CountrySTAT

An Integrated System for National Food and Agriculture Statistics

FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA WORKING GROUP ON AGRICULTURAL AND LIVESTOCK STATISTICS FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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Overview

- Brief introduction to the CountrySTAT/RegionSTAT systems
- Data Sharing in Latin America and the Caribbean
- Country Ownership of IT Technologies and Statistical Systems/Methodologies
- CountrySTAT Framework
- Capacity Development
- FAO's Role

GLOBAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL CHALLENGES REQUIRE **FAST, INFORMED** AND **TARGETED** DECISIONS

WE NEED TO CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY

CountrySTAT was created to serve exactly this purpose!

Introduction to CountrySTAT/RegionSTAT Systems

CountrySTAT is part of the solution to inform national and regional policy decisions by addressing the following challenges:

1. Lack of **data and metadata harmonization**
2. **Poor data dissemination** systems/mechanisms
3. Restrictive or unclear **data policy**
4. **Poor communication** and awareness
5. **Limited interoperability** between systems

Introduction to CountrySTAT/RegionSTAT Systems

CountrySTAT is part of the solution to address such challenges and inform national and regional policy decisions.

CountrySTAT is a web-based framework for national food and agriculture statistics developed with the same open-source platform used for FAOSTAT.

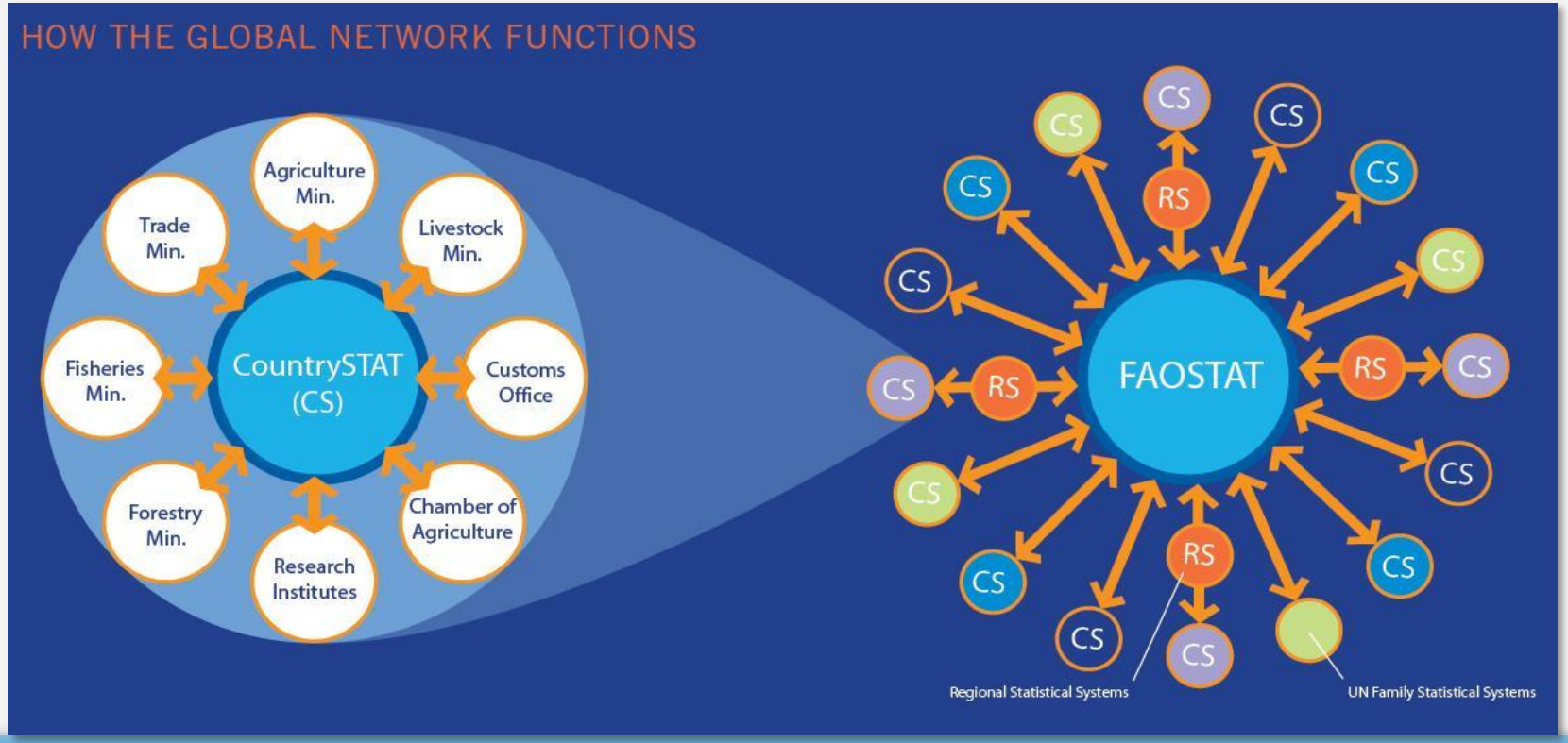
RegionSTAT is the regional version of the CountrySTAT system.

CountrySTAT's **objectives** are:

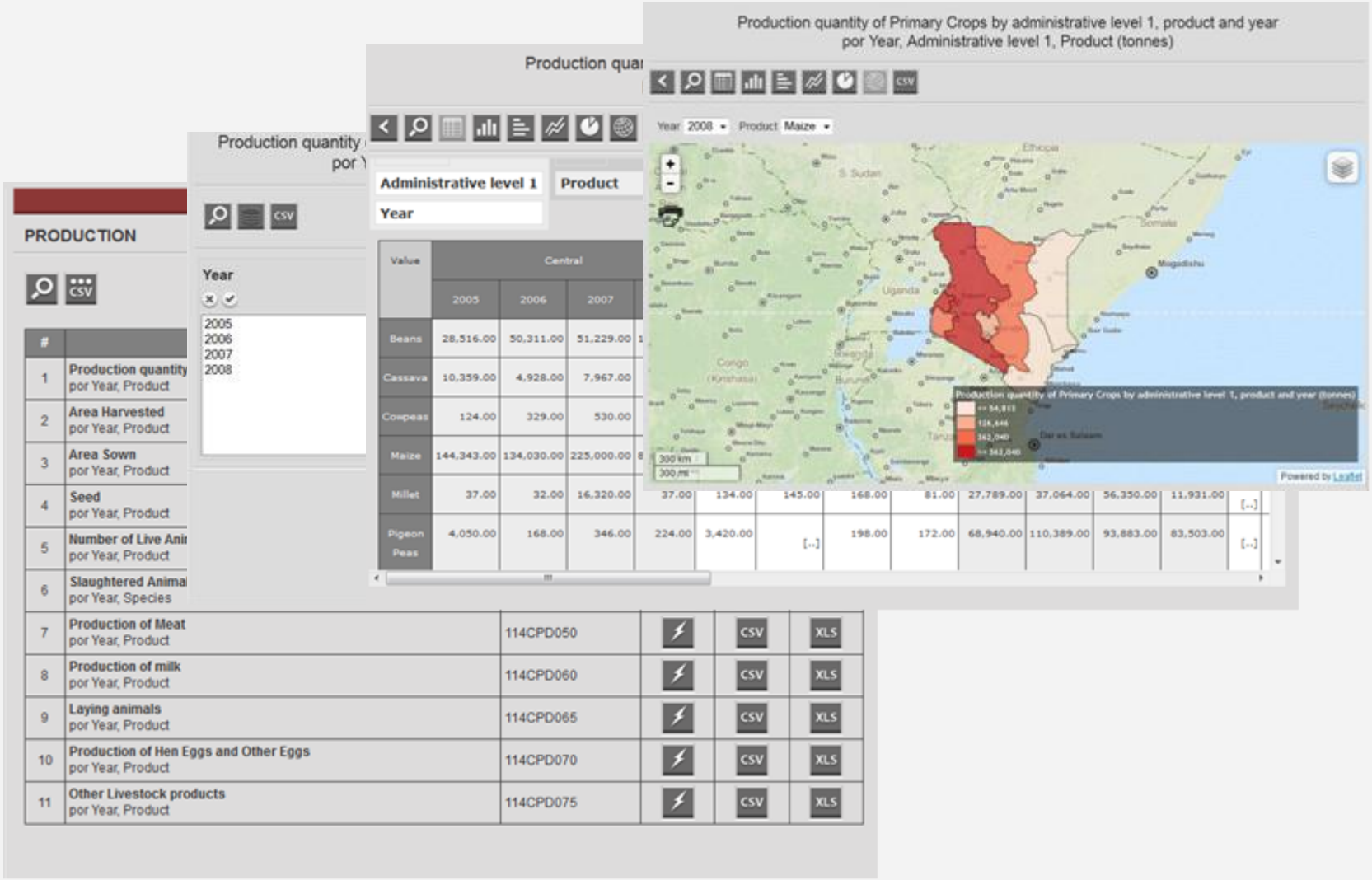
- to improve access to food and agricultural statistics
- reinforce institutional collaboration through Technical Working Groups
- to support evidence-based decision making with official statistics
- to facilitate informed policy making at **regional**, **national** and **sub national** levels.

Relationship with RegionSTAT and FAOSTAT

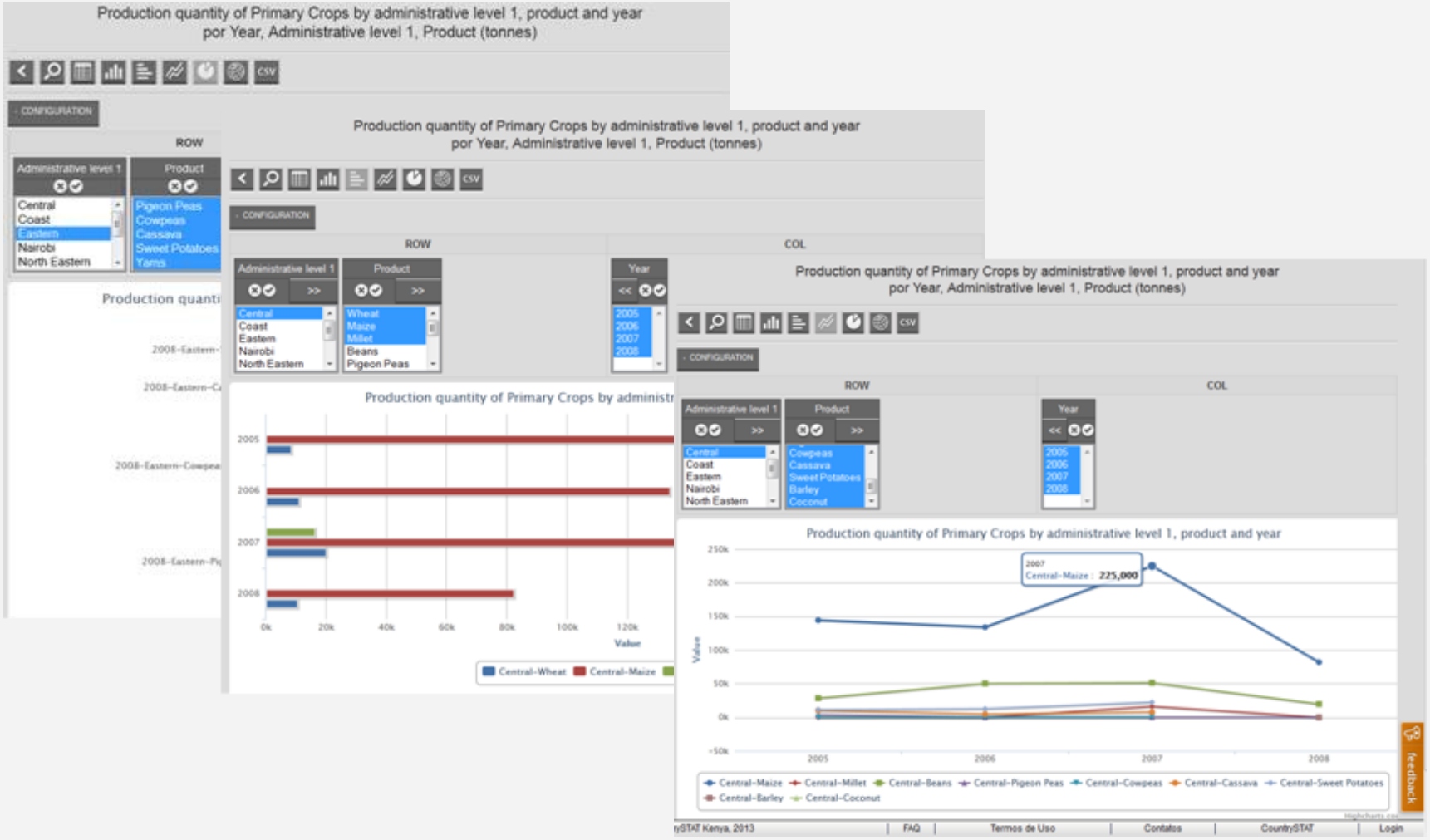
National level	**CountrySTAT**
Regional level	**RegionSTAT**
International level	**FAOSTAT**



CountrySTAT provides users with valuable outputs



CountrySTAT provides charts to support data analysis



CountrySTAT Global Coverage

Africa (22)

- Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia.

Southeast Asia (2)

- Bhutan, Philippines

Central Asia (1)

- Afghanistan

Caribbean (1)

- Haiti

Regional Economic Organizations (2)

- East African Community (EAC)
- Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest-Africaine (UEMOA)

New requests/Pipeline Projects

- Algeria, Chile, Sri Lanka, Paraguay, Pakistan, Iran, ECO, SADC

Data Sharing in Latin America and the Caribbean

A challenge that many data users face worldwide is difficulty in accessing data in a variety of usable formats.

This exact challenge has been taken on by CountrySTAT and the Open Data Movement which has been recently gaining momentum.

“What exactly is the Open Data Concept and how can it benefit me and the people I serve in my work as a statistician?”

- Use technologies that allow institutions to standardize official national and regional statistics
- Benefit from SDMX(**S**tatistical **D**ata and **M**etadata E**x**change) Standard Specification for data exchange
- Increasing transparency, data accessibility, creating an environment for evidence-based policy making and data sharing more efficiently regionally and internationally.
- Catalyse informed policy making at **regional**, **national** and **sub national** levels.

The CountrySTAT Framework

The CountrySTAT Project was designed considering the principles of Open Data. The focus is to strengthen national capacity to improve data management and accessibility of official statistics related to agriculture and food.

There are three pillars: Statistics, Information Technology and Communications.

Statistics

- National statistics
- International standards
- Methodology
- Quality Control

IT

- Data handling using a web-based platform
- Ready-to-use visualization and analysis
- Efficient data exchange

Communications

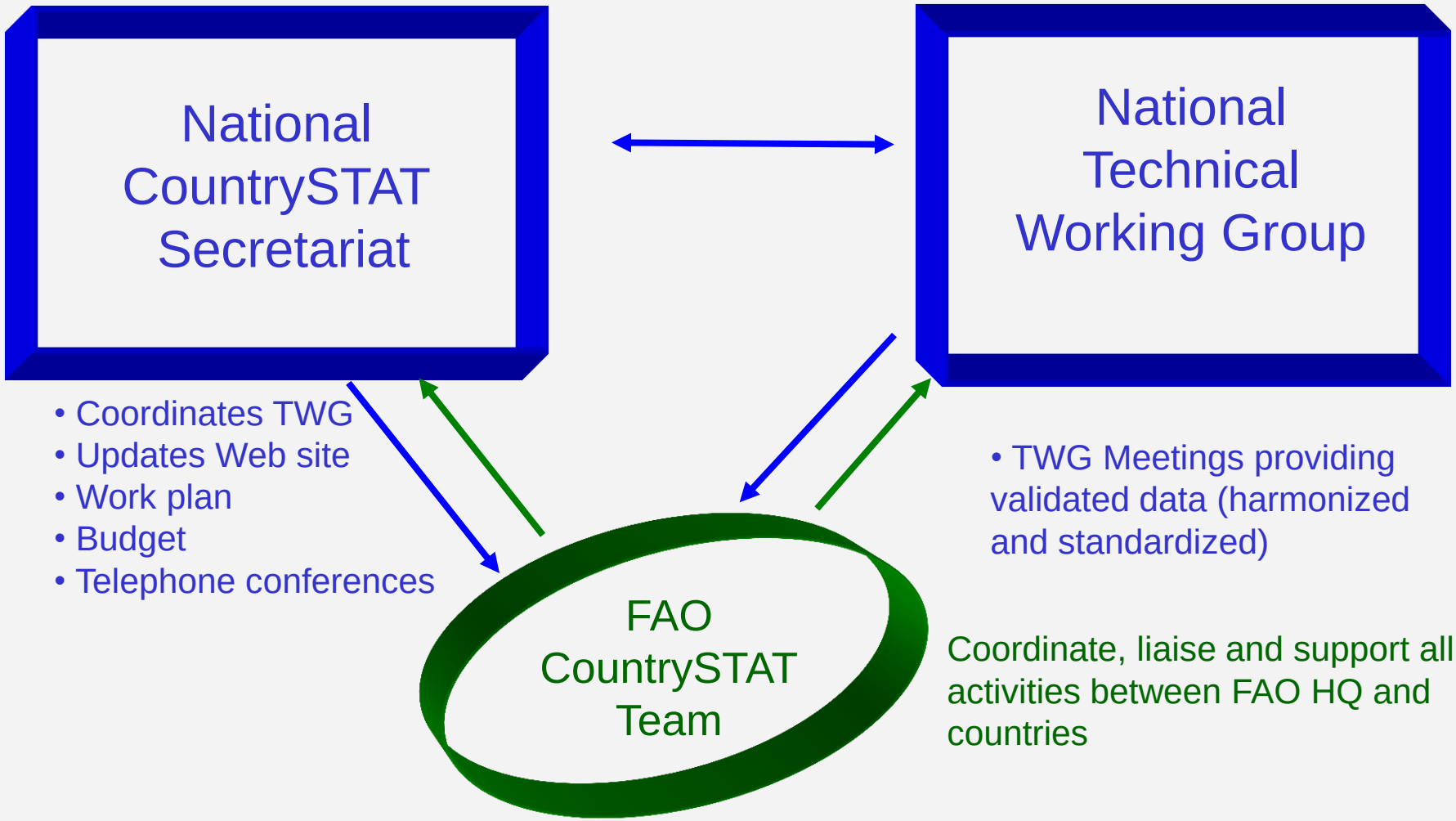
- Awareness at national and international level
- Encourage user participation
- Improved access to information

Country Coordination

- Provide technical support and guidance to countries
- Assist in the organization of relevant national meetings, workshops, and training sessions
- Monitor and support day-to-day progress of activities and implementation.

The CountrySTAT Framework

CountrySTAT's dynamic framework and process for strengthening institutional capacity in countries



The CountrySTAT Framework

It is important to note that the CountrySTAT approach results from a collaborative effort by members of a network of national and international institutions who make *official data available to be uploaded to the system on a regular* basis.

CountrySTAT is therefore the effort of a community rather than the output of one organization. This results in a system that is nationally owned and managed.

Project activities are implemented by 2 national bodies that work together to manage and carry out the activities of the national CountrySTAT system.

- The CountrySTAT National Secretariat
- The CountrySTAT Technical Working Group

The CountrySTAT Framework

The CountrySTAT National Secretariat, under the leadership of a national coordinator, is responsible to oversee, guide and implement all CountrySTAT activities at national and sub-national levels.

The National Secretariat is composed of 5 members coming from the National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Agriculture. The composition of the team should have a balance between statisticians and IT specialists.

The National Secretariat works closely with the FAO Headquarters based team in order to:

- Coordinate all national activities
- Organize the collection of information needed to monitor relevant national policy as well as the national food security situation, and update CountrySTAT accordingly
- Prepare CountrySTAT National Technical Working Group meetings, and ensure their Secretariat;

The CountrySTAT Framework

Catalysing institutional collaboration through National Technical Working Groups (TWG) is an important step toward making official data available.

- CountrySTAT guides national teams to strengthen collaboration between key stakeholders in agriculture to work together to standardize and have consensus on the data to be made publicly available through CountrySTAT which serves as a one-stop centre for the nation's official statistics
- TWGs are the motor that drives data collection, validation, standardization and harmonization of official data uploaded to CountrySTAT

The TWG members provide:

- Official data such as Agricultural Censuses/Surveys and Statistical Yearbooks
- International Standards are applied to ensure global comparability of data
- Metadata to support the reliability and official status of the data

Strengthening National Capacities

Since 2005 over 300 individuals globally have been trained on CountrySTAT (data harmonization, data management, using international standards, and administering their national CountrySTAT system)

CountrySTAT's strong capacity development programme provides national institutions with the knowledge and tools to:

- Harmonize data from different sources
- Administer their national CountrySTAT web site
- Use an Open-source system and tools that can be customized to country needs
- Empower national team with knowledge of how data can be exchanged between national, regional and international systems

FAO's Role

CountrySTAT is part of a number of efforts within FAO to improve data quality, improve statistical data management and dissemination.

The first is the fact the FAO Statistics Division's investment in the development of the FENIX platform has benefitted national institutions and users alike. FENIX is a platform providing an internet-based system that provides modularity allowing it to meet different user requirements and adapt to support global, regional and national level initiatives.

It helps improve data exchange, the use of standard classifications, harmonization and increased data availability at the sub-national, national, regional levels and international levels.

Data sharing within the region and with and other international organizations will bring the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean into the International Open Data Initiative.

CountrySTAT and the Global Strategy

The second is that CountrySTAT is aligned with the principles of the Global Strategy to Improve Agriculture and Rural Statistics. The Global Strategy is based on 3 pillars:

- Establishment of a **minimum set of core data** that countries will collect to meet current and emerging demands
- The **integration of agriculture into national statistical systems** in order to satisfy the demands of policy makers and other users who rely on comparable data across locations and over time
- **Governance and statistical capacity development** which will provide the foundation for sustainability of the agricultural statistics systems

CountrySTAT and the Global Strategy

CountrySTAT is directly linked to the second pillar which advocates for integrated data management systems which should provide:

- Support for the dissemination of official statistics that would be readily available, clearly identified by source and time, and comparable within and across countries
- Provide a framework for the storage of survey results
- Support data analysis capabilities as a result of the data provided

CountrySTAT and the Global Strategy

It is also important to note that CountrySTAT touches on the other 2 pillars of the Global Strategy:

- The CountrySTAT platform supports the dissemination of 41 key variables in four groups (Economic, Social, Environmental and Geographic Location), which represent the Minimum Set of Core Data, indicated in the first of the three pillars of the Global StrategyProvide a framework for the storage of survey results

- CountrySTAT also supports governance and statistical capacity development.
  - The TWG is a powerful national body. It catalyses institutional collaboration as it is composed of national experts responsible to carry out the standardization, harmonization and dissemination of official statistics on agriculture and food, and this inclusive approach results in bringing national and regional data into the Open Data Initiative.

In Conclusion

CountrySTAT can play a role in Latin America and the Caribbean in order to introduce improvements to the availability and data management of statistics related to agriculture and food through:

1. Service-oriented architecture based on open-source technology
2. Integrated metadata across domains and databases
3. Implementation of well-known data exchange protocols (e.g. SDMX)
4. Widget approach to deliver functionalities
5. Implementation of software standard specifications

Recommendation

The Working Group may wish to endorse the following recommendations:

Recommends that countries and Regional/Sub-regional Communities consider adopting CountrySTAT as the platform for the integration, management and dissemination of official statistics for food and agriculture, including data from agriculture censuses and surveys, statistical yearbooks, Food Balance Sheets (FBS) and other specific statistical products.

Access CountrySTAT Today

www.countrystat.org

Thank you!

Merci!

Muchas gracias!

Muito Obrigado!

Dank u!