JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Thirty-fourth Session
Geneva, Switzerland, 4 – 9 July 2011

REPORT OF THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

Accra, Ghana, 1 - 4 February 2011
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Nineteenth Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa reached the following conclusions:

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE 34th SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND BY THE 65th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

The Coordinating Committee:

- did not make any specific recommendations on the need for further guidance on traceability/product tracing (paras 8-12);
- agreed to submit a number of recommendations regarding measures that the Commission and FAO/WHO could take in connection with private food safety standards (paras 13-21);
- noted that a worldwide standard for processed cheese was necessary, but that if that was not possible, a regional standard for Africa should be developed (paras 22-23);
- took note of the written replies submitted on Activities 4.5 and 5.5 and that mechanisms had been established to promote interdisciplinary coordination at the national level as specified under Activity 4.5 and to enhance participation of NGOs at the national level as specified under Activity 5.5 (para. 24);
- provided answers and information to the questionnaire seeking suggestions for the development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018 (paras 25-32);
- did not support the options proposed to limit participation in physical working groups (paras 33-34);
- agreed that there should be a gradual shift from Objective 1 to Objectives 2 and 3 of the Codex Trust Fund; that there was a need for capacity building and that it should complement the work of FAO/WHO; that there should be a mechanism to assist graduated countries to continue receiving support from the CTF; that the current criteria should be retained; and that the lifespan of the Trust Fund should be extended (paras 43 – 50); and
- unanimously agreed that Cameroon should be appointed as Regional Coordinator for Africa (para. 81-84).

**OTHER MATTERS**

The Coordinating Committee:

- expressed appreciation to FAO and WHO for their work in the area of capacity building and scientific advice (paras 35-42);
- agreed that the coordinator, Ghana, would undertake an evaluation of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for CCAFRICA for discussion in the margins of the 34th CAC on how to further implement the CCAFRICA Strategic Plan (para. 58); and
- exchanged information on national food control systems, consumer participation in food standards setting, use of Codex standards at national and regional level and nutritional issues in the region (paras 59-80).
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INTRODUCTION
1. The FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee for Africa held its Nineteenth Session in Accra, Ghana from 1 to 4 February 2011, by courtesy of the Government of Ghana. The Session was chaired by Professor Samuel Sefa-Dedeh, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering Sciences University of Ghana Legon. The Session was attended by 176 delegates, advisors and observers representing 36 Member Countries, 2 Observer Members from outside the region, and 4 international organizations. A complete list of participants, including the Secretariat and Representatives of FAO and WHO is provided in Appendix I to this report.

OPENING OF THE SESSION
2. The Session was opened by the Honourable Minister of Health, Mr Joseph Yileh Chireh, on behalf of His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana, who welcomed delegates to Ghana for the 19th Session of CCAFRICA and noted that the session provided a unique opportunity to address food safety challenges facing the continent. He further noted that despite efforts by Governments as well as multilateral and bilateral agencies, weaknesses still exist in national food control systems in the African region and emphasized the shared responsibility and involvement of all stakeholders. It was stressed that to improve food safety in the region, more financial commitment was needed on the part of Governments and donor agencies in the work of CCAFRICA to achieve real progress and that it was necessary for African Governments and Agencies to show their commitment by providing support to national Codex activities. He also emphasized that the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission was changing and that the African region couldn’t afford to lag behind and commended the African Union’s InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU/IBAR) for providing support for the coordination of African positions on some Codex issues.
3. In concluding, he noted that by the next session of CCAFRICA it would have a new coordinator and that it was an honour for Ghana to have served as the current coordinator. He stated that the cooperation received from member countries provided an impetus for the work undertaken to bring CCAFRICA to its current level and that the Region was at a crucial point in its history and visionary leadership on the part of the next coordinator was imperative.
4. Mrs Hannah Clarendon and Dr Daniel Kertesz welcomed delegates to Ghana on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and World Health Organization (WHO), respectively.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 1)¹
5. The Committee agreed to a proposal by the chairperson to report back on the “friends of the chair” meeting on ractopamine in the provisional agenda under Item 7 (Other business and future work).
6. The Committee adopted the provisional agenda as its agenda for the Session with the above proposal.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 2a)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2008 – 2013 (Agenda Item 2b)²
7. The Committee noted matters arising from the 32nd and 33rd Sessions of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the 64th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and

¹ CX/AFRICA 11/19/1
² CX/AFRICA 11/19/2, CL 2010/43-AFRICA, CX/AFRICA 11/19/2-Add.1 (comments from Mali and IDF), CRD 1 (comments from Ghana), CRD 2 (comments from IFT), CRD 5 (comments from Uganda), CRD 7 (comments from Nigeria), CRD 8 (comments from Kenya), CRD 11 (comments from Cameroon).
the 26th Session of the Committee on General Principles as summarized in the working document and discussed in particular the following matters:

**Traceability/Product Tracing**

8. Following the request of the 32nd Session of the Commission, the Committee discussed whether there was a need for further guidance on traceability/product tracing.

9. Some delegations noted that the current *Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System* were very general and expressed the view that further guidance of a more practical nature was needed in the framework of Codex for food control purposes at the national level, especially as regards non-packaged food. It was suggested to follow the same approach as in the case of the application of the HACCP system.

10. Several delegations pointed out that countries should not focus on the safety and quality of exports only but that their priority should be ensuring the safety of food for domestic consumption in order to protect the health of their consumers, including through adequate import control.

11. The Representative of FAO indicated that FAO and WHO were ready to work with countries to develop specific guidance adapted to their needs at the national or regional level in order to implement traceability/product tracing in the framework of food control systems. The Observer of the African Union also drew the attention of the Committee to the need for coordination of cooperation activities on various aspects of food control systems, including traceability.

12. The Committee agreed to inform the Commission of the above discussion and did not make any specific recommendation.

**Private standards**

13. The Committee discussed the issue of private standards based on replies given and other interventions made on the questions contained in CL 2010/43-AFRICA.

**Question 1 – have food producers/processors in your country experienced any problems in meeting private standards?**

14. Several members informed the committee that due to the more stringent and prescriptive nature of private standards, their implementation was difficult especially for small-scale farmers, which in turn limited their access to markets. Members also questioned the lack of transparency in the way private standards were developed and the lack of harmonization between these private standards. Members reiterated the view that all food safety standards should be harmonized with Codex.

**Question 2 – What are the financial implications of meeting private standards, especially implications for SMEs?**

15. In general the financial implications were linked to the high cost of certification, especially for small holders which further limited their access to markets. There were also huge financial costs for providing assistance and training to farmers.

**Question 3 – What measures have been taken to overcome / ease the problems in implementing private standards?**

16. It was noted that several measures had been put in place by some members to provide assistance to small holders, such as the provision of financial assistance, training and organization of producers into groups to allow for group certification. These interventions were either public or through public-private partnerships.
**Question 4 – What should the CAC/FAO/WHO do in the context of private standards?**

17. In noting the concerns and impact of private standards, the Committee agreed to submit the following recommendation to the Commission:

18. Taking into account the principle articulated in Article 1(b) of the Statutes of the Codex Alimentarius Commission: *promoting coordination of all food standards work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organizations* that the Commission initiate a mechanism to promote coordination with private standard-setting organizations through the establishment of a physical working group or forum to look at issues raised on the impact of private standards to especially smallholders and that could lead to engagement with these external bodies.

19. The Secretariat clarified that non-governmental organizations could participate in the work of Codex if they met the criteria for observer status in Codex.

20. The Representative of WTO informed the Committee that there was ongoing discussion on private standards in the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Committee. The SPS Committee had created in 2008 an ad hoc working group on SPS-related private standards to bring more structure to discussions on private standards within the SPS Committee. This group discussed the subject of SPS-related private standards and possible future work of the Committee based on a questionnaire survey on the effects of SPS-related private standards, a descriptive report summarizing the responses received, and a report on possible actions for the SPS Committee regarding private standards. In March 2011, as part of its final report, the ad hoc working group will forward six actions to define the scope of SPS-related private standards and promote information exchange to the Committee for endorsement. In addition, the SPS Committee will examine the other issues on which the working group could not reach consensus and also consider how to address private standards in the future. More information on documents related to SPS-related private standards which have been submitted to the SPS Committee is available in the WTO SPS Information Management System ([http://spsims.wto.org](http://spsims.wto.org)).

21. The Committee noted the ongoing work of the WTO SPS Committee and recommended the Commission continue working closely with WTO on this matter.

**Processed Cheese**

22. The Committee recalled that the 33rd Session of the Commission had deferred its decision on discontinuation of work on a standard for processed cheese and had requested interested coordinating committees to discuss the necessity and scope of a regional standard.

23. Some delegations indicated that they supported a world-wide standard but that if it was not possible, a regional standard for Africa should be developed as a basis for national standards which would facilitate production and trade of processed cheese.

**Strategic Plan 2008 - 2013**

**Activities 4.5 and 5.5**

24. The Committee noted that, as it appeared from the comments received, several countries had established mechanisms to promote interdisciplinary coordination at the national level as specified under Activity 4.5, and to enhance participation of NGOs at the national level as specified under Activity 5.5. The Committee also recalled that the participation of NGOs was addressed in the framework of the Strategic Plan for Africa.

**Development of a new strategic plan for 2013 - 2018**

25. The Committee discussed the questions put forward in Circular Letter CL 2010/43-AFRICA in order to prepare the revised Strategic Plan and made the following comments and recommendations.
Question a)
26. The Committee agreed that the five goals of the Strategic Plan were still relevant and should be retained and noted a proposal to add a new goal on addressing emerging food safety issues arising from, for example, new technologies and climate change.

Question b)
27. The Committee agreed that measurable indicators should be included in the Strategic Plan, that the current format should be retained and that ongoing activities should be tracked.

Question c)
28. Several delegations pointed out that one of the main challenges was the proliferation of private standards which were sometimes more stringent than Codex standards without scientific basis, and referred to the recommendations made earlier under the current item.
29. Some delegations pointed out that several important challenges existed for developing countries: the implementation of Codex standards at the national level; the need for political support to address food safety issues; the need to generate scientific data in order to increase the input of developing countries in the process on a scientific basis; and the application of risk analysis by countries. The Committee recognized the need for continued capacity building by FAO and WHO in these areas in order to improve participation in the Codex process as a whole.

Question d)
30. In addition to the issues identified under c) some delegations proposed that an evaluation of the participation of developing countries be carried out and it was noted that this issue would be considered when discussing the Trust Fund.

Question e)
31. The Committee noted a proposal to review the current 8-Step Procedure with a view to accelerating the elaboration process.

Question f)
32. The Observer from the African Union informed the Committee about its programme on risk analysis of climate change insofar as it affected food safety, including the emergence of new pests and related risks of increased use of chemicals; promotion of exchange of information among countries in the region; and the establishment of centres of excellence.

New Options for Physical Working Groups
33. Many delegations expressed the view that participation in working groups should remain open to all members. As regards the limitation of the size of working groups, it was suggested to consider limiting the number of delegates per country, but not the number of delegations by region. Several concerns were expressed on the opportunity and feasibility of designating regional representatives, taking into account that there were several sub-regions. As regards funding, the Representative of WHO clarified that the possibility of funding for participation in working groups through the CTF already existed and that it was for countries to decide in which meeting of committees or working groups they wished to participate.
34. The Committee concluded that it did not support the options proposed to limit participation in working groups.
ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO COMPLEMENTARY TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (Agenda Item 3a)³

35. The Representative of FAO introduced the new work of FAO of interest to members: development and testing of new guidance on imported food control programmes; the launching of EMPRES-food safety programme and the technical assistance for improved management of food safety emergencies at national level; and the investment in and benchmarking of food control programmes. The Representative further gave examples of technical support available to member countries, such as strengthening of national Codex committees; set up of risk-based food control systems and improvement of technical services in relation to food control; support to specific value chains to allow implementation of Codex Standards; and improved sharing of SPS and food standards information among concerned stakeholders. In response to member countries queries the mechanisms to access FAO technical assistance were clarified.

36. The Representative of WHO reminded the Committee of the importance of scientific advice as provided by FAO and WHO as basis for safety standards developed by Codex, but also its importance to strengthen decision making on national and regional level. The output of the scientific advice programme is freely accessible through the respective FAO and WHO websites, and efforts to improve accessibility are being undertaken.

37. Some examples of current activities were mentioned and the process on how to request scientific advice and how to contribute to it were briefly described. In this context the importance of working through the respective Codex Committees and their priorities working groups was emphasized, as well as the importance to respond to calls for data in a more comprehensive and timely manner. The Committee was informed that information on calls for data are being widely distributed and also sent to Codex Contact Points and that it is important that these calls are forwarded to individuals and institutions or organizations which may have relevant data to submit.

38. A project to improve the database for scientific advice was briefly mentioned which would entail a survey on the types and amounts of mycotoxins occurring in sorghum, with the aim to evaluate the need for establishment of a Codex standard for this important commodity.

39. The Representative of WHO also informed the Committee that the sixty-third session of the World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA63.3 on Advancing Food Safety Initiatives as well as various regional policy documents to guide food safety work. The capacity to conduct laboratory-based foodborne disease surveillance has been strengthened in several countries and Centres of Excellence have been established in three countries. Twenty-eight countries have evaluated their food control systems and programmes towards the development of policies. Countries were supported to strengthen coordination mechanisms including National Codex Contact points. Further food safety activities in various countries using the WHO Five Keys to Safer Food were reported on.

40. Training in various areas of food safety has been conducted including HACCP, foodborne disease surveillance and a number of guidelines have been developed to facilitate capacity building.

41. In the discussions that followed delegations shared experiences and sought clarification on a number of issues including the assessment of food safety systems and development of laboratory capacity. There was a request to coordinate activities of WHO and FAO in countries for effective use of resources.

42. The Committee expressed its appreciation to FAO and WHO for their support to building capacity of members in the region.

³ CX/AFRICA 11/19/4, CRD 7 (comments of Nigeria).
FAO/WHO PROJECT AND TRUST FUND FOR ENHANCED PARTICIPATION IN CODEX (Agenda Item 3b)\textsuperscript{4}

43. The Representative of WHO introduced the item and recalled that the 33\textsuperscript{rd} Session of the Commission and the 64\textsuperscript{th} Session of the Executive Committee had discussed and reached conclusions on 5 strategic questions in the framework of the mid-term review of the Codex Trust Fund (CTF), as presented in Annex 1 of CL 2010/43-AFRICA.

44. The Committee noted that its feedback on the strategic questions could further guide FAO and WHO in the planning and implementation of the CTF activities over the next 6 years.

Question 1

45. The Committee agreed that there should be a gradual shift from Objective 1 to Objectives 2 and 3 having noted that while participation in Codex had increased that this participation should be strengthened and that Objectives 2 and 3 could lead to more effective and quality participation. It was however acknowledged that Objective 1 was still important due to the varying level of development of members of the region.

Question 2

46. The Committee agreed that there was a need to address capacity building activities, but that this should complement and not duplicate the core capacity building activities of FAO and WHO.

Question 3

47. The Committee agreed that a mechanism should be developed to assist graduated countries to continue receiving support from the CTF. A possible mechanism could be through matched/shared contributions by CTF and national governments. Such support should however be limited to deserving graduated countries that could be selected on more specific criteria such as timely response to circular letters and the frequency of their participation. The issue of possible twinning of more experienced countries with those less-experienced was further proposed to ensure a sharing of expertise gained from participation in Codex.

48. Some delegations raised concern about the communication of the CTF with members to alert them of their impending graduation and that such communication could be useful to ensure continued support by their national governments for their participation in Codex. It was however noted that while good communication between the CTF and members was important that members also had a responsibility to ensure that they understood the terms of the CTF and when they would graduate.

Question 4

49. The Committee agreed that the current criteria should be retained. One delegation however proposed that the burden of disease should be taken into account especially for those countries with a high burden of HIV to which budgets were directed.

Question 5

50. There was general agreement that the lifespan of the CTF should be extended, but that in the main, least-developed countries should benefit from this extension.

General

51. Several delegations raised concern with the functioning of the secretariat of the CTF. It was clarified that an additional staff member has been hired to assist with the day to day work of the CTF.

\textsuperscript{4} CL 2010-43-AFRICA, CX/AFRICA 11/19/5 (comments of Mali), CRD 5 (comments of Uganda), CRD 7 (comments of Nigeria), CRD 8 (comments of Kenya).
ACTIVITIES OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (Agenda Item 3c)\(^5\)

52. The Observer of the African Union (AU) referring to its report in CX/AFRICA 11/19/6 highlighted the “Participation of African Nations in sanitary and phytosanitary standard-setting organizations” (PANSPSO) project which was jointly implemented by the AU-IBAR, the AU-IAPSC and 7 African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) which aims at facilitating effective participation of African countries in the activities of Codex, OIE and IPPC. This project had helped put in place a mechanism to coordinate common positions on animal, plant and food safety standards and that through this mechanism coordinated positions were presented at the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods and Pesticide Residues, respectively. The Committee was further informed that the AU was in the process of setting up a secretariat to assist with coordination of Codex matters. In relation to financing of SPS activities in the region, the Committee was informed of PPDA within Africa and that there was a mechanism by which partnerships could be set up to provide assistance for activities in all areas including nutrition, that this was managed through the RECs.

53. The Committee was also informed by the Delegation of the European Union of its activities being undertaken in the region, in particular its support to the PANSPSO project and the Better Training for Safer Foods (BTSF) as described in CRD 6. The Delegation noted that while resources were available for capacity building and assistance in the region, better coordination was necessary.

54. The Observer of the WTO informed the Committee of some of its upcoming activities, including a three-week advanced course on the SPS Agreement (Geneva, October 2011) and two 4-day regional workshops for Africa in 2011. The Committee was informed that more information would be made available during the STDF/WTO seminar scheduled to be held during the present session of CCAFRICA.

STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CCAFRICA (Agenda Item 4a)\(^6\)

55. The Committee recalled that its last session had agreed on a number of priority activities for the implementation of the strategic plan; a format for country reports on this implementation and that the Coordinator would prepare a summary report of progress for consideration by the next session.

56. The Delegation of Ghana as coordinator introduced its report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan and highlighted the main aspects and achievements, as follows:

- A website had been established for CCAFRICA in order to facilitate coordination on issues of interest to the region and exchange of information.
- Working groups had been set up to consider the issues related to the Committees on Contaminants in Food, on Pesticide Residues, and on Food Hygiene and regional experts had been identified in these areas.
- Several issues requiring expertise had been identified in the meetings of Codex Contact Points organized by AU-IBAR in Nairobi in 2009 and prior to the current session for the following areas of work: (i) fish and fishery products, (ii) fresh fruits and vegetables; (iii) food additives; and (iv) food labelling.

57. The Delegation of Ghana also referred to the annual country report presented in CRD 13, summarizing the information received from several countries on national Codex structures; participation

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\(^5\) CX/AFRICA 11/19/6 (Report by the AU (IBAR)), CRD 6 (comments of EU).

\(^6\) CX/AFRICA 11/19/7, CX/AFRICA 11/19/7-Add.1 (comments of Benin, Mali, Mauritania, Seychelles and Zambia), CRD 1 (comments of Ghana), CRD 2 (comments of Somalia), CRD 4 (comments of Angola), CRD 5 (comments of Uganda), CRD 7 (comments of Nigeria), CRD 9 (comments of Burkina Faso), CRD 10 (comments of Malawi), CRD 11 (comments of Cameroon), CRD 12 (comments of South Africa), CRD 13 (Annual country report prepared by Ghana).
in Codex meetings and contribution to working groups; Codex activities supported by FAO/WHO; country issues that require specialized expertise; needs for capacity building; and other Codex activities in the region.

58. The Committee expressed its thanks to Ghana for the preparation of the reports and agreed that countries in the region should meet in a side event in conjunction with the 34th Session of the Commission (July 2011) in order to consider further the implementation of the Strategic Plan. For this purpose the Chairperson encouraged the delegations who had not yet submitted their reports to do so as soon as possible in order to facilitate the evaluation and follow-up of the implementation.

INFORMATION ON NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS, CONSUMER PARTICIPATION AND USE OF CODEX STANDARDS (Agenda Item 4b)

59. The Committee was informed of the updates in food control systems, consumer participation and use of Codex standards presented in written comments and oral presentations at the session. The main aspects of the information provided and issues raised in the discussion are summarized below.

Food control systems

60. Some delegations indicated that they had established a single food safety authority, especially in the sub-region of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), taking into account the recommendations of UEMOA in this respect. In other countries, the responsibilities were carried out by several entities, especially the ministries of agriculture, health, trade, fisheries, and national bureau of standards. In some cases, the mechanism of coordination for food safety legislation was also used for Codex purposes and preparing national positions. Some delegations referred to their difficulties to organize an efficient food control system due to the fragmentation of responsibilities between various official authorities and lack of coordination.

61. Another important issue identified by several countries related to the difficulties of establishing and maintaining laboratories for the purpose of food control, and to obtain accreditation. Some delegations indicated that the UEMOA programme on food quality provided assistance to the countries in the sub-region on laboratory accreditation.

62. Some delegations indicated that their countries are mainly importers of foodstuffs and drew the attention to the specific problems and requirements for capacity building as regards import control.

63. Several countries indicated that they had benefited from assistance of FAO or WHO to develop or update their food legislation and develop their food control systems (as presented under Agenda Item 3). In addition, the Committee was also informed about sub-regional initiatives such as the UEMOA quality programme and the development of regional standards and inventory of laboratories in the East African Community.

National Codex structures

64. The Committee noted that most countries have established a national Codex structure which may be a national Codex committee or a national committee responsible for food safety and food legislation matters, including Codex issues, or that they are in the process of establishing such mechanisms.

65. Some countries informed the Committee that their national Codex committee was structured in sub-committees according to the subjects addressed in Codex Committees and involved all experts and stakeholders for each area of work.

7 CL 2010/45-AFICA, CX/AFRICA 11/19/8 (comments of Benin, Mali, Mauritania, Seychelles, Zambia), CRD 1 (comments of Ghana), CRD 2 (comments of Somalia), CRD 4 (comments of Angola), CRD 5 (comments of Uganda), CRD 7 (comments of Nigeria), CRD 9 (comments of Burkina Faso), CRD 10 (comments of Malawi), CRD 11 (comments of Cameroon), CRD 12 (comments of South Africa).
66. Some delegations indicated that they had established a Codex national committee but needed technical assistance to make it operate efficiently in order to improve coordination between official authorities and stakeholders. It was noted that several countries had benefited from FAO or WHO training in order to develop their capacity to deal with Codex issues.

67. The Committee recognized the importance of coordinating activities related to the SPS Agreement at the national level and noted that many countries participated in the AU-IBAR PANSPSO programme for all SPS issues, animal health and plant protection as well as food safety.

68. As regards consumer participation, the Committee noted that many countries involved consumers in Codex coordination and in the development of national legislation on food safety. This was complemented by actions to develop consumer awareness in food safety matters. The main limitation to the participation of consumer organizations was lack of resources.

Use of Codex standards

69. The Committee considered the use of Codex standards as recommended by the Executive Committee following the abolition of the acceptance procedure.

70. The Committee noted that in many countries, Codex standards were integrated into national legislation as regulations or used as voluntary standards, and the following areas were mentioned in the discussion: food hygiene, food additives, food labelling, milk and milk products. Some delegations indicated that Codex labelling texts had been used extensively at the national level to develop regulations on nutrition labelling, and nutrition and health claims in order to provide adequate information to consumers.

71. The Committee noted that some countries also used Codex standards in the absence of national standards or as a reference for export and import purposes at the regional level.

72. Some delegations indicated that limitations to the use of Codex standards were related to lack of knowledge of standards by the industry and other stakeholders. The difficulties in implementation as regards inspection capacities and the technical possibilities of laboratories were also put forward.

73. The Chairperson thanked all participants for their contributions and recalled that the Strategic Plan for CCAFRICA monitored the situation and allowed for identification of challenges and difficulties in order to improve food control systems in the region.

NUTRITIONAL ISSUES AT NATIONAL OR REGIONAL LEVEL (Agenda Item 5)

74. The Committee noted the replies to CL 2010/45-AFRICA and the information provided by FAO and WHO in CX/AFRICA 11/19/9-Add.1.

75. The Representative of FAO introduced activities in relation to food composition (publication of a food composition table for West Africa and a training course) as well as two projects: one in Malawi on complementary foods (young childrens’ diet enriched by using locally available nutrient dense foods) and a regional project funded by Germany aiming at mainstreaming nutrition, food security and livelihoods into regional, national and local policies and programmes in Sub Saharan Africa.

76. The Representatives from WHO informed the Committee on activities to reduce the burden of malnutrition including the adoption of resolution WHA63.23 on Infant and Young Child Nutrition and follow-up actions towards it implementation. A number of countries have been supported to conduct landscape analysis and some have revised their nutrition strategies and action plans. Workshops on

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8 CX/AFRICA 11/19/9 (comments of Benin, Mali, Mauritania and Seychelles), CX/AFRICA 11/19/9-Add.1, CRD 1 (comments of Ghana), CRD 2 (comment of Somalia), CRD 4 (comments of Angola), CRD 5 (comments of Uganda), CRD 7 (comments of Nigeria), CRD 9 (comments of Burkino Faso), CRD 10 (comments of Malawi), CRD 11 (comments of Cameroon), CRD 12 (comments of South Africa).
policy development and flour fortification were organized. There are ongoing interventions to address micronutrient deficiencies including iron, vitamin A and iodine deficiencies. It was noted that two countries in Africa will be conducting research on the efficacy of neonatal Vitamin A supplementation in improving child survival. Ongoing work on nutrition surveillance, the WHO New Growth Standards and integrated management of Acute Malnutrition were mentioned.

77. In addition, the Representative of WHO informed that Committee of a number of initiatives related to nutrition advice and related activities. WHO recently established the WHO Nutrition Guidance Expert Advisory Group (NUGAG) to develop nutrition guidelines in accordance with the new WHO process for guideline development. A Global Network of Institutions working in the field of nutrition was established, and WHO is undertaking nutrient profiling work on country level.

78. The Committee expressed its appreciation to FAO, WHO and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) for their support and work on nutrition and further noted that the presence of UNICEF to report on their work at the next CCAFRICA would be welcome.

79. Several delegations reported about the nutrition status in their countries, in particular, problems relating to micronutrient deficiencies, lifestyle diseases and malnutrition and the programmes being implemented to address these problems. In particular, food fortification, salt iodation, vitamin supplementation and school feeding programmes were put in place.

80. The Committee was further informed of the use of Codex standards in relation to nutrition labelling and claims and that many countries had adopted the WHO International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and developed national policies on infant feeding and related national standards. The Committee noted that many challenges still remained with regard to implementation of nutrition-related legislation, such as nutrition claims, due to, amongst others, lack of laboratory infrastructure and expertise. Some delegations however reported that they had undertaken improving laboratory infrastructure, training of technicians and inspectors.

NOMINATION OF THE COORDINATOR (Agenda Item 6) 9

81. On the proposal by the Delegation of Tanzania and supported by other delegations, the Committee proposed to nominate Cameroon as Coordinator. The Delegation of Cameroon accepted the nomination and expressed its appreciation to the Committee for their support. The delegation committed itself to continue to build on the work initiated by Ghana in the framework of the Strategic Plan for CCAFRICA.

82. The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to the 34th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission that Cameroon be appointed as Coordinator for Africa.

83. The Committee recalled that it had agreed on Guidelines for the Transfer of Coordinatorship (ALINORM 09/32/28, Appendix IV) at its last session and reminded Ghana and Cameroon to follow these Guidelines to ensure a smooth transfer of coordinatorship.

84. The Committee expressed its appreciation to Ghana for the excellent work done during both its terms as Coordinator.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK (Agenda Item 7)

“Friends of the chair” on ractopamine

85. The chairperson informed the Committee that Ghana had participated in the “friends of the chair” meeting on ractopamine and invited interested members who wanted to provide further inputs and guidance on this work to consult with the coordinator on this matter.

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DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 8)

86. The Coordinating Committee was informed that its 20th Session would be held in approximately two years time (2013) and that the exact date and venue would be communicated to Members at a later stage on the basis of consultation between the Coordinator to be appointed by the 34th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Codex Secretariat.
APPENDIX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS
LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES

Chairperson: Prof Samuel SEFA-DEDEH
Président: Dean, Faculty of Engineering Sciences
Presidente: University of Ghana, Legon

Accra
Ghana
Tel.: +233 277533090
Email: sefad@ug.edu.gh

ANGOLA

Mrs Teodora SILVA
1ère Vice-Présidente du Codex-Angola
Codex –Angola
Rua Cerqueira Lukoki
Luanda
Angola
Tel: 244912511981
Fax: 24422396745
Email: janorq@netangola.com;
tlourenosilva@gmail.com

Dr Maria SANAZENGE
2ème Vice-Présidente du Codex-Angola
Rua Commandante Gika Largo Antonio Jacinto
Luanda
Angola
Tel: 244923653695
Fax: 24422323724
Email: Sanazenge@hotmail.com

BENIN/BÉNIN

Dr Yombo MALETE
Directeur de l’Alimentationet de la Nutrition
Appliquee; Secrétaire Permanent du Comité
National du Codex Alimentarius, Point de contact
du Codex Alimentarius
Ministere de l’Agriculture, de l’Elevage et dela
Peche
Porto Novo
Benin
Tel: +22990032527; +22997112020
Email: yombomalete@yahoo.fr

Mr Richard Dedenou OUSSOU
Chef Service Hygiène Publique
Direction de l’Hygiène et de l’Assainissement de
Base / Ministère de la Santé
BP 882
Cotonou
Benin
Tel: +22921339720, +22995811083
Email: richardoussou@yahoo.fr

Ms Keolebogile SEGOMELO
Manager Scientific Standards
Botswana Bureau of Standards
Private Bag BO 48
Gaborone
Botswana
Tel: +267 3903200
Fax: +267 3903120
Email: Segomelo@bobstandards.bw

Mr Hussein H. T. TARIMO
Principal Scientific Officer I
Ministry of Health
Public Health Department
Private Bag 00269
Gaborone
Botswana
Tel: +267 363 2121
Fax: +267 3902092
Email: htarimo@gov.bw;
BURUNDI

Mr Mivuba ZACHARIE
Head-Certification, Accreditation and Inspection Division
Burundi Bureau of Standards and Quality Control
Boulevard de la Tanzanie No. 500
P.O. Box 3535, Bujumbura
Burundi
Tel: +25778855270
Email: mivubazacharie2000@yahoo.fr

Mr Pierre-Claver NTIBAKIVAYO
Conseiller Technique
Ministere de l’Agriculture et de l’Elevage
B.P. 1850 Bujumbura
Burundi
Tel: (257) 77735129/22222087
Email: mufozi2009@yahoo.fr

BURKINA FASO

Mr Saisore Dominique BAMBARA
Nutritioniste
Ministere de la Santé
03 BP 7068
Ouagadougou
Burkina Faso
Tel: +226 76 50 88 30
Email: bambaradominique@yahoo.fr

Mr Moussa OUATTARA
Agronome
Ministere de l’Agriculture, de l’Hydraulique, des Ressources Halieutiques
DPV 01 BP: 5362 Ouagadougou 01
Ouagadougou
Burkina Faso
Tel: + 226 71353315
Email: ouattmouss@yahoo.fr

CAMEROON/CAMEROUN

Boniface Charles Booto à NGON
General Manager
Standards and Quality Agency
BP 5674
Yaounde

Cameroon
Tel: +237 99937621
Fax: +237 22226496
Email: bootoangon@yahoo.fr

Mr Solomon TATAH
Sub Director
Department of United Nations
Room 104, Min. of Ext. Relations
Yaounde
Cameroon
Tel: +237 22210266/ 75520459
Fax: +237 22101133
Email: solomontatah@yahoo.com

Mr. Jean Martin ETOUNDI
Technical Secretary No.1 Of National Codex Committee and Food Safety
Sub Director of Quality and Promotion in Standards and Quality Agency
P. O. Box 8186
Yaounde
Cameroon
Tel: +23777742241/+23797143633
Email: etoundijme@yahoo.fr

Mrs Grace Nde NINGO
Chief of Service for Food Quality Control Representative
Ministry of Public Health
Yaounde
Cameroon
Tel: +237 77693186
Email: gningo@hotmail.com

Mr POUEDOGO
Chargé d’Etude / Industry and Commerce Division
Prime Minister’s Office
BP 12876
Yaounde
Cameroon
Tel: +237 99897733
Email: pouedo@yahoo.com

Mr Médi Moungui
Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Cameroon
Via Siracusa 4/6 00161 Rome Italy
medimoungui@yahoo.fr
Mr Martin Paul MINDJOS MOMENY  
Technical Secretary of National Codex Secretary  
National Codex Committee and Food safety  
P. O. 4404  
Yaounde  
Cameroon  
Tel: +00237 22239079  
Fax: +237 22 226496  
Email: mindjos@yahoo.fr

Mrs Garone Josiane CHOUYA TCHAKOUTE  
Contact Point of Codex Standards and Quality Agency  
P. O. Box 14966  
Yaounde  
Cameroon  
Tel: +237 99542384  
Fax: +237 22226496  
Email: pointfocalcameroun@yahoo.fr

Mr Urbain Noel EBANG MVE  
Secrétaire General  
Ministry of Industry, Mines & Technological Development  
BP 25075  
Yaounde  
Cameroon  
Tel: +237 22231973  
Fax: +237 22221973  
Email: eur2006@yahoo.fr

REPUBLIC/REPUBLIQUE CENTRAL AFRICAINE

Aimé Pascal NGOUMBANGO NZABE  
Director of Plant Protection  
Ministry of Agricultural  
P. O. Box 786  
Bangi  
Central African  
Tel: + 236 75502324  
Email: ngouze@yahoo.fr

Mrs Yoyo Solange Clemence  
Directrice Commerce  
Ministere Du Commerce  
BP 1988  
Bangui  
Republique Central Africaine  
Tel: +236 75508887  
Email: solangeyoyo@yahoo.fr

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO/CONGO, REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE

Dr Jean-Marie Yuma OLENGA  
Chief de Division Sanki Publique Veterinaire  
Ministère de l’Agriculture  
BP 8722 – Kin / Gombe  
Kinshasa – République Democratique du Congo  
Tel: +243998867155  
Email: jm_olga@yahoo.fr

COMOROS/UNION DES COMORES

Ing Faissoili Ben MOHADJI ATTOUMANE  
Directeur General Agriculture et Environment, Ile Autonome de Moheli Comores  
Direction Générale Agriculture et Environment, Ile Autonome de Moheli Comores  
BP 25 Fomboni, Moheli Comores  
Union des Comores  
Tel: +2697720240; 3320040  
Email: faiissoilibenmohadji@yahoo.fr

Mr Abdillahi ALI  
Chef de Service Charge de la Nutrition  
Ministeré de la Santé Ile Autonome de Ngazidja  
BP 446  
Moroni  
Union des Comores  
Tel: +3338198  
Email: aissilame@yahoo.fr

IVORY COAST/CÔTE D’IVOIRE

Mr Yapo François AHOTI  
Director Standardization and Certification  
CODINORM (Côte d’Ivoire Normalisation)  
01 P. O. Box 1872 Abidjan 01  
Immeuble le Général, 5th Floor  
Abidjan  
Cote d’Ivoire  
Tel: +225 20 320 397  
Fax: +225 20 21 56 11  
Email: ahoti@codinorm.org

Dr Akpeaud Dannis Hermann HOUFFOUET  
Essential Actions in Nutrition Focal Point  
DC-PNN (Programme National de Nutrition)
06 BP 1160 Abidjan 06
Abidjan
Côte d’Ivoire
Tel: +225 07784890
Fax: +225 20 21 84 61
Email: houffoueta@yahoo.fr

Dr Ehousson NARCISSE
President
CNCA - CI
20 BP 811
Abidjan 20
Côte d’Ivoire
Tel: +225 01015596
Email: marcehoussou@yahoo.fr

Mrs Adom née DIALLO KAMA
Agnomoniste
Ministère de l’Agriculture
25 BP 1426
Abidjan26
Côte d’Ivoire
Tel: +225 05 32 1577
Email: kama_diallo@yahoo.fr

Dr Etiegne MIAN STANISLAS
Program Manager
Helen Keller International
17 BP 1334
Abidjan
Côte d’Ivoire
Tel: +225 05101035
Fax: +225 2241109
Email: setiegne@hki.org

DJIBOUTI

Mr Mouharam FOUAD ABDALLAH
Chef de Service de Contrôle des Normes et de la Qualité
Direction du commerce et de Normalisation
Ministere du Commerce et de L’Industrie
B.P 24
Republique de Djibouti
Tel: +253 82 1194
Fax: +253 35 4909
Email: marahuom@hotmail.com

ETHIOPIA / ETHIOPIE

Mr Ayele GEDA
Director, Testing Laboratories
Quality & Standards Authority of Ethiopia
P. O. Box 2310
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
Tel: +251 911 614143
Fax: +251 646 0880 / 81
Email: ayele@qsae.org

Mr Wendafrash BEYECHA
Director, Inspection and Surveillance Food, Medicine & Health Care Administration and Control Authourity
P. O. Box 15605
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
Tel: +251 911 625843
Fax: +251 11 5521392
Email: wendm2001@yahoo.co.uk

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Dr Antonio Bonifacio MBA NDONG
Medico Veterinario
Ministerio De Agricultura & Bosques
Malabo
Guinea Ecuatorial
Tel: +222 685855
Email: ambandong@yahoo.es

Mrs Rosario MBANG MOSUY ADA.
Auxillar Veterinaria
Ministerio De Agricultura & Bosques
Malabo
Guinea Equatorial
Tel: +222277859
**GABON**

Miss Colette Lydie AMBONGUILAT  
Directeur du Centre National de Nutrition  
Ministère de la Santé  
Membre du Comité National du Codex Alimentarius  
BP 12322  
Libreville  
Gabon  
Tel: +241 07355698  
Email: clauy75@yahoo.fr

Dr Mesmin NDONG BIYOO  
President  
Comité National Codex  
BP – 2246  
Libreville  
Gabon  
Tel: +241 07 252751  
Email: ndong_ndong@yahoo.fr

Mrs. Blanche Emilienne OBAME  
Secrétaire et Point Focal  
Comité National Codex  
BP 8704  
Libreville  
Gabon  
Tel: + 24106067215  
Email: mezoueblanche@yahoo.fr

**GHANA**

Mr John Odame-Darkwah  
Ag. Deputy Chief Executive  
Food and Drugs Board  
P. O. Box CT 2783  
Cantomment-Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 277 450901  
Email: jodamedarkwa@fdbghana.gov.gh

Dr P. N. T. JOHNSON  
Director, Food Research Institute – CSIR  
Food Research Institute  
P. O. Box M 20  
Accra  
Ghana  
Email: pntjohnson@fri.csir.org.gh

Dr. Sharon AFFRIFAH  
Regional Regulatory & Scientific Affairs Manager  
Nestle Central and West Africa Ltd  
P.M.B KIA 32  
Airport-Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 244 339795  
Fax: + 233 0302 774886  
Email: Sharon.affrifah@gh.nestle.com

Mr Kwame AMEZAH  
Director  
Ministry of Food and Agriculture  
Department of Extension  
P. O. Box M 37  
Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 243162117  
Email: kamezah@hotmail.com

Dr Francis KUNADU-AMPRATWUM  
Deputy Director  
Veterinary Services Department  
P. O. Box M161  
Accra  
Ghana  
Tel:  +233 (0) 302 775377  
Fax:  +233 (0) 302 776021  
Email: kunaduampratwumfrancis@yahoo.com

Mr Samuel Duodu MANU  
Regional Director  
Fisheries Commission  
M. O. F. A.  
P. O. Box KF 8  
Koforidua  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 244571903  
Fax: +233 034 2026585  
Email: sdmanu@yahoo.com
Mr Wisdom K. Selorm AGBEMAVOR  
Scientific Officer  
Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC)  
P. O. Box LG 80  
Legon-Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 020 820 4488  
Fax: 233 030 240 0807  
Email: wakselorm@hotmail.com

Mrs Milly Ezeria KYOFA-BOAMAH  
Deputy Director  
Ministry of Food and Agriculture / Plant Protection & Regulation Services Directorate  
P. O. Box M 37  
Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 0208120721  
Email: nkyofaboamah@yahoo.co.uk

Mrs Felicia ANSAH-AMPROFI  
Deputy Director  
Pesticide and Fertilizer Reg. Division  
Plant Protection and Regulatory Service Directorate – MOFA  
P. O. Box M37  
Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 0244 95 1912  
Email: famprog@yahoo.co.uk

Mr Frederick AYE  
Vice President  
Consumers Association of Ghana  
P. O. Box TF 81  
Trade Fair  
Accra  
Ghana  
Email: usdghan@gmail.com

Mrs Audrey ESSILFIE  
Regulatory & Scientific Affairs Manager  
Nestlé Ghana Ltd  
PMB, KIA  
Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 (0) 544 335 484  
Fax: +233 (0) 302 50119516  
Email: audrey.essilfie@gh.nestle.com

Mr Raphael KUWORNU  
Compliance Officer  
Nestlé Ghana Ltd  
PMB, KIA  
Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 (0) 303 304181  
Email: raphael.kuwornu@gh.nestle.com

Dr Betty AMOA  
Senior Lecturer  
University of Ghana  
Department of Nutrition and Food Science  
P. O. Box 134  
Legon-Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 0246817525  
Email: bamoa@yahoo.co.uk

Mrs Eunice ADAMS  
Director  
WIAD, Ministry of Food and Agriculture  
P. O. Box M37  
Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 0288 227724  
Email: uqadams@hotmail.com

Mr Samuel Nii QUARCOO  
C. E. O.  
Quarcoo Initiatives  
P. O. Box TF 313  
Trade Fair-Accra  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 0287010438  
Email: quarcooil@yahoo.com

Dr Samuel LOWOR  
Senior Research  
Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana  
P. O. Box 8  
New Tafo  
Ghana  
Tel: +233 243889880  
Fax: +233 0277900029  
Email: Slowor2@yahoo.co.uk

Mrs Nana Benyiwa ACKOM  
Lecturer  
Department of Food Process Engineering  
University of Ghana
Legon-Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 27 514 2218
Email: newusie@yahoo.co.uk

Mr Eugene ADARKWA-ADDAE
Ag. Director Standards
Ministry of Trade and Industry
P. O. Box MB 47
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 244 690703
Email: eadarkwaaddae@yahoo.co.uk

Mrs Rosetta ANNAN
Member
National Codex Committee Ghana
P. O. Box KD 769
Kanda-Accra
Ghana
Tel: 233 302 91 1142
Email: victorannan@gmail.com

Miss Mildred Naa Ayele MENSAH
CEO
Milmen Consult
F2 Manet Cottage (DTD)
Baatsonaa (SKM)
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 277601498
Email: mildemencon@yahoo.com

Mr Kwame ASAMOAH-OKYERE
Head, Biosafety Unit
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 020 8184188
Email: kwamedei@hotmail.com

Mrs Gloria ODOI
Regulatory Officer
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 277412912
Fax: +233 302 229794
Email: djoppus@yahoo.com

Ms Maria LOVELACE-JOHNSON
Head, Food Safety Management Unit
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 020 8115619
Fax: +233 302 229794
Email: mariluv2004@hotmail.com

Mrs Paulina ANFU
Head, Food Evaluation & Registration Unit
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 026 4588067
Fax: +233 302 229794
Email: phnanfu@yahoo.ie

Ms Maria LOVELACE-JOHNSON
Head, Food Safety Management Unit
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 020 8184188
Email: kwamedei@hotmail.com

Mrs Isabella AGRA
Head, Food Safety & Nutrition Department
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 0244 337249
Fax: +233 302 229794
Email: isabelmansa@yahoo.com

Mrs Wilhelmina QUARCOOPOME
Regulatory Officer
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 0244764246
Email: tata4gh@yahoo.com
Mr Seidu UMARU
Regulatory Officer
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 0244 523341
Fax: +233 302 229794
Email: umarusei@yahoo.co.uk

Mr John ODAI-TETTEY
Regulatory Officer
Food and Drugs
P. O. Box CT 2783
Cantonment – Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 244 747263
Email: odaitettey@yahoo.ca

Mr George PENTSIL
Senior Officer
Food Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Cantonment – Accra
Ghana
Tel: + 233 244 927 127
Email: gpeegh@yahoo.com

Dr Charles TORTOE
Senior Research Scientist
CSIR – FRI
P. O. Box M 20
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 243 241801
Email: cttortoe@yahoo.co.uk

Mr Sam ADU-KUMI
Deputy Director
Environmental Protection Agency
P. O. Box MB 326
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 244 635213
Email: adukumi@yahoo.com

Mrs Felica ANSAH–AMPROFI
Deputy Director
Plant Protection & Regulatory Services
Directorate (MOFA)

P. O. Box M 37
Pokuase, Accra

Prof Esther SAKYI – DAWSON
Associate Professor
University of Ghana, Nutrition Food Science
Department
P. O. Box LG 134
Legon-Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 24 43 67 242
Email: esakyid@ug.edu.gn

Dr Oppong DWAPANYIN
Senior Research Officer
Cocoa Research Institute
P. O. Box 8
New Tafo – Akim
Ghana
Tel: +233243211271
Email: adwapanyin@yahoo.com

Mr Augustine DONKOR
Senior Lecturer
University of Ghana, Department of Chemistry
Accra
Ghana
Tel:+233 26 5005073
Email: adonkor@ug.edu.ph

Mr Cheetham MINGLE
Head, Food Chemical Laboratory
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Cantonment-Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 244080 666
Email: tawa_gh@yahoo.com

Mr Kwame Dei ASAMOAH-OKYERE
Head, Biosafety Unit
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana

Dr Kafui KPODO
Deputy Director
Food Research Institute
P. O. Box M 20
Accra
Ghana
Tel: + 244 650635
Email: kpodofri@ghana.com

Dr Ferdinand D. TAY
President
Consumers Association of Ghana
GITFC
P. O.Box TF 81
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 20 811 9966
Email: consumersghana@yahoo.com

Mrs Janet Ama Amissah TETTEH
Regulatory Officer II
Food and Drugs Board
P. O.Box CT 2783
Cantonment
Ghana
Tel: +233 243 487932
Email: jamissahtetteh@yahoo.co.uk

Ms Catherine GORDOR
Export Development Officer
Ghana Export Promotion Council
P. O. Box M 146
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233244 705866
Fax: + 233 677256
Email: kesinam26@yahoo.com

Zakari Abdallah KHALIFA BANDA
Head of Services
Ghana Export Promotion Council
P. O. Box M 146
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 302 689889
Email: bandazuk@yahoo.co.uk

Prudence ASAMOAH-BONTI
Head, Food and Material Standards
Ghana Standards Board
MB 245
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233244 361848
Email: dencycal@yahoo.com

Dr Bashiru BOI KIKIMOTO
Deputy Director – Public Health
Veterinary Services
P. O. Box M 161
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +2333 244 289782
Email: boikikimoto@yahoo.com

Mr Stephen Adu YEBOAH
Regulatory Officer
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 261 904263
Email: sayeboah@gmail.com

Mr Ebenezer Kofi ESSEL
Head, Food Inspectorate
Food and Drugs Board
P. O. Box CT 2783
Cantonment
Ghana
Tel:+233244 655943
Email: kooduntu@yahoo.com

Mr John DEFOR
Policy Research Officer
Association of Ghana Industries
P. O. Box AN 8624
Accra
Ghana
Tel: 23330277023/4
Email: jdefor@agighana.org

Mr Mustapha Tawiah KUMAH
Ag. Director of Standards
Ghana Standards Board
P. O. Box MB 245
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 302 501937
Fax: +233 302500231
Email: mkumah@gsb.gov.gh

Mr Vesper SUGLO
Director
Ministry of Food & Agriculture-PPRSD
P. O. Box M 37
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +244 388275
Email: jackvesper@yahoo.com

Dr Nicholas A. de Heer
Retired Consultant in Public Health & Nutrition
First Vice-Chairman
Joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius
Representing Africa, Asia & Latin America (1972)
P. O. Box KD 385
Kanda-Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 302 776627 / 20 6763737
Email: deheer1930@yahoo.com

Mr Robert Akwasi Kwakye NKETIA
Association of Ghana Industry
P. O. Box AN 8624
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 2624815 / 020 2017474 / 0322061597
Email: raktiaholdings@yahoo.com

Mr Gustav E. QUAYSON
Director, Communication
Consumer Protection Agency
P. O. Box CT 5356
Accra
Ghana
Tel: +233 248 550099
Email: stav25@yahoo.co.uk

Guinea-Bissau
Tel: +002456978601
Email: soaresvazf@yahoo.com.br

Mr José Mora N’SUM-NE
Responsable de l’Infor Commun. Du CNCA
CDEDA/MAOR
BP-71-Bissau-Rue-Ex-QG
Bissau
Guiné-Bissau
Tel: +245 669145
Email: nsunme@hotmail.com

GUINEE

Mme Hadja-Minté CISSÉ
Directrice Générale
Institut Guineen de Normalisation Et
De Metrologie
Ministère de l’Industrie et des PME
BP 1639
Conakry
Guinée
Tel: +224 60 29 95 39
Email: mintecisse@yahoo.fr

Mr. Jean-Luc FABER
Chef Division Gestion des Pesticides et de
Agréments Professionnels
Ministere de L’Agriculture
Service National Protection des Vegetaux
Et des Denrees Stockees
Conakry
Guinée
Tel: +224 60553676
Email: elsabang@yahoo.fr

Mrs Diallo AISSATOU BOBO
Chef Section Etudes et Statistiques
Ministere Industrie et des, PME
BP 468
Conakry
Guinée
Tel: +224 60546678
Email: diallo.aissatoubobo@yahoo.fr

GUINEE-BISSAU/GUINEE-BISSAU

M. Julio Malam INJAI
Point Focal
Comite National du Codex Alimentarius
Ministère de l’Agriculture et du developpement
Rural
Bisau BP 844
Guinee-Bissau
+2456621182
Email: junain2010@live.com;
codexgw@yahoo.br

Mr Soares Faustino VAZ
Directeur Du Service of Normalisation
Ministere Du Commerce, Industue, Tourisme er
Artisanat
P. O. Box 269
Bissau
KENYA

Mrs Eva ODUOR
Director-Standards Development & International Trade
Kenya Bureau of Standards
54974 Popo Road off Mombasa Road behind Bellevue
Nairobi
Kenya
Tel: +25402605490
Fax: +25402609660
Email: info@kebs.org/oduore@kebs.org

Dr Moses GICHA
Deputy Director of Veterinary Services
Department of Veterinary Services
P. O. Private Bag
Kangemi-Nairobi
Kenya
Tel: +254 733557134
Email: medwrin@yahoo.com

Mrs Alice ONYANGO
Manager-Kenya Codex Contract Point
Kenya Bureau of Standards Code: 00200
54974 00200 Popo Road off Mombasa Road behind Bellevue
Nairobi
Kenya
Tel: +25402605490
Fax: +25402609660
Email: akothe@kebs.org/info@kebs.org / dereda.oyangol@gmail.com

Ms Grace MUCHEMI
Assistant Manager
Analytical Services
Pest Control Products Board
P. O. Box 13794-00800
Nairobi
Kenya
Tel: +254-20-4446115
Fax: +254 20 4449072
Email: md@pcpb.or.ke, gmuchemi@pcpb.or.ke

Mrs Anne NJOROGE
Assistant Director
Ministry of Agriculture
P. O. Box 30028-00100
Nairobi

Kenya
Tel: ++254722825365
Email: wanjarogen@yahoo.com

Miss Lucy NAMU
Chief Analytical Chemist
Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service
P.O. Box 49592, 00100, GPO, Oloolua Ridge, Off Ngong Road
Nairobi
Kenya
Tel: +254-3536171
Fax: + 254-3536175
Email: lnamu@kephis.org

LESOTHO

Miss Palesa LESOLI
Regional Food and Nutrition Coordination
Private Bag A 78
Maseru 100
Lesotho
Tel: 266 58029630
Fax: 266 22322179
Email: plesoli@rediffmail.com

Dr Tabitha Masentle SEEISO
Director Veterinary Public Health & Food Safety
Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security
Private Bag A 82
Department of Livestock Services
Maseru 100
Lesotho
Tel: +266 22317284
Fax: +266 22311500
Email: seeisotabitha@yahoo.com

Mr Motjoka Azael MAKARA
Principal Standards Officer
Ministry of Trade & Industry, Cooperative & Marketing
P. O. Box 747
Maseru 100
Lesotho
Tel: +266 22322113
Email: lessqa@leo.co.ls
LIBERIA

Mr Sei Wonkemie GAHN
Assistant Minister for Industry
Ministry of Commerce and Industry
P. O. Box 9041
Monrovia
Republic of Liberia
Tel: +231-6512488
Email: wonkemie532002@yahoo.com

MADAGASCAR

Mr Ramiandrisoa BERNARDIN
Directeur de la Concurrence et de la Protection des Consommateurs
Ministere du Commerce
Lot ITR 75 bis Andranonahoastra
Antananarivo
Madagascar
Tel: +261331229676
Email: dnp.snor@moov.mg
                               /dcpc@commerce.gov.mg

MALAWI

Mr Fred SIKWESI
Acting Deputy Director General
Malawi Bureau of Standards
P. O. Box 946
Blantyre
Malawi
Tel: +2651870488
Fax: +265 1870756
Email: fsikwese@mbsmw.org

Dr Bernard CHIMERA
Deputy Director
Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
Department of Animal Health and Livestock Dev
P. O. Box 2096
Lilongwe
Malawi
Tel: +265 999 315 766
Fax: 265 1 751 349
Email: bernard.chimera@yahoo.com

Mrs Martha MAIDENI
Standards Manager
Malawi Bureau of Standards
P. O. Box 946
Aliments  
Centre Commercial Rue 305 Quartier du Fleuve  
BPE: 2362  
Bamako  
Mali  
Tel: +223 79293458  
Fax: +22320220747  
Email: camara27@hotmail.com

Dr Sory SANGARE  
Regulatory and Scientific Affairs Manager  
Nestlé Mali  
BP: E3414  
Bamako  
Mali  
Tel: +223 79204605  
Fax: +223 20211580  
Email: sory.sangare@ml.nestle.com

MAURITANIA /MAURITANIE  
Dr Brahim Elkory MOHAMED  
Directeur Institut National de Recherches en Santé Publique, Point Focal National Codex  
Ministère de la Santé  
Avenue Gemal Abdennasser BP : 695  
Nouakchott  
Mauritania  
Tel: +22245 25 31 34  
Fax: +22245 29 26 45  
Email: melkory69@yahoo.fr

MOROCCO/MAROC  
Miss Khadija ARIF  
Cadre a la Division de la Rélémentation et la Normalisation Secretariat du CNC/Point de contact Codex  
Office National de Securite Sanitaire des Produits Alimentaires  
ONSSA, Avenue hadj Ahmed Cherkaoui Agdal  
Rabat – Maroc  
Rabat  
Maroc  
Tel: +212537676618  
Fax: +212537682049  
Email: Khad32@yahoo.fr

Mrs Imane QUADIL  
Head of Mission  
P. O Box C11  
Accra  
Ghana  
Email: ambassade.maroc.ghana@gmail.com

NIGERIA  
Abiola KOMOLAFE  
Deputy Director  
Standards Organization of Nigeria  
52, Lome Crescent, Wuse Zone 7  
Abuja  
Nigeria  
Tel: +2348023288411  
Fax: +2345239353  
Email: abikomos@yahoo.com

Mrs Jane OMOJOKUN  
Deputy Director  
National Agency for Food & Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC)  
3/5 Oshodi – Apapa Express Way, Oshodi  
Lagos  
Nigeria  
Tel: +2348033338184  
Email: omojokum.j@nafdac.gov.ng

Dr Ademola MAJASAN  
Assistant Director  
Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development, FCDA Secretariat  
Area 11, Garki  
Abuja  
Nigeria  
Email: demmyjash@yahoo.com

Mr Abimbola ADEGBOYE  
Assistant Director  
National Agency for Food & Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC)  
3/5 Oshodi – Apapa Express Way, Oshodi  
Lagos  
Nigeria  
Tel: +2348053170810  
Email: bimbostica@yahoo.com; adegboye.a@nafdac.gov.ng

Mrs Magaret ESHIETT  
Deputy Director  
Standards Organization of Nigeria  
¼ Victoria Arobieke Street, Lekki Phase II, Victoria Island
Lagos
Nigeria
Tel: +2348023179774
Fax: +2345239353
Email: megescitt@yahoo.com

Mr Fred CHIAZOR
Chairman, Technical Committee
Association of Food, Beverages and Tobacco
Employers (AFBTE)
16, Gerald Road, Ikoyi
Lagos
Nigeria
Tel: +2348035352226
Email: fchiazor@afr.ko.com

Mrs Margaret OLELE
Director Ass. Public Affairs
Pfizer Specialists
11A Obsorne Rd, Ikoyi
Lagos
Nigeria
Tel: +234 7064187879
Email: Margaret.olele@pfizer.com

RWANDA

Athanasis MUKESHIYAREMYE
Head, Standards Unit
Rwanda Bureau of Standards
P.O. Box 7099
Kigali
Rwanda
Tel: +250788483488
Fax: +250583305
Email: Mukesha_atha@yahoo.fr

SENEGAL/SÉNÉGAL

Mr Alhoussseynou Doctar HANNE
Chef De Bureau Gestonnaire du PNI/SPS
Ministére de l’Agriculture / DPV
BP 20054 Thiaroye
Dakar
Senegal
Tel: 221 776407517
Fax: 221 338 34 2854
Email: almhanne@yahoo.f
almhanco@hotmail.com

Mrs Tobe HONTEYE
Point Focal Codex
Ministére Sante et Prevention
4024-Rue Aime Cesaire Fann
Dakar
Senegal
Tel: +221 33 869 4307
Fax: 221 33 869 42 06
Email: houlytobe@yahoo.fr

SOMALIA

Dr Noor MOHAMED NOOR
Head of Food and Drug QC
Ministry of Health
Garowe, Puntland
Somalia
Tel: +25290-793526
Email: somaliacodex@gmail.com

SOUTH AFRICA/AFRIQUE DU SUD/SUDAFRICA

Mr Malose Daniel MATLALA
Deputy Director: Inter-Agency Liaison & Regulatory Nutrition
Food Control (National Codex Contact Point)
Department of Health
Private Bag X 828
Pretoria
South Africa
Tel: +27 123958789
Fax: +21 123958854
Email: CACPSA@health.gov.za

Mr Deon JACOBS
Principal Inspector
National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications
14 B Railway Road, Montague Gardens
Cape Town
South Africa
Tel: +27 21 5263400
Fax: +27 21 5263451
Email: jacobscdc@nrcs.org.za

SWAZILAND

Ms. Dudu DUBE
Principal Environmental Health Officer
Ministry of Health
Box 5
Mbabane
Swaziland
Tel: +268 766 29280
Fax: +268 404 7420
Email: duduzdube@yahoo.co.uk

UNITED REP. TANZANIA/TANZANIE,
REPUBLIQUE-UNIE DE

Dr Claude John Shara MOSHA
Chief Standards Officer
Head Agriculture and Food Section
Codex Contact Point Officer
Tanzania Bureau of Standards
Ubungo Area
Morogoro Road/Sam Nujoma Road
P. O. Box 9524
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania
Tel: +255 713 324 495/765 087 187
Fax: 255 222450959
Email: claudemasha@tbstz.org, cjsmoshar@yahoo.co.uk

Mr Justin Daniel MAKISI
Manager, Food Inspection and Enforcement
Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority
Mabibo External
Mandela Road
P. O. Box 77150
Dar Es Salaam
Tanzania
Tel: +255 784808112
Fax: +255 22 245 0793
Email: jmakisi@yahoo.com

Mr Elias Maiga CHINAMO
Assistant Director
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
P. O. Box 9083
D'salaam
Dar-ES-Salaam
Tanzania
Tel: +255 784 831623
Fax: +255 22 2130806
Email: chinamoebm@yahoo.co.uk

Dr Ayoub MNDEME
Agricultural Attaché
Embassy of Tanzania
Rome
Email: amndeme@yahoo.com

Dr Martin KIMANYA
Scientific Manager Food Evaluation
Tanzania Food & Drugs Authority
Mandela Road
P. O. Box 77150
Dar Es Salaam
Tanzania
Tel: +255 754317687
Fax: +255 22 2450793
Email: makimanya@yahoo.co.uk, martin.kimanya@tfda.or.tz

TOGO

Dr Kobou ABOTCHI
Chef Section Produits Halieutegus Ministére de l'Agriculture de l'Élevage, et de la Pêche
BP 4041
Lomé
Togo
Tel: +228 221 3645 / 228 904 9065
Email: kokouabotch@hotmail.com
Dr Tchala KAZIA
Codex Contact Point
Ministry of Agriculture
P. O. Box 1163
Lomé
Togo
Tel: +2289023235 / 228 225 41
Fax: 228 2251558
Email: kaziatchala@yahoo.fr

UGANDA/OUUGANDA

Mr Samuel BALAGADDE
Manager, Imports Inspection
Uganda National Bureau of Standards
P. O. Box 6329
Kampala
Uganda
Tel: +256 414 534357
Fax: + 256414534349
Email: samuel.balagadde@unbs.go.ug

Mr Patrick SEKITOLEKO
Manager International Liaison
Uganda National Bureau of Standards
P. O. Box 6329
Kampala
Uganda
Tel: +256 414 2223679
Fax: +256 414 286123
Email: patrick.ssekitoleko@unbs.go.ug

VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION

Dr Ben Manyindo
Deputy Executive Director
Uganda National Bureau of Standards
P. O. Box 6329
Kampala
Uganda
Tel: +256 414 222 367 / 9
Fax: +256 414 256 123
Email: ben.manyindo@unbs.go.

ZAMBIA/ZAMBIE

Dr Gift MUNTHALI
Senior Veterinary Officer
Department of Veterinary & Livestock Development,
Ministry of Livestock & Fisheries Development
P.O. Box 50060
Lusaka
Zambia
Tel: +260977427785
Fax: +260211252608
Email: munthali-g@yahoo.com

Dr Maputa Agnes KAMULETE
Veterinary Officer – Public Health
Ministry of Livestock & Fisheries
P.O. Box 50060, RW Lusaka
Lusaka
Zambia
Tel: +260977805930
Fax: +260211252608
Email: makamulete@yahoo.com

Mr Delphin M. KINKESE
Chief Environmental Health Officer
Food Safety and Occupational Health
Ministry of Health
P. O. Box 30205
Lusaka
Zambia
Tel: +260211253040/5
Fax: +26021123344
Email: dmkinkese@gmail.com

Mrs Margaret Lwenje LUNGU
Standards Manager
Zambia Bureau of Standards
P. O. Box 50259
Lusaka
Zambia
Tel: +260 211 231385/227075
Fax: +260 211 238483
Email: mlungu@zabs.org.zm

Mrs Margaret SAKALA MAZHAMO
Consultant / Public Analyst
Ministry of Health / Food and Drugs Control Laboratory
P. O. Box 30138
Lusaka
Zambia
Tel: +0977853766
Fax: +2601252875/253344
Email: mazhamoms@yahoo.com

ZIMBABWE
Mr Fredy CHINYAVANHU
Deputy Director – Food Control
Ministry of Health
P.O. Box CY 231, Causeway
Harare
Zimbabwe
Tel: +263712875435, +263772426084
Fax: +2634792026/7, 263775338669
Email: fchinyavanhu@healthnet.org.zw

Mr Huggine SHOKO
Quality Manager
Government Analyst Laboratory
P.O. Box CY231, Causeway
Harare
Zimbabwe
Tel: +2634792026/7, 263775338669
Email: hshoks@yahoo.com

OBSERVER COUNTRIES
PAYS OBSERVATEURS
EUROPEAN UNION (MEMBER ORGANIZATION) – UNION EUROPÉENNE (ORGANISATION MEMBRE)
Mr Risto HOLMA
Administrator
European Commission
1041 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +32 2 2998683
Email: risto.holma@ec.europa.eu

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA/ETATS-UNIES D’AMERIQUE
Mr Kenneth LOWERY
International Issues Analyst
U.S. Codex Office
1400 Independence Ave S.W. Room 4861
Washington DC
United States
Tel: +202 690 4042
Fax: +202 720 3157
Email: Kenneth.lowery@fsis.usda.gov

Ms Renee HANCHER
Standards Coordinator, Market Access & Compliance
United States Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration
1401 Constitution Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230
USA
Tel: 2024823493
Fax: 2024825939
Email: Karen.Burress@trade.gov

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/ORGANISATIONS
AFRICAN UNION/UNION AFRICAINE
Dr Jean Gerard MEZUIM’ELLA
Director of Inter-African Phytosanitary Council of the African Union (AU-IAPSC)
Department of Rural Economy & Agriculture (DREA)
BP 4170 Yaounde
Cameroon
Tel: + 237 22211969
Email: au_cpi@au.appo.org

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION ORGANISATION/MONDIALE DU COMMERCE
Ms Marlyyne HOPPER
Economic Affairs Officer
Standards and Trade Development Facility
Rue de Lausanne 154
Geneva 1211
Switzerland
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH/FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA SANTÉ ANIMALE

Olivier ESPEISSE
Vétérinaire Responsable
International Federation for Animal Health
1 rue Defacqz
Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +33 1 55 49 35 35
Email: espeisse_olivier@lilly.com

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF BEVERAGE ASSOCIATIONS [ICBA]

Mrs Sibongile CHIUMYA
SRA Manager
The Coca-Cola Company
9 Junction Avenue Parktown
Johannesburg
South Africa
Tel: +27 11 644 0544
Email: schiumya@afr.ko.com

Ms Jemimah MAMBALA
SRA Manager
The Coca-Cola Company
Kilimanjaro Road, UpperHill
Nairobi
Kenya
Tel: +254 20 3253518
Email: jmambala@afr.ko.com

FAO

Ms Catherine BESSY
Food Safety & Quality Officer
Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division
Food and Agriculture Organization
Via delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome
Italy
Tel.: +39 06 5705 3679

Fax: +39 06 5705 4593
Email: catherine.bessy@fao.org

Ms Giorgia VICOLO
APO – Associate Professional on Food Safety
FAO/Regional Office for Africa
Accra
Email: giorgia.nicolo@fao.org

WHO

Dr Angelika TRITSCHER
Scientist
World Health Organisation
Ave Appia 20
Geneva
Switzerland
Tel: +41227913569
Fax: +41227914807
Email: tritschera@who.int

Dr Patience MENS...
GHANAIAN SECRETARIAT/SECRÉTARIAT GHANA

Ms Joyce OKOREE
Codex Contact Point Officer
Ghana Standards Board
P.O. Box MB-245
Accra
Ghana
Tel.: +233 302 501 937
Fax No: +233 302 500 092
Email: codex@gsb.gov.gh

Mr John OPPONG-OTOO
Codex Contact Point Officer
Ghana Standards Board
P.O. Box MB 245
Accra.
Ghana
Tel.: +233 302 501937
Fax: +233 302 500092
Email: codex@gsb.gov.gh

CODEX SECRETARIAT/SECRÉTARIAT DU CODEX

Ms Verna CAROLISSEN
Food Standards Officer
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome
Italy
Tel.: +39 06 5705 5629
Fax: +39 06 5705 4593
Email: verna.carolissen@fao.org

Ms Selma DOYRAN
Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome
Italy
Tel.: +39 06 5705 5629
Fax: +39 06 5705 4593
Email: selma.doyran@fao.org

Mr Peter Di TOMMASO
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome
Italy
Tel.: +39 06 5705 5629
Fax: +39 06 5705 4593
Email: peter.ditommaso@fao.org