

Integration of Agricultural Statistics System in India

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Abstract: Eradication of extreme poverty and achievement of equitable and sustainable economic growth has to be the ultimate goal. This paper discusses and illustrates how agricultural statistics play a vital role in achieving this goal, especially when national economies are predominantly agrarian. Integration may be done at various levels of administrative units at which independent developmental plans are made with a minimum of two levels: national and sub-national. The national level model may be followed at sub-national levels. The objectives for integration can be to produce land use statistics, crop statistics, irrigation statistics, inputs statistics, price statistics, livestock, indices and indicators.

Agriculture related data are generated by diverse government agencies. At the national level, a “core” group consisting of members from all agricultural statistics source agencies should be formed and guided by a common vision of generating timely and reliable statistics encompassing the entire agriculture sector. This group should engage itself in dialogue with the data users and research institutes to establish the adoption of standardized information and communication tools and a fixed time schedule of data dissemination to greatly enhance the faith of data users.

To provide the basic information for the population engaged in agriculture with the intent of helping them achieve improved living standards, proper policy interventions are required. Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, raising education levels, taking care of health needs, promoting gender equality and ensuring environmental sustainability necessitate integration of agricultural statistics with education, health, gender and environment statistics, among others. While integration within itself involves various Ministry organization plus other agencies, integration outside will also involve additional Ministries. Thus, a powerful integration model is required to include agro-based industries. Public-private partnership for funding and sharing of benefits also needs exploration.