



## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC**

Eleventh session

Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 28 September - 1 October 2010

### **ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO COMPLEMENTARY TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

#### **PART 1 - CAPACITY BUILDING**

(Prepared by FAO/WHO)

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. This paper describes FAO/WHO activities in the areas of capacity building and the provision of scientific advice implemented since the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific (CCNASWP) which are complementary to the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

#### **TECHNICAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW**

2 Under their respective mandates, goals and workplans, FAO and WHO are engaged in a range of food safety and quality capacity development activities at national and regional levels. These capacity development activities directly support the Codex Strategic Plan 2008–2013; in particular, activities 1.7, 2.6 and 5.4. Furthermore, FAO and WHO capacity development activities also contribute to the Strategic plan for the CCNASWP, especially objective 3 (development and enhancement of the capacities of national Codex Contact Points), Objective 4 (the exchange of scientific and technical expertise in the region) and Objective 5 (promote procedures to review Codex codes, standards, guidelines and recommendations to facilitate their use as the basis for national standards).

3. FAO and WHO capacity development activities are generally aimed at:

- Upgrading the capacity of developing member countries in food safety, quality control and quality assurance and supporting their effective participation in the work of Codex;
- Enhancing the respective roles of the agriculture and health sectors and trade and industry in ensuring the safety and quality of the food supply; and
- Strengthening cooperation and collaboration between FAO and WHO and partner organizations, in the field of food safety and quality.

4. Since the last session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South-West Pacific, FAO and WHO (either jointly or together with partner organizations and donors) have commenced or are continuing to work with countries of the region on a range of activities (including direct technical assistance projects on food safety and quality, regional projects and events addressing food safety issues). Detailed information is provided below in tables shown in paragraph 8 below. More background on FAO and WHO technical capacity development activities is available at [www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns](http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns), [www.fao.org/ag/againfo/home/en/index.htm](http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/home/en/index.htm), <http://www.faopacific.ws> and <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/capacity/en/>.

5. Important information on capacity building activities and initiatives of global relevance was provided to the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of CAC and is available in CX/CAC 10/33/15 Add.1 ([ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/cac/cac33/cac33\\_15\\_add1e.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/cac/cac33/cac33_15_add1e.pdf)). The working paper provides information of relevance to the all regions and describes the range of supporting materials (e.g. guidelines, manuals and online resources), global information exchange systems, international events and global projects which have been delivered or initiated since the last session. Issues of relevance include ongoing work to develop global training materials on import food control programmes and food safety risk analysis; strengthened efforts through INFOSAN and EMPRES Food Safety programme to support countries' in managing food safety emergencies; technical improvement of the FAO's International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health ([www.ipfsaph.org](http://www.ipfsaph.org)); and the undertaking of country case studies to support the WHO Initiative to Estimate the Global Burden of Foodborne Diseases (FERG).

### Specific focus on regional initiatives

6. Joint FAO/WHO capacity-building activities organized by the Codex Trust Fund in collaboration with Codex partners for the period in question appear in the annual reports and progress reports of the Codex Trust Fund which are submitted to the 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCEXEC and the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the CAC. Specific to the forthcoming 11<sup>th</sup> Session of CCNASWP, FAO and WHO with funding from the CTF are planning a pre-CCNASWP workshop to address food labelling issues and in particular date marking issues of relevance to countries of the region. The expected outcomes of the workshop include that delegates (1) are familiarised with Codex labelling provisions; (2) are informed of date marking requirements and other current food labelling issues in a range of trading partner countries; (3) have identified ways of how to use the Codex process to seek harmonization; and (4) are informed about the Food Secure Pacific Framework for Action and have discussed linkages with the CCNASWP Strategic Plan.

7. On a regional level, it is worth noting that a Pacific Food Summit took place in Port Vila, Vanuatu from 21 to 23 April 2010 drawing together senior agriculture, health and trade officials from all Pacific Island countries. The summit agreed on a multisectoral Framework for Action on food security, which includes a dedicated theme on food regulatory frameworks, enforcement and compliance and public-private sector collaboration.

8. Activities completed or ongoing since the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South-West Pacific are detailed in the following tables.

<b>REGIONAL/NATIONAL EVENTS</b>			
<b>Activity (Workshop/Seminar/Training Course)</b>	<b>Organizers</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Second Meeting of the Pacific Food Safety and Quality Legislation Expert Group (PFSQLE)	FAO/WHO	27-28 November 2009	Wellington, New Zealand
FAO/WHO training course on risk-based food inspection and certification in the Pacific	FAO/WHO	30 November - 3 December 2009	Wellington, New Zealand
Pacific Food Summit on food security, food safety and nutrition calling on Pacific island countries and areas to enhance various aspects of food security including strengthening food control systems	FAO/GHI/PIFS/SPC/UNICEF/WHO	21-23 April 2010	Port Vila, Vanuatu
Integrated Food Standards Project to strengthen capacity of the Pacific Islands Forum countries to establish and enforce internationally recognized food laws, standards and inspection procedures to promote unhindered trade in safe and wholesome food.	WPRO/FAO/Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	Various	14 Pacific Island countries
A practical guide to introducing food standards to promote health and trade for smaller island states has been prepared and is being reviewed and revised.	WHO	Ongoing	N/A

Regulators from Fiji, PNG and Solomon Islands trained in food safety auditing with the purpose of enabling them to be accredited by the international personnel certification body RABQSA.	WHO	Various	Australia
A Study of Cyanide Levels in Cassava and its Products in some South Pacific Island countries	FAO	Ongoing	University of the South Pacific, Fiji

**PROJECTS/DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES**

<b>Title</b>	<b>FAO/WHO</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Status</b>
Food safety regulations drafted	WHO	Cook Islands, Kiribati and Nauru	Ongoing
Technical support for national food summit	SPC/WHO	Cook Islands	Completed
Drafting food standards	WHO	Cook Islands	Ongoing
Technical support provided on food standards and imported food control	WHO	Federated States of Micronesia	Ongoing
Drafting food standards	WHO	Federated States of Micronesia	Ongoing
Technical support to prepare a proposal for a FAO TCP on food control	FAO in collaboration with WHO	Federated States of Micronesia	Ongoing
Technical support for national food summit	SPC/WHO	Federated States of Micronesia	Completed
National seminars on Codex Alimentarius and Fiji Food Safety Regulations	FAO	Fiji	May 2010 (Completed)
Review of food inspection services	FAO	Fiji	Oct 2009 (Completed)
Food standards passed as a result of technical support	WHO	Fiji	June 2009
Technical support to review the competent authority and the effective enforcement of newly introduced food standards	WHO	Fiji	June 2010
Technical guidance on conducting microbiological risk assessments	WHO	Fiji	Ongoing
Development of national food safety emergency response plan for Fiji initiated.	WHO	Fiji	Ongoing
Technical support provided on Food Safety Act and food inspection processes	WHO in collaboration with FAO	Kiribati	Ongoing
Technical support for national food summit	WHO/UNICEF /FAO	Kiribati	Completed

Draft food safety regulations prepared for consideration of key stakeholders	WHO, in collaboration with FAO	Republic of the Marshall Islands	Ongoing
Technical support provided to review existing regulations and guide future developments	WHO in collaboration with FAO	Nauru	Completed
Drafting of food standards and stakeholder discussions	WHO in collaboration with FAO	Nauru	Ongoing
Drafting food standards	WHO	Niue	Ongoing
Enhancement of food safety education based upon the Five Keys to Safer Food, including food safety education in schools	WHO	Pacific countries	Inspection system review completed Oct 2009, follow up capacity building May 2010
Integrated Food Standards project to strengthen capacity of the Pacific Islands Forum countries to establish and enforce internationally recognized food laws, standards and inspection procedures to promote unhindered trade in safe and wholesome food.	WPRO/FAO-SAP/Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	14 Pacific Island countries	Ongoing
Food import control system in Palau reviewed and inter-agency working group has been established with the purpose of implementing a national plan of action on strengthening food import control	WHO, in collaboration with FAO	Palau	Ongoing
Training on risk assessment	WHO	Papua New Guinea	Ongoing
A review of PNG standards to determine their consistency with Codex guidelines is being supported	WHO	Papua New Guinea	Ongoing
Drafting imported food control guidelines	WHO	Papua New Guinea	Ongoing
Regulators from PNG were hosted by NZFSA to observe auditing processes	WHO	Papua New Guinea	Completed
Technical assistance for international accreditation of the Samoa Research and Development Institute food laboratory	FAO	Samoa	Ongoing
Post-harvest research and capacity building in Samoa to improve shelf-life/packaging and product quality of breadfruit and papaya	FAO	Samoa	Completed
Technical assistance to draft a Meat Hygiene Legislation, including the Abattoir and Meat Supply Act and the Abattoir and Meat Inspection Regulations	FAO	Samoa	Completed
Technical support for national food summit	FAO/WHO	Samoa	Completed

Draft food safety bill prepared and is being discussed with key stakeholders	WHO in collaboration with FAO	Samoa	Ongoing
Technical assistance provided to Solomon Islands to draft imported food control guidelines	WHO, in collaboration with FAO	Solomon Islands	Ongoing
Technical assistance provided to Solomon Islands to draft food standards consistent with Codex and harmonized with Fiji's food standards.	WHO in collaboration with FAO	Solomon Islands	Ongoing
Technical assistance to Solomon Islands to draft, finalise and launch a national integrated food security, food safety and nutrition policy	FAO/WHO	Solomon Islands	Policy launched April 2010
Assessment of agro-based food processing opportunities, with emphasis on food quality and safety aspects.	FAO	Tonga	Ongoing
Technical support was provided to strengthen national food import control system	WHO	Tuvalu	Completed
Food standards under development	WHO	Tuvalu	Ongoing
Technical support for national food summit	FAO/GHI/PIFS/SPC/UNICEF/WHO	Vanuatu	Completed
The Vanuatu Food Control Regulations (2007) and the food import inspection systems were reviewed and technical advice on necessary amendments provided.	WHO	Vanuatu	Completed
Country capacity building in foodborne disease burden estimation, policy situation analysis and research utilization.	WHO	Country in which the pilot burden of foodborne disease study will take place (still to be selected)	Development of training modules

9. Looking ahead, priorities for the coming year in the region, which may be implemented jointly by FAO and WHO, or in association with other partner organizations, aim at strengthening national food control systems in Pacific Island countries, including:

- Providing expertise in the drafting of Codex compliant laws, regulations and standards;
- Building the competent authority capacity of food inspection/certification services;
- Promoting risk-based food inspection systems;
- Enhancing food analysis capacity;
- Strengthening official food safety systems through the use of the risk analysis framework including risk assessment of food hazards;
- Targeted training for food safety officials and technical staff (food safety managers, food inspectors, and food analysts) in carrying out their respective duties;
- Supporting national Codex programmes (including Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees) to facilitate effective participation in Codex and providing tailored Codex training to further enhance participation in Codex activities at regional and national levels;

- Building capacity of small and medium size enterprises to implement food quality and safety standards;
- Developing tools and training materials to assist food safety and quality control activities; and
- Strengthening regional and international food control information exchange and cooperation activities.

10. Capacity development activities at national and regional levels are implemented according to organization-wide strategic planning, as well as in response to direct requests from member countries. In the Pacific, FAO and WHO have a tradition of collaborating and coordination in the implementation of food safety related activities. This was enhanced through the joint implementation of the Integrated Food Standards Project/Regional Trade Facilitation Programme.

11. ***The membership of CCNASWP is invited to engage with FAO and WHO*** to provide feedback on:
- Ongoing FAO and WHO activities to strengthen food safety and quality in the region
  - Priority needs at national and regional level which require further support from FAO and WHO.