



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

Twenty-fifth Session

Kampala, Uganda

27 - 31 January 2025

Comments by The Gambia

Agenda Item 10 – Nomination of the Coordinator

1. Introduction

The Gambia is honored to present its candidature for the position of Coordinator for the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA). This nomination is in line with the procedures outlined in Rule IV of the Procedural Manual of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

2. Rationale for Nomination

Recognizing the importance of the coordinator in shaping the strategic direction and leadership of Codex Committee for Africa, it is pivotal in promoting the implementation of Codex Standards and enhancing food safety and trade facilitation in the region. The coordinator plays a crucial role in facilitating the work of the committee and ensuring the effective implementation of decisions

As a committed member of the Codex Alimentarius Commission The Gambia has demonstrated, strong commitment to food safety and standards. This is validated in its, exemplary food control mechanism since 2005 by establishing structures with clearly defined roles. To further demonstrate its commitment and strengthen accountability and responsibility, a unique food safety regulatory body (Food Safety and Quality Authority under the Office of the Vice President) was established after the enactment of the Food Safety and Quality Act 2011. Coupled with the active participation in Codex activities led by the National Codex Committee and supported by the Scientific Committee and Stakeholder Consultative Committee to facilitate activities that contribute to the development of international food standards, the country's strategic location and its dedication to regional cooperation make it an ideal candidate to coordinate CCAFRICA.

3. Experience and Expertise

The Gambia has a robust food safety infrastructure and a history of effective collaboration with international organizations, including FAO and WHO. The country has developed and adopted several standards, guidelines, procedures, and regulations that are harmonised with codex. The country has successfully implemented various food safety programs and has a team of experienced professionals who are well-versed in Codex procedures and standards. Some of the experts have participated in regional and international standard setting, guidelines and procedural development platforms.

4. Vision for CCAFRICA

As Coordinator, The Gambia aims to:

- i. Strengthen regional cooperation and collaboration among African members in the field of food safety and quality.
- ii. Enhance the capacity of member countries to better participate in the work of Codex.
- iii. Promote the harmonization of food standards and regulations across the region to facilitate trade and ensure consumer protection.
- iv. Foster active participation of all member countries in Codex activities and decision-making processes.
- v. Actively work with Regional Economic Communities of Africa, partners, the private sector and governments to ensure broader participation and inclusion in decision making and implementation of Codex strategic objectives.

- vi. Encourage the development of new work in regional and global standards (new food sources and novel foods)
- vii. Advocate for increased funding for codex work in the region through governments, development partners, and the private sector.
- viii. Promoting food safety systems in traditional Markets
- ix. Facilitate monitoring, accountability and knowledge management

5. Conclusion

The Gambia is willing and committed to advancing the objectives of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and is well-prepared to take on the responsibilities of the Coordinator for CCAFRICA. There is support and backing from the policy makers, partners, and stakeholders. We respectfully request the support of the member countries for this nomination.