

Undertaking a Food Safety Needs Assessment in China

Context

Capacity-building needs assessments are an essential first step in addressing a country's specific needs.

This assessment will help to identify the specific needs, document baseline food safety capacity across the system, and identify and harness the interest of local stakeholders and external partners.

A significant operation is now being undertaken in China that builds on the operational experience in Zambia. The Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP) and The World Bank Group are working in partnership with the China Food and Drug Administration (CFDA), other Chinese government agencies, key international organizations, and the food production and retail sector to define and implement a multi-sector food safety capacity building action plan. This will be based on a needs assessment that is being undertaken in selected provinces. The achievement in establishing this activity with agreement from a wide range of stakeholders has been significant.



Strategy

Building on Existing Resources in Partnership Approach

The GFSP has played a key role in bringing together a diverse group of players in China and internationally, from the public and private sectors. The World Bank Group, including the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the GFSP, conducted a mission to China in March 2014, with the goals of directing energy and investment into the needs of the Chinese food safety system. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

and the World Health Organization (WHO) were active partners in these discussions. This partnership will help to avoid duplication of effort, more effectively addressing the many food safety needs in China.

Results

Capacity Building Responding to Identified Needs

The effort to address food safety in China is a complex and ambitious undertaking that offers an excellent opportunity for public-private collaboration. As a result of the activity to date, preliminary agreement has been reached with Chinese Government counterparts on the process whereby China's needs for food safety capacity building and a related action plan will be developed. Once plans are finalized, a major food safety capacity building initiative involving the GFSP and many other partners is expected to commence. There will be significant value added from the GFSP focusing on whole of value chains for at least two major commodities and with a view to assist China to move to a risk-based food safety system.

Mapping of resources and programs, undertaken in conjunction with Food Industry Asia, has been completed as a first step. Several other external partners are actively engaged in starting cooperation programs. For example, the Grocery Manufacturer Association Science and Education Foundation has initiated a SME food supplier food safety training program in cooperation with GFSP and others. In addition, the GFSP, through a range of partners in its Laboratory Capacity Building Expert Group, will undertake a hands-on Laboratory Training Pilot commencing end 2014 through 2015.