
16. The FAO RDES project would also support the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Food Security Information System (AFSIS) Project, which was approved by the Second Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry+3 (AMAF+3), held in Vientiane, LAO PDR in October 2002. While endorsing the AFSIS Implementation Plan, AMAF+3 agreed to start AFSIS activities in early 2003. The FAO RDES data exchange system programmes could be used by the AFSIS, which would also be provided technical support by RDES. Both FAO/RDES and ASEAN/AFSIS had the same objectives: to help member countries produce and exchange highly reliable data on food and agriculture, Mr Otsuka said. Close collaboration among these projects would maximize their combined output for strengthening food security in the Asian region, he added.
17. Active participation of member countries was indispensable for the development of the RDES on food and agricultural statistics, he said and requested the focal points to exert efforts at the national level for building the data exchange system. This would require obtaining the necessary data for inclusion in the system and coordination with relevant agencies.

Election of officers

Agenda item 2

18. Ramesh Chandra Das, Deputy Director of the Agriculture Census Section, Central Bureau of Statistics, Nepal, was unanimously elected Chairperson of the meeting while Ferdous Nurun Ara, Director of the Agriculture Wing, Bangladesh Bureau of

Statistics, was elected Vice-Chairperson. Romeo S. Recide, Director of the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, Philippines, was appointed Rapporteur.

Adoption of agenda and timetable

Agenda item 3

19. The meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda and timetable with minor amendments.

Report on the 19th APCAS Session

Agenda item 4

20. The Senior Statistician of the FAO Regional Office, Frederick Baker presented the report of the 19th APCAS Session held in Seoul, Republic of Korea from 21 to 25 October 2002. This session was attended by 60 delegates and observers from 20 member countries and four UN and international organizations, he said. The objectives of the 19th APCAS Session were to review the current status of food and agricultural statistics in member countries as well as FAO's activities in food and agricultural statistics in the region during 2000-2002. New developments relevant to agricultural statistics such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and image scanning technology for processing agricultural survey and census data; the impact/consequences of irregular censuses in Australia; preparations for the World Census of Agriculture 2010; and Indicators for Agricultural Policy Analysis were among other items on the agenda.
21. The discussions at the 19th APCAS Session highlighted the need for: (a) FAO's continued support to agricultural statistics, especially in the conduct of agricultural censuses and electronic survey data processing and analysis; (b) the inclusion of a list of minimum FIVIMS (Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems) indicators in the FAO supplement on agricultural census data for food security as well as guidelines for differentiating farm households from agricultural establishments; (c) involvement of all key regional fishery organizations and other relevant agencies in the implementation of FIGIS (Fisheries Global Information System) as well as public advocacy to ensure the success of FIGIS; and (d) promotion by FAO of the use of advanced information technology hardware and software for data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination.
22. The APCAS session requested action by FAO and member countries in three other areas: (a) improving the reliability and international comparability of statistics on agriculture, forestry and fisheries for a better understanding of the changing food and agricultural situation in member countries; (b) standardization of definitions and methodology for collection of production costs data for easier comparison across countries; and (c) information collection about organic farming in future agricultural censuses and surveys.

23. The 19th APCAS Session identified these specific follow-up actions for FAO: (a) an Expert Consultation in Livestock Statistics scheduled for July 2003 in Bangkok; (b) a publication scheduled for 2003/2004 on the Programme of the World Census of Agriculture 2010, including supplements on livestock, organic farming and food security; (c) preparation of an indicative medium-term schedule of subsequent APCAS sessions to allow potential host countries to make proper preparations, taking into consideration expressions of interest by specific countries to host the sessions; (d) notification of the possibility of new FAO Asia-Pacific member countries joining APCAS.
24. The above presentation was followed by questions seeking clarifications on the methods and uses of forecasting, the inclusion of structural statistics on livestock in agricultural censuses and other matters. After discussion and comments, the focal points were informed that forecasting guidelines had been developed from the documents of various meetings and workshops on the subject. A draft had been prepared and it would be circulated among member countries after revision.
25. The Commission provides a forum for members to identify areas for improvement in agricultural statistics, such as crop forecasting with remote sensing. The focal points who did not attend the 19th APCAS Session were requested to identify their problems on the system and share these with FAO. The focal points were informed that the Commission agreed that a publication on structural livestock statistics would be useful for countries in their agricultural census planning. It was also pointed out that livestock should always be part of the agricultural census.

Country presentations

26. The focal points made brief presentations on their national statistical systems for agriculture and food, including the nature and extent of data requirements in their respective countries. The focal points listed the data in great demand and identified heavy users of such statistics.
27. Production of wholesale/retail costs data for the major commodities for each country was reported most often. Policy makers in agriculture ministries and other government agencies were the heaviest users of such data in support of their planning, monitoring and evaluation functions. Researchers, international organizations and large private sector groups were the other important users of the data. It was pointed out that small farmers too needed information, especially on weather and expressed their data needs during farmer consultations, seminars and workshops.
28. MS Excel, MS Access, Integrated Micro Processing Software (IMPS) and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) were most commonly used for data processing and analysis.

Development of the Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics (RDES) in Asia and Pacific countries

Agenda item 5

29. The Agricultural Statistics Expert of the project explained that RDES was an Internet-based facility for storing and exchanging agricultural statistics among the participating countries in the region, including Japan. It was an interactive system which did not require a web server in each country and ordinary Internet access was sufficient, he explained. Data files were stored in MS Excel, MS Word, Acrobat PDF and other formats. The focal points were responsible for maintaining the system.
30. The participants were given a demonstration of the RDES Internet site and individual web pages for the 16 participating countries. External links are provided with UN and other international and regional organizations and associations.
31. Comments were invited from the focal points on the format and content of the country web pages so that changes could be made when required.
32. It was pointed out that decisions on statistics to be included in the RDES should be based on the consideration that these should be in addition to those that were requested by or regularly reported to FAO for inclusion in its data and information systems.
33. After a discussion on the information content of the RDES country web pages, the meeting agreed that a list of commodities would be prepared so that the focal points could select those relevant for their respective Internet sites. Tables with relevant information for the identified commodities would be prepared by the focal points and included in specific country RDES web pages.

Hardware and system installation in the participating countries

Agenda item 6

34. The Agricultural Statistics Expert explained the hardware and software requirements for operating the RDES in the participating countries. He indicated that he planned to visit all member countries to explain the different aspects of the installation of RDES hardware and software to technical staff of the focal points. (See Annex 5 for RDES computer hardware and software specifications).

Global issues in agricultural statistics

Agenda item 7

35. The Chief of the Statistical Development Service, FAO Headquarters, Hiek Som made a presentation on three global issues that affect agricultural statistics systems: (a) the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); (b) CountryStat; and (c) Advocacy for statistics.

36. The eight MDG goals include 18 targets and 48 indicators. Two of these directly related to FAO's mandate are: (i) monitoring the proportion of population below the minimum dietary energy consumption level and (ii) monitoring the proportion of land area covered by forest.
37. The CountryStat system is being developed as part of FAOSTAT2 for the electronic collection of national data and making it available to users through FAOSTAT. Mr Som said that some countries represented at the second focal points meeting could be chosen as pilot countries for CountryStat development.
38. Advocacy of the importance of good statistics in development planning was needed for increasing awareness among those in charge of development funds, he said. Dissemination should be viewed as giving back information to society in recognition of its contribution to data generation, he added.
39. For this, he considered cooperation with media as essential for fostering understanding and appreciation of the value of statistics. He also cited the importance of promoting the use of statistics and providing statistical products that show information other than through figures and tables. Mr. Som urged participants to ensure regular production of key statistical products required by data users and the public.
40. Finally, he presented material on advocacy for statistics developed by the PARIS21 Task Team on Advocacy, including pamphlets, posters and films.

Highlights and major recommendations

Development of RDES

41. The meeting agreed that the RDES project design was appropriate. It was also agreed that the focal points would compile and enter the required statistical data into the RDES system after its installation.

Common format data tables

42. The proposed common basic format for the RDES data tables, which was discussed in the meeting, was considered appropriate. Accordingly, it was agreed that the focal points should use this format for storing data in the system. While a core set of common commodities would have to be included in the national RDES Internet pages, it was agreed that countries could add other relevant commodities. Any deviation from the basic data format would have to be explained through appropriate notes. The final statistical tables would be prepared by the project and sent to the focal points for implementation.

Hardware procurement and system installation

43. The meeting agreed that the system hardware specifications were comprehensive and the schedule of hardware procurement and software installation in countries, beginning in April 2003 and ending in June 2003, was reasonable. The focal points were expected to assist in hardware procurement and software installation.

Adoption of the report and closing session

Agenda items 8 and 9

44. After the Rapporteur's presentation of a synthesis of the deliberations and the major recommendations, the Chairperson thanked FAO and the Agricultural Statistics Expert for hosting a meaningful meeting. The FAO representative expressed his appreciation to the focal points, the donor government and other persons for their valuable support. The Vice-Chairperson also expressed her gratitude to FAO and the hosts on the behalf of the participants.
45. The representative from FAO Headquarters and the Agricultural Statistics Expert of the project expressed their appreciation and hope that the focal points would continue to cooperate in the implementation of the project.
46. The meeting was declared closed at 12.15 hours.

Agenda and Timetable

Thursday, 27 March 2003

- 09.00 - 09.30 Registration
- 09.30 - 10.00 Agenda Item 1 Opening Session
- Opening Statement by *He Changchui, Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific*
- Overview and objectives of the meeting by *Kimihiko Eura, Agricultural Statistics Expert, GCP/RAS/184/JPN*
- Address by *Michiya Otsuka, Senior Statistician, Statistics and Information Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan*
- 10.00 - 10.10 Introductions of the participants
- 10.10 - 10.20 Agenda Item 2 Election of officers
- 10.20 - 10.30 Agenda Item 3 Adoption of the agenda and timetable
- 10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break
- 11.00 - 12.00 Agenda Item 4 Report of the nineteenth session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (19th APCAS). *Frederick Baker, Senior Statistician, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific*
- Lunch
- 13.30 - 14.30 Agenda Item 5 Development of the Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries. *Kimihiko Eura*
- 14.30 - 15.00 Coffee break
- 15.00 - 16.30 Agenda Item 6 Hardware and system installation in the participating countries. *Kimihiko Eura*

Friday, 28 March 2003

- 09.30 - 10.30 Agenda Item 7 Global issues in Agricultural Statistics. *Hiek Som, Chief, Statistical Development Service, FAO/HQ*
- 10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break
- 11.00 - 11.50 Agenda Item 8 Adoption of the report
- 11.50 - 12.00 Agenda Item 9 Closing session

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Opening statement

He Changchui

Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

Distinguished participants,
FAO colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to extend to you a warm welcome to this second meeting of the focal points for the project *Strengthening regional data exchange system on food and agricultural statistics in Asia and Pacific countries*. The main objective of the project is to implement an electronics-based regional data exchange system for the participating countries.

The importance of strengthening mutual co-operation among member countries and the establishment of a system for the collection and dissemination of statistics were discussed during the sixteenth session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics in 1996. In order to realize these goals, the project *Improvement of agricultural statistics in Asia and Pacific countries* commenced in 1998 and its second phase commenced in 2001.

These two regional projects have been carried out by FAO with generous financial contributions provided by the Government of Japan. I would like to express – through the Japanese delegates present today at this meeting - FAO's gratitude and appreciation for Japan's continued trust and support for food and agricultural development in the region, specifically in the sector of agricultural statistics.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Moving into the 21st century, not only the industrial sector but also the agricultural sector is being influenced by rapidly changing technologies. State-of-the-art technologies alone have not been able to – and will neither in the future – prevent widespread hunger with 800 million people worldwide going to bed hungry every day. We are, indeed, still living in a world where many people living in poverty face a daily struggle – particularly the women – to secure enough food for the family. FAO, therefore, is calling for a global alliance against hunger and the realization of the basic human right to food. In this respect, the mobilization of the political will of world leaders, and the allocation of sufficient resources to fight poverty and hunger, are two crucial goals for the hunger coalition.

It is in this regard that food and agricultural statistics play a most important role as baseline information for decisions and initiatives related to sustainable agriculture and rural development. The statistics provide decision-makers with a reliable and timely description of the agricultural sector. This information enables them to develop appropriate policies on agriculture and the development of rural areas, while ensuring adequate supplies of food for the population and the achievement of sustainable growth by the national economy. I, therefore, call upon both your compassion and professionalism to emphasize the human face of statistics, and to make every effort to ensure that your work serves the just and noble cause of our joint battle against hunger.

Food and agricultural statistics in Asia and Pacific countries have undergone dramatic changes during the last twenty years. Although reporting systems continue to be a major source of data in many countries, sample surveys have been gradually introduced into statistical systems. FAO has always been at the forefront of promoting and providing technical assistance to member countries in establishing and developing strong agricultural statistical systems at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels. Since 1950, FAO has been the leading advocate for the Programme for the World Census of Agriculture which encourages standardization of a minimum core programme for the agricultural census and a complementary relationship between the agricultural census and more frequent food and agricultural sample surveys.

National statistical publications are now regularly issued. In addition, many countries are introducing modern information technology systems for data processing, analysis and dissemination. These improvements in food and agricultural statistics are expected to benefit national agricultural development, food security and poverty alleviation, and strengthen policy development, evaluation and monitoring.

Recognizing the prevailing environment of rapidly changing socio-political as well as technological conditions, your meeting will further fine-tune the activities and outputs of the FAO project for the establishment of a regional data exchange system on food and agricultural statistics in Asia and Pacific countries.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I understand that this second meeting of focal points for the project will serve as a forum to introduce the Regional Data Exchange System and to discuss future outputs. Allow me to stress that the ultimate beneficiaries of the project are the participating countries. Your presence today is witness to the importance attached to the project and your fully justified desire to ensure that the available opportunities are most efficiently and effectively exploited. This way, our common endeavours will result in maximum benefits from this project.

This two-day meeting offers a timely opportunity to review your needs and expectations from the project. Considering time and resource limits inherent to any project, FAO continues to strive to work with other development partners to find ways of assisting you, either individually or jointly.

Wishing you all a successful outcome for the meeting and an enjoyable stay in the city of Bangkok and the Land of Smiles.

Thank you.

Address

Michiya Otsuka
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Statistics and Information Department, MAFF, Japan

It is my greatest pleasure to speak to you at the Focal Points Meeting of the regional project *Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics*, representing the Statistics and Information Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

To begin with, Japan highly appreciates the consistent activities of FAO for the improvement of agricultural statistics throughout the history of the organization, especially in the Asia and Pacific region. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to all country focal point persons for attending this meeting.

Japan considers it vitally important for the improvement of global food security that countries produce reliable statistical data for the food and agriculture sector and share the data among them. Based on this recognition, Japan proposed a joint undertaking for the improvement of agricultural statistics, standardization and exchange of data in the Asia and Pacific region, at the 16th Meeting of APCAS convened in Tokyo in 1996. To our great pleasure, the proposal was unanimously supported by the meeting. We have contributed to a trust fund in FAO since 1998. A statistical expert was also sent to the FAO Regional Office in Bangkok to promote implementation of the project.

The present project is the second phase of the one I mentioned a moment ago. It intends to develop a data exchange system for food and agricultural statistics in the region. The project started in December 2001 and has already completed the data exchange system programmes. The system was pre-tested in Lao PDR in December last year and is now ready for full-scale implementation.

The Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific countries will serve the member countries and FAO in sharing/exchanging data. After this Focal Points Meeting, the system will be implemented successively in member countries. When the process is completed, the member countries will be able to utilize the data for agricultural policy planning and implementation, especially for strengthening food security.

The Second Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry of ASEAN+3 (AMAF+3), held in Vientiane, LAO PDR in October 2002, endorsed the AFSIS Project Implementation Plan (OPIP) and agreed to start the project activities in early 2003.

Accordingly, the project started its activities in January this year. The AFSIS project is expected to receive support from our FAO project. The data exchange system programme will be used also by AFSIS, and our technical support too will be provided to the project. The two projects, namely FAO and AFSIS, share the same objective: to help member countries to produce highly reliable food and agricultural statistics and to exchange these

among themselves. I am convinced that close collaboration among these projects will maximize their combined output in strengthening food security in the Asian region.

It is understood that the Project Expert will explain the development of the data exchange system and the future activities of the project. I would request all country delegates to actively discuss these subjects in this meeting.

For the development of the Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics, active participation of the member countries is indispensable. All the country focal point persons attending today's meeting are requested to make the utmost effort at the national level in building the data exchange system, obtaining necessary data input for the system and coordinating with the agencies concerned. I sincerely hope that the project goals will be attained through your efforts.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Hardware and software specifications

Hardware

1. CPU – Pentium 4 - 2.0 GHz
2. RAM 256 MB
3. LAN 10/100 Mbps and Modem 56 K
4. 15" Monitor
5. 40 GB Hard Disk
6. Floppy Drive 1.44"
7. CD Writer
8. USB Port
9. Keyboard/Mouse

Software

1. Windows XP Professional
2. Microsoft Office XP with FrontPage
3. Adobe Acrobat
4. Adobe Photoshop 7.0 or PaintShop Pro 7.0
5. CuteFTP Pro 2.0
6. Norton Antivirus
7. SPSS Base System and Tables

Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries

The regional project *Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries (GCP/RAS/184/JPN)* was launched in December 2001. It follows up on the project *Improvement of Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries (GCP/RAS/171/JPN)*. Both projects have been funded by the Government of Japan and executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The development objective of the member countries of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS) is to have a sound statistical system capable of (i) providing data and information for planning and policy-making in the food and agriculture sector with the aim of raising the living standards and nutritional status of people, especially the rural poor, and (ii) exchanging these data with other countries to support national, regional and global food security programmes and policies.

The Project has two immediate objectives:

- 1) phased implementation of the Master Plan for the Regional Data Exchange System for Food and Agricultural Statistics, according to concepts formulated by the previous regional project; and
- 2) strengthening of national capacities to analyze, use and disseminate food and agricultural statistics in support of national agricultural development policy and planning, including food security and poverty alleviation.

To achieve its objectives, the project has developed the Regional Data Exchange System as an Internet-based facility for storing and exchanging agricultural sector statistics.

Member countries

Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.

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