

# C O D E X   A L I M E N T A R I U S   C O M M I S S I O N



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of  
the United Nations



World Health  
Organization

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**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA  
22nd Session**

**Nairobi, Kenya, 16 - 20 January 2017**

**Informal Discussion on “SMEs and the food trade” held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

An informal discussion on “SMEs and the food trade” was held on the margins of the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the CCAFRICA, on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017, from 8:00-9:00 am. Interested CCAFRICA Members and Observers as well as representatives of the FAO and WHO participated in the discussions which were facilitated by Mrs Awilo Ochieng Pernet, Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The informal discussion was based on the responses submitted by CCAFRICA delegates in plenary following the Group Exercise on “What role can Codex play for SMEs in Africa?” which was carried out on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 after the Keynote address delivered by Dr Cris Muyunda on “SMEs and Food Trade”. A summary of the informal discussion is contained in the table and notes below.

KEY WORDS	RESPONSIBILITY	ACTION / WAY FORWARD
COMPILATION OF EXISTING RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES	<b>SOURCES:</b> African Union-IBAR, Codex Alimentarius Commission, FAO, WHO, FAO/WHO	Kenya supported by the Codex Chairperson will make a first compilation of the available resources to be distributed to CCAFRICA Members by 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2017

	Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF <sup>1</sup> ), National authorities, SMEs Associations (sector-specific), Development partners (e.g. EU/PIP project), etc.	
<b>HARMONISATION OF STANDARDS</b> <u>Harmonisation</u> of national standards with Codex Standards and the <u>effective implementation</u> of these standards by SMEs will promote intra-regional African trade.	<u>Harmonisation</u> of national food standards with Codex standards ⇒ National authorities (with support from the African Union-IBAR, FAO/WHO, other bilateral/multilateral partners) <u>Implementation</u> of relevant Standards, GLs, Codes of Practice, Guides ⇒ SMEs <u>Enforcement</u> of national food standards ⇒ National authorities	
<b>HARMONISATION OF THE <u>IMPLEMENTATION</u> OF STANDARDS</b>	The African Union-IBAR and the EU/BTSF developed a “ <b>Reference framework for the harmonisation of the management of food hygiene in Africa</b> ” in 2010.	The African Union-IBAR should disseminate the “Reference framework for the harmonisation of the management of food hygiene in Africa” among the AU Member States.
<b>DEVELOP AND ROLL-OUT SECTOR-SPECIFIC FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY STANDARDS AND OTHER RELEVANT GUIDANCE</b>	Codex Alimentarius Commission, FAO, WHO FAO/WHO, STDF, National authorities, SMEs Associations (sector-specific), etc.	Countries should adopt/adapt/reference Codex Standards, as appropriate and ensure easy access and dissemination of the national documents.

<sup>1</sup> The STDF is a global partnership, established by FAO, WHO, OIE, the World Bank and WTO, to support developing countries in building their capacity to implement international sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards, guidelines and recommendations as a means to improve their human, animal, and plant health status and ability to gain or maintain access to markets. The STDF provides grant financing for the development and implementation of projects that support the implementation of international standards to promote trade. See: [www.standardsfacility.org](http://www.standardsfacility.org)

<p><b>SIMPLIFICATION AND TRANSLATION OF VERY TECHNICAL CODEX/NATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS, GLs, etc. INTO LOCAL LANGUAGES</b></p> <p>In order to make this information accessible (comprehensible) to relevant SMEs. Awareness should be raised about the information and the simplified and translated information should be disseminated to the SMEs.</p>	<p>National authorities SMEs Associations (sector-specific), etc.</p>	
<p><b>RAISING AWARENESS AND DISSEMINATION OF CODEX/NATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS, GUIDANCE AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION AMONG SMEs</b></p>	<p>National authorities SMEs Associations (sector-specific), etc.</p>	<p>As part of the preparations of the 23<sup>rd</sup> CCAFRICA session (2019), some countries may be identified and requested to provide information at the session on the activities they will have undertaken in this field under a specific Agenda Item.</p>
<p><b>IDENTIFY BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESS STORIES AND DISSEMINATE THE INFORMATION AMONG SMEs</b></p>	<p><b>SOURCES:</b> Codex Secretariat (Codex Website), FAO, WHO, FAO/WHO, STDF, African Union-IBAR /Regional Economic Communities, National authorities, SMEs Associations (sector-specific), PIP and Fit for Market programmes funded by the EU, etc.</p>	
<p><b>INTEGRATE SMEs ASSOCIATIONS INTO NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEES</b></p> <p>Integrating SMEs into National Codex activities facilitates the dissemination of relevant information and contributes to capacity building of SMEs.</p>	<p>National authorities, SMEs Associations, etc.</p>	<p>As part of the preparations of the 23<sup>rd</sup> CCAFRICA session (2019), some countries may be identified and requested to provide information at the session on the activities they will have undertaken in this field under a specific Agenda Item.</p>

<p>This also contributes to developing/strengthening partnerships between the SMEs, National Codex Committees and the relevant national key institutions.</p>		
<p><b>LINK NATIONAL SMEs WITH THOSE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES/REGIONS</b></p> <p>In order to share experiences, learn from each other and to disseminate Codex food safety and quality information.</p>	<p>African Union-IBAR/Regional Economic Communities, National Authorities, SMEs Associations, etc.</p>	<p>Activity to be carried out on an on-going basis</p>
<p><b>GOVERNMENTS SHOULD FOSTER DIALOGUE AND COLLABORATION WITH SMEs ASSOCIATIONS</b></p> <p>SMEs which produce food for the export and domestic markets</p>	<p>National authorities SMEs Associations (sector-specific), etc.</p>	

**The following observations were also made during the informal discussion:**

- Build on the documents and relevant resources which have already been developed by relevant international and national organisations including African Union-IBAR, FAO, WHO, FAO/WHO, STDF, national authorities, development partners, etc. A compilation to this effect will be developed by Kenya, supported by the Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
- Enhance the roles of the Codex Contact Points so that they foster dialogue and communication with the SMEs to know the challenges that the latter face and their needs as regards food standards.
- Governments should appreciate the role played by SMEs in the national economy and sensitise them on the need and benefits of ensuring food safety.
- Identify a mechanism/channel which should be used to reach the SMEs (e.g. local governments, SMEs associations where these exist, etc.)
- Each country should determine who belongs to SMEs.

- Countries should ensure the sustainability of knowledge and skills gained during the implementation of capacity building projects.
- Countries should note the importance of involving the various groups of SMEs associations in food safety and quality activities as well as the specificities of these SMEs e.g. commodity-based, gender-based, youth-based, etc.
- The representative of the WHO drew attention to the WHO Safer Food for Africa initiative.
- The representative of the STDF drew attention to STDF work of interest to SPS-related government agencies interested in encouraging cooperation with the private sector including SMEs. Reference was made to the following STDF documents which are also available on the STDF website, which is available in English, French and Spanish: [www.standardsfacility.org](http://www.standardsfacility.org)
  - 1) Publication "National SPS coordination mechanisms: An African perspective" offers guidance and recommendations on options to improve public-public and public-private coordination in the SPS area. See: [http://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF\\_NationalSPSCoordinationMechanisms\\_EN\\_0.pdf](http://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF_NationalSPSCoordinationMechanisms_EN_0.pdf)
  - 2) Publication "Public-Private Partnerships to enhance SPS capacity", which analyses how some governments are partnering with the private sector to strengthen SPS capacity and boost trade. The publication includes two case studies from Kenya and South Africa on the experiences and lessons of setting up mechanisms for public-private dialogue and collaboration in specific value chains. See: [http://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF\\_PublicPrivatePartnerships\\_EN\\_0.pdf](http://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF_PublicPrivatePartnerships_EN_0.pdf)
  - 3) STDF work on "Implementing SPS measures to facilitate safe trade, including a Briefing Note which highlights good practices to improve the implementation of SPS measures in a way that ensures health protection and reduces transaction costs, which are expected to have a major benefit for the private sector and SMEs, as well as governments. See: <http://www.standardsfacility.org/facilitating-safe-trade>
  - 4) STDF Briefing "Enhancing SPS capacity to promote trade for development in LDCs"In addition, several STDF projects involve the private sector as implementing agencies, providers of finance, expertise or other resources, and intermediaries that link to small-scale producers and farmers on the ground. Some projects also promote and support SPS-related partnerships between government agencies and the private sector in African countries. In developing countries, micro, small and medium-sized private enterprises often benefit from STDF projects. A new Briefing Note on STDF projects engaging and/or benefitting the private sector provides examples of STDF projects engaging the private sector.
- Participants were informed of the "e-PING alert" <http://www.epingalert.org/en> which is an online alert system for notifications submitted by WTO Members under the SPS and TBT Agreements. It was developed by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the International Trade Center (ITC).

- Participants took note of the “Grand Tripartite Free-Trade Area” COMESA, EAC, SADC NTB Reporting and Monitoring Mechanism <http://www.tradebarriers.org/about> “The mechanism enables stakeholders to report and monitor the resolution of barriers encountered as they conduct their business in the COMESA, EAC and SADC regions. It enhances transparency and easy follow-up of reported and identified NTBs and NTMs. This web-based NTBs reporting, monitoring and eliminating mechanism is accessible to economic operators, government functionaries, academic researchers and other interested parties.”
- The European Union funded cooperation programme PIP, which ended in 2016, <http://pip.coleacp.org/en> was implemented at the request of the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) Group of States by COLEACP. The PIP programme developed a lot of specific value-chain training material (available in French and English) including training manuals <http://pip.coleacp.org/en/pip/31133-training-manuals> , production guides <http://pip.coleacp.org/en/pip/31144-production-guides> , studies, reports and technical papers, etc. <http://pip.coleacp.org/en/pip/31162-studies-and-position-papers> etc.
- The European Union is now funding a new cooperation “Fit for Market” programme whose objective is to strengthen competitiveness and sustainability of the ACP horticultural sector. English: <http://www.coleacp.org/en/nos-programmes/fit-for-market> French: <http://www.coleacp.org/fr/competitivite-durabilite>