



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**  
**73<sup>rd</sup> Session**  
**WHO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland**  
**10 - 13 July 2017**

**STRATEGIC PLAN 2014–2019: IMPLEMENTATION STATUS**  
**(Prepared by the Codex Secretariat in collaboration with FAO and WHO)**

*This paper presents the:*  
*Implementation status of the Codex Strategic Plan 2014–19 (Section 2 and Appendix I);*  
*Implementation status of the Codex Communications Strategy 2015–17 (Appendix II);*  
*Draft outline of the Codex Communications Strategy 2017–19 (Appendix III).*

## **1. BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Codex Strategic Plan 2014–19**

1. CAC36 (2013) adopted the Strategic Plan of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for 2014–19 (the Strategic Plan)<sup>1</sup>. The Executive Committee has the responsibility to annually monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
2. This report has been prepared for the third calendar year of implementation (2016) based on the following sources of information:
  - Existing data from monitoring tools (e.g. reports, working documents);
  - Replies submitted by Codex Subsidiary Bodies to a standardised questionnaire<sup>2</sup>;
  - Information provided from FAO and WHO;
  - Information provided from FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees (RCCs);
3. Four activities (1.1.2, 2.2.3, 3.1.4 and 4.1.2) are no longer monitored as these were agreed as finalised by CCEXEC71<sup>3</sup>. None or little information was collected for nine indicators that were identified as unmeasurable/unclear in previous reports to CCEXEC (under activities 2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.4, 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.2.1).
4. Currently there is no tool to collect information directly from members, which makes it difficult to monitor certain activities such as the establishment and participation of members in networks (2.3.4), the use of partnership initiatives (3.1.2) or the identification and prioritization of Codex Committees/Task Forces by developing countries (3.2.2). Information provided from the online platform embedded in the Codex Alimentarius website can be a suitable source in the future. However, at this moment it is not designed to collect such a broad spectrum of information.
5. From September 2016, as a result of the revitalization process, the item “Monitoring of the Implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan” was included in the agendas of all RCCs. This item was added to provide support to CCEXEC in monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Plan and might also help the Codex Secretariat to collect missing information such as those mentioned in para.4.
6. Following a request by CAC39 to regularly review Codex work management practices as part of the monitoring of the Strategic Plan, a Secretariat-led review of Electronic Working Groups (EWGs) took place between September 2016 and February 2017. Relevant findings and recommendations from this review are contained in CX/EXEC 17/73/3.

<sup>1</sup> [www.codexalimentarius.org/procedures-strategies/strategic-planning/en/](http://www.codexalimentarius.org/procedures-strategies/strategic-planning/en/)

<sup>2</sup> Replies received from all Codex Subsidiary Bodies, except for CCAFRICA, CCNASWP, CCLAC, CCNEA, CCEURO

<sup>3</sup> REP16/EXEC para.83.

7. Details of the implementation status of the Strategic Plan for the calendar year 2016 are presented in Appendix I.

## 1.2 Codex Communications Strategy

8. CCEXEC71 recommended that the Secretariat prepare a report on the outcome of the Codex Communications Strategy 2015–17 and present a new draft Communications Strategy for the years 2017–19. The two documents are contained in Appendix II and III respectively.

## 2. SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2014–19

### 2.1 Implementation of goals for 2016

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

9. CAC39 (2016) adopted three new standards and related texts (the standards) as well as 28 changes<sup>4</sup> to existing standards. Some Committees continue using their own scheme to discuss emerging issues in addition to the *Criteria for Establishment of Work Priorities* in the Procedural Manual.

10. Persistent and emerging food safety and quality issues were proactively identified through a survey for all six Codex regions and presented at the respective regional Committee sessions in 2016/early 2017.

#### Goal 2: Ensure the application of risk analysis principles in the development of Codex standards

11. The *Working Principles for Risk Analysis* stipulated in the Procedural Manual remain the basis for risk analysis in the development of Codex standards. Three committees follow additional specific criteria. While some committees regularly request/use scientific advice from FAO/WHO, others seek scientific advice only on a case by case basis.

12. FAO has developed an umbrella project proposal to seek extra-budgetary resources to ensure sustainability of the joint FAO/WHO Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme. In addition, the FAO Committee of Agriculture established an open-ended informal working group on sustainable funding for the programme which will discuss funding options throughout 2017. In WHO, the funding allocation to scientific advice on food safety remained problematic.

13. In order to increase the scientific input from developing countries, FAO/WHO have provided support through ten activities including training and projects aimed at enhancing the capacity of developing countries. Currently no adequate indicator exists to measure the scientific data input from developing countries, but both quantity and quality of data provided by developing countries is estimated to be insufficient.

#### Goal 3: Facilitate the effective participation of all Codex Members

14. In 2016 the Codex Trust Fund successor initiative (CTF2) was launched and numerous events were held to promote both participation and investment in the fund, which so far is supported by only seven donor countries. Differently from the first CTF, which had the primary focus on supporting physical participation in Codex meetings, CTF2 seeks to help build strong, solid and sustainable national capacity to engage in Codex.

15. While the percentage of co-hosted EWGs continued to increase in 2016, the percentage of co-hosted Physical Working Groups (PWGs) slightly dropped and no session of a Codex Committee was co-hosted in 2016.

16. 2016 saw an increase in side events held at the margins of Codex Committee sessions which covered a range of topics such as CTF2, the global burden on foodborne diseases and approaches to scientific advice for nutrition.

#### Goal 4: Implement effective and efficient work management systems and practices

17. The technological changes introduced in 2014 (Online Registration System, improved Codex website, online forum for EWGs) were continued to be enhanced and used throughout 2016. In addition, the new Online Commenting System (OCS) was launched in July 2016 and rolled out in the second half of the year. The technological innovations and enhancements made sought to increase the efficiency and transparency in Codex work.

18. The Secretariat continued activities to harmonise approaches and increase capacity of Committee chairs when facilitating consensus, most notably through a two day workshop. In addition, five Committees held seminars for first time delegates prior to their sessions.

19. The timely distribution of documents continues to be a challenge as only 28 percent of documents were distributed at least two months prior to the respective committee session (2% less than in 2015).

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<sup>4</sup> The word “changes” refers to both revisions and amendments made to Codex existing standards and related texts.

20. Overall the elaboration and revision of Codex standards does not exceed the time frame of five years set by the Procedural Manual (96% of new work was finalized in less than 5 years between 2009 and 2016).

## 2.2 Conclusions

21. The implementation of the Strategic Plan was progressing well in 2016. The performance related to the objective outcomes remained the same as in previous year with some exceptions as follows.

22. The status improved for:

- Activities related to work management of each Committee (i.e. 1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.2.2): Most of the Committees had the opportunity to consider enhancing their work management practices in response to the request from CCEXEC70. As a result, five Committees took action in this regard. In addition, RCCs horizontally included new agenda items titled “food safety and quality situation in the countries of the region” and “prioritization of the needs of the region and possible approaches to address them” with a view to a more proactive identification of emerging issues and Member needs;
- Activities related to communication tools (i.e. 4.1.8): The Codex Secretariat continues to introduce systems since 2014 such as the ORS, OCS and the new Codex Website to facilitate the communication among stakeholders;
- Co-hosting of EWGs (3.1.2), side events (3.2.3), PWGs held in conjunction with plenary sessions (4.1.5).

23. The status of participation from developing countries activities (2.3.3) and the timely distribution of working documents (4.1.4) slightly deteriorated compared to the previous year.

24. According to the timeline in the Strategic Plan, three activities (1.2.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.2) were finalized 2016. In total, eight activities, corresponding to 25 percent of all activities, had been finalized by the end of 2016.

25. Some of the information gathered in 2016 contributed to the monitoring of activities that contained unclear or unmeasurable indicators (e.g. 2.1.2, 3.1.1 and 4.1.1)<sup>5</sup>.

26. With regards to the submission of scientific data from developing countries (activity 2.3.1) a more adequate progress indicator still needs to be developed. Also the extent to which developing country members have developed sustainable institutional arrangements (activity 3.1.1) can currently not be measured. However, the Secretariat has started collecting information on national institutional arrangements on the member platform<sup>6</sup> embedded in the Codex website.

## 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

27. It is recommended that the Executive Committee:

### Strategic Plan 2014–19

- (1) Consider whether activities are evolving in the right direction and, where activities are not implemented satisfactorily, suggest measures to improve the outcome;
- (2) Identify activities that are no longer relevant and for which data and information may not be needed;
- (3) Take note of the continuing difficulties concerning the monitoring of activities that include unclear or unmeasurable indicators and carefully consider the measurability of indicators when developing the Strategic Plan 2020–25;
- (4) Request the Codex Secretariat, in collaboration with FAO and WHO, to present at CAC41 and EXEC75 a status report of the 2017 implementation of the Strategic Plan;

### Communications Strategy 2015–17

- (5) Note the report on the Communications Strategy 2015–17;

### Draft Communications Strategy 2017–19

- (6) Consider and confirm the mission and objectives of the 2017–19 Communications Strategy;
- (7) Request the Secretariat to identify specific activities under each objective;
- (8) Request the Secretariat to present the completed strategy to CCEXEC74 (Rome September 2017) for examination and approval;
- (9) Request that CCEXEC74 nominate a member/s of CCEXEC to advise on the 2017–19 strategy.

<sup>5</sup> CX/CAC 15/38/12

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.codexalimentarius.org/members-observers/members/en>

## SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

### 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.**

The objective has been met as in 2016 CAC39 adopted three new standards and 28 changes to existing standards.

Committees have reported that they follow the *Criteria for Establishment of Work Priorities* outlined in the Procedural Manual. In addition, a few Committees continue to use supplementary criteria to help prioritise their work. Persistent and emerging food safety and quality issues were identified for all six Codex regions and presented at the respective regional committee sessions.

#### **Activity 1.1.1**

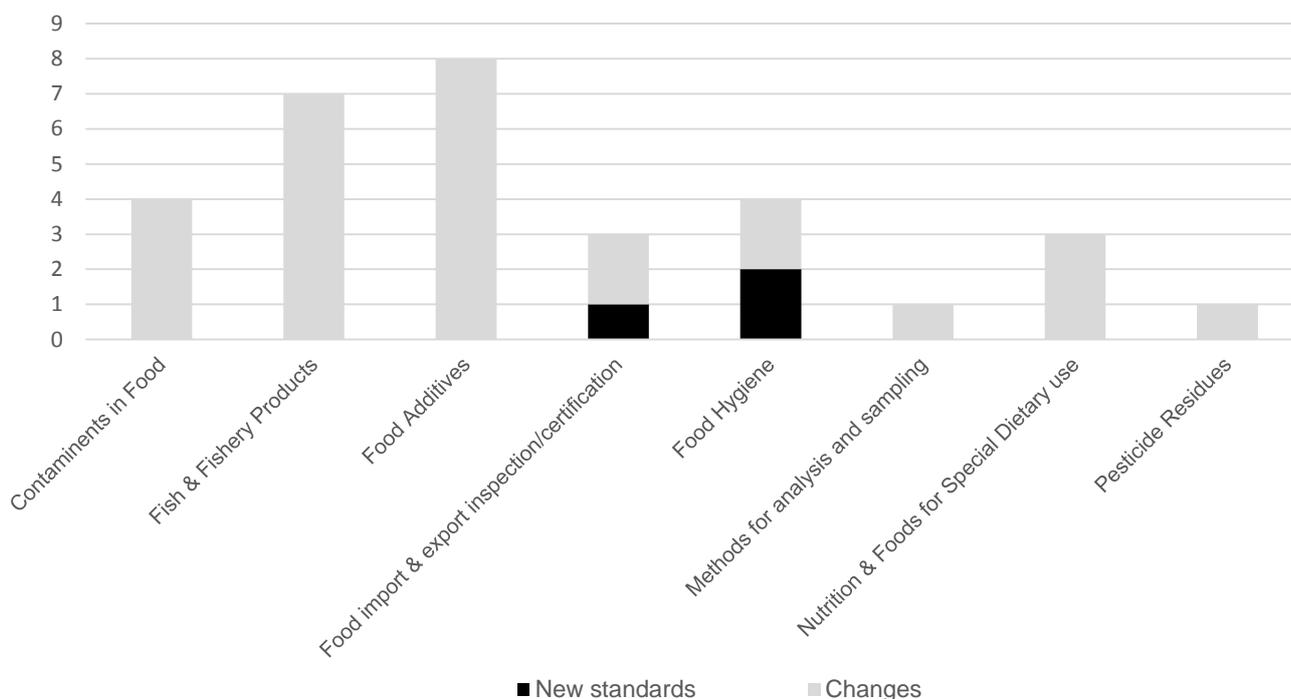
All subsidiary bodies follow the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities in the Procedural Manual (PM).

The Committees CCCF, CCFH, CCPR, CCRVDF and CCFICS continue to use additional criteria to prioritize their work. No Committee expressed any imminent plans for review or revision of the current criteria.

CCEXEC70 recommended to all Committees to consider the need to develop an approach for the management of their work similar to that used by CCFH (while recognising the differences in topics, working procedures, etc. among various committees). At least five Committees decided to take action in reply to this recommendation to enhance their work management, while others replied that the current frame was sufficient.

Considering that all new proposals were assessed using the criteria in the PM, the number of standards developed and revisions based on priority setting criteria equals the total number of new standards and changes to existing standards adopted at Step 8 or Step 5/8 at the CAC39, which is 31.

Figure 1: New standards and changes to existing standards adopted in 2016 by Committee



#### **Objective 1.2: Proactively identify emerging issues<sup>7</sup> and Member needs and, where appropriate, develop relevant food standards.**

Subsidiary bodies do not use a common systematic approach to identify emerging issues. Some Committees such as CCFH and CCFICS use their own scheme to discuss emerging issues that are relevant to their respective Terms of Reference. Members, other relevant Committees and the parent organisations flag and

<sup>7</sup> 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 disasters, external threats).

report emerging issues during or prior to Committee sessions to ensure that newly developed or revised standards meet user needs.

For all six RCCs, the item “*Food safety and quality situation in the countries of the region*” has been included in the provisional agendas. The agenda item aimed at identifying and prioritizing the needs in the regions, especially with regards to persistent and emerging food safety and quality issues.

### **Activity 1.2.1 and 1.2.2**

In March 2016, the Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO have launched a survey for Members to identify critical and emerging issues in food safety and quality. The information collected fed into background documents for Regional Coordinating Committees. Depending on the quality of data and the discussions and conclusions held in each region, the Secretariat will decide whether or not to integrate information deriving from the survey in the Codex member platform to assist Members in the future to identify and track emerging issues

### **Objective 1.3: Strengthen coordination and cooperation with other international standards-setting organizations seeking to avoid duplication of efforts and optimize opportunities**

The Codex sister organisations OIE and IPPC attend sessions of the CAC and some subsidiary bodies on a regular basis. Information on recent activities from OIE is a standing item on the Commission agenda and the relevant Committees (i.e. CCFH, CCFICS, and CCRVDF). The coordination with IPPC continued to be strengthened on an administrative level as the two organizations jointly implementation and continuously develop an online commenting system with the assistance of a shared staff member. Codex cooperates with IPPC and OIE regarding common interests in WTO and STDF.

Other standard-setting organizations participated in the relevant Committees and provided useful information. The Codex Communications Strategy identifies Codex Observers as part of the target audience and includes activities that aim to enhance the engagement of observers by 2017 to support collaboration in the development of Codex Standards

Codex was represented at several events organized by the international organisations like ISO, OECD, UNECE and the WTO in 2016.

### **Activity 1.3.1**

The cooperation between Codex Committees and the OIE is described in more detail in documents: FICS/22 INF/2, CX/RVDF 16/23/4, CX/FH 16/48/4.

### **Activity 1.3.2**

The Codex Secretariat is regularly participating in events of international organizations (e.g. ISO, OECD, UNECE, WTO). However, no specific action plan regarding the coordination and cooperation with other international organizations exists. This is further addressed in CX/CAC 17/40/19 (Relations between Codex and other International Organizations).

## **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.**

CCCF, CCFA, CCFH, CCPR and CCRVDF regularly requested and used the scientific advice of the joint FAO/WHO expert bodies. These committees follow the Working Principles for Risk Analysis in the PM, which guide them to ensure that all the relevant factors in exploring risk management options are considered. Other Committees, such as CCNFSDU, CCFFP, CCFO and CCNASWP have sought scientific advice from FAO/WHO as needed.

In addition to FAO/WHO expert body advice, members typically seek and engage national scientific and technical expertise from within their government and from those outside the government prior to developing and advancing a country's position.

Risk management recommendations are communicated through the publication of standards or related texts themselves. In addition, news articles on the Codex website and Tweets highlighted specific risk assessment issues related to the adopted texts.

### **Activity 2.1.3**

The Committees below continued to follow specific criteria in addition to the Working Principles for Risk Analysis:

- CCCF - Specific criteria for setting MLs for contaminants in the GSCTFF
- CCPR - Risk Analysis Principles applied by the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues

- CCRVDF - Risk Analysis Principles applied by the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods

#### **Activity 2.1.4**

In 2016, the Commission adopted three new standards and 28 changes to existing standards. Information on the adopted texts was published on the Codex Website around a month after the meeting. In addition, news articles on the Codex website regularly highlight the content of specific standards and risk management information (e.g. Nov 2016 China Food Safety and Risk Communication Conference). Codex also used Twitter to link latest news on food trade and food safety with Codex standards. Around 5,500 tweets were published in 2016 and the number of followers increased from 1,200 to 3,200.

#### **Objective 2.2: Achieve sustainable access to scientific advice.**

In 2016, CAC39 *“called on Members to provide additional resources in such a way that would increase the funding of the scientific advice programme in a predictable manner until a long-term solution is found and strongly encouraged Codex Members to increase in-country communication between the health and agriculture sectors with a view to heightening awareness within the governing bodies of FAO and WHO on the urgent need for critical core funding.”*<sup>8</sup>

The 40<sup>th</sup> session of the FAO Committee of Agriculture (COAG) established an open-ended informal working group on sustainable funding for FAO/WHO's Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme with the mandate to consider options for adequate and sustainable funding for the programme building on past CAC recommendations. In parallel FAO developed an umbrella project proposal to allow in the most streamlined form possible for Codex and FAO members to support the scientific advice program through extra-budgetary funds.

#### **Activity 2.2.1**

FAO has continued in its commitment to protect its current scientific advice funding through ring-fencing the allocated budgets for staff and activities. FAO's Committee of Agriculture has further established an open-ended informal working group on sustainable funding for FAO/WHO's Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme. The first meeting of this open-ended working group is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

In the case of WHO, resource allocation to scientific advice on food safety remained inadequate throughout 2016 as it is derived solely from extra-budgetary funding. In addition, food safety has not been on the agenda of WHO governing body meetings for a long time and no Member interventions on the matter have been made.

#### **Activity 2.2.2**

FAO has developed an umbrella project proposal that will allow in the most streamlined form possible for Codex and FAO members to support the scientific advice programme through extra-budgetary funds. However, challenges regarding the predictability remain. FAO gratefully acknowledges the support from Canada that in addition to extra-budgetary contributions also provided a two year secondment of a senior risk assessment specialist to FAO's scientific advice programme on microbiological risk assessment.

#### **Objective 2.3: Increase scientific input from developing countries.**

In 2016, CAC39 and the sessions of 11 subsidiary bodies<sup>9</sup> were held and attended by a total of 705 delegations and 2,073 delegates, including national technical and scientific experts. Out of the 705 delegations 205 were from developing countries<sup>10</sup>, which corresponds to 29 percent of the total delegation numbers. Out of the 2,073 delegates 581 were from developing countries, which corresponds to 28 percent of the total delegate numbers. Both percentages constitute a decrease of 2 percent compared to 2015.

Among the 188 Codex members, 80 were developing countries in 2016, which corresponds to 42 percent of the total membership. For sessions held in 2016, 21-37 percent of the delegations that attended were from developing countries.

FAO/WHO have provided support through ten activities including trainings, events and projects aimed at enhancing the capacity of developing countries with a view to also increase scientific input from these countries.

FAO and WHO continued to face a shortage of scientific data from developing countries and no suitable indicator for the measurement of progress in this area has been developed. JECFA however has engaged in a novel process for the evaluation of compounds which attempts to gather more comprehensive data including from developing countries.

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<sup>8</sup> REP16/CAC para 221

<sup>9</sup> The sessions of CCEXEC and RCCs are excluded as they have restricted participation.

<sup>10</sup> Developing Countries: Low-income economies and Lower-middle-income economies under classification provided by World Bank for each fiscal year (<http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups>).

**Activity 2.3.1**

In order to address the issue regarding a paucity of data for the evaluation of residues of veterinary drugs that are critical to some areas, yet lack the support of a sponsoring manufacturer, JECFA engaged in a novel process for the evaluation of some compounds answering to the request of multiple Codex members. This process will attempt to gather, through a comprehensive and critical literature search combined with other datasets made available by Codex members, enough data for recommending MRLs in food. While it is too early to evaluate the success of this approach, it is one activity targeted to break through the impasse of data scarcity faced by Codex members from developing countries.

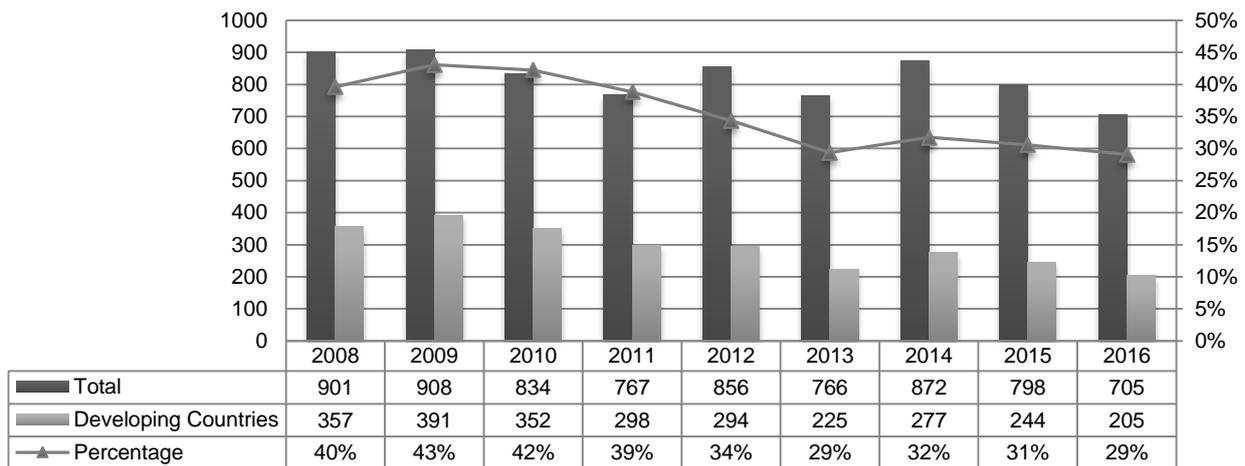
**Activity 2.3.2**

Support was provided through a range of capacity development modalities as follows:

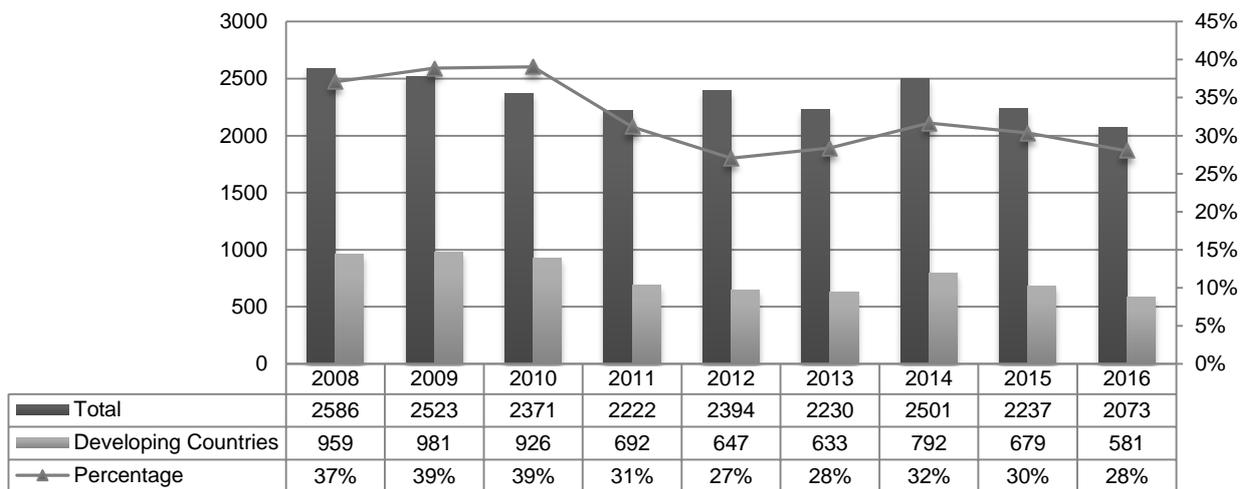
- Technical support to the African Pesticide Data Generation Project (STDF/PG/359) for strengthening regional capacity to meet pesticide export requirements based on international standards (Codex MRLs) - Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia (extended to 2017);
- Implementation of a regional Total Diet Study (TDS) in Nigeria, Mali, Cameroon and Benin - FAO/WHO managed this STDF funded project (ongoing);
- The project GCP/BGD/047/NET completed a series of surveys to collect data on the principal hazards in 7 most consumed food commodities in Bangladesh in 2016
- The projects GCP/BGD/047/NET and GCP/BGD/054/USA supported a hazard assessment in 2016 with the Department of Livestock Services in Bangladesh along the poultry value chain from farm through to retail points
- Completion of TCP/MLI/3502: sequence of seven training courses and distance mentoring activities to support Mali capacity to identify food safety issues, collect and analyse data to support risk analysis processes.
- Closing of TCP/GUA/3501 MAGA Support for the development of a risk profile and /or risk assessment to determine the damage to human health from corn consumption (Guatemala)
- FAO completed support to the implementation of a program on microbiological and chemical risk management in Ghana through a series of workshops and long-distance support of participants. The focus was on strengthening the regulatory interface with two value chains: cassava and smoked fish. Trainees were from Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Liberia and The Gambia.
- The GEMS/Food contaminant database - a web-based platform to allow the submission of data on food contamination from different countries and institutions. A distance-learning tool was developed to improve facilitate the use of the GEMS/Food system by Member States.
- FAO, in partnership with WHO and other international partners, is building a pilot Global Individual Food consumption data Tool (FAO/WHO GIFT). This tool will be developed based on the needs of various stakeholders working in the field of nutrition and food safety at country, regional and global level. The pilot FAO/WHO GIFT has been published on FAO website (<http://www.fao.org/gift/>).
- FAO/WHO technical support to the harmonization of food consumption data in ASEAN countries and implementation of a food consumption survey in Lao PDR.

**Activity 2.3.3**

**Figure 2: Number of Delegations 2008–16**



**Figure 3: Number of Delegates for 2008–16**



**Figure 4: Number of Delegations in 2016**

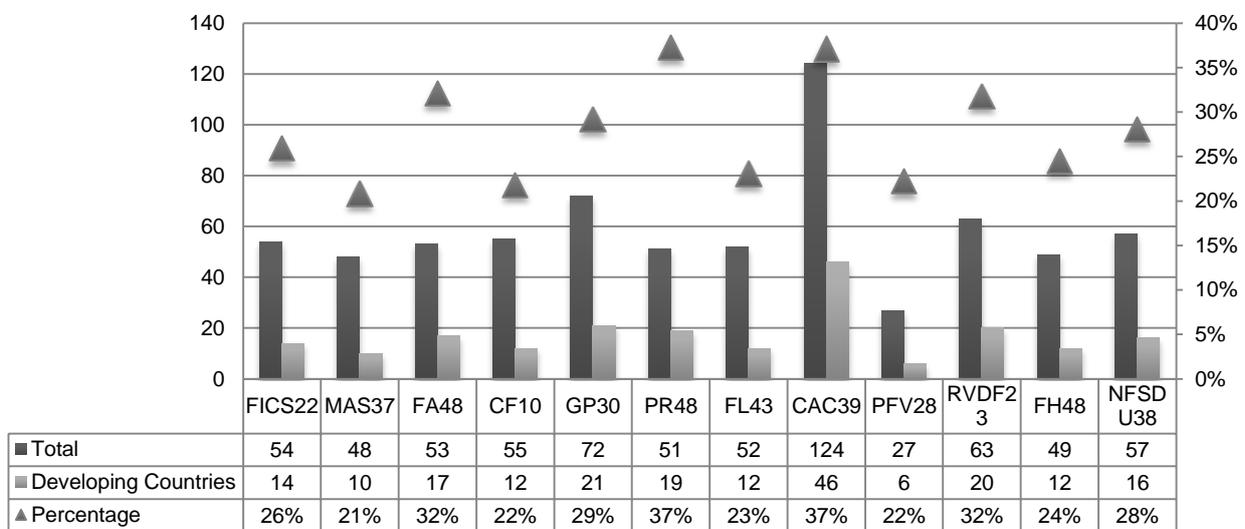
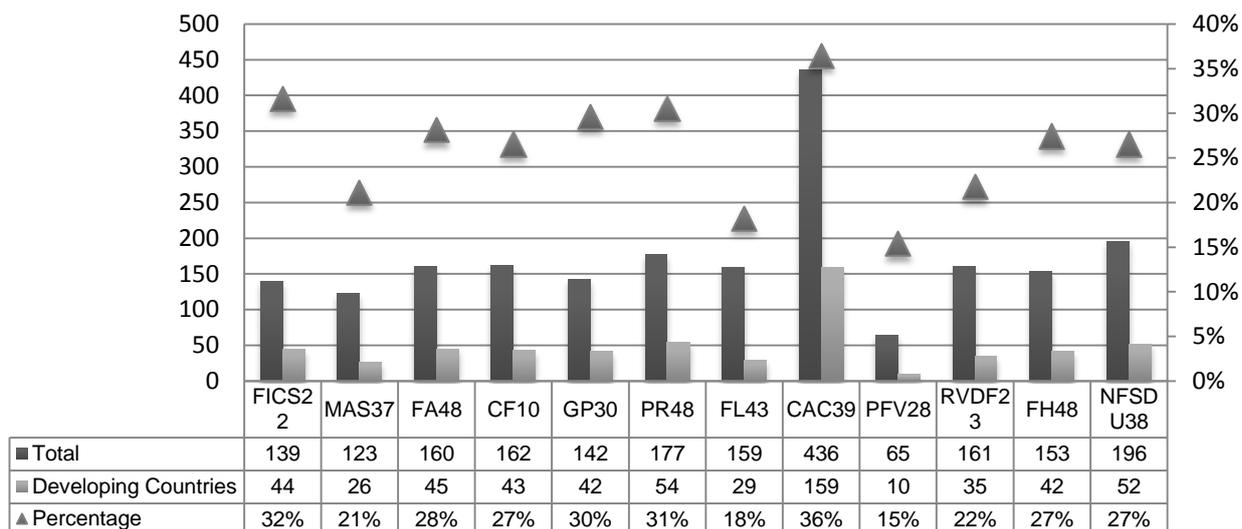


Figure 5: Number of Delegations in 2016



**Strategic Goal 3 FACILITATE THE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF ALL CODEX MEMBERS.**

**Objective 3.1: Increase the effective participation of developing countries in Codex.**

The Codex Trust Fund successor initiative (CTF2) was launched in the beginning of 2016. The total contribution in 2016 was USD 962,118 from seven donors. As part of the CTF2, a FAO/WHO Diagnostic Tool has been developed for countries to take stock from time to time (self-assess) of their national Codex programme and to assess what is working well, and identify areas in need of improvement. While all countries may benefit from use of the FAO/WHO Diagnostic tool to self-assess their national Codex programme, it is an obligatory requirement for CTF2 applicants.

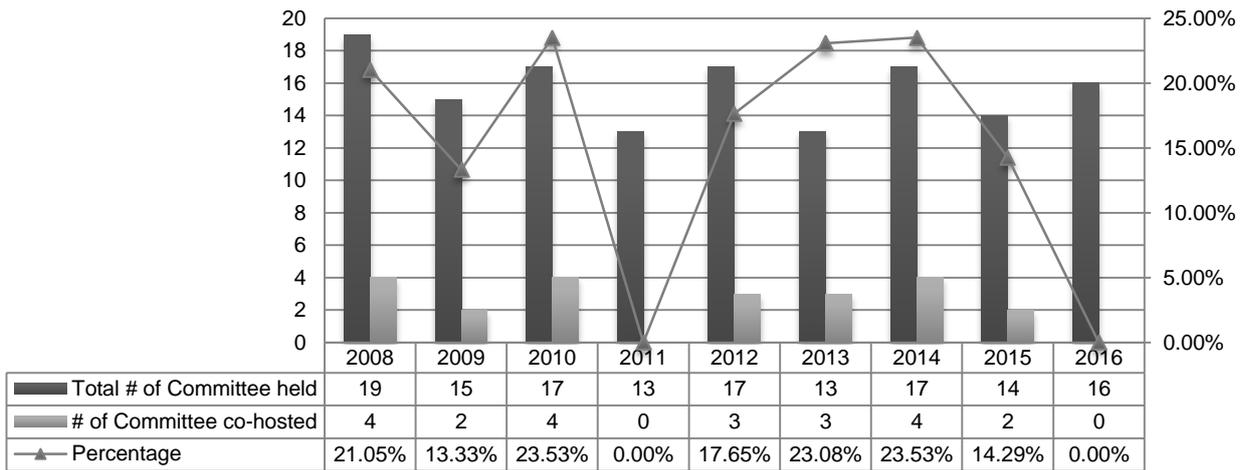
In 2016, 15 sessions of subsidiary bodies were held and none of them were co-hosted. As regards Electronic Working Groups (EWGs) established in 2016, 26 out of a total of 37 EWGs were co-hosted, which corresponds to 70 percent. Concerning Physical Working Groups (PWGs) held in 2016, three out of a total of eight PWGs were co-hosted, which corresponds to 38 percent. The percentages of co-hosted Committee and PWG sessions did not show a clear trend. However, in the case of EWGs the percentage has continued to increase since 2010.

With regards to both working documents and interpretation, all six official languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese and Russian) were used for CAC39; all official languages except Russian were used for EXEC71; and English, French, Spanish and Arabic were used for EXEC72. All General Subject Committees and Commodity Committees used English, French and Spanish as their working languages. For RRCs, the following UN official languages were used: CCNASWP14 (English only), CCASIA20 (English and Chinese), CCEURO30 (English, French, Spanish, Russian), CCLAC20 (English and Spanish).

As regards EWGs established in 2016, English was used in all of them while Spanish was used for 16 percent, which constitutes an increase of 2 percent compared to the previous year.

**Activity 3.1.2**

**Figure 6: Number of Co-hosted Subsidiary Bodies**



**Figure 7: Number of Co-hosted Electronic Working Groups**

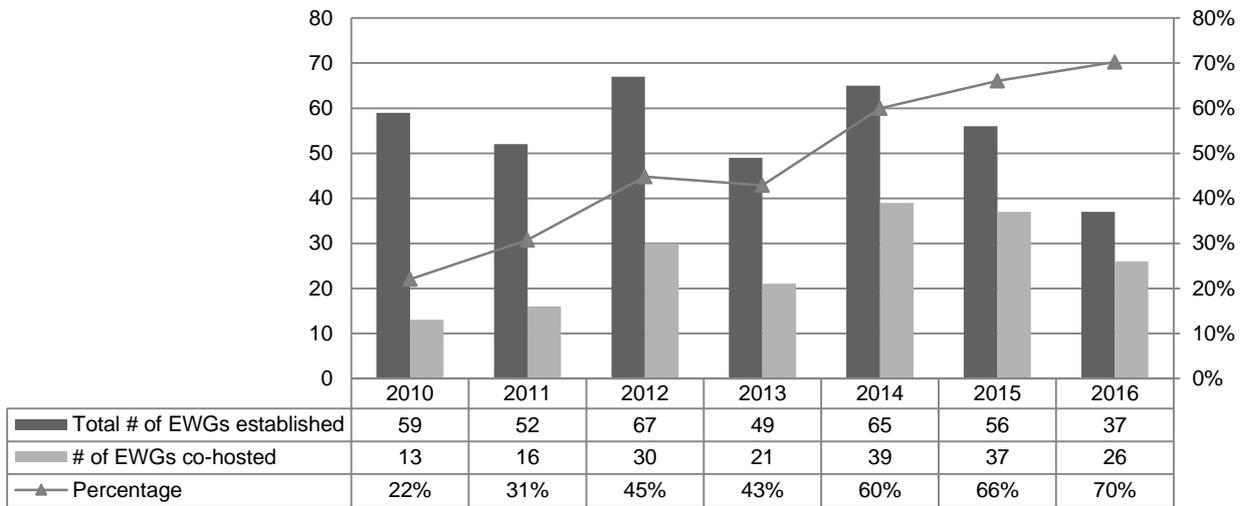
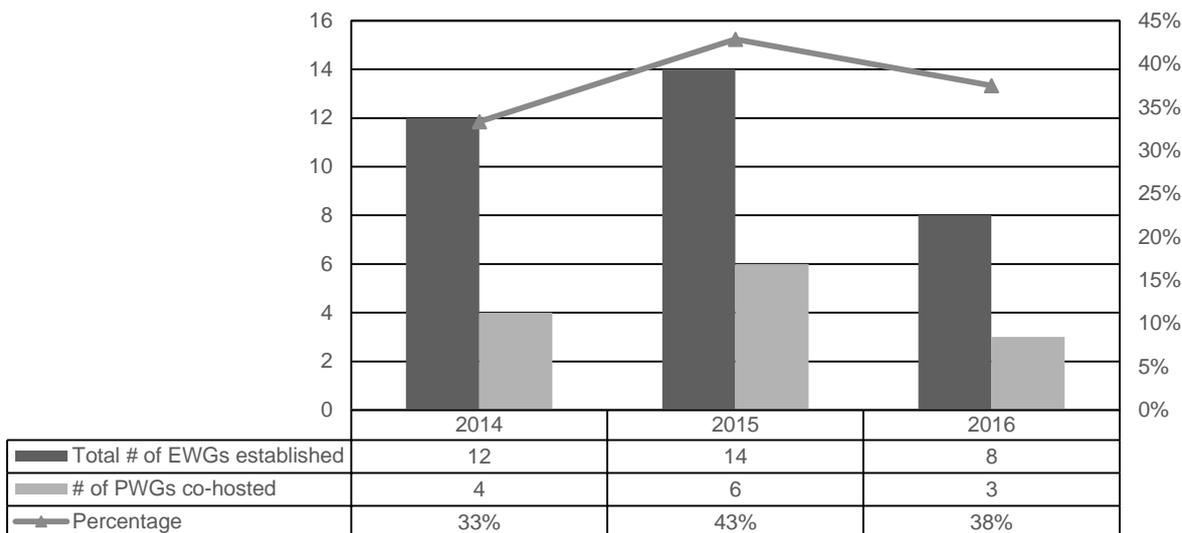
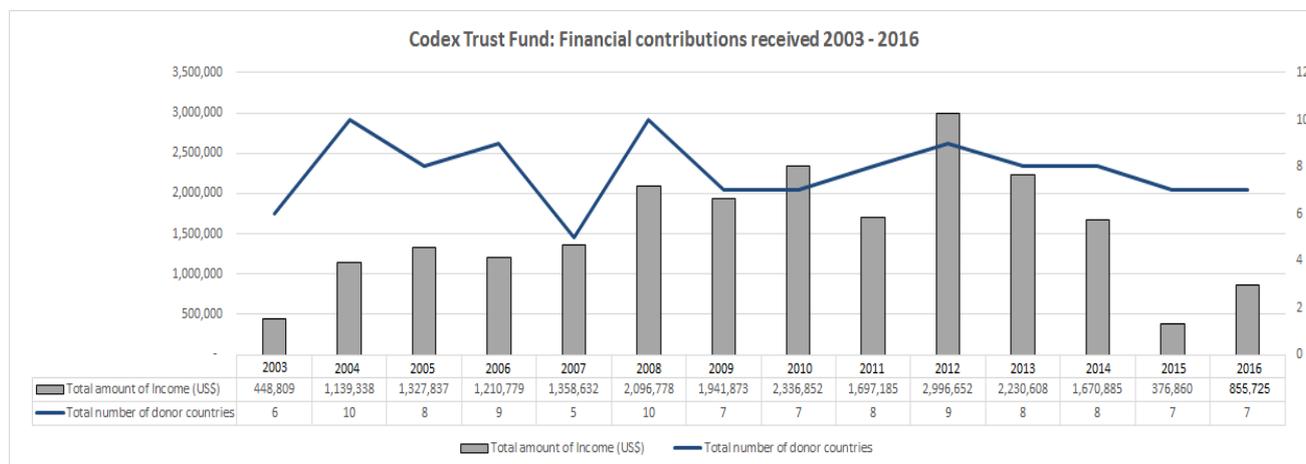


Figure 8: Number of Co-hosted Physical Working Groups



Activity 3.1.3

Figure 9: Financial Contributions Received 2003–16



Activity 3.1.5

Table 1: Languages used in Electronic Working Groups established 2014–16

	2014		2015		2016	
	Number	percentage	Number	percentage	Number	percentage
Total EWGs established	64		56		37	
EWGs used English	64	100%	56	100%	37	100%
EWGs used French	1	2%	5	9%	2	5%
EWGs used Spanish	8	13%	8	14%	6	16%
EWGs used Russian	1	2%				
EWGs used Arabic			2	4%		

**Objective 3.2: Promote capacity development programmes that assist countries in creating sustainable national Codex structures.**

Seven activities regarding CTF2 were implemented in 2016/beginning 2017 and four countries were granted support in the first application round of CTF2. FAO furthermore held four capacity building workshops and implemented five projects throughout the year 2016.

More than 30 side events were held in the margins of the Codex meetings which is 20 events more than in 2015.

**Activity 3.2.1**

The following activities regarding the second Codex Trust Fund (CTF2) were implemented:

- CCEURO30 side event - CTF2 information session (3 October 2016)
- CCNASWP19 side event - CTF2 information session (20 September 2016)
- CCNASWP19 side event “CTF2: preparing robust applications” (23 September 2016)
- CCASIA20 side event - CTF2 information session (28 September 2016)
- CCLAC20 side event - CTF2 information session (23 November 2016)
- CCAFRICA22 side event - CTF2 information session (19 January 2017)

In 2016, four countries (Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar and Senegal) were successful in the first application round of the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund and are being supported over three years to strengthen national Codex structures.

In addition, the following FAO capacity development projects and workshops were finalised or ran throughout the year 2016:

- Project GCP/BGD/047/NET in Bangladesh to support the technical discussions of 3 Codex mirror sub-committees – hygiene, fresh fruits and vegetables; as well as pesticides and veterinary drug residues
- Project GCP/RAS/295/JPN aimed at capacity development for Codex in ASEAN countries and including
- National training workshop in Lao PDR, 27-29 June 2016
- National training workshop in Myanmar, 20-21 December 2016
- Regional training workshop for all ASEAN countries in Bangkok, 9-11 January, 2017.
- Project TCP/SFS/3503 to support the capacity building of National Committees and Points of Contact of CODEX Alimentarius, for three countries of the Sub regional Office for Southern Africa: Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Swaziland
- Project TCP/SFE/3501 to support capacity building for Codex Alimentarius and improved food control systems in Eastern African countries (Burundi, Rwanda, Djibouti and Ethiopia)
- A workshop on new and emerging issues in food safety, for national codex contact points. Panama, 14-16 June 2016. The topics discussed were: Food Safety Policy, Risk based approaches, Antimicrobial resistance, Food losses and waste.
- TCPf Strengthening Food Control Capacity in Kiribati, approved in December 2016, with an Output “National Codex structures and capacities strengthened”

**Activity 3.2.3**

Side events on the new online communication tool were held at CAC39 as well as at all RCCs. In addition, a side event on the Electronic Platform for EWGs was held at CCRVDF23 and CCFH48.

Side events on new Codex Trust Fund were held at all RCCs (see activity 3.2.2). In addition, a meeting was held with Codex Trust Fund Donors during CAC39. Two side events were organized: 1) with countries having applied for the Codex Trust Fund in the first application round and; 2) a “Dialogue on the New Codex Trust Fund” with all member countries.

Other events held at the margins of Codex meetings are stated in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Side events to Codex meetings held in 2016

Codex Session	Side event topic
CAC39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) and Food Safety (FAO/WHO)</li> <li>United States Food and Drug Administration Update on Food Safety Modernization Act Regulations (USA)</li> <li>Global Burden of Foodborne Diseases (WHO)</li> </ul>
CCFA48:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The role of JECFA for CCFA (FAO/WHO)</li> </ul>
CCPR48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results from the EFSA/FAO/WHO Workshop on the Evaluation of the IESTI Equation, and Preliminary Impact Analysis (EFSA/RIVM)</li> <li>CropLife International Perspectives on Proposed Changes to IESTI Equations (CropLife International)</li> <li>North American International Harmonization Efforts for Pesticides: An Update on Current Status and Activities (Health Canada/ US EPA)</li> </ul>
CCFL43:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future Directions for CCFL (Codex Secretariat)</li> </ul>
CCNASWP14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kava</li> <li>Workshop: Developments in Food Safety in the Pacific and Future Priorities (FAO/WHO)</li> </ul>
CCASIA20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revitalization of Regional Coordinating Committees and Strengthening Standard-setting and Implementation of Codex Standards (Codex Secretariat/FAO/WHO)</li> <li>Feast, Flavour and Fusion of India (India)</li> </ul>
CCRVDF23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Approach to Evaluating Exposure (FAO/*WHO)</li> <li>Testing of priority Rating System for New Work (France)</li> </ul>
CCFH48:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HACCP</li> <li>Histamine</li> </ul>
CCLAC20:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results of the IICA twinning program (ACHIPIA)</li> </ul>
CCNFSDU38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approaches in generating scientific advice for nutrition – A review of current practices (FAO/WHO)</li> </ul>

#### **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.**

In August 2016, an additional session of the Executive Committee was held in follow-up to CAC39 enabling CCEXEC to fully exercise its strategic and advisory role with the ultimate objective of striving to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

All other subsidiary bodies of the Commission continued to identify and address potential impediments to standard setting work by making best use of Working Groups (i.e. EWG, PWG, in-session WG) and workshops. The Committees also made various effort to reach consensus, e.g. providing information well in advance of meetings, using a mentoring approach, training first time delegates, holding discussion to establish clear direction and support prior to submitting proposals in the step process and scoping work towards areas where consensus exists. Furthermore, the Secretariat organized a workshop for chairs on consensus building that was held in April 2016 (following CCGP30).

The technologies introduced in 2014 (Sharepoint, phpBB discussion forum for EWGs, automated mailing) were continued to be used and improved throughout 2016 and the new Codex online commenting system was rolled out following its launch at CAC39.

All Codex Committees strive to hold PWGs in conjunction with Committee meetings, unless doing otherwise is justifiable by specific needs. In 2016 all PWGs (8 in total) were held in conjunction with the respective Committee sessions.

With regards to the timely distribution of working documents improvements still need to be made. Out of a total of 429 working documents in three languages (E/F/S) issued in 2016, 119 working documents were distributed at least 2 months prior to their respective Committee session, which corresponds to only 28 percent (2 % less

than in 2015). Challenges remain in particular in Committees, such as CCFH, where the advancement of work is linked to the provision of scientific advice.

As regards the timely elaboration and revision of standards, only five pieces of work took more than five years to finalize up to the year 2016. In other words, 96 percent of the work was successfully finalized within the limit of five years.

### **Activities 4.1.1**

#### Timely Elaboration and Revision of the Codex Standards

The Secretariat conducted a study on the time needed for the elaboration or revision of Codex standards to complement the monitoring of activity 4.1.1. This section presents the analysis of the time between the approval of a standard as new work until its final adoption for all items that were given a job number (Codex started using job numbers from 2004, CAC27). In other words, those without a job number such as ongoing work<sup>11</sup> and amendments were excluded from the scope of this study. In addition around 16 items were excluded from this study as it was difficult to calculate the duration, and some items were counted more than once as they split into more than two items during the course of elaboration/revision (see CX/EXEC 16/71/5 for details).

#### 2016

At CAC39, 16 items with a job number were adopted as final texts. 14 were adopted within a period of five years, which corresponds to 89 percent. The following two documents took more than five years to finalize (i.e. eight and 11 years respectively):

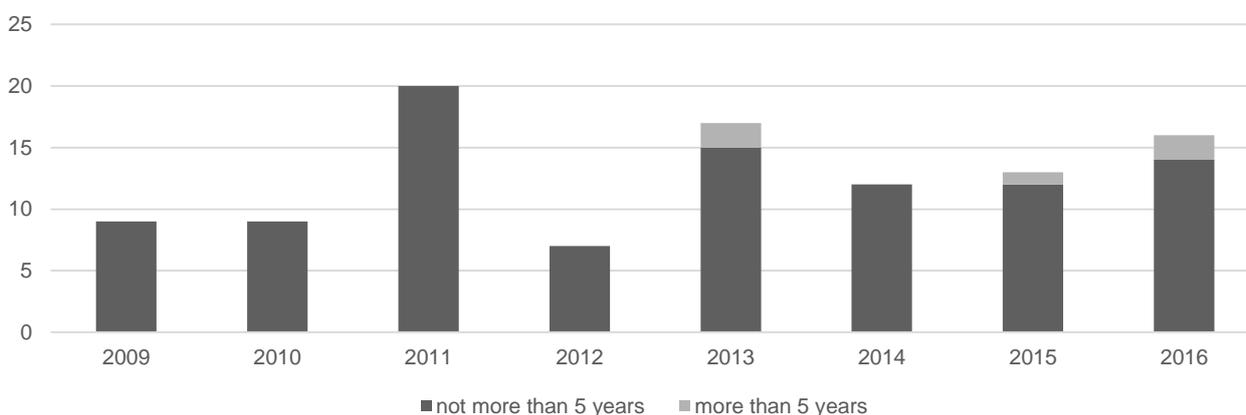
- Additional or Revised Nutrient Reference Values for Labelling Purposes in the *Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling* (CAC/GL 2-1985)
- Code of Practice on the Processing of Fresh and Quick Frozen Raw Scallop Products

#### 2004-2016

During 2004 and 2016 a total 178 new work items with job numbers were approved. 125 out of 178 were adopted as final texts by 2016. 120 out of 125 were adopted within 5 years, which corresponds to 96 percent.

The figure below shows the number of standards and standard revisions adopted from 2009 to 2016 (Codex started giving job numbers from 2004; in this regard, those adopted within 2009 were all by definition developed within 5 years). The chart also indicates the number of elaborations and revisions that took more than 5 years for adoption and the number of those completed within 5 years.

Figure 10: Duration of Codex standard elaboration/revision, 2009–16



#### *Items currently under discussion*

At the time of CAC39, a total of 44 items that fall under the scope of this study were under discussion. Only one item, which is “Organic aquaculture” had been under discussion for more than five years. In addition, the following four items were already using five years at the time of July 2016:

- Standard for Fish Oils
- Standard for Panela

<sup>11</sup> Ongoing work (including those transferred to ongoing work) was excluded from the study regardless of the job number given.

- Regional Standard for Laver Products
- Regional Standard for Dough

### Activities 4.1.3

As of February 2017, the discussion forum for EWGs has 623 registered users (more than double compared to 2015) and is used by 7 Committees and 7 active EWGs.

The new system for online commenting was launched at CAC39 and rolled-out in the second half of 2016 for both Codex and IPPC. The system helps Codex Contact Points to draft, share and submit comments on Codex texts and allows the Codex Secretariat to better manage consultation processes by automating notifications, compiling comments in an easy and efficient manner, and providing data for analysis. A FAQ and User Manual for the system was published on the Codex website and several side events as well as individual briefings were held to introduce the system (e.g. side events to CAC39, CCNASWP14, CCASIA20, CCEURO30, CCAFRICA22 and CCNEA9)

### Activities 4.1.4

#### Timely Distribution of Working Documents

This section presents an analysis of the distribution of working documents (WDs) in English, French and Spanish<sup>12</sup> prepared for the Commission and Committees held in 2014–16. The analysis does not consider invitation letters, provisional agendas, circular letters, addendum papers (mostly comments papers), other comments papers including the replies to circular letters, and information documents<sup>13</sup>. In addition, WDs not issued were excluded from the scope.

The following table shows the number of WDs falling under the scope mentioned above that were circulated at least two months before the Session and those that were not<sup>14</sup>.

Table 3: Timely distribution of Working Documents by language, 2014–16

	2014				2015				2016			
	Total	E	F	S	Total	E	F	S	Total	E	F	S
Total # of WDs considered	458	168	140	150	430	149	148	133	429	160	130	139
# of WDs circulated at least 2 months prior to session	101	53	22	26	129	59	39	31	119	63	27	29
# of WDs circulated less than 2 months prior to session	367	115	118	124	301	90	109	102	310	97	103	110

Table 4: Percentage of Working Document distributed in time by language, 2014–16

Year	Total	English	French	Spanish
2014	22%	32%	16%	17%
2015	30%	40%	26%	23%
2016	28%	39%	21%	21%

Overall, there was a decrease in the timeliness of the distribution of WDs from 2015 to 2016.

### Objective 4.2: Enhance capacity to arrive at consensus in standards setting process.

Following a survey of training needs amongst Codex Chairs a workshop for chairs on consensus building was held in Paris from 16-17 April 2016 (following CCGP30). Along with the Chairperson and three Vice Chairs of the Commission, the chairs of 13 Codex Committees participated and exchanged information on best practices and challenges faced in the past.

In 2016, a total of 16 Committees were held and at least five of them organized a seminar/workshop for first time delegates before the plenary session (CCCF10, CCPFV28, CCASIA20, CCRVDF23, CCFH48).

<sup>12</sup> Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Original Language Only are not considered (WDs prepared only for one language are counted as Original Language Only)

<sup>13</sup> Para. 5, CAC/37 CRD/5

<sup>14</sup> Numbers corrected from the ones provided in CX/EXEC 16/71/5.

## Appendix II

**REPORT ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE CODEX COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2015–17****Introduction**

CAC38 (2015) did not formally adopt the 2015–17 Communications Strategy due to lack of time in plenary. However, the Codex Secretariat implemented the Communications Strategy through the communications objectives presented at CCEXEC70<sup>15</sup>. They are listed below, including updated information on status.

**Objective 1**

*Establish clear and transparent communication channels (internal and external) for the Codex secretariat.*

**STATUS REPORT**

The website has been redesigned to introduce thematic areas and provide greater visibility to Regional Activities.

News articles are published regularly.

The @FAOWHOCodex Twitter account publishes over 350 tweets per month, has almost 4000 followers and over 2 million visitors in the last year since CAC39. Social media has proved to be the quickest way to post news (with limited resources) and Codex is also able to benefit from the social media reach of the parent organisations.

FAO has provided Codex with a YouTube playlist<sup>16</sup> on the FAO corporate channel to reduce duplication and enhance distribution and coverage.

FAO has advised the Secretariat to provide guidelines to Host Secretariats to ensure that the Codex visual identity (and the logos of the parent organisations) are used appropriately at Codex committee meetings.

The Codex Secretariat liaises frequently with the parent organisations for advice and support on communications. The latest projects include work on messages for SDGs within the Agriculture Division of FAO and developing a WeChat channel aimed at Chinese social media in conjunction with IPPC.

**Objective 2**

*Ensure that Codex members receive regular, consistent, reliable, relevant and useable communication to strengthen their knowledge, build their capacity and promote their active participation in the work of international standard setting*

**STATUS REPORT**

The Secretariat now uses a single distribution list to publish to stakeholders. An RSS feed is being implemented on the Codex website to allow users to receive a constant update on the information Codex publishes<sup>17</sup>.

Electronic Working Groups (EWGs). All Committees are moving to the electronic platform<sup>18</sup> which now has over 600 members. Stakeholders and users recognise the support provided by the Secretariat in this area and the digital platform will also enable monitoring and reporting on participation to be accurate. The Codex website<sup>19</sup> also now indicates the status of all EWGs.

“Understanding Codex” has been published in Russian<sup>20</sup>. A factsheet on Codex is available in English<sup>21</sup>.

The new Codex website now links directly to the FAO Document Repository and internal corporate solutions ensure that texts are more easily located and not duplicated across retired or outdated systems. The Secretariat is still working to digitalise the complete archives from the origins of Codex Alimentarius.

Work on capacity building is ongoing through collaboration in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Codex Trust Fund with FAO Food Safety and the revision of the Codex e-learning programme.

Communications products require dedicated human resources working to a prioritised workplan. The Secretariat manages to maintain the website but will need to assign additional resources to finalise effective tools and products.

<sup>15</sup> [ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/meetings/CAC/cac38/cac38\\_22e.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/meetings/CAC/cac38/cac38_22e.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzp5NgJ2-dK69ov7NL8Zt0mO1iJqxYeW9>

<sup>17</sup> See explanation on FAO website: <http://www.fao.org/news/rss-feed/en/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://forum.codex-alimentarius.net/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/e-working-groups/en/>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5667r.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6172e.pdf>

**Objective 3**

*Enable Codex Committee Chairpersons and Codex host governments to receive relevant and useable guidance to strengthen their knowledge, to streamline and harmonise the way committees function and to support their effective role in the work of international standard setting.*

**STATUS REPORT**

A third annual training weekend workshop will be held in Rome in May 2017 and at least 24 Codex Chairs and Regional Coordinators are expected to attend. The full agenda will cover the role of Codex Chairs and also a range of themes identified by the Chairs themselves including: the use of technology; guidance for risk analysis, and the speed of standard setting.

The Codex Secretariat continues to interact with Host Secretariats at every opportunity to share best practices and transfer skills. "Loaned expert" initiatives such as those undertaken with China for CCPR and CCFA, and scouting trips such as the one organised for CCMAS (where there is a new Chair) are a model that should be adopted at every opportunity.

The Secretariat also continues to liaise closely with all Host Secretariats and if possible will arrange for a training event in 2017-2018.

**Objective 4**

*Assist the parent organisations, FAO and WHO, in advocacy and effective communication with Member States on matters pertaining to Codex and related activities.*

**STATUS REPORT**

Senior Officers liaise constantly with Member States on matters pertaining to Codex.

Greater visibility is also being achieved in FAO with coordination of all communications teams in the FAO Agriculture Division.

The Secretariat continues to support the CTF2 and the work emphasising Codex contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Objective 5**

*Engage Observers to support collaboration and cooperation in the development of Codex standards.*

**STATUS REPORT**

The Secretariat continues to monitor Codex observers in accordance with the guidelines in the Procedural Manual.

The Secretariat also sends representatives to the WTO SPS and TBT committees and to deliver training at workshops.

A joint FAO/WTO publication "Trade and Food Standards" is due to be published in July 2017. Codex has also worked closely with ISO on publications material with an article on sustainable agriculture to appear in ISOFocus this year<sup>22</sup>.

The Codex Secretary has given external keynote addresses at university and conference level and together with Food Standards Officers presented Codex to a range of visiting delegations in FAO.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.iso.org/isofocus/x/>

## DRAFT OUTLINE CODEX COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2017–19

### Introduction

The Codex Communications Strategy is currently reported on under the general implementation status of the Codex Strategic Plan. CCEXEC71 (Rome 2016) requested the Secretariat to present a new draft Communications Strategy (2017–19) to CCEXEC73 (Geneva July 2017).

The Secretariat seeks confirmation of the strategic level mission and objectives outlined below before completing the details of the plan.

All communications activities remain ongoing even in the absence of a formal strategy.

### Mission

At CCEXEC70 the Representative of WHO suggested the Secretariat widen the mission of the communications strategy to include advocacy.

The table below reflects the original mission statement and a proposed draft for the 2017–19 strategy.

Mission 2015–17	Draft Mission 2017–19
By introducing efficient means of communication, the Codex Secretariat will facilitate the effective participation of all Codex stakeholders	To provide all stakeholders with the tools and means to participate effectively in the work of Codex and assist them in fostering understanding nationally regarding the work of the Programme

### Objectives

The 2015-2017 strategy included five objectives. The Secretariat proposes to introduce a new sixth objective to link the strategy more closely to the six regional coordinating committees. Over the two-year cycle of the strategy, each region would take the lead for four months and the Secretariat would channel communications, activities, publications and news to that region, in conjunction with FAO/WHO and the regional coordinator, on topics of mutual value and interest.

#### Objective 1

*Establish clear and transparent communication channels (internal and external) for the Codex secretariat.*

#### Objective 2

*Ensure that Codex members receive regular, consistent, reliable, relevant and useable communication to strengthen their knowledge, build their capacity and promote their active participation in the work of international standard setting*

#### Objective 3

*Enable Codex Committee Chairpersons and Codex host governments to receive relevant and useable guidance to strengthen their knowledge, to streamline and harmonise the way committees function and to support their effective role in the work of international standard setting.*

#### Objective 4

*Assist the parent organisations, FAO and WHO, in advocacy and effective communication with Member States on matters pertaining to Codex and related activities.*

#### Objective 5

*Engage Observers to support collaboration and cooperation in the development of Codex standards.*

#### Objective 6 (new)

*Work with FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committees to identify, develop and implement effective communications initiatives.*

### Resources

The 2015–17 strategy identified the resources required to launch and implement a communications strategy. A senior officer should lead and prioritise any communications work in the Secretariat. They will also require sufficient human resources to run the activities and reach the objectives identified in the strategy.

### Monitoring and evaluation

It is recommended that monitoring of the communications strategy remain linked to the reporting on the general implementation status of the Codex Strategic Plan.