



# IMPROVED FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS FOR GREATER GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY

Safe food is critical to achieving food and nutrition security, improved public health outcomes and increased competitiveness in agri-food trade, which fosters opportunities for improved livelihoods and economic development. It is widely recognized that global action is required to improve food safety and that food safety capacities need to be strengthened everywhere to enable more rational and effective control in all countries. Adequate capacity to address food safety is also a significant contributing factor to community resilience to shocks. Weak food control systems and the inability of national authorities to orient food control programmes to deal with critical food safety issues can have serious public health consequences and impede access to lucrative segments of domestic and export markets. To address these challenges, the project developed materials to support the strengthening of national and regional food safety programmes, as well as of food control systems in selected countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America through the implementation of capacity development programmes.



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## WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The multi-disciplinary project was structured around three complementary pillars. First, it assisted the participating countries in the implementation of a reliable, objective and thorough assessment of their food control systems, the assessment to serve as the basis for better planned, better coordinated and better monitored capacity development programmes. Second, it enabled countries within COMESA to understand and apply the risk analysis framework to improve the harmonization of food safety regulations within the subregion. Finally, it increased the up-take of the risk analysis framework for evidence-informed food safety decision-making in Latin America and the Caribbean region. Each pillar comprised multiple activities at global, regional and country level. At global level, the main focus was on the development of innovative food safety tools. The applications resulting from these tools were then tailored and implemented at regional and country level.

## IMPACT

The project activities have contributed to strengthening food control systems in the participating countries, which in turn will improve public health outcomes and competitiveness in agri-food trade, providing opportunities for economic development and improved livelihoods. The evidence-based assessments generated information for national food control agencies that reliably describe the overall status of their national food control system, enabling the development of targeted strategic plans and the monitoring of progress in improving the system. The assessment process also proved to be excellent training for participants in building a common understanding of how the overall food control system works and how each institution should interact with the others, improving coordination and interagency collaboration at national level. At regional level, a process of harmonization of risk-based food safety regulations has been initiated in the COMESA region, while in the Caribbean, food safety scientists have been enabled to contribute effectively to risk-based decision-making and, in particular, to decisions on regional food safety issues.

## KEY FACTS

### Contribution

USD 1 080 000

### Duration

1 February 2017 – 28 February 2019

### Resource Partner

United States Food and Drugs  
Administration (FDA)

### Partners

Common Market for Eastern  
and Southern Africa (COMESA),  
Inter-American Institute for  
Cooperation on Agriculture

### Beneficiaries

Regional and sub-regional bodies  
concerned with food safety and food  
trade, national food safety authorities  
and relevant ministries in participating  
countries, food producer and trade  
organizations, national academia  
involved in food safety research  
and teaching, women's groups  
involved in food processing  
and marketing, and consumers

## ACTIVITIES

- National food control system assessment conducted in four countries: Indonesia, Malawi, Tunisia and Sudan. Based on the assessment findings, a strategic plan was developed and endorsed by the relevant ministries in Indonesia; priorities for improvement were discussed and agreed with relevant authorities in Malawi.
- Five training workshops organized for COMESA members (over 100 participants) on assessment of mycotoxin risks and microbiological risk management.
- Four national stakeholder workshops held for 157 participants on genetically modified food and feed safety in Bhutan, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia. In Bhutan, biosafety communication strategy and biosafety incident management protocol developed for ministerial endorsement.
- National action plans developed in Kenya, Uganda and Zambia, as well as a joint proposal document for regional collaborative approaches.
- Workshop on foresight held for 32 participants in Burkina Faso.
- Two workshops on development of food safety policy held for 64 participants in Myanmar.
- Three training courses in chemical food safety risk assessment held for 40 Caribbean regulators in Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.
- Legal report on food safety in school feeding programme developed in Sao Tome.



### Project Code

FAO: GCP/GLO/520/USA

### Project Title

Strengthening Global Food Safety through Improved Regional and Country Food Control Systems

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