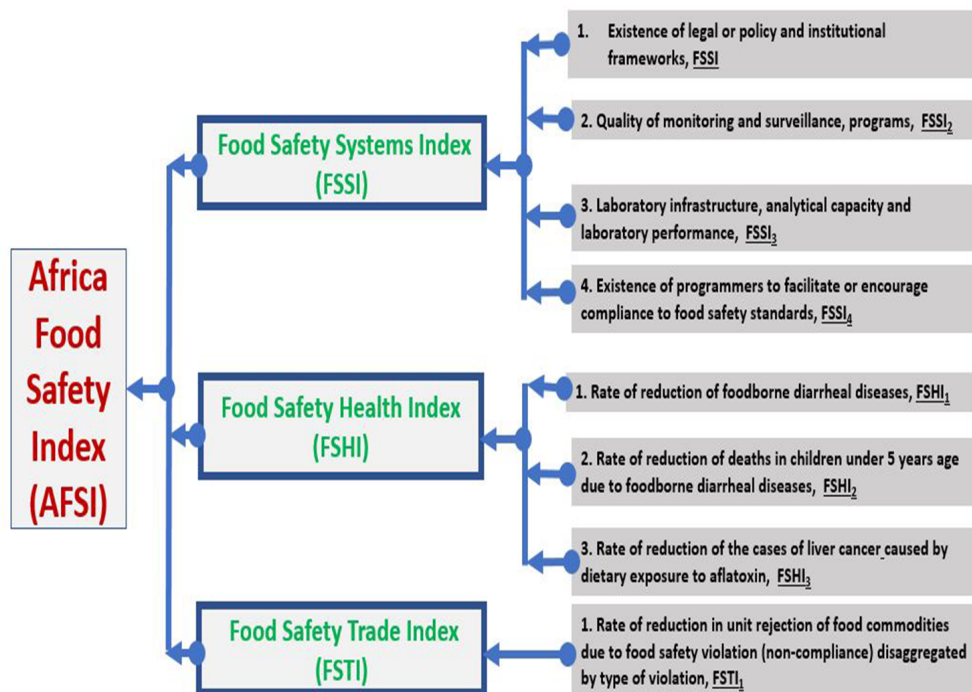


What is measured to capture the complexity of food safety?



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: PACA Secretariat
 Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, AU Commission
 Email: paca@africa-union.org
foodsafety@africa-union.org

AFRICA FOOD SAFETY INDEX - AFSI (Tracking food safety towards systematic improvements)



«Food Safety- a Shared Responsibility»

AFSI has been developed with technical collaboration of International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and with the financial assistance of CTA within the framework of the project entitled Building Capacity for Institutionalizing Food Safety Tracking in the African Union Member States. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and can therefore in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of CTA.

AFRICA FOOD SAFETY INDEX (AFSI):

Food safety— benefits everybody and every sector

Food safety is a complex and cross cutting subject. There is no silver bullet nor single actor that can comprehensively address the problem of unsafe food effectively. It is the responsibility of every African to address food safety on the continent along the food value chain, starting from producers (farmers) all the way up to the consumers. Unsafe food threatens human health and maintains unacceptable status quo of food insecurity, poverty and a range of health-related problems, making national development and lasting peace more challenging.

✓ Health:

Contaminated foods cause harmful health impacts and disproportionately affect children and other vulnerable groups (young, old, pregnant, malnourished and immune suppressed). The burden of unsafe foods is most felt in Africa where, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), 91 million people fall ill each year due to food-borne diseases and 137,000 die of the same cause, representing one-third of the global death toll for foodborne diseases.

✓ Trade and Economy:

In 2010 alone, illness and premature death due to foodborne diseases caused productivity losses of US\$95 billion a year in developing countries, mostly in Africa and Asia. Moreover, food safety has become an important precondition for access to global food markets and increasingly, for high-value domestic markets in developing countries. Currently, Africa loses 670 million US Dollars annually in lost export trade due to aflatoxin contamination alone.

✓ Food Security and Nutrition:

Unsafe food not only poses significant threats to the health of the population, but also to the food security and nutrition of Africans. Unsafe food thwarts food security and creates a vicious cycle of disease and malnutrition, undermining national development.

Therefore, to register gains in health, food and nutrition security as well as trade in agricultural commodities, food safety needs to be adequately addressed.



Africa Food Safety Index (AFSI) Embedded in AU Biennial Review (BR)

AFSI is tracked through the Biennial Review (BR) process that involves the tracking, monitoring and reporting on the implementation progress in achieving the provisions of the African Union Malabo Declaration on Agricultural Transformation.

The BR report fosters alignment, harmonization and coordination among multi-sectoral efforts and multi-institutional platforms for Member States to deliver on targets set in the Malabo declaration. The inclusion of the AFSI in the BR mechanism provides a platform to effectively track progress made in achieving food safety on the continent for the attainment of the Malabo Declaration, while promoting peer review, mutual learning and mutual accountability. The scores in the BR report provide positive peer pressure which has proven to be a powerful tool to motivate increased performance of each AU Member State.

Expected Outcomes of Tracking Food Safety in Africa

By tracking food safety through the BR, African governments will consistently report on food safety. Food safety tracking and country level efforts to meet food safety benchmarks through the BR mechanism are expected to have a domino effect on:

- Prioritization of food safety, thus increased investments and effort in addressing food safety on the continent,
- Systemic improvements in food safety management leading to enhanced food security and nutrition, and
- Reduced burden of foodborne illnesses and enhanced access to markets.

Components of the Africa Food Safety Index (AFSI)

AFSI is comprised of 3 composite indicators, namely:

- Food Safety Systems Indicator (FSSI),
- Food Safety Health Indicator (FSHI), and
- Food Safety Trade Indicator (FSTI).

The FSSI is an input indicator which, if addressed, will result in improvements in the two outcome indicators on health and trade (FSHI and FSTI).

