



# Development and Sustainability of Eastern Mediterranean Region and South African National Food Composition Databases

Marisol Warthon-Medina<sup>1</sup>, Jenny Plumb<sup>1</sup>, Mark Roe<sup>2</sup>, Ayoub Aljawaldeh<sup>3</sup>, Ailsa Welch<sup>4</sup>, Maria Glibetic<sup>5</sup>, Agnes Kadvan<sup>5</sup>, Jalila El Ati<sup>6</sup>, Helena S. Costa<sup>7,8</sup>, Hettie Schonfeldt<sup>9</sup>, Henrietta Nkechi Ene-Obong<sup>10</sup>, Maria Traka<sup>1</sup>, Paul M. Finglas<sup>1</sup>

## Background

Complete, harmonised, open access **food composition data** (FCD) is essential for dietary monitoring and Public Health Nutrition

FCD in the countries of the **Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office** (EMRO) and South Africa is often missing, incomplete, outdated or unreliable, particularly for fat, sugar and salt content of processed foods.

The improvement of regional FCD is essential to improve the quality of results from **nutrition surveillance systems**, which help to inform nutrition programs and policies.

## Outcomes

**45 FCD compilers** from **13 countries** attended workshops and training exchanges.

Training included: **Value documentation; Food composition data tools:** FoodCASE, Diet Assess and Plan (DAP), Nutritics, nutritools.org; **Food classification** and description of composite dishes: LanguaL and FoodEX2; **Recipe calculation; EuroFIR e-learning tools** and case studies: nutritools.org; **Laboratory food analysis** for vitamins, minerals, dietary fibre, amino acids, and fatty acids profile.

FCD from **6 countries: Tunisia, Morocco, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan** and **South Africa** was standardized using EuroFIR thesauri. Data is now available as **open access** on the EuroFIR **FoodExplorer** platform.

## Aims and Approaches

Quadram Institute Bioscience (**QIB**), and EuroFIR, working with **World Health Organization's** (WHO) EMRO to develop more comprehensive, open access, national FCD in **Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Kuwait, Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan, Egypt, Jordan, Mauritania** and **South Africa**

A series of workshops and training activities that supported production of new data that better reflect foods that are currently consumed in these countries.

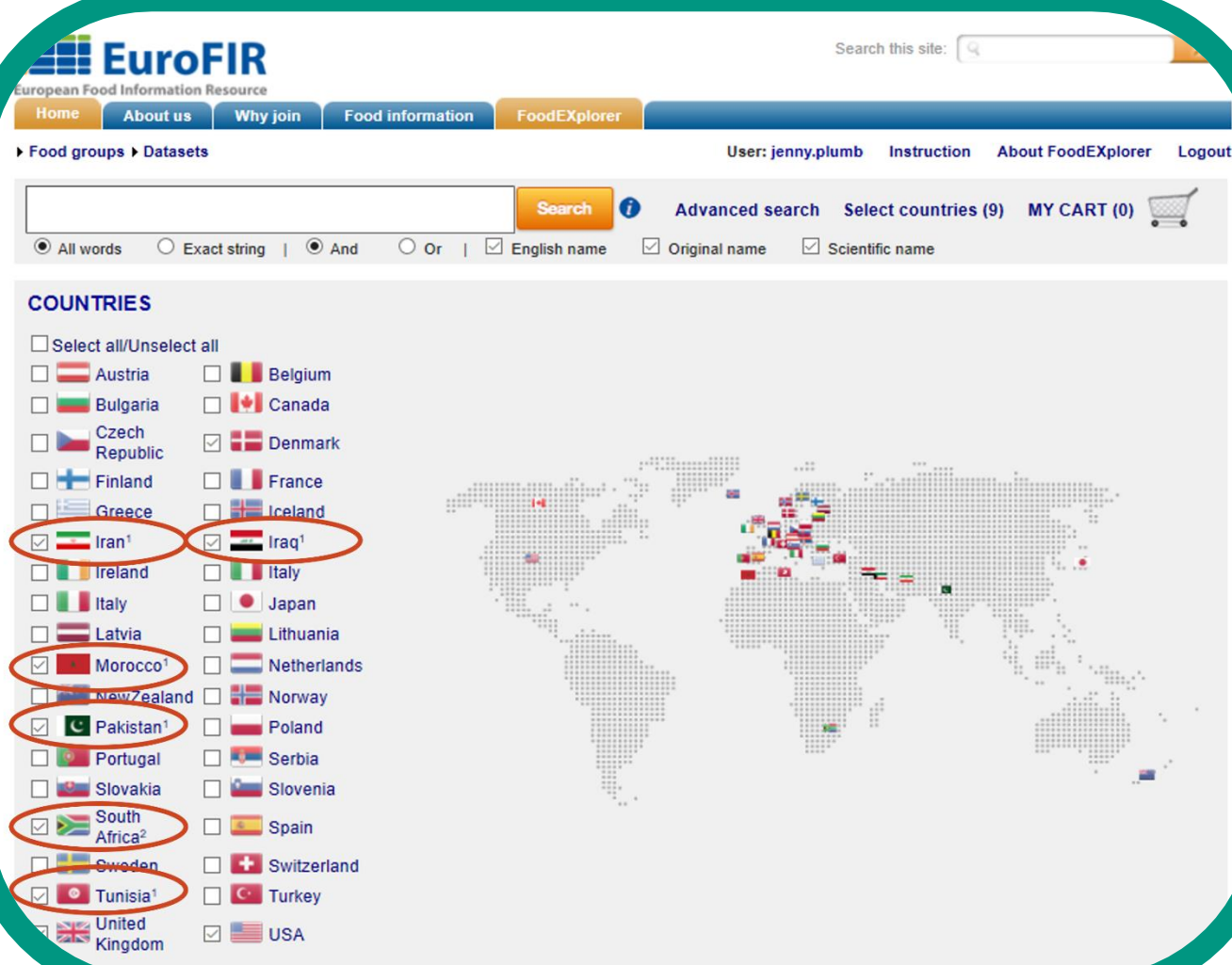
Workshops provided training on: design of sampling and analytical protocols; analytical methods; data compilation tools and data management tools.

### Food Data included in national datasets within FoodExplorer

	Iran	Iraq	Pakistan	Tunisia	Morocco	South Africa
<b>N° Foods</b>	91	62	209	228	183	381
<b>N° Components</b>	36	14	19	44	23	28
<b>N° Datapoints</b>	3243	850	3762	37152	4209	7106



**FoodExplorer, showing open access national datasets**  
<http://www.eurofir.org/FoodExplorer/datasets.php>



## Conclusions

Updated and searchable datasets from **Tunisia, Morocco, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan** and **South Africa** are freely available and will contribute to improved quality of data for use in research and public health monitoring in the region.

All FoodExplorer datasets are available to individuals and students from countries that are eligible for **Overseas Development Aid**.

**Improved knowledge** of the production of FCD in EMR leading to higher quality food data for stakeholders.

**WHO-EMRO** is funding further updates of FCD tables and analysis in these countries, with the focus on identifying TFA, SFA, salt and sugar in addition to micronutrients.

For further information contact [paul.finglas@quadram.ac.uk](mailto:paul.finglas@quadram.ac.uk)

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<sup>1</sup>Quadram Institute Bioscience UK. <sup>2</sup>European Food Information Resource (EuroFIR AISBL) Belgium, <sup>3</sup>World Health Organization, Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (WHO-EMRO). <sup>4</sup>University of East Anglia UK. <sup>5</sup>Center of Excellence in Nutrition and Metabolism Research (CAPNUTRA) Serbia. <sup>6</sup>National Institute of Nutrition and Food Technology (INNTA) Tunisia. <sup>7</sup>National Institute of Health Dr. Ricardo Jorge, I.P (INSA) Portugal. <sup>8</sup>REQUIMTE-LAQV/Faculty of Pharmacy, Universidade do Porto. <sup>9</sup>University of Pretoria South Africa, <sup>10</sup>University of Calabar Nigeria. African Network of Food Data Systems (AFROFOODS).

