



UNIVERSITÉ
LAVAL



parera



LAND O'LAKES
VENTURE 37

ARAB FOOD CONSUMPTION DATA INITIATIVE

Supporting Representative Exposure Assessments in the Arab Region

First Expert Meeting of the Arab Food Consumption Data Network

23 February 2024 • St-Regis Marsa Arabia, Doha, State of Qatar

Record of Outputs and Future Directions

Introduction

Dietary Exposure Assessments require access to food occurrence data related to the hazard and **to food consumption information**. The latter data is gathered through various sources, including the development and implementation of **24-hour recall surveys** enabling to record the food consumption patterns. Surrogate data may also be accessed through existing information generated by other statistical surveys and activities, such as the household budget surveys, which tend to be implemented regularly in most countries.

As much as food consumption data are crucial to support more representative exposure assessments, there is a general understanding that collecting such data is expensive and unaffordable for most countries, leaving these jurisdictions without access to this valuable resource.

Several initiatives carried out in the Arab region have resulted in the development of food consumption data, to address nutrition and public health goals defined for the region. The availability of this data to be used by food regulators and other food stakeholders such as industry would be better enabled through the creation of opportunities of collaboration between the networks of experts involved in the relevant fields. This is one of the objectives pursued by the Arab Food Consumption Data Initiative.

This initiative aims to:

- ❖ Create reliable repositories for food consumption data representative of the Arab region, including country-related data, for use by food regulatory authorities and their stakeholders for exposure assessment purposes.
- ❖ Develop agreed-upon methodologies of food consumption data collection that can be used consistently by Arab food risk assessment authorities to implement food consumption surveys in their respective jurisdictions.
- ❖ Develop and maintain the set of enabling tools, including Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) that support the consistent deployment of food consumption data collection in the Arab region e.g., applications of data collection, applications for data analysis, etc.
- ❖ Develop training material and capacity building programs to disseminate knowledge and support the adoption of consistent / harmonized methodologies and tools supporting food consumption data collection in the Arab region.
- ❖ Develop and maintain a network of experts that support the sustainable management of food consumption data, for risk assessment use in the Arab region.

Objectives of the First Meeting of Food Consumption Data Expert Network

A group of experts from the Arab region has already contributed to various efforts of methodology, application and data development related to food consumption information.

The Arab Food Consumption Data Initiative will harness the existing expertise in the region, to focus resources aiming to achieve the objectives stated above, under the leadership of Dr. Maha Hoteit, National Research Council of Lebanon.

The **first meeting** of the Arab experts aimed to chart a path for the following project milestones:

- ❖ Contribute to the mapping of current activities supporting food consumption data collection in the Arab region, with a clear landscape of availability of such data and their accompanying resources.
- ❖ Contribute to making available the outputs of previous efforts of food consumption data collection activities and ensuring their accessibility by the Arab food risk assessment community.
- ❖ Contribute to the development of a path forward for the review and adoption of consistent / harmonized methodologies to be applied for the various surveys relevant to food consumption data collection – for example, 24-hour recall surveys, Food Frequency Questionnaires (FFQ), etc. – and the associated enablers, such as, templates, ICTs, etc.

Experts Represented at the Meeting

Country	Name	Affiliations
Lebanon	Dr./Prof. Maha Hoteit	National Research Council of Lebanon – CNRS - Lebanese University
Qatar	Dr./Prof. Reema Tayyem	Qatar University
Morocco	Dr./Prof. Nada Benajiba	Ibn Tufail university
Bahrain	Dr./Prof. Sabika Lahdan	University of Bahrain
Saudi Arabia	Dr./Prof. Khlood Bookari	Taibah University
Saudi Arabia	Dr./Prof. Nahla Bawazeer	King Saud University
Saudi Arabia	Dr./Prof. Abeer Alzaben	Princess Noura University, Riyadh
Oman	Dr. Salima Al Maamari	Ministry of Health
UAE	Dr./Prof. Haleama Sabbah	Abu Dhabi University
Iraq	Dr./Prof. Hasanen Ghazi	Al Bayan University
Kuwait	Dr./Prof. Dalal Kazemi	Kuwait university
GForSS	Dr./Prof. Samuel Godefroy	Laval University, Quebec City, QC, Canada Institute of Nutrition and Functional Foods (INAF) Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS)
GForSS	Dr./Prof. Élie Bouyazbeck	Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS) Laval University, Quebec City, QC, Canada Institute of Nutrition and Functional Foods (INAF)

Other Network Experts who were not present at the meeting and sent their regrets

Palestine	Dr. /Prof. Radwan Qasrawi	Al-Quds University, Jerusalem
Jordan	Dr./Prof. Nermeen Al-Awad	Hashemite University
Morocco	Dr. Hasnae Benkirane	Ibn Tufail University

Key Decisions and Path Forward

- ❖ The importance of available and accessible food consumption data in the Arab region to support food risk assessment activities was reiterated.
- ❖ The following action plan was supported by all participants:
 - To continue mapping published/nonpublished data related to food composition tables, food frequency questionnaires and previous national food consumption studies in each Arab country, where possible.
 - To develop and make available a common template, in the form of an XLS sheet that would support to capture the data available in a consistent fashion, contributing to the development of the coveted repository of data.
 - To initiate the development of a consistent methodology aiming to capture food consumption data in the Arab region, through and Arab Diet Screener and 2 non-consecutive 24-hour recall surveys.
- ❖ Members of the network will continue to work on the development of these deliverables, with the intent to have an update at an upcoming meeting, scheduled on the margins of the Third Arab Codex Colloquium, planned in Doha possibly on 10 June 2024.

PROPOSED AGENDA

8:00-8:30	Registration and Coffee
8:30-9:00	Introduction Of Participants
9:00-9:15	Introductory Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ <i>Dr. Maha Hoteit NRC Lebanon / GForSS</i>➤ <i>Prof. Samuel Godefroy, Ulaval / GForSS</i>
9:15-9:30	Introduction of the Global Food Regulatory Science Society and its Initiatives in the Arab Region <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ <i>Dr. Elie Bouyazbeck</i>
9:30-10:00	Setting the Scene: Introduction of the Arab Food Consumption Data Initiative and the Structure of the Expert Network <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ <i>Prof. Samuel Godefroy</i>
10:00-10:30	Discussion of the Mapping of Food Consumption Data Collection Initiatives in the Arab Region <p>What is available, what is underway and how we can make outputs available and accessible to all.</p>
10.30-11:00	Discussion of the methodologies and enabling tools to carry out food consumption data collection, including accessibility of surrogate data sources <p>What is available, how to access it and what do we need to develop?</p>
11:00-11:30	Road Map for Next Activities related to the Arab Food Consumption Data Initiative and the Role of the Expert Network
11:30	Meeting Adjourned