

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
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## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

### Forty-fifth Session

#### Codex Trust Fund: activity report

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report covers 2021, the sixth year of operation of the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund-2 (CTF2), as well as the first half of 2022. It highlights key achievements and lessons learned and provides a summary of operational and financial aspects of activities.

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to delay the implementation of CTF2 projects. However, beneficiary countries started to accelerate activities again, both aided through the use of virtual tools that allowed for remote work and building on the loosening of COVID-19 related public health restrictions in some countries. This trend continued in the first half of 2022.

All Round 1 countries (Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar and Senegal) completed their projects and will move to the evaluation of results once pandemic related restrictions relax sufficiently. Activities in Round 2 and 3 countries continued, albeit with some limitations caused by the pandemic and the political instability in some of the countries. Most of Round 4 countries have begun implementing their projects, and Round 5 countries have been working on the finalization of the agreements necessary to formalize CTF2 support. The call for applications for Round 6 of CTF2 support resulted in 14 applications received by the CTF secretariat. Four applications were approved for funding and another four were given conditional approval, pending final review following revision.

The CTF2 Secretariat contracted a company to conduct the CTF2 mid-term evaluation, the results of which are expected to inform recommendations to improve the performance of the CTF2 by late 2022.

The financial situation of the CTF2 remains sound and expenditures on project activities accelerated again in 2021 and 2022. Codex Trust Fund donors have signaled their continued commitment to support the work of the Trust Fund and actively engaged in discussions about how to ensure that the CTF2 will be best positioned to support eligible countries in the second half of its mandate, also considering a more virtual working environment.

#### A. INTRODUCTION

The CTF2 supports countries to build strong, solid and sustainable national capacity to engage in Codex work. For more information, please visit the Codex Trust Fund website: <https://www.who.int/initiatives/codex-trust-fund>.

Applications from eligible countries for CTF2 support are being assessed once per year through a transparent process. Successful applications receive support for up to three years. By mid-2022, six rounds of applications and selections had taken place, with 44 countries receiving CTF2 and up to eight countries (depending on the final decisions on conditional approvals) expecting to receive support through round 6.

#### B. STATUS OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The list below provides a summary of project implementation status by funding cycle as of August 2022: For a more detailed overview of project activities by country, please visit the CTF website at: <https://www.who.int/initiatives/codex-trust-fund/projects-and-impact>:

- Round 1: all four projects were completed in 2021.
- Round 2: all eight projects are under implementation.
- Round 3: all nine projects are under implementation.
- Round 4: all eight projects have started implementation.
- Round 5: all six countries are in the process of completing contracting/starting project implementation.

- Round 6: preparation of contracts for selected projects is underway; countries whose proposals received conditional approval are working on the required revisions with final decisions on funding expected by October 2022.

### Challenges in project implementation

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the implementation of CTF2 projects in 2021. However, with some countries lifting COVID-19 related public health restrictions and country teams adapting to a virtual work environment, the implementation rate accelerated again in most projects. Difficulties remain particularly linked to the implementation of activities that require the physical presence of participants, not all of which can be fully replaced by virtual tools. With the agreement of the CAC, the Codex Trust Fund has been given the opportunity to provide limited support to allow countries connect to virtual meetings. In addition, the CTF2 is allowing for the extension of project deadlines agreed before the pandemic to allow for the implementation of activities at a later time once COVID-19 related public health restrictions are eased.

Starting in 2021, there have been several disruptions to CTF2 projects caused by political instability. The Myanmar-led group project including Cambodia and Lao PDR needed to be put on hold following the political change that took place in Myanmar in February 2021. Mali and Guinea experienced political instability in May and September 2021, respectively, and Burkina Faso in January 2022. While the political changes in Africa affected administrative proceedings, the change in Myanmar led to the suspension of all collaborations of UN agencies with the country. To continue project implementation with the remaining group countries Cambodia and Lao PDR, the planned project has been adjusted to ensure the implementation of both national and joint activities. Regarding the affected countries in Africa, FAO and WHO regional and country offices continued the support of project implementation.

Administrative delays limited the timely implementation of some projects with most delays linked to the coordination between different institutions at national level and between implementing countries and lead agencies (FAO and WHO). While the Codex Trust Fund has no direct influence on delays at national level, as part of the CTF2 mid-term evaluation it is foreseen to identify potential inefficiencies within the CTF2 Secretariat and its global support structure which can subsequently be addressed to ensure smoother processes.

### Round 6 Call for Applications

The sixth call for applications for CTF2 funding opened on 1 September 2021 with 54 countries eligible to apply. In total, 14 applications were received in the on-line system by the 17 December 2021 deadline. 13 applications were assessed to be fully complete and met the pre-screening criteria.

The regional breakdown of applications in Round 6 is as follows:

- 7 from Codex African region (out of 23 eligible)
- 2 from Codex Asian region (out of 5 eligible)
- 1 from Codex European region (out of 4 eligible)
- 0 from Codex Latin American and Caribbean region (out of 11 eligible)
- 2 from Codex Near East region (out of 4 eligible)
- 2 from Codex North America Southwest Pacific region (out of 7 eligible)

The Technical Review Group appraised the quality of applications and provided recommendations to the CTF Steering Committee. Funding was approved for the applications submitted by *Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe*.

Conditional approval for funding, pending clarifications and/or substantial modifications of their proposals has been given to *Comoros, Niger, Syria and Uzbekistan*. Adding to the conditional approval for funding given to *Fiji* (application Round 5), a total of five applications are pending final decision for funding.

### Observation of trends

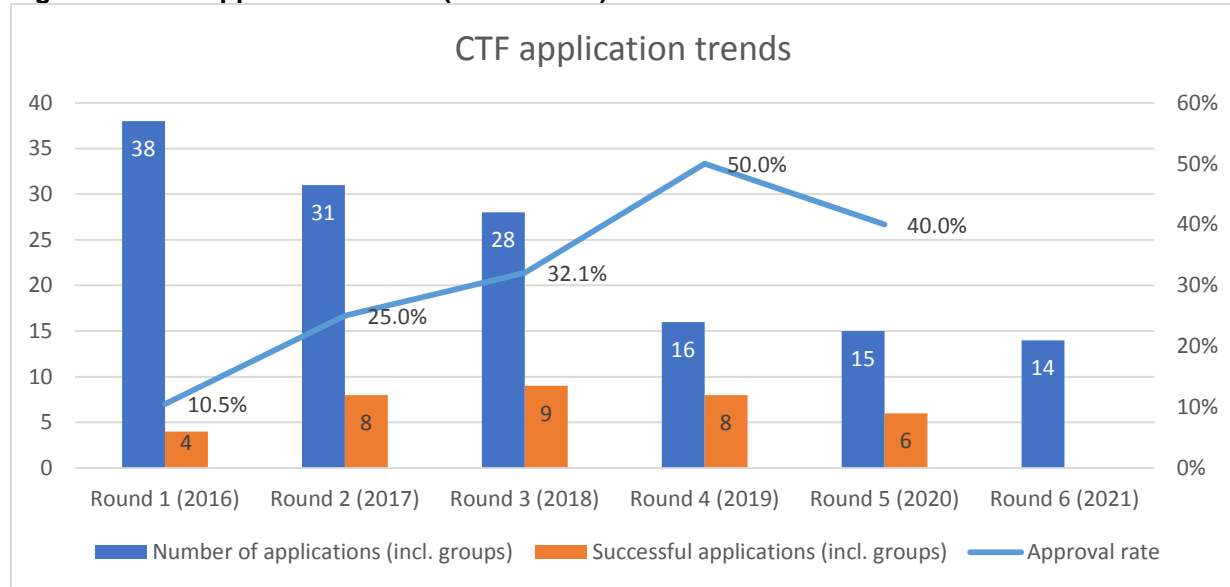
The figure below provides an overview of applications received and projects granted over the past rounds of CTF2 support. The trend towards a reducing number of applicants is partly due to a shrinking number of eligible countries that have not yet received CTF2 support (out of 103 countries eligible for CTF2 support in 2016, 44 have been granted CTF2 support and are implementing or preparing for the implementation of projects in 2021). The remaining countries have either not applied or were not successful with an earlier application.

In order to expand support to remaining eligible countries, in 2021 the CTF2 Secretariat, in collaboration with the Codex Regional Coordinating Committees and the FAO/WHO Regional Advisors, expanded training opportunities for CTF2 eligible countries on the CTF2 application process, as well as on the

application of the FAO/WHO Codex Diagnostic tool for self-assessing status of national Codex programmes. A stabilization of the number of applicants for Round 6 of CTF2 support indicates that outreach and training activities have been successful in maintaining interest of countries in CTF2 support, including those that had not been successful in applying in an earlier round.

The CTF2 Secretariat is planning to continue its strategy of increased engagement with CTF2 eligible countries and will take into consideration recommendations deriving from the CTF2 mid-term evaluation that will assess how the CTF2 can increase its effectiveness in providing support and enhancing the capacity of eligible countries.

**Figure 1: CTF2 application trends (2016 – 2021)**



### C. GOVERNANCE

The CTF2 Steering Committee, comprised of members from Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO met as needed, ten times, in 2021 and five times by August 2022. Decisions for Round 6 of CTF support were made in May 2022.

The annual meeting of the CTF2 Advisory Group convened virtually on 16 December 2021. In addition to updates provided by the CTF2 Secretariat, Codex regions and a panel of CTF recipient countries, this year's meeting focused on the discussion of the draft terms of reference (TOR) of the CTF2 mid-term evaluation as well as how to define and measure what constitutes "effective participation" in Codex work. It is foreseen to continue the discussion about "effective participation" in 2022.

On request of the CTF2 Secretariat, the Codex Alimentarius Commission at its 44<sup>th</sup> session signaled its support to the flexibility necessary to respond to the exceptional challenges posed to countries eligible for CTF2 support by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### D. FUNDRAISING

Throughout the reporting period, donors signaled their continued support for CTF2 and enabled the no-cost extension of grant agreements to ensure the full utilization of funds which was delayed by the disruption of implementation plans due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A virtual donor meeting open to all CTF1 and CTF2 donors was held on 30 June 2021. The meeting focused on the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of CTF2 projects, outlined the priorities of the CTF2 mid-term evaluation and discussed how best to ensure the most adequate and effective support for CTF2 eligible countries.

Also in June 2021, the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS) of the Republic of Korea held a virtual grant signing ceremony with WHO to mark the multi-annual support provided by MFDS to the Codex Trust Fund. The ceremony was held with one year of delay due to COVID-19, honoring the beginning of MFDS support in 2020.

Finland joined the group of CTF2 donor countries in December 2021, bringing the total number of active donors of the Codex Trust Fund in its current format to 16, now including Canada, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, the Rep. of Korea, Malaysia, the

Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

A breakdown of funding support received in 2021 is outlined in section F, Table 2.

#### **E. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework was approved by the CTF2 Steering Committee and the CTF2 Advisory Group. This report considers only the indicators at output level, which correlates to the implementation of activities and can be measured on annual basis. Output performance indicator (1.2) remains under methodological review and does not appear below. Following decision of the Steering Committee, some indicators will only be monitored if the activities take place (e.g. FAO/WHO Codex training courses). Indicators at the Outcome and Goal level will be measured after projects are completed. In 2021, all Round 1 countries (Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar and Senegal) completed their projects and will be first due for evaluation at these stages.

Performance Indicator	Baseline end 2020	Target	Performance Data	Self-evaluation
<b>Output 1 - Countries being supported making steady progress</b>				
1.1 - Number of individual countries supported through country or group applications	11 countries selected in 2020: Azerbaijan, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Kazakhstan, Laos PDR, Mauritius, Myanmar, Samoa, Tonga  (38 cumulative since CTF2 inception)	Year on year increase in number of countries	6 countries selected in 2021: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Maldives, Timor-Leste  (44 cumulative since CTF2 inception)	Annual - Not Achieved  Cumulative - Achieved
<b>Output 2 - Capacity of technical staff engaged in Codex activities increased as a result of project activities, sharing deliverables from projects, CTF2-supported FAO/WHO training and workshops.</b>				
2.1 - Number and type of activities supported in project countries (as an individual country or as part of a group project)	28	Broad range of activities supported <sup>1</sup>	111 activities in 2021, listed in this report under the Activities section.	Achieved
2.2 - Technical staff engaged in Codex activities in supported countries are working differently (including participating differently in Codex meetings) as a result of these inputs	Disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic led to a shift to the increased use of virtual tools, fundamentally changing the nature of participating in Codex meetings.	By end of project, each country to demonstrate 1-2 ways they are working differently	In 2021, most countries supported by CTF2 have introduced electronic tools enabling the participation in virtual Codex meetings	Achieved
2.3 - Number of outputs / deliverables from project countries being shared widely for use by all countries	10 materials (outputs/deliverables) on the CTF2 community library.	Year on year increase in number of outputs / deliverables	10 materials (outputs/deliverables) on the CTF2 community library.	Not achieved. Website was revamped in 2021. New material will be added in 2022.
2.5 - High level of satisfaction among participants in training courses/workshop organized and/or supported.	N/A	80% satisfaction rate	Satisfaction level was partially surveyed.	Not achieved

<sup>1</sup> including "innovative" activities (Codex coaching, south-south partnering/networking, tailored training etc.) & synergies with FAO/WHO activities

In preparation of the CTF2 mid-term evaluation, Terms of Reference were drafted in consultation with the CTF2 Advisory Group and distributed through established channels as part of a request for proposals to identify a suitable service provider. The evaluation is expected to produce their conclusions and recommendations by the fourth quarter of 2022. It will also review the CTF2 monitoring and evaluation framework and make suggestions on its improvement.

The aim of the CTF2 mid-term evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the Trust Fund's ability and effectiveness to deliver on its mandate and best serve its beneficiaries, while also considering new challenges arising from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the emerging new working environment.

The specific objectives of the mid-term evaluation are to:

- 1) Assess to what degree CTF2 has achieved working towards an increased capacity of developing and transition economy countries in engaging more effectively in the Codex system;
- 2) Review the setup, operational aspects and support structure of the CTF2 to identify potential areas of improvement, also considering how the CTF2 could adapt to the emerging virtual work environment imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic to become more effective;
- 3) Explore how the sustainability of CTF2 projects can be secured beyond the end of CTF2 support, considering both possible CTF2 interventions and other options;
- 4) Building on the findings under the objectives above, provide recommendations for the CTF2 looking forward, to ensure the CTF2 can maximize its support and best serve the needs of its beneficiaries during the second half of its mandate.

The Codex Trust Fund will be assessed in accordance with the criteria informed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)<sup>2</sup>, exploring the following dimensions:

- **Relevance** of CTF2 support provided to countries striving to engage more effectively in Codex work (or lack of required support that is not included in the scope of CTF2 support).
- **Coherence** of CTF2 support with activities undertaken in beneficiary countries and in alignment with similar and/or complementary support mechanisms.
- **Efficiency** of the funding mechanism in delivering support to beneficiary countries.
- **Effectiveness** of the CTF2 to deliver results and fulfil its mandate, measured against the project goal, outcome, outputs and activities outlined in the monitoring and evaluation framework specified for the programme.
- **Sustainability** of support provided on country level.
- **Impact** generated by the CTF2 beyond the effects of direct project implementation, including longer-term or broader social, environmental, and economic effects.

Following a competitive selection process, TDV Global was identified as the service provider to conduct the CTF2 mid-term evaluation. By the time this report was written, the evaluators had produced an inception report outlining the approach, methodology and timeline of their work, and data collection was well underway. Preliminary findings are expected by early Q4 2022. A final evaluation report will be provided by end of February 2023 and will inform key recommendations to be presented to the 46th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

## F. FINANCIAL REPORTING

This section provides an overview of the financial information of the CTF2. Table 1 provides the starting balance, contributions, expenditure and ending balance of the Trust Fund in 2021.

**Table 1**

Balance, income, expenditure 2021	US\$
Balance carried over from 2020	1,962,065
Contributions received in 2021	1,185,522
Expenditure in 2021, including PSC	969,840
<b>Balance end 2021</b>	<b>2,177,747</b>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

Contributions and expenditures by cost category for the period 1 January – 31 December 2021 are listed in tables 2 and 3 below.

**Table 2**

<b>Contributions in 2021</b>	<b>US\$</b>
<b>European Commission</b>	<i>375,895</i>
<b>Finland</b>	<i>84,459</i>
<b>India</b>	<i>25,000</i>
<b>Japan</b>	<i>90,168</i>
<b>Korea, Republic of</b>	<i>250,000</i>
<b>Malaysia</b>	<i>10,000</i>
<b>United States</b>	<i>350,000</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b><i>1,185,522</i></b>

**Table 3**

<b>Expenditure cost category</b>	<b>US\$ 2019</b>	<b>US\$ 2020</b>	<b>US\$ 2021</b>
<b>Support to countries</b>	<i>554,089</i>	<i>364,155</i>	<i>562,000</i>
<b>Project administration</b>	<i>4,344</i>	<i>1,246</i>	<i>36,505</i>
<b>Staff cost</b>	<i>449,913</i>	<i>421,308</i>	<i>268,879</i>
<b>Programme support cost (PSC)</b>	<i>131,085</i>	<i>93,436</i>	<i>102,456</i>
<b>Total (including PSC)</b>	<b><i>1,139,431</i></b>	<b><i>880,145</i></b>	<b><i>969,840</i></b>

2021 saw an overall increase in expenditures, with CTF2 recipient countries having continued catching up on their implementation plans, which is reflected in a higher share of funds allocated to country support for the project period, actually surpassing 2019 figures. Savings in staff costs is mostly due to the post of administrative assistant having been vacant for eight months in 2021. These savings outweighed the additional costs incurred during the transition period between the previous and the current the CTF2 Programme Administrators allowing for a two-month handover period.

Increases in expenditures were outweighed by financial contributions received from CTF2's committed donor community. With total contributions of USD 1,185,522 in 2021, the CTF2 balance at the end of the year was USD 2,177,747