



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Concept Note

Eighth meeting of the Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics

*21-22 June 2018,
Bangkok, Thailand*

Background

The *Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics* (GSARS) represents a concerted effort by governments and its implementing partners to respond to the increased requirements for agricultural statistics by establishing the framework to rebuild statistical systems producing agricultural statistics, meet emerging data requirements, and address the needs to monitor cross-cutting development issues.

In the Asia-Pacific region, the implementation of GSARS is guided by the Regional Action Plan, and is carried out by the regional implementing partners covering the technical assistance, training, and research components of the programme. The implementing partners notably include: the Asian Development Bank (ADB) covering research, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for technical assistance, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) through the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) for training.

To date, the Global Strategy in Asia and the Pacific is active in nineteen countries including: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Georgia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Tonga and Viet Nam.

Since 2013, a Regional Steering Committee (RSC) has been established and currently acts as the ultimate-decision making body at the regional level for the GSARS programme. The RSC provides guidance and oversight for the implementation of the regional and country activities defined in the Regional Action Plan, and is supported by the secretariat office located in the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific to carry out these duties.

Per the requirements of the Regional Action Plan, the RSC is expected to meet at least once annually to monitor progress in the implementation of the plan and evaluate its impact. Seven meetings of the RSC have thus far been conducted with objectives to ensure coordination and integration of the implementation of the Global Strategy, as well as facilitating the approval and endorsement of key reporting documents. The organization of the eighth RSC meeting is expected to better inform its members on the ongoing activities in the final year of the programme, and facilitate further discussions on the direction of a possible second phase of the Global Strategy.

Objective

The objective of the meeting is to bring together members of the RSC to facilitate a broader consultation on the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for the *Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics*. The main areas of focus will be on the informing the

progress made in the implementing countries, and conducting a roundtable discussion on the direction of a possible second phase for the Global Strategy.

Outputs

Outputs of the meeting are:

1. Provide RSC members with timely updates on the activities being carried out by the implementing partners so far in 2018 – including an update on the 2018 work plan and budget
2. Roundtable discussion on the direction of a possible second phase of the Global Strategy;

Participants

Participants of the meeting will include nominated members of the Regional Steering Committee comprising of national government representatives from Bhutan, China, Fiji, Lao PDR, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam; as well as representatives from APAARI, ASEAN, NSSTA, SPC, DFID, SAARC, USDA-NASS, ADB, UNESCAP-SIAP, and FAO. A total of 21 participants are expected to participate in the 8th RSC meeting.

Duration

The Eighth Regional Steering Committee meeting will last 1.5 days and is scheduled for 21-22 June 2018.

Venue

Participants will be informed at a later date.

Sustainability of the activity

The Regional Steering Committee is the key governance mechanism for the implementation of the Global Strategy in the Asia Pacific region. Key decisions from the Steering Committee inform the strategy and work plan for the sustainable implementation of technical assistance and training activities in all Global Strategy implementing countries.