



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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STRATEGIC PLANNING 2014 – 2019

GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

Background

1. CAC36 (2013) adopted the Strategic Plan of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for 2014-2019. It includes a work plan identifying for each activity: the responsible party, timeline, expected outcome and measurable indicators/outputs.
2. The Executive Committee and the Commission are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Plan annually to ensure effective progress in implementing the plan. The work plan notes that for monitoring progress, existing reports, data and information will be used where possible and, where necessary, the responsible parties will be asked to provide additional data.
3. This paper was prepared by the Codex Secretariat with the support of Vice-Chairperson Samuel Godefroy, FAO and WHO to:
 - Review options for data collection (e.g. using data from existing initiatives; data collection by Codex subsidiary bodies, members, host countries and FAO/ WHO); and
 - Support discussions of CCEXEC69 and CAC37 related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
4. The following elements are considered: existing data; selected surveys; support of FAO and WHO; role of CCEXEC and measurable indicators and outputs.

Existing Data

5. Data relevant to a number of measurable indicators are already available and could be easily used to monitor the implementation of activities, e.g. data related to several activities associated with Strategic Goals 1¹, 3² and 4³. These data can be obtained through existing resources, e.g. from committee' reports, working documents, information of the Secretariats, and no additional survey is needed.
6. However, committees' support could be needed to make such information easier to retrieve, e.g. documentation of risk management decisions, related to Activity 2.1.3⁴.
7. The Secretariat could recall this to committees, e.g. through the "matters referred" document, which would further sensitize committees in regard to the direction and priorities established by the Strategic Plan relevant to their work.

Selected Surveys

8. Some indicators can only be measured by information gathering through targeted surveys: e.g. for monitoring co-hosting arrangements (Activity 3.1.2⁵) or members' ability to attend committees that they have listed as a priority (Activity 3.2.2⁶).

¹ Strategic Goal 1: Establish international food standards that address current and emerging food issues.

² Strategic Goal 3: Facilitate the effective participation of all Codex Member.

³ Strategic Goal 4: Implement effective and efficient work management systems and practices.

⁴ Activity 2.1.3: Ensure that all relevant factors are fully considered in exploring risk management options in the context of Codex standard development.

9. For other indicators, established surveys and questionnaires could be adapted, e.g. the Circular Letter of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees, to provide information about the status of Codex structures and efforts to strengthen them (Activity 3.1.1⁷).

10. Surveys should be administered when the implementation of a specific activity has been promoted by the relevant parties, so that actual outputs and their impact can be recorded: e.g. regarding surveys on the use of virtual technologies to support Codex work processes (Activities 4.1.2⁸ and 4.1.3⁹); or surveys related to Physical Working Group meetings and consensus building (Activities 4.1.5¹⁰ and 4.2.1¹¹)

11. Information related to activities 2.1.2¹² and 2.3.3¹³ associated with Strategic Goal 2¹⁴ would require input from members as to the level of participation of their experts in Codex committees or their input into the development of national positions. Further work seems necessary to either clarify the level and type of information requested, e.g. what constitutes “appropriate inputs”, or to consider collecting other information, that could help to better evaluate progress towards achieving the expected outcome.

Support from FAO and WHO

12. Various activities associated with Strategic Goals 2¹⁷ and 3⁷ are only achievable through collaboration with FAO and WHO, given their role in the provision of scientific advice to Codex and in capacity building initiatives.

13. FAO/WHO capacity building initiatives contribute significantly to Codex activities and could serve as indicators if they are geared toward the goals of the plan. Information related to initiatives that contribute to the sustainability of Codex structures in developing countries (Activity 3.2.1¹⁵) could be sought from FAO and WHO and could be included in their regular reports to the Commission.

14. Data related to the level of funding of the Codex Trust Fund (CTF) or any successor initiative may be more easily gathered through the CTF Secretariat (activity 3.1.3¹⁶), administered by WHO.

15. FAO and WHO could also assist in gathering information on specific indicators: e.g. information related to the level of mobilization of members as part of their interventions in FAO and WHO governing bodies (Activity 2.2.1¹⁷) or the impacts of specific capacity building initiatives on the development and availability of expertise in developing countries to support data generation in response to calls for data (Activities 2.3.1¹⁸ and 2.3.2¹⁹).

16. It will be critical to have FAO and WHO support to provide information on implementation of relevant activities and to identify those FAO/WHO initiatives that directly contribute to the Strategic Plan and to strengthen them where required.

⁵ Activity 3.1.2: Encourage the use of partnership initiatives to increase effectiveness of participation of developing countries, such as co-hosting of committees and working groups, including the development of guidance documents, building on lessons learned.

⁶ Activity 3.2.2: Promote capacity development programs that assist countries in creating sustainable national Codex structures.

⁷ Activity 3.1.1: Encourage Members to develop sustainable national institutional arrangements to promote effective contribution to the Codex standard setting processes.

⁸ Activity 4.1.2: Assess benefits and, where cost effective, implement new technologies to improve, Codex communication, work flow, and management of activities.

⁹ Activity 4.1.3: Assess benefits and, where cost effective, implement new technologies to improve Member participation in committees and working groups.

¹⁰ Activity 4.1.5: Increase the scheduling of Work Group meetings in conjunction with Committee meetings.

¹¹ Activity 4.2.1: Improve the understanding of Codex Members and delegates of the importance of and approach to consensus building of Codex work.

¹² Activity 2.1.2: Encourage engagement of scientific and technical expertise of Members and their representatives in the development of Codex standards.

¹³ Activity 2.3.3: Encourage sustained and continuous participation of technical and scientific experts from developing countries in the work of Codex.

¹⁴ Strategic Goal 2: Ensure the application of risk analysis principles in the development of Codex standards.

¹⁵ Encourage FAO and WHO to implement capacity development programs that support the creation of sustainable national Codex-related structures.

¹⁶ Activity 3.1.3: Encourage financial contributions to the Codex Trust Fund and its successor initiative.

¹⁷ Activity 2.2.1: Encourage FAO and WHO governing bodies to identify the provision of scientific advice as a high priority and allocate sufficient resources for the FAO/WHO expert advice, in particular from expert bodies such as JECFA, JEMRA, JMPR and JEMNU.

¹⁸ Activity 2.3.1: Encourage developing countries to submit data in response to calls from FAO/WHO expert bodies, through enhanced food safety and nutrition data generation capabilities.

¹⁹ Activity 2.3.2: Encourage FAO and WHO to support programs aimed at enhancing the capacity of developing countries to generate, collect and submit data.

Role of Executive Committee

17. As part of its role in the Critical Review of monitoring the standard development process, the Executive Committee can play a key role in identifying potential process and procedural impediments. The Executive Committee, can therefore be an additional source of data and information, to those provided by the committees, to monitor Activity 4.1.1.²⁰

18. Beyond this specific function the Executive Committee should continue overseeing the general monitoring of the implementation of Strategic Plan and advise the Commission accordingly.

Measurable Indicators and Outputs

19. Each activity of the Strategic Plan is associated with measurable indicators and outputs, which are listed together making it difficult on occasion to distinguish outputs from indicators.

20. Some activities only list outputs, e.g. Activities 1.1.2²¹, 2.2.2²². For other activities the measurable indicators need to be clarified, e.g. the indicator of Activity 2.1.2²³: “# of scientists and technical experts as part of member country delegations”, needs criteria to determine who constitutes “scientists and technical experts”.

21. Some of the indicators apply to the outcome of an objective rather than to the implementation of an activity²⁴, e.g. the indicator of Activity 1.1.1²⁵: “# of standards revised and # of new standards developed based on these criteria” is more appropriate to the Objective 1.1²⁶.

Conclusion

22. This is the first year for the implementation of the new Codex Strategic Plan and therefore regular monitoring will begin after CAC37 as neither the responsible parties nor the secretariat have had sufficient time to report relevant information or initiate actions in support of data collection and reporting.

23. The above discussion shows that a lot of information or data relevant to monitoring implementation of the plan is currently generated as part of regular Codex activities, or could become available as part of the Codex work plan, without any additional burden to Codex subsidiary bodies and members. This information and data will be used in the annual implementation report to the Executive Committee and the Commission.

24. For a number of other activities, data and information need to be generated through: specific requests for information to Codex subsidiary bodies; development of *ad hoc* surveys; and assistance of FAO and WHO.

25. For other activities, it will be necessary to clarify the nature and type of the information requested. Table 1 summarizes the availability of information and data for each activity. For the measurable indicators additional work is necessary, including the consideration of higher level measurable indicators, targeted to the Objectives or to the Strategic Goals.

26. Additional work is needed to differentiate between measurable indicators and outputs and to identify and clarify those indicators that could be linked to the achievement of the objective. A set of higher level indicators (for the Objective or the Strategic Goal) could be developed which would give greater value to the indicators and reduce the burden of monitoring.

27. Overall it is important that available information is used in the best way and that collection of data and information is targeted, and does not result in an excessive burden to the work of the committees, members and FAO and WHO.

²⁰ Activity 4.1.1: Periodically review the work processes and procedures used by the CAC and its subsidiary bodies to ensure impediments to standard-setting work are identified and addressed, if necessary.

²¹ Activity 1.1.2: Strengthen the critical review process to improve standards monitoring.

²² Activity 2.2.2: Encourage continued financial support from Members for the FAO/WHO expert advice, in particular from FAO/WHO expert bodies such as JECFA, JEMRA, JMPR and JEMNU.

²³ Activity 2.1.2: Encourage engagement of scientific and technical expertise of Members and their representatives in the development of Codex standards

²⁴ REP13/EXEC, para. 85.

²⁵ Activity 1.1.1: Consistently apply decision-making and priority-setting criteria across Committees to ensure that the standards and work areas of highest priority are progressed in a timely manner.

²⁶ Objective 1.1: Establish new and review existing Codex standards, based on priorities of the CAC.

Recommendations

28. It is recommended that the Commission, request:

(i) The Codex Secretariat, in collaboration with FAO and WHO, to:

- Present at the next Session of the Commission and Executive Committee a report of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for those activities for which information and data are available;
- Prepare a plan for the development of surveys or other proposals to monitor the remaining activities for which information and data are not available;
- Consider the development a set of higher level measurable indicators (for each of the nine Goals or for each of the four Strategic Objectives).

(ii) The Committees to report on:

- The way they are documenting their priority setting to identify new work or to update standards (Activities 1.1.1 and 1.2.2).

Table 1 – Codex Strategic Plan 2014-2019: Availability and source of data and information

Activity	Availability of data and information	Source
Strategic Goal 1: Establish international food standards that address current and emerging food issues		
Objective 1.1: Establish new and review existing Codex standards, based on priorities of the CAC.		
Activity 1.1.1 - Consistently apply decision-making and priority-setting criteria across Committees to ensure that the standards and work areas of highest priority are progressed in a timely manner.	Not currently available. Committees can be asked to document their priority setting to identify new work, emerging issues or to revise standards (combine with Activity 1.2.2).	Committees' reports.
Activity 1.1.2 - Strengthen the critical review process to improve standards monitoring.	Available	Report prepared by the Codex Secretariat for the CCEXEC70.
Objective 1.2: Proactively identify emerging issues ²⁷ and Member needs and, where appropriate, develop relevant food standards.		
Activity 1.2.1 - Develop a systematic approach to promote identification of emerging issues related to food safety, nutrition, and fair practices in the food trade.	Approach to be developed (possibly addressing other activities).	Report of the Secretariat on the outcome of the survey
Activity 1.2.2 - Develop and revise international and regional standards as needed, in response to needs identified by Members and in response to factors that affect food safety, nutrition and fair practices in the food trade.	See Activity 1.1.1	Committees' reports.
Objective 1.3: Strengthen coordination and cooperation with other international standards-setting organizations seeking to avoid duplication of efforts and optimize opportunities		
Activity 1.3.1 - Promote collaboration in standards development in Codex with the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) on standards that cover the farm to fork continuum and affect Codex and those organizations	Available	Reports presented at the CAC.
Activity 1.3.2 - Promote cooperation with other international governmental and non-governmental standard-setting organizations to support development of relevant Codex standards and to enhance awareness, understanding and use of Codex standards.	Available. Consider the need and scope for analysis and survey.	Reports presented at the CAC.
Strategic Goal 2: Ensure the application of risk analysis principles in the development of Codex standards.		
Objective 2.1: Ensure consistent use of risk analysis principles and scientific advice.		
Activity 2.1.1 - Use the scientific advice of the joint FAO/WHO expert bodies to the fullest extent possible in food safety and nutrition standards development based on the "Working Principles of Risk Analysis for Application in the Framework of the Codex Alimentarius".	Partly available. Consider the need to conduct an in-depth analysis to identify trends in requests, availability and use of data.	Committees' reports.
Activity 2.1.2 - Encourage engagement of scientific and technical expertise of Members and their representatives in the development of Codex standards.	Not available. Consider the need and scope for analysis and survey (combine with Activities 2.1.3 and 2.3.3).	
Activity 2.1.3 - Ensure that all relevant factors are fully considered in exploring risk management options in the context of Codex standard development.	Not available. See Activity 2.1.2.	
Activity 2.1.4 - Communicate the risk management recommendations to all interested parties.	Not available. Wait for the completion of the communication strategy.	

²⁷ Emerging food safety and nutrition issues are interpreted to include scientific and technological innovations and emerging hazards, related to ongoing investigations or extra-ordinary events (e.g., natural disaster, external threats).

Activity	Availability of data and information	Source
Objective 2.2: Achieve sustainable access to scientific advice.		
Activity 2.2.1 - Encourage FAO and WHO governing bodies to identify the provision of scientific advice as a high priority and allocate sufficient resources for the FAO/WHO expert advice, in particular from expert bodies such as JECFA, JEMRA, JMPR and JEMNU.	Not available. Discuss with FAO and WHO if and how to report on this activity.	
Activity 2.2.2 - Encourage continued financial support from Members for the FAO/WHO expert advice, in particular from expert bodies such as JECFA, JEMRA, JMPR and JEMNU.	Available.	Financial report on FAO and WHO provisions of scientific advice presented at the CAC.
Activity 2.2.3 - Explore other appropriate funding sources for FAO/WHO scientific advice.	Available. Not clear how the report can impact on the Objective 2.2.	CAC on-going discussion.
Objective 2.3: Increase scientific input from developing countries.		
Activity 2.3.1 - Encourage developing countries to submit data in response to calls from FAO/WHO expert bodies, through enhanced food safety and nutrition data generation capabilities.	Not available. Discuss with FAO and WHO if and how to report on this activity.	
Activity 2.3.2 - Encourage FAO and WHO to support programs aimed at enhancing the capacity of developing countries to generate, collect and submit data.	Not available. Discuss with FAO and WHO if and how to report on this activity. (combine with Activity 2.3.4).	
Activity 2.3.3 - Encourage sustained and continuous participation of technical and scientific experts from developing countries in the work of Codex.	Not available. See Activity 2.1.2.	
Activity 2.3.4 - Encourage the establishment of and participation in networks of Members to enhance collaboration in the generation of data that can be submitted for review by expert committees.	Not available. See Activity 2.3.2	
Strategic Goal 3: Facilitate the effective participation of all Codex Members.		
Objective 3.1: Increase the effective participation of developing countries in Codex.		
Activity 3.1.1 - Encourage Members to develop sustainable national institutional arrangements to promote effective contribution to the Codex standard setting processes.	Available. Consider the use of web-based tool to collect this information.	Reports of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees.
Activity 3.1.2 - Encourage the use of partnership initiatives to increase effectiveness of participation of developing countries, such as co-hosting of committees and working groups, including the development of guidance documents, building on lessons learned.	Partly available. Consider the need and scope for survey.	Reports and schedule of meetings and initiatives.
Activity 3.1.3 - Encourage financial contributions to the Codex Trust Fund and its successor initiative.	Available.	Reports CTF Secretariat.
Activity 3.1.4 - Support the planning and development of a successor initiative for the Codex Trust Fund.	Available.	CAC reports.
Activity 3.1.5 - To the extent possible, promote the use of the official languages of the Commission in committees and working groups.	Available.	Committees' reports.
Objective 3.2: Promote capacity development programs that assist countries in creating sustainable national Codex structures.		
Activity 3.2.1 - Encourage FAO and WHO to implement capacity development programs that support the creation of sustainable national Codex-related structures.	Available. Consider some criteria to define "functioning structure".	Reports of FAO, WHO and CTF presented at CAC and at Coordinating Committees.
Activity 3.2.2 - Encourage developing countries to identify and prioritize Codex committees and task forces of significance to them.	Not available. Consider the need and scope for survey.	

Activity	Availability of data and information	Source
Activity 3.2.3 - Where practical, the use of Codex meetings as a forum to effectively conduct educational and technical capacity building activities.	Available.	Information of the Secretariat and FAO, WHO and CTF reports.
Strategic Goal 4: Implement effective and efficient work management systems and practices.		
Objective 4.1: Strive for an effective, efficient, transparent, and consensus based standard setting process.		
Activities 4.1.1 Periodically review the work processes and procedures used by the CAC and its subsidiary bodies to ensure impediments to standard-setting work are identified and addressed, if necessary.	Not available. Consider the need and scope for survey and specific questions to be addressed by committees.	
Activities 4.1.2 - Assess benefits and, where cost effective, implement new technologies to improve, Codex communication, work flow, and management of activities.	Available. (combine with Activity 4.1.3).	Report of the Secretariat.
Activities 4.1.3 Assess benefits and, where cost effective, implement new technologies to improve Member participation in committees and working groups.	See Activity 4.1.2	Report of the Secretariat.
Activities 4.1.4 - Ensure timely distribution of all Codex working documents in the working languages of the Committee/Commission.	Available.	Report of the Secretariat.
Activities 4.1.5 - Increase the scheduling of Work Group meetings in conjunction with Committee meetings.	Available.	Committees' reports.
Objective 4.2: Enhance capacity to arrive at consensus in standards setting process.		
Activities 4.2.1 - Improve the understanding of Codex Members and delegates of the importance of and approach to consensus building of Codex work.	Available.	Report of Secretariat.
Activities 4.2.2 - Through networking, training and workshops, seek to improve the skill set of chairs of working groups and committees to achieve consensus.	Available. (combine with Activity 4.2.2).	Report of Secretariat.