

COUNTRYSTAT : A TOOL FOR AGRICULTURAL PLANERS AND RESEARCHERS

countrySTAT as a web based platform for Easy access to quality statistics on food and agriculture at sub-national, national and regional levels, has many facilities to give to agriculture planers and researchers. In Rwanda CountrySTAT Rwanda started in 2008 followed by official launch in 2009.

Still it's use should be sensitized to the end users who mostly need statistical data for a better planning. Reason why on 20th of June in the premises of the hotel Lemigo in Kigali a CountrySTAT National Sensitization and Users Seminar took place. The seminar was attended by around 60 participants from the Ministries, representatives of the Technical and Financial Partners, Secretaries and General Managers of various departments, members of the Technical Working Group CountrySTAT-Rwanda and the media.

This seminar has been organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The objective of the seminar was to sensitize national authorities and development partners on the importance of CountrySTAT so that they support and actively participate in its consolidation and sustainability, as well as to popularize CountrySTAT with the major users of statistical data.

Dr Théogène Rutagwenda Director General of Animal Resources from the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resource, Mrs Beatrice Uwumukiza, Director General for Agriculture and Livestock Inspection and Certification Services, the FAO Representative Mr Maiga and Mr Paul N'Goma Kimbatsa, CountrySTAT Team Leader from FAO HQs, opened the ceremony and greeted the many participants.

Dr Rutagwenda in his Opening speech, stressed the great importance of statistical information and the capacity-building and the important role of CountrySTAT in providing evidence-based decision making.



Dr Rutagwenda Theogene (Second left) officially launching the seminar

FAO Representative, Mr Maiga emphasised that FAO is committed to the development and implementation of integrated systems of data and metadata on food and agriculture, because reliable statistical data of good quality can aid the greater efficiency in development politics.

CountrySTAT, designed as a unique window of information on food and agriculture, is easily accessible on the Web, and not only enables the centralization, organization, standardization and harmonization of data from different sources, at national and sub national level, and integrates them in a common location, but moreover support evidence-based decision making and facilitate informed policy making and monitoring.

CountrySTAT also contributes to the improvement of data quality according to international standards to ensure their comparability and accessibility, allows to simplify and speed the process, from the data collection to its dissemination, emphasizes the reinforcement of national capacities and ownership of the system towards assuring long-term sustainability, and promotes partnership between different statistical agencies at the country level, including the National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture and other institutions, as well as promotes the exchange of data within countries, between countries and between FAO and countries.

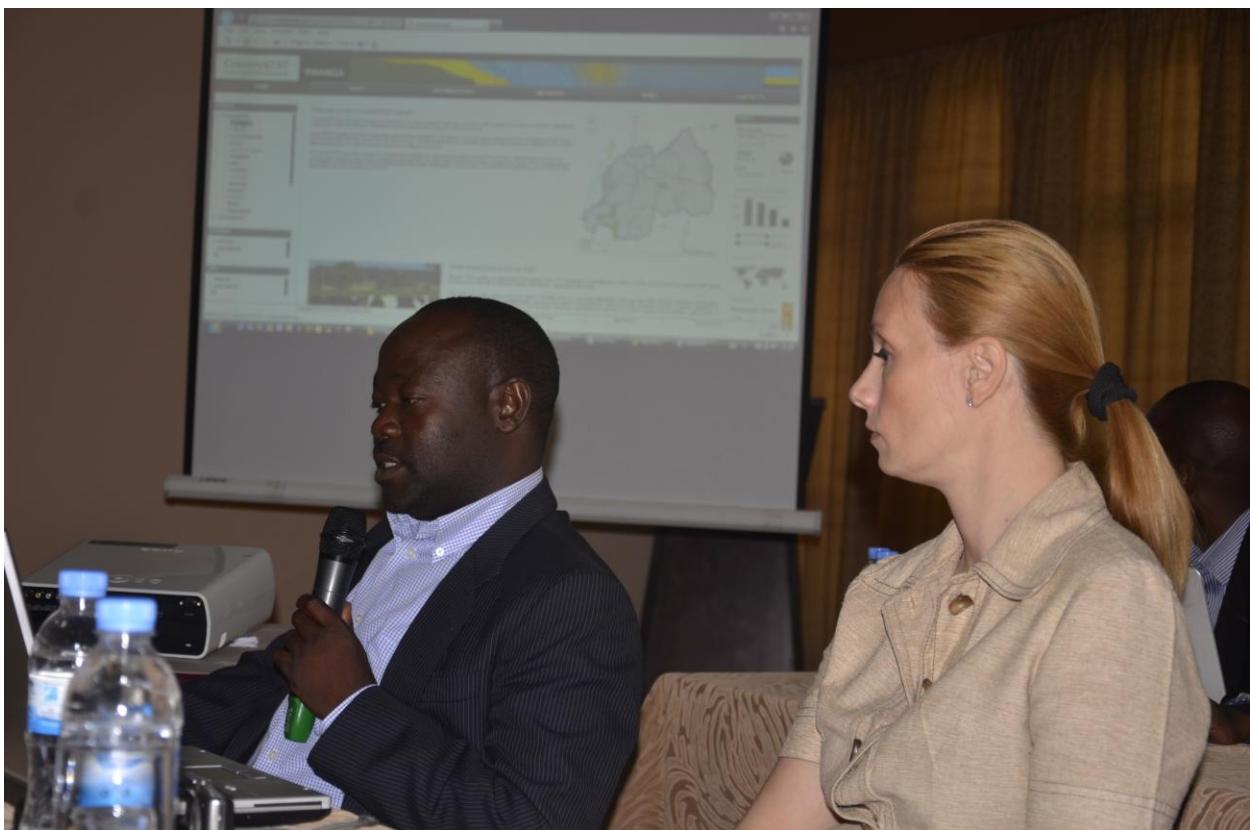
On the closure ceremony, the FAO Representative congratulated the Government of Rwanda, and particularly the Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Ms Agnes Matilda Kalibata, for its emphasis and commitment to food and agricultural statistics, and

the hard work and dedication of the Department towards making CountrySTAT Rwanda a public system.

Mr Paul N'Goma Kimbatsa made the presentation of FAOSTAT, that provides time-series and cross sectional data relating to food and agriculture for over 200 countries, and its integration with CountrySTAT.

Ms Irene Cukic, CountrySTAT Country Coordination Officer presented an overview of the integrated system of CountrySTAT.

Mr Jean-Marie Vianney Nyabyenda, National Coordinator, presented Rwanda Integrated System and highlights on the progress of CountrySTAT project,



Mr Jean-Marie Vianney Nyabyenda the country coordinator giving his speech

CountrySTAT is currently operational in 22 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo and Zambia), and 2 Regional Organizations (UEMOA - The West African Economic and Monetary Union and EAC - East African Community). The system is also implemented in Asia in Bhutan and the Philippines. Recently new projects were started for the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) with a CountrySTAT pilot in Afghanistan.

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (through FAO) financed the implementation of CountrySTAT in 17 Sub-Saharan countries of Africa in 2007. The project has since then attracted numerous partners, including the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), East African Community (EAC), Cooperazione Italiana, WFP, MAFAP, Africa Fertilizers, Africa Livestock, SADC, ECO and CEMAC.



Participants group picture

What is CountrySTAT?

CountrySTAT is a web-based information technology system for food and agriculture statistics at the regional, national and sub national levels. It provides decision-makers with a one stop center for easy access to statistics across thematic areas such as production, prices, trade and consumption. The information available can support data analysis, informed policy-making and monitoring with the goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. CountrySTAT has been developed using cutting-edge open-source technology and is part of the FAOSTAT family, and therefore benefitting from the same technology implemented recently for the new FAOSTAT system, which is known as the FENIX platform. This platform offers users an internet-based and scalable system that provides functionalities to users and other web-applications.