

Fourth session

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Agenda Item 4

Thank you, Madame Chair.

As an active participant in crafting the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, the Philippines is pleased to note that considerable progress has been made in its implementation and significant levels of funding from donor countries and development partners have been made available. Governance structures at global and regional levels, including a monitoring and evaluation framework and a strong coordination mechanism, are in place and functioning. We are happy to note that the research component is moving in the direction of producing cost-efficient and useful methodologies for application in countries, and that the technical assistance and training components are also picking up speed in implementation.

We would like to recognize the collaboration among UN ESCAP, FAO, and the Asian Development Bank in the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific with special recognition of the role of UN SIAP to implement the component on capacity building. We realize, however, that we need a big pool of experts to cover the technical assistance, training and research components of the regional action plan. We invite countries and experts, from within and outside the region to share their knowledge and expertise in implementing the plan. We also support FAO's call for resource partners to continue extending their support so funding gaps may be covered.

The Philippines commits to supporting the work in developing guidelines to improve the collection of food consumption data from household income and expenditure surveys. The newly created Philippine Statistics authority is re-examining its survey programs to rationalize and harmonize the whole statistical data system. This is one major area of concern and we will be looking toward to the work of the Inter-agency Expert Group on Agricultural and Rural Statistics for guidance. We suggest that the IAEG continue its strategy of consultations and learning from experience of countries and experts around the world.

Lastly, we welcome FAO's leadership role in the development of the guidelines for the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020, which, within the context of the Global Strategy, builds on the imperatives of integration of the agricultural system with the rest of the national system. We support, in particular, the plan to produce two volumes of guidelines - the first volume to focus on the Census Programme, definitions and concepts and the second to focus on operational issues. The Philippines was involved in the consultations to draft the guidelines and we look forward to more consultative activities toward finalizing the two volumes.

Thank you Madame Chair.