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**Adding a Social Dimension to Agricultural Statistics: Incorporation of
Gender Considerations into FAO's Statistical Support to Member Countries***

by

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** Gender and Population Division, FAO. The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

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Adding a Social Dimension to Agricultural Statistics: Incorporation of Gender Considerations into FAO's Statistical Support to Member Countries

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Introduction

For over two decades, there has been an increasing demand for improved social statistics, particularly gender statistics. In 1995, the UN Statistical Commission established the Expert Group on the Statistical Implications of Recent Major United Nations Conferences to oversee the statistical follow-up to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo), the 1995 World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen) and other conferences. UN agencies have responded to mandates to devote more attention to indicators and statistics for poverty measurement, food security and sustainable development from Agenda 21 and numerous conferences by establishing Expert working Groups (e.g., the Rio Group on Poverty Statistics) and interagency collaborations (ECOSOC 1998, 1999, 2000). A global mandate for gender statistics and indicators is contained in the World Plan of Action by the International Conference on Women in 1975 (ECOSOC1999; Narain 1999). The 1989 World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) and the World Food Summit Plan of Action (1996) provide similar mandates for socio-economic indicators and gender-relevant data for the agricultural and rural development sectors.

Such mandates have resulted in an increased demand for accurate and relevant social statistics for agriculture and the rural sector, and placed even greater demands on national statistical capacities (FAO 1995b: 2). In response, The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has charged its Statistics Division (ESS) with, “. . . cooperating with member countries to improve consistency and quality of data and help develop and improve agricultural statistics,” (FAO 1996a: Forward). Within the framework of the FAO plan of action for the integration of women in development (FAO 1995b) and the current FAO gender and development plan of action 2002-2007 (FAO 2003), the Gender and Population Division (SDW) of FAO has also worked to document, develop and disseminate information and data on rural women—their roles, responsibilities and status—in the fields of agricultural production, food security and rural development (FAO 1999b: 2)

These mandates to improve the human dimension of agricultural statistics converge in the collaboration between the Gender and Development Service (SDWW) and the Statistics Division to incorporate gender and other socio-economic considerations into national

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agricultural censuses and other aspects of national agricultural statistical systems. This paper describes SDWW/ESS activities to date with regard to training and sensitisation in gender and agricultural/rural statistics, technical support to national agricultural censuses, retabulation of existing data sets to improve the availability of gender-disaggregated data² (GDD), and working with users and producers to ensure the relevance, validity and use of the data. The paper concludes with a summary of lessons learned from these experiences and discusses their implications for mainstreaming gender and other social dimensions into agricultural statistics.

Gender Mainstreaming in Agricultural Statistics within FAO

As part of the Strategic Framework for FAO: 2000-2015 (FAO 1999c), the Gender and Population Division (SDW) of FAO contributes to the integrated use of data and information for Sustainable Development through the incorporation of gender and population factors into national agricultural statistics. To this end, the Gender and Development Service (SDWW) has collaborated since the early 1990s with the Statistics Division (ESS) to build capacity at national level by providing training and technical support in gender and statistics for ministries of agriculture and central statistics offices (CSOs) for Member Countries.

This capacity building can be seen as a multi-faceted process involving several or all of the following activity areas:

- **Sensitisation/Training** of both producers and users (actual and/or potential) in gender issues, concepts and tools for the production, analysis and use of gender-disaggregated data;
- **Promotion of user-producer dialogue** to ensure quality and relevance of agricultural statistics;
- **Production of technical guidelines for gender and statistics** to support data production and use;
- **Technical Support to agricultural censuses/surveys in GDD**
- **Separate studies to develop statistical information on gender and rural women**
- **Recoding/retabulation of existing data** to produce gender-disaggregated data sets
- **Preparation of GDD data bases/data sets**
- **Dissemination strategies**
- **Linking with other institutions** to avoid duplication of effort, develop common concepts, definitions, methodologies, etc.

These activity areas should not be viewed as a linear process. Although the ideal situation would be to follow these activity areas in sequence, both choice and sequencing of activities will vary according to the situation. A summary of activities in these activity areas is given, along with examples, in the sections that follow.

² As distinct from sex-disaggregated data, *gender-disaggregated data* (GDD) refers to indicators derived from sex-disaggregated data on social and economic attributes (FAO 1999b; 2 fn. 2).

Sensitisation/training in gender and statistics, GDD.

Gender sensitisation is often an integral part of the user-producer workshops, discussed in more detail below, held during early stages of FAO support to national agricultural census. However, the need for gender considerations in statistics and for gender-disaggregated data (GDD) for rural policy and planning is also a topic discussed during training workshops conducted by SDWW under its Socio-economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) Programme and in separate events. Examples include: an inter-agency consultation on statistics and data bases on gender in agriculture and rural development (1991); presentation of case studies at the 1993 Regional Expert Consultation for Women in Agriculture organized by ESS and SDW for the Near East Region (RNE); workshops in Guatemala (1996) and The Dominican Republic (2001) to promote increased awareness on gender concerns, and; presentations on topics related to gender, information and statistics as part of the High-Level Consultation on Rural Women and Information (1998) and the Second Consultation on Agricultural Information Management (2002).

Since 2000, SDWW has developed and finalised a set of training materials on Gender-Disaggregated Data (GDD) in English, modelled after its Socio-economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) training package. The GDD materials are intended not only to sensitise statistical data users and producers to the need for incorporating gender considerations into agricultural/rural statistics, but also to provide them with practical tools for gender-disaggregated data production and analysis. The English language materials have been used in ten-day national and regional GDD training workshops in Namibia (2000), Uganda (2001), Zambia (2001) and Zimbabwe (2002) Romania (2001). They have been translated into French, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian for use in other contexts.

Promotion of User-Producer Dialogue.

User-producer dialogue on gender statistics issues is supported through SDWW participation in the user-producer workshops organised by the FAO Statistical Development Service (ESSS) for the national agricultural census. During these workshops, the national gender consultant or the SDWW backstopping officer usually prepares a paper and makes a presentation that highlights the availability of and need for gender disaggregated data in the specific country and serves as a resource person in the discussions of data needs and technical issues. Such has been the case for numerous user-producer workshops related to censuses, including those in Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Lesotho, Myanmar, and Senegal.

User-producer dialogue can also result from specific workshops on user-producer linkages (e.g., Zimbabwe 1997) or spontaneous efforts by stakeholders. Such a user-producer group for GDD was formed spontaneously by participants at the conclusion of the GDD training workshop in Uganda in 2001. The group met several times without external support before a series of events rendered the network dormant. Nevertheless, participants have continued to communicate through email and to work on gender mainstreaming in statistics. This has led one former member to observe that despite its

short life, the network has produced some good results and facilitated change in management of data such that sex-disaggregated data, as a first step to gender-disaggregated data, “. . . is now a reality within the institutions at the national and district level,” (Olinga: Personal Communication).

Production of technical guidelines for gender and statistics.

As part of its normative work to provide technical guidance in agriculture, FAO prepares numerous guidelines on agricultural statistics. The guidelines for the current World Census of Agriculture 2000 contain suggestions for cross-tabulations of selected variables by a range of social characteristics of the holder; age, sex and legal status. A list of these variables is contained in Annex 1. These suggestions have greatly increased the capacity of the census to produce socially-relevant data and have formed the basis of much of the technical backstopping work by SDWW. In addition, specific guidelines and other materials on gender statistics have been produced. These include the “FAO Guidelines for the Improvement of Statistics on Women: Obtaining Statistics from national agricultural surveys in selected countries of the Near East (FAO 1996b), “Filling the Data Gap” (FAO 1999b) and “Agricultural Censuses and Gender Considerations,” (FAO 1999a), as well as numerous guidelines produced in the field during census support missions.

Technical support in Gender to agricultural censuses/surveys in GDD.

This is by far the most active area for FAO in gender and statistics, and has involved close collaboration between SDWW and ESSS since the early 1990s. Since then, countries that have received some form of technical backstopping in gender from SDWW during their agricultural census include: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Lesotho, Myanmar, Panama and Senegal. Backstopping activities are currently ongoing in The Dominican Republic, Guinea, Guatemala, Niger, Mauritania, and Trinidad and Tobago, and are anticipated for Georgia and Rwanda.

The SDWW/ESSS collaboration has produced a pattern of technical support activities to help ensure that gender issues are taken into account at various stages of the planning and execution of the census. Wherever possible, a national gender consultant, supported by a regional SDWW officer, is the preferred arrangement. These activities include:

- identification of a national gender consultant;
- preparation of a paper highlighting the availability of and need for gender disaggregated data in that specific country;
- preparation of a gender statistics component for the overall enumerator training;
- introduction of gender aspects into the general information campaign on the data collection exercise;
- review for gender biases of questionnaires, sampling framework and definitions used;
- facilitation of contacts between statisticians and “gender planners”;
- preparation of plan of tables;

- review of final publications and distribution plan.

(Tempelman 2001)

The impact of this collaboration has been an enhanced understanding among national statisticians on 'hidden' gender biases in existing data collection methods and tools, as well as enhanced national capacity to adapt statistics methods and tools to GDD needs. This has led to improved documentation on the collection of GDD, improved collection of GDD and some improvements in the availability of gender disaggregated agricultural information. In addition, there are interesting examples from national data collection exercises solving particular statistics technical problems. These include: the introduction of the concept of 'plot manager' to the census (e.g., Togo, Senegal, Guinea); the use of sex disaggregation in the collection of labour data, including unpaid family labour (e.g., Burkina Faso), and; the addition of questions on specific topics, such as agro-processing (e.g., Cape Verde).

Separate studies to develop statistical information on gender and rural women

In addition to the technical support it provides to agricultural censuses under the SDWW/ESS collaboration, SDWW also supports separate studies to generate statistical information on gender issues and rural women for use in policy planning. These activities include: the preparation of a supplementary questionnaire focussing on the socio-economic situation of women farmers (Benin 1993-94) and two specific projects to integrate gender into national agricultural censuses through training, dissemination of gender results for gender advocacy and creation a gender indicators database for policy formulation (Panama 2000; Dominican Republic, ongoing). The Service supported the survey on rural women and men in Bulgarian agriculture conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (1999), and support to/participation in a seminar on Gender, Population and Land Tenure in Rural China at the conclusion of the First National Agricultural Census of China (Beijing, 2001). SDWW has also assisted in the compilation of statistical information for national action plans for the empowerment of rural women for several countries including Tunisia, Algeria and Bulgaria.

Recoding/retabulation/reanalysis of existing data

One of the strategies recommended by FAO for filling the gender data gap is to promote the coordination, integration and retabulation of agricultural data by sex and age at the sub-national level (FAO 1999b: 23). With the addition of the sex and age of the agricultural holder to many agricultural censuses and annual agricultural surveys, such retabulation permits the production of gender-sensitive data bases on characteristics of smallholder agriculture such as size of agricultural holdings, cropping pattern, use of farm machinery, fertilizer and other inputs, etc. Gender-sensitive retabulation and analysis of census data has been supported in Togo (1991-92), Burkina Faso (1993), Chile (2002), and Hungary (ongoing). FAO participated in an analysis of the living conditions of women in Vietnam that was based on a reanalysis of data from the 1997-1998 Vietnam Living Standards Survey (2001-2).

Gender retabulation of data sets is also an important aspect of training in gender-disaggregated data to produce problem sets for in-class exercises, and for post-workshop follow-up to reinforce skills learned during the workshops. Sample gender-disaggregated data sets were prepared for GDD training workshops in Namibia (2000), Uganda (2001), Zambia (2001) and Zimbabwe (2002), using recent data from the annual agricultural survey of smallholders or the agricultural module from the National Household Survey. Following the workshops in Namibia and Zambia, a more complete retabulation of the annual agricultural survey data produced tables and data bases for a time series disaggregated by sex of the head of the agricultural holding at provincial level.

Preparation of GDD data bases/data sets

SDWW does not have the resources required for compiling and maintaining data bases on gender and agriculture. Consequently, the strategy of the Service has been to work with other units within FAO to incorporate a gender dimension into the existing data sets, and collaborate with external partners (such as UNECE, ESCAP, ESCWA, ILO, UNSO, UNFPA, etc.) on gender and statistics, as discussed below.

In addition to the sub-national GDD data bases produced through retabulation, the relatively recent incorporation of gender and other socio-economic aspects into agricultural censuses has greatly enhanced the potential value of these censuses as sources of social statistics for data bases held and maintained by FAO. However, FAO's major data base, FAOSTAT, still focuses primarily on data for crops, livestock, agricultural products and agricultural prices, relying on UN population estimates/projections and ILO estimates of economically active males and females for social data.

FAOSTAT is currently undergoing a revision and the new version, FAOSTAT2, is expected to contain more data on the human dimension of agriculture, including gender. Planned modifications include the disaggregation of the time series data on agricultural machinery, fertilizer and pesticide use by sex of the agricultural household, and rural/urban disaggregation of the UN Long-Term Demographic Projections that form part of the current FAOSTAT database. Moreover, further disaggregation of census data using the recommended sex-disaggregated tabulations could provide a relatively low-cost means for establishing a gender-disaggregated data base on the characteristics of male- and female-headed agricultural holdings or households for FAOSTAT2. This option will be explored by ESS and SDWW, as well as the possibility to link FAOSTAT2 to data bases external to FAO to provide statistics in areas not covered by FAOSTAT2 to its users.

Dissemination strategies

SDWW also works in the area of dissemination of information on rural women and gender. This work includes support to the preparation of national action plans for the integration of rural women in development previously discussed. Other efforts on information dissemination include contributions to the 1999 High Level Consultation on

Rural Women and Information and preparation (with the Extension, Education and Communication Service) of the publication entitled, “Gender and Food Security. The Role of Information. Strategy for Action,” (FAO2000).

Linking with Other Institutions

SDW and ESS officers at headquarters and regional offices have established and maintain linkages of varying strengths to international organisations, UN agencies and Regional Commissions working in the area of gender and statistics. Officers participate regularly in regional meetings/workshops on gender and social statistics, such as those sponsored by UNECE (Italy 2001, Geneva 2002), ESCAP (Bangkok 2003) and ESCWA (Beirut June 2003), and others (e.g., the current meeting). Given the multi-sectoral focus of most of these meetings, a major contribution by FAO staff has been to report on gender/social statistics activities in the agricultural sector, and to provide an agricultural and, in some cases, a rural development perspective to the discussions.

Of particular note are FAO contributions on gender and statistics to the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS). AFCAS gatherings are statutory meetings organised by the FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF) to bring together directors of agricultural statistics from within the region to discuss issues of mutual interest. For the last three sessions papers have been presented on the need for GDD and on efforts to increase the availability of GDD in selected countries. AFCAS has proven to be an important entry point for improving understanding on the need for increasing the availability of GDD and discussing actions required. By putting GDD on the agenda, individual countries get a chance to report on their pilot activities in this regard and present practical solutions to technical problems related to GDD collection. In the process, participants, become advocates for improving GDD and see the importance ascribed by FAO to the subject, which also stimulates further action at the national level.

Lessons Learned

A variety of lessons that can contribute to the discussions for this meeting can be drawn from the experiences previously described. These lessons are summarised in the sections below.

Training/sensitisation. Although sensitisation is necessary during initial stages of incorporating gender into agricultural statistics, it is **not**, however, a sufficient condition for the promotion and/or support of GDD, and, by extension, other social statistics. After the sensitisation workshops have been held, gender (and other social statistics) mainstreaming programmes need to continue to interact with both producers and users to reinforce sensitisation and to conduct actual training to enable effective production and use of GDD.

In training and sensitisation activities, there needs to be a balance between both users and producers of (gender) statistical data in order to establish the dialogue needed to build demand as well as improve quality/supply of GDD. There is a need to impart practical

skills to both users and producers based on their perceived needs and capacity. For example, national training workshops in gender and statistics may need to pay attention to pre-workshop needs assessments in order to adjust training materials to local settings and up-scale or down-scale presentations and in-class practical exercises, according to participants' familiarity with gender/statistical concepts and the type of analytical software they use in their everyday work (e.g., use of Excel/Access versus SPSS, etc.).

Promotion of User-Producer Dialogue. Experiences with user-producer workshops held as part of support to agricultural censuses suggest that, besides initial raising awareness in gender issues, the impact of these workshops on gender statistics can often be limited without follow-up and support from external organisations. Lack of follow-up is often the case, due to limited human resources. The Uganda case of the GDD network described on page 3 is an exception and points to the need for grassroots ownership in the process if the momentum generated during the workshops is to be sustained.

GDD Support to Agricultural Censuses. ESSS/SDWW technical support to national agricultural censuses has in general enhanced understanding among national statisticians on 'hidden' gender biases in existing data collection methods and tools. This has also encouraged those responsible for the census to adapt statistics methods and tools to meet GDD needs, and has resulted in not only improved documentation on the collection of GDD, but also more effective collection of the data itself. During the current round of WCA, increased availability of gender disaggregated information for agriculture has resulted to some extent and continued improvements are anticipated for the future.

Moreover, these experiences have been perceived by the participating officers from both ESS and SDWW to have been generally successful and beneficial to the programme of census support. Consequently, a gender component appropriate to the situation is more frequently included in the FAO technical support to the agricultural census.

GDD Retabulation. In order to derive maximum benefit from training activities, follow-up retabulation of data sets should occur as soon after the training as possible to reinforce lessons learned and practise skills acquired during workshops. If the delay in follow-up is greater than a few months, there will need to be a thorough review of the tools and methods covered in the training. This was certainly the case for Namibia and Zambia, where retabulations were organised about one year after the initial GDD training workshops.

However, the need for comprehensive "refresher" training during retabulation may be due as much to personnel turnover in national systems and loss of "institutional memory" on GDD production skills as it is lack of interest and/or forgetting the initial training. Staff loss and/or lack of practice necessitated a "mini seminar" to review basic concepts in GDD production techniques in both Namibia and Zambia. (Kebe 2001, 2002). These experiences signal a need for constant reinforcement of training; periodic retraining should be included "recurrent cost" in programmes to introduce—and maintain—capacity for social statistics in "non-social" sectors.

Regardless of the level of interest, motivation and skills, gender data retabulation requires substantial amounts of time and resources, making underestimation of resources (especially time) a potential hazard. In Zambia, the retabulation of agricultural survey data required five months and the work on the Hungarian agricultural census is still ongoing after seven months. In both cases, delays were experienced for a variety of reasons, including staff availability and conflicts with other duties. Such experience point to the need for a strong commitment to the task by statistical managers in order to avoid the long delays in completion of data retabulation and preparation of the data sets and reports.

Conclusion

This paper has provided an overview of FAO efforts to incorporate a gender dimension into its programme of technical support in agricultural statistics to its Member Countries. This review has been more selective than exhaustive and has focused on the collaborative work of SDWW and ESS both at Headquarters and in the Regional Offices in the areas of sensitisation and training, promotion of the user-producer dialogue, production of technical guidelines for gender and statistics, technical support to agricultural censuses/surveys in GDD, recoding and retabulation of existing data, preparation of GDD data bases/data sets and linking with other institutions.

Most of these gender mainstreaming activities are conducted within the framework of technical support to national agricultural censuses and have aspects that may be specific to the area of agricultural statistics. However, the lessons learned from these experiences, this paper argues, also have salience for mainstreaming and improving social statistics in other sectors where social statistical data are collected, analysed and used in planning and policy formulation.

In reviewing these activities and lessons learned, it is clear that, over the past ten years, awareness of the need for GDD has increased greatly among national agricultural statisticians to whom this support has been given. There has also been an increasing interest in GDD among donors, because of data requirements for planning, monitoring and evaluation of Poverty Reduction Strategies, which have become a pre-condition for joining the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Programmes.

Not all gender data that are collected are also processed and analysed. Such a situation results in creating insufficient demand and risks providing no justification for further GDD collection. This is due to a variety of reasons, including:

- lack of funding and/or time allocated to overall agricultural data collection and analysis by projects and programmes,
- lack of demand or imprecise demand from users,
- insufficient publicity being given to the availability of the raw GDD, which in itself may contribute to a low demand.
- lack of human and financial resources to process and/or technical capacity to analyse the GDD.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need for enhancing agricultural planners' capacities to use GDD in their regular planning, monitoring and evaluation tasks. Use of GDD should not be limited to strictly "gender" planners; planners of agricultural and rural development programmes should also be encouraged and supported in GDD use in policy formulation. Training for this stakeholder group must be adapted to different planners at various levels, namely: district, regional and national levels.

Finally, such programmes need to address and promote improvements to GDD user-producer contacts and collaborations with various organisations and institutions at national and international levels. As this meeting demonstrates, interagency cooperation is vital in order to build on complementarities and create synergies for development of social statistical data bases.

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Appendix 1.

Gender-Disaggregated Data from Agricultural Censuses Potentially Available from WCA 2000 Round Cross Tabulations by Holder's Sex and Age

Category 02 – General Characteristics

Purpose of production

Category 03 – Demographic Characteristics

Holdings by size of holder's household

Holders and members of their households by sex and age

Holders and members of their households by education

Holders and members of their households by marital status

Category 04 – Employment

Holders and members of their households economically active by age and sex

Holders and members of their households by main occupation

Holders and members of their households by type of work (permanent, occasional)

Holdings by numbers of permanent workers (members of holder's household and hired)

Category 05 – Land and water

Number and area of holdings

Tenure of land

Land use

Land under shifting cultivation by year cleared

Category 06 – Crops

Major temporary crops

Other temporary crops

Major permanent crops

Other permanent crops

Use of fertilizers

Use of pesticides

Use of high yielding crop varieties

Category 07 – Livestock

Holdings by number of livestock (for each relevant kind of livestock)

Livestock by sex, age and purpose (for each relevant kind of livestock)

Poultry (for each species)

Category 08 – Machinery and equipment

Number of stationary power-producing machinery by source of supply

Use of other agricultural machinery by source of supply

Category 09 – Buildings and other structures

Use of non-residential buildings by tenure
Area and volume on non-residential buildings by purpose

Category 10 – Other activities

Number and area of forest trees
Fishery activities and kind of aquaculture installations