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**The Role of the Gulf Cooperation Council Statistics Centre in
Improving Statistics in the Region**

**Prepared by the
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*“The Role of the Gulf Cooperation Council Statistics Centre (GCC-Stat) in
Improving Statistics in the Region”*

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1- Introduction

As part of the continued cooperation among the GCC members, the heads of the states during their 2012 annual summit have approved the establishment of a new statistical center in the Gulf Cooperation Council. The centre is named “GCC-Stat” and it is located in Muscat, the capital of Oman and started its service in June 2013. The Heads of the GCC states have powered the centre with an independent framework affiliated to the Ministerial Council. The center will be overseen by the Board of Directors. The centre is empowered to be the only official source of data for the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

This exciting new venture for official statistics in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was created by Statute¹ with the following mandated functions:

1. Collection of economic, social, demographic, agricultural, environmental, energy and other data through the National Statistical Centers and work on their classification, storage and analysis.
2. Creation of statistical databases including all the different sectors of economic, social, demographic, agricultural, environmental, energy and other data in cooperation with the National Statistical Centers.
3. Implementation of joint statistical projects through the National Statistical Centers.
4. Preparation and provision of data and information and statistical indicators about the GCC region.
5. Provision of comprehensive statistics that feature appropriate accuracy, coverage, coherency, and consistency and that are sustainable and up to date.
6. Provision of the available data and information to the national authorities and the General Secretariat of the GCC and its affiliated agencies, and regional and international stakeholders.
7. Develop strategic plans for the statistical work of the GCC in coordination with the National Statistical Centers.
8. Coordination of statistical work programs at the level of Member States in collaboration with the National Statistical Centers and other relevant authorities.
9. Represent the GCC region in statistical matters.
10. In accordance with the legislation in force, enter into international cooperation agreements that would contribute to the development of the GCC Statistical System, in coordination with the competent authorities.

¹ Statute *Statistical Center of the Gulf Cooperation Council For the Arab States of the Gulf.*

11. Apply international standards in all areas and phases of the statistical work.
12. Standardize methodologies, definitions, classifications and other criteria used in the statistical work in coordination with the National Statistical Centers.
13. Take necessary steps to ensure quality assurance of the statistical work.
14. Provision of technical support for the advancement of the statistical work of the Member States.
15. Undertake capacity building in the Member States in the field of statistical work.
16. Prepare and provide training programs for the development of human resources working in the field of official statistics in the Member States.
17. Disseminate information and statistical indicators through various means of publication.
18. Contribute to building a culture of statistics and raising statistical awareness.
19. Perform any other functions and terms of reference related to the competence of GCC-Stat as assigned by the Board of Directors.

GCC-Stat as part of a wider GCC statistical system is expected to provide statistical and technical leadership, but much of the heavy lifting to take the statistical system forward will be done by the National Centers. It will be critical that GCC-Stat is trusted by the National Centers and that it delivers on its agreed work program.

2- Journey, and Values for GCC-Stat

Countries sees GCC-Stat as a partner with the National Statistical Centers of the six Member Governments working to produce high quality statistics and supporting services to better inform governments and the communities of the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. By driving the GCC Statistical System, GCC-Stat should aim to realize the full potential of statistical information and to also raise awareness of the important role to be played by quality data in shaping good decision making.

It is in the above context, and after considering the vision, mission and values of international and national statistical offices, that the following journey and values are approved for GCC-Stat

- GCC-Stat Journey

“Empower GCC nations with knowledge to drive progress and prosperity.”

- Belief Statement

“Knowledge. For prosperity.”

- Values

Excellence. Collaboration. Responsiveness

3- Strategic Objectives for GCC-Stat

The strategic directions for GCC-Stat is considered in the context of its functions as set out in its founding Statute and also in the context of the role it is expected to play in advancing the GCC Statistics Strategy.

The following Matrix illustrates the set of strategic objectives and supporting strategies. Most of the objectives are align with the five macro objectives in the GCC Statistics Strategy Framework.

GCC-Stat Strategic Objectives and Strategies

Objective	GCC-Stat Strategies
<p>1: Build and strengthen the statistical capacity and institutional capacity of the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council to meet the statistical requirements of the GCC.</p>	<p><i>Strengthen the GCC Statistical System.</i></p> <p>This will be achieved, in collaboration with National Statistics Centers of the GCC Member States, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing standardized and harmonized statistics laws that govern all statistical work in the GCC region. • Implementing a code of statistical practice for the GCC region. • Undertaking or facilitating peer reviews of Member countries national statistical systems. • Providing cost-effective, relevant and timely technical assistance and training to Member countries. • Adapting and/or developing and implementing standard classifications, statistical concepts and methodologies for use in the GCC region. • Benefiting from international experiences. • Implementing best practice statistical and technical processes (e.g. in information technology and dissemination) within GCC-Stat to demonstrate and guide National Statistics Centers.

<p>2. Promote and improve the quality and quantity of statistical products on a sustainable basis.</p>	<p><i>Drive the development of statistics in the GCC region.</i></p> <p>This will be achieved, in collaboration with National Statistics Centers of the GCC Member States, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolving the GCC statistics to support informed decision making. • Adopting statistical standards and methodologies. • Developing a data quality framework for the GCC region and applying it in all GCC statistical work. • Encouraging statistics producers beyond the National Statistics Centers to adopt contemporary international statistical standards in their work. • Through the National Statistics Centers, working with administrative bodies to make effective use of administrative data for official statistics purposes. • Participating in relevant international statistical activities to ensure, as appropriate, that international developments are reflected in GCC statistics.
<p>3. Highlight the region of the Gulf Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf as a united bloc economically and socially</p>	<p><i>Build economic and social indicators represent the GCC region and build economic modeling for the region.</i></p>
<p>4. Develop and expand statistics dissemination.</p>	<p><i>Establish a high quality, relevant and timely centralized database of</i></p>

	<p><i>statistics for GCC countries and for the region as a whole.</i></p> <p>This will be achieved, in collaboration with National Statistics Centers of the GCC Member States, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assembling and disseminating the agreed datasets in accordance with the agreed standards and methodologies. • Building dissemination vehicles and approaches that best meet user requirements in regard to accessibility and usability. • Developing common approaches among GCC countries to data confidentiality and ensuring compliance. • Ensuring cost-effective data collection from GCC countries.
<p>5. Develop and improve joint work-program between statistical agencies and GCC-Stat.</p>	<p><i>Implement and drive coordinated statistics work programs within the GCC region that meet the needs of the Member States and the GCC Secretariat.</i></p> <p>This will be achieved, in collaboration with National Statistics Centers of the GCC Member States, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committees and Task Forces aligned with overall strategies and work program. • Undertaking joint statistical projects with the National Statistics Centers. • Supporting the coordinated programs through technical assistance and training to

	<p>the National Statistics Centers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a high-level GCC statistics user group on medium and longer term priorities and other important matters for the GCC statistical system.
<p>6. Align the national statistical strategies in the GCC countries with the requirements of the GCC common statistical programs, and with best international practices.</p>	<p><i>Build a trusted partnership between GCC-Stat and the National Statistics Centers.</i></p> <p>This will be achieved, in collaboration with National Statistics Centers of the GCC Member States, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective engagement with GCC partners in all aspects of GCC-Stat's work. • Build unified strategy for GCC countries.
<p>7. Build the culture of statistics and raise the awareness of statistics within the GCC region.</p>	<p><i>Raise awareness of the importance of statistics within the GCC region.</i></p> <p>This will be achieved, in collaboration with National Statistics Centers of the GCC Member States, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective external relations program. • Sponsoring conference of users and producers of statistics in the GCC region, once in 2 years. • Establishing an effective outreach program within the GCC to various constituencies (e.g. students, businesses, non-government organizations, households)
<p>8. Ensure that the GCC region has an effective voice in international statistical developments.</p>	<p><i>Effectively represent the GCC statistical system in international statistical forums.</i></p> <p>This will be achieved, in</p>

	<p>collaboration with National Statistics Centers of the GCC Member States, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring appropriate GCC representation in international statistical forums, in accordance with GCC statistical priorities. • Representing the GCC region's statistical interests in the development of international statistical standards. • Promoting the achievements of the GCC statistical system internationally, including through hosting periodic international statistical conferences.
<p>9. Ensure long term organizational sustainability of GCC-Stat.</p>	<p><i>Establish a culture of excellence in GCC-Stat.</i></p> <p>This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting and supporting high caliber and motivated staff. • Encouraging staff exchanges between the National Statistics Centers and GCC-Stat. • Building effective business systems and processes. • Building strong relationships with academia. • Fostering a culture of innovation.

4- Projects approved for 2014 and beyond:

The board of director has approved the following projects for GCC-Stat starting from 2014:

- National accounts
- Finance and monetary statistics
- Indices (cpi, ppi ..etc)
- Admin data
- 2020 census
- Trade statistics
- Labor statistics
- Data quality and standards
- Environment & energy
- Progress and development indicators.

5- Conclusion:

In short, this new institutional arrangement at the GCC level is expected to boost the level and the quality of data production on the coming few years.