



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NEAR EAST**

Twelfth Session

Muscat, Oman

28 September - 2 October 2025

CODEx COMMUNICATION WORK PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT

(Prepared by the Codex Secretariat)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The 11th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Near East (CCNE11, 2023) acknowledged the importance of regional Codex communications for the work of the committee and the Members of the region and adopted the “Regional communications work plan 2024-2025”¹. The value of implementing a communications work plan was further recognized noting that it would help to sustain and build on the positive progress of previous years in this area.

1.2 This paper highlights the progress made on implementation of the regional communications work plan and proposes that the region maintain such a work plan moving forward, with the objectives of establishing clear communication channels, enhancing Codex work and communicating the value of Codex Standards in the region.

2. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Objective 1 Reinforce and expand existing communication channels and establish clear additional channels as needed e.g. for specific work streams

2.1 During the handover between Saudi Arabia and Oman, both countries, in their capacities of Coordinator for the Near East, worked together to maintain active communication among Members in the region by means of virtual meetings, emails, WhatsApp, telecommunications, and other formal and informal meetings.

2.2 While these tools provide a way for countries to establish useful and faster communication channels, it remains important for CCNE Members to ensure that the official contact detail of their respective Codex Contact Points² are up to date, as this information guarantees that they receive formal communications from the Codex Secretariat. Updates should be provided directly to Codex@fao.org.

2.3 Under Objective 1, CCNE11 also set a target that by CCNE12 80% of Members/Observers surveyed would indicate timeliness, accessibility and quality of Codex regional communications “excellent” or “good”. To facilitate receipt of information on this, a very short survey has been developed. Members are encouraged to complete this survey at:

<https://forms.office.com/e/cuhsBNwHmz>

2.4 This survey takes only 2-3 minutes, and the results will be provided during the discussion of this item.

Objective 2: Communicate the value of Codex engagement and use of standards in the region

2.5 The proposed activities under this objective primarily related to sharing information related to success stories in the region, stories on food safety, standards work or capacity development initiatives in the region and activities undertaken in collaboration with the Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO.

¹ REP23/NE paras 84, 85, 89 and Appendix IV

² List of CCNE Codex Contact Points: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/codex-regions/ccne/members/en/>

2.6 There has been an effort in the region to document and communicate activities through the preparation of short web stories that have been subsequently published on the CCNE news page³ on the Codex website. This has been steadily increasing year on year.

2.7 Over the past two years World Food Safety Day provided a strong incentive to raise awareness on food safety and share information on national and regional initiatives. At least 11 countries in the region have shared stories since CCNE11⁴. Stories covered technical areas, trainings and the regional webinars and initiatives organized by the Coordinator in collaboration with FAO, WHO and the Codex Secretariat⁵.

2.8 While CCNE met the indicators established in the communications work plan regarding the number of news and countries contributing to Codex news on the regional webpage, set at 24 news items and the 50% of the total number of CCNE Members respectively, there is still an opportunity for more countries in the region to share their experience, news and messages related to Codex work. Social media posts shared via the relevant channels of Members, FAO, WHO and Codex can also provide a means to further promote and inform Codex stakeholders about the work related to Codex carried out in the region.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

3.1 There are functioning internal regional communication channels and in general, the region has made good progress since CCNE11. With regard to Objective 2, World Food Safety Day continued to serve as a strong driver along with webinars, and initiatives organized by the Coordinator in collaboration with the Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO. Moving forward, efforts should be made to continue to build in communications to all initiatives to maintain this situation, as well as to engage other Members in the region to share their experiences.

3.2 In this context, it is recommended that CCNE12:

- i. renew its commitment to the Communications work plan, as updated in Annex I;
- ii. continue its efforts to enhance the regional communications network; and
- iii. continue to communicate on and promote its food safety and standard setting efforts and successes.

³ <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/codex-regions/ccne/about/en/>

⁴ Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates.

⁵ Further information on the use and impact of Codex texts in the Near East region are provided in the working document CX/NE 25/12/12.

ANNEX I

**PROPOSED COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES TO THE REGIONAL WORK PLAN 2025-2027
TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN**

The table shows the objectives, activities, targets and indicators for the proposed communications activities to the regional work plan for 2025-2027, to support the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan. These elements derive from Strategic Goal 2 and 4 of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031, “Enhance Codex work management systems and practices that support the effective and efficient development of standards and related texts” and “Maximize the impact of Codex by increasing the visibility and use of standards”.

Objectives	Activities	Targets	Indicators
1. Reinforce and expand existing communication channels and establish clear additional channels as needed e.g., for specific work streams	1.1 Consolidate and improve information flow and exchange between countries and Codex Secretariat (CS) 1.2 Expand and strengthen existing simple and rapid communications methods (e.g. Regional WhatsApp communications group)	By CCNE13 80% of Members/Observers surveyed indicate timeliness, accessibility and quality of Codex regional communications “excellent” or “good”	Number of survey responses rating regional communications “excellent” or “good”
2. Communicate the value of Codex engagement and use of standards in the region	2.1. Provide CS with monthly drafts of web stories capturing food safety, standards work or capacity building initiatives in the region 2.2. Promote regional success stories and initiatives in conjunction with CS and FAO/WHO	- By CCNE13, 30 news items from countries in the region - By CCNE13, 70% of countries in the region contributed to Codex news on the regional webpage	Number of CCNE news stories published Number of countries who have made a published contribution