

Current Limitations and Future Vision of CountrySTAT

Information Technology Module

CountrySTAT Consultative Meeting
Casablanca, Morocco 01 – 03 December 2013

Current Strengths

- Reliable and versatile system architecture based on Open Source software (FENIX)
- Availability of very rich software libraries of tools for maps, tables, charts, text, statistical analyses, user interface, etc.
- Links with other FAO and non-FAO systems like FAOSTAT; ADAM; AMIS; HarvestChoice (IFPRI); Production, Supply & Demand (USDA); International Grain Council, (IGC)
- Highly competent development & support team

Current Weaknesses

- Poor involvement of the country focal points in the development of the system; absence of a user/development community
- Lack of knowledge of data management processes and flows at country level → system may not directly respond to country needs
- Lack of data validation and analysis tools; absence of coding system conversion tools (e.g. between FAOSTAT and CPC)
- Limited capacity to automate data exchange with other systems
- Limited geospatial data management capabilities

The New System - Future Vision



User-friendliness
and user-targeted
tools



Improved
functionalities and
performance



Interoperability
and open data
exchange



Better
involvement of
the users
(user community)

The New System - Future Vision

User-targeted tools

- Based on country/region levels need assessments describing data flows, data management practices and data exchange between national and regional systems
- Diversified implementation and use of CountrySTAT/FENIX technologies depending on specific country/region needs
- Integration with existing systems to streamline data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination

The New System - Future Vision

Improved functionalities

- System performance with low-level bandwidth
- High-capacity of customization to rapidly respond to users' changing requirements
- Improved efficiency in data management (e.g. data upload process; conversion of measurement units and classifications)
- Availability of data quality control and analysis tools
- Diversified data collection systems (e.g. online forms; mobile apps)
- Improved geospatial data management and analysis tools

The New System - Future Vision

Interoperability and open data exchange

- Software architecture built on web services implementing interoperable technology frameworks (e.g. SOAP, RESTful)
- Implementation of standard specification for data and metadata exchange (SDMX, DDI, ISO 19139)
- Implementation of standard specification for geospatial data exchange (Open GIS Consortium)
- Supporting Open Data standard models for data interchange on the web such as the Resource Description Framework (RDF), which allows structured data to be mixed and shared across applications

The New System - Future Vision

Building of the user community

- Setup a feedback system and make it available through CountrySTAT and all other FENIX applications
- Open an online communication channel such as Internet Relay Channel (IRC) to keep constant communication with the users and provide online support
- Improve online and offline software documentation using the wiki and PDF documents
- Provide support to volunteer developers from countries and regions and/or other international organizations willing to contribute to the development of the system

Getting ready for the challenge....

<http://fenixapps.fao.org/repository/panel/index.html>