



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA**

**20<sup>th</sup> Session**

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**ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO COMPLEMENTARY TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS  
COMMISSION**

(Prepared by FAO and WHO)

**INTRODUCTION**

1. This paper describes FAO and WHO activities in the area of nutrition of interest to the Africa region.

**FAO ACTIVITIES**

International Conference on Nutrition (ICN+21)

2. FAO and WHO are jointly organizing the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN+21) to be held in Rome, in November, 2013. The conference will review progress on the World Declaration and Plan of Action was adopted by delegates from 159 countries and the European Community who pledged to eliminate or reduce substantially starvation and famine; widespread chronic hunger; undernutrition, especially among children, women and the aged; micronutrient deficiencies, especially iron, iodine and vitamin A deficiencies; diet related communicable and non-communicable diseases; impediments to optimal breast-feeding; and inadequate sanitation, poor hygiene and unsafe drinking water.

3. Prior to holding the ICN+21, expert meetings will be held to discuss:

- The development of global diets since ICN 1992: Influences of Agri-Food sector trends and policies;
- Sustainable Nutrition Security: Restoring the bridge between agriculture and health. The ICN+21 website can be reached at [www.fao.org/icn21](http://www.fao.org/icn21)

Food Safety and Nutrition Awareness Campaign

4. The FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF) launched a Food Safety and Nutrition Awareness Campaign on the 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2012, on the occasion of the Africa Food and Nutrition Day. The awareness campaign has the following 3 objectives: 1) creating an urgency among decision makers on the need to develop coherent food safety and nutrition policies and /or enforce them where already existing; 2) establishing a renewed interest and a permanent dialogue on food safety and nutrition among all partners, including the media; and 3) improving the knowledge of targeted groups on the rights and responsibilities of the different actors, involved in the provision/consumption of safe and nutritious foods. Awareness raising interventions will target 7 pilot countries in a first phase (Angola, Uganda, Ghana, Congo DRC, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali) and will expand to all sub-Saharan Africa in a second phase. The Food Safety and Nutrition Awareness Campaign leaflet is available on [www.fao.org/ag/agn/fns/resources](http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/fns/resources)

Complementary foods project in Malawi

5. *Improving the dietary intakes and nutritional status of infants and young children through improved food security and complementary feeding counselling (IMCF)* is a three year research project funded by Germany and led in collaboration with the Justus-Liebig-University Giessen and the University of Malawi. This research project documents 1) the effectiveness of Trials of Improved Practices (TIPS) formative research for generating sustainable feeding recommendations and recipes that result in better dietary intakes and nutritional status; 2) the extent to which locally available and affordable foods can meet the nutritional requirements of children aged 6-23 months; 3) the impact of combining behaviour change communication with crop and dietary diversification; 4) the extent to which improved complementary feeding practices are sustainable, replicable and up-scalable. The IMCF research partners with the project "Improving Food Security, Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach" covering Kasungu and Mzimba districts.

**6. Project achievements to date:** Nutrition education materials for use with women's groups have been developed and community-based complementary feeding interventions have been implemented in both

districts, based on facilitated discussion groups with mothers of young children, and on cooking sessions demonstrating how to improve the diets of young children using locally available ingredients. A video documenting the intervention will soon be available on <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8A8F9F986F79F673>.

#### Supporting Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods in Sub-Saharan Africa

7. The three year German-funded project “Supporting Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods in Sub-Saharan Africa” is designed to assist FAO and its partners to integrate food security, nutrition and livelihoods objectives into regional, national and local policies and programmes. **Project achievements to date:**

- **Growing awareness** of the role of Agriculture -and FAO in particular- in fighting malnutrition, amongst SUN, REACH and other inter-agency initiatives for nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Increased awareness and capacities** for nutrition of FAO staff in Sub-Saharan Africa. Efforts are also underway to ensure nutrition is adequately addressed in FAO Country Programming Frameworks.
- **promotion of nutrition-sensitive agriculture** through training and technical support; publication of a synthesis of guiding principles : [www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/wa\\_workshop/docs/Synthesis\\_of\\_Ag-Nutr\\_Guidance\\_FAO\\_IssuePaper\\_Draft.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/wa_workshop/docs/Synthesis_of_Ag-Nutr_Guidance_FAO_IssuePaper_Draft.pdf)
- **mainstreaming of nutrition in CAADP** through sub-regional workshops and country level support.
- **School-based approaches for nutrition** are promoted with NEPAD, WFP and the Partnership for Child Development on “Home Grown School Feeding”.
- **Synergies between the Right to Food, social protection and gender** are fostered. Lessons learned from the project, for example, helped inform the design of the new FAO/ECOWAS Hunger Free Initiative for West Africa.
- **Communication and knowledge management:** lessons learned and tools developed and shared on [www.fao.org/ag/agn/fns](http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/fns) ). Support provided for events such as the Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security and the ECOWAS Nutrition Forum.

#### Food Composition publication

8. The *West African Food Composition Table* was published by FAO, in collaboration with the West African Health Organization and Bioversity International. The food composition table was based on the 2010 publication *Composition of Selected Foods from West Africa* which included data on 173 West African foods. The present publication comprises data on 472 West African foods including some varieties and 28 food components. The data represent the average values of the collected compositional data using different data sources from 9 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal) which were complemented by data sources from outside of Africa when necessary: scientific papers, thesis, university reports, as well as food composition databases. Additionally to the print and electronic version of the book, also an Excel spreadsheet of the user database with more specific information is available from the INFOODS website (<http://www.fao.org/infoods/infoods/tables-and-databases/west-africa-archives/en/>).

#### Food Composition Training course

9. In 2010, a two-week training course on food composition (FoodCompCourse) was given in South Africa. In 2012, the FoodCompCourse organised by EuroFIR AISBL, the Tübitak Marmara Research Center and Division of Human Nutrition of Wageningen University Food Institute was held in Turkey. Three participants were from Africa: one from Uganda, one from Malawi and one from Burundi. The course “FoodComp 2012” demonstrated how to produce, manage and use good quality food composition data in a standardized way, using harmonized procedures.

#### Further activities

10. Currently, two TCP (Technical Cooperation Programme) proposals from Africa are in preparation
- TCP facility proposal from Zimbabwe
  - TCP proposal from Angola

#### **WHO ACTIVITIES**

11. The Strategic Objective sought to improve nutrition, food safety and food security. The sixth-third session of the World Health Assembly adopted WHA63.23 on *Infant and young child nutrition*. This together with various regional frameworks including the *Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy* (2005 to 2015) formed the basis for nutrition and food safety work in the Region.

12. WHO strengthened partnerships with West African Health Organization (WAHO), Comité Inter-Etat pour la Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel (CILSS), UNICEF, WFP, ECSA, OCEAC, other UN Agencies and African Union/NEPAD to strengthen capacities and harmonize indicators for nutrition surveillance. In 2011, a joint workshop on nutritional surveillance was organized in Grand Bassam, Côte d’Ivoire for ten countries to

revitalize their surveillance systems in order to respond to the changing profile of malnutrition. The same workshop was organized in 2012 in Addis Ababa on nutrition surveillance for the ten Anglophone countries<sup>i</sup> and indicators to be used were listed and harmonized. Country implementation plans (CIP) to reinforce country nutrition surveillance were developed.

13. In 2010-2011, Nutrition indicators were integrated into the IDSR for routine monitoring of the nutrition situation in countries for early detection and timely intervention to prevent and manage cases. As a result nutrition conditions are routinely reported through the IDSR. Twenty-two countries<sup>ii</sup> have national surveillance data on major forms of malnutrition. For 2012, Nutrition indicators included in IDSR were disseminated to ten countries and to 32 potential consultants for WHO in Nutrition.

14. Heightened advocacy for nutrition increased the number of countries that have included nutrition activities in their Poverty Reduction Strategies from six in 2008-2009 to 24 in 2010-2011. This together with the partnerships and advocacy activities enhanced coordination, oversight and awareness for nutrition resulting in the reinforcement of multisectoral Nutrition Coordination Teams in 32 countries<sup>iii</sup>. During the above workshop on surveillance in Addis Ababa, multisectoral Nutrition Coordination was highlighted.

15. In 2010-2011, eight countries<sup>iv</sup> reviewed their nutritional policies and are developing intersectoral policies according to the recommendations issued from landscape analysis on readiness to scale up nutrition. In 2012, Guinea conducted its landscape analysis and Tanzania finalized and disseminated the Nutrition Landscape analysis outcomes. Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda were supported to accelerate nutrition interventions through Accelerating Nutrition Interventions project. Support provided to Botswana to develop a National Plan of Action for Nutrition for 2012 – 2016

16. In 2010-2011, WHO continued supporting countries in developing norms, standards, guidelines and strategies to improve infant feeding strategies especially in mothers living with HIV/AIDS. Three sub-regional workshops were held for 26 countries<sup>v</sup> on the new WHO recommendations on infant feeding in the context of HIV, PMTCT and ART. Twenty countries<sup>vi</sup> adapted the new recommendations into national guidelines. Nine countries<sup>vii</sup> finalized their strategies and action plans on the prevention and management of severe malnutrition. Six countries<sup>viii</sup> conducted IYCF assessment and used the findings to revise their national strategies. In 2012, five countries<sup>ix</sup> were supported to improve the implementation of IYCF Strategy including the new WHO Growth Standards, exclusive breastfeeding and the Code of Marketing of Breast milk Substitute. Zambia was supported in conducting assessment of Baby Friendly Health Facility Initiative (BFHFI). Mozambique organized a TOT course for 10 participants on the use of the hospital self-appraisal tool to strengthen BFHI.

17. In 2012, WHO continue to improve its capacity building in the area of nutrition and nutrition technical capacity for countries. WHO organized two training workshops, one for potential Francophone consultants (18) and another for potential Anglophone consultants (14) on main WHO tools: Policy development, SAMM, IYCF/HIV and Nutrition surveillance. Five countries<sup>x</sup> were supported in training on SAMM and IYCF.

18. Nutrition problems in Sahel food crisis, Angola food crisis and East crisis of RDC were managed. WHO coordinated the elaboration of WHO suggestions to be provided into the regional food and nutrition response to the crisis and strengthened the nutrition components of the sub-regional health sector strategy to the food and nutrition crisis. WHO facilitated the CILSS and partners regional workshop on food crisis in Sahel countries which aimed to define the scope of the crisis and way forward in terms of activities. Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia and Burkina Faso were supported to elaborate country health sector response strategy and mobilize resource through the CERF proposals in response to the Sahel food crisis. Mauritania, Senegal and Gambia were supported to develop a pool of trainers and training of health workers on the management of severe acute malnutrition. A proposal on nutrition surveillance for Sahel countries was developed and fund mobilization is ongoing.

<sup>i</sup> Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe

<sup>ii</sup> Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Chad, Congo, Republic of, Cote D'Ivoire, D.R. Congo, Eritrea, Guinea Bissau, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

<sup>iii</sup> Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Republic of, D.R. Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

<sup>iv</sup> Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique and Zambia

<sup>v</sup> Angola, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Cote d' Ivoire, Chad, DRC, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

<sup>vi</sup> Botswana, Burundi, Cameroun, Cote d' Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe

<sup>vii</sup> Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zimbabwe

<sup>viii</sup> Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania and Togo

<sup>ix</sup> Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe

<sup>x</sup> Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania and Niger