


Food Balance Sheets (FBS) - Module6

1. Module 6

1.1 Welcome

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)



Food Balance Sheets (FBS)

Lesson 6
Suggested Data Sources and Imputation:
Trade (Imports and Exports)

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Notes:

1.2 Lesson objective

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Lesson objective

In this lesson we will learn about the Food Balance Sheet (FBS) with respect to:

1. Different data sources for trade;
2. Recommended approach for imputation and estimation of trade



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Notes:

1.3 Outline

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Outline

- Feature of trade data
- Official data sources
- Alternative data sources
- Imputation and estimation



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Notes:

1.4 Features of trade data

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Features of trade data

Of all the variables involved in FBS compilation, data for the international trade variables of imports and exports are the most likely to be reported reliably by official sources (usually the national customs office).

At the same time, particularly in trade of agricultural goods, official reported trade flows may not encompass all cross-border transactions. This is because:

1. Food aid transactions are sometimes excluded from official trade flows, yet they could potentially be a source of a significant proportion of a country's food supply.
2. In some countries, agricultural goods are traded outside of formal customs procedures (unrecorded trade).

For these reasons, while official trade data is likely available in most cases, it may need to be supplemented with data from other sources in order to provide more accurate aggregate import and export estimates in a food balance sheet setting.



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Notes:

1.5 Official data sources

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Official data sources

Most of the world's countries collect official data on both imports and exports of goods via customs declarations.

Aggregated data from customs declarations for use in national FBS compilation can typically be accessed directly from whichever national administrative body is charged with reporting on trade data, which may be the national customs office, Ministry of Trade, or National Statistics Office.

Aside from customs declarations, country-level FBS compilers may wish to consult additional official administrative records in the case that potential issues with official customs data are identified. Other sources that can be consulted include shipping manifests, ship registers, port administration reports, or enterprise surveys.



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Notes:

1.6 Official data sources

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Official data sources

In some cases, countries also produce official data estimating otherwise unrecorded trade flows. Uganda, for example, annually conducts an "Informal Cross Border Trade (ICBT)" survey to collect information about the scope of these trade flows. The country's 2014 survey suggested that ICBT exports were nearly one-fifth the size of formal exports, and agricultural goods represented almost half of those unreported trade flows.

Cases such as this underscore the importance of monitoring or surveying unrecorded trade flows for statistical purposes for countries where these flows are recognized as occurring. For the purposes of compiling an FBS, it is crucial to combine an estimate of unrecorded trade flows with the official trade data in order to arrive at a more realistic total trade estimate.



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For more information see the Bank of Uganda's ICBT survey website, available at: https://www.bou.or.ug/bou/publications_research/icbt.html.

1.7 Alternative data sources

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Alternative data sources

- 1 International trade database
- 2 "Mirror" data from trading partner
- 3 Unrecorded trade resources
- 4 Food aid data

For FBS compilers who for some reason cannot access national customs data or for compilers who wish to cross-check the data or consult other sources, there are various options.



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1.8 Alternative data sources

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Alternative data sources

- 1 International trade database

There are two sources of international trade database that can be used:

1. Comtrade database : For the majority of the world's countries, official customs data is forwarded to the UN Statistics Division, where it is checked, organized, and published in the UN's signature trade database, Comtrade. Although data from Comtrade are not directly sourced from a national statistical agency, they can still be considered "official data" for the purposes of FBS compilation.
2. FAO dataset: This dataset is elaborated on the basis of Comtrade data. FAO's dataset attempts to account for food aid and unrecorded trade flows, rendering it a more complete dataset for food balance sheet purposes. FAO's dataset contains imputations and estimations, thus it is not entirely an official data source.

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1.9 Alternative data sources

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Alternative data sources

2 "Mirror" data from trading partner

Within the Comtrade and FAO datasets, countries are encouraged to check the trade flows reported by their trading partners—referred to as “mirror” data—in instances where no official trade data is available, or as an additional validation of their own national data. This is partly due to the greater overall reliability of import data. Because countries oftentimes tax imports through tariffs, there is a tendency for import data to be more closely and accurately monitored.

As most exports are not taxed, sometimes those trade flows are not adequately captured, even in official data. In those instances, it may make sense for compilers to consult partner data and, if necessary, further investigate the reason behind the discrepancy, or even override their official trade figures. For countries that do not report trade data, consulting trade partner mirror data is necessary to formulate a detailed picture of a country’s agricultural trading pattern.

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1.10 Alternative data sources

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Alternative data sources

3 Unrecorded trade resources

In countries where unrecorded trade is reported to be substantial, compilers should at least attempt to quantify those values. Some data sources are available for certain regions of the world that could be helpful in this process. For example, the FEWS NET network produces periodic cross-border trade reports for both East and Southern Africa. These reports typically estimate quantities of cross-border trade, by commodity, and they also document the underlying dynamics driving changes in these trade flows.

The Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (known by its French acronym, CILSS, for Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel) also collects data on unrecorded trade flows between eight West African countries for both major cereal grains and livestock. Compilers from countries in that region should consult the CILSS reports on intra-regional agricultural trade in order to ensure the completeness of export and import data for food balance sheet purposes.

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FEWS NET’s Markets & Trade portal, at: <https://www.fews.net/sectors/markets-trade>.

CILSS website, available at: <http://www.cilss.bf/spip.php?rubrique59>.

1.11 Alternative data sources

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)


Alternative data sources

4 Food aid data

If country-level compilers suspect that food aid shipments are excluded from trade data, efforts should be made to add food aid quantities to commercial quantities to arrive at an estimate of total trade for FBS compilation purposes.

Compilers should be aware, however, that there has been a dramatic shift in the way that food aid is delivered to countries over the past decade—where donor countries previously gave physical quantities of food, now they are much more likely to donate money, either for local procurement of food aid, or to assist the hungry in purchasing food directly from the market.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is the UN Agency that oversees most deliveries of food aid. At this writing, however, WFP is adjusting the way that it reports food aid shipments. Through 2016, WFP published data on food aid shipments (through calendar year 2014) on their INTERFAIS website. Beginning in 2017, this platform will be sunsetted, and WFP will instead report their food aid shipments through the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI).



WFP
World Food Programme

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The INTERFAIS data is available through this portal: <http://www.wfp.org/fais/>.

The website of IATI is available at: <http://www.aidtransparency.net/>.

1.12 Imputation and estimation

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Imputation and estimation

No methodology is suggested for imputation and estimation of trade data at the country level, as various datasets already exist that should cover the trade data needs of most countries. However, as described above, country-level compilers may wish to adjust official trade data based on informal trade data or on mirror data from trading partners. These options are both detailed in the previous section.

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1.13 Quiz 1

(Multiple Choice, 10 points, 1 attempt permitted)

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Quiz

Q 01

Most of the world's countries collect official data on both imports and exports of goods via customs declarations.

Select one that apply.

☒ True

☐ False

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1.14 Quiz 2

(Multiple Choice, 10 points, 1 attempt permitted)

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Quiz

Q 02

Because countries oftentimes tax imports through tariffs, there is a tendency for import data to be more closely and accurately monitored.

Select one that apply.

☒ True

☐ False

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1.15 Quiz 3

(Multiple Response, 10 points, 2 attempts permitted)

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Quiz

Q 03 Particularly in trade of agricultural goods, official reported trade flows may not encompass all cross-border transactions. This is because:

Select all that apply.

- ☒ Food aid transactions are sometimes excluded from official trade flows, yet they could potentially be a source of a significant proportion of a country's food supply.
- ☐ Suggested imputation method is not properly applied.
- ☒ In some countries, agricultural goods are traded outside of formal customs procedures (unrecorded trade).

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1.16 Quiz 4

(Multiple Response, 10 points, 2 attempts permitted)

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Quiz

Q 04 For FBS compilers who for some reason cannot access national customs data or for compilers who wish to cross-check the data or consult other sources, there are various options for alternative data source:

Select all that apply.

- ☒ International trade database
- ☒ "Mirror" data from trading partner
- ☒ Unrecorded trade resources
- ☒ Food aid data

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Feedback when correct:

1.17 Conclusion


Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)

Conclusion

You have finished lesson 6.

In this lesson, we have discussed:

1. Different data sources for trade component;
2. Recommended approach for imputation and estimation of trade component



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Notes:

1.18 Thank You

Suggested Data Sources and Imputation: Trade (Imports and Exports)



Food Balance Sheets (FBS)

Thank You!

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