



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
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Virtual

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CODEX COMMUNICATION WORK PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT

(Prepared by the Codex Secretariat)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CCLAC21 acknowledged the importance of prioritizing regional Codex communications and adopted the regional communications work plan 2020-2021¹ with the objectives of establishing clear communication channels and communicating the value of Codex Standards in the region.

1.2 Due to time constraints, CCLAC22 could not discuss the regional communications work plan for 2023-2024, and further adopted it during an Electronic Working Group (EWG)². In this context, CCLAC22 further confirmed and supported the activities proposed in CCLAC22/CRD03 which were linked to the efforts of the region to support the 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”.

1.3 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

2.1 The Coordinator has worked to continue communication among Members in the region by means of virtual meetings, emails, WhatsApp, telecommunications, and other informal meetings.

2.2 It is also important that Members ensure that the official contact detail of their CCP³ 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.

2.3 The EWG of CCLAC22 set a target that by CCLAC23 80% 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/e/D0fYsmRHYC>

which will only take 2-3 minutes and the results will be provided during the discussion on Agenda Item 7.

Objective 2: Convey the value of participation in Codex and the use of standards in the region

2.4 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

¹ REP20/LAC Appendix III

² REP22/LAC; Report of the EWG https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/sh-proxy/it/?lnk=1&url=https%253A%252F%252Fworkspace.fao.org%252Fsites%252Fcodex%252FMeetings%252FCX-725-22%252FLinks%252FN181_LAC_SP_2023-2024_en.pdf

³ List of CCLAC CCPs: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/codex-regions/cclac/members/en/>

and activities undertaken under the Action to support implementation of Codex AMR Texts (ACT)⁴ and Codex Trust Fund (CTF) projects. There has been an effort in the region to document and communicate activities through the preparation of short web stories that have been subsequently published on the CCLAC news page⁵ on the Codex website. This has been steadily increasing year on year.

2.5 Over the past two years World Food Safety Day provided a strong incentive to raise awareness on food safety and share information on national and regional initiatives. At least twenty countries in the region have shared stories since CCLAC22, multiple stories coming from some countries⁶, confirming the trend of the past observed period in 2022-2023. In this context the region has met its target of 60% of countries contributing to news items and World Food Safety Day was the major driver. Stories also covered technical areas such as for example antimicrobial resistance and the regional webinars organized in collaboration with FAO, WHO and the Codex Secretariat.

2.6 While CCLAC met the indicator established in the communications work plan, exceeding the goal of 30 news stories under point 2 with a total of 75 news published, there is still opportunity for more countries in the region to share their experience, especially from the Caribbean area.

2.7 There have been two countries involved in the ACT project, namely Bolivia and Colombia: both have shared at least two stories of initiatives and progress in the respective countries.

2.8 In the same context, the Phyto and Zoonitary Regulation and Control Agency of Ecuador (AGROCALIDAD), the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC), the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (FAO RLC), in collaboration with the Codex Secretariat, organized a series of virtual seminars with the purpose of promoting the use and application of Codex standards for the strengthening of national food safety systems. To share the results of these webinars, as of May 2024, a total of nine news has been published on the CCLAC page, and other communication material including photos and relevant messages have been also posted on the FAO and Codex X accounts.

2.9 There have been five CTF recipient countries in the region, Honduras, Cuba, Guyana, El Salvador, and Guatemala. All have shared at least one story of an initiative or progress in the region. Videos about the initiatives carried out in these countries have been produced and shared via the relevant channels of FAO, WHO and Codex, including websites and social media (YouTube and X).

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

3.1 There are functioning internal regional communication channels and in general, the region has made good progress since CCLAC22. With regard to Objective 2, World Food Safety Day continued to serve as a strong driver along with the webinars and related initiatives organized in the context of the ACT project. Moving forward, efforts should be made to continue to build in communications to all initiatives to maintain this situation, as well as to engage other Members in the region to share their experiences.

3.2 In this context, it is recommended that CCLAC23:

- renew its commitment to the Communications work plan, as updated in Annex 1;
- continue its efforts to enhance the regional communications network; and
- continue to communicate on and promote its food safety and standard setting efforts and successes.

⁴ <https://www.fao.org/antimicrobial-resistance/projects/ongoing/project-10/en/>

⁵ <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/codex-regions/cclac/about/en/>

⁶ Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Suriname.

ANNEX 1**PROPOSED REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS WORK PLAN 2024-2025**

The table shows the objectives, activities, targets and indicators for the CCLAC Regional Communications Work Plan. These elements derive from 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”.

Objectives	Activities	Responsible party	Targets	Indicators
1. Establish clear, communication channels	1.1. Consolidate and improve information flow and exchange between countries and Codex Secretariat (CS) 1.2. Establish simple and rapid communications methods (e.g. discussion group on Codex EWG forum)	1.1 Member Countries and CS 1.2 Regional Coordinator (RC), Member Countries and CS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By CCLAC24, 80% of Members/Observers surveyed indicate timeliness, accessibility and quality of Codex regional communications “excellent” or “good” 	Number of survey responses rating regional communications “excellent” or “good”
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 2.4 Liaise with ACT beneficiary countries in the region to communicate on every phase of ACT projects	2.1 Member Countries, RC 2.2 CS, RC, FAO/WHO 2.3 CTF Beneficiary Countries, FAO/WHO, CS 2.4 ACT Beneficiary Countries, FAO/WHO, CS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By CAC48, 20 news items from countries in the region published By CCLAC24, 30 news items from countries in the region By CCLAC24, 70% of countries in the region have continued to make a contribution to Codex news on the regional webpage 	Number of CCLAC news stories published Number of countries who have made a published contribution