

*Fourth Session of OIC-StatCom
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Report on the OIC-StatCom Executive Work Plan Activities

OIC-StatCom Forum
OIC-StatCom Online Knowledge and Experience Sharing Platform

1 Project Summary

The project basically aims at bringing about an online service (OIC-StatCom Forum) to act as a dynamic and centralized platform of knowledge and experience sharing on

- i. the practices of OIC-StatCom Members for, including but not limited to, the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of statistical data;
- ii. present and future activities of the OIC-StatCom Members; and
- iii. all aspects and processes of official statistics.

The project further aims at facilitating the information flow for cooperation and collaboration among the OIC-StatCom Members through sharing and exchange of knowledge and experience on matters relevant to official statistics. Moreover, by this facilitation, the OIC-StatCom Members will collaboratively take a step in bridging the information gap for the OIC-StatCom Members with varying levels of statistical capacities. The platform will primarily be available in English; however, Arabic and French language options will also be offered in the near future for wider outreach to the official statisticians in the OIC Member Countries.

In the framework of the project, the online knowledge and experience sharing platform (OIC-StatCom Forum) will be developed, public relations mechanism to promote the OIC-StatCom Forum among the OIC Member Countries will be initiated, and active usage of the OIC-StatCom Forum by the members will be encouraged. In the long-run, the project has the motivation to bring about a spirit of online community that rewards constructive involvement through enrichment with features of game dynamics (i.e., gamification), and fosters solidarity by allowing the Forum members to help each other on issues relevant to official statistics.

2 Overall Objective

To enable the OIC-StatCom Members to share knowledge accumulated, experiences gained and challenges faced in a structured, systematic, and interactive way for statistical capacity development.

3 Project Purpose

To facilitate the information flow on matters relevant to official statistics among the OIC-StatCom Members through an online knowledge and experience sharing platform.

4 Expected Results

- Technical capacity of statistical professionals increased.
- Notion of continuous learning in official statistics promoted.
- Quality in statistical processes ameliorated through cooperation and mutual learning.
- Collaborative interaction among the OIC-StatCom Members enhanced.
- Knowledge about official statistical topics accumulated and actively shared.

5 Target Group

The main target groups of the project are the OIC-StatCom Members including the National Statistical Offices and other relevant departments of the National Statistical System in the OIC Member Countries. The other users to benefit from the project include higher education institutes and private sector interested in the issues relevant to the official statistics.

6 Relevance to OIC-StatCom Strategic Vision

In the OIC-StatCom Strategic Vision Document, approved by the OIC-StatCom in 2012 and accessible on <http://www.oicstatcom.org/strategic-vision.php>, one of the sub-objectives under the *Statistical Capacity Development* is to “share ‘Lessons Learnt’ and ‘Success Stories’ regarding the experiences gained and challenges faced by the OIC-StatCom members through a virtual statistical system”. Furthermore, another strategic sub-objective under the *Coordination of Statistical Cooperation and Collaboration among NSOs, OIC-StatCom, Regional and International Organisations* calls for to “initiate cooperation and collaboration programmes for the needs of the NSOs of the OIC Member States to be identified through the physical and virtual meeting rounds of a panel of experts in a structured, systematic, and interactive way”. The Challenges section of the OIC-StatCom Strategic Vision clearly underlines, among others,

- i. different levels of statistical development among the OIC regions;
- ii. lack of human resources with strong technological and sustainable management skills;
- iii. difficulties in assuring data quality, and
- iv. inadequate collaboration and coordination within NSSs and at OIC level.

In this regard, this project will contribute in bringing about an online platform (OIC-StatCom Forum) through which knowledge and experience is shared among and accumulated through the members of the OIC-StatCom.

7 Contribution to the Multilateral Cooperation among the OIC-StatCom Members

The project will contribute to the multilateral cooperation among the OIC-StatCom Members by facilitating the information flow and accumulation among them. In the short and medium term, the project aims at initiating an online platform called OIC-StatCom Forum for knowledge and experience sharing among the official statisticians in the OIC Member Countries. In the project preparation phase, the participants of the Training Programme on “Statistical Database Design and Visualization Tools Development”, co-organised by SESRIC and IDB on 11-12 December 2013 at SESRIC Headquarters, Ankara, Republic of Turkey, agreed to share their experiences on statistical software development and to technically cooperate through establishing a forum among the IT Departments of NSOs of OIC Member Countries. Moreover, as a long term vision, the information accumulated in the OIC-StatCom Forum project is expected to serve as reference material for the statistical capacity development efforts of NSOs in the OIC Member Countries.

8 Structure of the OIC-StatCom Forum

Information on issues pertaining to official statistics are available on the Internet presences of many national and international organisations; however, the available information are typically of descriptive, sometimes un-organised and de-centralised nature and do not directly and interactively address the solutions that the official statisticians working in OIC Member Countries are searching for their specific problems. As the official statisticians in the OIC Member Countries need to browse a multitude of websites to seek information of different kinds, this process usually becomes time consuming, and ends up with no interaction with other official statisticians having an experience on the similar challenges they previously might have faced. Given this background, this project aims at providing an online platform based on the following structure:

The OIC-StatCom Forum is proposed to include the following five main categories:

1. General Discussion
 - a. Forum Newbies: In this sub-section, new forum members can introduce themselves and mention about their expertise fields.
 - b. Frequently Asked Questions: The FAQ sections lists the common questions concerning the structure, content, and administration of the forum.

- c. Off-Topic Issues: This sub-section gives the forum members the opportunity to have small-talks not related to official statistics. It is present in the forum to maintain the participation of the members.
- 2. Events/Announcements
 - a. OIC-StatCom Sessions: In this sub-section, there will be the announcements relevant to the sessions of OIC-StatCom.
 - b. Events by SESRIC and IDB: As the ex-officio members of the OIC-StatCom Bureau, the SESRIC and IDB will under this sub-section announce their events relevant to official statistics.
 - c. Events/Announcements by Other Stakeholders: Occasionally, the OIC-StatCom Secretariat receives the events/announcements of other stakeholders including those of the international agencies. To have a broader access to the OIC-StatCom members, these events/announcements will be published under this sub-section.
- 3. Activities of Member National Statistical Offices: Upon notification by the respective NSOs, the activities/projects of OIC-StatCom members currently being undertaken or planned to be implemented in the future will be announced here. The member NSOs will have the opportunity to post job vacancies for specific projects/tasks also in this section.
- 4. Thematic Experience & Knowledge Sharing: This section will be the main backbone of the forum giving the opportunity to the forum members to share their experiences, success stories and lessons learnt, and seek answers to their issues in official statistics:
 - a. Statistical Domains: This sub-section will be used by the forum members to share their experiences, success stories and lessons learnt, and seek answers to their questions to be posted under the following items structured in accordance with the CSA Rev.I-October 2009, an international categorisation of official statistical domains, subject areas, and activity fields.
 - i. Demographic and Social Statistics: Questions/experiences falling under Population and Migration, Labour, Education, Health, Income and Consumption, Social Protection, Human Settlements and Housing, Justice and Crime, Culture, Political and other Community Activities, and Time Use will be posted here.
 - ii. Economic Statistics: Questions/experiences falling under Macroeconomic Statistics, Business Statistics, Cross-Cutting Economic Statistics, Banking, Insurance, Financial Statistics, Prices, Labour Cost, and Informal Sector will be posted here.
 - iii. Environment and Multi-Domain Statistics: Questions/experiences falling under Environment Statistics, Regional and Small Area Statistics, Multi-Domain Statistics and Indicators, and Yearbooks and Similar Compendia will be posted here.

- iv. Methodology of Data Collection, Processing, Dissemination and Analysis: Questions/experiences falling under Metadata, Classifications, Data Sources, Data Editing and Data Linkage, Data Dissemination, Data Warehousing, Statistical Confidentiality and Disclosure Protection, and Data Analysis will be posted here.
 - v. Strategic and Managerial Issues of Official Statistics: Questions/experiences falling under Institutional Frameworks and Principles, Statistical Programs; Coordination within Statistical Systems, Quality Frameworks and Measurement of Performance of Statistical Systems and Offices, Management and Development of Human Resources, Management and Development of Technological Resources, Coordination of International Statistical Work, and Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building will be posted here.
- b. Professional and Managerial Skills: This sub-section will be used by the forum members to post their experiences, success stories and lessons learnt, and seek answers to their questions falling under:
- i. Effective Communication: Analytical and Critical Thinking, Effective Oral Communication Techniques, and Effective Written Communication Techniques.
 - ii. Leadership and Personal Development in an Official Statistics Setting: Change Management, Concepts of Leadership, Group Dynamics and Human Behaviour, Mentoring and Career Counselling Mechanisms, Organising Effective Meetings, Team Formation and Management, Time Management, and Understanding the Business of Statistics and Project Management.
 - iii. Stakeholder Relations and Statistical Literacy: Community Outreach through Social Media for NSOs, Developing Statistical Literacy and Data Awareness Initiatives, Efficient User Complaints Management Systems, and Stakeholder Relationship Management.
5. StatCaB Programme: This section is for the announcement of the training programmes to be organised under the StatCaB programme initiated in early 2007 by the SESRIC. The members will be able to view the current training StatCaB programmes and will post their immediate training needs and capacities to be considered within this initiative.

The proposed main categories demonstrate the main activity fields which are currently promoted in accordance with the statistical capacity development efforts of the OIC-StatCom. The OIC-StatCom Forum will have the capacity to host additional categories and sub-categories while preserving the structure-to-exist with its contents. These categories will be used for displaying and opening new conversations under the OIC-StatCom Forum. As the new conversations under the main and sub-categories will be started by the users, the OIC-

StatCom Forum will not be a static online presence but a dynamic platform for sharing and accumulating information and experience. In this regard, the active participation of the OIC-StatCom members is envisaged through the promotion activities aimed at them and other relevant stakeholders.

Furthermore, the users will have the flexibility to start a conversation under the category/sub-category they want. As a result, the same topic of interest may be open to conversation in more than one category/sub-category. The approach of keeping multiple conversations spread over the OIC-StatCom Forum is a proposed on-purpose action to give more freedom to the users to endure their engagements with the OIC-StatCom Forum.

For information retrieval from the online platform, the users will be able to conduct search from among the existing conversations. If the user is already aware of what s/he is looking for, the search option in the OIC-StatCom Forum will display the relevant conversations based on the appropriate keywords input by the user. In the case of user not exactly knowing what s/he is looking for or searching for more common information, the user will be able to browse through the pre-defined structure. In this way, the user will be able to find the desired information based on the pre-defined structure.

Although a certain degree of flexibility will be given to the users for the endurance of their engagement with the online platform, several roles will be defined by the OIC-StatCom Forum Administration. The role based model will ensure the security and orderliness for the entire platform. An ‘Administrator’ role is, in this respect, proposed for the overall running of the system. The Administrator will have the authority to issue usernames and passwords for the initial stage of the project. Upon the enabling the system for self-registration, the Administrator will have the authority to accept or reject the registrations. In rare cases, the Administrator will be able to warn, temporarily suspend, or totally ban those not acting within the to-be-set Guidelines. The Administrator will be able to delegate some/all of her/his authorities to moderators for some/all categories/sub-categories. Assigned moderators are expected to keep the order in their responsibility areas in accordance with the Guidelines. Registered members will be able to start conversations and post comments to the previously initiated conversations under the categories/sub-categories they are allowed. Registered members will be able to delete their own conversations/comments. Guest/anonymous users will only be able to see the conversations available in the OIC-StatCom Forum. In the long-run, the OIC-StatCom Secretariat envisions the rewarding of the registered members who positively contribute to the knowledge and experience accumulation and sharing based on the gamification principles. As the project is in its preparation phase, these features have not been proposed in this document.

To further increase the engagement of the members of the online platform, an “ice-breaker” category is proposed under the name “General Discussion”. Under this category, members will be able to introduce themselves to the community to make the first contact with them

under the “Forum Newbies” sub-category. Also the “General Discussion” will have a “Frequently Asked Questions” sub-category to enable the new members ask about the online platform and its contents. The “Off-Topic Issues” sub-category will be used as a section in order to increase the interaction among the Forum members.

As to the maintenance of the OIC-StatCom Forum, SESRIC in its capacity as the ex-office Bureau member of the OIC-StatCom is proposed to oversee the overall development of the online platform infrastructure, its hosting and periodic maintenance.