



African Union

Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources

AU FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT COORDINATION MECHANISM

Continental Workshop on the establishment of Food Safety Authority at African Union and of a Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed -RASFF.

29th – 30th October 2012, Kigali, Rwanda



OUTLINE

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Definitions

Food means any substance, whether processed, semi-processed or raw, which is intended for human consumption, and includes drink, chewing gum and any substance which has been used in the manufacture, preparation or treatment of “food” but does not include cosmetics or tobacco or substances used only as drugs. (Codex)

‘Food’ (or ‘foodstuff’) - means any substance or product, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed, intended to be, or reasonably expected to be ingested by humans. (Most AU member States)

‘Food’ includes drink, chewing gum and any substance, including water, intentionally incorporated into the food during its manufacture, preparation or treatment.

‘Food’ shall not include: (a) feed; (b) live animals unless they are prepared for placing on the market for human consumption; (c) plants prior to harvesting; (d) medicinal products; (e) cosmetics; (f) tobacco and tobacco products; (g) narcotic or psychotropic substances; (h) residues and contaminants.



Definitions cont..

Food safety: refers to the assurance that food will not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared and/or eaten according to its intended use. Food safety is rather related to the non-occurrence of food safety **hazards** or risks and does not include other human health aspects related to food, for example, malnutrition.

Food safety management system: a recognized formal approach giving a framework for effectively managing food safety responsibilities

Hazard: means a biological, chemical or physical agent in, or condition of, food with the potential to cause an adverse health effect.

Risk : refers to a function of the probability of an adverse health effect and the severity of that effect, consequential to a hazards(s) in food.



Definitions cont..

Feed' (or 'feeding stuff') means any substance or product, including additives, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed, intended to be used for oral feeding to animals;

Final consumer : means the ultimate consumer of a foodstuff who will not use the food as part of any food business operation or activity.

- (consumers **consume** the food product.)
- (customers **distribute or sell foodstuffs** to consumers)

Contaminant: means any biological or chemical agent, foreign matter or other substance not intentionally added to the food which may compromise food safety or suitably so that it does not meet a standard requirement determined by any law (most AU member states food laws)

Codex-Contaminant means any substance not intentionally added to food, which is present in such food as a result of the production (including operations carried out in crop husbandry, animal husbandry and veterinary medicine), manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packing, packaging, transport or holding of such food or as a result of environmental contamination. The term does not include insect fragments, rodent hairs and other extraneous matter. www.au-ibar.org



Definitions cont..

Food control means ***a mandatory, regulatory activity of enforcement by the competent health authority*** to provide consumer protection and ensure that all food during production, handling, storage, processing and distribution is safe, wholesome and fit for human consumption; conform to safety requirements and are honestly and accurately labelled as prescribed by law (FAO/WHO ASSURING FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY: GUIDELINES FOR STRENGTHENING NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS, 2003)



Definitions cont..

OTHER IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS:

Food law; Food business; Food business operator;

Feed (or ‘feeding stuff’);

Feed business; Feed business operator; Retail;

Placing on the market; Risk analysis; Risk assessment;

Risk management; Risk communication; Traceability;

Stages of production, Processing and distribution;

Primary production



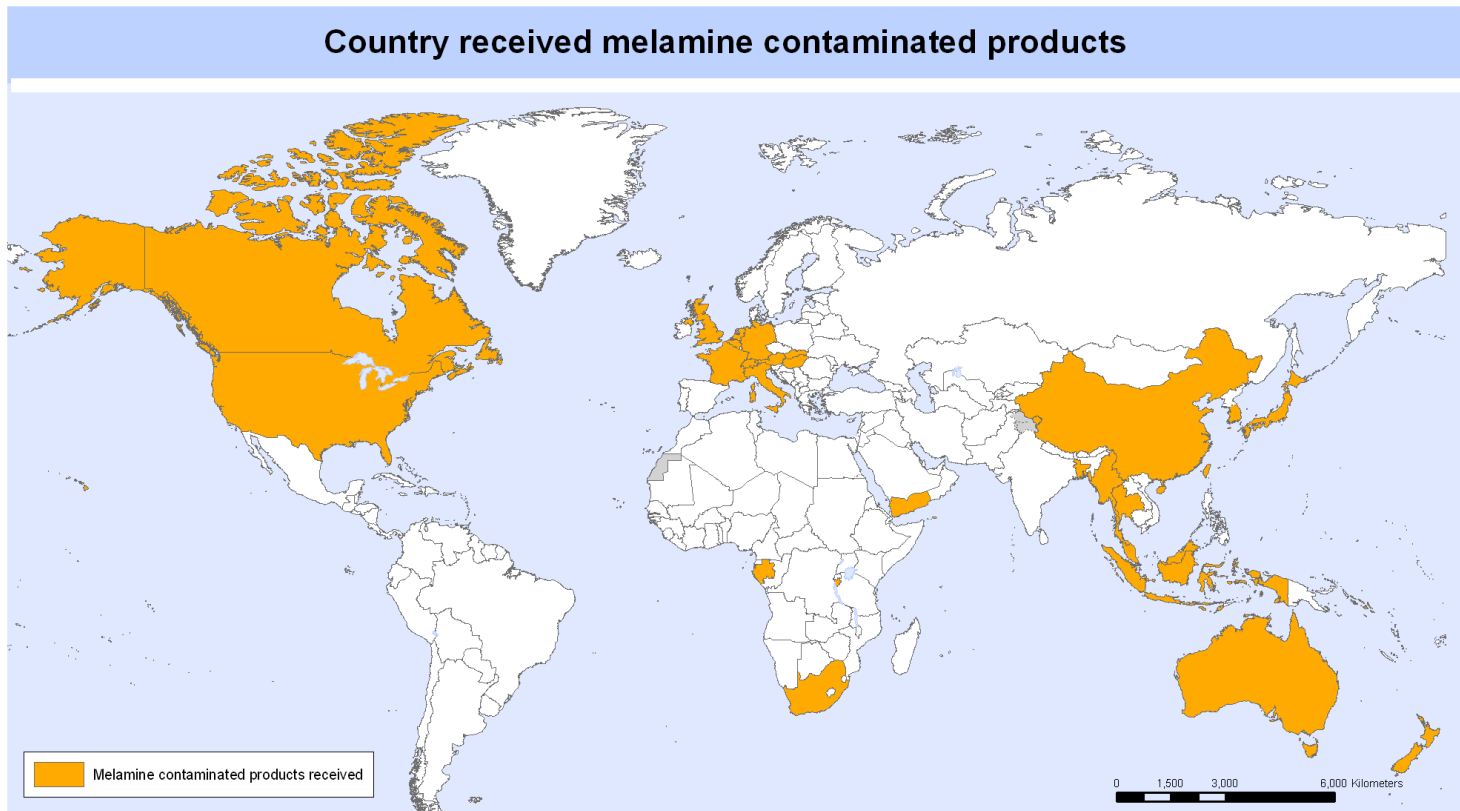
Food scares in Africa

Melamine Contamination of Infant Formula

- **Melamine added in the primary production sector (milk collection centres) to disguise diluting milk with water**
- **22 of 79 Chinese powdered infant formula producers affected**
- **Products from affected producers exported to several countries**
- **Levels detected range from <0.1 – 2600 mg/kg**
- **$> 29\ 4000$ ill $> 50\ 000$ hospitalized 6 deaths (WHO)**



Food scares in Africa cont..



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

Data Source: World Health Organization
Map Production: Public Health Information and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
World Health Organization



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Food scares in Africa cont..

- **Food-borne diseases are a serious threat to people in Africa, especially for those already weakened from devastating conditions such as malaria and HIV/AIDS**
- **“Many African countries do not have adequate food security, resulting in a situation where at least 60 percent of the food supply is **imported or donated** to supplement local production. Because there is not effective food safety regime in place in most countries of the region, the safety of imported food cannot always be assured, adding to the risk of widespread food contamination.**
- **2000 deaths estimated to occur every day in Africa from food and waterborne diseases. Improved food safety would help to reduce the 2 000 deaths estimated to occur every day in Africa from food and waterborne diseases (WHO – Africa region)**



Food scares in Africa cont..

- **Dr Chris Ngenda Mwikisa, Director of the Division of Healthy Environment and Sustainable Development at the WHO Regional Office for Africa, 2005. "Food and water transmit a variety of disease-causing agents which are at the origin of the high burden of diarrhea cases. In Africa, these are estimated at up to four **episodes per child per year**. Several devastating outbreaks of foodborne diseases such as cholera, salmonellosis, entero-haemorrhagic *Escherichia coli* (EHEC), hepatitis A and acute aflatoxicosis have occurred in a number of African countries recently. Already this year (2005) 34 000 cases of cholera due to contaminated water and food have been reported in 30 countries with more than 1000 deaths. And we should remind that outbreaks are only the tip of the iceberg since many more sporadic cases go unrecorded."**

(Regional Conference on Food Safety for Africa held in Harare, Zimbabwe, October 2005)



Food scares in Africa cont..

- ❑ **The 2004 outbreak of acute aflatoxicosis in Kenya was one of the most severe episodes of human aflatoxin poisoning in history with a total of 317 cases reported by 20 July 2004, with a case fatality rate of 39%**
- ❑ **Chronic aflatoxicosis manifested as Liver cancer incidence per 100,000 in Kenya and Mali, 2006**

Nation	Male	Female
Kenya	8.5	4.9
Mali	19.4	8.8



Food scares in Africa cont..

Year	Place	No. of Cases	Disease/contamination	Food
1991	Tanzania	10	Datura Stramonium– Jimson weed	Stiff porridge (Ugali) from millet
1992	Mozambique	772	Haemorrhagic colitis	Cooked food at market
1992	Swaziland	40, 912	<i>E. coli</i> 0157	Beef; untreated water
1993	Madagascar	188	carchatoxin (Liposoluble toxins)	Eating the meat from a single shark (<i>Carcharhinus leucas</i>)
1994	Ethiopia	79	<i>Salmonella newport</i>	Unpeeled undercooked eggs
1996	Central African Republic	108	<i>Enterohaemorrhagic Escherichia coli</i>	
1998	Burkina Faso	29	Fatal encephalopathy	Unripe ackee fruits
2001	South Africa	578	<i>Shigella flexneri</i>	Maize meal
2002	South Africa	2 deaths	Type A Botulinum	Tinned fish int omato sauce
2004	Kenya	More than 400 cases	Acute Aflatoxicosis	Maize -meal

Source: AFRO Food Safety Newsletter Issue No 1. December 2004 World Health Organization Food Safety Unit (FOS)December 2004.



Food scares in Africa cont..

- ❑ *Hartwig de Haen, FAO Assistant Director-General, 2005* said: **“Building an effective food safety and quality regime throughout Africa** has become an urgent necessity in order to save lives and create economic opportunity across the continent. The failure of many African produced food products to meet international food-safety and quality standards hampers the continent’s efforts to increase agricultural trade both intra-regionally and internationally, locking many farmers out of a chance to improve their economic well being. **Establishing Pan-African food safety standards** will not only save lives and improve the health of African people, it will go a long way toward helping Africa join in international trade and raise African living standards, particularly in rural areas where most of the poor are subsisting.”



Legitimacy of an AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism

- ❑ **legitimacy is a pre-requisite for an effective functioning of any regional organization**
 - ❑ **Normative belief by an actor that a rule or institution ought to be obeyed**
 - ❑ **A regional organization perceived as legitimate creates a strong incentive for member states to comply with its norms**
 - ❑ **In most cases is self-imposed by its member states**
 - ❑ **Activities and decisions of a legitimate regional organization increasingly limits the national sovereignty of individual citizens by imposing obligations on their regulations**
 - ❑ **Legitimacy address both institutional (mandates), procedural and substantive (outcome of decision making procedures)**



Legitimacy of an AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism cont..

❑ Institutional legitimacy

- ❑ **The Constitutive Act of the African Union: adopted in 2000 at the Lome Summit (Togo), entered into force in 2001:**
 - ❑ **53 Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Organization of African Unity (OAU);**
 - ❑ **Article 2 – Establishment - The African Union is hereby established in accordance with the provisions of this Act;**
 - ❑ **Article 5 - Organs of the Union**
 - ❑ **1. (e) The Commission**
 - ❑ **Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA)**
 - ❑ **The African Union's Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU/IBAR)**
 - ❑ **(AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism – AU/FSMCM)**
 - ❑ **Inter- African Phytosanitary Council (AU/IAPSC)**
 - ❑ **2. Other organs that the Assembly may decide to establish.**
 - ❑ **Article 6 - The Assembly - 1. The Assembly shall be composed of Heads of States and Government or their duly accredited representatives. 2. The Assembly shall be the supreme organ of the Union.**



Legitimacy of an AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism cont..

□ Institutional legitimacy

- **Article 6 - The Assembly - 1. The Assembly shall be composed of Heads of States and Governments or their duly accredited representatives.**
 2. The Assembly shall be the supreme organ of the Union.

- **A meeting of AU and EU Heads of State and Government at the Lisbon Summit held on 9th December 2007 adopted a Joint Africa-EU Strategy including the need to strengthen capacities in the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) fields with the view to harmonizing SPS frameworks within Africa in the framework of the "Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) Programme. The programme has resulted to the elaboration of a reference document for the harmonization of food safety inspections and authorization of food establishments within Africa in line with the Codex principles.**

- **In April 2009, the African Union Commission (AUC) and the European Commission (EC) jointly organized a High Level Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, entitled: "Institutionalizing SPS in Africa: Promoting Regional Integration in Rules, Standards, Controls and Procedures". The aim of the Conference was to launch the EC-funded programme BTSF in Africa", which is one of the delivery tools of the Joint Africa-European Union Strategy and its first Action Plan 2008-2010.**



Legitimacy of an AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism cont..

- ❑ **Procedural legitimacy** – is the belief on the part of the member countries that the procedures for establishing decisions are defined in such a way that they ensure an outcome which is perceived as right (**WGG**)(See EFSA example but in Africa context)
- ❑ **Substantive legitimacy** – relates to the out come of the procedural legitimacy including norms, guidelines, recommendations (**WGG**)(see EFSA example but in Africa context)



Milestones/Stepping stones

- ❑ **AU Member States majority have or are in the process of developing food safety policies (South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, etc);**
- ❑ **AU Member States have or are in the process of developing food safety laws and requisite regulations**
- ❑ **RECs have developed SPS Protocols with requisite Food Safety measures**
 - **COMESA - Regulations on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures , 2009);**
 - **EAC - Final Draft of the Protocol on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures for the East African Community – 2009);**
 - **SADC - Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade, 2008);**
 - **West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) («Règlement N°7/2007/CM/UEMOA Relatif à la Sécurité Sanitaire des Végétaux, des Animaux et des Aliments dans l'UEMOA»);**
 - **ECOWAS - Regulation C/REG...06/09 on the Harmonization of the Structural Framework and Operational Rules Pertaining to the Health Safety of Plant, Animals and Foods in the ECOWAS Region);**

AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism
Milestones/Stepping stones cont..



- **Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) an SPS framework in the pipe line.**
- **Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) SPS policy framework will be developed after the adoption of the region's free trade zone**
- **The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) intends to develop common phytosanitary regulations for the region**
- **West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) - in 2007, WAEMU adopted an SPS Regulation ("Règlement") relating to food safety and the protection of animal and plant life and health.²⁰**



Objectives

- ❑ **The principal/overall objectives of AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism would be :**
 - ❑ **Protecting public health by reducing the risk of foodborne illness and taking into account relevant animal and plant health issues; and the environment**
 - ❑ **Protecting consumers from unsanitary, unwholesome, mislabelled or adulterated food; and**
 - ❑ **Contributing to economic development by maintaining consumer confidence in the food system and providing a sound regulatory foundation for trade in food.**



Functioning of AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism

- ❑ **Consideration of the peculiar social, economic, political and scientific situations for Africa:**
 - ❑ **Political instability,**
 - ❑ **Food insecurity,**
 - ❑ **Food borne diseases, Communicable diseases,**
 - ❑ **Drought, floods and other natural disasters**
 - ❑ **Varying and inadequate or absence of national food safety legislative frameworks:**
 - ❑ **Food safety policies**
 - ❑ **Basic food safety laws**
 - ❑ **Multitude of enforcement agencies**
 - ❑ **Lack of credible crisis management system at individual member states, RECs or AU levels**



Functioning of AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism cont.

- ❑ **Consideration of the peculiar social, economic, political and scientific situations for Africa cont.:**
 - ❑ challenge to most African countries to meeting the need for competent, timely and independent risk assessments
 - ❑ lack of expertise and difficulty in collecting own toxicological and exposure assessment data to conduct risk assessments.
 - ❑ low food inspectors professionalism which is not commensurate with their responsibilities,
 - ❑ lack of logistical support to carry out the inspections (transport, inspection equipment, etc.)
 - ❑ cumulative tasks often requested from food inspectors (price control, inspection of non-food consumer items, weights and measures, environmental hygiene, etc.).



Functioning of AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism cont.

- ❑ **Consideration of the peculiar social, economic, political and scientific situations for Africa cont.:**
 - ❑ the problem that national food inspection services are often located in the capitals and major cities, with little if any control exercised in small towns and rural areas.
 - ❑ few countries of the region have efficient national import/export inspection and certification systems.
 - ❑ majority of public health laboratories not having the capacity to test for chemical contaminants and naturally occurring toxins .
Some identified causes of this weakness include:
 - ❑ Inadequate resources in terms of funding, equipment and personnel;
 - ❑ Lack of recurrent expenditure to enable the repair of equipment and to maintain adequate supplies of chemicals and materials needed for analyses; and
 - ❑ Inadequate quality assurance procedures.



Functioning of AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism cont.

❑ Consideration of the peculiar social economic, political and scientific situations for Africa cont.:

- ❑ a few of the testing laboratories in Africa are accredited for specific tests in accordance with the quality, administrative and technical requirements of ISO 17025 as such competence in terms of equipment and operator skills, as well as reliability of results may not be satisfactory.
- ❑ lack of developed inter-laboratory testing programmes, joint training programmes or even sub-regional laboratories that could serve the needs of multiple countries.
- ❑ Low capability of the food industry to supply safe food as food production, processing, and marketing in most countries in the region is by a large number of small producers and handlers who lack appropriate knowledge and expertise in the application of modern practices and food hygiene.
- ❑ structured and regular acquisition and dissemination of relevant information to the public on food safety problems and corresponding measures taken to resolve them is lacking in most countries
- ❑ lack of established on-going educational programmes for government food control officials, food industry officials and/or consumers.



Functioning of AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism cont.

- ❑ **Consideration of worldwide food safety challenges :**
 - ❑ **Increasing burden of foodborne illness and new and re-emerging foodborne hazards;**
 - ❑ **Rapidly changing technologies in food production, processing and marketing;**
 - ❑ **Developing science-based food control systems with a focus on consumer protection;**
 - ❑ **International food trade and need for harmonization of food safety and quality standards;**
 - ❑ **international trade in high-value and value-added food products**
 - ❑ **Changes in lifestyles, including rapid urbanization; and**
 - ❑ **Growing consumer awareness of food safety and quality issues and increasing demand for better information.**



Functioning of AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism cont..

- Consideration of specific concerns about food hazards including :**
 - Microbiological hazards;**
 - Pesticide residues;**
 - veterinary drugs residues and growth promoting hormones used in the production of animals;**
 - Misuse of food additives;**
 - Chemical contaminants, including biological toxins;**
 - Adulteration;**
 - Allergens; and**
 - Genetically modified organisms.**



Functioning of AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism cont..

- ❑ *THE WGs ARE TO COME UP WITH OPERATIONAL MODALITIES OF AN AU FOOD SAFETY AU FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT COORDINATION MECHANISM TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CONSIDERATIONS ENUMERATED ABOVE. THE EXAMPLES FROM THE RECs AND MEMBER STATES REPRESENTED IN THIS WORKSHOP EXTENDED TO CONTINENTAL LEVEL, EXPERIENCES FROM WHO, FAO, WHO AND THAT OF EFSA CAN BE USED BUT IN THE AU CONTEXT*



Organization of AU Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism

- ❑ **Consideration has to be taken of the peculiar social, economic, political and scientific situations for Africa;**
- ❑ **Availability of resources at different levels**
 - ❑ **Human**
 - ❑ **Financial/Budgetary**
 - ❑ **Infrastructure**
- ❑ *THE WGs ARE TO COME UP WITH PROPOSAL FOR ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF THE AU FOOD SAFETY AU FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT COORDINATION MECHANISM TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CONSIDERATIONS ENUMERATED ABOVE. THE EXAMPLES FROM THE RECs AND MEMBER STATES REPRESENTED IN THIS WORKSHOP EXTENDED TO CONTINENTAL LEVEL, EXPERIENCES FROM WHO, FAO, WHO AND THAT OF EFSA CAN BE USED BUT IN THE AU CONTEXT*



THREE WGs TO:

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- ❑ THE WGs ARE TO COME UP WITH PROPOSAL FOR ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF THE AU FOOD SAFETY AU FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT COORDINATION MECHANISM TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CONSIDERATIONS ENUMERATED ABOVE. THE EXAMPLES FROM THE RECs AND MEMBER STATES REPRESENTED IN THIS WORKSHOP EXTENDED TO CONTINENTAL LEVEL, EXPERIENCES FROM WHO, FAO(CANADA), WHO AND THAT OF EFSA CAN BE USED BUT IN THE AU CONTEXT
- ❑ SPECIFIC AREAS FOR EXTERNAL (EU) SUPPORT UNDER THE JOINT AU-EU JOINT STRATEGY
- ❑ SEE PROGRAMME



Thank you



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