



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations**



**World Health
Organization**

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Agenda Item 5

CX/EXEC 16/71/5

**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

71st Session

FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

21-24 June 2016

CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 – 2019

GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

(Prepared by the Codex Secretariat in collaboration with FAO and WHO)

INTRODUCTION

1. CAC36 (2013) adopted the Strategic Plan of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for 2014-2019 (the Strategic Plan).¹ The Executive Committee has the primary responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Plan annually.
2. This report has been prepared for the second calendar year (2015) of implementation of the Strategic Plan. Three different sources of data and information were used, namely existing data from monitoring tools, replies submitted by Codex Subsidiary Bodies to a standardised template, and information provided by FAO and WHO.² Since CAC38, three additional Committees (CCSCH2, CCFFV19, and CCFFP34) have provided information in response to the template. With this, all active Subsidiary Bodies, with the exception of Committees working by correspondence only and five RCCs, have provided replies.
3. A summary of the implementation status of the Strategic Plan for the calendar year 2015 is presented in Appendix I. Detailed additional information is presented in Appendix II.
4. A Codex communication strategy was presented to CCEXEC70, but it was not discussed nor adopted by CAC38 due to lack of time. CCEXEC70 requested the Secretariat to start implementing the strategy in continued liaison with FAO and WHO, and to present an update report on the preliminary outcomes of the strategy to the next Executive Committee and Commission sessions. This report is presented in Appendix III.

SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION OF GOALS

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

5. CAC38 (2015) adopted 8 new standards and related texts (the standards) as well as 15 revisions and 12 amendments of current standards. Some Committees started using their own scheme to discuss emerging issues. Coordination and cooperation with other international standard-setting organizations is expected to be further enhanced through activities that are part of the Codex Communication Strategy (e.g. analysis of the status of engagement with Codex observers, participation in key meetings and events), which was presented in 2015.

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

6. The Committees follow the *Working Principles for Risk Analysis* stipulated in the Procedural Manual and request/use scientific advice when relevant. In order to increase the scientific input from developing countries, FAO/WHO have provided support to at least 14 events or programmes (see Appendix II Activity 2.3.2) that are aimed at enhancing the capacity of developing countries.
7. Within WHO resource allocation to scientific advice on food safety remains inadequate. FAO has maintained its support to its scientific advice programme and enhanced its stability by “ring-fencing” all related activity and staff budget.

¹ ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/Publications/StrategicFrame/Strategic_plan_2014_2019_EN.pdf

² Paras 5-10 CX/CAC 15/38/12

Goal 3: Facilitate the effective participation of all Codex Members

8. The Codex Trust Fund came to the end of its term in 2015, and remaining events and programmes were implemented to support effective participation in Codex (full details are provided in CX/CAC 16/39/19 to the final report of the CTF prepared for CAC39).

9. In parallel, the planning and development phase of the Codex Trust Fund successor initiative (CTF2) was undertaken in 2015 and CTF2 was launched at the beginning of 2016. CTF2 will seek to continue engaging developing and transition countries sustainably in Codex.

10. A number of Codex Committee Sessions and Working Groups were co-hosted, and in particular the percentage of co-hosted electronic Working Groups has continued to grow since 2010.

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

11. New technologies, such as the online registration system and an improved Codex website as well as an online forum for electronic working groups, have been introduced to improve Member participation in Codex activities.

12. A workshop was organized for Codex Chairs on how to lead and facilitate committee meetings and another workshop was organized for the members of the Executive Committee.

13. Several Committees are continuing to hold seminars for first time delegates prior to their sessions.

14. As for the timely distribution of documents, the percentage of documents distributed at least 2 months before the Session increased compared to 2014.

CONCLUSIONS

15. The implementation of the Strategic Plan was progressing well in 2015. The performance related to the objective outcomes either remained the same as in the previous year or were improved.

16. According to the timeline in the Strategic Plan, five activities (1.1.2, 2.2.3, 3.1.4, 4.1.2 and 4.1.4) ended in 2015. The conclusions on activities 3.1.4, 2.2.3, and 4.1.4 can be found in REP15/CAC and CX/CAC 15/38/15; CX/CAC 16/39/19 and CX/CAC 16/39/20; and Appendix II of this document respectively.

17. The Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO are developing an online platform embedded in the Codex website that will enable Codex member countries to upload and share information on their food safety control systems in a standardized way. This platform, in addition to other uses, may include monitoring progress with regards to the Strategic Plan activities (2.3.4, 3.1.2 and 3.2.2), which currently lack sufficient data.

18. To the extent possible relevant information was gathered in 2015 to contribute to the monitoring of activities that contained unclear or unmeasurable indicators (i.e. 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 3.1.1, 3.2.1 and 4.1.1) as pointed out at CAC38.³ With regards to activity 2.3.1, FAO and WHO note that it is not adequate to simply focus on a numerical baseline. A qualitative assessment methodology which revolves around aspects such as relevance, novelty and utility of the data in the development of the scientific advice would need to be developed to also reflect the quality of replies and consequently inform about progress in relation to scientific input from developing countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

19. It is recommended that the Executive Committee:

- (1) Considers whether activities are evolving in the right direction and, where activities are not implemented satisfactorily, suggests measures to improve the outcome.
- (2) Identifies activities that are no longer relevant and for which data and information may not be needed.
- (3) Discusses whether the five activities mentioned in para. 9 can be considered finalized.
- (4) Takes note of the continuing difficulties concerning the monitoring of activities that include unclear or unmeasurable indicators and carefully considers the measurability of indicators when developing the Strategic Plan 2020-2025.
- (5) Requests that the Codex Secretariat, in collaboration with FAO and WHO, presents at the next Session of the Commission and Executive Committee a status report of the 2016 implementation of the Strategic Plan for those activities for which information and data are available.

³ CX/CAC 15/38/12

SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION STATUS (OBJECTIVES)**Strategic Goal 1: ESTABLISH INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS THAT ADDRESS CURRENT AND EMERGING FOOD ISSUES****Objective 1.1: Establish new and review existing Codex standards, based on priorities of the CAC.**

The objective has been met as in 2015 the CAC38 adopted 8 new standards as well as 15 standard revisions and 12 standard amendments.

Committees have reported that they follow the *Criteria for Establishment of Work Priorities* outlined in the Procedural Manual. In addition, a few Committees use supplementary criteria to help prioritise their work.

In the ongoing process of discussing a review of the Codex work management and functioning of the Executive Committee it is envisaged that the critical review function of the CCEXEC, which includes the application of *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities*, the Strategic Plan and the required supporting work of independent risk assessment is also reviewed.

Objective 1.2: Proactively identify emerging issues⁴ and Member needs and, where appropriate, develop relevant food standards.

There was no common systematic approach to identify emerging issues used in Codex subsidiary bodies in 2015. However, some Committees such as CCFH and CCFICS use their own scheme to discuss emerging issues that are relevant to their respective Terms of Reference. Members, other relevant Committees and the parent organisations flag and report emerging issues during or prior to Committee sessions to ensure that newly developed or revised standards meet user needs. For Regional Coordinating Committees (RCCs), the item "Food safety and quality situation in the countries of the region" has been included to the provisional agenda of all six RCCs as of 2016. This agenda item aims to identify and prioritize the needs in the regions, especially with regards to persistent and emerging food safety and quality issues.

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

The Codex sister organisations OIE and IPPC attend sessions of the CAC and some subsidiary bodies on a regular basis. Information from OIE is a standing item on the Commission agenda and relevant Committees and OIE informed the development of standards and related texts in CCFH, CCFICS, and CCRVDF. Coordination with IPPC was strengthened on an administrative level as the two organisations jointly acquired and continued to develop an online commenting system with the assistance of a shared staff member.

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

Codex was represented at 14 events organized by the international organisations in 2015.

Strategic Goal 2: ENSURE THE APPLICATION OF RISK ANALYSIS PRINCIPLES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CODEX STANDARDS**Objective 2.1: Ensure consistent use of risk analysis principles and scientific advice.**

CCCF, CCFA, CCFH, CCNFSDU, CCPR and CCRVDF regularly request and use the scientific advice of the joint FAO/WHO expert bodies. These committees follow the Working Principles for Risk Analysis in the Procedural Manual, which guide them to ensure that all relevant factors in exploring risk management options are considered. Other Committees, such as CCFFP, CCFO and CCNASWP have sought scientific advice from FAO/WHO as needed. The consistency of the Risk Analysis texts across relevant Committees was considered by CCGP30.

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

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

⁴ Emerging food safety and nutrition issues are interpreted to include scientific and technological innovations and emerging hazards, related to ongoing investigations or extra-ordinary events (e.g., natural disasters, external threats).

Objective 2.2: Achieve sustainable access to scientific advice.

Within WHO resource allocation to scientific advice on food safety remains inadequate as it is derived solely from extra-budgetary funding. FAO maintained its support to its scientific advice programme and enhanced its stability by “ring-fencing” all related activity and staff budget. .

A FAO/WHO project proposal was drafted to encourage renewed discussions with Codex members regarding extra-budgetary contributions to the scientific advice programme.

Objective 2.3: Increase scientific input from developing countries.

In 2014/2015 FAO/WHO issued 11 Calls for data (for which deadlines were set in years 2014/2015) on a range of topics and to which a variable response was received. All calls for data were distributed through the Codex mailing lists as well as the FAO and WHO websites and various relevant networks. However, a baseline on input from developing countries remains to be established and how to best do this is currently a subject of discussion between FAO and WHO.

FAO/WHO have provided support to 14 events/programmes aimed at enhancing the capacity of developing countries.

For 2015, a total of 2,237 delegates participated in the Commission meeting and Sessions of 12 subsidiary bodies (CCEXEC and RCCs are excluded, as they have restricted participation). Out of the 2,237 delegates 679 were from developing countries, which corresponds to 30% of the total delegate numbers and constitutes a decrease of 2 percent compared to 2014.

Strategic Goal 3 FACILITATE THE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF ALL CODEX MEMBERS.**Objective 3.1: Increase the effective participation of developing countries in Codex.**

As of April 2016, there are 188 Members in Codex and all have established Codex Contact Points (CCPs). South Sudan was the latest developing country that joined Codex (in 2015).

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

In 2015, a total of 14 sessions of subsidiary bodies were held. Out of the 14, two Committees were co-hosted (CCCCF9 and CCRVDF22), which corresponds to 14%. For Electronic Working Groups (EWGs) established in 2015, 37 out of the total of 56 EWGs were co-hosted, which corresponds to 66%. For Physical Working Groups (PWGs) held in 2015, six out of the total of 14 PWGs were co-hosted, which corresponds to 43%. The percentages of co-hosted Committee and PWG sessions do not have a clear trend. However, for EWGs the percentage has continued to increase since 2010.

With respect to the use of official languages in working groups, six Committees expressed their satisfaction while two Committees informed that they are not always satisfied, or unsatisfied. For EWG and PWG, most of the Committees use English as main language and make use of other languages based on the availability of resources. The Committees replied that promoting co-chairing arrangements might facilitate the use of other official languages than English.

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

Four FAO/WHO Codex capacity-building workshops supported by the Codex Trust Fund were held in 2015. In addition, six capacity development projects were finalised or run throughout the year 2015 (See Appendix II Activity 3.2.1 and CX/CAC 16 /39/18 for additional information).

More than 10 side events were held in the margins of the Codex meetings.

Strategic Goal 4: IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT WORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND PRACTICES.**Objective 4.1: Strive for an effective, efficient, transparent, and consensus based standard setting process.**

Impediments to standard-setting work are likely to be addressed in an internal Secretariat-led review on the Codex Work Management and Functioning of the Executive Committee (REP16/GP App. II).

In December 2015, the Codex Secretariat organized a workshop for the members of the Executive Committee to ensure a better recognition of the different roles in the committee, to facilitate team building and improve the functioning of the CCEXEC overall. For 2016, a follow-up CCEXEC session is planned to ensure that the CCEXEC can take into account the decisions of the Commission.

In 2015 Committees reported trying to identify and address impediments by making best use of Working Groups (i.e. EWG, PWG, in-session WG) and workshops. The Committees also made various efforts to reach consensus, e.g. by ensuring the provision of information in advance of meetings, using a mentoring approach, discussing to establish a clear direction and support prior to submitting proposals in the step process, and scoping work towards areas where consensus exists. CCRVDF held a discussion focused on impediments to its work in its 22nd session (April-May 2015).

Various new technologies have been introduced since 2014 to facilitate the standard setting process management and administration (online registration system, discussion forum for EWG, automated mailing etc.). The Codex website was partly updated in the end of 2015 to improve the user friendliness and usefulness to its members.

For document distribution, all the stakeholders, including the Codex Secretariat, host government secretariats, and the Chairs of EWGs, work very closely together to plan the schedule for document preparation and distribution. In 2015, among a total 415 working documents in three languages (E/F/S) issued, 118 working documents were distributed at least 2 months before the session. This corresponds to 30% and compared to 2014 (i.e. 22%), there is a slight improvement (See Appendix II for details). Challenges remain in some Committees, such as CCFH, when advancement of work is linked to the provision of scientific advice.

In 2015, out of 14 PWGs held, 10 PWGs (71%) were held in conjunction with Committee meetings. In 2014, a total of 10 PWGs were held and with one exception the PWGs (90%) were held in conjunction with Committee meetings.

To complement the monitoring of this activity, we conducted study on timely elaboration and revision of standards. Until year 2015, and for those given job number, it took an average of 2.69 years to finalize a standard. Only three pieces of work took more than 5 years to finalize. In other words, 97% of work was successfully finalized within 5 years. (See Appendix II for details)

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

Two events for Codex Chairs were organised in 2015:

- 13-14 March 2015: *What are the best ways for Codex Committees to communicate?*
- 10 July 2015: *Informal meeting of Codex Chairs* (held in conjunction with CAC38).

The Codex Secretariat has also surveyed training needs amongst Codex Chairs in preparation for a 2016 workshop held in conjunction with CCGP30.

According to the replies to the template, the Committees try to identify and address impediments by making best use of small-scaled Working Groups (i.e. EWG, PWG, in-session WG) and workshops. The Committees also make various efforts to reach consensus, e.g. ensuring the provision of information in advance of meetings, using a mentoring approach, having a discussion to establish clear direction and support prior to submitting proposals in the step process, scoping work towards areas where consensus exists. CCRVDF discussed⁵ impediments to its work in its 22nd session (April-May 2015).

In 2015, a total 18 Committees were held, among them at least six Committees (CCAFRICA21, CCFO24, CCCF9, CCSCH2, CCFFP34 and CCFH47) organized a seminar/workshop for first time delegates before the Plenary Session.

⁵ Discussion paper regarding the issues and concerns that impact the ability of the CCRVDF to efficiently perform its work (CX/RVDF 15/22/2)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION STATUS (ACTIVITIES)

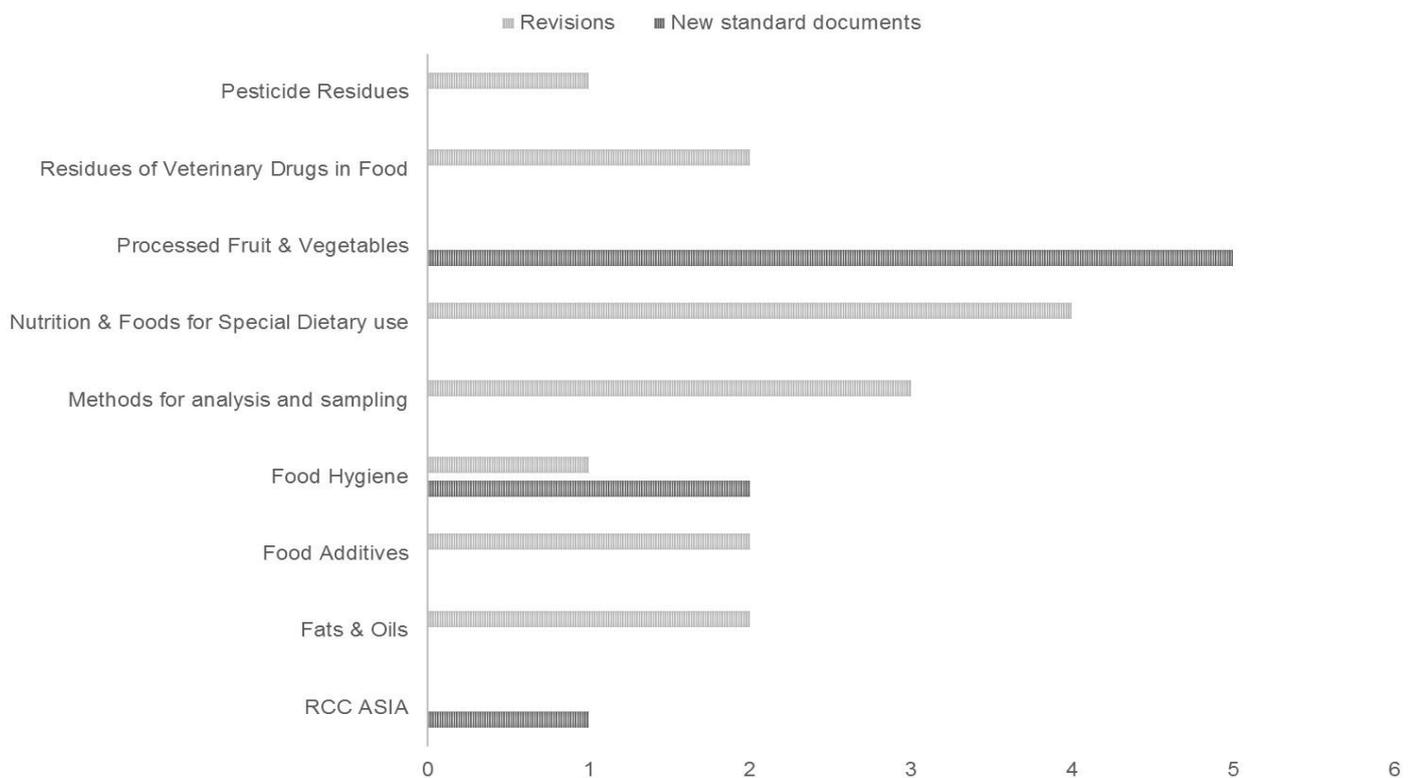
Activity 1.1.1

All committees that responded (15 out of 23) follow the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities in the Procedural Manual. The work of CCGP helps to ensure that other Committees have the necessary mechanisms to conduct their standard setting work effectively. In addition, the Committee has developed risk analysis principles as well as a code of ethics for application by governments.

As in the previous status report CCCF, CCFH, CCPR, CCRVDF and CCFICS have reported using additional criteria with which to prioritize their work. No committee expressed any imminent plans for review or revision of the current criteria.

Considering that all new proposals were assessed using the Criteria in the Procedural Manual, the number of standards developed and revisions based on priority setting criteria equals the number of new standard documents and revisions adopted at Step 8 or Step 5/8 at the CAC38, which is 23.

Figure 1: Adopted new standard documents and revisions in 2015 by committee



Activity 1.1.2

The critical review process will be one of the elements of a Secretariat-led internal review of the work management and functioning of the Executive Committee. As the Terms of Reference for this internal review still need to be endorsed by the CAC39, the activity (originally foreseen to end in April 2015) is delayed and is most likely to be finalised by the end of 2018.

Activity 1.2.1 and 1.2.2

In March 2016, the Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO have launched a survey for Members to identify critical and emerging issues in food safety and quality. The information collected will feed into background documents for Regional Coordinating Committees and an on-line platform that shall allow Members to store and compare emerging issues in one central location (i.e. the Codex Website). Depending on survey response rates and quality, the platform could be broadened and may assist Members in the future to identify and track emerging issues.

Activity 1.3.1

The cooperation between Codex Committees and the OIE is described in more detail in the following documents: CX/CAC 16/39/21 (Relations between Codex and other International Organizations); CX/FH 15/47/4; CX/RVDF 15/22/5 and CX/FICS 14/21 INF/3.

Given the similarities in secretarial structures Codex continued to collaborate with IPPC at the administrative level in 2015. There is also cooperation with IPPC regarding common interests in WTO and STDF.

Activity 1.3.2

Cooperation between Codex and other international standard-setting organizations may in some instances have a long history, but this cooperation could benefit from a more strategic approach, where areas of mutual benefit would be actively sought. As these organizations may play a central role in the enhancement of Codex standards it would be advisable to improve interaction with them, e.g. by increasing the presence of Codex in all relevant meetings of such organizations.

Information on cooperation between Codex Committees and select international standard-setting organizations can be derived from the following documents: CX/CAC 16/39/21 (Relations between Codex and other International Organizations), CX/FFV 15/19/4 (UNECE) and FH/47 CRD/12 (ISO).

Activity 2.1.2

The mentoring approach used in 2012 in the revision of the *Principles and Guidelines for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria Related to Foods* (CAC/GL 21-1997) is an example of a mechanism used by the CCFH to engage scientific and technical expertise at national level in the work of Codex.

The Committees do not believe that any specific guidance on this issue is currently needed.

Activity 2.1.3

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

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

Activity 2.1.4

The *Working Principles for Risk Analysis for Food Safety for Application by Governments* (CAC/GL 62-2007) continues to be the key source of guidance for Members. These guidelines underline the importance of exchanging information in relation to the concerns of interested parties about the risks associated with food.

In 2015, 35 standards and related texts were adopted at CAC38 and published either as new documents or as revisions or amendments on the Codex Website almost entirely one month after the meeting. In addition, news articles on the Codex website highlighted specific risk assessment issues related to the adopted texts (e.g. risk assessment for bovine somatotropin MRLs concerning cow milk production).

While the issue is relevant for General Subject Committees, Commodity Committees do not consider communication of risk management recommendations a priority activity.

Activity 2.2.1

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

In the case of FAO, scientific advice on food safety has also not been on the agenda of governing body sessions in 2015. However, FAO maintained its support to its scientific advice program and enhanced its stability by ring-fencing all related activity and staff budget related to the programme.

Activity 2.2.2 and Activity 2.2.3

A FAO/WHO project proposal has been drafted to encourage renewed discussions with Codex members regarding extra-budgetary contributions to the scientific advice programme.

Activity 2.3.2

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

- Work on the FAO/WHO mycotoxin in sorghum project is being finalised. The final regional workshop was held in Addis Ababa, 18-19 June 2015, in collaboration with PACA. Further analysis of the analytical results has been undertaken in response to the request from the 9th session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CX/CF 15/9/3 – Add 1), and a paper has been presented to the 10th CCCF;
- Technical support to the African Pesticide Data Generation Project (STDF/PG/359) for strengthening regional capacity to meet pesticide export requirements based on international standards (Codex MRLs) - Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia;
- FAO support to Latin America Pesticide Data Generation Project (STDF/PG/436) - Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama, Peru (2014-2015);
- Implementation of a regional Total Diet Study (TDS) in Nigeria, Mali, Cameroon and Benin - FAO/WHO managed this STDF funded project;
- FAO TCP programme to strengthen capacities in Risk analysis in Mali (TCP/MLI/3502) is ongoing;
- FAO National training workshop on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, Bangladesh, January 2015;

- WHO continued to provide technical support to Indonesian Ministry of Health for the analysis of the first National Total Diet Study;
- FAO Workshop on Microbial Risk Assessment (MRA), jointly organized with ILSI, for SADC member countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe) held in June 2015 in Windhoek, Namibia;
- FAO implemented a workshop on the development of microbiological criteria in accordance with international standards and guidelines to support harmonisation of food safety regulations within COMESA, Nairobi, Kenya on 16 & 17 November 2015. Participants were from Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Malawi, Seychelles, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and Mauritius;
- FAO implemented a workshop on microbiological risk management in Accra Ghana with a focus on strengthening the regulatory interface with 2 value chains: cassava and smoked fish. The workshop involved participants from Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Liberia and The Gambia and was held on 17-20 May 2016.
- TCP/GUA/3501 MAGA Support for the development of a risk profile and /or risk assessment to determine the damage to human health from corn consumption (Guatemala), ongoing;
- FAO Technical Cooperation Programme: Post-harvest horticultural supply chain analysis of microbial contamination in selected fruits and vegetables in Samoa, 2015;
- FAO and WHO continued in 2015 to collaborate on the CIFOCOs (FAO/WHO Chronic Individual Food Consumption Data summary statistics) tool which is published at <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/databases/en/>;
- FAO and WHO continued in 2015 to develop the pilot version of FAO/WHO GIFT (FAO/WHO Global Individual Food consumption data Tool), more information is available at <http://www.fao.org/nutrition/assessment/food-consumption-database/en/>.

Activity 2.3.3

Figure 2: Total Number of Delegations and Delegations from Developing Countries⁶ for 2008-2015

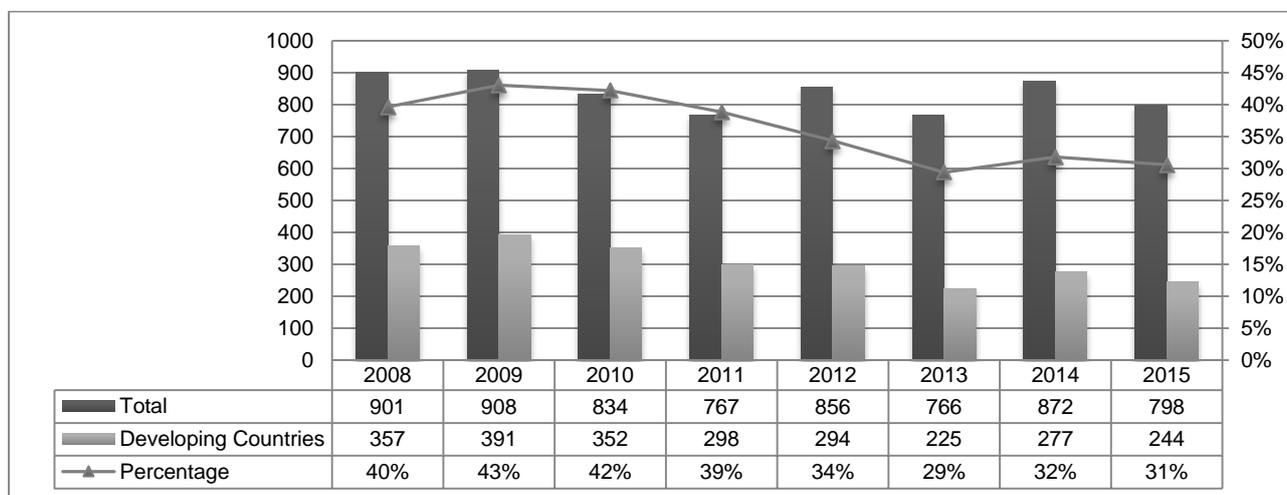
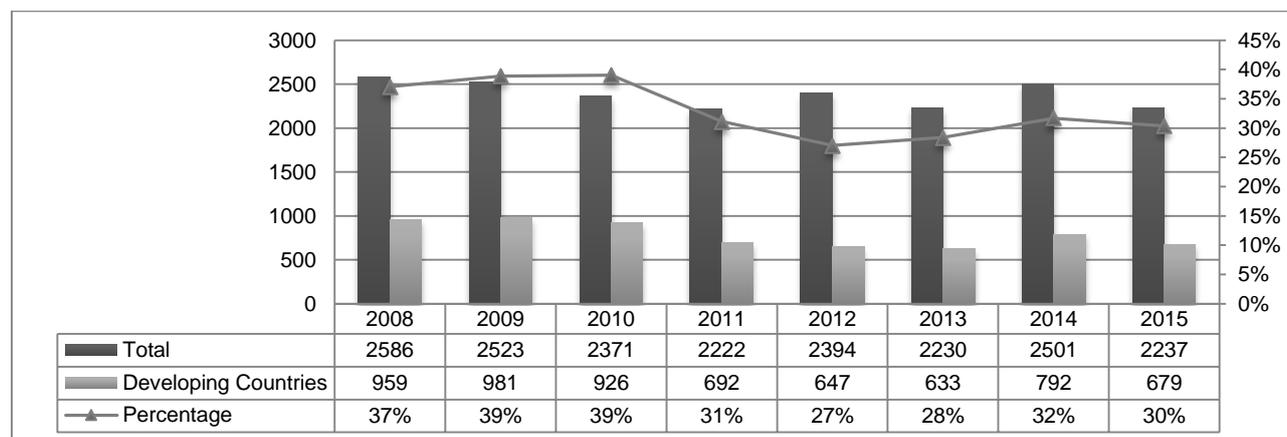


Figure 3: Total Number of Delegates and Delegates from Developing Countries for 2008-2015



⁶ Developing Countries: Low-income economies and Lower-middle-income economies under classification provided by World Bank for each fiscal year (<http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups>).

Figure 4: Total Number of Delegations and Delegations from Developing Countries for Committees and CAC held in year 2015

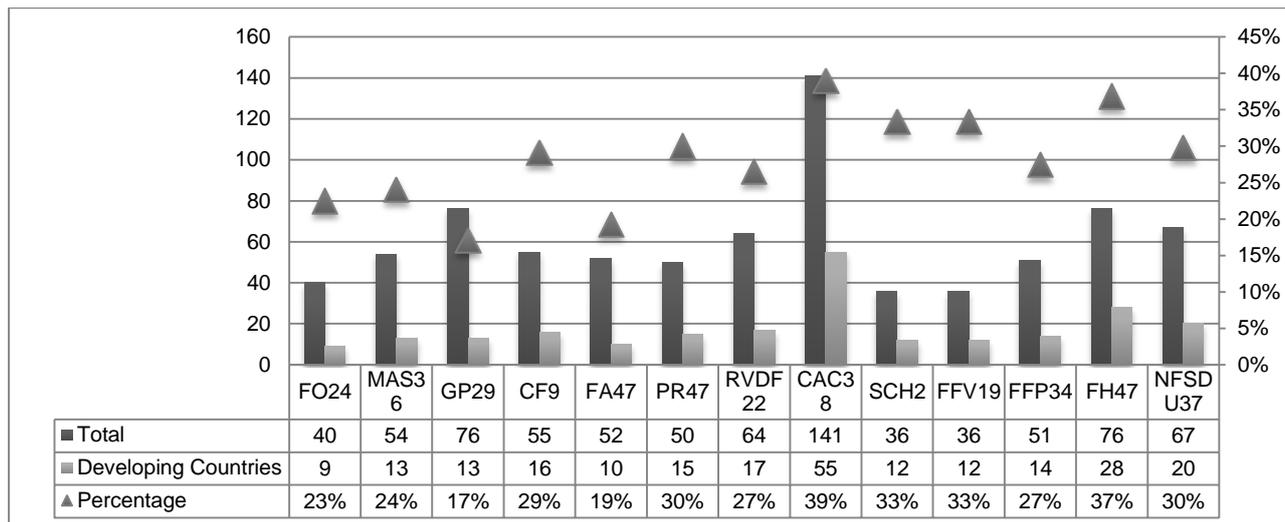
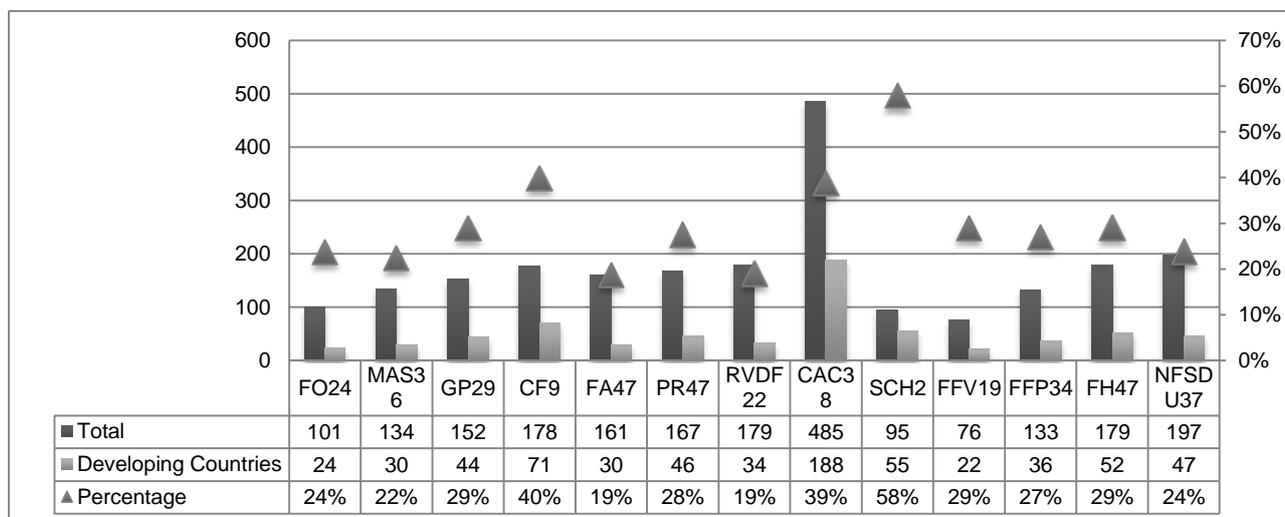


Figure 5: Total Number of Delegates and Delegates from Developing Countries for Committees and CAC held in year 2015



Activity 3.1.1

As of March 2016, there are 188 Member countries in Codex and all have established national Codex Contact Points (CCPs). However, having a CCP does not necessarily mean that the Member has developed sustainable national institutional arrangements to promote effective contribution to the Codex standard setting processes.

Being ready and prepared to effectively participate in Codex sessions, requires a national Codex programme to be in place. This programme should include personnel with adequate knowledge of Codex work⁷ and national food standards issues and clear mechanisms and processes to manage and provide input to Codex work. Furthermore, it should be adequately resourced (human and financial), include inputs from the private sector, consumers and the scientific and academic community and be an integral part of a well-functioning food control system. The Codex programme needs to be fit for purpose, address national interests and priorities and be adaptive to change and evolving needs.

Activity 3.1.2

In 2009-2010 a study was conducted regarding co-hosting of Codex Sessions based on the Activity 5.3 of the Codex Strategic Plan 2008-2013. As a result of discussions on this matter in CAC and CCGP the Guidelines to Host Governments of Codex Committees and Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Forces (Section III of the Procedural Manual) was amended to include text referring to co-hosting, and a webpage⁸ referring to procedures for co-hosting arrangements was posted on the Codex Official Website.

⁷ Codex work encompasses the results of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies, the tasks and activities undertaken by all involved during the Codex sessions to develop the Codex texts, and the related preparatory work at the national level.

⁸ <http://www.codexalimentarius.org/meetings-reports/co-hosting-meetings/en/>

Figure 6: Number of Co-hosted Subsidiary Bodies

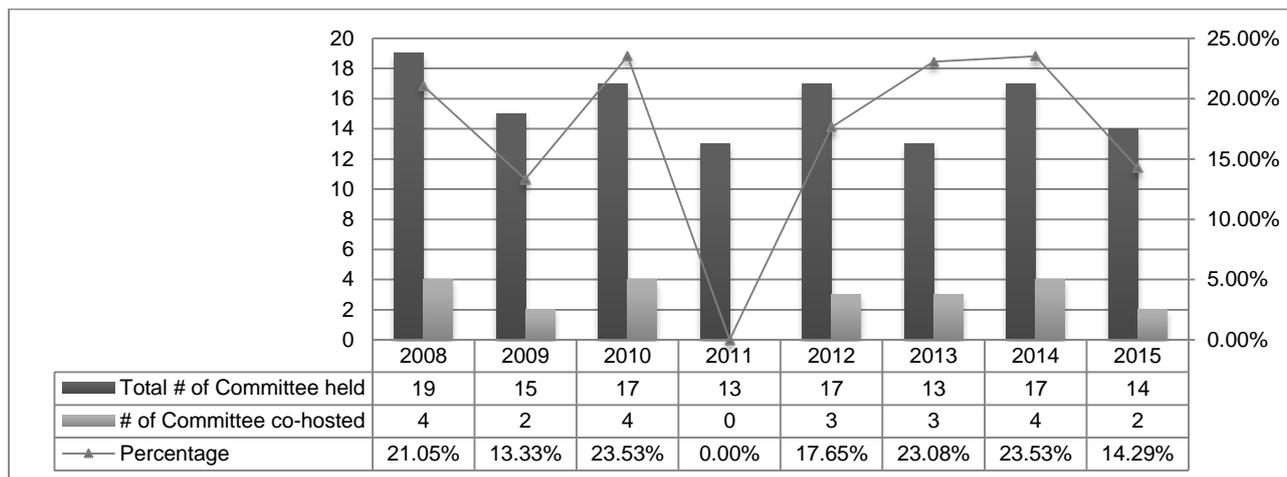
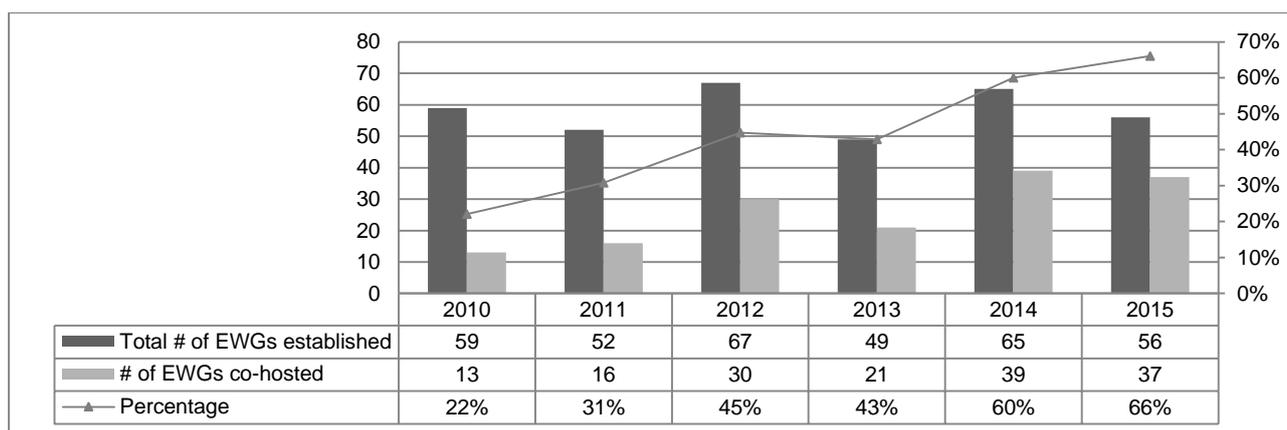
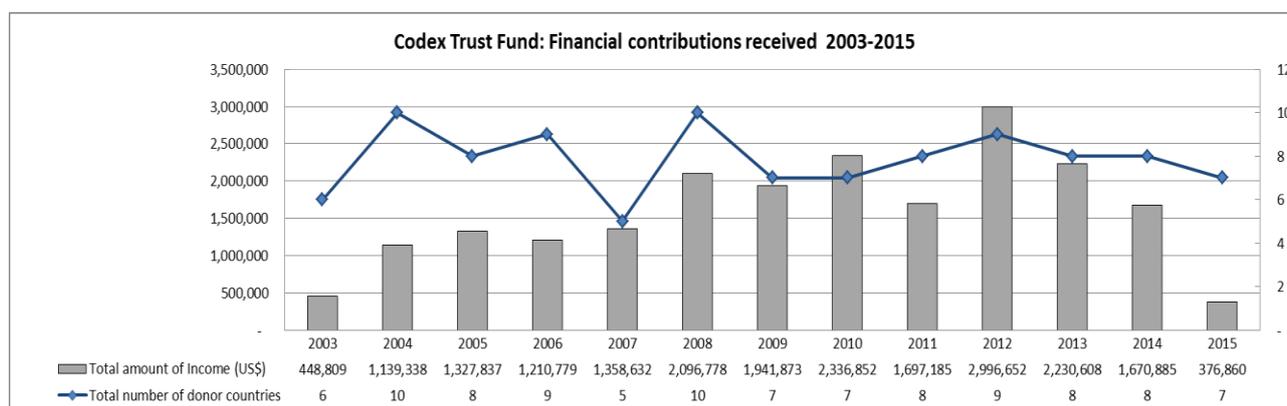


Figure 7: Number of Co-hosted Electronic Working Groups



Activity 3.1.3

Figure 8: Financial Contributions Received 2003-2015



Activity 3.1.5

All 6 official languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese and Russian) were used in CAC38, and EXEC70 used all official languages other than Russian. All General Subject Committees and Commodity Committees used English, French and Spanish as their working languages. For Regional Coordinating Committees, the following UN official languages were used: CCNASWP13 (English only), CCEURO29 (English, French, Spanish and Russian), CCASIA19 (English and Chinese), CCLAC19 (English and Spanish), CCAFRICA (English and French) and CCNEA (English, French and Arabic)

For EWGs and PWGs, English was used for 100%.

Table 1: Languages used in Electronic Working Groups established in year 2014 and 2015

	2014		2015	
	Number	percentage	Number	percentage
Total EWGs established	64		56	
EWGs used English	64	100.00%	56	100.00%
EWGs used French	1	1.56%	5	8.93%
EWGs used Spanish	8	12.50%	8	14.29%
EWGs used Russian	1	1.56%		
EWGs used Arabic			2	3.57%

Table 2: Languages used in Physical Working Groups held in year 2014 and 2015

	2014		2015	
	Number	percentage	Number	percentage
Total PWGs held	12		14	
PWGs used English	12	100.00%	14	100.00%
PWGs used French	4	33.33%	10	71.43%
PWGs used Spanish	4	33.33%	10	71.43%

Activity 3.2.1

Four FAO/WHO Codex capacity-building workshops supported by the Codex Trust Fund were held in 2015:

- Codex African Region: Pre-CCAFRICA FAO/WHO regional workshop on “Risk Communication”, Yaoundé, Cameroon, 26 January 2015
- Codex Southwest Pacific region: FAO/WHO workshop on “Nutrition, Non-communicable Diseases and the Role of Codex”, Nadi, Fiji, 20-22 April 2015
- Codex European region: FAO/WHO regional workshop on “Strengthening Capacities for Effective Participation in Codex with Emphasis on Microbiological Food Safety for CIS and Neighbouring Countries of Codex European Region”, St Petersburg, Russian Federation, 17-18 September 2015.
- Codex Near East region: Pre-CCNEA FAO/WHO regional workshop on “Update on Codex Processes and Procedures, including Initiating New Work”, Beirut, Lebanon, 29-30 October 2015.

In addition, the following capacity development projects were finalised or ran throughout the year 2015:

- Strengthening Capacity of Mongolia to Implement Codex (TCP/MON/3401): May 2012 – April 2015
- Strengthening the National Codex Committee and the Codex Contact point in Lebanon (TCP/LEB/3401): January 2013 – December 2015
- Strengthening participation in Codex in Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe (TCP/SFS/3503): May 2015 – April 2016
- Strengthening national food safety control systems and capacity of the national Codex Committee for Comoros: May 2014 – December 2016
- Support to capacity building for Codex Alimentarius and improved food control systems in Eastern African countries (TCP/SFE/3501): September 2014 – April 2016
- Technical assistance for the formulation of food safety programmes in Guinea Bissau (TCP/GBS/3503): February 2015 – May

Activity 3.2.3

In 2015, 6 events were held in conjunction with the CAC:

- 6 July: Side event on FAO GM Foods Platform (ca. 100 participants)
- 7 July: Update on the Codex Website – online registration and commenting (ca. 100 participants)
- 8 July: Information on WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (ca. 100 participants)
- 9 July: Meeting of Host Country Secretariats of Codex Subsidiary Bodies (ca. 40 persons)

- 9 July: FAO/WHO Side Event on Hazards Associated with Animal Feed (ca. 100 persons)
- 10 July: Implementation of the Codex Trust Fund Successor Initiative (ca 900 persons)

In addition, several events were held in conjunction with CAC subsidiary body meetings. Examples include:

- 2 June 2015: Side event on GM Foods Platform (CCNEA8)
- 4 June 2015: Side event on food safety capacity development tools (CCNEA8)
- 14 April 2015: Side event on Feed Safety (CCPR47)

Activities 4.1.1

According to the replies to the template replies, the Committees try to identify and address impediments by making best use of Working Groups (i.e. EWG, PWG, in-session WG) and workshops. The Committees also make various effort to reach consensus, e.g. ensuring the provision of information in advance of meetings, using a mentoring approach, discussion to establish clear direction and support prior to submitting proposals in the step process, scoping work towards areas where consensus exists. CCRVDF discussed⁹ impediments to its work in its 22nd session (April-May 2015), and this approach could be useful for other committees as well.

Activities 4.1.2

In August 2015 a Codex Secretariat staff member was made in charge of business intelligence management and IT support to further improve management systems internally.

Activities 4.1.3

New technologies introduced in 2014 (Sharepoint, phpBB discussion forum, automated mailing) were continued to be used and improved in 2015. As of February 2016, the discussion forum has around 270 members and is used by 4 Committees and 7 EWGs.

At the end of 2015 a new software for online commenting was purchased and is being rolled-out in 2016 for both Codex and IPPC. Codex Contact Points will find it much easier to draft, share and submit comments on Codex texts and the system will allow the Codex Secretariat to manage consultation processes by automating notifications, compiling comments in an easy and efficient manner, and providing data for analysis.

In addition, technologies continue to be tested for participation enhancement in Committee meetings. For example CCNEA, held in Rome in June 2015, was opened up via live-streaming.

Activities 4.1.4

The Codex Secretariat started developing an improved, better targeted and more automated distribution of documents as part of its new Communication Strategy.

Timely Distribution of Working Documents

This section presents an analysis of the distribution of working documents in English, French and Spanish prepared for the Commission and Committees held in 2014 and 2015. The analysis does not consider invitation letters, provisional agendas, circular letters, addendum papers (mostly comments papers), replies to circular letters, information documents.¹⁰

Conclusion:

The following table shows the number of working documents (WDs) falling under the scope mentioned above that were issued. Also the table contains a comparison of documents that were circulated at least 2 months before the Session and those that were not.

	2014				2015			
	Total	E	F	S	Total	E	F	S
Total # of WDs fall under the scope	490	179	151	160	415	141	141	133
# of WDs not issued	27	6	11	10	26	8	9	9
Total # of WDs issued	463	173	140	150	389	133	132	124
# of WDs circulated at least 2 months before the Session	101	53	22	26	118	51	36	31
# of WDs circulated less than 2 months prior to the Session	362	120	118	124	271	82	96	93

Total: In 2014, a total of 490 WDs were issued. Out of 490, 101 WDs were distributed at least 2 months before the Session, which corresponds to 22%. In 2015, a total of 415 WDs were issued. Out of 415, 118 WDs were distributed at least 2 months before the Session, which corresponds to 30%.

⁹ Discussion paper regarding the issues and concerns that impact the ability of the CCRVDF to efficiently perform its work (CX/RVDF 15/22/2)

¹⁰ Para. 5, CAC/37 CRD/5

English: In 2014, a total of 173 WDs were issued. Out of 173, 53 WDs were distributed at least 2 months before the Session, which corresponds to 31%. In 2015, a total of 133 WDs were issued. Out of 133, 51 WDs were distributed at least 2 months before the Session, which corresponds to 38%.

French: In 2014, a total of 140 WDs were issued. Out of 140, 22 WDs were distributed at least 2 months before the Session, which corresponds to 24%. In 2015, a total of 132 WDs were issued. Out of 132, 36 WDs were distributed at least 2 months before the Session, which corresponds to 29%.

Spanish: In 2014, a total of 150 WDs were issued. Out of 150, 26 WDs were distributed at least 2 months before the Session, which corresponds to 28%. In 2015, a total of 124 WDs were issued. Out of 124, 31 WDs were distributed at least 2 months before the Session, which corresponds to 27%.

Overall, there was improvement in the timeliness of the distribution of WDs from 2014 to 2015 with the exception of Spanish language documents.

Timely Elaboration and Revision of the Codex Standards

This study was conducted to complement monitoring of activity 4.1.4, for which the criterion was identified as unclear and unmeasurable. When there are impediments, elaboration or revision may take a longer time than usual. In this regard, duration of standard elaboration or revision could be considered as a useful and measurable indicator.

This section presents an analysis of the time passed since the approval of a standard as new work until final its adoption for all documents that were given a job number (Codex started using job numbers from 2004, CAC27). In other words, those without a job number such as ongoing work and amendments were excluded from the scope of this study. The following were also excluded from the scope as it was difficult to calculate the duration:

- Work discontinued (N08-2012, N08-2012, N09-2012, N03-2011, N04-2011, N01-2005, N11-2005, N10-2004, N12-2004)
- Work given a job number but subsequently turned into Ongoing work (N09-2006, N04-2010, N10-2006 and N18-2011)
- Work approved as new work and also adopted as final text in the same year (N04-2006)
- Work which disappeared (N09-2009, N04-2007)

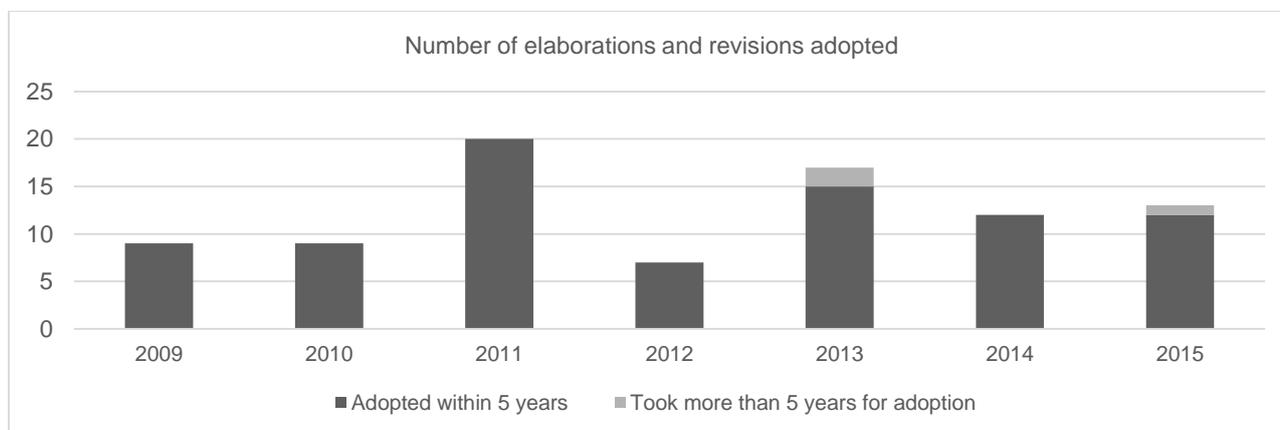
The years for approval as new work and final adoption were identified from the reports for each job number and its duration was calculated. Occasionally new work approved was split into more than one work in the process of elaboration or revision and was adopted in different years. In cases where new work approved was completely split into two to develop different Standards, these were counted as two different work (N07-2011).

Conclusion:

During 2004-2015 a total 171 new work was approved and given job numbers. Among them, 16 were excluded from the scope (see above). One work was split into two (N07-2011). 47 were still under discussion in the relevant Committees. In total, 109 elaborations and revisions were calculated for their duration.

The chart below shows the number of elaborations and revisions adopted from 2009 to 2015 (Codex started giving job numbers from 2004; in this regard, those adopted within 2009 were all by definition developed within 5 years). The chart also indicates the number of elaborations and revisions that took more than 5 years for adoption and the number of those completed within 5 years.

According to this study it took an average of 2.69 years to finalize a standard. Only three works took more than 5 years to finalize. In other words, 97% of work was successfully finalized within 5 years.



Activities 4.1.5

All Codex Committees strive to hold PWGs in conjunction with Committee meetings, unless doing otherwise is justifiable by specific needs.

REPORT ON THE PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES OF THE CODEX COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The Codex communications strategy is aligned with the mandates of its parent organisations as well as with the Codex Strategic Goals and Objectives. More specifically the strategy has its roots in the following strategic goals:

- Codex Strategic Goal 2 – Ensure the application of risk analysis principles in the development of Codex standards (Specifically 2.1.4 “Communicate the risk management recommendations to all interested parties”);
- Codex Strategic Goal 3 – Facilitate the effective participation of all Codex Members;
- Codex Strategic Goal 4 – Implement effective and efficient work management systems and practices.

Awaiting formal adoption by CAC, the Codex Secretariat has implemented the communications strategy through the communications objectives and activities presented at CCEXEC70¹¹. They are listed below, including information on the current status of implementation:

Objective 1

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

Activities:

1. Implement Codex Secretariat document management, workflow and distribution policies and platforms¹² that support better collaboration and efficiency within the Secretariat and more rapid distribution of information to stakeholders.
2. Redesign and reorganise the codexalimentarius.org website to provide an appropriate mix of content based on the needs of the Codex key audiences (and the availability of resources in the Secretariat to generate content).
3. Publish news on a regular basis.
4. Provide tools, techniques and capacities to assist Food Standards Officers in delivering Codex key messages consistently at every opportunity when engaging with stakeholders¹³.
5. Launch social media trial with Twitter and LinkedIn.

STATUS REPORT

The Codex website now has a more efficient, more secure and more versatile document management workflow. This is the most advanced system within FAO and mitigates against the risks of human error, duplication and hacking.

The website has staff working in a coordinated manner to ensure it is regularly updated. The domain change has taken place bringing Codex under www.fao.org and it is expected that the website redesign will be presented at CAC39.

50 weekly news articles have been published since CAC38 and nearly 3000 tweets for the steadily growing number of followers (2100 as of publication of this paper).

Codex is now liaising regularly and successfully with relevant units in FAO and WHO to best exploit in-house expertise and the large following of the parent organizations on social media.

Objective 2

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

Activities:

1. Provide Codex Contact Points with the necessary support and communications tools and products explaining Codex’s work to empower them to reach in-country stakeholders.
2. Ensure timely communication with Codex Contact Points so they receive the right information (e.g. accessible and useable reports/information in the right language).
3. Implement online systems (regional websites, mailing lists, document distribution channels, registration systems, discussion forums for electronic working groups etc.) that are simple, reliable and user friendly.

¹¹ ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/meetings/CAC/cac38/cac38_22e.pdf

¹² Using Microsoft Sharepoint, Forum discussion boards and an online commenting system.

¹³ Participation in meetings will be more strategically planned to include all higher-level professional officers from the Codex Secretariat and ensure that any attendance will result in at least a paragraph (either spontaneous or pre-prepared with the Secretariat’s communication officer) in the meeting report.

4. Provide tools and capacity, in conjunction with FAO/WHO¹⁴, including e-learning for CCPs and their national stakeholders, to show how standard setting works and how (for example) to bring new work from the national level for formal presentation at a Codex committee¹⁵.

STATUS REPORT

The Secretariat is on schedule to deliver on the targets set by CAC40.

Five Codex Committees have set up so far a total of eight working groups on the pilot platform for electronic working groups which is also being used for communication with groups within the Codex Community such as Codex Chairs, Host Secretariats and the current CCEXEC. Following the one year pilot phase which ends at CCRVDF23 in October 2016 the Secretariat will survey users and decide on the future use of the technology.

A first (limited) edition of the 4th Understanding Codex will be available at CAC39 (in English). It will be accompanied by a series of short videos¹⁶ that have been developed on core aspects of Codex such as Industry, Observers, Trade, RCCs and the Codex Trust Fund. Both products will be distributed in at least three languages to all Codex Contact Points after CAC39. The upcoming RCC meetings will also benefit from the availability of these communication products together with their own webpages within the Codex website.

Discussions with FAO Repository and the FAO Office of Corporate Communication are underway to consolidate Codex publications available online. This is especially relevant for standards and other Codex texts. Whilst these are always current on the Codex website, the passage of time, changes in policy and technology and the power of search engines have led to outdated editions of texts still being available online. Similarly those older Codex documents (including working papers) that have not yet been digitalised will be uploaded online into a digital archive.

Objective 3

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

Activities:

1. Survey Codex Committee Chairpersons and Codex host governments to identify key areas for capacity building and opportunities for harmonisation.
2. Provide capacity development opportunities including through the annual Codex Chairs' residential workshop.
3. Convene meetings of Codex host government representatives to discuss common issues with a view to increasing effectiveness of meeting operations.

STATUS REPORT

A full survey has not been carried out.

A training weekend was held near Paris following CCGP30 from 15-17 April attended by 12 Chairs and Vice Chairs as well as 3 Chair's assistants and 4 regional coordinators. The session was organized in collaboration with the United Nations Organization for Training and Research (UNITAR) and focussed on the skills necessary to Chair international Codex meetings. What emerged from the training weekend was the invaluable contributions current and past Chairs can make by sharing their knowledge to ensure that new and developing chairpersons are appropriately prepared.

The Codex Secretariat held a particularly successful meeting with the Canadian Host Secretariat in Rome in advance of CCFL43 and this type of planning and communication is a model to be repeated where logistics and resources allow. Equally useful the working staff exchanges taking place between the Netherlands, Germany and the Codex Secretariat at the very operational Secretariat level.

Objective 4

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

Activities:

1. Analyse the visibility of Codex and Codex-related activities of FAO/WHO in FAO/WHO governing bodies and identify ways to improve or maintain the level of visibility.
2. Develop high-level communication material to link the SDGs and other relevant high-level political commitments with the Codex mandate.

STATUS REPORT

Senior Officers have met with over several Member States on matters pertaining to Codex since CAC38.

¹⁴ Also in collaboration with the Codex Trust Fund

¹⁵ A "Codex diploma" award for those completing the training would add value to the initiative and enhance the competence and participation of members in the work of Codex.

¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcFASiXODBFcWpMOfSo6iXOYtw3WgSsT>

Publications such as the FAO 70th anniversary book “70 Years of FAO¹⁷” where Codex is indicated as one of FAO’s greatest achievements aid visibility.

Greater visibility is also being achieved in FAO with deeper involvement with communications activities and initiatives throughout the house. These include major events such as the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) – an FAO Governing Body.

Following the publication of “Understanding Codex” work in 2016-2017 in conjunction with the Codex Trust Fund and the parent organizations will also focus on high level material emphasising Codex contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Objective 5

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

Activities:

1. Review the status of engagement of all Codex Observers based on their reports and other relevant information, in accordance with the existing provisions of the Procedural Manual and analyse where cooperation is strong, weak, or inexistent.
2. Continue close collaboration with the most relevant intergovernmental organisations and seek participation in key meetings related to the work of standard setting.
3. Ensure visibility of Codex when engaging with consumer and food industry organisations and other collaborative platforms through active participation in meetings and seminars.
4. Establish and promote events (seminars, presentations, keynote addresses) in conjunction with FAO/WHO on topics that highlight the work of Codex¹⁸.

STATUS REPORT

The activity regarding the status of observers in Codex has been completed. 47 observers were contacted to verify their status in Codex. 7 NGOs submitted proof of compliance; 19 NGOs did not meet the conditions set forth in Section VII Paragraph 6 of the Principles; 2 NGOs indicated that they were no longer interested to attend meetings as observers with Codex; 11 sent a reply by the deadline (and 1 after the deadline) showing their interest in the work of Codex Alimentarius, and requesting to maintain their observer status.

Codex has continued to collaborate actively with organizations such as WTO and ISO with joint projects and initiatives planned for 2016-2017 including a publication on food safety and food standards with WTO in the context of the SPS and TBT Agreements.

¹⁷ <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/efeddfc5-0be1-4010-8aeb-24e6c1979566/>

¹⁸ By communicating who Codex is and what it does, Codex will build its reputation, harness resources and demonstrate how it connects to other divisions and sectors in house.