



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA**

**24th Session**

**Virtual**

**5 - 9 and 13 September 2022**

**CODEX COMMUNICATION WORK PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT**

*(Prepared by the Codex Secretariat)*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

CCAFRICA23 acknowledged the importance of prioritizing regional Codex communications and adopted a regional communications work plan 2020-2021<sup>1</sup> with the objectives of establishing clear communication channels and communicating the value of Codex Standards in the region. This work plan was linked to the efforts of the region to support implementation of Strategic Goal 3 of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 “Increase impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards”; in particular objective 3.1 “Raise the awareness of Codex standards”. This paper highlights the progress made on implementation of the regional communications work plan and proposes that the region maintain such a work plan moving forward.

## 2. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

### **Objective 1 Establish clear, communication channels**

On the margins of CCAFRICA23, The Regional Coordinator and Members worked together to establish a simple, informal and rapid communication network using WhatsApp. This tool has now been in use for almost three years, works alongside the formal Codex communication mechanisms (e.g. Codex-L used by the Codex Secretariat to share information with all Codex Contact Points (CCPs)), and facilitates the weekly, if not daily sharing of information among Members in the region. To date delegates from around three quarters of the countries in the region are members of the CCAFRICA WhatsApp Group. Given the extensive use and uptake of this tool, it is proposed that as a next step all Members ensure that their CCP is a member of this group so that it can continue to be developed as an effective communication tool for the CCAFRICA region. It is also important that Members ensure that the official contact detail of their CCP<sup>2</sup> are up to date as this ensures that they receive formal communications from the Codex Secretariat. Updates can be provided directly to [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org).

CCAFRICA23 set a target that by CCAFRICA24 75% of Members/Observers surveyed would indicate timeliness, accessibility and quality of Codex regional communications “excellent” or “good”. To facilitate receipt of information on this a very short survey has been developed. Members are encouraged to complete this survey at

[https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=aMQ6Frir0ESB\\_dnbFeOvlnRhtW6DwUNCvUDYQmw\\_wNJpUOUdKSEtPNINDMVZXUIINMDIxOUNKVdLMS4u](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=aMQ6Frir0ESB_dnbFeOvlnRhtW6DwUNCvUDYQmw_wNJpUOUdKSEtPNINDMVZXUIINMDIxOUNKVdLMS4u)

which will only take 2-3 minutes and the results will be provide during the discussion on Agenda Item 9.

### **Objective 2: Communicate the value of Codex standards in the region**

The proposed activities under this objective primarily related to sharing information related to success stories in the region, stories on food safety, standards work or capacity development initiatives in the region and activities undertaken under Codex Trust Fund (CTF) projects. There has been a strong, commendable effort in the region to document and communicate activities through the preparation of short web stories that have

<sup>1</sup> REP20/AFRICA Appendix II

<sup>2</sup> List of CCAFRICA CCPs: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/codex-regions/afrika/members/en/>

been subsequently published on the CCAFRICA news page<sup>3</sup> on the Codex website. This has been achieved through the Coordinator in their execution of the communications work plan between CCAFRICA23 and CCAFRICA24 and allowed all targets to be achieved.

Over the past three years World Food Safety Day had provided a strong incentive to raise awareness on food safety and share information on national and regional initiatives. At least ten countries in the region have shared stories over the past three years, multiple stories coming from some countries. However each year it is the same 10-20 countries<sup>4</sup> that are active, hence there is room for more countries to use WFSD as an opportunity raise awareness on food safety and Codex standards.

There have been 21 CTF recipient countries in the region. Of those 17 have shared at least one story of an initiative or progress in the region with some sharing multiple stories. In addition, just about 50 percent of countries in the region have contributed to Codex news on the regional webpage. There has also been a recent increase in communications on regional and sub-regional initiatives, in particular in relation to training and awareness raising in Codex, which not only supports Goal 2 but also Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan on effective participation.

### **3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

In general, the region has made good progress on communications since CCAFRICA23 with approximately half the region engaged in communications. World Food Safety Day, Codex Trust Fund and the efforts of the Regional Coordinator have been key to making this progress. Moving forward efforts should be made to continue to build in communications to all initiatives to maintain this situation as well as engage other members in the region to share their experiences.

In this context, it is recommended that CCAFRICA24:

- renew its commitment to the Communications work plan, as updated in Annex 1;
- continue its excellent efforts to develop a truly regional network that includes key Codex players in the region; and
- continues to communicate on and promote its food safety and standard setting efforts and successes.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/codex-regions/africa/about/en/>

<sup>4</sup> Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Chad, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Zimbabwe,

## ANNEX 1

## PROPOSED REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS WORK PLAN 2022-2024

The table shows the objectives, activities, targets and indicators for the CCAFRICA Regional Communications Work plan. These elements derive from Strategic Goal 3 in the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 “Increase impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards”; in particular objective 3.1 “Raise the awareness of Codex standards’.

Objectives	Activities	Targets	Indicators
1. Reinforce and expand existing communication channels and establish clear additional channels as needed e.g. for specific work streams	1.1. Consolidate and improve information flow and exchange between countries and Codex Secretariat (CS) 1.2. Expand and strengthen existing simple and rapid communications methods (Regional. WhatsApp communications group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By CCAFRICA25 80% of Members/Observers surveyed indicate timeliness, accessibility and quality of Codex regional communications “excellent” or “good”</li> </ul>	Number of survey responses rating regional communications “excellent” or “good” 2. Communicate the value of Codex standards in the region
2. Communicate the value of Codex engagement and use of standards in the region	2.1. Provide CS with monthly drafts of web stories capturing food safety, standards work or capacity building initiatives in the region 2.2. Promote regional success stories and initiatives in conjunction with CS and FAO/WHO 2.3 Liaise with Codex Trust Fund beneficiary countries in the region to communicate on every phase of CTF projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By CAC46 10 news items from countries in the region published</li> <li>By CCAFRICA25 24 news items from countries in the region By CCAFRICA25</li> <li>50% of countries in the region have made a contribution to codex news on the regional webpage</li> </ul>	Number of CCAFRICA news stories published Number of countries who have made a published contribution