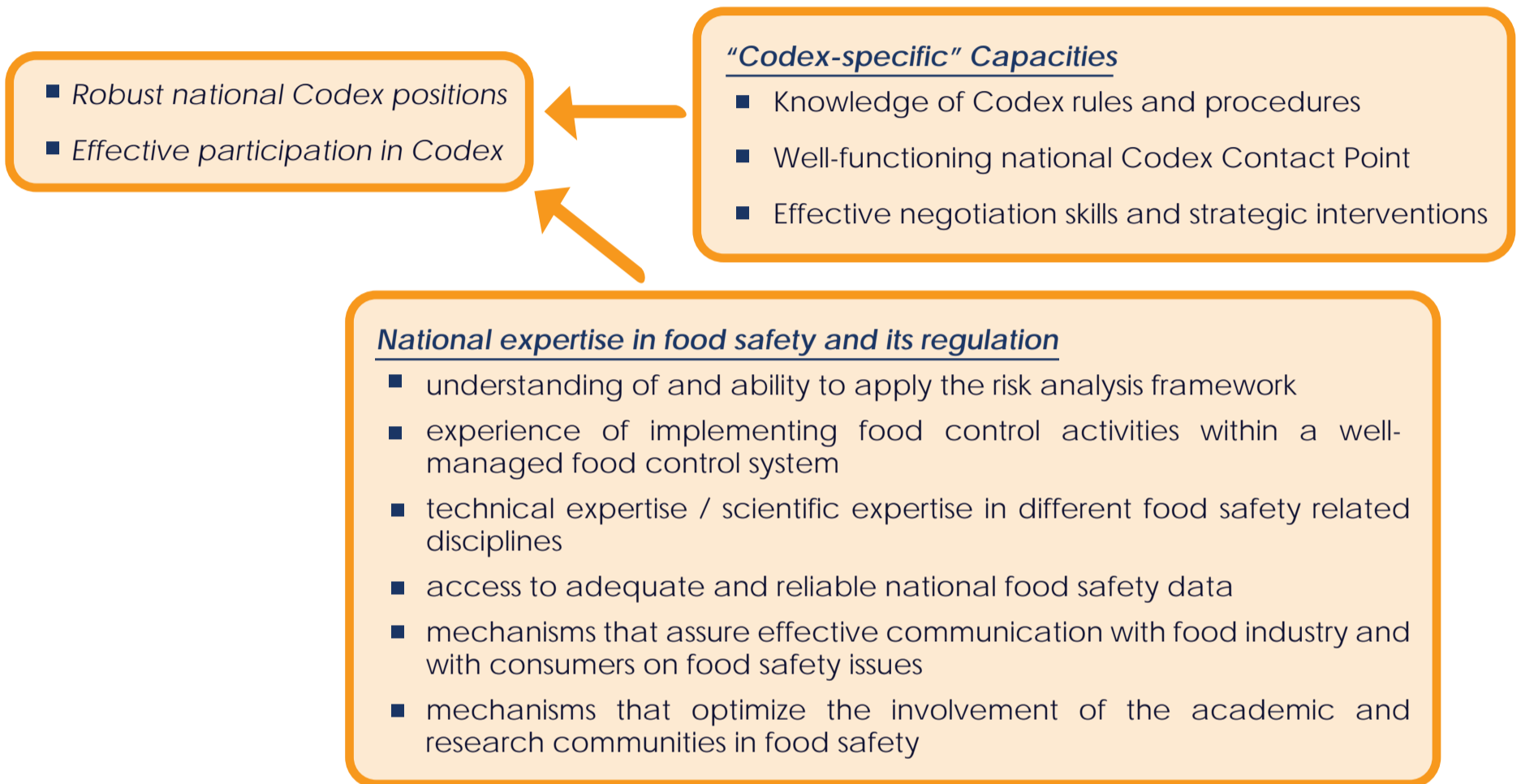


The Codex Alimentarius provides a collection of food standards, guidelines and codes of practice recognized by the World Trade Organization since 1995 as the “benchmark” standards for national food safety regulations and the basis for international food trade - they are science-based standards, adopted through global consensus. The legitimacy and universality of Codex standards depend on the effective participation of all Codex membership.

Food safety capacity development activities of the Food Quality and Standards Service of FAO (AGNS) support the ability of developing countries and countries in transition to participate more effectively in Codex.

### What are the Capacities required for effective participation in Codex?



### Developing capacities

AGNS develops capacity through a wide spectrum of activities both upstream and downstream of standard-setting: developing capacities of countries to contribute data and expertise to the development of scientific opinions that underpin Codex discussions; supporting improved national consultation on Codex issues; supporting national capacities for implementing and enforcing food standards harmonized with Codex.

*“An FAO programme enriched with over 25 years of experience – all partners are gratefully recognised and we look forward to continuing to build stronger networks and partnerships among the global food safety community.”*  
 Ezzeddine Boutrif, Director,  
 Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN), FAO

### Impacts of recent Projects - Selected examples

**Strengthened national Codex Committees** - These committees are an important means of mobilizing available national expertise into the elaboration of national positions on Codex and often in the development of national food standards. Recent projects in **Guinea, Côte d’Ivoire and Angola** and a sub-regional project in Latin America covering **Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Dominican Republic** have resulted in the formal establishment of committees and increased the knowledge of core members on key food standardization issues, particularly in food safety risk analysis.

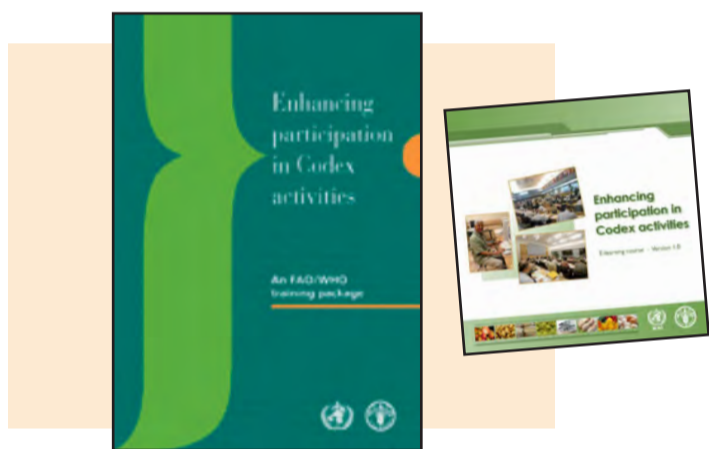
# Capacity Development in Food Safety and Food Quality

## ▶▶ Facilitating effective participation in Codex

**National standards harmonized with Codex and enhanced national food safety standard-setting** - In Lao PDR a national standard on food labeling has been adopted and Improved procedures for fast-tracking consideration of Codex standards for adoption as national standards is under consideration. In **Armenia** a regulation on food additives based on the Codex General Standard for Food Additives (GFSA) was proposed as a means to update existing national legislation. In **Democratic Republic of Congo**: a legal instrument was created to facilitate automatic adoption of existing Codex standards as “interim” national standards until they can be confirmed through the national standard-setting process.

**Evidence-based positions on food safety issues** - A recent FAO **Global** project that focused on the prevention of ochratoxin contamination in green coffee generated data and information that has informed the development of a Codex Code of Practice and facilitated effective participation of a number of coffee-producing countries. An on-going project in **Iran** builds on earlier FAO activities to reduce aflatoxin contamination in pistachios. The project will enable evidence-based risk management decisions on aflatoxin control that allow the country to meet Codex maximum limits for aflatoxin in pistachios.

Many training programmes have been implemented using FAO/WHO training packages to strengthen knowledge of Codex rules and procedures and improve national planning for Codex participation and preparedness of Codex delegations.



### Essential References:

- **FAO/WHO training package** in English, Spanish, French, and Russian.
- **FAO/WHO e-learning course “Enhancing participation in Codex activities”**, a self-paced course available on line and in CD ROM in En, Fr, Sp.

*“FAO food safety projects and training have been very important in helping build our national food control system. Our improved understanding of food safety and food regulation allows us to participate more fully in Codex and to benefit more from it”.*  
Ousmane Touré, Director General the ANSSA, Mali

The **FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund**, operational since March 2004, complements AGNS capacity building efforts by providing direct support to Codex delegates from approximately 130 low-income and lower-middle-income countries.

## Forward looking

Over the years, there has been improved awareness and knowledge among Codex delegates, more dynamic and consistent interventions as part of the global standard-setting process and updated food control programmes and national food standards.

However, FAO recognizes that capacity development is an ongoing process of improvement and that it will be necessary to develop new tools and new ways of supporting the evolving needs of countries in their growing participation in global food safety governance. FAO will intensify its efforts to develop partnerships, including South-South cooperation, and to facilitate channeling of technical and financial resources for the continual strengthening of the global food safety system.

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