



**Informal notes from Codex Trust Fund meeting,
held on 4 July 2006 @ 12:30 hrs, CIGC**

Provisional agenda

1. Welcome
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Matters arising from last meeting
4. 2005 Annual Report and 7th Progress Report: salient points
5. Survey of national policy and activities related to food safety in countries eligible for the Codex Trust Fund
6. Discussion on agenda item 5 and next steps
7. Any other business

Secretariat

Chairperson	Dr Anne MacKenzie, Canadian Food Inspection Agency
WHO	Mrs Susanne Weber-Mosdorf, Assistant Director-General, Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments (ADG/SDE) Dr Jørgen Schlundt, Director, Food Safety, Zoonoses & Foodborne Diseases (FOS)
FAO	Dr Maria Lourdes Costarrica González

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed participants and the meeting adopted the agenda.

2. Adoption of agenda

a) Opening remarks by Mrs Weber-Mosdorf, ADG/SDE:

- Codex Trust Fund is 3 years old & shown impact at country level;

- In 2005, funds made available by generosity of donors has enabled 87 of the 138 eligible countries to benefit through their participation in Codex meetings;
- The Trust Fund has received approx. US\$ 1.5 million every year, but substantive funds are needed to reach the same level for 2007;
- Recent examination of the impact of TF has shown that active participation by those countries in Codex meetings:
 - helped to start and/or enhance national food safety activities
 - is linked with ability of countries to respond to food safety crises
 - 31% of benefiting countries recently modernised legislation
 - Improved quality and quantity of Codex activities at country level following participation
- In summary, the TF is an initiative with impact and is well received by countries; need to ensure its continuation and extension to countries who have so far not benefited;
- ADG invited countries to express their expectations and describe their experience with the TF at this meeting.

b) An intervention was made by the delegation of the Netherlands encouraging a level of discussion at this meeting that might make further discussion in CAC plenary unnecessary, hence permitting the Commission to skip item 13 on CAC agenda.

3. Matters arising from last meeting

Director FOS, WHO reiterated the importance of this opportunity to have a full discussion on the TF. He proposed that a meeting could also be arranged with TF donor countries if they so wished.

Matters arising from the last meeting and follow up actions taken included:

- The preparation of the report that will be considered under agenda item 5;
- Several practical/logistic suggestions made at the last meeting which have been taken forward
- The issue of scrutiny of TF sponsored participants in Codex meetings. This is particularly necessary for agenda items requiring quorum. All 24 TF sponsored participants had been present during a quorum count at this CAC meeting

4. 2005 Annual Report and 7th Progress Report

a) Director FOS, WHO summarized the salient points from the two reports.

2005 Annual Report:

- Report provides detailed info on the number of beneficiaries by regions; the number was noted to be high;
- Total contributions received in the order of US\$ 3.0 million, i.e. 1.5 million per year;
- There is scope to increase number of donor countries to at least 35; need to approach new donors;
- Report provides detail on training course held in Costa Rica in 2005.

7th Progress Report:

- Report provides update on and expectation of funding;
- This year, US\$ 830 000 received so far which falls short of the US\$ 1.5 million mark;
- Report provides list of countries to be funded this year, including detail of the funded activities.

b) Following this presentation, there were altogether 19 interventions from countries¹ (6 of which were donors), and one from the European Union.

All beneficiaries expressed strong feelings of appreciation of the institution, the management and the country level impact of the Codex Trust Fund. The most important outcomes of participation reported by countries were:

- An increase of interest in Codex matters at country level;
- Better training of local experts in Codex related issues;
- The establishment of national Codex Committees;
- A strengthening of national systems.

Donors appreciated the efforts shown by recipient countries, the reporting on the TF issues by the Secretariat and leadership of FAO/WHO which is establishing a precedent for similar mechanisms in other standard setting bodies. Three donors (Germany, Netherlands and New Zealand) announced levels of funding for 2006 and a number of donors including the Netherlands and the European Commission highlighted the likely continuation of funding levels in the future. Japan's contribution for 2006 was also acknowledged and will appear in subsequent reports.

¹ Antigua, Benin, Burundi, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Eritrea, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Switzerland, Tanzania, Turkey, Uganda.

The Netherlands highlighted the need to continue to ensure strict divisions between participation sponsored by the TF and technical assistance and capacity-building assured by mechanisms other than Codex. In this context, the FAO representative referred to capacity building activities carried out by FAO/WHO and other organizations, donors and institutions in the different regions in food safety.

Some of the more specific comments can be categorized and summarized as follows:

Type of issue	Content	Rationale	No of countries raising issue	Potential solutions suggested
<p>Quality of participation</p>	<p>Inconsistency of participants</p>	<p>Need <i>consistency</i> and <i>regularity</i> of participation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure quality of interventions in Codex meetings - have <i>quality</i> and <i>continuity</i> of impact at country level - raise awareness around Codex issues at country level - facilitate implementation of national plans to enhance Codex activities 	<p>5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase funding for participation • Increase communication between participants (consider mentoring scheme) • Rigorous selection of candidates more appropriately (propose <i>criteria</i> which dictate direct involvement in Codex and commitment to continue tasks) • Take advantage of participation in regional meetings

Type of issue	Content	Rationale	No of countries raising issue	Potential solutions suggested
Logistics of participation	Difficulties with travel arrangements	Country-internal logistics require adequate lead time, clear arrangements and certainty of funds available	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase lead time for countries to make arrangements • Give money directly to countries to manage travel fund • Look at cost-effectiveness for lodging close to or on-site of meeting
Training	Participants need better Codex preparation pre-meeting	Only adequate preparation can ensure high quality input by participants in Codex meetings and at country level (including impact on communities)	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops/briefings prior to Codex meetings for beneficiaries² • Training on how to prepare national positions for Codex meetings • Identification of beneficiaries at beginning of meetings to permit "mentoring" by veterans • Take advantage of regional meetings/trainings and participation

One country expressed concern about inconsistencies in relation to the information on achievements included in the report and requested detailed clarification.

Costa Rica proposed the use of indicators for the impact of TF at country level following participation in Codex meetings which could include the following elements:

- Increased interest of countries in standard setting through Codex
- Increased representation of countries at Codex meetings
- Increased use of country-**internal** funds for Codex activities
- Establishment of national Codex Committees

² Example was given by Canada who reported to have organized an orientation session for the Codex Labelling Committee prior to this CAC meeting. Such opportunities require better advertisement and increased possibilities for TF participants to arrive early and attend.

The Chair concluded the agenda item by encouraging country delegations to write down their suggestions and make available to WHO/FAO for categorizing as an aide to the development of operational guidelines for the TF. Problems identified should be matched with corresponding suggestions for resolution.

5. Survey of national policy and activities related to food safety in countries eligible for the Codex Trust Fund

Director, FOS, WHO made a presentation summarizing the report (slides attached).

6. Discussion of Agenda item 5

Three countries (Nigeria, Samoa, and Uganda) made interventions highlighting the following:

- The importance of continuation of evaluation involving recipient countries;
- The importance of dissemination of findings at country level;
- The need to permit sufficient time for registering impact at country level (including a proposal to weigh the advantages of smaller & thematically focussed evaluations at shorter time intervals against comprehensive evaluations at longer intervals);
- The need for countries to ensure that the appropriately trained representatives are sent to meetings to ensure maximum benefit.

All donors emphasized the need for continued evaluation and sustainable funding. Switzerland in particular proposed 5 points to improve upon the effective use of TF funds:

1. Institutionalize and optimize the evaluation process;
2. Include donor countries and their expectations in the evaluation process
3. Focus on resolution of problems arising e.g. short instructions/briefings; issues to be taken up in capacity-building
4. Continue open and strong support from WHO and FAO
5. Provide information and advocacy materials (e.g. brochure) for potential new donors.

The FAO representative underscored the importance of the exchange with participants to understand what is happening in Codex at national level. She highlighted the importance of: using regional fora; matching national needs to training activities and other opportunities; respecting the division of responsibilities for capacity-building in Codex. She also underscored that quality of participation requires extensive preparation at country level.

The Chair offered the following observations:

- Countries should reflect upon the need for a formal cost-effectiveness analysis;
- The TF Secretariat may wish to consider summarizing the wealth of information provided in the annexes to the report which include testimonials;
- There should be an examination of the reasons why 23% of countries did not respond to the invitation to participate in the evaluation.

7. Other business

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded with a call for all countries to submit their individual comments and proposals for potential solutions to the TF Secretariat. The Secretariat will circulate the draft meeting notes to all participants for comment as soon as possible.