



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## Official launch of the CountrySTAT system in Sierra Leone

On 13 February 2014 the national CountrySTAT system of Sierra Leone will be officially launched. The event will be held in the premises of the Bintumani Hotel at 10:00 am. Present at the launching will be the relevant line Ministries and other stakeholder institutions like Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security; Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources; Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Secretariat; Ministry of Health and Sanitation; Ministry of Trade and Industry; Ministry Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs; Ministry of Education; Statistics Sierra Leone and a host of others.

CountrySTAT is a web-based information system that allows gathering and monitoring of national and sub-national food and agriculture data in compliance with international standards. Easily accessible and maintained, it provides a solid framework for an improved accessibility of reliable and timely data, which is essential for implementing better policies and investments in agriculture. The implementation of this system will also help to strengthen the collaboration between statistical institutions, ministries of agriculture and other relevant institutions in the country.

Another feature of CountrySTAT is that it is nationally owned and managed. The National CountrySTAT Secretariat comprising of members from different institutions is responsible for the maintenance and updating of the system. The collected data is standardized according to international standards and is made available to all users in a single access-point. The availability of reliable and timely food and agriculture data constitutes an important asset for an informed policy-making and decision-taking.

The latest report published by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) on the state of the food insecurity in the world noted that approximately 842 million people were undernourished during the period 2011-2013, or around one in eight people. The vast majority of hungry people – 827 million – live in developing regions, where the prevalence of undernourishment is now estimated at 14.3 percent.

The official launch of CountrySTAT will create an opportunity for the policy-makers, government officials, development partners and other participants to get acquainted with the value-added of the system and to learn how it can be used to improve data quality and to support the policy making process.

More information about CountrySTAT – Sierra Leone is available at the following link:

<http://www.countrystat.org/home.aspx?c=SLE>



# Irish Aid

Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

## Irish Aid seeks a committed and dynamic Programme Advisor to manage our Nutrition and Food Security portfolio

Irish Aid is the official development cooperation programme of the Government of Ireland. The Irish Aid programme in Sierra Leone is administered through the Embassy of Ireland in Freetown.

We are currently inviting applications for the position of Programme Advisor, with a focus on Nutrition and Food Security.

### Essential criteria:

- Significant work experience (5 years +) in Nutrition and Food Security
- Bachelor's degree in relevant discipline
- Strong oral and written English skills
- Strong interpersonal skills to collaborate effectively with multiple stakeholders
- Strong communication and facilitation skills
- Ability to work independently, take initiative and use good judgment

### Desirable criteria:

- A post-graduate qualification at Master's level in a field relevant to the Irish Aid strategy priorities
- Experience working for an international or inter-governmental organisation
- Experience in appraisal, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes

Please submit your application outlining how you meet the above criteria. Your application should include a cover letter and curriculum vitae (CV) detailing your education and work experience, and should be submitted to:

**[davida.macauley@dfat.ie](mailto:davida.macauley@dfat.ie)**

OR

**Dauida Macauley  
Embassy of Ireland  
8 St Josephs Ave,  
Off Spur Road,  
Freetown**

Irish Aid is an equal opportunities employer and highly encourages qualified women to apply.

Applications from both Sierra Leonean and non Sierra Leonean candidates are welcome.

Closing date for receipt of applications:

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

# Agriculture Ministry/ FAO launches CountrySTAT

BY ABUBAKARR KARGBO

**C**ountrySTAT is a web-based system for food and agriculture statistics at the regional, national and sub-national levels that provides decision-makers with a one-stop centre for easy access to statistics across thematic areas such as production, prices, trade and consumption.

The Ministry of Agriculture having realized the importance of data in food and nutrition, agriculture and forestry teamed up with the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) to officially launch CountrySTAT in Sierra Leone. The event was held at the Bintumani Hotel, Aberdeen on Thursday 13th February 2014.

The system already has a working Secretariat and technical committee together with a standard website.

CountrySTAT aims to provide quality statistics on food and agriculture and promote evidence based decision making; facilitate informed policy making and contribute to the reduction in hunger and malnutrition; assist Sierra Leone in integrating and organizing a national data to be comparable at the international level; and promote partnerships between various statistical institutions within the country, including Statistics Sierra Leone and other statistical authorities.

"The CountrySTAT will make a significant contribution to Sierra Leone's economy. FAO is committed to the integrated system as it is going to be credible and user friendly," says FAO Country Rep, Dr. Gabriel Rugalema.

CountrySTAT is based on the open-sourced software platform called FENIX. Its main features include browsing and

analysis of data, advanced interactive data download, cross-domain data search by using free-text, and data exchange through web services. The tool enables users to access and manage information and to easily perform data analysis using the web browser.

Hon. Mrs. Marie Jalloh is the Acting Minister of Agriculture and Food Security. She informed the gathering that the data system can help in resource mobilization and distribution, and in planning for development. This, she said can only succeed when there is a high speed quality broadband internet service.

"With CountrySTAT, we can be able to overcome most of the challenges faced in data collection in the food and agriculture sector.

We will continue to support the project to ensure it success," says Francis Brewah of Statistic Sierra Leone.

"CountrySTAT improves national and regional policy decision. It increases transparency and data efficiency and also improves data management and availability to the Agriculture sector," Achin of CountrySTAT in FAO Rome said.

Other speakers include the National Coordinator of CountrySTAT, Mohamed A. Sheriff; and Julia Stone, Country Project Officer CountrySTAT Rome. The event was chaired by the Chief Agriculturist in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Francis A.R. Sankoh.

CountrySTAT plans to expand its scope by including real time and forecast data relevant to agriculture, and will make use of mobile technologies and Graphic Information System for data collection.



*Standard Times Monday Feb. 17, 2014*