

Report of the Technical Meeting of ASEAN Food Security
Information System (AFSIS)

9 August 2002
Century Park Hotel, Bangkok Thailand

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**Report of
The First Technical Meeting of AFSIS
Century Park Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
9 August 2002**

Introduction

1. The First Technical Meeting of ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) was held on 9 August 2002 at the Century Park Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand. Following discussions held at the Special SOM-AMAF in Surabaya, Indonesia on 6-8 May 2002, the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture & Cooperatives (MOAC), Thailand, hosted the meeting. The overall objectives of AFSIS are to facilitate food security planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in ASEAN through the systematic collection, organization, management, analysis and dissemination of food security data and information. Project activities will focus on capacity building for statistical personnel of all ASEAN member countries in two dimensions: human resources development, and information network systems.

2. The meeting was attended by delegates from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, People's Republic of China, Korea, and representatives of the ASEAN Secretariat, MAFF Japan, the Embassy of Japan, JICA, and FAO's regional office. The list of delegates appears as **Annex 1**.

Opening session

3. Dr. Adisak Sreesunpagit, Secretary General of OAE, Thailand, welcomed participants. Opening the meeting, he reaffirmed that Thailand would, at this meeting, not only secure member countries' understanding of the project concept but also present a detailed technical work plan. He emphasizes that the AFSIS project would continue to play a valuable role over a long time period. The full text of his speech appears as **Annex 2**.

4. Mr. Masataka Hishiyama, Director, Office of International Affairs, Statistics and Information Department, Japan emphasizes that food security is one of the most urgent concerns of Asian countries, and that the AFSIS Project will build the institutional capacity of the ASEAN countries, to enable them to monitor food security in the region. The Japanese Government affirmed its intention to support the AFSIS Project. Japan's assistance to AFSIS is intended to help food security in the entire region. Japan assists FAO's food security related information projects, and plans to implement technical cooperation through JICA. All such projects should coordinate their activities and cooperate, to improve regional food security information. The full text of this remarks appears as **Annex 3**.

5. Mr. Hiroyuki Konuma, Chief of Policy Assistance Branch, FAO/RAP began by acknowledging the valuable support of the Japanese Government for FAO in the field of regional food security. FAO's own Japan-funded regional project *Strengthening regional data exchange system on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries*, is closely linked with AFSIS, and their goal is the same: to attain regional food security for ASEAN countries. Future cooperation between FAO and ASEAN will strengthen, and FAO is willing to work with ASEAN to prepare a *Regional Strategy and Program for Food Security*. The full text of his remarks appears as **Annex 4**.

Agenda Item 1: Objectives of the Project

6. The AMAF + 3 Meeting in Indonesia from 3-5 October 2001 endorsed ASEAN's project proposal for the establishment of the ASEAN Food Security Information System project, AFSIS. Thailand will coordinate the implementation of the project, in close collaboration with FAO. The Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand, will implement the project, and the Statistics and Information Department (SID), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Japan is the donor. The information paper appears as **Annex 5**.

7. The overall objectives of AFSIS are to facilitate food security planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in ASEAN through the systematic collection, organization, management, analysis and dissemination of food security data and information. Project activities will focus on capacity building for statistical personnel of all ASEAN member countries in two dimensions: human resources development, and information network systems.

(1) Human Resources Development

8. The AFSIS project aims to raise the capacity of statistical personnel in the agricultural sectors of ASEAN member countries so that they can work efficiently for the project. The project will use various modalities such as regional meetings, training courses, seminars, provision of hardware and software and other support systems as well as country-level supervisory technical services. Expertise in statistics from other international organizations relevant to the project will be sought to formulate the framework and monitor the training courses for capacity building. The project may also recruit the services of national and international consultants.

(2) Information Network System

9. The AFSIS network will consist of the regional network and national networks. For the regional network, information will be made available from the regional center to member countries through databases and Internet WebPages, which will be established in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat and other related institutes and projects, and especially with FAO. In addition to the regional network system, each member country will establish its own internal information network system, linked to the central and the local areas.

Agenda Item 2: Discussion of the Technical Work Plan

10. The meeting discussed the objectives and detailed technical work plan of the AFSIS project proposed by OAE, which appears as **ANNEX 6**. The Meeting agreed that the institutional capacity of the government agencies for agricultural statistics should be improved through training programs and information system development. Two main approaches are to be followed:

11. The first, *Human Capacity Development* aims to ensure that statistical personnel in member countries, as a result of participating in training and seminars conducted through the ASEAN Food Security Information System Project (AFSIS Project), will have the capacity to plan and implement statistical data collection, analysis and dissemination for the agriculture sector.

12. Focal Point Meetings, held at least once a year, will decide on the major activities of the Project. The ASEAN Food Security Information and Training Center (AFSIT Center) will be established in Bangkok. The Center will conduct training of member country personnel working on agricultural statistics and information in both Basic Technology and Additional Technology. National Seminars will also be organized with help from the Center. The Project will use resources from other national agencies and research institutions, FAO and other international organizations.

13. The second approach is *Information System Development*, whose object is to establish the AFSIS Regional Network. This Network will connect the member countries and AFSIT Center, and allow statistical organizations (through country Focal Points) in the member countries to exchange data. The Project will assist in the provision and installation of computer hardware and software, as well as initial data input, to member countries.

14. Member countries will exchange data through the Regional Network. Eventually the AFSIS Information Network will consist of both a National Network and a Regional Network, to exchange statistics and information within and between member countries, respectively. The Project will build the Regional Network first. This Network will be initiated during the first year of the project. AFSIT Center will assist member countries by providing technical guidance and by organizing seminars on information management and data utilization. Each member country will acquire statistical data from the AFSIT Center and other member countries through the network system. They will analyze data and provide advice and results to policy agencies.

Agenda Item 3: Comment and Suggestion

15. The delegate from the Philippines commented that the data and information should be integrated into forms that can be collected and able to be exchanged in a standardized format. The Chair agreed, despite the work that would be involved. The Indonesian delegate asked whether experts can come from organizations other than those

specified. The Singapore delegate asked on which commodities would the Project focus, and on the level of funding. The Korean delegate asked for details about the Project's timeframe. One of the Thai participants asked whether, in addition to training, joint research programmes could be funded. The emphasis on the training programmes should be on advanced information technology (IT) – there is a need to be up-to-date with technology.

16. The Project Coordinator agreed with the Philippines and emphasized that every member country will be able to use the AFSIT Center as a center for information. Replying to the question from Singapore, the Coordinator said that the priority commodity would be rice; other priority commodities would be maize, soybeans, cassava and sugar cane, consistent with the ASEAN Food Security Reserve Board (AFSRB). The FAO delegate said that FAO would be pleased to contribute expertise and software to the Project.

17. The Japanese delegate pointed out that human resources were highly significant, and considered that the first Focal Point Meeting should focus on this issue. The Japanese delegate said that funding for the Project's implementation beginning in 2003 would, in the Japanese Fiscal Year 2002 (April 2002 – March 2003) amount to US\$ 246,000.

18. The Korean delegate asked when the Network would be started. The Project Coordinator replied that the Network would begin operations after the first Focal Point Meeting. The Meeting agreed with the suggestions regarding training, and agreed to provide a training expert for advanced information technology. The Coordinator said that each training course will be appropriate to the knowledge level of the participants.

Agenda Item 4: Conclusion

19. The meeting agreed to submit the PIP, which appears as ANNEX 7, to the SOM-AMAF + 3, which will be held in October 2002 in Laos PDR for consideration.

ANNEX 1

The First Technical Meeting
ASEAN Food Security Information System
9th August 2002
Century Park Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

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ANNEX 2

**OPENING STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
AT THE
FIRST TECHNICAL MEETING OF ASEAN FOOD
SECURITY INFORMATION SYSTEM (AFSIS)**

Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Office of Agricultural Economics, Thailand, I should like to welcome all of you to the First Technical Meeting of ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS).

We are all aware that, in the developing countries of Asia there are more than five hundred million undernourished people. This is about 70% of the total number of undernourished people in the world. Most of these people are in rural areas, and the need to increase their food security is both urgent and challenging.

At its meeting in October 2001 in Indonesia, the AMAF+3 Meeting endorsed ASEAN's proposal for the establishment of the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS). Thailand will collaborate closely with FAO on the implementation of the project. The Thai Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), which is part of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, will be responsible for implementing the project. The Statistics and Information Department (SID), which is part of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF), Japan, is the donor.

The AFSIS project aims at raising the living standards and nutritional status of people in ASEAN countries by developing food security information for the region as a whole and for individual countries. The project will not only construct an information network system but also strengthen the monitoring, analysis and dissemination of food security information.

Despite the significant progress made in collecting food and agriculture data, many countries in ASEAN still face difficulties in obtaining reliable and timely data about food security. The methodologies used in data collection need to be improved in a number of countries, and new and modern techniques of data collection, analysis and dissemination for food security information have to be adopted.

Furthermore, owing to globalization, which is encompassing almost every country in the world, the demand for accurate, timely and comparable information among countries is ever increasing. Countries are becoming more interdependent in many respects, and food security information is no exception. With the recent growth of trade in agricultural products, countries need accurate data on production and prices in the international market. But countries and international organizations also need to share agricultural statistics and information so that they can better stabilize food supplies, balance the supply and demand for food, and conserve the environment.

The AFSIS project will not only develop an information network system among participating member countries of ASEAN; it will also involve a series of well-planned seminars, workshops and training programs at regional and national levels, for the statistical personnel of national government offices in member countries. These meetings will help develop statistical skills in such areas as data collection, analysis and dissemination, consistent with the framework of the AFSIS. At the end of the project, these officials should be able to respond in a timely manner to requests from policy makers, food security planners, and agricultural development and data users from the private sector.

At the Special SOM Meeting in Surabaya, Indonesia on 6-8 May 2002 Thailand has presented the Project Implementations Plan (PIP) of AFSIS to member countries for consideration. The SOM endorsed Thailand to set The First Technical Meeting or ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) in Thailand. Therefore, the objective of this meeting is not only to make the project's concept understood by member countries but also to present the detailed technical work plan.

The outcome of this meeting will be reported to the SOM and AMAF+3 meetings in Vientiane, Lao PDR. My hope is that the AFSIS will be useful for all member countries, and will continue to play a valuable role over a long time period. Finally, on behalf of the Office of Agricultural Economics, Thailand, may I express wish that all representatives will have fruitful discussions and achieve the objectives of this meeting.

Thank you: I declare the meeting open.

ANNEX 3

Speech by Mr. Masataka Hishiyama
Director of International Statistics Office.
Statistics and Information Department,
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan
At the First Technical Meeting
Of ASEAN Food Security Information System
9 August 2002 at Century Park Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

It is my pleasure to speak to you at the First Technical Meeting of ASEAN Food Security Information System, representing Statistics and Information Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan.

Please allow me first to express my sincere appreciation and respect to the effort of Dr. Adisak Sreesunpagit, Secretary General of the Office of Agricultural Economics, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Thailand and his staffs for today's Meeting.

Food security is one of the most urgent concerns to Asian countries, where there are over 500 million undernourished people, accounting for 70 percent of world total.

Against this background, The First Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry of ASEAN+3 countries held in Indonesia in October 2001 agreed on the development of ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS). At the meeting, Japanese Government informed its intention to support its implementation.

The project was intended to strengthen institutional capacity of statistical system in ASEAN countries in order to obtain reliable statistical information and to facilitate exchange of data among countries, whereby enabling countries to monitor food security situations of the region.

In May 2001, The Special Meeting of SOM-AMAF+3 held in Surabaya, Indonesia, was reported by Thailand on the progress of AFSIS. The Meeting was informed that Thailand would be hosting the first technical meeting to review the detail work plan for the consideration by SOM-AMAF+3 to be convened in October 2002 in Lao PDR.

Japan has been contributing to statistical improvement in Asian region through FAO and JICA. Our assistance to AFSIS development is in line with our past efforts, namely to cover the whole ASEAN region with the joint improvement undertaking. The Trust Fund Project through ASEAN Secretariat will a) strengthen human resource capacity so that accurate data may be provided in timely manners, and b) develop an information network system for food and agricultural statistics connecting ASEAN countries. The project is expected to facilitate food security monitoring and planning and implementation of food security policies. It is also hoped that, if the AFSIS becomes fully operational, its output will benefit surrounding countries.

As you may already know, FAO also conducts food security related information projects with Japanese assistance. We also plan to implement technical cooperation through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Close coordination and cooperation among these projects will be most important for the effective improvement of regional food security information.

I join the call of Dr. Adisak in requesting all attending this Meeting to contribute to fruitful discussion on objectives and work plan of AFSIS project. I also hope that the result of the discussion will be reported to, and endorsed by, the forthcoming SOM-AMAF+3 meeting in Vientiane, Lao PDR in October, paving the way for its implementation in early next year.

Thank you for your attention.

ANNEX 4

STATEMENT By Mr. Hiroyuki Konuma
Chief, Policy Assistance Branch (RAPP)
FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
At
The First Technical Meeting of ASEAN Food Security
Information System (AFSIS)
9 August 2002 at Century Park Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Morning:

First of all, let me convey the greetings and best wishes for a successful inaugural meeting from the Assistant Director General, a.i., Mr. Dong Qingsong of the FAO Regional Office.

I also wish to express at the outset our profound appreciation of this opportunity to speak before you on regional food security. It is a fundamental FAO mandate from our Governing Body. I would be remiss if I fail to acknowledge the strong support the Japanese government has extended to FAO in this field.

FAO is privileged to be associated with ASEAN through Japan funded and FAO extended regional project GCP/RAS/184/JPN “Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries”.

This project is closely linked with the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) under one umbrella and a common goal to attain regional food security in ASEAN countries.

Brief Regional Overview

At the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome, more than 180 countries collectively pledged concerted actions towards “food security for all.” Progress has been achieved in reducing hunger in Asia-Pacific. Yet, 64 percent of the 780 million hungry people in the developing world reside in this region, with a deficit in basic daily dietary energy of 100 to 400 kilo calories.

World leaders gathered again in June this year at the World Food Summit: five years later (**WFS:Fyl**), because it became clear that the original goal would not be met without additional efforts. Recent global events and the worsening hunger plight made new commitments necessary to press forward and reduce poverty and hunger.

Is the region's access to food threatened? The food situation in the region should be manageable. Populated countries have demonstrated a capacity to cope with rising food demand, despite resource constraints. Favorable policies, governance and political will can assist Asian food producers respond to changes in factor endowments and opportunities.

Market reforms in Asian transition countries raised GDP growth rates in the early 1990s. Deepening the reform process, along with appropriate public investments can sustain the growth in the agriculture and rural areas, where an overwhelming majority of food insecure are located.

Agricultural land development is feasible in parts of the region where only a small part of the arable land is irrigated, while surface and groundwater resources abound. Alluvial plains offer opportunities for cost-effective, short-gestation, small-scale and farmer-controlled irrigation systems.

Food insecurity in Asia-Pacific developing economies is essentially a poverty problem. It reflects a failure of food entitlements due to low returns to assets owned largely by the rural poor. Undernourishment is pervasive in countries where national incomes are lowest.

The evidence is clear that rapid income growth, sustained over a period of time, reduces poverty and strengthens food security. First, increased incomes directly enhance the long-term household food security. Second, growth generates fiscal resources for market infrastructure and other public goods. They lower marketing costs and consumer prices. In effect, access to food is improved, even with a given level of nominal household income.

Improving Food Security

Let me now turn to what FAO is doing in this region to help food security. At the country level, FAO has assisted with the:

- **Special Programme for Food Security – SPFS** was launched after unanimous approval by the FAO Council in 1994. The World Food Summit further endorsed it, where Heads of States and Governments committed themselves to make food security a priority of national development (beneficiary countries) or of development support (donor countries).

The main objective is to assist in rapidly increasing food production and productivity on a sustainable basis, reduce year-to-year variability of production and improve access to food as a contribution to equity and poverty alleviation.

The programme expects to contribute in implementing the basic commitments of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, particularly on:

- a) "...policies aimed at increasing physical and economic access to food...".
- b) "...participatory and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development policies...", and
- c) "...optimal allocation and use of investments, to foster human resources, sustainable food, and rural development."

The SFPS has been either operation or under formulation in 16 countries in the region including four in ASEAN countries. Generous support from the government of Japan benefits two on-going SPFS in the ASEAN, in addition to two others in the SAARC region.

Another FAO initiative at country level is the preparation of:

- **Strategies for Nation Agricultural Development, Horizon 2010** for developing countries and economies in transition, as an initial step in the follow-up to the WFS. They were drafted to:

- a) help governments implement nation national commitments made globally;
- b) create close partnership with United Nations system and other international development agencies to support the formulation and implementation of the agricultural strategy; and
- c) help place investments in agriculture high on the national and international agenda.

The strategy documents were updated and amended to ensure that the policies and programmes for sustainable food security at national and household level remain consistent with the changing socioeconomic and food security situation in member countries.

Starting in late 1999, workshops organized by the respective governments were held to take stock of the progress and to update the draft. It was attended by relevant government officials, parliamentary commissions, and actors of civil society, private sector, non-governmental organizations and development partners.

FAO complements the above country initiatives with relevant regional activities, among which are:

- **Regional strategies for agricultural development and food security**

Though poverty and food insecurity have national dimensions, FAO has undertaken to expand cooperation with Regional and Sub-regional Economic Organizations (REOs) in order to reinforce national programmes, and take advantage of synergies and complementary at regional and sub-regional levels. FAO assisted REOs in formulating policies and programmes for sustainable agricultural and food production,

better access to food, food safety and enhanced trade in food and agricultural products at national, sub-regional and regional levels.

In line with the above, a Regional Strategy for Agricultural Development and Food Security (RSADFS) was elaborated for each participating REO in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Each RSADFS draws on the strategy document for national agricultural development-horizon 2010. It highlights the commonality of REO members with respect to agriculture and food security, identifies major differences in endowments and policy parameters and recommends options and thrusts for cooperation among REO members.

- **Regional Programmes for Food Security (RPFS).** RPFS are designed to implement key elements of the above regional strategies. Thirty-four REOs were invited initially to collaborate in preparing the respective regional strategies and programmes. Joint elaboration of the strategies and programmes is under way for the South Pacific Forum and the SAARC in the region.

At the **WFS:FyI** side events on Regional Food Security at Work, 21 REOs presented their respective strategies and programmes for regional food security to various stakeholders, particularly those from the donor community and financing institutions. As a follow-up, FAO has proposed that the Asian Development Bank organize a meeting at its Headquarters to further discuss the practical modalities of financing the REO's RFSP.

- **Capacity Building on WTO Negotiations**

As part of 14 sub-regional workshops worldwide, FAO organized three sub-regional workshops for Asia-Pacific in 2001 and 2002, with 34 participants from 29 countries and three regional organizations on the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), Agreements on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Its main objective is to enhance the capacity of developing FAO member countries in multilateral trade negotiations on agriculture and thus, maximize the benefits from current or potential WTO membership for sustained food security and poverty alleviation.

FAO and ASEAN Collaboration

FAO's collaboration with the ASEAN has had a long history. Back in 1980, FAO executed a project assistance on examining the **Supply and Demand of Agricultural Commodities in the ASEAN (RAS/77/006)** in collaboration with the ASEAN Committee on Food, Agriculture and Forestry and the Interim Secretariat in Jakarta. Also, FAO technical assisted in the establishment and the research and training activities of then **ASEAN Agricultural Development Planning Center** in Bangkok. Subsequent project assistance (**GCP/RAS/087/SWI**) focused on capacity-building in

project/programme formulation and development planning. Another regional project assistance, **GCP/RAS/114/JPN**, dealt with food security issues through technical activities in modeling optimal buffer stock operations and management in Asian countries.

Indeed, FAO has a wealth of technical expertise on food security to share with the ASEAN. A formal relation between the FAO and the ASEAN concluded with an exchange of letters in 2000 should facilitate future cooperation. Recently, our Director-General indicated that FAO is ready and willing to work with the ASEAN in preparing a Regional Strategy and Programme for Food Security.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On this note underlining FAO readiness and willingness and willingness to cooperate with you, let me thank you once again for this chance to talk about continuing the history of FAO-ASEAN collaboration on a topic so highly strategic to the region's development

ANNEX 5

ASEAN FOOD SECURITY INFORMATION SYSTEM (AFSIS)^{1/}

Anchalee Ooraikul ^{2/}

The AMAF+3 Meeting in Indonesia from 3-5 October 2001 endorsed ASEAN's project proposal for the establishment of the ASEAN Food Security Information System project, AFSIS. Thailand will coordinate the implementation of the project, in close collaboration with FAO. The Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand, will implement the project, and the Statistics and Information Department (SID), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Japan is the donor.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of AFSIS are to facilitate food security planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in ASEAN through the systematic collection, organization, management, analysis and dissemination of food security data and information. There are four specific objectives as follows:

(1) To improve the capacity of human resources to develop and operate the food security information system (AFSIS).

(2) To improve the systems and methods of collection of food security information, including information on the food production, imports and exports, market prices, consumption, stocks held by farmers and traders, and the crop growth situation in each country;

(3) To develop more reliable methodologies and techniques for estimating and forecasting the food supply-demand situation in the ASEAN region; and

(4) To develop an information network system to exchange and disseminate statistical data and information related to food security in the region on a timely basis.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Project activities will focus on capacity building for statistical personnel of all ASEAN member countries in two dimensions: human resources development, and information network systems .

Human Resources Development

The AFSIS project aims to raise the capacity of statistical personnel in the agricultural sectors of all ASEAN member countries so that they can work efficiently for the project.

The project will use a combination of various modalities such as regional meetings, training courses, seminars, provision of hardware and software and other support systems as well as country-level supervisory technical services. Moreover, expertise in statistics from other international organizations relevant to the project,

^{1/}Paper for first Technical Meeting of ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) on 9 Aug 2002, at Century Park Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

^{2/}Deputy Secretary-General of Office of Agricultural Economics, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand.

including the recruitment of national and international consultants, will be sought to formulate the framework and monitor the training courses for capacity building.

The training courses will be focused on management and development of the AFSIS and will be divided into two levels: basic techniques and advanced techniques, as follows:

1. Basic technical training will comprise:
 - (1) Basic statistical survey techniques, for instance, sampling design, crop cutting, etc.
 - (2) Data processing techniques, which involves reporting and disseminating data through IT systems.
2. Advanced technical training will comprise:
 - (1) Data analysis and forecasting.
 - (2) Advanced data collection techniques, such as GIS and remote sensing.
 - (3) Network systems, such as website and database systems.

However, owing to differences in the information systems of member countries, the project implementation strategy and level of support at country level will be adapted to suit each country's specific conditions.

Information Network System

The AFSIS network will consist of the regional network and national networks. For the regional network, information will be made available from the regional center to member countries through databases and Internet WebPages, which will be established in collaboration with ASEAN secretariat and other related institutes and projects, and especially with FAO.

In addition to the regional network system, each member country will establish its own internal information network system, linked to the central and the local areas. The national information network system may be pilot tested on a small scale, and may differ from country to country.

In order to strengthen the AFSIS management, an ASEAN Food Security Information and Training Center (AFSIT Center) will be established as a secretariat body for the AFSIS project and a hub of information on food security for participating member countries. Decisions for the project will be made at Meetings of Focal Points. Member countries will be urgently requested to nominate Focal Points. Focal Point Meetings will be held at least once a year.

Also relevant to food security in East Asia, in addition to the AFSIS Project are: the FAO project on Agricultural Statistics, and the JICA project on Agricultural Statistics and Economic Analysis Development in Thailand. The Coordinating Body, which will be composed of representatives from the above-mentioned projects, will be organized to discuss the activities of the AFSIS so as to increase efficiency and avoid duplication of work undertaken in other projects.

Today's meeting is AFSIS's first activity. Its objective is to formulate the project framework, which will be discussed in detail at the next session. If this proposal is accepted and endorsed, the report will be submitted to SOM and AMAF+3 to be held in Vientiane, Lao People Democratic Republic, and the Fund could be reimbursed for future implementation.

Results of AFSIS

Through the AFSIS Project, the AFSIT Center, accompanied by FAO and JICA, will develop human resource and information network systems at both regional and national levels, with the aim of raising the statistical and information capacity of ASEAN member countries. Statistical personnel in member countries will then have the capacity to set up plans and implement statistical data collection, analyses and dissemination for agricultural sector. Statistical organizations in the member countries will be able to access data through the AFSIS Regional Network, which will connect the member countries and AFSIT Center. The member countries will formulate small preliminary models for their national network and conduct pilot tests.

The overall aim is to develop member countries' statistical capacity, so that their statistical institutions can provide the accurate, reliable and timely information that is necessary for policy making.

ANNEX 6

ASEAN FOOD SECURITY INFORMATION SYSTEM (AFSIS)^{1/}

Montol Jeamchareon^{2/}

1. Human Capacity Development

1.1 Objective

1.1.1 Long-term Objective

In the ASEAN member countries, government offices for agricultural statistics will be capable of providing accurate and timely data to national policy planners for food security and agricultural development.

1.1.2 Project Target

Statistical personnel in member countries, as a result of participating in training and seminars conducted through the ASEAN Food Security Information System Project (AFSIS Project), will have the capacity to plan and implement statistical data collection, analyses and dissemination for the agriculture sector.

1.2 Activities

1.2.1 Focal Point Meeting

AFSIS Focal Point Meeting (FPM) will be established. FPM consists of Focal Point personnel nominated by the member countries. It is convened once a year. It discusses and decides on orientation and major activities of AFSIS Project.

At its first meeting, FPM considers the plan of AFSIS training programs and finalizes it.

1.2.2 ASEAN Food Security Information and Training Center

Under AFSIS Project, ASEAN Food Security Information and Training Center (AFSIT Center) is established in Bangkok.

AFSIT Center conducts regular training program. The program consists of the “Basic Technology Course” and the “Additional Technology Course”. These courses are organized every year.

The program is formulated so that member country personnel working on agricultural statistics and information can be trained or gain knowledge in statistical data collection, analyses and dissemination. Technology, skills and knowledge offered by the program should correspond as much as possible to each country’s agricultural situation and statistical development. For instance:

(1) Basic technology

- Sampling Techniques
- Crop cutting
- Monitoring/estimation of damages
- Survey Data Processing

^{1/} Paper for first Technical Meeting of ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) on 9Aug 2002, at Century Park Hotel. Bangkok, Thailand

^{2/} Senior Statistics Technical Office, Center for Agricultural Information, Office of Agricultural Economics, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand.

- Reporting/Disseminating by Internet

(2) Additional Technology

- Demand/Supply Forecasting
- Multiple Frame Sampling
- Database Construction
- National Network Planning through Internet

The AFSIT Center will find trainers, instructors and resource persons for the training from the Center itself, other national agencies / research institutions from member countries, FAO and other international organizations.

After the first year's training, the program is reviewed and, following suggestions from the FPM, modified.

AFSIT Center also provides assistance to member countries in organizing National Seminars, by advising on procedures, subjects, etc, and by sending experts to the Seminars.

1.2.3 Member countries

Member countries send their statistical personnel for training.

Each member country organizes a National Seminar once during the AFSIS Project. It discusses important problems and issues related to agricultural statistics and information. It also considers future statistics/ information development of the country.

Member countries accept necessary assistance provided by AFSIT Center in organizing the Seminar.

1.3 Schedule and Input

1.3.1 Schedule

AFSIT Center will be established early in year 2003. The first year's training program takes place after the Center completes necessary preparation. The National Seminars will be conducted at a later stage of the Project.

1.3.2 Input

AFSIS Project provides training equipment and pays training expenses. The latter include costs of the training operation, trainers and instructors, travel and per diems of the training participants, etc. Thai Government provides space for the AFSIT Center.

2. Information System Development

2.1 Objectives

2.1.1 Long-term Objectives

Statistical organizations for the agricultural sectors in member countries will be able to acquire domestic and international data through national and regional information networks, and provide accurate and timely data as required by food and agricultural policy planning / implementing agencies of their governments.

2.1.2 Project Target

AFSIS Regional Network is established, connecting the member countries and AFSIT Center. Statistical organizations (through country Focal Points) in the member countries will exchange data through the Network.

The member countries formulate their own small preliminary models for their National Networks and conduct their pilot tests.

2.2 Activities

2.2.1 Focal Point Meeting's decision on overall plan

As the AFSIS project starts, a draft overall plan for the information network development is formulated. The plan consists of the scope of information to be included in AFSIS and the structure of the network system. The first FPM discusses and finalizes the plan.

2.2.2 National Network and Regional Network

Eventually, the AFSIS Information Network will consist of a National Network and a Regional Network. The former exchanges statistics and information *within* the member country, i.e. between the head office of statistical agency and its regional/provincial offices across the country. The latter exchanges data *between* the member countries.

AFSIS Project starts building the Regional Network first. The National Network will be pilot-tested on a small scale later in the Project period.

2.2.3 Regional Network

(1) Information to be exchanged

Information to be exchanged by the Regional Network consists of Center Information and Country Information. The former is prepared by AFSIT Center and shown on the "AFSIT Center Web Page". The latter is prepared by the member countries and posted on "Country Web Pages".

(2) Install Network: hardware, software and data

Software for the AFSIS Web Pages for AFSIC and Countries is designed and programmed by an FAO project¹. Customization to fit the country situations will be done by the AFSIS Project. Each member country will input data to Web Pages².

Personal computers will be installed in each member country. Some will also be installed in AFSIT Center. Later, additional computers will be installed for data use and analysis.

(3) Data Exchange and Utilization

Each member country acquires statistical data from the AFSIT Center and other member countries through the network system. The member countries analyze the data and provide the result to policy planning / implementing agencies. They also provide country data to other countries' users by uploading to their Country Web Pages. AFSIT Center will undertake its own data / information collecting activities. Data that the Center obtains through its activities will be provided through the Center Web Sites.

AFSIT Center assists member countries by providing necessary technical guidance and organizing seminars and workshops on information system management and data utilization³.

¹ Project "Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries" GCP/RAS/184/JPN.

² Costs of initial data input will be supported by the AFSIS Project.

³ FAO Project on Regional Data Exchange System assists AFSIT Center and member countries in network management.

2.2.4 Pilot Testing of National Networks

The project will conduct a small-scale pilot testing of National Networks in each member country. For this purpose, additional computer hardware will be installed in member countries. A detailed plan of the testing will be formulated in the later stage of the project.

2.3 Schedule and Input

2.3.1 Schedule

The Regional Network will be initiated during the first year of the project. The pilot testing of National Networks will be conducted in the later state of the Project.

2.3.2 Input

The AFSIS project supports installation of computer hardware and software as well as initial data input to Web Pages of member countries⁴.

⁴ FAO provides services for designing and programming Web Pages.

ANNEX 7

DEVELOPMENT OF ASEAN FOOD SECURITY INFORMATION SYSTEM

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (PIP)

A. GENERAL BACKGROUND

A.1 Current Status on Food Security Information in ASEAN Countries

Food security is a growing concern in national and international communities. In the developing countries of Asian region, especially in the rural areas, there are more than five hundred million undernourished people, which is equivalent to 70% of the world total. It has become the urgent issue to strengthen the food security in order to achieve social stabilization and economic development.

In Asian countries, rice is the main staple and a large number of people are engaged in rice production. Rice is therefore a most important and very sensitive food commodity, affecting the food security of the people in the region. East Asia (ASEAN+3) is the world's major producer and consumer of rice. Countries in the region account for about 80% of total world rice production, 75% of world consumption, 57% of world rice trade and they hold 55% of total world rice stocks.

The Asian region has suffered from frequent large-scale natural disasters, which have led to repeated imports of rice and food aid. Rice prices have fluctuated markedly whenever production reductions took place, because of limited amount of imports/exports and storage capacity. Therefore, establishment of food security reserves has been one of important policy agendas for these countries.

Availability of accurate and timely information concerning supplies of rice and other food commodities plays a vital role in ensuring food security in the region. Accurate and reliable production, consumption and trade data in these countries are indispensable in formulating effective and efficient policies and strategies for stable food supplies to the population. Timely short-term forecasts of production enable these countries to organize appropriate storage, transportation and distribution programs to prevent food shortages, both in countries as a whole and in specific "hot spots" within a country. Reliable data concerning private- and government- sector food storage will facilitate more cost-efficient management of reserves.

Food and agricultural statistics and information in ASEAN countries have undergone drastic changes over the last 20 years. Many countries in the region have undertaken regular agricultural production surveys, censuses and food consumption or household income/expenditure surveys. National statistical publications are also issued on a regular basis. These improvements in food and agriculture statistics and information have benefited national agricultural development and food security.

Despite the significant progress made in collecting food and agriculture data, many countries in ASEAN region still face difficulties in obtaining reliable and timely data.

Methodologies used in data collection need to be improved in a number of countries, and new and modern techniques of data collection, analysis and dissemination of food security information have to be adopted.

Dissemination of data is an important area to which countries attach high priority in response to the ever-increasing needs of data users. Traditional hard copy publications are produced, but often this method results in delays in releasing the information. While countries are now trying to capitalize on the progress in computer and telecommunication technology to improve their information dissemination systems, shortages of funds and expertise limit adoption of the new technology.

Furthermore, owing to accelerating globalization encompassing most countries in the world, demand for accurate and timely information, comparable between countries, is ever increasing. Every country is intensifying her efforts for cooperation with other countries in many fields, and food security information is no exception to this trend. With the recent growth of agricultural products trade, every country wants to obtain accurate statistical data on other countries' production and prices in the international market. It is also necessary for international organizations to share agricultural statistics and information as a guide to achieving such goals as the stabilization of food supplies and the balancing of supply and demand.

A.2 Project Origin and Preparation

Following the mandate given to Thailand by the Special Senior Officials Meeting of Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry of ASEAN Member Countries, China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (*SOM-AMAF+3*) in April 2001 in Cambodia, an *ASEAN Workshop on Food Security Cooperation and a Rice Reserve Management System in East Asia* was held on 19-20 July 2001 in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand. The workshop discussed the Terms of Reference for a Feasibility Study on Creation of a Rice Reserve Management System in East Asia.

Also at the workshop, a *general framework of the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS)* was discussed. It was agreed by the workshop to present the result to the SOM-AMAF+3 and the Ministerial Meeting (AMAF+3) in Indonesia on 3-5 October 2001.

The October meeting of AMAF+3 endorsed ASEAN's proposal for the establishment of the AFSIS project, and Thailand agreed to coordinate the implementation of the project. The Meeting noted that, at the SOM-AMAF+3 Meeting, Japan also considered the AFSIS to be an important and useful project, and would consider studying the necessary support for development of the system.

Subsequently, intensive consultations continued between the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC), Thailand, as the

implementation organization, and the Statistics and Information Department (SID), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Japan, as the donor.

Then, the Government of Japan took budget measures for implementation of the *Project on Development of ASEAN Food Security Information System* (hereafter called “AFSIS Project” or “the Project”). The OAE of MOAC, Thailand, will take the initiative on overall management of the AFSIS Project.

A.3 Relevant On-going Assistance

In the Asia and Pacific region, national food security, agricultural development and eradication of hunger and poverty are important agendas.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan, is well aware of this situation, and considers the role of information and statistics as fundamental and of prime importance. It recognizes the necessity of supporting activities addressing these issues. The Government of Japan has been spearheading efforts for the improvement of information and statistics in support of agricultural sector development in general, and poverty alleviation and food security in particular, using bilateral and multilateral schemes.

The AFSIS Project funded by the Government of Japan will involve, as far as is feasible, maximum cooperation with Japanese funded on-going and planned projects in the field of agricultural statistics and food security information to achieve optimal utilization of resources and synergy in project activities.

Specifically, the Project is expected to work closely with other related Japan-funded project such as the FAO regional project "Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries" and a JICA project "Agricultural Statistics and Economic Analysis Development" planned for implementation in Thailand. These projects are required to harmonize their implementation in terms of organizing training courses and meetings, sharing know-how and data, and other related matters.

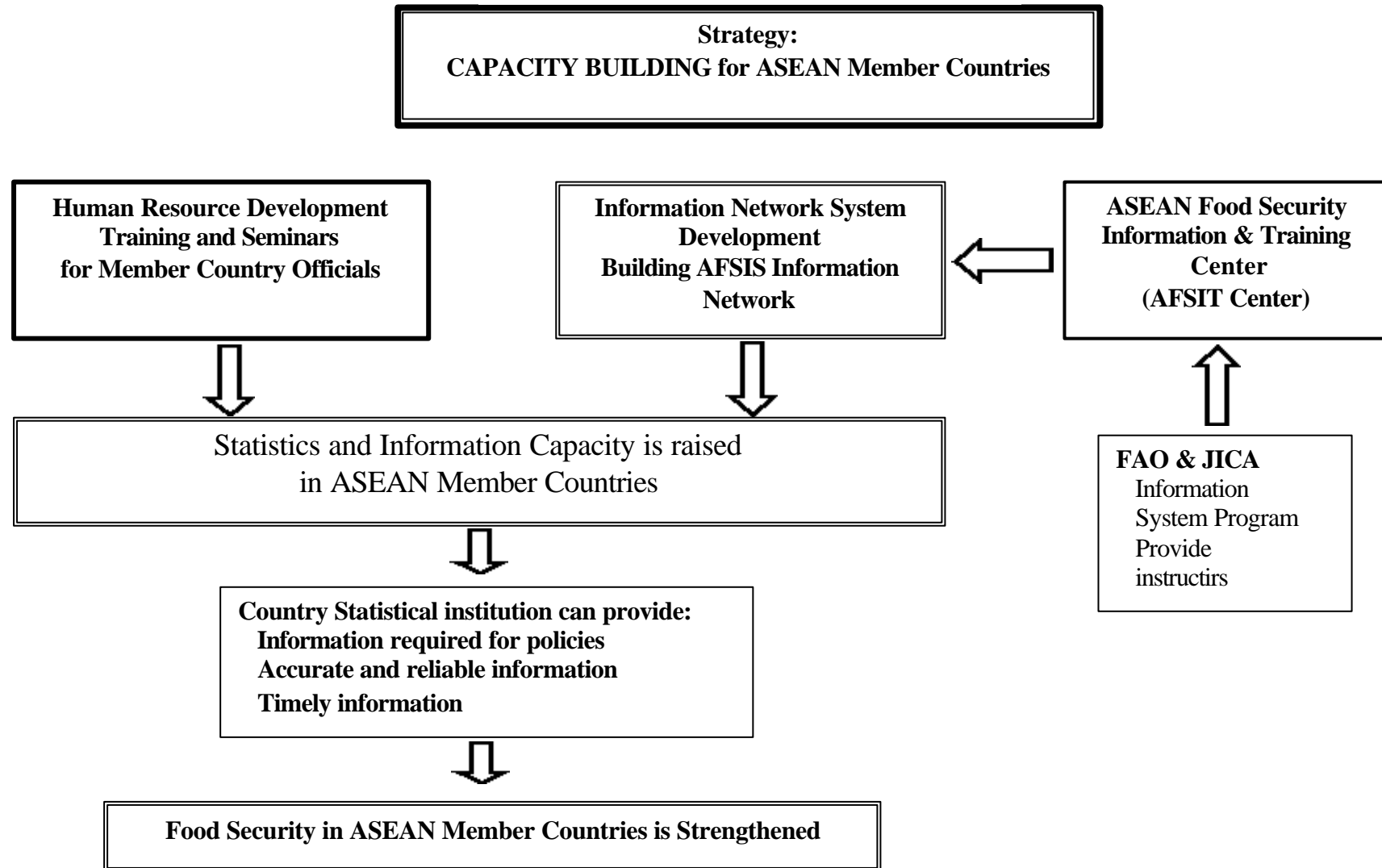
B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

B.1 Project Concept, Strategy and Approaches

The Project intends to build up a system called *AFSIS*. The AFSIS will be a combined human resource development and information network system, which together will support the food security policies and programs in ASEAN countries in terms of statistics and information. (See *Chart 1* for the overall concept and strategy of the AFSIS Project.)

Chart 1

OVERALL CONCEPT of AFSIS Project



The strategy of the AFSIS Project is to contribute to the *improvement of institutional capacities of national agencies for agricultural statistics and information*. Rather than immediately seeking food security information from the start, the Project will first endeavor to upgrade the capacity of the statistical agencies. To the extent that the Project is successful in this endeavor, the improved statistical agencies will be capable of supplying the statistics and information required for the planning and implementing agencies of governments and the private sector that are engaged in food marketing and distribution.

Institutional capacity of statistical agencies consists of two major components. One is human resource capacity, i.e. technology, experience and morale of statistical personnel both in the agency headquarters and in regional and/or local offices. The other is infrastructural capacity, i.e. facilities and equipment for data collection, processing and dissemination. The most important of these at present is the information network system for data processing, reporting and communication. The Project will work with both these components

Therefore, the Project has two main activities, which are (1) *human resource development* and (2) *information network system development*.

(1) Human Resource Development

The Project aims to develop human resources, i.e. to raise the capacity of statistical personnel in member countries in the food and agricultural sector. The objectives of human resource development are to improve routine data collection skills in respect of agricultural statistics and information, to enhance utilization of information network systems, and to strengthen data analyzing skills. (See *Chart 2* for objectives and approaches of human resource development.)

The Project will use a combination of many modalities such as regional seminars and training, and national seminars.

In order to facilitate the implementation of these training and seminar programs, necessary hardware, software and other support system will be provided. The Project will make use of more statistically advanced expertise from other relevant projects of international organizations, recruitment of national and international consultants, etc.

The regional level training is divided into two levels, *basic technology* and *additional technology*. (See *Chart 3* for examples of the training curriculum.)

As the national component of human resource development under the Project, member countries will organize National Seminars in order to discuss important problems and issues related to agricultural statistics and information. This component will consider ways and means of further developing national statistical systems to be more functional in providing data to policy planning and implementing agencies.

Human Resource Development

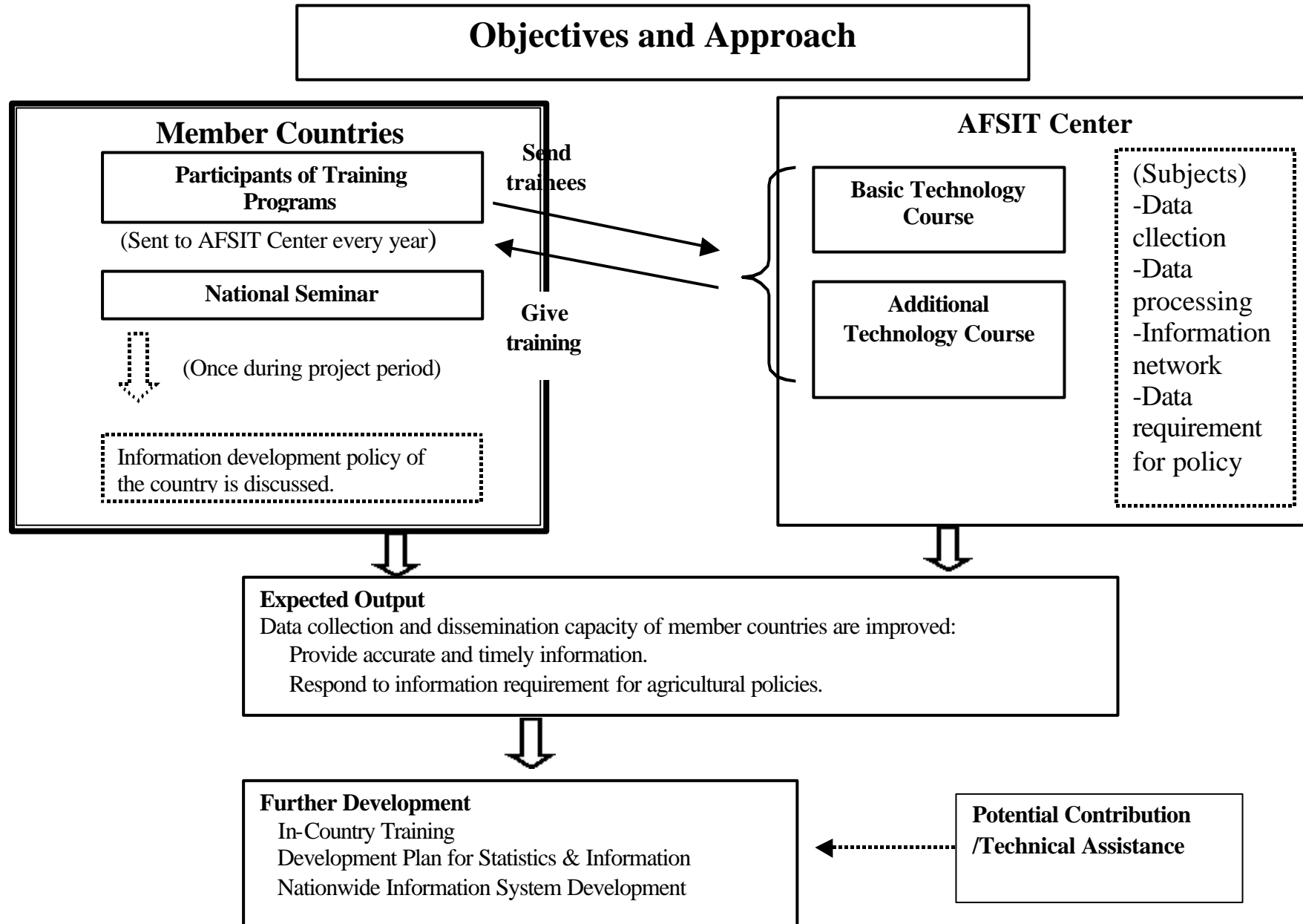
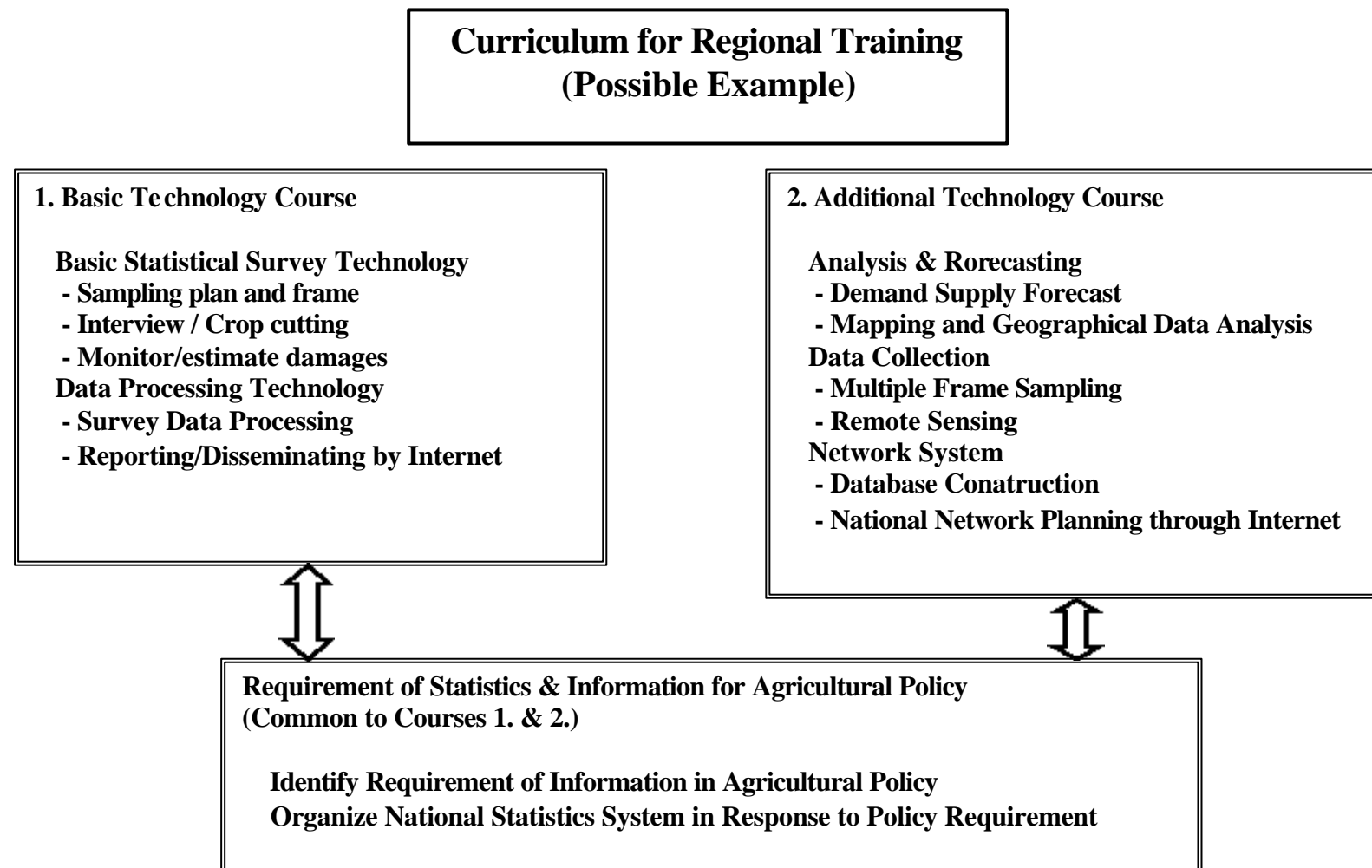


Chart 3

Human Resource Development



Note: Training Programs will be discussed and finalized by the AFSIS Focal Point Meeting.

(2) Information Network System Development

ways and means of further developing national statistical systems to be more functional in providing data to policy planning and implementing agencies.

(2) Information Network System Development

The Project will develop an AFSIS Information Network System (AFSIS Net). Through AFSIS Net, statistical organizations for the agricultural sectors of member countries will be able to acquire domestic and international data, as required by governments' food and agricultural policy planning / implementing agencies. (See *Chart 4* for information network system.)

The AFSIS Net consists of National Networks and a Regional Network. At the regional level, the Project will establish an information network system on food security covering regional center and member countries, composed of data sets and Internet WebPages. (See *Chart 5* for schematic presentation of Regional Network.)

Building the Regional Network will be conducted in collaboration with participating member countries and an FAO project.¹

As well as the AFSIS Net at the regional level, each member country will establish its own information network system to manage data/information collecting. Because the input of such information is expected to be large, however, the Project cannot complete the entire national level networks. Instead, the Project will conduct small-scale pilot tests in each member country. The pilot models may differ according to the administrative structure of the statistical institutions, communication situations, etc, in each country. (See *Chart 6* for a schematic presentation of National Network.)

B.2 Expected Output of Project

The AFSIS Project will develop a system of human resources and information networks at both regional and national levels. It will also build capacity in statistics and information in ASEAN member countries.

The Project will help statistical personnel in member countries gain the capacity to plan and implement statistical data collection, analyses and dissemination for their agricultural sectors. Statistics organizations in the member countries will exchange data through the AFSIS regional Network, connecting member countries with its regional center. Member countries will formulate small preliminary models for their national network and conduct pilot tests.

¹ Country Web Pages are planned and developed by the FAO Project "Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries"

Information Network System

Chart 4

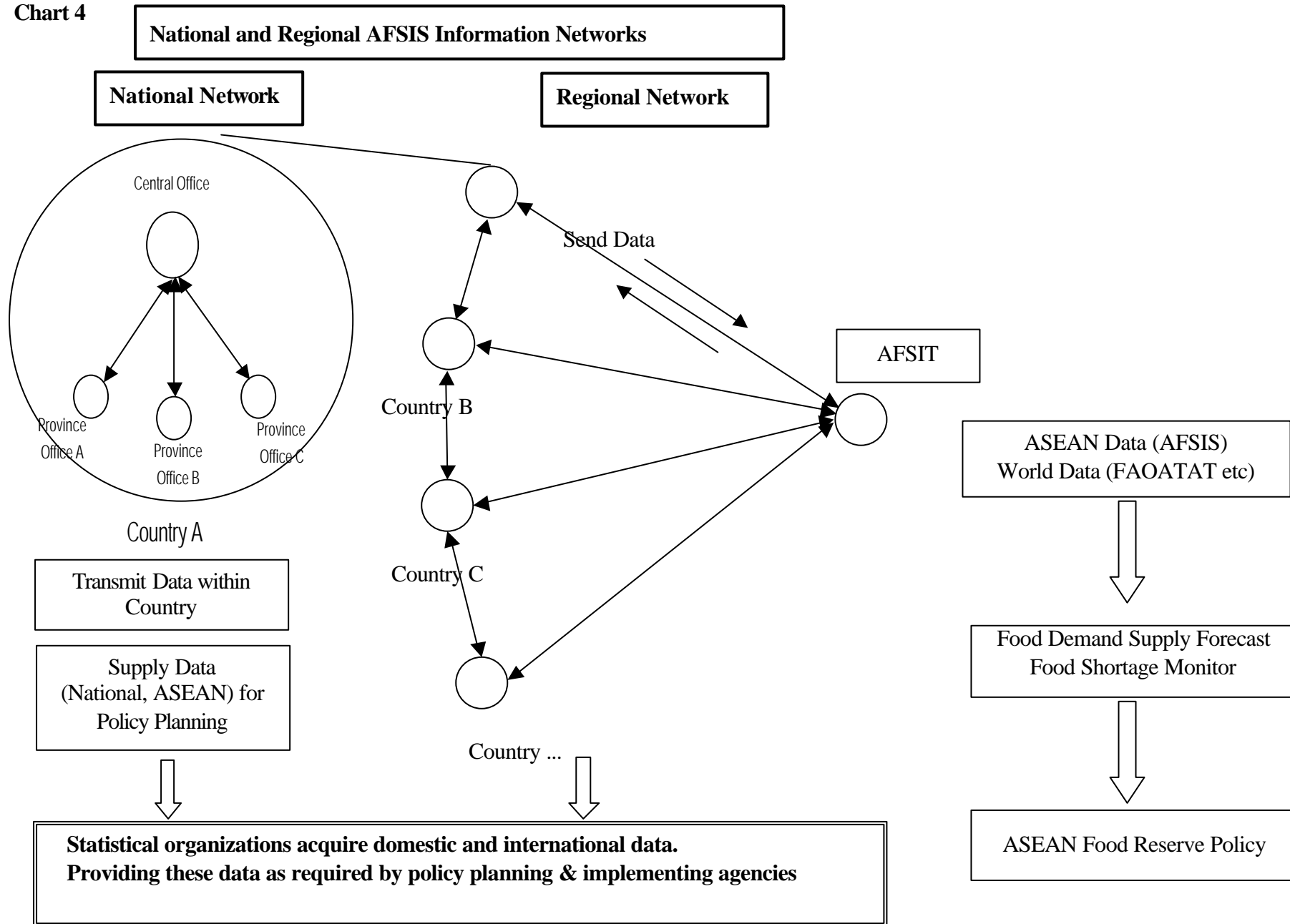


Chart 5 Information System Development

AFSIS Regional Network

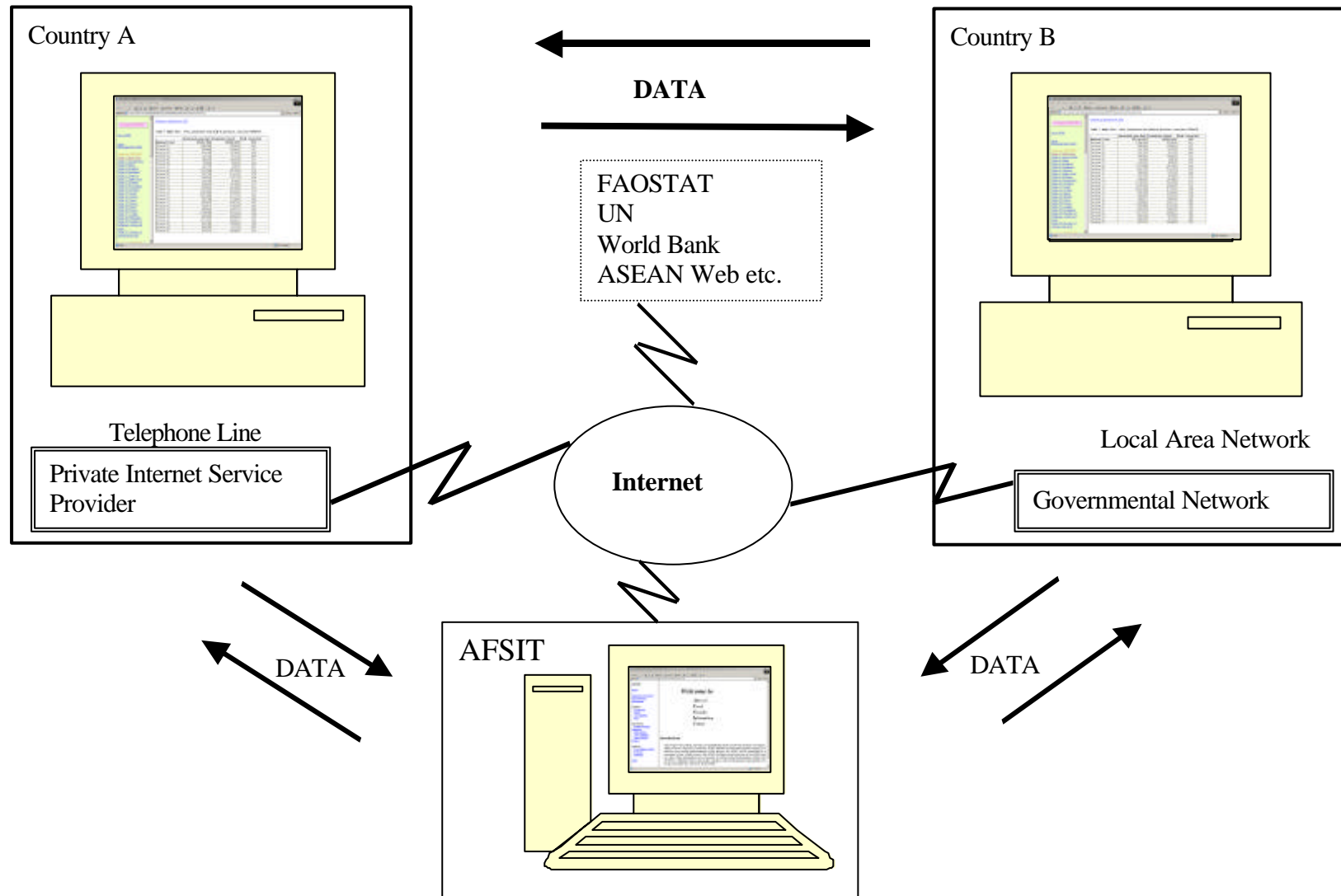
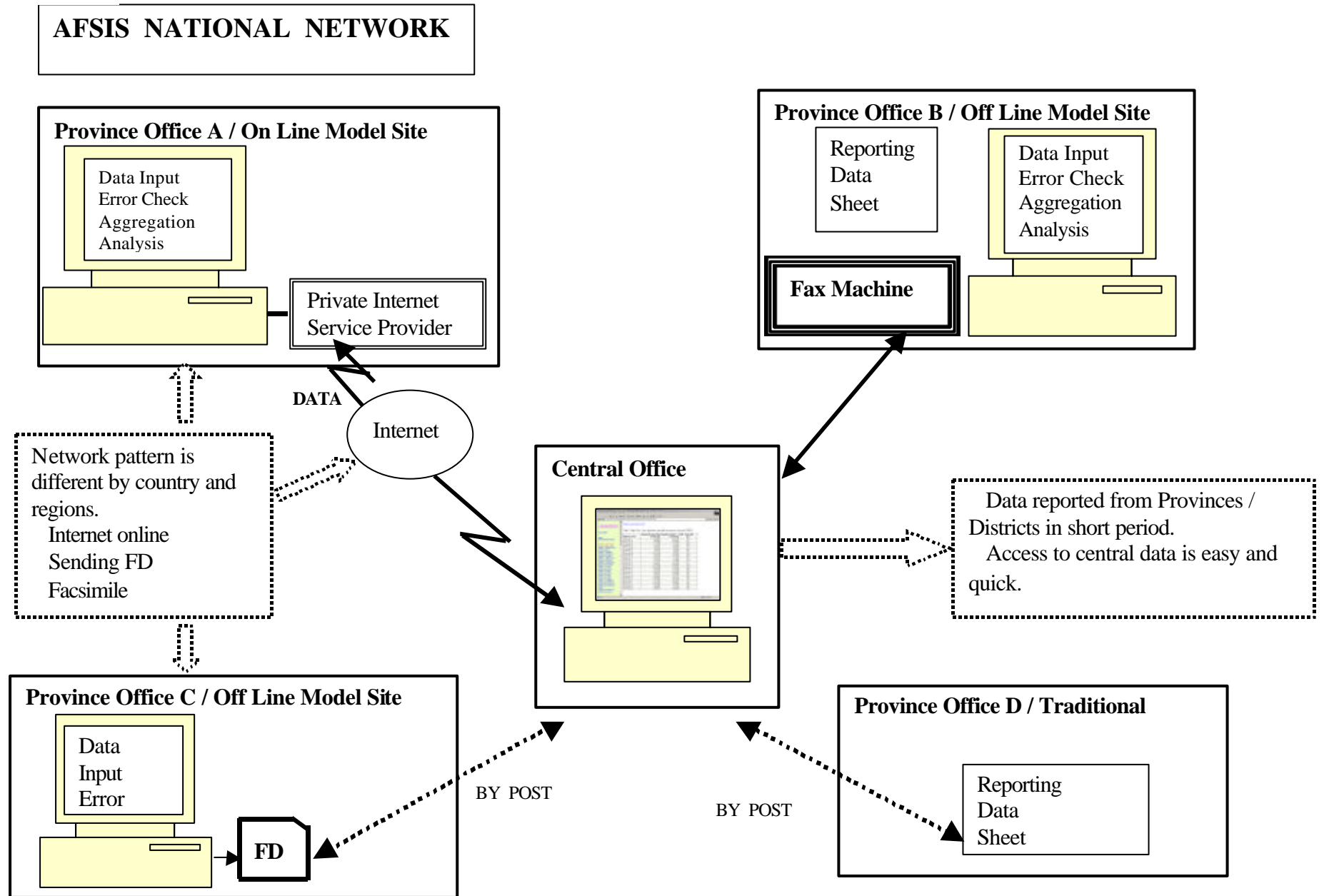


Chart 6 Information System Development



As a result of member countries' statistical development, their statistical institutions will be able to provide information required for policies, and accurate, reliable and timely information.

B.3 Commencement and Duration of the Project

The AFSIS Project commences in the first quarter of the year 2003, and will be implemented for five years from its commencement.

B.4 Institutional Framework of the Project

Every member country will nominate a *Focal Point* for the Project. Each Focal Point will be responsible for managing and/or assisting in carrying out project activities, ensuring cooperation among national personnel/offices concerned, seeking

appropriate assistance when required and promoting liaison and cooperation with other related projects.

The *Focal Point Meeting (FPM)* will be the decision-making mechanism of the Project. The FPM will be attended by representatives of Focal Points. The ASEAN Food Security Information and Training Center, as explained later in this section, will perform the function of secretariat. FPMs will be held at least once a year.

The FPM will discuss, review and decide on the following matters:

- a) Detailed work plans of the Project;
- b) Project activities at the regional and national levels; and
- c) Other important matters relevant to the implementation of the Project.

For smooth and efficient management of the AFSIS Project, an *ASEAN Food Security Information and Training Center (AFSIT Center)* will be established. It will function as a secretariat of AFSIS FPM, as a center for regional training and as a hub of information on food security for participating member countries. It will provide whatever services necessary for project activities of member countries. The AFSIT Center will be located in the premises of the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC), Thailand.

A *Coordination Body*, which will be composed of managers of projects related to food security information, i.e. the AFSIS Project, FAO regional project on food and agricultural data exchange system, and JICA project on agricultural statistics and economic analysis development in Thailand, will be organized to discuss efficient cooperation and coordination of these projects' activities. The objective of the Coordinating Body is to produce the maximum combined output by avoiding duplication among projects concerned. In discussing mutual coordination, the Coordinating Body will be guided by decisions made by decision-making bodies of the individual projects.

C. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

C.1 Basic Objectives

The basic objective of the project is to strengthen food security in ASEAN countries with the aim of raising people's living standards and nutritional status. It aims to do this through the building of institutional and operational capacities for statistical information systems on food and agriculture in member countries, which will be capable of (i) monitoring and providing food security information for planning and policy making, (ii) collecting accurate and timely statistical data on national level, and (iii) sharing food security data within and between countries through an information network system.

C.2 Project Targets

Statistical personnel in member countries, as a result of participating in training and seminars conducted through the Project, will be able to plan and implement statistical data collection, analyses and dissemination for the agricultural sector.

An AFSIS Regional Network will be established, connecting the member countries with each other and with the AFSIT Center. Statistical organizations in the member countries will exchange data through the Network. The member countries will formulate their own small preliminary models for their National Networks and conduct pilot tests.

D. ACTIVITIES

D.1 Human Resource Development (See *Chart 7* for schedule.)

Activity 1.1 Establishment of ASEAN Food Security Information and Training Center

The ASEAN Food Security Information and Training Center (AFSIT Center) is established in the premises of OAE of MOAC. It functions as a center for implementing regional level training programs.

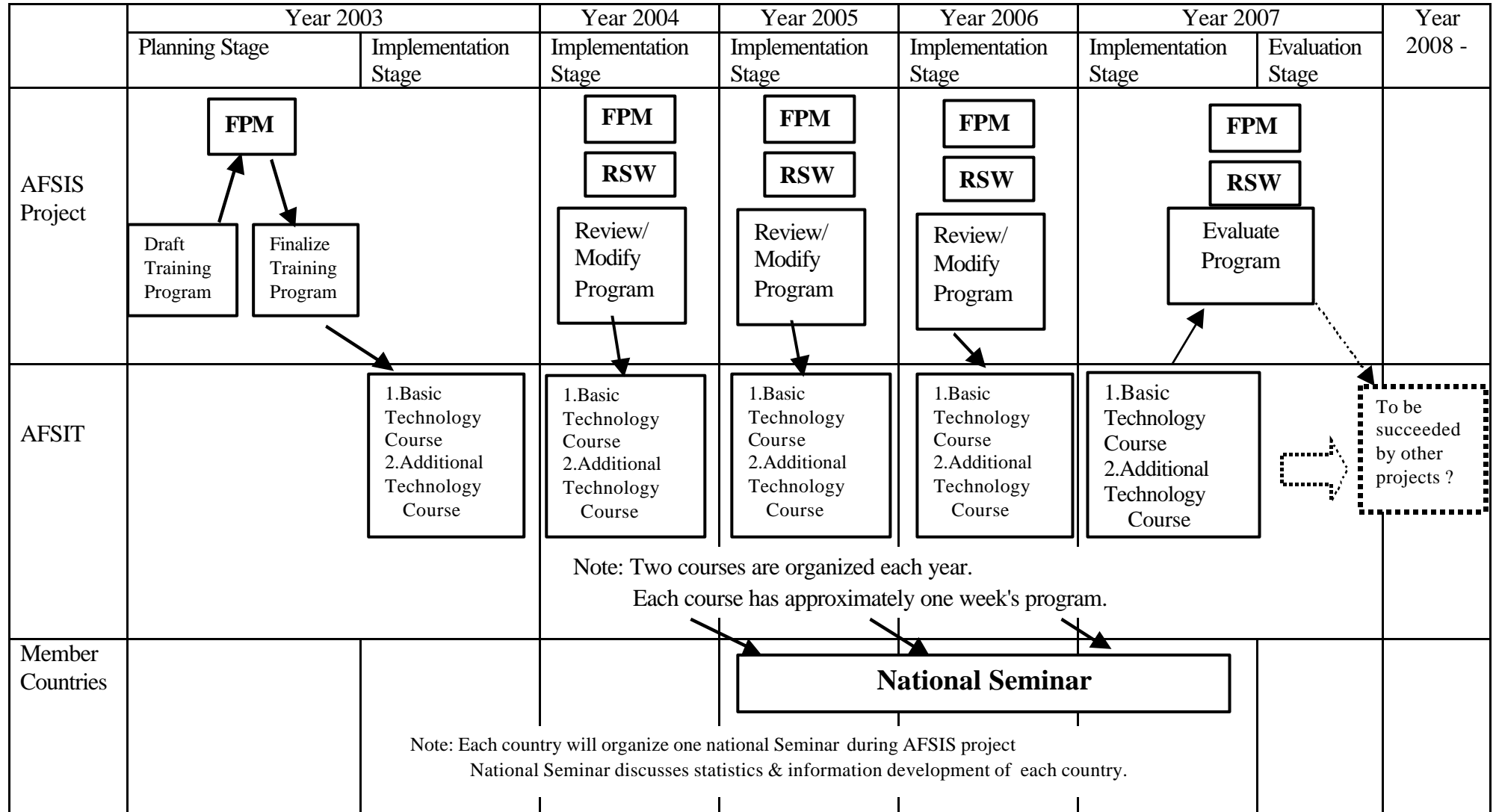
Activity 1.2 Planning of Training Programs and Seminars

AFSIT Center prepares a detailed draft plan for regional training and seminars. FPM considers the draft plan and decides on the plan at its first meeting in the first quarter of 2003.

The plan of training and seminars will be reviewed every year by FPM. Necessary modifications are made following the decision of FPM.

Chart 7

Schedule of Human Resource Development



Notes: FPM = Focal Point Meeting FPM/RSW = Focal Point Meeting and Regional Workshop / Seminar

Activity 1.3 Regional Training

AFSIT Center conducts a regular training program at the regional level. The program consists of *Basic Technology Course* and *Additional Technology Course*. These courses are organized every year. Member countries send their statistical personnel to the training.

The program is formulated so that member countries' personnel working on agricultural statistics and information can be trained or gain knowledge in statistical data collection, analyses and dissemination. Technology, skills and knowledge offered by the program should correspond as much as possible with each country's agricultural situation and statistical development.

AFSIT Center will find trainers, instructors and resource persons for the training from AFSIT Center itself, other national agencies / research institutions from member countries, FAO and other international organizations.

Activity 1.4 National Seminars

Member countries organize *National Seminars* to discuss important problems and issues related to agricultural statistics and information. The Seminars also consider the statistics/information development of the country.

In organizing the National Seminar, member countries accept necessary assistance provided by AFSIT Center, for example resource persons, advisors, etc.

Activity 1.5 Regional Seminars and Workshops

AFSIT Center organizes *Regional Seminars and Workshops*, whenever it considers necessary, on subjects and issues related to statistics and information concerning food and agriculture.

In organizing Seminars and Workshops, AFSIT Center may collaborate with other projects working for food and agricultural statistics in the region and member countries. The Seminars and Workshops are convened, when appropriate, back-to-back with FPM to allow as many persons as possible to participate in them.

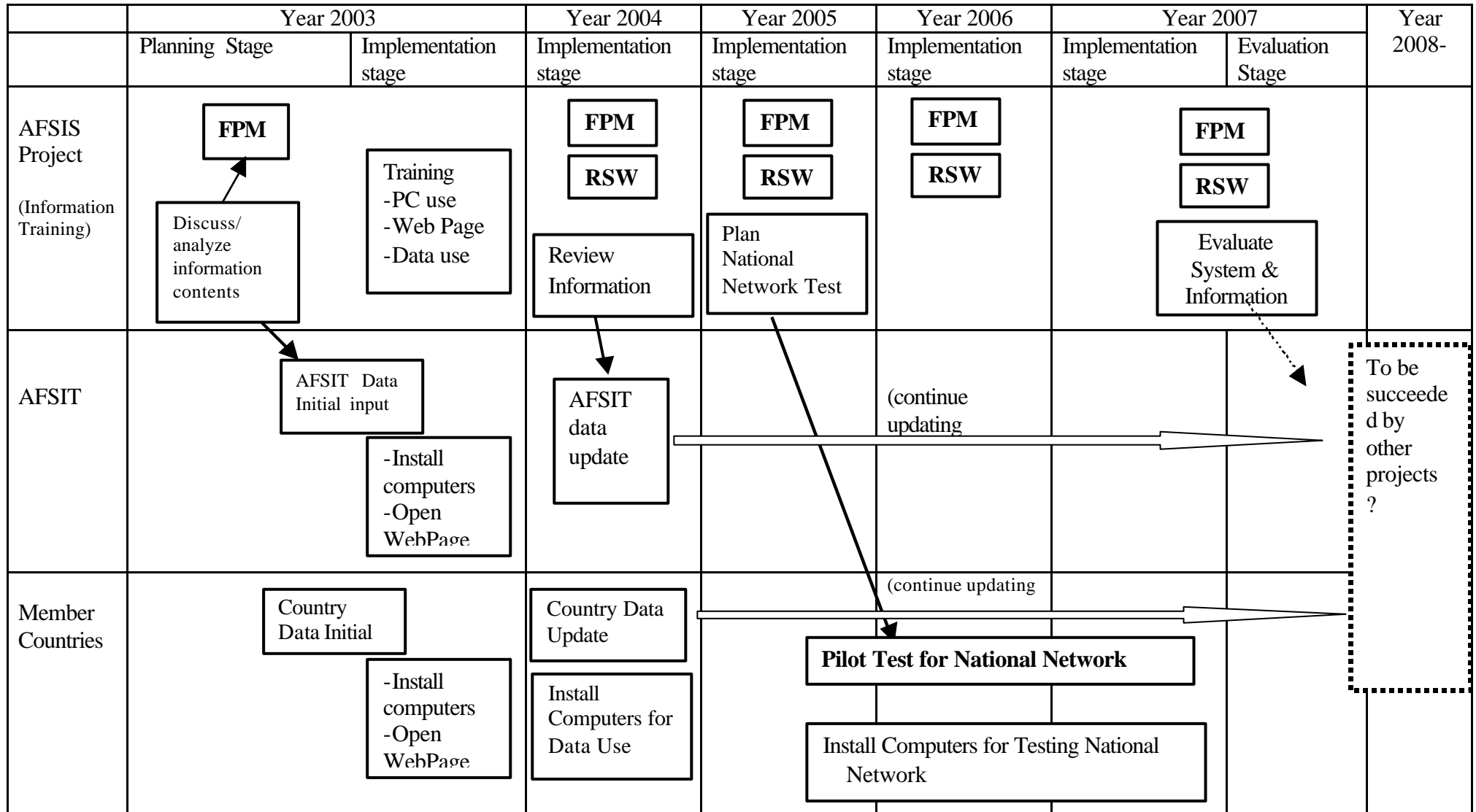
D.2 Information Network System Development (See *Chart 8* for schedule.)

Activity 2.1 Planning of Information Network System

As the AFSIS Project starts, an overall plan for information network development will be formulated. The plan will outline the scope of information to be collected by AFSIS and shared by member countries through AFSIS Net or other means. It will also set out the structure / configuration of AFSIS Net. The First FPM will discuss and finalize the plan.

Chart 8

Schedule of Information Network System Development



Notes: FPM = Focal Point Meeting FPM/RSW = Focal Point Meeting and Regional Workshop / Seminar

Contents of food security information to be included in the AFSIS Net will be reviewed and modified every year by the FPM. If it proves to be necessary, Regional Seminars and Workshops will discuss the detail.

Eventually, AFSIS Net will consist of National Networks and the Regional Network. AFSIS Project will start building the Regional Network first. The National Networks will be pilot-tested on a small scale later during the Project period.

Activity 2.2 Building Regional Network

(1) Information to be Exchanged

Information to be exchanged by the Regional Network consists of Center Information and Country Information. The former will be prepared by AFSIT Center and shown on the “AFSIT Web Page”. The latter is prepared by the member countries and posted on “Country Web Pages”.

(2) Install Network: Hardware, Software and Data

Software for the AFSIS Web Pages for AFSIT Center and Countries is designed and programmed by an FAO project¹. Customization to fit country situations will be done by the AFSIS Project. Each member country will upload data to its Web Pages².

Personal computers will be installed in each member country and at AFSIT Center. Later on, additional computers will be installed for data use and analysis. Member countries will open Country Web Pages, either using existing Web Sites in appropriate government offices or by contracting with an Internet provider.

Activity 2.3 Data Exchange and Utilization through the Network

Each member country will acquire statistical data from AFSIT Center and other member countries through AFSIS Net. Member countries will analyze the data and provide the results to policy planning / implementing agencies. They will also provide country data to other countries' users by uploading to their Country Web Pages. AFSIT Center will undertake its own data / information collecting activities. Data collected by AFSIT Center will be provided through the AFSIT Web Pages. (See *Chart 9* for possible contents of AFSIS Net information.)

AFSIT Center will assist member countries by providing necessary technical guidance and organizing seminars and workshops on information system management and data utilization³.

¹ Project “Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries” GCP RAS JPN

² Costs of initial data input will be supported by the AFSIS Project

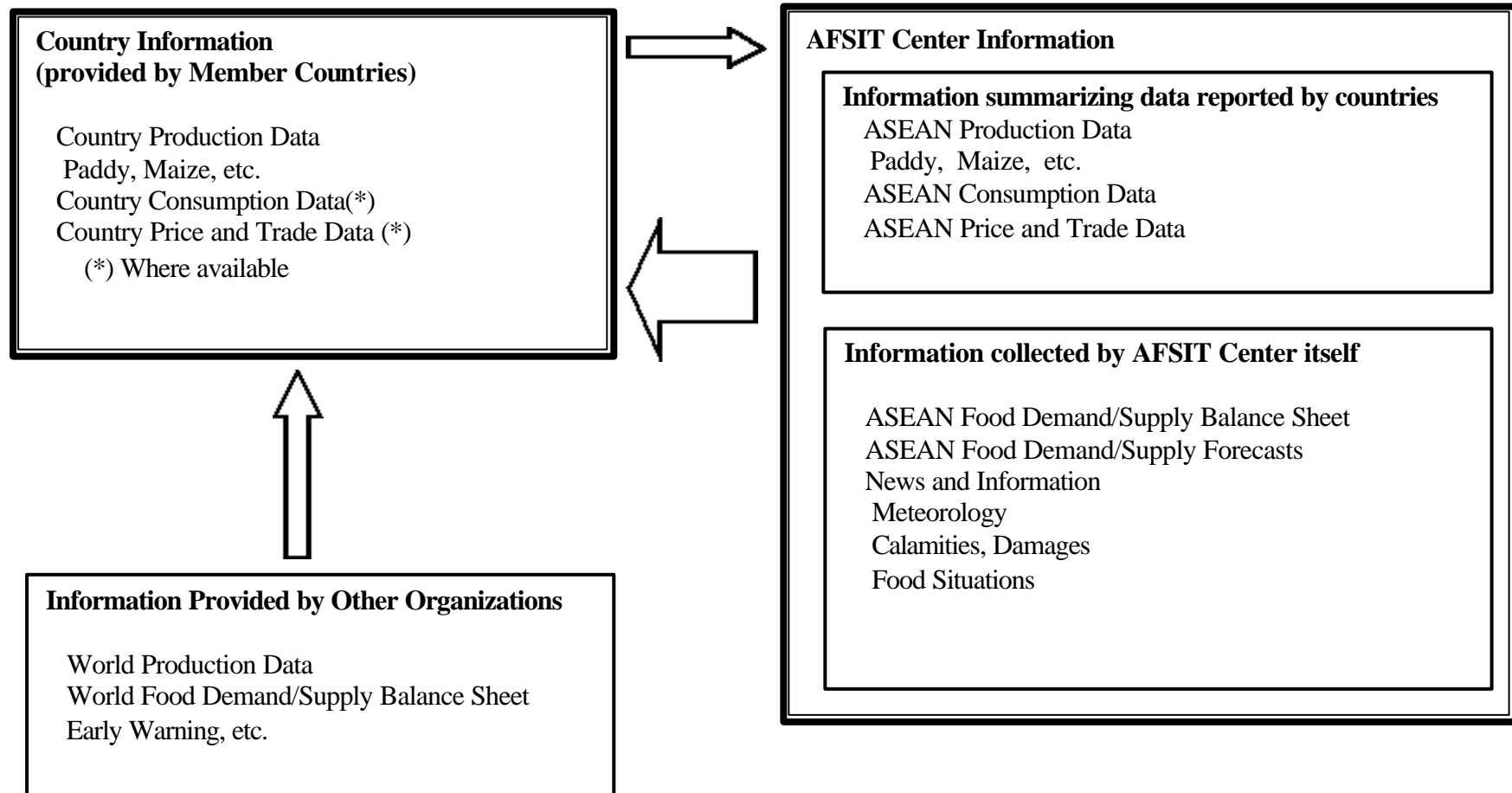
³ FAO Project on Regional Data Exchange System assists AFSIT Center and member countries in the network management

Activity 2.4 Pilot Testing of National Networks

Each member countries will conduct a small-scale pilot testing of its National Network. For this purpose, additional computer hardware will be installed in member countries. Detailed testing plans will be formulaed in the later stage of the Project.

Chart 9

Possible Contents of AFSIS Net Information



Note: Contents of information to be provided to the information system will be discussed in the First Focal Point Meeting.