



United Arab Emirates



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS المركز الوطني للإحصاء

**CountrySTAT REGIONAL BASIC ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING**  
**for GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL (GCC) MEMBER STATES**

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 26 - 30 January 2014



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**Final Report**

*Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates*

## I. Introduction

With support from the Regular Programme of the FAO Statistics Division (ESS), as well as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), it was possible to hold the CountrySTAT REGIONAL BASIC ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING for GCC MEMBER STATES in Abu Dhabi, UAE from 26 – 30 January 2014. The five-day training workshop was facilitated by experts from FAO headquarters in order to provide training concerning the various aspects of CountrySTAT. The group of trainers were:

- Paul N’GOMA-KIMBATSA (FAO/Rome);
- Fabio GRITA (FAO/Rome);
- Julia STONE (FAO/Rome);
- Yann LAURENT (FAO/Rome).

### Workshop Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were to provide the participants with an introduction to the CountrySTAT Framework, a basic training on the use of the CountrySTAT System, and the use of FAO Concepts and Definitions in when disseminating data online. In particular, the workshop focused on:

- The CountrySTAT institutional framework and coordination of activities within countries
- IT module and the new CountrySTAT system
- Statistics module of CountrySTAT
- Presentation of the communication strategy for CountrySTAT

The workshop provided a platform for the participants to have a hands-on experience in the use of the system, as well as make recommendations to further promote the use and visibility of CountrySTAT within the GCC region and member states.

## II. Key Activities

### CountrySTAT Regional Basic Administrator Training

The authors of this report worked as a team to facilitate plenary sessions, practical exercises and presentations on the four pillars of CountrySTAT (Country Coordination, Statistics, IT, and Communications).

The CountrySTAT Team was met with a warm welcome by the Director General of the UAE NBS, Mr Rashed Khamis Suwaidi, before starting the official opening. They were introduced to Mr Khamis Abdelrahman Hussein Raddad, Director of the Agriculture and Environment Statistical Department. Mr Sirelkhatim Mohamed, Investment Officer from the FAO Sub-regional Office for the GCC States and Yemen also attended to the opening to represent FAO.

The opening ceremony started with an introduction of all participants. The General Director of the NBS gave a speech that welcomed all individuals in attendance, and highlighted the importance of agriculture statistics. He discussed the main activities of the NBS related to agriculture statistics, and highlighted the way in which CountrySTAT would be beneficial to the UAE. Mr Sirelkhatim Mohamed, who represented FAO, made a speech highlighting the importance FAO gives to statistical capacity development and the importance to CountrySTAT at the level of member countries. It is FAO’s desire that this training would reinforce regional cooperation through this training on the CountrySTAT system. The Director of the Agriculture and Environmental Statistics Department gave a speech highlighting the importance of this workshop and noted that it is the beginning of a fruitful collaboration between the FAO and the UAE NBS.

The main objective of the regional training was to present the CountrySTAT system to the participants and provide a good foundation on the processes related to standardizing, harmonizing and uploading data to the CountrySTAT System.

Presentations were made in plenary on the following:

- Training objectives
- Online Presentation of FAOSTAT, CountrySTAT, AMIS, and the new prototype for CountrySTAT and RegionSTAT
- Presentation of CountrySTAT Mobile Data Collection
- Presentation on E-Learning Module on Statistics
- Presentation from the UAE NBS on Coordination and Collaboration with the sectoral statistical activities
- Presentation on the CountrySTAT Framework
- Presentation on the Institutional Framework and Key National Structures of CountrySTAT
- Presentation on Communications and Raising the Visibility of your national CountrySTAT website
- Presentation on CountrySTAT Partnerships
- Statistics Module: FAO Concepts and Definitions, Commodity Classification, Data Harmonization, Table Structure, Strategy Minimum Set of Core Data, Agricultural Censuses and Surveys, Statistical Yearbooks, Food Balance Sheets and Thematic Modules
- IT Module: Presentation on Introduction to CS – Publisher/CountrySTAT Administrative Tools
- Presentation on the Concept Note for the GCC-FAO Partnership in Statistics, and the Next Steps
- Presentation of the workshop report

The presentations were followed by training sessions focusing on the use of the system as related to IT and statistics. During this time the participants were able to familiarize themselves with the CountrySTAT system through practical exercises, get hands-on experience using the various features, and discuss any problems encountered. They had the support of the team in carrying out practical exercises on the analysis of outliers and data harmonization.

The participants provided their feedback on the system and gave many positive suggestions for improvements, adaptation to their regional context, and future developments which are included in the recommendations of this report.

At the close of the workshop participants were presented with certificates of completion for the Basic Administrator Training on CountrySTAT.

### **III. Recommendations**

#### **Recommendations for GCC Member States**

- CountrySTAT should be incorporated in the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics in GCC member states.
- Each country must decide if the CountrySTAT focal institution will be the NBS or the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Countries who require support in areas such as agriculture census, improving data collection methodologies, food balance sheets or other topics, it is important to submit a formal request to the FAO Statistics Division through your local FAO office.

## Recommendations for FAO

- In future trainings where the CountrySTAT team has their first interaction with the country it would be important to ensure managers/decision makers from statistical institutions are in attendance, as well as IT experts.
- Currently the CountrySTAT data tree prioritizes agriculture. It is necessary to make it clear to new users that the system is flexible so as to immediately encourage them to make available other kinds of data from various sectors.
- As agriculture does not make a large contribution to the national income of GCC countries, the system must be able to reflect the sectors that are most important for the region.
- A discussion with the GCC on existing systems is necessary as there are a number of databases that exist in GCC member states for a number of different sectors. To ensure the next steps are beneficial to all it is important to consider the work already done and it is necessary to discuss this further with IT experts and statisticians at the national and regional levels. This will be an important point for data exchange and data sharing within the region.
- The website must be flexible so that users can have a site that is in Arabic and English. All technical documentation and training materials should also be in Arabic, and there should be at least one trainer as part of the team who speaks Arabic.
- CountrySTAT must provide the possibility to use advanced technologies for the following:
  - Online forms to upload/update data instead of uploading Excel files. Users should be able to directly enter/update the data online without concern for uploading.
  - Validation is necessary so that users can receive warnings when entering data if the values entered appear to be outliers in relation to other figures for the time series.
- In the CountrySTAT IT training module information should be included on the system security features.
- It is recommended to consider a two phased approach in which the first phase will include needs assessments in each country where existing capacity and systems are evaluated against what is provided by the CountrySTAT system. This phase will evaluate the added value of CountrySTAT and will decide whether to move to the implementation phase.
- FAO should initiate contact with the heads of statistical centers as well as the Gulf Statistics Centre which is based in Oman to discuss the future project.
- FAO must send the first draft of the concept note to the GCCSTAT and other high level national authorities without country budgets, but one sub-regional budget.
- When an agreement has been made to move forward with GCCSTAT with FAO assistance it will be important to:
  - To prepare a full project document;
  - Advocacy to the resource partners with support from FAO-SNG in order to mobilize project funds during 2014.

## Annex 1: Agenda

<b>Sunday, 26 January 2014</b>	
<b>08:30 – 09:00</b>	Registration
<b>09:00 – 10:00</b>	Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction of Participants</li> <li>- Welcome remarks from National Bureau of Statistics</li> <li>- Speech by FAO Representative of the United Arab Emirates</li> <li>- Speech by the United Arab Emirates</li> </ul>
<b>10:00 – 10:30</b>	<i>Coffee Break and Photo Souvenir</i>
<b>10:30 – 10:45</b>	Training objectives <i>(Presentation by Paul N’Goma-Kimbatsa, CountrySTAT Team Leader, Statistics Division FAO Rome)</i>
<b>10:45 – 11:30</b>	Online presentation of FAOSTAT, CountrySTAT, AMIS, New Prototype of CountrySTAT and RegionSTAT <i>(Presentation by Fabio GRITA, CountrySTAT IT Officer/ Coordinator FENIX, and Paul N’GOMA KIMBATSA, CountrySTAT Team Leader, Statistics Division FAO-Rome)</i>
<b>11:30 – 11:45</b>	Presentation: CountrySTAT Mobile Data Collection <i>(Presentation by Fabio GRITA CountrySTAT IT Officer/ Coordinator FENIX, Statistics Division FAO-Rome)</i>
<b>11:45 – 12:00</b>	Presentation: CountrySTAT E-Learning <i>(Presentation by Yann LAURENT, CountrySTAT IT Expert, Statistics Division FAO-Rome)</i>
<b>12:00 – 12:15</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>12:15 – 13:00</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<b>13:00 – 13:30</b>	Presentation of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and Coordination / Collaboration with the sectoral statistical activities <i>(Presentation by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), UAE)</i>
<b>13:30 – 13:45</b>	Presentation: CountrySTAT Framework (Overview of CountrySTAT and RegionSTAT system components, software, international standards, Links to Global Strategy, Agricultural Censuses/Surveys, Food Balance Sheets and Statistical Yearbook) <i>(Presentation by Julia STONE, CountrySTAT Country Project Officer, Statistics Division FAO-Rome)</i>
<b>13:45 – 14:15</b>	Institutional Framework, Key National Structures and CountrySTAT Capacity Development <i>(Presentation by Julia STONE, CountrySTAT Country Project Officer, Statistics Division FAO-Rome)</i>
<b>14:15 – 14:45</b>	Communications and Raising the Visibility of your national CountrySTAT website (CountrySTAT Communications Strategy, Importance of Communications, Activities, Methods of Communication) <i>(Presentation by Julia STONE, CountrySTAT Country Project Officer, Statistics Division FAO-Rome)</i>
<b>14:45 – 15:15</b>	CountrySTAT Partnerships - The Way Forward in the GCC-FAO Partnership on Statistics

	(Regional data sharing and harmonization) ( <i>Presentation by Julia STONE, CountrySTAT Country Project Officer, Statistics Division FAO-Rome</i> )
<b>15:15 – 15:30</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>Monday, 27 January 2014</b>	
<b>09:00 – 09:30</b>	Presentation: CountrySTAT Statistics Component (FAOSTAT Concepts and Definitions, Commodity Classification, Data Harmonization) ( <i>Presentation by Paul N’Goma-Kimbatsa, CountrySTAT Team Leader, Statistics Division FAO-Rome</i> )
<b>09:30 – 10:30</b>	Presentation: CountrySTAT Statistics Component (CountrySTAT process, Table Structure, Classification of Commodities) ( <i>Presentation by Yann LAURENT, CountrySTAT IT Expert, Statistics Division FAO-Rome</i> )
<b>10:30 – 10:45</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<b>10:45 – 11:00</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>11:00 – 11:45</b>	Practical Exercise: International Classification
<b>11:45 – 12:15</b>	Presentation: CountrySTAT Statistics Component (Process of creating tables) ( <i>Presentation by Yann LAURENT, CountrySTAT IT Expert, Statistics Division FAO-Rome</i> )
<b>12:15 – 13:00</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<b>13:00 – 14:00</b>	Practical Exercise: Preparation of tables (using CountrySTAT templates for National Core) to input and format data for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Core</li> <li>○ Sub-national</li> <li>○ Other modules</li> </ul>
<b>14:00 – 14:30</b>	Presentation: CountrySTAT Statistics Component (Publishing data and metadata in CountrySTAT) ( <i>Presentation by Yann LAURENT, CountrySTAT IT Expert, Statistics Division FAO-Rome</i> )
<b>14:30 – 15:30</b>	Practical Exercise: Preparation of 3-dimensions table and metadata, publishing data in CountrySTAT
<b>Tuesday, 28 January 2014</b>	
<b>09:00 – 10:30</b>	Practical Exercise: Uploading data and metadata for National Core and Sub-National Domains
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<b>11:00 – 12:15</b>	Practical Exercise: Managing Pages of your CountrySTAT site (Home, About, Key Indicators, Metadata and Contacts)
<b>12:15 – 13:00</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<b>13:00 – 14:00</b>	Practical Exercise: Find errors in the tables
<b>14:00 – 14:30</b>	Presentation: CountrySTAT IT Component (Introduction to CS – Publisher/CountrySTAT Administrative Tools) ( <i>Presentation by Fabio GRITA, CountrySTAT IT Officer/ Coordinator FENIX, Yann LAURENT, CountrySTAT IT Expert, Statistics Division FAO-Rome</i> )

<b>14:30 – 15:15</b>	Presentation of innovations in the CountrySTAT system using the FENIX platform as well as future technological developments (Open data network for sharing agriculture and food security information – a new perspective for global, regional and national level systems, Focus on technologies – service-oriented architecture, web-based geospatial data management tools, semantic search engines and mobile data collection) <i>(Presentation by Fabio GRITA, CountrySTAT IT Officer/ Coordinator FENIX, Statistics Division FAO-Rome)</i>
<b>15:15 – 15:30</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>Wednesday, 29 January 2014</b>	
<b>09:30 – 10:30</b>	Presentation of the Concept Note for the future Project Proposal and Next Steps <i>(Presentation by Paul N’Goma-Kimbatsa, CountrySTAT Team Leader, and Julia STONE, CountrySTAT Country Project Officer, Statistics Division FAO-Rome)</i>
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<b>11:00 – 12:30</b>	<b>Open Discussion</b>
<b>12:30 – 14:30</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<b>14:30 – 17:00</b>	<b>City Tour</b>
<b>Thursday, 30 January 2014</b>	
<b>09:00 – 10:30</b>	Drafting of the main conclusions and recommendations of the Workshop Report
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<b>11:00 – 11:15</b>	Any other business/Evaluation
<b>11:15 – 11:45</b>	Presentation and adoption of the main conclusions and recommendations
<b>11:45 – 12:00</b>	Closing Ceremony
<b>12:00 – 14:00</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<b>14:00 – 17:00</b>	Free Time

Annex 2: Participant List

<b>Participants</b>						
<b>E- Mail</b>	<b>Tel.</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Agency Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Candidate Name</b>	<b>NO</b>
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