

PROJETS
PROJECTS

PROJEKTEN
PROYECTOS

Rwanda agricultural survey and analysis

Project summary

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1. BACKGROUND

Rwanda is classified as one of the six poorest nations in the world.

It is also Africa's most densely populated country and preliminary figures from the 1978 national census indicate that the population is growing at over 4% per year (currently among the world's highest rates of growth). Rwanda is afflicted with all of the logistical problems of a poor, landlocked country and possesses no major mineral deposits. Its primary resources are its relatively good soil and abundant rainfall, although the extreme hilliness of the terrain tends to offset these advantages to some degree. Having few other options, the vast majority of Rwandans must build their future on the productivity of the land.

Rwanda is already a country of small subsistence-level farms; they are approximately 800.000 farms in the country with an average size estimated at about one hectare. Although national food production goals established in the first two five-year plans have for the most part been realized, this has been largely due to exploitation of marginal and pasture lands and not, as was planned, to increases in production per hectare. In fact, the data suggests that over the last five years yields per hectare have decreased as marginal lands have come under cultivation. There is now very little uncultivable arable land left "to exploit", however, so that continued territorial expansion no longer represents a viable response to maintain population pressure.

Current agricultural planning calls for 3,8% yearly increases in food production, a 12,2% increase in animal production and a 12,7% yearly increase in export crop production. However, knowledge regarding present resource availability and use as well as estimates of current production, acreage and yields on which the agricultural production target is based are not reliable and Rwanda does not know if the present agricultural system is capable of even these necessary minimum increases. Existing variations in production yields, inputs, technologies, cultural and marketing practices and hence, many of the more important constraints to, and means for, increasing production have yet to be identified and quantified.

2. PROJECT GOAL, PURPOSE AND OUTPUTS

The purpose of the project is to strengthen the capability and performance of the Government in data collection, processing, analysis, planning and management in the agricultural sector. By the end of the project we will expect to have:

- a) increased the availability and reliability of information needed to manage the agricultural sector;
- b) improved capability for data collection, processing and analysis in the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MINAGRI).

The project will serve in a tangible way Rwanda's top agricultural goal: to increase total and per capita food production and farmer income. The main contribution of this project will be more relevant and more accurate agricultural data that can be utilized by the Government in making more effective use of its limited resources, both through better planning and through its improved ability to anticipate problems and crises of food shortfall.

Specific project outputs are:

1. the establishment of a functioning agricultural statistics and analysis unit (ASAU) in the MINAGRI;
2. the formation of a trained survey and analysis staff in ASAU;
3. specifically designed computer programs and data collection procedures;
4. a pilot survey including pretesting of data collection procedures;
5. a national agricultural survey;

6. statistical, analytical and methodological documents for future use by the MINAGRI and the Ministry of Planning (MINIPLAN).

3. MAIN PHASES OF THE PROJECT

3.1. Survey Preparation Phase: May 1981-February 1982

The purpose of this early phase of the project was to carry out all these activities that we need to be completed before the beginning of the pilot survey in March of 1982.

In addition to training the staff, a great deal of work had to be done in pretesting and revising survey methodologies, in questionnaire, construction, and in drafting interviewers' reference guides, office editing procedures, coding procedures and tabulation plans.

3.2. Pilot Phase: March 1982-October 1983

The pilot survey is designed as a „dress rehearsal“ of the full survey that follows. All forms, manuals, procedures and equipment used in the full survey will first be given a trial run in the pilot phase.

The interviewers (142) will be in the field administering the household questionnaire, conducting the farm size measurements and setting up the production measurement system for 710 farmers. As soon as the data from these three sources begin to arrive at the prefectural office, they will be manually edited for completeness. Then, at the ASAU office, the data will be coded and keyed for processing on the project-funded micro-computer (North Star).

Analysis of the pilot results and an evaluation of the survey program will be completed by June of 1983, allowing sufficient time to revise methodologies, the questionnaire and the scheduling of activities for the full survey.

During the final months of the pilot phase, the prefectural supervisors (10) and commune level interviewers will be put through a second training period.

3.3. Full Survey Phase: October 1983-end of project

The full survey phase will comprise the final three years of the project. During the first year all the data collection activities will be completed. Although the volume of data collected and processed will be considerably greater than that of the pilot phase, the timing of the various activities will follow the same general schedule used in the pilot phase.

The second two years of the full survey will be devoted to an in-depth analysis of the data as well as the continued up-dating of the data. A special emphasis during this period will be placed on generating information and recommendations for planning and decision-making purposes.

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