EFFICIENT FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM: COOPERATION, COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION
Introduction (Food safety and control issues)

Global and regional requirements for strengthening food control

Examples of food control systems: role of cooperation, collaboration and coordination

Regional situation analysis

Future perspectives

Conclusion
Intruction: General principles of Modern food control

- Enforcement of food laws for consumer protection
- Protection from food hazards along the entire food chain
- Risk reduction by applying the principle of prevention throughout the food chain
- Establishing emergency procedures e.g. recall of products and outbreak detection, investigation and control.
- Developing science based food control standards and strategies
- Cooperation and participation of all stakeholders
Basis for strengthening Global and regional food control

- International trade.
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- SPS and TBT/WTO
- WHA and Regional Committee for Africa resolutions:
  - Resolution AFR/RC57/R2: Food safety and Health: A Strategy for the WHO African Region
  - Resolution EB126R7: Advancing Food Safety Initiatives
  - Resolution AFR/RC58/R2: Strengthening public health laboratories

- The revised IHR (2005) has expanded scope: diseases caused by infectious diseases, chemical agents, radioactive materials and contaminated food.
Elements of a Modern national food control system

- Food safety policies, law and regulations, standards (CODEX)
- Inspection services
- Food control management
- Surveillance, Monitoring, foodborne disease surveillance
- Information, Education/training, Communication
Key pillars in Food Safety

SAFE FOOD FOR ALL

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Food Legislation Enforcement
- Advice To Industry Trade
- Consumer Education
- Information Gathering Research
- Provision of Health Services

Educated Informed Public
- Selective Discriminating Consumer
- Safe Food Practices At Home
- Community Participation
- Active Consumer Groups

Good Practice Producers Distributors
- Processed Food Quality Assurance
- Appropriate Processes Technology
- Trained Managers and Food Handlers
- Labelling, Education

Government

Consumer

Industry/Trade

NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO FOOD SAFETY

WHO/FAO LEADERSHIP FOR INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS ON FOOD SAFETY, POLICIES, ACTIONS
Situation analysis of food control in the Region

- Fragmented legislation, duplication of regulatory activity
- Lack of cooperation, collaboration and coordination.
- Insufficient and inadequate capacities for food safety
- Inadequate resources for food safety
- Insufficient basic infrastructure
- Lack of awareness of food safety
Organizational structure of food control systems and coordination mechanisms

- Single agency system
  - Advantages:
    - Harmonization of food standards, and uniform application of protection measures at all the links of the food chain;
    - Capacity to quickly respond to emerging challenges and the demands of the domestic and international marketplace;
    - The provision of more streamlined and efficient services, benefiting industry and promoting trade.
    - Improved cost efficiency and more effective use of resources and expertise;
Organizational structure of food control systems and coordination mechanisms (con’t)

- Single agency system
  - Competence scope:
    - A single unified agency for food control is firstly a risk management body.
    - Risk assessment must remain distinct from risk management in terms of functionality and responsibility.
    - Risk assessment must be carried out by independent experts in a functional framework where risk assessor and risk manager tasks are clearly separate.
Organizational structure of food control systems and coordination mechanisms (con’t)

- Integrated system

- Advantages:
  - coherence in the national food control system with uniform application of control measures across the whole food chain throughout the country;
  - politically more acceptable as it does not disturb the day-to-day inspection and enforcement role of other agencies;
  - encourages transparency in decision-making processes, and accountability in implementation; and
  - is more cost-effective in the long term.
Organizational structure of food control systems and coordination mechanisms (con’t)

- Integrated system
  - Levels of operation:
    - **Level 1**: Formulation of policy, risk assessment, risk management and development of standards and regulations.
    - **Level 2**: Coordination of food control activity, monitoring, and auditing.
    - **Level 3**: Inspection, and enforcement.
    - **Level 4**: Education and training
  - **Foodborne disease surveillance**
Modern food control: fundamental role of coorporation

- Among the general principles that underpin modern food control:
  - Recognizes that food control is a mutually shared responsibility among government, the food industry and consumers who require common vision in order to succeed.

- One of the key components of a food control system
  - A coordinated and unambiguous food control management system.

- Coordination at national level is required to improve effectiveness and thus protection of the health of the consumer.
Countries in the Region are increasingly initiating actions to optimize coordination by: creating working groups and coordination bodies, such as intersectoral commissions, elaboration of policy documents.

Need for strong collaboration, cooperation and coordination of all sectors involved in food safety assurance e.g.

- Between food safety related laboratories: Food control, public health, private laboratories
- Collaboration between health and agriculture, trade, Universities, Research Institutions, private sector etc.

- Communication between food control laboratories, Public/Private Sector, Consumers
- National Codex Committees – Key Role
Opportunities through collaboration & coordination (con’t)

Core functions of the Codex Contact Point

- Acts as the link between the Codex Secretariat and Member countries;
- Coordinates all relevant Codex activities within their own countries;
- Receives all Codex texts and ensure their circulation;
- Sends comments on Codex documents or proposals to the Codex Alimentarius Commission etc.
- Works in close cooperation with the national Codex committee
- Acts as the liaison for the food industry, consumers, traders and all other concerned
- Acts as a channel for the exchange of information and coordination of activities with other Codex Members etc.
Organizational structure of food control systems and coordination mechanisms

- Multiple agencies responsible for food control

  - Drawbacks:
    - A system in which several agencies are involved in food safety control usually leads to a duplication of regulatory activities.
    - Frequent confusion over jurisdiction; overlaps and inefficiency use of resources and lack of performance;
    - Gaps in the coverage of food safety control activities.
Organizational structure of food control systems and coordination mechanisms (con’t)

- Strengthening multiple agency systems:
  - Sharing responsibilities
    - development of a national food safety policy/strategy that clearly defines the responsibilities and tasks of different agencies.
  - Cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders
  - Intra-agency coordination
  - Inter-agency coordination
AMR surveillance and control, Kenya

- (i) Meat products along the meat value chain from various study sites were contaminated with *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* at different levels; highest contamination rates were in retail meats at lower end markets, followed by retail meat at higher end markets.
- (ii) Contamination rates were higher in chicken slaughtered at retail markets compared to the commercial abattoir slaughtered chicken. In addition contamination levels in chicken meats at slaughter were higher for *E. coli*, *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in comparison to levels seen in beef carcasses.
- (iii) Antimicrobial resistance was highest among isolates from poultry followed by those from pigs and cattle in that order.
- (iv) Evidence for the effectiveness of the implementation of food safety programs during animal slaughter based on HACCP principles and risk was provided by the significant decrease in faecal contamination and pathogen detection at the commercial abattoirs.
(v) Factors enabling good hygiene practices were lacking in most abattoirs. Procedures along the slaughter lines varied from one facility to another. Enabling good hygiene practices was greatly challenged by old infrastructure and water availability and use.

(v) Education and awareness of the need for good hygiene practices is required.

(vi) 85% of small scale farmers slaughtered their birds on site for sale but conditions of slaughter were poor and hygiene maintenance a great challenge as for the larger abattoirs.
Hazard dynamics can vary with:

- Animal species
- Microbial hazard
- With specific activity at each point in the chain
- Local geography and socio-cultural factors
- Infrastructure and facilities available

At each point involvement of the National Food Safety Council with representation from all relevant sectors
The specific objectives are:

- To provide a platform for advocacy for food safety;
- To provide Member States with a framework for the development and implementation of national policies for food safety;
- To strengthen food control systems, including foodborne disease surveillance and food monitoring for prevention, detection and control of emergencies;
- To facilitate the development of intersectoral collaboration and partnerships for food safety.
Partnerships and advocacy for food safety

Development of tools, guidelines and manuals;

Strengthening of food control systems, including foodborne disease surveillance;

Strengthening capacities for food safety;

Enhancing effective participation of countries in the Codex Alimentarius Commission;

Evaluations of national food safety programmes as a basis for the elaboration of policies, strategic plans, legislation and regulations;

Strengthening national food safety information, education and communication programmes.
The Next Steps

Member States are urged to:

- Consider the establishment of modern and effective single Food Control Agencies or integrated food control structures/national food control authorities with inter-ministerial and interdepartmental representation
- Develop transparent systems and procedures for sharing all types of information
- Seek synergies between different specialized laboratories through coordination and collaboration
- Establish a framework for cooperation and collaboration for informal import control
- Engage all stakeholders involved in food safety assurance including the public sector and NGOs.
Conclusion

- Several agencies and institutions involved in food safety assurance with no clearly defined mandates.
- This has resulted in fragmentation of the food control system and inefficient use of resources.
- The national food control system may be based on multiple agencies, a single agency or an integrated approach; cultural, economic, and political conditions of the country will determine the appropriate model to be followed.
- Improved coordination of the various agencies and ministries involved in food safety would enhance the level of public health protection, make the best use of interagency collaboration, and avoid duplication of effort.
A Shared Responsibility

THANK YOU