

## *Measuring agriculture and rural planning with advanced methods*

### Impact evaluation of policies and projects for agricultural and rural development

August 31, 2015, Italian Pavilion (6:20 pm - 9:30 pm)

*Message from Simonetta Di Cori, representing the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation*

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentleman,

It gives me a great pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

I also wish to thank Mrs. Elisabetta Carfagna for organizing this meeting that gives us the possibility to have an overview on the current evaluation system of policies and projects for agricultural and rural development.

I would like to start my short message recalling the importance of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are giving an unprecedented emphasis to food and agriculture systems, recognized for their role in ensuring environmentally, economically and socially sustainable production and consumption patterns. A number of identified targets make direct reference to food security, nutrition, sustainable practices in agriculture, fishery and forestry, as well as to sustainable water and energy consumption.

In this context, we strongly believe that is fundamental to have updated and reliable statistical data on food and agriculture, necessary to monitor national trends and to evaluate policies adopted and projects implemented for agricultural and rural development.

As Joseph Stiglitz has said: “If we measure the wrong things, we do the wrong things” and I add: “If we measure the wrongs things we evaluate the wrong things”!

We need to offer technical assistance for the modernization of Agricultural Statistics in support of the Sustainable Development Agenda.

In this context, it is important to know that the Italian Cooperation is supporting FAO for:

1. **Global strategy to improve agricultural and rural statistics**, created to respond to the declining quantity and quality of agriculture statistics and to face many challenges of agriculture in 21<sup>st</sup> century and
2. **CountrySTAT programme in Africa**, which has the objective to improve access to food and agricultural statistics.

The investment in country statistical capacities for data collection and reporting is crucial, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation stresses the need of the development of new statistical indicators that will be used to track progress across countries and be aggregated to represent regional and global trends.

Next September, during the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly, the Summit for the Adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda will convene and a Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) will be launched.

Italy has joined the GPSDD noting that the production, accessibility and use of high quality data is essential to achieve those Sustainable Development Goals, as recognized in the Third International Conference on Financing for Development's outcome document, Ethiopia July 2015.

The Partnership will work towards a world where data can be produced, shared and used in an environment of trust, inclusion, creativity and efficiency and will facilitate stakeholders across sectors, countries and regions worldwide to galvanize and sustain political commitments, align strategic priorities and norms, strengthen capacities, foster innovation and build trust in the booming data ecosystems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a view to improving the lives of citizens, in particular those that are currently left behind.

The exercise of impact evaluation of policies and projects, especially for agricultural and rural development, has been always encouraged by the Italian Cooperation. A good example is given by a project that we are implementing in Senegal, with the agreement of local Ministries. We are

developing a statistical system for the impact evaluation of some activities (financed to give assistance to National Program of Agricultural Investments) on local population with special attention to women that represent the majority involved in agriculture.

In Senegal, we are also involved, together with UNWOMAN and the local Ministry for Woman, in a common exercise aiming to develop a new methodology for data collection, analysis and evaluation of women empowerment in agriculture.

We consider fundamental to organize meetings and seminars like this one, that give the chance to gather experts and policy makers to discuss the distinct challenges to define an appropriate evaluation and statistical monitoring system, in particular in the areas of food security, agricultural and rural development, nutrition, sustainable agriculture and natural resource use, and to see how the International community is responding to them.

Thank you for the attention!