



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
Twenty-third Session
Virtual
22-26 July 2024

CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031: STATUS AND NEXT STEPS

(Comments by Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Uruguay)

Strategic management involves defining the necessary actions to achieve specific objectives in a given context, as well as establishing the mechanisms to evaluate the progress made once these actions are implemented. In this evaluation task, indicators are an indispensable tool as they fulfill multiple functions: they allow the measurement of the organization's progress towards achieving the defined strategic objectives, facilitate decision-making with a systemic vision, serve as a common language that promotes organizational alignment, enhance transparency and accountability, and facilitate learning and continuous improvement. In view of their relevance, management indicators must be given special consideration in the strategic planning process we are currently working on.

Therefore, and in accordance with the objectives agreed upon during the 86th session of the CCEXEC (REP24/EXEC), the following indicators are proposed for each of the strategic objectives:

Strategic Goals 1: Respond to Members' needs for protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade in an evolving global environment by developing science-based standards.

- Facilitate the participation of all Codex members and observers throughout the standard-setting process.
- Identify needs and emerging issues (foresight).
- Timelines of standard setting.
- Develop food standards founded on scientific evidence based on globally representative data and Codex risk analysis principles (Securing expertise).
- Use scientific advice consistently in line with Codex risk analysis principles.

Analysis and proposal

Many of the activities proposed for achieving this strategic objective do not require the development and monitoring of specific indicators because deviations from the defined guidelines are not foreseeable (for example, the development of standards based on scientific evidence or the use of scientific advice) or depend heavily on circumstances outside the Codex, such as the identification of needs and/or emerging issues.

However, it is possible to obtain a management evaluation in activities aimed at facilitating the participation of all Codex members and observers during the standard-setting process. In this sense, the following four indicators are proposed.

The first seeks to measure the level of participation of members in technical committees and electronic working groups (EWG):

$$\frac{\text{Number of members and observers participating in at least one EWG to prepare a Codex General Subject document}}{\text{Total members and observers participating in a technical Committee}} \times 100$$

Rationale: The relationship between the members and observers participating in the development of a Codex document on General Subject and the total number of members in the organization can serve as an indicator of the facilitation of the participation of all Codex members and observers during the standard-setting process.

The second proposed indicator measures the level of involvement of those who participate in the Technical Committees or EWG:

$$\frac{\text{Number of active members and observers, in the Technical Committee or EWG}}{\text{Total members and observers on the Technical Committee or EWG}}$$

Rationale: to ensure the success of the process, it is essential that members are not only present, but also engaged. This indicator is a reasonable approximation of the level of active involvement of the members in the activities.

The third indicator corresponds to the average of the indicators calculated using the previous formula:

$$\frac{\text{Summary of the indicators calculated from the above formula for technical committees and EWG}}{\text{Number of Technical Committees and EWG}} \times 100$$

Rationale: It is important to have a global indicator of synthesis of the level of active participation in relation to the participants.

It is important, as much as possible, for the greatest number of Codex members to participate in the activities. In this context, a fourth indicator is proposed, which measures the overall level of active participation of Codex members in its activities:

$$\frac{\text{Number of active members and observers in any technical committee or EWG}}{\text{Total Codex members and observers}} \times 100$$

Strategic Goals 2: Strengthen relationships with relevant international organizations, promoting an integrated approach to address global challenges

- Contribute to the transition to sustainable and resilient food systems,
- Targeted engagement with international organization to identify gaps,
- Improving mutual understanding of roles.

Analysis and proposal

The activities proposed for the achievement of this objective culminate in specific collaboration projects with other organizations. In this sense, we propose the following indicator:

$$\frac{\text{Number of joint research projects with other agencies on topics related to sustainability and resilience of food systems}}{\text{Number of projects carried out}} \times 100$$

Strategic Goals 3: Maximize the impact of Codex by increasing the visibility and use of standards

- Enhance the profile and recognition of Codex as the international food standards setting body for consumer health protection and ensuring fair practices in food trade,

- Harmonization through increased use of Codex standards in the development of national food standards and regulations,
- Sustainability of national codex structures,
- Promote the use of Codex texts in the context of integrative approaches such as One Health,
- Encourage contribution from relevant international bodies in Codex work.

Analysis and proposal

What significantly summarizes the achievement of this objective is that Codex standards should be established as one of the essential inputs for the formulation of food standards and regulations at the national level. The proposed indicator is simple, but obtaining the information needed for its development is complex. Therefore, it is considered essential to implement an efficient and reliable system to collect this information, avoiding relying solely on declarations from the parties involved. Alternatives that could be explored for this purpose include:

- Establish a starting date for measurement, for example, the effective date of the new strategic plan, and consider only the standards approved as of that date, excluding those of the past.
- Use artificial intelligence technologies (AI) to compare each country's compilations of food standards with Codex standards.
- Consider only the number of national food standards that have been adopted or modified as a direct consequence of the approval of a Codex standard.

In this regard, two indicators are proposed. The first measures the use of Codex standards adopted in each country:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Codex standards adopted subsequent to mm/dd/2026 that have been incorporated into national regulations}}{\text{Number of Codex standards adopted subsequent to mm/dd/2026}} \times 100$$

The second indicator corresponds to the average of the indicators for each Codex member.

$$\frac{\text{Summary of indicators calculated from the formula above for each Codex member}}{\text{Number of Codex members}} \times 100$$

Functional Objective: To improve labor management systems and practices that contribute to the efficient and effective achievement of all the objectives of the strategic plan.

- Maintain and improve efficient and effective labor management practices (new technologies as catalysts).
- Support and strengthen the capabilities of chairs and delegates to participate in committees (e.g., EWG handbook, delegate guide, guidance on new work proposals). Establish priorities in relation to the impact on consumer health protection and ensure the use of fair practices in international food trade.

Analysis and proposal

The main indicator for this objective is the quality and quantity of documents available on the official Codex website.

$$\frac{\text{Number of documents translated into the official languages within the stipulated timeframe}}{\text{Number of documents to be translated}} \times 100$$

As already mentioned, indicators are an essential tool, so the Strategic Plan 2026-2031 must include clear and precise indicators to ensure effective monitoring of its implementation. Although the list of indicators presented in this document is not exhaustive, the CCLAC is invited to review the proposed indicators to support the Codex Secretariat in their preparation, thus ensuring that the plan is solid and effective in achieving its goals.

Recommendation

CCLAC23 is invited to approve the proposed indicators, with a view to promoting them at the 87th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius.