

## United Nations Statistical Commission

### Fifty-third session

Item 3 (s) of the provisional agenda

### Items for discussion and decision: agricultural and rural statistics

## Document E/CN.3/2022/23 – Report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on agricultural and rural statistics

#### *Statement provided by:*

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

#### *Statement:*

The agriculture sector is the major contributor to sustained food, nutrition and livelihood security of its large population to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, reduce rural poverty and foster sustainable economic development. Development of agriculture in Bangladesh is therefore accorded high priority by the Government with special emphasis on agriculture related policies, planning and informed decision making. The advancements in technology in capturing and analysis of data have opened new frontiers to interpret, understand and infer about the issues confronting the sector. Statistical system is facing serious challenges in meeting this rising demand. There is a need to improve and strengthen the system with specific focus on agricultural and rural statistics.

The enacted Statistics Act 2013 empowers the BBS with the responsibility for collection, compilation, analysis, dissemination and coordination of all types of statistics including agricultural statistics in the country in a methodological and timely manner. The Act, in Clause Ga-6 mandated BBS to conduct Population Census, Agriculture Census, Fisheries and Livestock Census and Economic Census. It also empowers BBS to conduct all types of surveys including agriculture related and land use surveys. It may be mentioned that an approval from BBS will be required if any organization likes to conduct survey. Thus, the Act has entrusted BBS with the functions of supporting, coordinating and endorsing the statistics generated and disseminated by other line ministries, departments and organizations. This, in the long run, is expected to streamline the methodological and reporting differences of many key national statistics, enhance credibility of statistics and improve access and availability to different users and stakeholders.

The National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) approved in 2013. It is to be implemented through BBS. Eight wings of the BBS will be responsible independently for the successful implementation of activities in their respective areas of responsibility. The NSDS has acknowledged detailed consultations with a number of development partners and agencies in its preparation process. During the consultations, it became clear that the links between the BBS and other data producers were very limited and that immediate improvements in coordination were needed. It has been recommended that this coordination and partnership engagement should continue in the future for the successful implementation of the NSDS.

Preparation of Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Rural Statistics (SPARS) for Bangladesh has been done by adaptation of the process followed in developing National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS). The Bangladesh SPARS is prepared in line with Global Strategy to improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (GSARS). The GSARS was formulated by World Bank and FAO under the guidelines of United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and that endorsed by United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) in 2012. In line with Global Strategy, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) carried out the In-depth Capacity Assessment (IdCA) program with the support of FAO and published the report in 2014. The preparation of SPARS is also the continuation of fulfilment of

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proposal I recommended in IdCA. Countries having the national plan on improvement of national statistical system have been considered important in SDG document.

The SPARS has given emphasis on development of professionalism in the statistical work through regular training, introducing higher course in statistics and close connection with Institute of Statistical Research and Training (ISRT) of University of Dhaka and Bangladesh Agriculture University. The restructuring the Agriculture Wing of BBS as well as establishing statistical cell in planning wing of all ministries and departments has also been recommended. Five Strategic Goals, 37 outputs and 87 strategic actions/activities have been identified in SPARS for their achievement over the period 2016 to 2030.

Among 21 FAO custodian SDG indicators, some indicators were included in Agriculture (Crop, Fisheries & Livestock) Sample Census Questionnaire. A small initiative from FAO has been taken to provide capacity development to produce these indicators result from Agriculture Sample Census. The training was provided virtually from FAO Rome office on 6 (six) SDG indicators (2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.4.1 and 5.a.1) during the pandemic time in year 2021. Capacity development and Technical support more needed from FAO on Agricultural Statistics relevant to crop (Specially, Crop production data using GIS and Remote Sensing and land Use-Irrigation Statistics) and non-crop Statistics also.

Bangladesh still faces daunting challenges for ensuring food and nutrition security of its current population of around 160 million which is projected to reach over 186 million by 2030. There are several emerging trends that are likely to further increase the challenges for overcoming food and nutrition insecurity in the future. These include continuing population growth, increasing income inequality, deceleration in agricultural productivity growth, increasing scarcity of agricultural labour resulting from internal and international migration, likely adverse impact of climate change on food productivity, increasing pace of urbanization that will result in urban population becoming more reliant on the smooth functioning of the market chain to access food, and rising concerns regarding food safety.

In this regard, Agriculture wing of BBS has already taken a project on 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 (Food Security Statistics project approved by Ministry). FAO is a longstanding partner to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). According to fulfil SPARS goal 3 and 4, FAO can support to strengthen capacity to adopt cost effective and scientific survey methodology using Master sampling frame based on Censuses for some important crops survey. Also to fulfil IdCA proposal, FAO can support us to formulation of a GIS & Remote Sensing cell in Agriculture wing for strengthening the crop estimation system, including crop forecasting and crop monitoring for important crops, Land use statistics etc.

**Submitted on:**

2/17/2022

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