



**REPORT
SURVEY ON FOOD SAFETY INSPECTION AND CONTROL
PROGRAMS**

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CONTENT

CONTENT	2
ABBREVIATION	4
1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
2 Survey of Food Safety Inspection and Control	7
2.1 Background and survey requirements	7
2.2 Survey requirements and approaches	10
2.2.1 Scientific and systematic aspects	10
2.2.2 FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment tool (FCSA)	10
2.3 Design of questionnaires	10
2.3.1 Survey objectives	10
2.3.2 Respondents and survey method	11
2.3.3 Structure of the questionnaire.....	12
2.3.4 Assessment of responses	12
3 Survey Results	14
3.1 General Information	14
3.2 System capacity information analysis	15
3.2.1 Legal basis, infrastructure and financial resources	15
3.2.2 Human Resources.....	17
3.2.3	17
3.2.3 Coordination and relationship between relevant parties.....	18
3.2.4 Scientific basis and food safety inspection and control activities.....	20
3.2.5 Handling emergencies.....	24
3.2.6 Quality management, continuous improvement.....	26
3.3 Responses and suggestions for improving and enhancing the effectiveness of the food control system.....	29
4 Recommendations	30
4.1 Policy and legal framework on food safety	30
4.2 Ensuring the quality of food safety inspection and control activities	33
4.3 Coordination and interaction of relevant parties.....	34
4.4 Improve and enhance the capacity of the food safety inspection and control system.....	36
5 Annexes	38
5.1 Annex 1. Food Poisoning Situation.....	38
5.2 Annex 2. FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment tool (FCSA)	42



5.2.1	Structure of FAO/WHO FCSA Tool.....	42
5.2.2	Assessment criteria in FAO/WHO FCSA Tool	44
5.3	Annex 3. Statistics of survey participants.....	45
5.4	Annex 4. Recommendations to improve efficiency of FS inspection and control (question 117)	53
5.5	Annex 5 Description of Questionnaires.....	60

ABBREVIATION

AC	Assessment Criteria
CA	Competent Authority
CEA	Canadian Executing Agency
CFIA	Canadian Food Inspection Agency
DAH	Department of Animal Health
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DCP	Department of Crop Production
DLP	Department of Livestock Production
DOH	Department of Health
DoIT	Department of Industry and Trade
EBS	Event-based Surveillance
FBD	Foodborne Disease
FBO	Food Business Operator
FCSA	FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment tool
FD	Fishery Department
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FS	Food Safety
FSD	Food Safety Department
FSMA	Food Safety Management Agency
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
IBS	Indicator-based Surveillance
ICD	International Cooperation Department
LAB	Laboratory on food safety analysis
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOIT	Ministry of Industry and Trade
MOST	Ministry of Science and Technology
NAFIQPM	The National Authority for Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality, Processing and Market Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PPD	Plant Protection Department
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
VFA	Vietnam Food Administration
WHO	World Health Organization
WOAH	World Animal Health Organization

The components of a robust national food control system include a strong policy and regulatory framework, standards and guidelines aligned with those of the Codex Alimentarius and the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) where relevant, adequate resources to support the programs, shared responsibility, coordination and communication amongst all stakeholders, effective risk-based operational management of food controls along the entire food chain and feed chain, scientific capacity to conduct risk assessment, including laboratory capability, data and information collection/generation to support risk-based control measures, food safety emergency response plans, international connectivity and collaboration, food safety communications and education, including staff competence and training and performance monitoring for periodic review and continuous improvement. Food safety (FS) inspection and control is an important activity in a food control system and one which is always prioritized for early detection, prevention and effective handling of related food safety incidents, including food-borne diseases (FBD) and food poisoning. These incidents are an unfortunate outcome of a breakdown in the food control system.

Viet Nam issued the Law on FS and a series of supporting legal documents to guide implementation and control the FS assurance as well as the system of agencies involved in FS inspection and control in the areas of Agriculture and Rural Development, Health, Industry and Trade, with relatively clear decentralization from the central to local government levels. The survey conducted under SAFEGRO project in 2022/2023 demonstrated that the assurance of FS, and handling of FS incident as well as food poisoning are paid great attention by the society and are also prioritized by the Government for the funding for annual FS inspection and control programs, especially at important events. However, data from official reports show that food poisoning and FBDs due to different causes are still found with considerable levels and victim number while FS programs are still implemented as planned. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the nature of the activities, assess the causes and gaps related to the implemented FS inspection and control programs.

The policy consultant team in SAFEGRO project formulated a set of questionnaires based on criteria for evaluating capacity, efficiency and effectiveness of FS control in the FAO / WHO Food Control System Assessment Tool (FCSA)⁽¹⁾ in order to review systematically and scientifically the elements related to management and implementation of the FS inspection and control programs in Vietnam. This review considered the scientific aspect, completeness, effectiveness, capacity, resources, relations between provincial/central-run city competent authorities (CA) and related partners, and also the possibility for continuous improvement and development of these CAs.

A total of 177 responses were received from professional staff of different positions in different CAs at provincial level and central level in all three sectors (agriculture and rural development, trade and industry, and health). The number of responses and their origins demonstrated the diversity of the CAs involved in implementing FS inspection and control programs and assisting in the analysis of food control capacity in comparison with the assessment

⁽¹⁾ FAO/WHO 2019, Food control system assessment tool: Introduction and Glossary, Rome, ISBN 978-92-5-131630-6

criteria indicated in the FAO/WHO FCSA tool. The responses provided viewpoints of the CAs and sectors on technical specifications, methods to inspect and control FS, handle incidents, relations and roles of related parties involved in the process, as well as the impact on effectiveness of the programs. The consultant team received comments on specific inspection and control components of interest, measures to implement, roles of the CAs and suggested recommendations for improving efficiency and effectiveness of the FS inspection and control programs in Vietnam.

The processing and gathering of evidence-based information related to the FS inspection and control programs and capacity of the CAs from viewpoints of different sectors at different levels have assisted the consultant team in SAFEGRO confirm the gaps in the system to be dealt with, capacity to be enhanced, and other related issues to submit to the relevant CAs for consideration and decision on important policies in order to enhance management efficiency of the legal system on FS, build capacity of FS management agencies effectively and with uniform coordination, formulate ways to design FS inspection and control programs consistently nationwide, effectively control the safe food supply chain, and formulate and implement the self-assessment of the FS management system quality, thereby improving the capacity of the CAs to coordinate policies, procedures and programming on food safety at national and sub-national levels and improving food safety control capacity of the central and provincial governments to support a risk-based food safety management system for the domestic food supply as well as the integration of Vietnamese food into the global market.

2 Survey of Food Safety Inspection and Control

2.1 Background and survey requirements

People now demand not only sufficient and nutritious food but also safe food. Safe food has become a global demand which has a profound effect on international integration and has a considerable impact on the economic life of producers in the food chains, especially farmers.

To ensure food safety, all actors in the food supply chains, from production, processing to trading and even food consumers need to follow the relevant regulations and technical requirements of particular groups of food products. As numerous actors are involved in a food chain, any mistake in the chain can lead to serious public health consequences due to unsafe food, food poisoning or foodborne diseases (FBD). Therefore, the role of those involved in controlling, supervising and inspecting FS is also very important through the implementation of FS inspection and control programs at different scales, from the local to Central level.

There have been many reports, public releases, records and statistics on the FS situation including complaints from consumers, which demonstrate that FS issues remain a concern for all countries. Every year, food poisoning and FBD incidents still take place. Contaminated food can be found anywhere in the food chains, from farming, production, processing, storage, transportation and use of food, including improper use. Food poisoning or FBD may also result from improper use of naturally occurring animals and plants that are not intended for food and should only be used with sufficient guidance and control by professionals.

Based on the information from some documents like the 2015 WHO Report⁽²⁾, the estimates of the global burden of FBDs demonstrates that FBDs result from 31 foodborne agents (bacteria, viruses, parasites, toxins and chemicals) at global and sub-regional scales. The report emphasizes that more than 600 million FBD cases and 420,000 deaths may be recorded each year. According to a report by Vietnam Food Administration - Ministry of Health, 1,789 outbreaks, 58,949 affected people with 414 deaths were recorded in 2006-2015⁽³⁾; 1,441 outbreaks, 40,995 affected people, 240 deaths from food poisoning or FBDs were recorded in 2012-2021⁽⁴⁾. The Ministry of Health reveals that only 45 poisoning cases with 605 affected and 21 deaths were recorded in 2022, but 94 outbreaks with 1,225 hospitalized people and 20 deaths were recorded in the first 9 months of 2023⁽⁵⁾. In Korea, 3,380 outbreaks, 68,475 people affected by food poisoning or FBD were reported in 2013-2023⁽⁶⁾ (see *Annex 1*)

The reported data demonstrates that FS control remains a concern for all countries. Regardless of the level of maturity of their FS control systems, the risks of FS incidents and food poisoning can only be minimized and the damages mitigated. The FS incidents, food poisoning or FBDs can never be eliminated. The survey of the FS control programs is required to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of the FS control system, which is always a hot issue for society.

⁽²⁾ WHO Estimating the burden of foodborne diseases, 2015.

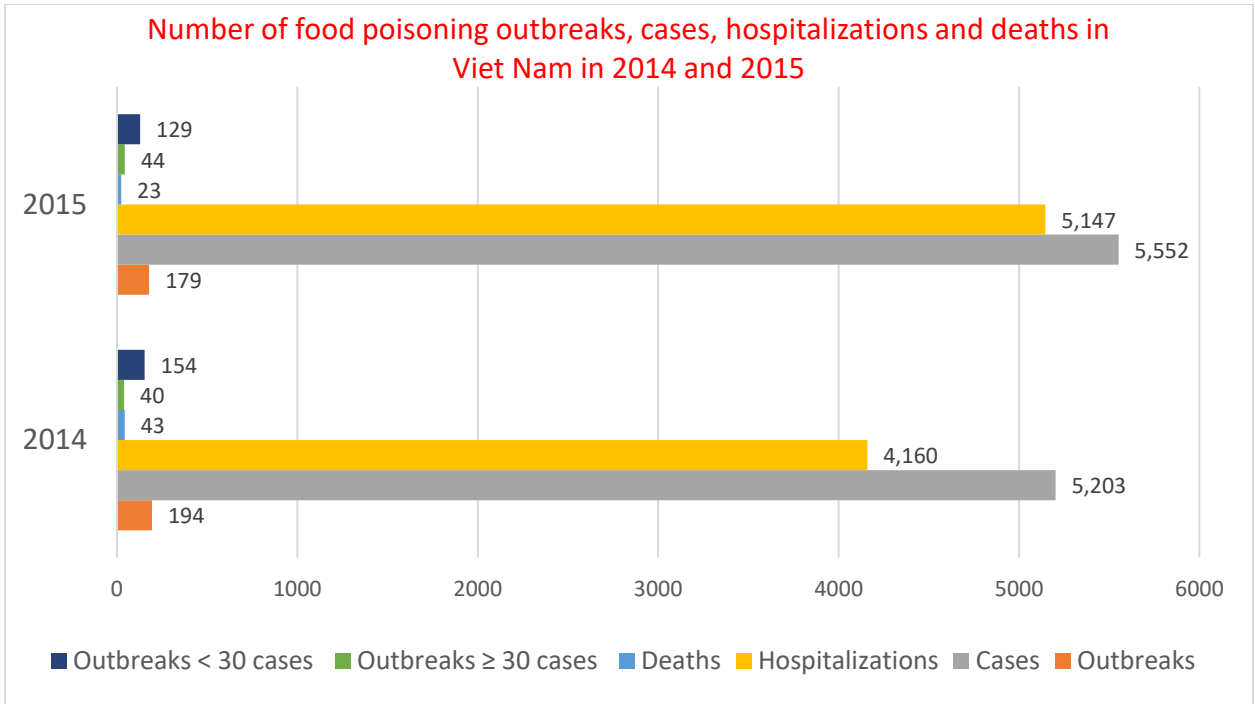
⁽³⁾ Food safety risk management in Vietnam: Challenges and opportunities, World Bank, 2017.

⁽⁴⁾ Food poisoning - Situation and management system in Viet Nam, *Trương Tuyết Mai*, 2022

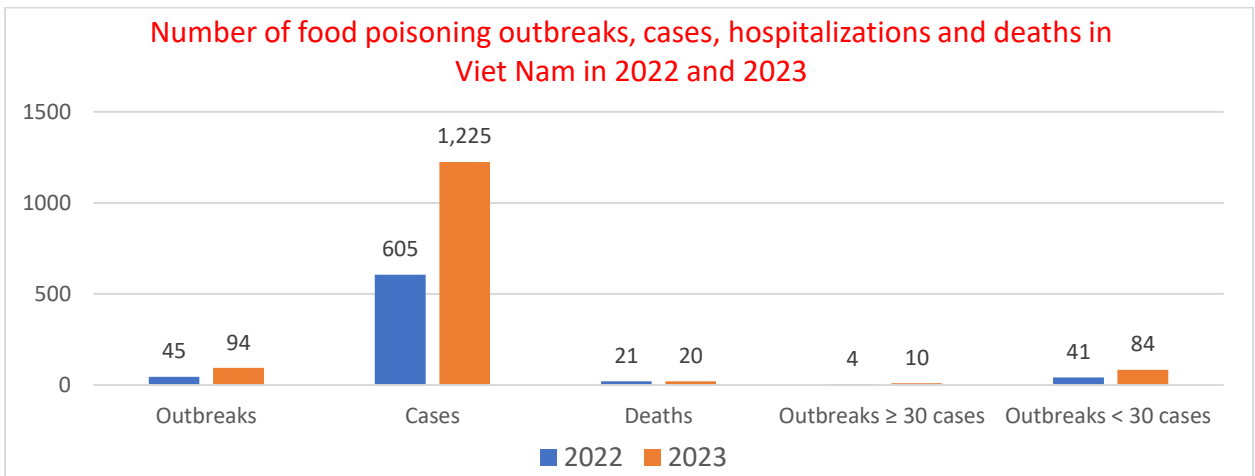
⁽⁵⁾ Report on food safety in the first 8 months of 2023, No.1357/BC-BYT, dated 19/10/2023, Ministry of Health.

⁽⁶⁾ Food poisoning statistics 2013-2023, Food Safety Information Institute, MFDS, Korea.

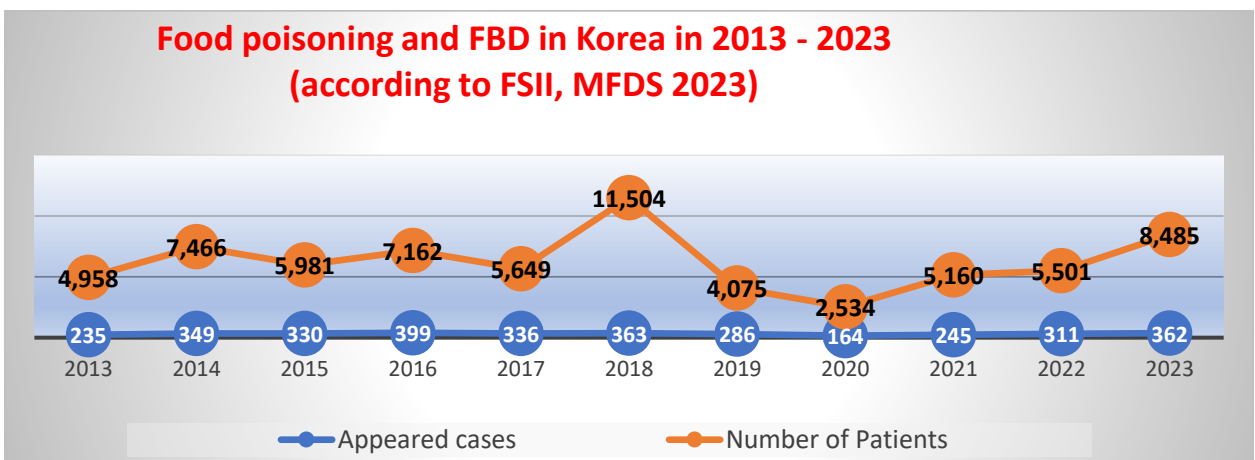
https://www.foodsafetykorea.go.kr/portal/healthyfoodlife/foodPoisoningStat.do?menu_no=3724&menu_grp=MENU_NEW02



(Source: VFA, 2016)



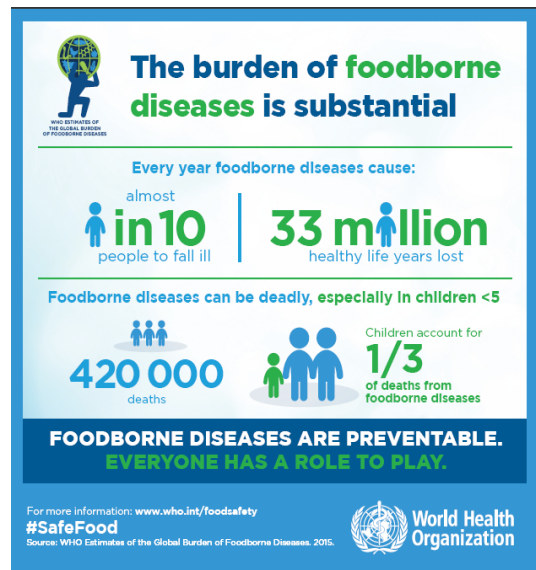
(Source: MOH, 2023)



(Source: FSII, MFDS 2023)



Social burdens resulting from food poisoning and FBD concentrate mainly in vulnerable groups such as old people and children (accounting for about 30% of foodborne deaths in children under 5 years of age) and are more frequently found in low and middle-income countries. The WHO estimates that about 33 million years of healthy life are lost globally every year due to eating unsafe food, and this figure may be underestimated. The WHO also thinks that FBDs are preventable, and it is actively working with international organizations with important role in organizing activities in diversified area, e.g. FAO, to provide countries with guidelines to develop and implement FS control systems which are strong, flexible and efficient at the national level, and, at the same time, provide consumers with tools to select safe food.



(WHO Estimating the burden of foodborne diseases, 2015.)

In Viet Nam, the Government and society pay great attention to FS assurance and effective handling of FS incidents. Legal documents have been systematically developed and continuously updated to be increasingly complete. A system of FS CAs in all sectors, including agriculture, industry, trade and health has been established to enforce the inspection and control for food safety. In 2022-2023, SAFEGRO Project collaborated with FS CAs in Viet Nam to conduct a survey on the handling of FS incidents in the country, based on some capacity assessment criteria indicated in the FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment Tools. The results of the survey on handling of FS incidents, food poisoning/FBDs in 2022-2023 demonstrated that one of the gaps affecting the handling of FS incidents is related to the efficiency and effectiveness of the FS inspection and control programs and the actors participating in these programs.

Component 1 of the SAFEGRO project on “Enabling Environment: Improved performance of national and sub-national governments in food safety regulation enforcement along the selected value chains in Vietnam to meet international standards” with an expected outcome of “improved capacity of relevant government agencies to coordinate policies, procedures and programming on FS control at the national and sub-national levels” continued to influence the design and implementation of the survey on FS inspection and control programs under Activity 1112.1⁽⁷⁾. The intention was to find gaps in operating the programs and propose comprehensive measures to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of CAs, manage and improve measures to prevent FS incidents, including food poisoning and FBDs, implement professional activities and enhance capacity of the system to meet relevant international standards, especially strengthen capacity of the national FS control system in Viet Nam in a comprehensive way, using the FAO / WHO FCSA (issued in November 2019) including the review of FS control and management system, and analysis of what needs to be added or improved. FAO and WHO have jointly designed

⁽⁷⁾ PROJECT DOCUMENT issued together with Decision 3145/QĐ-BNN-HTQT on 14/8/2020 by Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

a food control systems assessment tool to assist Member States in assessing the effectiveness of their food control systems regardless of the completeness of their systems. The FAO/WHO tool is described in more detail in Annex 2 (item 5.2). Through the development and application of the questionnaire (designed based on the FAO/WHO FCSA tool) the team was able to collect and assess the information related to system capacity and procedures, equipment, facilities and resources for operating the FS inspection and control programs of Vietnamese CAs in all areas related to the entire food chain.

2.2 Survey requirements and approaches

2.2.1 Scientific and systematic aspects

A farm-to-fork food supply chain is a system consisting of many related and interacting stages with the participation of numerous actors with different characteristics at these stages. Therefore, it is necessary to have programs and plans designed in a systematic and scientific way to thoroughly understand the characteristics and technical details of the actors in order to effectively implement food safety inspection and control.

There are tools available to evaluate the effectiveness of the FS inspection and control system, including traditional approaches such as activities of higher-level agencies to inspect and supervise the compliance with regulations at the lower-level management agencies which implement the FS control programs or the assessment and certification of the conformity assessment organizations to check the compliance with the referred standards when CAs implement the FS inspection and control programs. In general, ***the traditional approaches assess the implementation effectiveness through the assessment of the CAs and the process they apply to organize the implementation of the FS inspection programs.***

The team in Activity 1112.1 applied a ***new approach, based on a comprehensive assessment of the capacity of all components of the FS control system***, including inputs and resources, from the legal and policy framework to the financial infrastructure and resources provided for the CAs, ways to implement the FS inspection and control functions, from regular activities for food production, import and export to surveillance of the food supply chains, ways to handle and respond to FS incidents, maintain interaction with actors in the food supply chains and relevant domestic as well as international actors, as well as the use of science-based evidences to implement the tasks effectively and properly and improve continuously the inspection and control so that this task can always meet the increasing requirements of the community and deal with the ever-changing risks of the FS hazards that need to be controlled.

2.2.2 FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment tool (FCSA)

See Annex 2 (item 5.2.)

2.3 Design of questionnaires

2.3.1 Survey objectives

Based on the expected outputs of Activity 1112.1, the SAFEGRO project consultant team (1112.1.1) conducted a survey on handling FS incidents, food poisoning and FBDs in 2022-2023, using some FAO/WHO FCSA tool ACs appropriately selected for the survey objectives, and

reported the survey results and relevant recommendations with some gaps to be further studied in relation with other ACs in the FCSA tool.

Following Activity 1112.1.1, consultant team of Activity 1112.1.2 reviewed the actual FS management, referring to the current related regulations such as the FS Law and relevant Decrees and Circulars of all ministries/agencies to develop a set of survey questionnaires on FS inspection and control activities in order to collect information for assessment of the current status and performance of the CAs, to propose what should be improved, enhance the capacity of the CAs to meet international standards, raise the effectiveness and efficiency of the national FS inspection and control system. The questionnaires also addressed the assessment of communication, coordination and support between CAs, and the relationship between CAs and those involved in food quality and safety, including nominated, authorized or service laboratories for sample analysis, agencies authorized to carry out FS inspection and control, research institutes, academia involved in FS risk analysis and assessment, media, associations of food producers and businesses, and food chain participants (from production, distribution, storage, wholesale, retail to consumption). These correlations demonstrated the role and importance and help identify capacity and areas for improvement for CAs implementing FS inspection and control, the main actors for assessment in the FAO/WHO FCSA tool.

The application the FAO/WHO FCSA tool focuses on selecting relevant ACs from 4 main dimensions and sub-dimensions to help collect information and analyze the current status of the FS control program implementation CAs, through the responses to the questionnaires to self-reflect comprehensively the competencies of the current system, using the scientific approach, self-assess the limitations or incompleteness of the FS control system in a manner equivalent to the ACs of the FCSA tool, which has been elaborately developed, in accordance with the standards and rules of international organizations such as FAO, WHO, WOAHO/OIE, IPPC, CODEX...

Regarding the long-term objective after the SAFEGRO project, the set of questionnaires on the FS inspection and control programs can be further studied and scaled up, combined with some international standards on quality assessment of management systems to build a FS management system self-assessment tool that can be used for regular assessment of the work quality and also be used as basis to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the FS management system at all levels.

2.3.2 Respondents and survey method

Based on the scope of FAO/WHO FCSA tool and the objective of assessing the effectiveness of the FS inspection and control programs, the consultant team decided that the surveyed stakeholders are CAs with functions, tasks as assigned and decentralized to carry out FS inspection and control activities under all relevant ministries/agencies nationwide. The consultant team worked with SAFEGRO Project Office to draft a document to submit to the Deputy Head of the Project Steering Committee, who is NAFIQPM Director General, for consideration and approval before sending to the CAs to be surveyed, including:

- NAFIQPM and its subordinated units.
- Inspection units of MARD and DARDs.
- DARDs, provincial level Agro-Forestry-Fisheries Quality Assurance Sub-departments.
- VFA and provincial level FS Sub-departments.

- DOHs and FS inspection of DOHs.
- FS Management Boards of Bac Ninh province and Da Nang city; and FS Department of Ho Chi Minh city
- Science and Technology Departments of MOIT and DOITs.

As the surveyed stakeholders are diverse, from different fields, and under the management of different ministries/agencies, to ensure enough time and number of collected responses for a significant survey, the consultant team used the Google form for the survey, sending links to the interviewees and collecting responses on the internet. During the survey, the interviewees were provided with a contact telephone number for the team representative to ask any relevant questions in order to clarify technical content or other details, assisting the interviewees understand and answer the questions correctly.

The consultant team analyze and process the collected data; and study the interviewees' comments as well as documents related to the current situation to report the gaps in the FS management system and propose the issues for related CAs to consider and use in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the national FS control system.

2.3.3 Structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 6 parts:

- Part I. Brief introduction of the questionnaire, survey purpose, liability disclaimer, commitment to confidentiality.
- Part II. Abbreviations.
- Part III. Guidelines to answer
- Part IV. General information of surveyed stakeholders
- Part V. Survey content: 116 questions, including questions focusing on system capacity based on ACs in the FAO/WHO FCSA (see *Annex 5*)
 - A. LEGAL BASIS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF COMPETENT AUTHORITIES (11 questions)
 - B. HUMAN RESOURCES OF COMPETENT AUTHORITIES (14 questions)
 - C. INTERACTIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS (24 questions)
 - D. SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE BASE AND FS INSPECTION AND CONTROL (34 questions)
 - E. FS EMERGENCIES, FOOD-BORNE DISEASES AND FS INCIDENTS (13 questions)
 - F. QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT (20 questions)
- Part VI. Recommendations to improve efficiency and effectiveness of FS inspection and control.

2.3.4 Assessment of responses

For the technical aspects (Part V), each question was selected based on Assessment Criteria, AC Code in the System Competencies of the FAO/WHO FCSA tool.

The respondents collected information and replied based on self-assessed evidence related to each question for each surveyed AC and gave a corresponding answer rated for 3 levels:

- The system competencies meet the AC and have good performance. According to the FAO/WHO FCSA, this answer achieves a score of 3.
- The system competencies meet the AC but not fully or just partially or under the required effectiveness. According to the FAO/WHO FCSA, this answer achieves a score of 1.
- The system competencies do not meet the AC or have not been implemented. According to the FAO/WHO FCSA, this answer achieves a score of 0.
- All Acs must be fully answered.
- The comments in response to the open questions at the end of the questionnaire will be noted in the general report as consultative ideas and not scored.

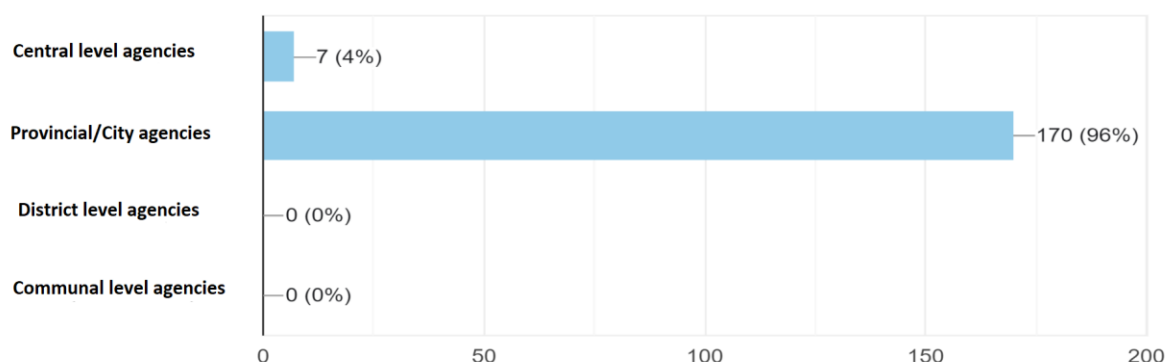
3 Survey Results

3.1 General Information

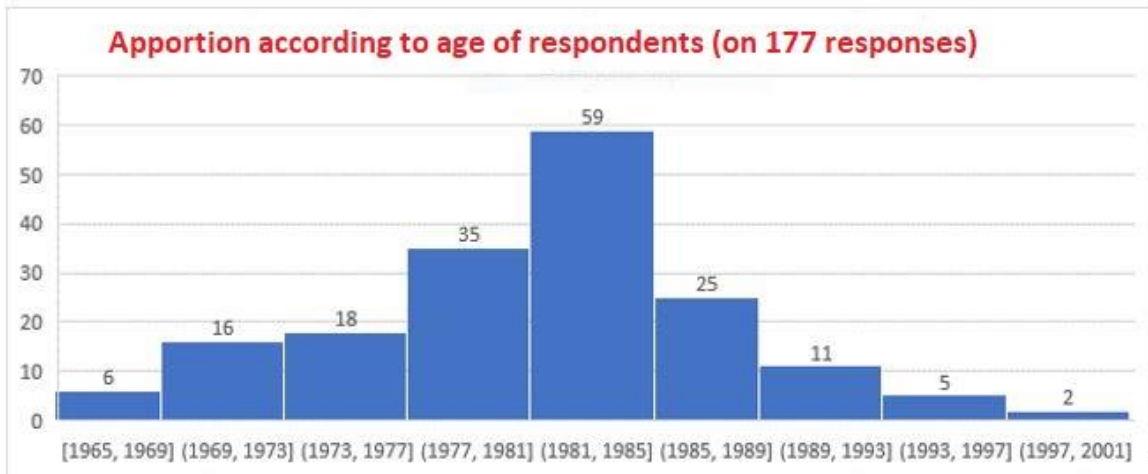
There were 177 responses from CAs in the sectors of Agriculture and Rural Development, Industry and Trade and Health. The focus was on CAs with the function of State management of food safety from central to local levels. There were 175 opinions from CAs, accounting for 98.8%, 1 from a public service unit (0.6%) and 1 from a Food Safety Testing Laboratory (0.6%). Regarding the hierarchy of units participating in the survey, there were 170 units at the local level (accounting for 96%) and 7 units at the central level (accounting for 4%). Therefore, the overall picture and results mainly reflect the capacity of CAs on food safety and mostly at the local level (Province/City) and met the objective set by the working group when conducting the survey.

Scope of decentralization

177 responses



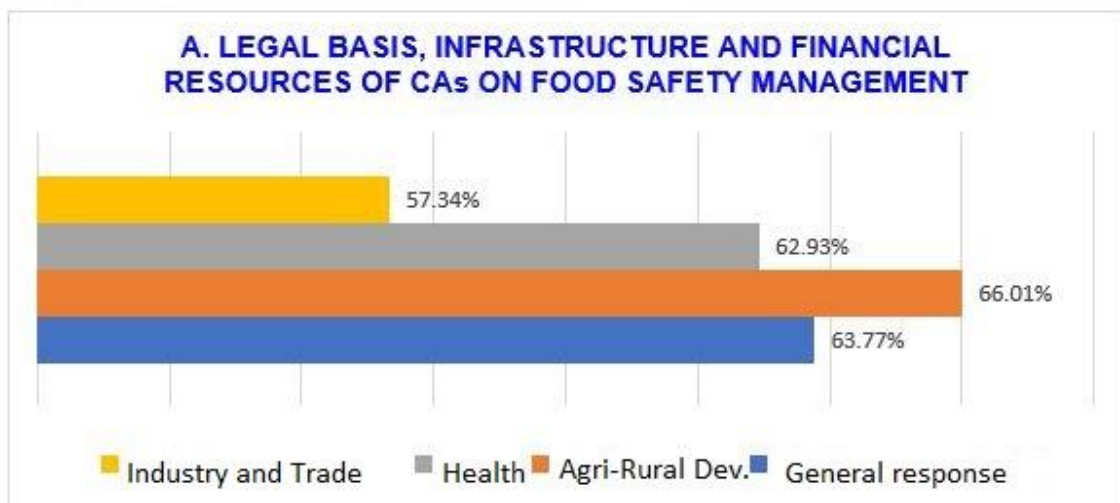
With respect to people assigned by the CAs to participate in the survey, the recorded ages included: from 47 - 59 years old (40 people, accounting for 22.6%); ages from 35 - 47 years old (119 people, accounting for 67.2%); and from 23 - 35 years old (18 people, accounting for 10.2%); Thus, most of the people assigned to participate in the survey were seasoned and experienced in food safety control. The positions of the survey participants at the level of Head/Deputy Department and Main Expert/Main Inspector were 59 people (accounting for 33.3%) with an average age of 46.2 years old, which is also a worthy criterion showing experience in food safety control of the system and the reliability of responses.



Statistics on survey participants according to sectors assigned to food safety management are recorded in Appendix 3

3.2 System capacity information analysis

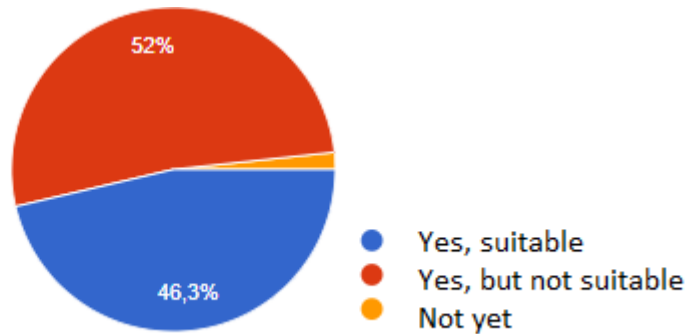
3.2.1 Legal basis, infrastructure and financial resources



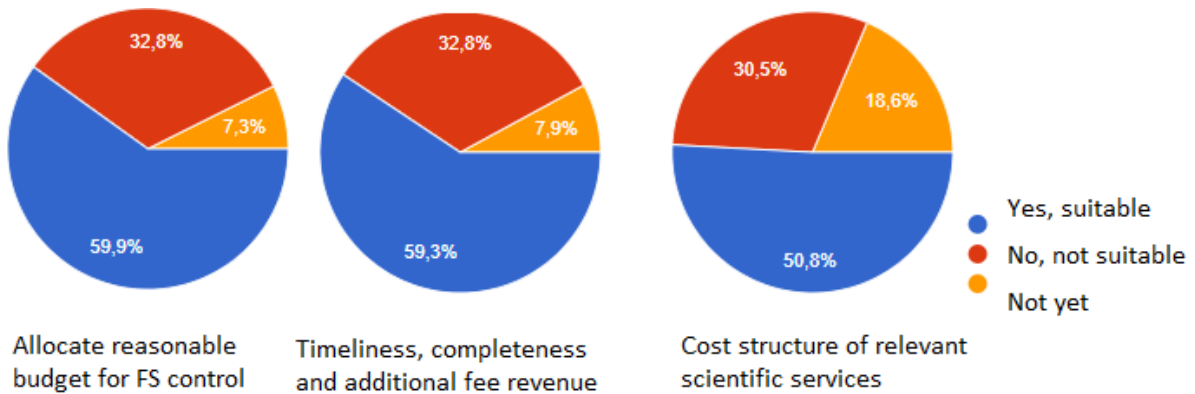
Regarding Vietnam's CAs on food safety, in general, most sectors have a good legal basis for food safety control activities and have relatively stable infrastructure and financial resources sufficient to serve their activities. The Agriculture and Rural Development sector and the Health sector have better infrastructure and financial resources, if compared to the Industry and Trade sector.

Regarding the legal basis underlying food safety inspection and control activities, the documents are quite complete in assigning and decentralizing food safety control to ensure authority and responsibility throughout the food chain and stipulating principles and procedures to implement a comprehensive food safety control process. However, in terms of rigor/closeness and coordination in food safety control in all steps of the food chain, it still does not meet expectations.

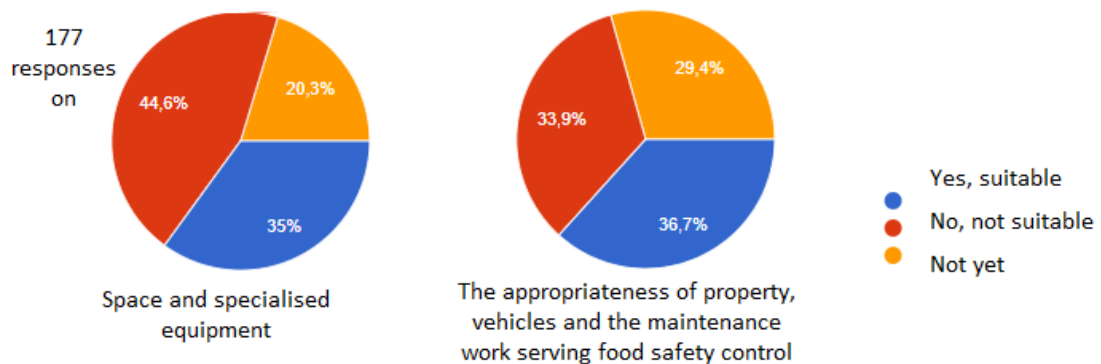
177 responses commenting on the closeness and coordination in food safety control applied to all steps in food chain



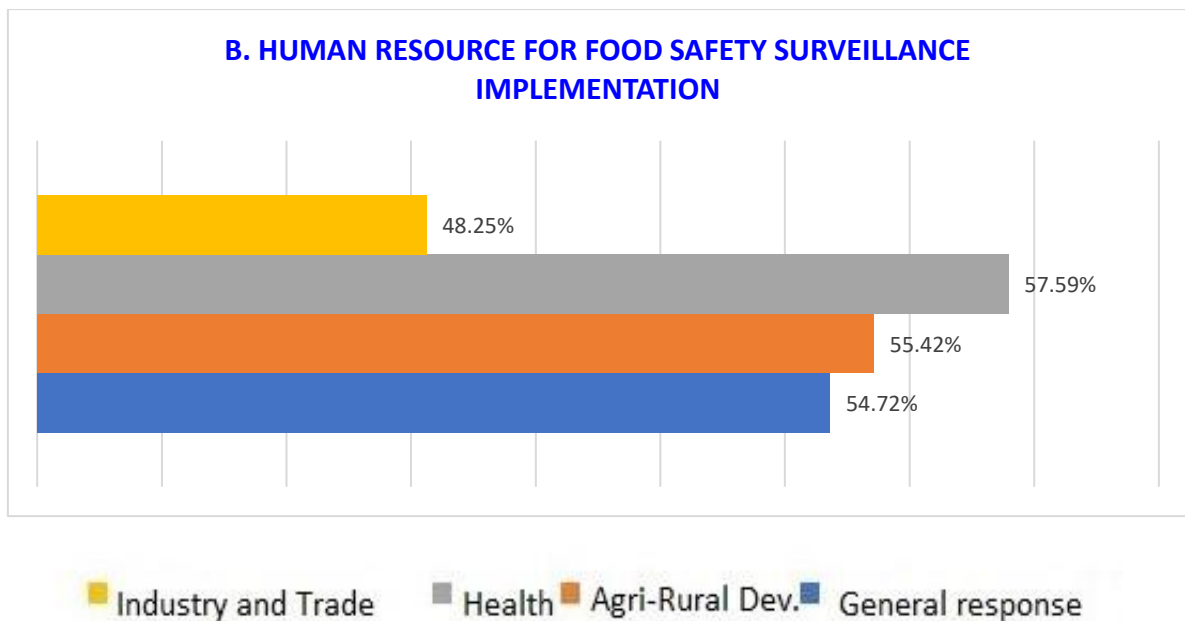
Regarding infrastructure and financial resources, budget allocation for food safety control is not effective and the timeliness is not guaranteed. For a few units budget is still not available. In particular, budget funding related to scientific services (e.g. laboratory or risk assessment) serving food safety control is still limited.



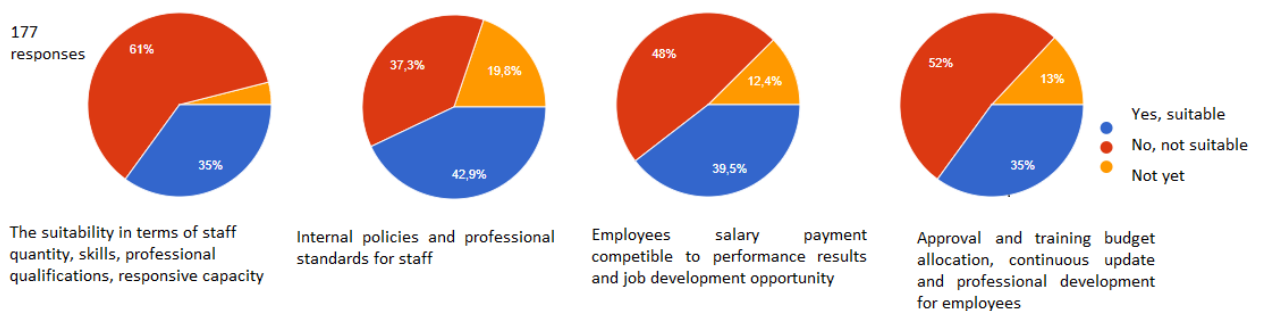
Regarding the working conditions of the food safety control authority, many opinions stated that the space and specialized equipment provided for positions conducting food safety control activities were inadequate, incomplete and ineffective. The budget provided for purchasing, renewing, repairing, maintaining the infrastructure and equipment serving food safety control was not being given sufficient attention or was ineffective.



3.2.2 Human Resources



Local authorities have invested in human resources for CAs with salaries and income assured for employees, however they remain inadequate in terms of quantity, skills, professional qualifications, and responsive capacity of staff performing food safety control and supervision. Many opinions stated that the salary was not completely commensurate with the tasks, and superiors have neither used the results of regular assessments of capacity and performance nor have measures to encourage the improvement of work efficiency associated with professional development promotion opportunities of food safety control workers, especially budget allocation for training, updating and continuous professional development in the field of food safety inspection and control. This may be due to internal policies and professional standards applied to employees that are not really effective.



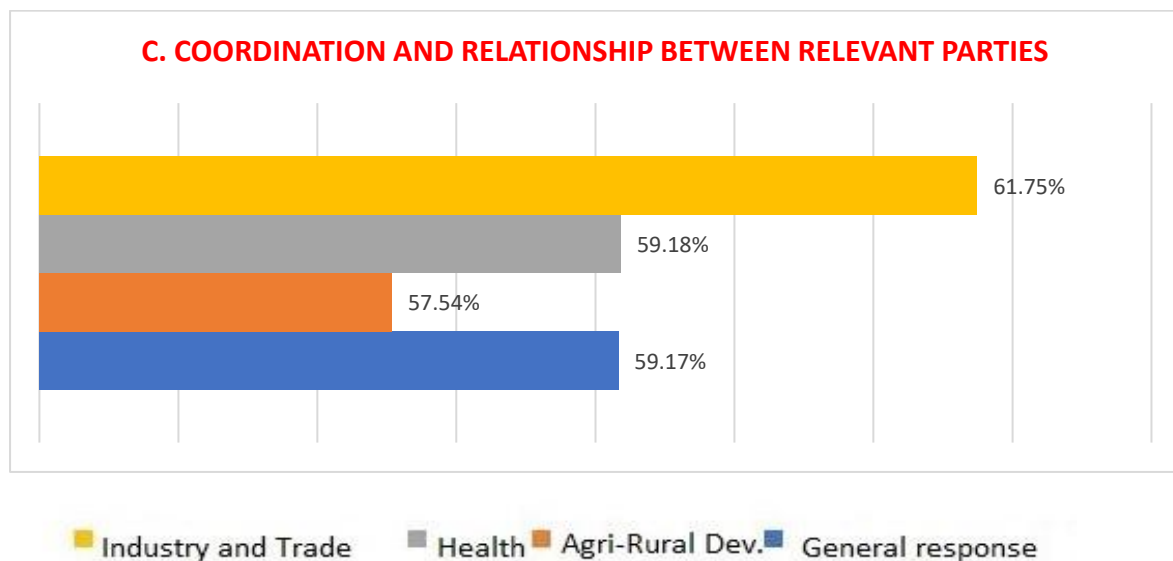
About 56% of respondents said that the training for new employees to take on the task of food safety inspection and control, the application of a mechanism to encourage employees to participate in periodic training to exchange and update knowledge and skills, and the sharing of new knowledge and experience with colleagues and working groups on food safety inspection and control remain limited or have not been implemented in CAs (about 20%).

More than 65% of respondents said that there was no appropriate budget allocation to allow employees with good professional skills to prepare and attend relevant international scientific meetings and conferences on quality and food safety, and that there was a lack of conditions or budget for them to access authentic and up to date sources of scientific and technical information for later dissemination to all other relevant employees.

More than 50% of responses demonstrated that the issue of using modern technology so that employees can have the opportunity to quickly access and exchange information at all levels is still limited or ineffective. There is a problem due to the absence or inefficiency of a CA’s mechanism and commitment to allow and secure information reported by employees about the misconduct of colleagues and superiors without having to suffer any backlash or adverse/negative effects.

In general, human resources implementing the food safety inspection and control program have been taken care of, but the level of investment, updating and improving qualifications, mechanisms for promoting talented staff and protecting ethical people need to be improved. The current situation shows that human resources for food safety inspection and control only meet 54.7% of the requirements in the FAO/WHO FCSA assessment tool, of which the Health sector meets about 57.6%, the Agriculture and Rural Development sector meets the level of about 55.4% and the Industry and Trade sector only meets the level of 48.3% when compared to FCSA requirements.

3.2.3 Coordination and relationship between relevant parties

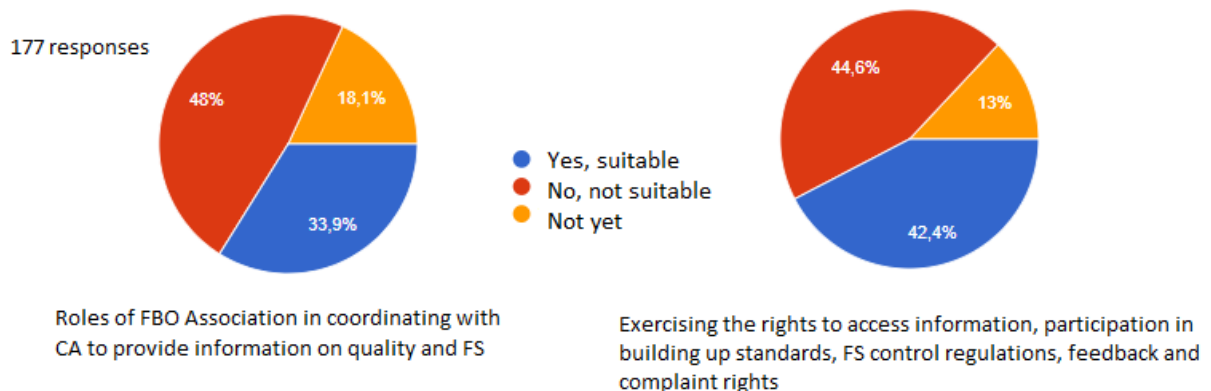


Overall, the CAs have a fairly good coordination and relationship with relevant parties in the process of implementing food safety inspection and control, especially the group of CAs in the Industry and Trade sector. Regarding the relationship between relevant parties, the responses show that the main concern is coordination between CAs and exchange of information between CAs and relevant parties, and announcement of procedures for the inspection and control of food safety.

The gap that needs to be considered is the implementation of an official communication mechanism between the CAs and relevant parties involved in food safety control, and the exchange of information throughout the food chain from production to the food safety situation with customers. In fact, it is not good or incomplete. Strategies and guidelines for communicating about food safety to partners, stakeholders, the public and international organizations are not effective. In particular, CAs have not yet carried out the analysis of the capacity development needs of food production and business operators to inform and plan appropriate campaigns to raise awareness and provide training and education on food safety training. Therefore, CAs have not effectively carried out their responsibility to support production and business operators to update and improve knowledge (production, processing, retail business, food wholesale, restaurants, supermarkets...) on food safety requirements and regulations or analyze and identify weak points in specific food safety control measures so that production and business operators can improve the effectiveness of their self-inspection, supervision and control of food safety.



For production and business operators participating in the food supply chain, the role of the Association for production and business operators is still vague and has not actively supported its members in exercising the right to access information and participate in developing food safety control regulations and food standards, provide relevant response and exercise the right to complain to CAs about food safety inspection and control to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of this activity.



Communication on laws related to food safety, food safety hazards, control programs and results, food safety incidents and preventive measures to ensure food safety towards the

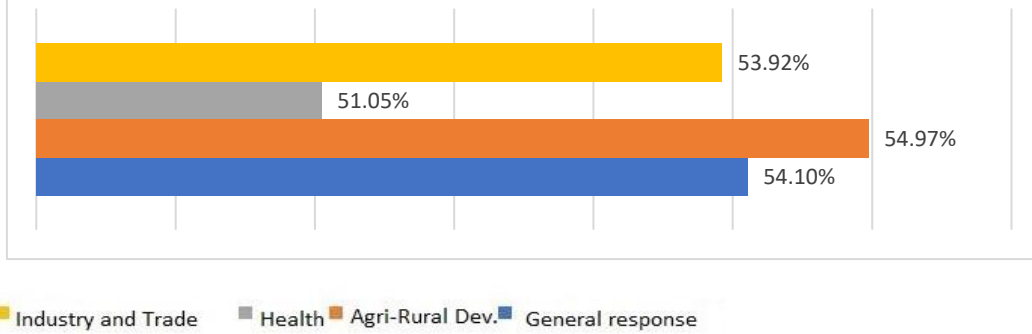
community including food business operators and consumers has been implemented fairly and without discrimination, through many mass media channels, audio-visual tools, social networks and with the participation and support of organizations/ professional communications experts. CAs are able to develop and implement communication activities and disseminate information to consumers (including groups with special food needs such as children, pregnant women, and the elderly...) about the importance of food safety, how to practice safe food preparation and use, food quality issues, how to recognize safe food, as well as risk communication when food safety incidents, food poisoning, FBD or fraud occurs in food production and business, in order to convey appropriate food safety messages to consumers and increase prevention effectiveness. However, this work is not regularly carried out or conveyed out to all local areas.

The CAs have provided a number of practices and guidelines to enable trading partners to easily access up-to-date information on quality requirements, food safety and inspection, control results of the implementation of food safety surveillance. However, the participation to support the development of international trade by providing guidance for international partners to have access to proactive, open and public communication on quality and food safety regulations, the requirements for domestic control measures, imported food control and documentation according to international standards has not been promoted as strongly as it is expected. In particular, there has not been an effective participation in the activities of international organizations (for example: Codex), the development of links between food safety CAs and the academic sector (universities, research institutes and other expert groups...) to fully use standards and guidelines from international organizations and scientific information from the academia/academic sector to provide appropriate information for inspection, control and assessment and respond to food safety and quality fraud or food safety fraud issues.



3.2.4 Scientific basis and food safety inspection and control activities

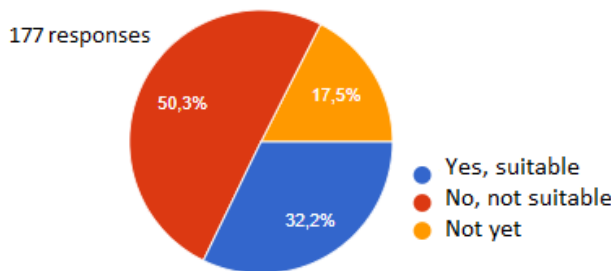
D. SCIENTIFIC BASIS AND FOOD SAFETY INSPECTION AND CONTROL ACTIVITIES



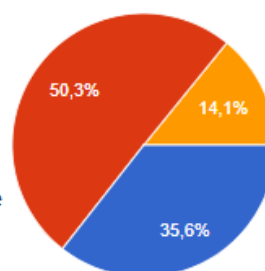
The scientific basis plays a particularly important role in analyzing and assessing food safety risks in the design and implementation of food safety inspection and control programs. This is content that is highly valued by FAO and WHO and is included in one of the four parts in the food safety control system analysis and assessment tool kit (FCSA) of FAO/WHO. Science-based content for collecting information and assessing risks to prevent and promptly respond to food safety hazards is considered one of the key factors that determines the effectiveness of a food safety inspection and control program.

Of 177 responses, only about 1/3 of the comments indicated that the content on a scientific basis and food safety control activities implemented were effective, the remaining 2/3 of the comments indicated that the content of a scientific basis and food safety control activities were not effective or incomplete. Analyzing the responses of CAs at the local level, especially in areas with poor infrastructure conditions, all respondents commented that this content has not been completely implemented.

Fifty percent of responses indicated that the CA's infrastructure and technical capacity to collect data to support food safety risk analysis is inadequate and ineffective. The professional capacity of the CA is not completely appropriate (or remains weak) and therefore does not provide effective support for developing procedures to adequately collect and analyze data, monitor its use and control the quality of data collected for food safety risk analysis tasks.

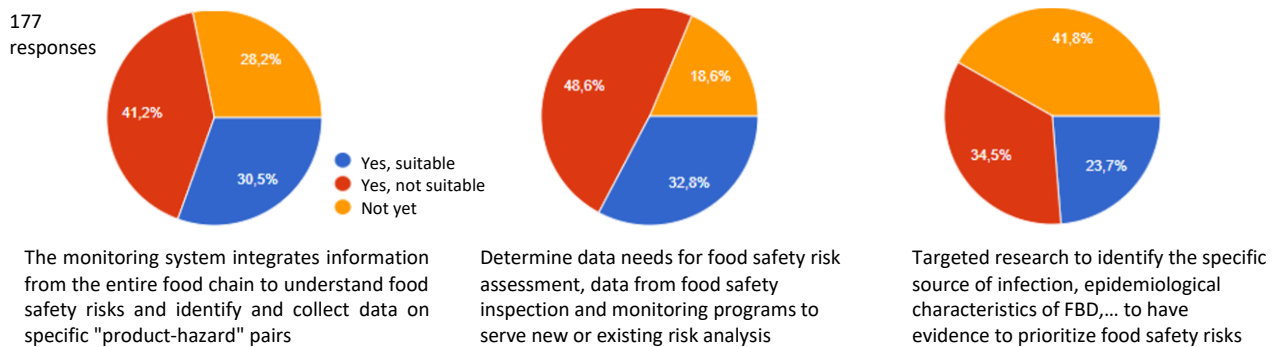


CA's infrastructure and technical capability in serving the collection of data to support FS risk analysis activity.



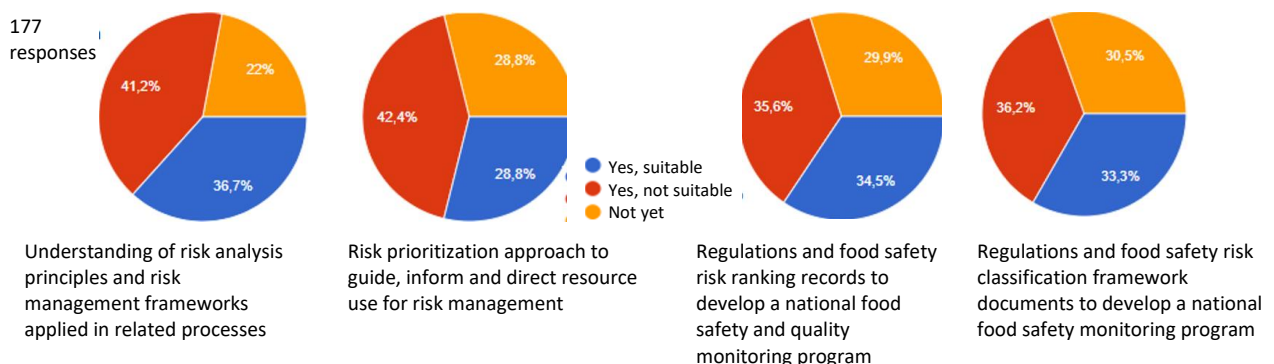
Expertise capability in developing procedures to collect and analyze data, monitor and control the quality of collected information to analyze FS risks.

Technically, the surveillance system that integrates information from the entire food chain to help better understand food safety risks, identify and collect data on specific “product-hazard” pairs has shown that it is not implemented or implemented with low effectiveness. To carry out the task of effective surveillance and control of food safety, a determination of the required data to assess food safety risks, assembly of this data and creation of databases is required obtained from regular food safety inspection and surveillance programs to collect information for analysis of current or newly emerging food safety risks. CAs should carry out targeted studies to identify specific food sources of disease, epidemiological characteristics of foodborne diseases, and estimate the social burden of foodborne disease (prevalence of new cases and data on disease severity) to have evidence of prioritization for each food safety risk.

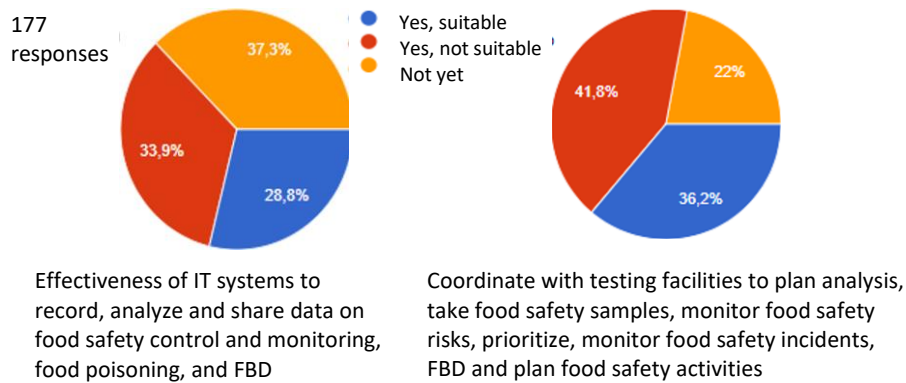


The food safety risk management system is built and applied scientifically. It is regularly reviewed and analyzed, in a risk management framework that ranks the risks and serves the process of establishing procedures related to the development of laws, standards, policies, guidelines, and the effective use of resource to efficiently carry out food safety control implementation. CAs need to coordinate with each other in carrying out risk assessments, determining assessment results, and estimating the acceptable level of risk for risk management based upon scientific arguments using qualitative, semi-quantitative or quantitative methods, systematically establishing a risk classification framework and a dossier system for food safety risk ranking to promote the development of an effective national food safety and quality surveillance program.

Upon evaluation, about 2/3 of the responses indicated that this criterion is fully implemented by the CA, however 30% thought that it has not been implemented in some places.



Tools for risk management include IT systems to record, analyze and share data obtained during the process of controlling food safety, surveillance of food safety incidents, food poisoning, and foodborne diseases. The use of qualified and authorized or designated food safety laboratories to coordinate with each other and risk managers in planning the work of sampling, analysis, and regular inspection of food safety based on a risk classification framework and monitoring the priority-ranked food safety risks, surveillance of food poisoning, FBD and scientific activities related to food safety is critical to effective risk management along with the preparation of documents for periodic inspection and supervision of food production and business operators.



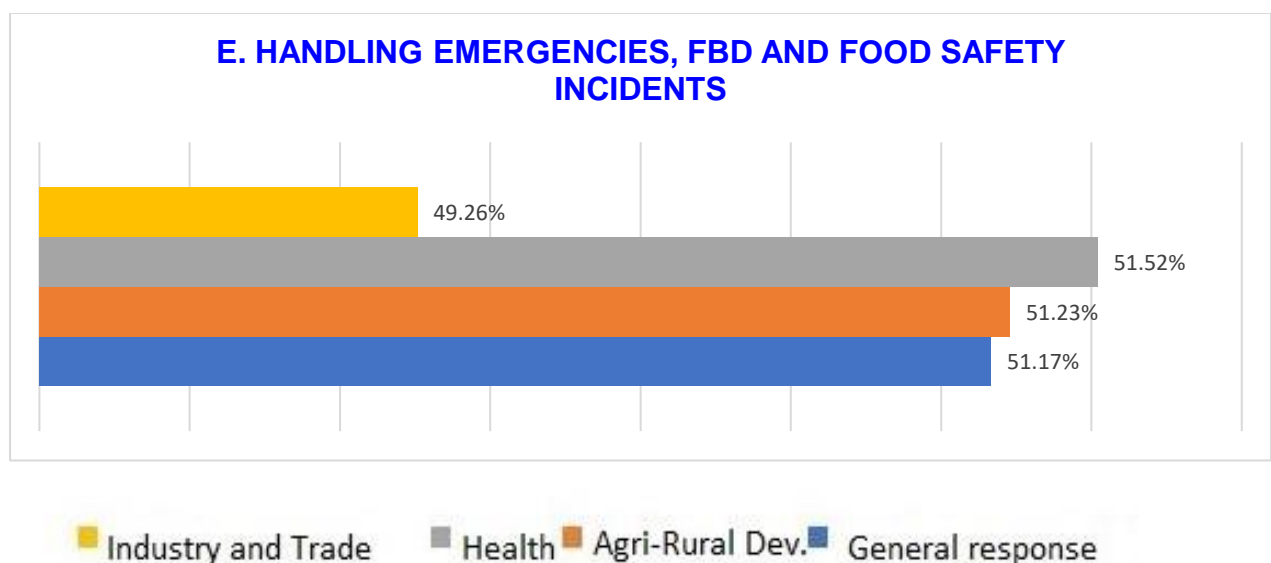
Effective food safety inspection, supervision and control must be based on risk analysis to help grade and classify groups of similar products to build and deploy reasonable and scientific plans according to uniform and identical procedures and regulations. CAs must have a consistent process of recording, classifying, updating and prioritizing production and business operators in food safety inspection and control and they must be monitored within the scope of control. This work task is being performed quite well for exported food, but is not effective with insufficient records available for tracking the implementation by food production and business operators in term of domestic consumption and imports.

Among the shortcomings that still need to be strengthened to improve the effectiveness of food safety control are implementation procedures and records to track the effectiveness of food safety control for activities of packaging, labeling, and advertising, food supply activities, especially reference standards, technical content, plans, and records for implementing food safety control for imported food. Good import practices that are developed, promulgated and used as a basis for imported food control activities are an important requirement for imported food safety control to be nationally consistent and effective.



Food safety control activities carried out at all stages of the food chain (from-farm-to-fork) are organized continuously, with connected coordination and comprehensive in accordance with the food safety control strategy. This activity assists the CAs to detect shortcomings in the food supply chain and ensures that the food safety control program is truly effective when scientifically supported by correctly implemented traceability activities within the controlled range. Traceability also assists the development and application of effective prevention measures and controls food safety risks for hazards that have been identified or predicted from the beginning. This activity must be controlled through the registration of production and business operators and be included in the periodic inspection and control plan based on the risk classification framework and priority ranking for FBOs.

3.2.5 Handling emergencies



Warnings and handling of emergencies and food safety incidents, including poisoning and foodborne disease, is an important part of the food safety control inspection program. Vietnam's legal document system has regulations related to this work including regulations on rapid warnings on food safety, procedures to respond to emergencies such as food poisoning and foodborne diseases. There is a budget allocation for handling food safety incidents, but more than 50% of responders believed that the budget was not appropriate or in some cases not enough to fully implement all incident handling measures, especially the phase of traceability investigation, epidemiological investigation and remediation after the occurrence of an incident.

The CA develops and implements a surveillance plan aimed at early detection and/or monitoring any issues related to quality and food safety in the food chain, with a rapid communication mechanism between CAs. The CAs is responsible for controlling and responding to emergency food safety incidents when food safety control, inspection, and supervision detect potential risks in the food chain that can impact human health, but the mechanism has not been operated coherently and has in certain cases not been effective.

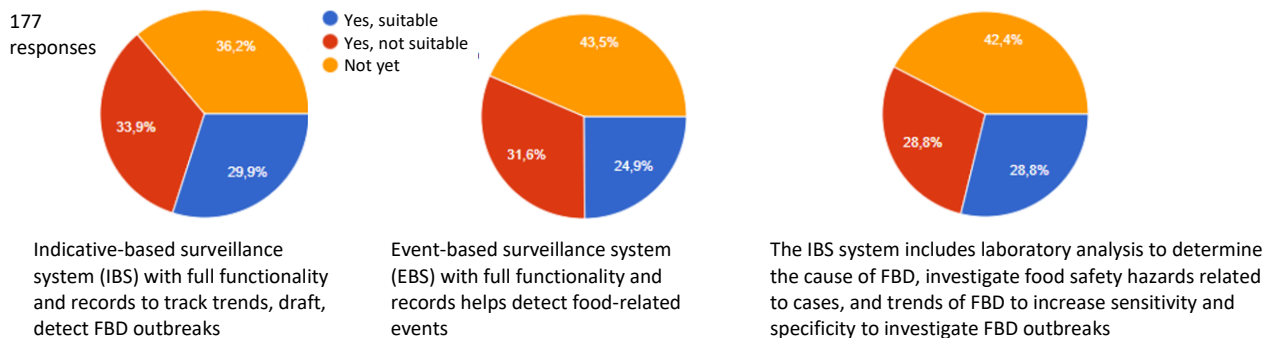
An effective and consistent national food safety surveillance and control program requires the participation and essential relationship of two warning surveillance systems:



+ “Indicator-Based Surveillance (IBS) systems rely on the systematic collection, surveillance, analysis and interpretation of structured data related to case definitions or syndromes” (WHO, 2014). Data on individuals' diseases (or syndromes or test results) are systematically recorded, analyzed, interpreted and disseminated. Based on the recorded index, data thresholds can be applied to help detect disease outbreaks, monitor trends and evaluate intervention measures to respond to emergencies, food safety incidents and FBD. The IBS system helps enhance the surveillance of food safety incidents and food-related diseases that have been reported, with indicators recorded and reported in a related database system recorded from test results, surveys, epidemiological records, from CA, medical facilities, and reports from other functional agencies.

+ “Event-Based Surveillance (EBS) is a system that uses a structured approach to detect and report “signals” of possible failure or FBD”, understood as information that may represent events of public health importance, often through channels outside the normal food safety surveillance system, including unofficial predictions system, including "rumors". “Signals” of this type may be designed by the CA for the purpose of detecting patterns of disease or FBD, such as clusters of similar disease in a community or clusters of disease or death in animals related to a certain event. Signals may also include suspected high-priority events, such as mass poisoning of patients during a large-scale event such as a food festival, music festival or even in events related to climate and weather factors such as FBD due to food in the summer, Tet holidays... EBS can be seen as a key component of an effective early warning system, allowing countries to better prepare for predictable disease outbreaks and pandemics.

Regarding IBS and EBS systems effectively serving food safety inspection, control and surveillance programs, in reality, they have not been well implemented in Vietnam.

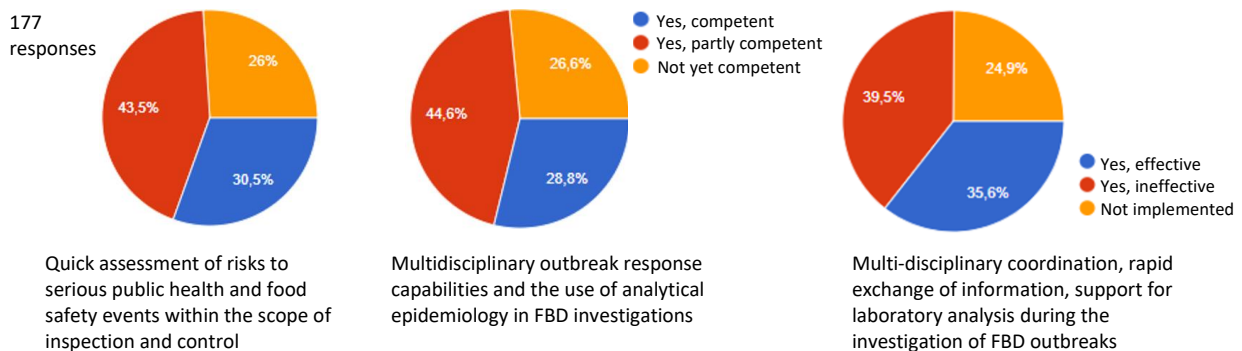


A national food safety control system needs a unified and appropriate plan; use a scientific risk analysis framework to predict appropriate response actions to food safety emergencies; is developed with the participation of relevant stakeholders, clearly defines food safety emergencies so that when they occur, appropriate response actions can be quickly triggered.

In any emergency, food safety or FBD incident, the CA is required to carry out epidemiological investigation and rapid assessment of risks to serious public health incidents

within the scope of food safety inspection and control. There is also a need for a CA to coordinate multidisciplinary outbreak responses and use analytical epidemiology in the investigation of foodborne outbreaks. It is necessary to have multi-disciplinary coordination, rapid exchange of information and laboratory analysis support during the investigation of foodborne disease outbreaks, and at the same time have a national-level scenario ready to proactively activate when an emergency food safety incident occurs with a serious scale and/or nature.

These necessary contents are a component in the group of must-have capabilities of any food safety control system. However, the majority of responses were that the CA currently does not have enough capacity, or its capacity does not fully meet the requirements. Multi-disciplinary coordination and cooperation for rapid exchange of information and use of analytical support from testing laboratories in investigating foodborne disease outbreaks have yet to be implemented or are currently not effective.

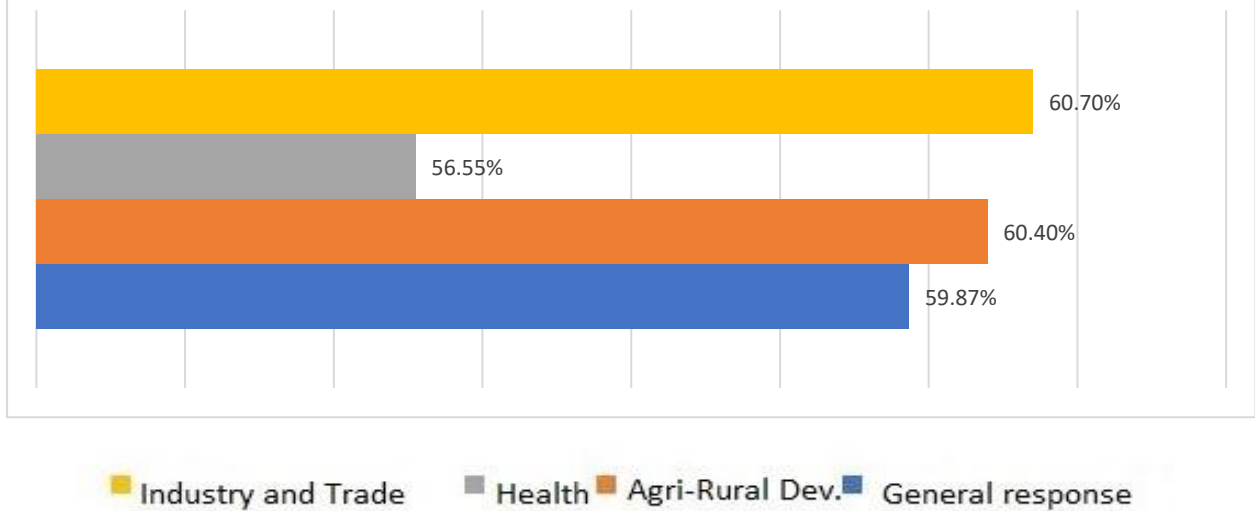


3.2.6 Quality management, continuous improvement

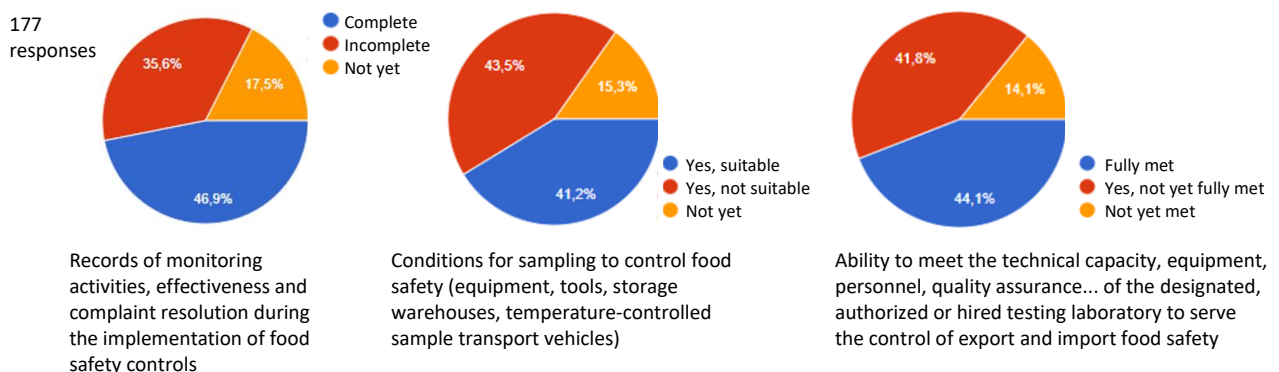
Food safety inspection and control activities are essentially systematic activities, requiring quality management with clear criteria, procedures, and a system of records to document the surveillance and supervision and periodically review and self-examine according to unified standards to improve and enhance operational efficiency.

CAs are aware of this problem, however, with current fragmented objectives and conditions dependent upon food groups and multi-sectoral assignment of tasks in carrying out food safety inspection and control tasks, there are no unified interdisciplinary regulations regarding standards applied to system management for the implementation of food safety inspection and control. Thus, many opinions believe that although the CAs are very concerned about the quality of operations, the effectiveness of their tasks is not high, especially the quality management of the system and the nature of continuous improvement of operations to regularly improve efficiency.

F. QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF OPERATION

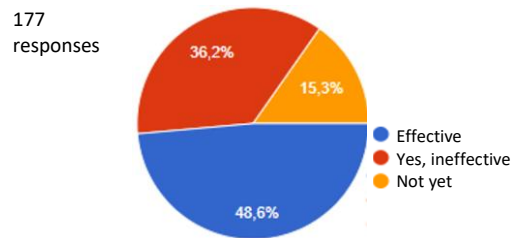


The process of implementing the food safety control program requires supervision, especially the consideration and handling of complaints and grievances raised by relevant parties. This surveillance activity also includes CA's responsibility to carry out evaluation periodically or when needed, the level of capacity and competency (technical, equipment, personnel, testing quality assurance system) of a designated, authorized or hired testing facility to analyze against import and export food safety control requirements, including conditions for food safety control sampling including appropriate equipment such as tools, storage warehouses, temperature-controlled sample transport vehicles, etc. There should be convincing evidence of surveillance activities, demonstrated through a complete and scientific record system, but many responses show that there is no evidence that surveillance has been well implemented throughout the system.



Food safety regulations require laboratories that are designated, authorized or hired for analyses to serve the food safety inspection and control program and apply international or

equivalent standards for quality assurance of food safety testing activities (such as ISO 17025) or clinical testing activities for medical tests (ISO 15189). These laboratories, when serving activities under the food safety control system for inspection or surveillance, need to truly have full capacity and flexibility to be able to adapt to changes in analytical criteria and/or fully meet the increase in testing demand. Increased testing is required when food safety emergencies, food poisoning, or food-borne disease outbreaks occur. A quality management system needs documented evidence of quality and continuous improvement to thrive.



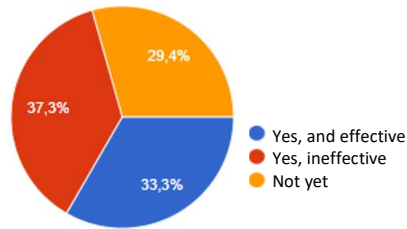
The application, recognition and maintenance of international standards ISO 17025 (Food safety testing laboratories) and ISO 15189 (clinical testing laboratories, medical testing laboratories) of laboratories participating in analysis serve food safety control

In general, management and quality assurance of food safety inspection and control activities include the quality management system of this activity and the issue of quality assurance of service provider activities such as those of testing laboratories, appointed, authorized or hired, and other support activities such as maintenance services, and calibration of equipment, tools and vehicles, including services for sampling, preservation and transfer of samples, etc. All quality assurance activities need to have a record storage system for periodic review, self-assessment and continuous improvement measures to ensure the operation of the inspection system, making sure that the food safety inspection and control system is always developing, adapting to change and remains effective.

Food safety control activities aim to implement effective preventive measures for high-risk food safety hazards, early detection of emerging and important problems, and contribute to setting effective policies and decisions for implementation. The FCSA tool mentions applying a "Foresight" approach to support this goal. Foresight is a systematic, participatory and multidisciplinary approach that assists understanding the medium and long-term future and the drivers of change. This is both a process and an approach that requires broad thinking and many scenarios or ideas. These scenarios and ideas can be gradually developed and become the basis for considering policy development and taking related actions. Foresight provides space for supply chain food safety control stakeholders and experts to build predictable, participatory knowledge. Foresight is used to identify multiple future scenarios and seek future changes of a quantitative and qualitative nature, by predicting and analyzing possible developments and potential challenges.

This is an approach that most responses say has not been implemented or has been implemented but is not effective.

177
responses



The application of "foresight" techniques to support a preventative approach to food safety inspection, early detection of emerging and important problems, helping to make effective policies and decisions

3.3 Responses and suggestions for improving and enhancing the effectiveness of the food control system

In addition to self-assessment responses, recording different aspects of the control system and the implementation of the food safety inspection and control program according to competency groups based on the FAO/WHO FCSA tool, the CA has provided many comments with very diverse content, related to the system of legal documents, authority, and proposed measures to improve and enhance the CA's operational capacity. CA's suggestions related to training, communication, etc. Suggestions in general aim to overcome some incomplete current situations and are consistent with responses recorded from the answers in the survey questions.

The responses comments are summarized, and the duplicate parts are omitted, and most comments are recorded verbatim as the content of the recorded responses text. (Annex 4).

4 Recommendations

Based on the results of analysis of aggregated data, comments and suggestions collected from responses from the CAs when answering the survey questionnaire (see Annex 3), with reference to “The World Health Organization's Global Strategy for Food Safety”⁽⁸⁾, and the 2023 report of the Ministry of Health⁽⁹⁾, and with the objective to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of food safety control systems, the consulting expert group has proposed some recommendations as follows:

4.1 Policy and legal framework on food safety

Vietnam has a Law on Food Safety (2010) passed by the National Assembly on June 17, 2010 with the goal of addressing growing national concerns about food safety risks and impacts on trade and human health. The Law on Food Safety is a modern legal framework, built on international standards and approaches to food safety management. The Law on Food Safety 2010 clearly defines the responsibilities of food safety management for three relevant ministries: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Industry and Trade as well as the roles and responsibilities of all levels of government in coordinating the implementation of food safety control. The food safety control regime has been designed according to specialized assignments, with each Ministry being assigned to manage and ensure food safety for several specific products in the entire food chain, including from production, preliminary processing, processing, storage, import and export to wholesale and retail distribution under their relevant sector and area of management.

The Law on Food Safety is also interpreted to be implemented through a system of sub-law documents including quite a few Government decrees, guiding circulars of relevant ministries or inter-ministerial circulars such as: Decree 15/2018/ ND-CP guiding the implementation of a number of articles of the Law on Food Safety, Decree 115/2018/ND-CP stipulating penalties for administrative violations of food safety; Circulars (Circular 31/2023/TT-BYT; Circular 29/2023/TT-BYT; Circular 32/2022/TT-BNNPTNT; Circular 38/2018/TT-BNNPTNT; Circular 23/2018/ TT-BYT; Joint Circular 20/2013/TTLT-BYT-BCT-BNNPTNT), etc. The system of legal documents on food safety covers quite fully the assignment, decentralization, responsibilities, and coordination mechanism between CAs from the central level to localities vertically, accompanied by regulations on reporting, inspection, and supervision of implementation to ensure proper implementation of regulations. However, when a food safety incident occurs, the coordinating role of assigned CAs and cooperation with other CAs is not really timely and effective. The issue of supervision of CAs in reality does not meet the requirements of the regulatory system, especially the requirements of building and applying a quality management system for food safety control and self-surveillance and self-assessment of the quality of food safety control.

The Law on Food Safety and the guiding Decree stipulate that all types of food, additives, processing aids, and packaging items and utensils that do not contain food are required to be inspected for food safety before import according to the list issued and regulated by specialized

⁽⁸⁾ WHO global strategy for food safety 2022-2030: towards stronger food safety system and global cooperation, ISBN 978-92-4-005768-5

⁽⁹⁾ Report No. 1357/ BC-BYT, dated 10 of October, 2023 of MoH

management ministries ⁽¹⁰⁾ (except for some certain exemptions according to regulations). For foods that are not on the list of state inspection regulations on food safety before customs clearance, specialized ministries are responsible for strengthening inspection when foods are being wholesaled and circulated domestically after customs clearance. In fact, the control of food commodities after import currently remains weak and the food safety control of imported goods, especially the control of some agents participating in the food supply chain such as various types of supplies, raw materials, and chemicals used for food production at land border gates are still ineffective and may pose high food safety risks.

The policy and legal system on food safety clearly stipulates the responsibilities of those involved in food production and business and the sanctions for violators. However, the system of technical regulations and specific reference standards in accordance with international standards (for example, CODEX standards, TCVN/Vietnamese Standards) are inadequate for application in the food supply chain to the extent where the CAs can use it as the legal basis to monitor, inspect, evaluate the implementation and handle violations when food safety incidents occur in the food supply chain. The effectiveness of control has not yet been achieved as expected. Handling food safety incidents is an extremely important food safety aspect identified in the system of legal documents on food safety. However, up to now, only the system of CAs under the Health sector is implementing several regulations ⁽¹¹⁾ related to the investigation and handling of food poisoning. The implementation is not synchronized in all food supply chains because food safety control issues are still divided by industry and sector.

Since 2012, the Prime Minister has approved a 10-year strategy for food safety with a vision to 2030 ⁽¹²⁾, in which many important goals such as improving knowledge and practice of food safety for different groups of stakeholders have yet to be achieved. By 2020, it was necessary to reach the rate of 95% of food producers, processors and traders, 100% of managers, and 80% of consumers with correct knowledge and practice of food safety. By 2030, food safety would be managed proactively and effectively based on the principles of risk analysis, building a food safety control program based on evidence and implementing food chain control; 100% of food producers, processors, traders, managers and consumers have correct knowledge and practice of food safety; 100% of food production, processing and trading facilities meet food safety conditions. However, the progress and results of implementation in each phase have not been as good as expected, especially the goal of evidence-based food safety management by 2030, a combination of event-based surveillance (EBS) and indicator-based surveillance (IBS), and the goal of bringing food safety education content to high school levels.

Analysis of survey results and proposed opinions and recommendations on food safety policy and legal framework are as follows:

⁽¹⁰⁾ Circular 11/2021/TT-BNNPTNT dated 20/09/2021 of MARD; Circular 2No.28/ 2021/ TT-BYT dated 20/12/2021 of MoH; Decision No. 1182/QD-BCT dated 06/04/2021 of MoIT

⁽¹¹⁾ Decision 39/2006/QD-BYT dated December 13, 2006 of the Ministry of Health promulgating "Regulations for investigation of food poisoning"; Circular No. 14/2011/TT-BYT dated April 1, 2011 of the Ministry of Health "General instructions on food sampling for inspection, quality control, food hygiene and safety".

⁽¹²⁾ Decision No. 20/QD-TTg dated January 4, 2012 of the Prime Minister "Approving the national food safety strategy for the period 2011 - 2020 and vision 2030

1. The Law on Food Safety should be reviewed to consider increasing its effectiveness and assigning a Government agency to be responsible for general state management of food safety, with sufficient authority to implement a unified food safety control system according to the government's common policy and legal framework, capable of quickly proposing updates on food safety control activities in accordance with world practices and progress.

2. Review all Decrees related to the implementation of the Law on Food Safety such as Decree 15/2018/ND-CP guiding the implementation of the Law on Food Safety, Decree 115/2018/ND-CP stipulating penalties for administrative violations of Food safety which specifically stipulates the roles, responsibilities and sanctions for food safety violations by consumers and other factors in the food supply chain in participating, coordinating and supporting work, surveillance, inspect, control food safety and handle incidents, food poisoning and food-borne diseases.

3. Put in place legal regulations related to binding responsibilities of CAs and staff performing food safety duties when performing their official duties, specific provisions on the right to complain, and a mechanism to protect the legitimate rights of all stakeholders in the food safety inspection and control program to ensure transparency and prevent abuse of CA's staff.

4. Review the Decision 39/2006/QĐ-BYT dated December 13, 2006, of the Ministry of Health promulgating "Regulations on investigation of food poisoning", adding content and upgrading it into a legal document of higher legal hierarchy, possibly the Circular promulgating "Vietnam's Food Safety Incident and Foodborne Illness Outbreak Response Procedure" (VFIORP). This process should fully state the steps to handle food safety incidents, food poisoning, and food-borne illness and disease from the moment that the possibility of a food safety incident is detected, or relevant information is received, investigated, samples taken; analyzed to determine the cause, dealing with the cause, mitigating the consequences, improving surveillance, follow up remediation, and reporting. until the CA declares the end of the case. This procedure should be approved for uniform application in all industries and sectors.

5. Supplement technical regulations related to the implementation of food inspection and control activities to achieve the general goals set out in the food quality and safety policy. Technical regulations related to the manufacturing industry and the responsibilities and obligations of manufacturers and related services to comply with and enforce specific food standards to ensure food safety, prevent and handle incidents, food poisoning, in accordance with international standards (for example: CODEX, TCVN, ISO standards) selected and required by the CA within the scope of authority and legal framework, and at the same time is also the legal basis for food safety supervision, inspection and control, assessment of implementation and handling of violations.

6. Develop a Government Decree regulating the design of content and lectures on food safety to include in training and education programs at all educational levels to provide knowledge about food safety, raise awareness and know-how practice methods to ensure food safety at all stages in accordance with the principle of "Food safety from-farm-to-fork", including proper identification, processing and use of plant and animal species used as food to prevent, minimize and limit food safety incidents, food poisoning and foodborne diseases.

7. Review, amend and supplement legal documents on imported food control in the direction of unifying food safety control, including elements involved in the food supply chain



(such as materials serving food production and processing) and adding regulations to strictly control the origin of foods and materials for production as well as conditions for suppliers before being allowed to import food into Vietnam.

4.2 Ensuring the quality of food safety inspection and control activities

Vietnam's legal documents regulating food safety are the basis for establishing CAs on food safety in all sectors with division and decentralization of control according to product type and supply field (import, storage, export), type/scale of production and business operation. Due to its diverse and multi-sectoral nature, although there are regulations for a presiding and coordinating agency, the coordination of activities in food safety control between CAs in different sectors is still ineffective.

CAs have different scales, scopes of activities, operational capacities and resources, and many places do not meet operational requirements. Financial resources, working conditions, facilities, equipment, maintenance of specialized tools and equipment serving food safety control, and regular budget for this activity have not been allocated accordingly in terms of the scale of operations and adequacy to positively affect the quality of food safety inspection and control.

There's a shortage of human resources for food safety inspection and control and in many places the quality of human resources is not high. The budgets for training new employees, updating knowledge and retraining to improve qualifications and career development of employees are also limited. The evaluation of employee performance and quality, salary mechanisms, employee protection policies to prevent abuse of power by superiors, and encouraging employees to join professional associations and exchange expertise are also ineffective. Support conditions for employees to participate and work with specialized organizations related to food safety, national and international scientific conferences on food safety, using modern technology and appropriate authority to gain opportunities to quickly access and exchange information with relevant levels and agencies are generally limited.

Food safety control is being carried out by CAs according to industry regulations or according to plans from superiors. Even food safety control programs from the initial production stage on a national scale are still assigned to specialized management and focus on serving exported foods rather than foods consumed domestically (such as the program of controlling toxic residues in aquaculture, controlling bivalve mollusk farming areas...). CAs have not applied uniform standards when establishing programs, plans and organizing the implementation of food safety inspection and control activities, so self-assessment of quality and improvement of operations is not effective.

Analysis of survey results and suggested recommendations on ensuring the quality of food safety inspection and control activities are as follows:

1. Agree on the organization of a single food safety assurance CA under the Government to unify the development and application of a food safety control system nationwide. This agency has the authority to coordinate other CAs assigned and decentralized to control food safety.

2. The State prioritizes budget plans for CA to fully supplement human resources, finance, facilities and equipment, including mechanisms to use food safety testing laboratories that meet international standards to support the implementation of food safety inspection and control,



handling food safety incidents, food poisoning and FBD outbreaks, including sampling and analyzing food safety indicators, verifying the food safety management system of food production and business operators and provide data to serve the construction of a unified national food safety database.

3. CA develops and applies a unified technical standard to manage the quality of the food safety inspection, control and supervision system, with standard procedural documents and self-verification measures, periodically evaluated by a third party to ensure the quality and effectiveness of food safety inspection and control.

4. Central-level CA develops and manages a unified national food safety inspection, control and supervision program based on risk analysis and building a risk classification framework having complete information about specific food safety hazards. Establish, implement and regularly update indicator-based surveillance (IBS) and event-based surveillance (EBS) systems to assist Provincial/City CAs coordinate activities and programs accordingly that are appropriate to local characteristics, contributing to providing additional and updated information to continuously analyze trends, assess risks and improve the food control system nationwide.

5. For food safety emergencies, CAs at all levels shall coordinate with disease control agencies at the same level to quickly assess risks related to food safety incidents, foodborne diseases, carry out epidemiological analysis and determine the root cause of the incident so that CAs can handle it appropriately, and determine specific control measures to prevent future recurrence.

6. The CA has a training plan based on capacity, in accordance with professional standards, for the right subjects and participants and uses human resources according to job requirements, creating conditions to encourage employees to develop their abilities, opportunities to access scientific information sources, participate in professional associations, and exchange expertise through domestic and international scientific conference activities. CAs regularly evaluate employee quality according to ethical standards, based on professional results to work out appropriate remuneration and replace employees who are not suitable for the job in terms of inspection and supervision of food safety.

7. CAs research and develop a tool to self-assess the quality of the food safety inspection, control and supervision system according to standards, you can refer to the FAO/WHO's tool "Assessment of food control system" (FCSA) to regularly self-inspect and take measures to improve and increase the quality of food safety work.

4.3 Coordination and interaction of relevant parties

CAs carry out inspection and control of food safety in the food supply chain with other participating actors, so the cooperative and interactive relationship takes place not only between CAs of their decentralized assignment, but also with other stakeholders. Through the assessment of the CA participating in the survey, the implementation of the official communication mechanism between parties in the food chain is still imperfect and sometimes incomplete. Although using information and communication channels, the CA has no plan to analyze the capacity development needs of food production and business operators to have communication campaigns, training and coaching to improve the ability of food production and business operators to effectively self-control and monitor food safety, especially small production and

business operators, wholesalers, restaurants, supermarkets. Even a large number of consumers do not have the necessary capacity to protect themselves against known food safety risks.

The Association of Food Producers and Traders and the Food Consumer Protection Association have not yet demonstrated their important roles in communicating about food safety and participating in interactions with CAs to jointly carry out food safety surveillance and promote transparency and fairness in domestic and international food production and consumption.

Analysis of survey results and suggested recommendations on coordination and interaction with relevant parties are as follows:

1. CAs should develop and implement annual or periodic plans at appropriate frequencies to survey and analyze the need to strengthen the capacity of food production and business operators, determine strategies to raise awareness, design and implement targeted education and training programs on food safety in the direction of risk analysis and assessment so that all production and business operators are provided with information and updated knowledge about food safety risks and control methods, as well as food standards and food safety standards appropriate to the product, understand how to ensure food safety to enhance market access capacity in accordance with relevant legal regulations.

2. CAs should strengthen effective interactions with academic institutions and relevant agencies as well as international food safety organizations to enlist and make full use of their support in training, capacity building, and updating information and evidence on existing and potential food safety hazards to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the food safety inspection, control and surveillance system throughout the country.

3. CA should maintain good interaction with media agencies and effectively operate an information communication system on food safety using appropriate means and tools. CA should regularly provide updated information on food safety and quality to all actors and stakeholders in the food supply chain from producers, traders, suppliers of materials and ingredients to consumers so they know how to self-control food safety, prevent and quickly respond to CAs when there are any signs or incidents of food safety loss, food poisoning or foodborne disease. This communication system supports the CAs to provide the fastest information to production and business operators in the high food safety risk groups and is an important source of data for the Event-Based Surveillance (EBS) system.

4. Actors and stakeholders in the food supply chain should participate in relevant associations and have activities to create strong incentives for these associations to promote their active role in interactions with CAs to effectively participate in the food safety inspection, control and supervision program.

5. Production and business operators should effectively develop and apply technical standards to improve the effectiveness of food safety control in their operations such as Codex guidelines on applying HACCP, ISO 22000 standards, VietGAP standards, good practice codes and hygiene codes in raw material supply, semi-finished product preparation, preparation, use of food additives, etc. and should be evaluated and recognized by third parties. CA plays the role of examining and evaluating with appropriate frequency to update, supplement and adjust

strategies and measures to support production and business operators to improve their capacity to control and monitor food safety.

6. Testing laboratories should participate in the food safety inspection, control and supervision program, develop and apply recognized appropriate standards for quality assurance of food or medical testing laboratories, and regularly self-assess operational quality, ensuring the requirements of a laboratory authorized or designated by CAs. Laboratories participate in the national laboratory network system and maintain contact and interaction with internationally recognized laboratories to serve as an important source in providing objective, accurate data about food safety risks, helping the CAs to update and strengthen the indicator-based surveillance system (IBS).

7. CAs should participate in developing content, textbooks, lectures, introducing typical cases related to control, inspection, handling food safety incidents, foodborne diseases to support the education industry to enhance communication and dissemination of knowledge and regulations on food safety to all levels of education and spread out in the community.

4.4 Improve and enhance the capacity of the food safety inspection and control system

About the factors that demonstrate the capacity of the food safety inspection and control system, through survey responses these are issues that need to be scientifically researched, regularly reviewed, updated and have measures for improvement. Suggested recommendations are as follows:

1. The food safety inspection, control and surveillance system should be based on scientific evidence, on the principles of risk analysis, assessment, risk management and risk communication according to relevant instructions of FAO, WHO, CODEX and is based on a scientific assessment process of perceived or potential health hazards resulting from human exposure to hazards through food. Therefore, a common and comprehensive national control plan is essential.

2. To support the indicator surveillance system (IBS), epidemiological investigation agencies, risk analysis and assessment, laboratories that meet international standards need to regularly control the quality of work and results, data collected from professional work, with a database system built and uniformly managed by the CAs, granting access to relevant CAs and responsible staff. Build up a decision-making culture based on objective and scientific evidence in which decision-makers must collect and use food safety data effectively, with sufficient capacity and good leadership. The database system to collect data from all levels of food safety management must be truly advanced, responsive and accurate through budget investment into information technology and supporting equipment and laboratory capacity.

3. CAs should encourage employees to exchange technical information in supervision, control, inspection, and food safety inspection, and plans to contract with Training Centers, Research Institutes, and other verification facilities should be in place to train, provide knowledge, exchange experiences to improve skills in hazard assessment, risk analysis, update information on risks, professional techniques, exchange data and management techniques on the basis of prevention, improving the effectiveness and efficiency of handling food safety incidents and emergencies.

4. CAs should enhance risk communication capacity, reach out to all stakeholders in the food supply chain, and build a diverse information collection system through many different channels to record all signs, news including rumors or predictive information about food safety to provide input for the event-based surveillance system (EBS) built according to FAO/WHO guidelines.

5. Design and develop pilot models of food safety inspection, control and supervision systems with a unified state management focal point, using food production and business operators that are pilot or typical models of success in self-control of food safety for purpose of communication, training, tours and replication, contributing to improving and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the national food control system.

6. CAs and relevant parties, professional associations should enhance the exchange of experiences, proactively participate in seminars, technical exhibitions, international activities on standardization, inspection, Evaluate and test food safety with corresponding organizations and have early access to the latest standards and scientific approaches in food safety inspection and control.

7. Vietnam's existing food safety control system basically has many contents that are already compatible and equivalent to international guidelines and standards, especially the principles and instructions for the CODEX's national food control system (CAC/GL 82-2013) and FAO/WHO Guidelines for Strengthening National Food Control Systems. Therefore, to improve the effectiveness of the national food safety control system, CAs should develop and apply codes, regulations or technical standards on system management, and apply evaluation processes and forms, self-assess the quality of activities of the food safety inspection and control program based on scientific tools such as FCSA of FAO/WHO. The assessment should be developed according to a form suitable to Vietnam's reality, ensuring equivalence with the FAO/WHO FCSA tool, applied consistently to the work of verification and self-assessment. Such improvement of the food safety control implementation system will be consistent with the World Health Organization's Global Strategy on Food Safety for the period 2022-2030 and the vision to 2030 on national food safety approved in the Decision. No. 20/QĐ-TTg dated January 4, 2012, of the Prime Minister.

5 Annexes

5.1 Annex 1. Food Poisoning Situation

Table 1. Food Poisoning Situation in Korea (2013-2022)

Tracking criteria	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Appeared cases	22	4	19	24	20	24	26	15	18	15	21	27	235
Number of Patients	286	50	327	896	252	677	611	405	450	141	492	371	4958
Appeared cases	9	14	24	22	35	36	33	43	27	24	32	50	349
Number of Patients	56	80	1063	371	1548	955	484	1429	261	257	342	620	7466
Appeared cases	36	13	23	30	27	31	34	31	28	34	24	19	330
Number of Patients	322	149	412	402	493	752	527	1729	400	299	221	275	5981
Appeared cases	14	9	25	39	43	36	22	62	39	41	37	32	399
Number of Patients	98	51	358	554	673	761	280	2388	425	731	446	397	7162
Appeared cases	20	18	16	26	40	44	46	46	31	16	17	16	336
Number of Patients	121	89	146	409	605	916	429	1555	745	332	179	123	5649
Appeared cases	17	15	37	25	31	28	35	36	56	45	23	15	363
Number of Patients	125	194	816	444	853	732	630	1536	5239	608	185	142	11504
Appeared cases	21	16	19	31	35	37	28	25	22	16	18	18	286
Number of Patients	216	109	504	543	438	532	550	333	136	227	236	251	4075
Appeared cases	28	9	3	8	5	19	30	18	16	11	10	7	164
Number of Patients	217	75	117	112	19	488	688	160	157	171	252	78	2534
Number of Patients	9	11	21	24	18	24	28	46	23	11	14	16	245
Appeared cases	292	298	401	417	194	343	1293	878	335	222	142	345	5160
Number of Patients	10	8	13	12	30	42	57	31	29	22	26	31	311
Appeared cases	139	134	422	148	657	1043	652	538	578	436	312	442	5501
Number of Patients	32	24	32	26	28	30	40	37	41	27	19	26	362
Appeared cases	429	266	418	791	715	403	1547	858	1520	706	412	420	8485
Number of Patients	218	141	232	267	312	351	379	390	330	262	241	257	3380
Appeared cases	2301	1495	4984	5087	6447	7602	7691	11809	10246	4130	3219	3464	68475

(Source: Food Safety Information Portal, Food Safety Information Institute, MFDS, Korea, 2024)

Table 2. Number of Food poisoning incidents, contracted and death/mortal cases in Vietnam from 2006 to 2015

Year	Number of incidents	Contracted cases	Mortality/death	Number of incidents with >= 30 contracted cases/incidents
2006	165	7.135	57	Data not available
2007	247	7.329	55	Data not available
2008	205	7.828	61	Data not available
2009	152	5.212	35	Data not available
2010	175	5.334	51	Data not available
2011	142	4.500	27	Data not available
2012	167	5.508	34	38
2013	163	5.348	28	39
2014	194	5.203	43	40
2015	179	5.552	23	44
TOTAL	1.789	58.949	414	161

(Source: VFA, 2016)

Table 3. Food poisoning situation in Vietnam (2012-2021)

No.	Year	Index		
		Food poisoning incidents (incidents)	Victims (people)	Number of Mortality (people)
1	2012	167	5.508	34
2	2013	163	5.348	28
3	2014	194	5.203	43
4	2015	179	5.552	23
5	2016	174	4.554	12
6	2017	148	4.087Mor	24
7	2018	108	3.472	17



No.	Year	Index		
		Food poisoning incidents (incidents)	Victims (people)	Number of Mortality (people)
8	2019	88	2.235	11
9	2020	139	3.094	30
10	2021	81	1.942	18
Total		1.441	40.995	240
Average /Year		144	4.099	24

(Source: Food Poisoning – Situation, Management System in Vietnam, *Trương Tuyết Mai, 2022*)

Table 4. Number of food poisoning incidents in Vietnam in 2014 and 2015

Index	2014	2015	Comparison (Quantity/%)
Number of incidents	194	179	-15 (-7,7%)
Number of cases	5.203	5.552	+349 (+6,7%)
Number of hospitalizations	4.160	5.147	+987 (+23,7%)
Mortality/Deaths	43	23	-20 (-46,5%)
Number of incidents with ≥ 30 cases/incident	40	44	+4 (+10%)
Number of incidents with < 30 cases/incident	154	129	-25 (-16,2%)

(Source: VFA, 2016)

Table 5. Number of food poisoning incidents in Vietnam in 2022 and 2023

Index	2022	2023	Comparison (Quantity/%)
Number of incidents	45	94	+49 (108,9%)
Number of cases	605	1.225	+620 (+102,5%)
Mortality/deaths	21	20	-1 (-4,8%)
Number of incidents with ≥ 30 cases/incident	4	10	+6 (+150%)
Number of incidents with < 30 cases/incidents	41	84	+43 (+104,9%)

(Source: MOH, 2023)

Table 6. Number of food poisoning incidents in Vietnam from 2012 to 2015, classified by causes

Reason	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Microorganism	76	82	72	67	297
Chemicals	12	8	4	3	27
Natural toxins	43	26	65	63	197
Unclear	36	47	53	46	182
Total	167	163	194	179	703

(Source: VFA, 2016)

Table 7. Number of food poisoning incidents in Vietnam (2022 - 2023), divided by causes

Cause	2022	2023	Comparision (Quantity/%)
Microorganism	8	27	+19 (+237,5%)
Chemicals	2	6	+4 (+200%)
Natural toxins	16	31	+15 (+93,8%)
Unclear	19	30	+11 (+57,9%)
Total	45	94	+49 (+108,9%)

(Source: MOH, 2023)

Table 8. Number of food poisoning incidents in Vietnam in 2014 and 2015, divided by geographical region

Geographical region	2014	2015	Comparision (Quantity/%)
Northern mountainous region	72	56	-16 (-22,2%)
Red River Delta	27	22	-5 (-18,5%)
North Central	16	19	+3 (+18,8%)
Central Coast	27	18	-9 (-33,3%)
Highlands	14	18	+4 (+28,6%)
South East	14	20	+6 (42,9%)
Mekong Delta	24	26	+2 (+8,3%)
Total	194	179	-15 (-7,7%)

(Souce: VFA, 2016)

Table 9. Number of food poisoning incidents in Vietnam from 2012 to 2015, divided by location

Location	2012	2013	2014	2015
Family	95	70	106	85
Communal kitchen	24	23	41	41
Restaurant or hotel	10	12	6	8
Events (weddings, death anniversaries)	15	30	16	12
Street	3	12	8	12
School	10	7	7	8
Other	10	9	10	13
Total	167	163	194	179

(Souce: VFA, 2016)

Table 10. Number of food poisoning incidents in Vietnam in 2022 and 2023, divided by location

Location	2022	2023	Comparision (Quantity/%)
Family kitchen	28	56	+28 (100%)
Communal kitchen	3	8	+5 (166,7%)
Restaurant or hotel	2	5	+3 (+150%)
Events (weddings, death anniversaries)	3	9	+6 (150%)
Street	1	0	-1 (-100%)
Other	8	16	+8 (+100%)
Total	45	94	+49 (+108,9%)

(Source: MOH, 2023)

Table 11. Number of large food poisoning incidents (> 30 people/incident) and small food poisoning incidents (<30 people/incident) in 2022 and 2023

Index	Large number of food poisoning incidents (>30 people/incidents)			Small number of food poisoning incidents (<30 people/incidents)		
	Year 2022	Year 2023	Comparison (number of cases/%)	Year 2022	Year 2023	Comparison (number of cases/%)
Number of incidents	4	10	+6 (150%)	41	84	+43 (104,9%)
Number of cases	334	569	+235 (70,4%)	271	656	+385 (142,1%)
Mortality/Deaths	0	1	+1 (+100%)	21	19	-2 (-9,5%)

(Source: MOH, 2023)

5.2 Annex 2. FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment tool (FCSA)

For any country, to ensure its FS, the Food Control System always plays an important role, helps protect consumers' health and maintain equality in food production and business. Most countries are adopting flexibly the Codex Principles and Guidelines for National Food Control Systems (CAC/GL 82-2013) to adapt to local conditions in the best way to design and implement specific measures for FS inspection and control. However, to assess the effectiveness of FS inspection and control programs and determine the effectiveness of the used resources, for the best protection for the health as well as economic benefits of consumers, it is necessary to have appropriate tools and measures. To this end, FAO and WHO have jointly designed a food control system assessment tool¹³ (FCSA), to assist Member States in assessing the effectiveness of their national food control systems, including the implementation of the FS inspection and control programs, regardless of the completeness of their systems.

The FAO/WHO FCSA tool primarily focuses on systematic analysis to evaluate the performance of CAs involved in FS inspection and control, detect the points to be added, improved and upgraded to achieve more effective assurance of FS, timely adapt to the changes and developments of food production and business in the diversified and multidimensional relationship of factors involved in the food supply chains. In developing the FCSA tool, FAO and WHO used a consultative approach by establishing a Review Committee with the participation of implementing agencies as well as international, regional and national academia to review the progress periodically. The pilot application in different regions (Africa, Asia, Europe and the Near East) has been carried out to test this tool in each phase of development; findings from the test and response from participants involved in the assessment are documented to improve the approach of the FCSA tool in order to adapt to different conditions. FAO has worked with WHO to organize research to develop the FCSA tool by identifying feasible approaches, inheriting knowledge, experience and previous improvement of the tools related to the food chains or the evaluation of FS management functions, e.g., the implementation of phytosanitary and sanitary (SPS) regulations, including the Performance, Vision and Strategy Tool of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Performance of Veterinary Services Tool of the World Organization for Animal Health/Office des Epizooties (WOAH/OIE), the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation tool of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

With the contribution of many scientists and the active participation of the authorities of member countries, the FAO/WHO FCSA tool, which has been developed for nearly 7 years and officially issued in 2019, is expected to be used by countries as a support platform for self-assessment activities to identify priority areas for improvement advance and plan sequential, coordinated activities to achieve the desired result. In addition to helping analyze the performance of its national food control system, through periodic reviews, a country can use the FCSA tool to develop and implement a self-surveillance program, self-assessing the effectiveness of the work process in the food control system in the host country at, in accordance with international rules and standards on management and quality assurance of the system.

5.2.1 Structure of FAO/WHO FCSA Tool

⁽¹³⁾ WHO and FAO 2021, *Food control system assessment tool: Introductory booklet*, ISBN (WHO) 978-92-4-002837-1

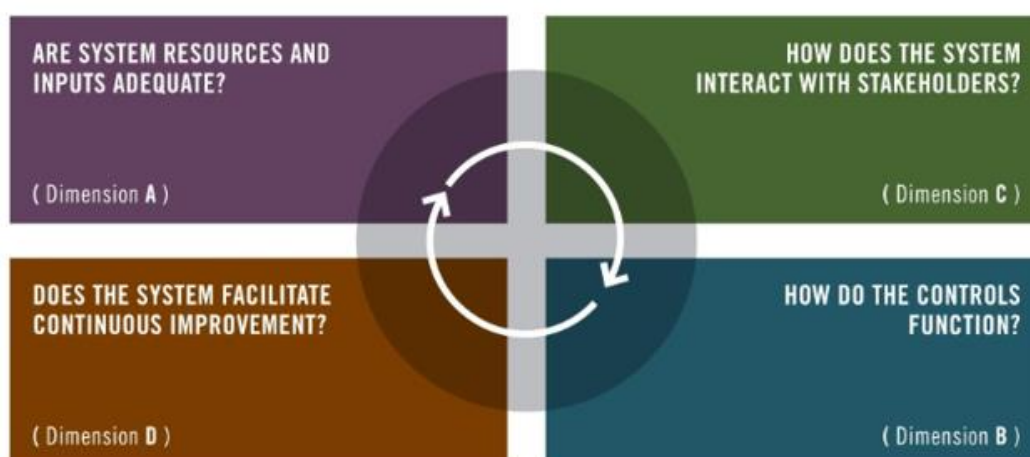
The FAO/WHO FCSA has 4 main dimensions⁽¹⁴⁾. These are typical and representative for a FS control system, and correlative as well as interactive, including:

➤ **Dimension A. INPUTS AND RESOURCES:** This dimension is prepared to identify the fundamental elements necessary for the system to operate. These elements range from legal and policy instruments to financial assets, equipment and infrastructure, and human resources.

➤ **Dimension B. CONTROL FUNCTIONS:** This dimension focuses on the processes and the outputs of the national food control system. It revolves around the control functions that must be exercised by CAs to ensure FS and quality along the food chain, and around the mechanisms that should be in place to appropriately manage food safety hazards, emerging risks, food emergencies and FS incidents. These functions and mechanisms encompass both inspection or oversight-type functions, in direct relation with food business operators, and surveillance and surveillance functions.

➤ **Dimension C. INTERACTIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS:** This dimension helps identify the interactions that must take place for the system to regularly adjust to national and international stakeholders' evolving needs, inspire confidence for stakeholders and to keep them well informed about their responsibilities.

➤ **Dimension D. SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE BASE/CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:** helps consider the necessary features for the system to build its scientific soundness and to keep abreast of new scientific developments and innovations, in order to continuously improve so that the FS control system is really efficient and effectively operated.



Each dimension has some sub-dimensions which are designed in more detail and structured by specific system competencies with scientific correlation. The FCSA has totally 9 sub-dimensions as described above. Each sub-dimension has System Competencies (SC). Each system competency has specific Assessment Criteria (AC). To assist the accurate assessment of each particular competency of the FS control system, the FCSA introduces guidance and indicators to help gather evidences for each assessment criterion.

⁽¹⁴⁾ FAO/WHO 2019, Food control system assessment tool: Introduction and Glossary, Rome, ISBN 978-92-5-131630-6

5.2.2 Assessment criteria in FAO/WHO FCSA Tool

162 Assessment Criteria (AC) are structured for dimensions and sub-dimensions as followed:

DIMENSION	SUB-DIMENSION	COMPETENCY	Number of criteria
Dimension A. INPUTS AND RESOURCES (61 <i>assessment criteria</i>)	A.1. POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK	A.1.1 Policy and legal drafting process	06
		A.1.2 Institutional framework	07
		A.1.3 Elements for food control legislation	12
	A.2. INFRASTRUCTURE AND FINANCES	A.2.1 Financial resources	10
		A.2.2 Infrastructure and equipment	05
		A.2.3 Analytical resources	07
A.3. HUMAN RESOURCES	A.3.1 Qualification of personnel	04	
	A.3.2 Capacity development of personnel	05	
	A.3.3 Staff management & staff motivation	05	
Dimension B. CONTROL FUNCTIONS (51 <i>assessment criteria</i>)	B.1. ROUTINE CONTROL ACTIVITIES OVER FOOD PRODUCTS	B.1.1 Domestic controls	17
		B.1.2 Import controls	09
		B.1.3 Export controls	05
	B.2. SURVEILLANCE, SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE FUNCTIONS	B.2.1 Surveillance programmes in relation to the food chain	07
		B.2.2 Food-borne disease surveillance	06
		B.2.3 Management of food safety emergencies	07
Dimension C. INTERACTIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS (21 <i>assessment criteria</i>)	C.1. DOMESTIC STAKEHOLDERS	C.1.1 Relationships between CAs and private sector regarding training needs	03
		C.1.2 Information flows and integration of FBOs into risk management	05
		C.1.3 Communication flows and involvement with consumers	05
	C.2. INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS	C.2.1 Interactions among CAs at international level	04
		C.2.2 Engagement of CAs with International Organizations	04

DIMENSION	SUB-DIMENSION	COMPETENCY	Number of criteria
Dimension D. SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE BASE/CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (29 assessment criteria)	D.1. EVIDENCE/RISK BASE	D.1.1 Access of CAs to updated scientific and technical information	03
		D.1.2 Capacity to collect and analyse data for risk analysis purposes	09
		D.1.3 Knowledge and use by CAs of risk analysis framework	09
	D.2. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	D.2.1 Performance surveillance of CAs and continuous improvement	06
D.2.2 Mechanism to ensure consideration of newest scientific and technical information for food control)		02	

5.3 Annex 3. Statistics of survey participants

Table 1. Survey participants in 3 sectors (Agriculture and Rural Development, Health, Industry and Trade)

Sector	Total	Percentage	Central Agencies	Percentage	Local agencies	Percentage
Agriculture and Rural Development	97	54.80%	7	7.22%	90	92.78%
Health	43	24.29%	0	0%	43	100%
Industry and Trade	37	20.90%	0	0%	37	100%
TOTAL	177	100%	7	3.95%	170	96.05%

Table 2. Survey participants in the agriculture and rural development sector

Agencies	Number	Percentage
NAFIQPM Department/NAFI Centers and Regional Branches	34	35.05%
Department of Animal Health and Sub-Departments	13	13.40%
Plant Protection Department and Plant Protection Branch/Division under the City/Provincial DARD	17	17.53%
Forest Protection Department/Quality Management	2	2.06%
Department of Fisheries	13	13.40%
Rural Development Department	1	1.03%
Department of Quality and Processing under the City/Provincial DARD	2	2.06%
Inspectorate of MARD/Inspectorate of DARD	8	8.25%
City/Provincial Department of Agricultural and Rural Development	7	7.22%
TOTAL	97	100%

Table 3. Survey participants in the Health sector

Agencies	Number	Percentage
Food Safety Management Board/ City/Provincial Department of Food Safety	1	2.33%
Provincial Sub-VFA	30	69.77%
Inspector of the City/Provincial Department of Health	8	18.60%
City/Provincial Department of Health	4	9.30%
TOTAL	43	100%

Table 4. Survey participant in the Industry and Trade sector

Agencies	Number	Percentage
City/Provincial Department of Industry and Trade	37	100%
TOTAL	37	100%

Table 5. System capacity to implement food safety inspection and control program

Group of evaluation criteria for food safety control system	Group of food control system competency according to FCSA	Adaptable responsive rate according to FCSA assessment criteria			
		Agriculture and Rural Development	Health	Industry and Trade	General
LEGAL BASIS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF CAs (Questions 1 to 11)	A.1. Policy and legal framework A.2. Infrastructure and finance A.3. Human Resources B.1. Regular control activities for food products	66.01%	62.93%	57.34%	63.77%
HUMAN RESOURCES OF CAs (Questions 12 to 25)	A.2. Infrastructure and finance A.3. Human Resources D.1. Evidence base/risk	55.42%	57.59%	48.25%	54.72%
COORDINATION AND RELATIONSHIPS OF STAKEHOLDERS (Questions 26 to 49)	A.1. Policy and legal framework B.1. Regular control activities for food products B.2. Tracking, monitoring and response functions C.1. Domestic stakeholders C.2. International stakeholders D.1. Evidence base/risk	57.54%	59.18%	61.75%	59.17%
SCIENTIFIC BASIS AND FOOD SAFETY INSPECTION AND CONTROL ACTIVITIES (Questions 50 to 83)	A.1. Policy and legal framework A.2. Infrastructure and finance B.1. Regular control activities for food products	54.97%	51.05%	53.92%	54.10%

Group of evaluation criteria for food safety control system	Group of food control system competency according to FCSA	Adaptable responsive rate according to FCSA assessment criteria			
		Agriculture and Rural Development	Health	Industry and Trade	General
	B.2. Tracking, monitoring and response functions D.1. Evidence base/risk				
EMERGENCIES, FOOD-BORN DISEASE AND FOOD SAFETY INCIDENTS (Questions 84 to 96)	A.1. Policy and legal framework A.2. Infrastructure and finance B.2. Tracking, monitoring and response functions	51.23%	51.52%	49.26%	51.17%
QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT (Questions 97 to 116)	A.1. Policy and legal framework A.2. Infrastructure and finance B.1. Regular control activities for food products B.2. Tracking, monitoring and response functions C.1. Domestic stakeholders D.1. Evidence base/risk	60.40%	56.55%	60.70%	59.87%

Table 6. System capacity needs to be upgraded according to the assessment criteria in the FAO/WHO FCSA tool

Evaluation criteria in the survey questions	Competency groups are assessed according to FAO/WHO FCSA	Responsive rate according to FCSA standards		
		Agriculture and Rural Development	Health	Industry and Trade
7. Plan and implement adequate budget provision to purchase, renew, repair, maintain infrastructure and equipment for food safety control (office, logistics, transportation, IT...) (A.2.1.6)	A.2.1. Financial resource	52.58%	64.34%	40.54%
9. Evaluation of the space and specialized equipment provided at all locations where food safety control activities are conducted? (A.2.2.1)	A.2.2. Infrastructure and equipment	53.26%	51.94%	38.74%
10. Evaluation of the suitability of assets, vehicles and maintenance to implement the food safety control program? (A.2.2.2)	A.2.2. Infrastructure and equipment	50.17%	47.29%	43.24%
11. Are food safety control staff provided with adequate testing equipment and appropriate working	B.1.2. Import control	56.01%	54.26%	33.33%

Evaluation criteria in the survey questions	Competency groups are assessed according to FAO/WHO FCSA	Responsive rate according to FCSA standards		
		Agriculture and Rural Development	Health	Industry and Trade
locations and conditions at import and export food control positions? (B.1.2.8)				
12. What is the appropriateness of the number, skills, professional qualifications and responsiveness of staff performing food safety control and supervision? (A.3.1.1)	A.3.1 Staff qualifications	56.70%	58.14%	48.65%
13. How are internal policies and standards applicable to all employees (official, outsourced) participating in or supporting food safety control established and applied? (A.3.1.2; A.3.1.3; A.3.1.4)	A.3.1 Staff qualifications	56.70%	58.91%	47.75%
16. Is the workforce with skills in food safety control approved and allocated a budget for training, updates and continuous professional development? (A.2.1.5)	A.2.1. Financial resource	52.58%	58.91%	44.14%
17. Is the training for new employees to take on food safety inspection and control tasks effective? (A.3.2.1)	A.3.2. Strengthen staff capacity	54.64%	62.79%	44.14%
20. Are skilled human resources allocated to the budget to prepare and attend meetings and international scientific conferences related to quality and food safety? (A.2.1.9)	A.2.1. Financial resource	43.30%	44.19%	38.74%
21. Provide authentic, up-to-date access to scientific and technical information sources for all relevant staff? (D.1.1.1)	D.1.1 Ability of CA to access updated scientific and technical information	51.55%	50.39%	40.54%
23. Do staff performing food safety inspection and supervision have enough access to modern, reliable technology to be able to quickly exchange relevant information with all levels of the National Administration of Food Safety? (A.2.2.4)	A.3.2. Strengthen staff capacity	49.48%	48.06%	42.34%
25. The CA actively cooperates with one or more reputable establishments on food safety such as training facilities or reference testing laboratories to support staff capacity building and create conditions for staff to participate in professional association? (D.1.1.3)	D.1.1 Ability of CA to access updated scientific and technical information	53.26%	53.49%	45.05%
26. Within the scope of operations, does the CA delegate some food safety	A.1.2. Institutional framework	30.58%	41.09%	45.95%

Evaluation criteria in the survey questions	Competency groups are assessed according to FAO/WHO FCSA	Responsive rate according to FCSA standards		
		Agriculture and Rural Development	Health	Industry and Trade
control functions to other state or private units? (A.1.2.5)				
34. Does the CA conduct an analysis of the capacity development needs of food production and business establishments to inform and plan appropriate food safety awareness campaigns, training, and education? (C.1.1.1)	C.1.1. Relations between the CA and the private sector regarding training needs	48.45%	53.49%	59.46%
37. What is the role of associations of food producers and traders in terms of coordination with CA in providing association members with all information on quality and food safety? (C.1.2.1)	C.1.2. Information flow and integration of food production and business establishments into risk management	49.83%	51.16%	48.65%
46. Does the CA participate in supporting the development of international trade by taking an active, public communication approach to quality and food safety regulations, control measures requirements and records according to standards international? (C.2.1.1)	C.2.1. Interaction between CAs at international level	50.86%	37.21%	57.66%
47. Does the CA provide implementation methods and guidance so that trading partners can easily access updated information on quality requirements, food safety as well as implementation control measures? (C.2.1.2)	C.2.1. Interaction between CAs at international level	56.36%	49.61%	66.67%
48. Does the CA participate in the activities of international organizations such as Codex and use the standards and guidelines of those organizations in food safety control activities? (C.2.2.1; C.2.2.2; C.2.2.3; C.2.2.4)	C.2.2. Participation of CAs with international organizations	50.17%	60.47%	42.34%
49. The effectiveness of the link between the National Food Safety Authority and the academic sector (universities, research institutes, other expert groups...) to provide appropriate information to evaluate and respond to issues about food safety and fraud? (D.2.2.1)	D.2.2 Mechanism to ensure review of the latest scientific and technical information on food control	42.27%	38.76%	44.14%
50. Does the CA have enough infrastructure and technical capacity to	D.1.2 Capacity to collect and analyze data for risk analysis	50.86%	45.74%	47.75%

Evaluation criteria in the survey questions	Competency groups are assessed according to FAO/WHO FCSA	Responsive rate according to FCSA standards		
		Agriculture and Rural Development	Health	Industry and Trade
collect data to support food safety risk analysis activities? (D.1.2.1)				
52. Is there a monitoring system that integrates information from the entire food chain to help better understand food safety risks and identify and collect data on specific “product-hazard” pairs? (D.1.2.4; D.1.2.5)	D.1.2 Capacity to collect and analyze data for risk analysis	43.30%	38.76%	53.15%
53. Determining data needs for food safety risk assessment, developing necessary data and data from regular food safety inspection and monitoring programs to collect information for risk analysis activities new or existing? (D.1.2.6; D.1.2.7)	D.1.2 Capacity to collect and analyze data for risk analysis	47.42%	48.84%	53.15%
54. Conduct targeted research to identify specific food sources, epidemiological characteristics of foodborne diseases, and estimate the social burden of foodborne diseases (rate of new cases). and data on disease severity) to have evidence of prioritization for each food safety risk? (D.1.2.8; D.1.2.9)	D.1.2 Capacity to collect and analyze data for risk analysis	32.30%	37.21%	40.54%
55. Understand the principles of risk analysis and risk management framework applied in processes related to developing laws, standards, policies and guidelines? (D.1.3.1)	D.1.3 CAs' knowledge and intended use of the risk analysis framework	50.17%	46.51%	55.86%
56. Implement a risk prioritization approach to guide, inform and direct the effective use of resources for risk management? (D.1.3.2; D.1.3.3)	D.1.3 CAs' knowledge and intended use of the risk analysis framework	41.24%	41.09%	49.55%
57. The coordination of national authorities to assess risks and the results of risk assessment and estimation can be scientifically argued using qualitative, semi-quantitative or quantitative methods and establish a risk classification framework? (D.1.3.4; D.1.3.5; D.1.3.6)	D.1.3 CAs' knowledge and intended use of the risk analysis framework	42.96%	37.98%	42.34%
58. Regulations and documents for implementing food safety risk ranking to promote the development of a national food safety and quality monitoring program? (B.2.1.2)	B.2.1 Food chain monitoring program	50,6%	34.11%	48.65%

Evaluation criteria in the survey questions	Competency groups are assessed according to FAO/WHO FCSA	Responsive rate according to FCSA standards		
		Agriculture and Rural Development	Health	Industry and Trade
59. Regulations and records documenting information from the food safety risk classification framework for foods provided by food production and business operators to the CA to develop a national food safety monitoring program? (B.2.1.4)	B.2.1 Food chain monitoring program	49.83%	34.88%	45.95%
60. What is the use and effectiveness of IT systems to record, analyze and share data obtained during the process of controlling food safety, monitoring food safety incidents, food poisoning, and foodborne diseases? (A.2.2.3)	A.2.2. Infrastructure and equipment	38.83%	44.19%	38.74%
61. Implementation and records documenting coordination with testing facilities to create analysis plans for regular inspection of food safety, sampling program to monitor food safety risks, prioritize, and monitor Food poisoning, foodborne disease and scientific activities related to food safety? (A.2.3.1)	A.2.3. Analytical resources	50.17%	52.71%	46.85%
63.Regulations, procedures for classifying and inspecting similar food groups? (B.1.1.6)	B.1.1 Domestic control	62.20%	40.31%	58.56%
64. Tracking record and effectiveness of food safety control for food packaging, labeling and advertising activities within the scope of control? (A.1.3.11)	A.1.3. Elements of food control legislation	52.58%	47.29%	53.15%
71. Develop content, plan and documents to implement imported food safety control? (A.1.3.6)	A.1.3. Elements of food control legislation	47,08%	41,86%	46,85%
80. Regulate and manage, update registration documents, and periodically evaluate food importers' compliance with food safety regulations? (B.1.2.1)	B.1.2. Import control	55.33%	49.61%	55,86%
81. Are good import practices developed, promulgated and used as a basis for imported food control activities? (B.1.2.2)	B.1.2. Import control	47,08%	45,74%	55.86%
82. The imported food control program based on risk analysis, reference to relevant information, history of food safety of imported food... is developed and implemented according to plan,	B.1.2. Import control	47.42%	48.06%	56.76%

Evaluation criteria in the survey questions	Competency groups are assessed according to FAO/WHO FCSA	Responsive rate according to FCSA standards		
		Agriculture and Rural Development	Health	Industry and Trade
including consideration to existing resources? (B.1.2.3; B.1.2.4)				
83. Regulations on mechanisms for collecting and analyzing information to allow identification of food safety incidents? (B.2.3.2)	B.2.3. Managing food safety emergencies	47.77%	48.84%	52.25%
88. Is there a fully functional Indicator Based Surveillance System (IBS) and Records to monitor trends, forecast, and detect foodborne disease outbreaks? (B.2.2.1)	B.2.2. Surveillance of foodborne disease	43.64%	35.66%	41.44%
89. Is there a fully functional Event-Based Surveillance System (EBS) and Foodborne Event Detection Profile? (B.2.2.2)	B.2.2. Surveillance of foodborne disease	37.11%	32.56%	34.23%
90. Have an IBS system that includes laboratory analysis to determine the cause of foodborne disease (especially diarrhea), investigation of food hazards associated with cases and outbreaks, help better understand trends in foodborne disease to increase sensitivity and specificity for detecting outbreaks? (B.2.2.3)	B.2.2. Surveillance of foodborne disease	40.21%	37.21%	35.14%
91. Perform rapid risk assessment for serious public health events within the scope of food safety inspection and control? (B.2.2.4)	B.2.2. Surveillance of foodborne disease	45.70%	44.96%	43.24%
92. Ability to respond to multidisciplinary outbreaks and use analytical epidemiology during foodborne outbreak investigations? (B.2.2.5)	B.2.2. Surveillance of foodborne disease	47.42%	42.64%	35.14%
93. Effective multi-disciplinary coordination, rapid information exchange and laboratory analysis support during the investigation of foodborne disease outbreaks? (B.2.2.6)	B.2.2. Surveillance of foodborne disease	48.45%	51.94%	45.95%
96. Is the risk analysis framework appropriately used to anticipate appropriate response actions to food safety emergencies? (B.2.3.7)	B.2.3. Managing food safety emergencies	48.11%	44.96%	55.86%
100. How does the capacity (technique, equipment, personnel, testing quality assurance system, etc.) of the	A.2.3 Analytical resources	61.51%	49.61%	58.56%



Evaluation criteria in the survey questions	Competency groups are assessed according to FAO/WHO FCSA	Responsive rate according to FCSA standards		
		Agriculture and Rural Development	Health	Industry and Trade
designated, authorized or hired testing facility meet the needs of food safety control? for imported and exported food? (A.2.3.2; A.2.3.3)				
105. Are detailed procedures for implementing food control activities at the border documented, fully provided, available to all enforcement officers at the border, and applied properly? (B.1.2.5)	B.1.2. Import control	52.92%	43.41%	54.05%
110. Apply advanced measures and techniques to manage food safety risks and periodically re-evaluate these measures and techniques to update appropriately? (D.1.3.7; D.1.3.8)	D.1.3 Knowledge and intended use of the risk analysis framework by CA	55.33%	49.61%	58.56%
116. The application of "Foresight" techniques to support a preventive approach to food safety control, early detection of emerging and important problems, helping to make effective policies and decisions? (D.2.2.2)	D.2.2 Mechanism to ensure review of the latest scientific and technical information on food control	43.99%	41.86%	54.95%

5.4 Annex 4. Recommendations to improve efficiency of FS inspection and control (question 117)

1. Increase funding for FS monitoring for provinces (Bac Giang Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
2. Strengthen the capacity of related local agencies (Ha Tinh Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
3. Revise soon the FS Law 2010. There should be consistent regulations on FS management among the different sectors, namely Health, Agriculture, Industry and Trade. (Quang Tri Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
4. Promote the education and dissemination of knowledge and legislation FS in the society (Bac Lieu Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
 - Improve the state management structure on FS in general; and improve FS Sub-Departments, Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Departments, and Market Management Sub-Departments;
 - Increase number of staff in charge of FS activities;
 - Enhance the qualifications of staff in charge of FS management
 - Invest in upgrading facilities, equipment and working conditions for staff in charge of FS management;



- Provide good compensation for staff in charge of FS management;
5. Formulate management regulations that match the actual situation (Ninh Thuan PPSD)
 6. Formulate clear and serious regulations and punishments (Dac Nong Rural Development Sub-Department)
 7. Provide guidelines for consistent implementation and control from the Central level to local level (An Giang Fisheries Sub-Department)
 8. Strengthen the training for staff in charge of FS inspect and control. Invest in quick test equipment, direct supervision at production and business site. Supplement funds for implementation (Tay Ninh Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
 9. Develop institutions and policies, including a national monitoring framework program on FS for consistent implementation across the country. Increase resources (training of staff in charge of FS manage, including implementation of FS monitoring programs; invest in provision of equipment and funding for supervision...); assess and manage FS risks; conduct risk communication to food producers and consumers... (DAH)
 10. Strengthen the communication and dissemination of relevant legislation. Strengthen the state management capacity and coordination between related departments and agencies, People's Committees of districts, towns and cities in FS assurance. Provide enough equipment and instruments for FS monitoring; arrange specialized and experienced human resources (Tay Ninh Sub-DAH)
 11. Maintain consistency and transparency of CAs and FBOs (Thai Nguyên Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
 12. Organize regular training for staff in charge of FS inspection and control (Tra Vinh Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
 13. Study to produce quick test equipment which is used for field testing, cheap and accessible for consumers. In the short term, it is necessary to continue to have mobile food testing machines at markets to facilitate inspection and help consumers have basis to distinguish safe and unsafe products, thereby to protect their rights (Quality, Processing and Market Development Division, DARD)
 14. Pay attention to enhancing professional knowledge and training to improve knowledge, capacity and qualification for staff in charge of FS inspection (Crop Production and Plant Protection Division, DARD)
 15. Promote communication (provincial Fisheries Sub-department)
 - Train staff in charge of FS and sampling
 - Strengthen inspection work
 - Raise punishment levels for FS violations.
 16. Have regulations on criminal handling for serious violations that still take place despite repeated treatments, attribute responsibilities to the persons who see violations but do not handle such violations. In the implementation, the responsibilities of heads of relevant governmental authorities at different levels, CAs and State management agencies related to FS must be clarified. In addition, it is necessary to continue to reorganize the linkage from production to consumption (Quang Ngai Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)

17. Strengthen the inspection and control activities by functional agencies to strictly handle violations; strengthen and improve the effectiveness of the coordination among relevant agencies; have staff to participate in training and courses on professional issues and sampling of agricultural input materials and agricultural, forestry and fishery products, specialized inspection and State management (Nam Dinh Sub-DAH)
18. Strengthen training for staff in charge of FS work of CAs at different levels. Review the system of national FS standards and regulations for easy updating (Quang Ngai Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
19. Issue sufficient technical regulations related to FS in fisheries to serve the management activities (Thanh Hoa Fisheries Sub-Department)
20. Provide more qualified staff, quick test equipment for FS inspection and control; Improve professional qualifications for staff in charge of FS work. Revise and supplement the FS QCVN and TCVN systems. The system of FS management agencies has not been synchronous and consistent from the central to local levels (Quality, Processing and Market Development Division, Hai Duong DARD)
21. Provide more resources (Ninh Thuan Fisheries Sub-Department)
22. Issue decisions and plan for annual FS inspection and control, including specific assignment of tasks for individual capable and functional units. Organize regularly capacity building training for those involved in FS inspection and control (Nam Dinh Fisheries Sub-Department)
23. Strengthen FS communication (Inspectorate of Thanh Hoa DARD)
24. Develop a full legal framework; strengthen the coordination among relevant sectors and agencies in FS control; improve people's awareness of FS (Inspectorate of MARD)
25.
 1. Improve communication to persuade producers, businesses and consumers to follow strictly FS regulations (Thanh Hoa Sub-DAH)
 2. Strengthen inspection, supervision and handling of violations as regulated.
 3. Develop livestock production chains in close linkage with safe processing and consumption.
26. Provide more specialized staff; supply sufficient specialized equipment; provide professional training on FS for managers (Thanh Hoa Sub-PPD)
27. Formulate nationally consistent plans on the indicators to be analyzed, the type of food to be monitored (Inspectorate of Ca Mau DARD)
28. Propose that CAs formulate and issue relevant technical standards and regulations to match diversified products available in the market. (Dong Thap Sub-PPD)
29. Formulate a single agency for FS management (Binh Dinh Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
30. Introduce clear, timely and suitable regulations ((Inspectorate of Thanh Hoa DARD)
31. Organize soon in-depth training on FS inspection and control (Phu Yen Fisheries Sub-department)
32. Continue to pay attention to training for professional improvement for staff in charge of quality, FS and processing management, and staff in charge of market development from provincial to local levels. - Request the MARD and specialized management departments to provide professional guidelines on the content of guidance, examination and

- assessment of processing and storage development in agriculture, forestry and fisheries (Quang Ninh Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
33. Enhance professional capacity (Long An Sub-DAH)
 34. Continue the communication and dissemination of information to related establishments on how to manage, process and establish food value chains. Apply relevant technologies to analyze, treat, preserve and process clean and high-value products (Quang Ngai Sub-DAH)
 35. Specify FS inspection assignments among related agencies, based on products or HS codes. (Sub-PPD)
 36. Conduct well local authorities' control of business registration: provide frequent training to enhance professional capacity of staff in charge of FS work (Ninh Thuan Sub-DAH)
 37. Provide training and funding to perform well the State management of FS (Sub-PPD)
 38. Strengthen training (Hung Yen Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
 39. Increase human, financial and equipment resources; Strengthen the coordination of functional agencies at different levels; Enhance communication to better people's awareness of safe food consumption; Promote trade linkages to find markets for agricultural products (Nam Dinh Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
 40. Enhance communication and dissemination of FS knowledge, raise FBOs' awareness of FS hazards, legal regulations on FS... Strengthen inspection and sampling to check FS and quality and ward risks Ha Noi Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
 41. Increase number and capacity of implementation staff, clarify the writing in implementing documents to match readers from different regions, procure quick and effective test equipment to meet FS demands of importing and exporting markets (Ca Mau Sub-PPD)
 42. Improve monitoring system from local level, ensure traceability for FS inspection and control (Quang Ngai Sub-DAH)
 43. Ensure to improve the local system of FS monitoring and easy traceability to raise product values (Quang Ngai Sub-DAH)
 44. Enhance training on FS knowledge (Phu Tho Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
 45. Conduct FS communication to enhance people's awareness; strengthen inspection, control and decentralization to local agencies; introduce tough punishments for FBOs violating FS legislation... (Quang Ngai Fisheries Sub-department)
 46. Enhance the role of third party's FS inspection and oversight of FBOs; enhance communication and visual training to introduce relevant legal documents for people (Ho Chi Minh DARD)
 47. Strengthen inspection and control. Apply favourable policies and compensation means, enhance professional and management capacity, upgrade analysis and testing laboratories. Assess and analyse regularly FS risks to have warning in order to prevent possible risks (Inspectorate of Ho Chi Minh DARD)

48. Recommend: (Soc Trang Fisheries Sub-department)
 - 1/ Training to enhance capacity of staff in charge of FS inspection.
 - 2/ Assignment of FS-specialized tasks.
 - 3/ Enhance communication.
 - 4/ Apply punishments which are tough enough to implement FS regulations
49. Update regularly law-guiding documents (Bac Ninh FS Management Board)
50. Strengthen capacity of staff in charge of FS inspection and control (Ho Chi Minh Fisheries Sub-department)
51. Improve the State management structure in the field of FS toward a single contact agency in charge of food security and safety assurance from the Central to local level (Kon Tum Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
52. Strengthen the training for FS management staff working in the field of crop production and plant protection. Supplementing Circulars, guidelines and technical standards for safe production. Intensify inspection and deterrent handling of smallholder farmers. Supplement the regulations on protecting production and living environment, limiting waste as well as chemical pollutants for soil and water sources, thereby affecting the food quality safety of agricultural products (Tien Giang Sub-PPD)
53. Provide funding and equipment for FS inspection and control activities and food testing, and control food chain and food in the market (Inspectorate of Lao Cai DOH)
54. Improve technical regulations and regulations related to FS inspection and control; strengthen human resources to perform the State management of FS (especially at district level) (Binh Thuan DOIT)
55. Provide more human and financial resources (Thai Nguyen DOIT)
56. Introduce clear assignments, specific regulations on favourable conditions for staff in charge of FS control, regulations on timely rewarding and sanctioning (Lang Son DOIT)
57. Strengthen handling measures (Thanh Hoa FS Sub-department)
58. Formulate coordination mechanisms for FS management (Dong Thap DOIT)
59. Enhance efficiency and effectiveness of FS inspection and control (Phu Yen DOIT)
60. Organize training courses for FS management staff from the areas managed by industry and trade sector (Cao Bang DOIT)
61. Have a single contact agency for FS management; provide training to enhance capacity of staff, increase funding (Thua Thien-Hue SF Sub-department)
62. Issue guiding documents for timely implementation of FS work (Inspectorate of Lang Son DOH)
63. Enhance collaboration among the State agencies involved in FS inspection and control (Phu Tho DOIT)
64. Introduce the same guiding documents for all the three sectors to have consistent and effective management, monitoring and control of risks (Quang Tri FS Sub-department)
65. Enhance the updating of new knowledge, raise funding for FS activities (Tra Vinh FS Sub-department)
66. Enhance collaboration among the sectors involved in FS management (Phu Tho DOIT)
67. Introduce specific and clear legal documents on FS to have basis for detailed planning of FS inspection and control. The current documents are often amended, supplemented

- and adjusted, which results in difficulty for those implementing FS inspection and control.
- The sampling of fresh products is very difficult, and, limited funding sometimes results in ineffective inspection and control.
 - The Industry and Trade sector manages some packed products and this is easy as they can check origin and deadline. However, it is difficult to control street food (Phu Tho DOIT)
68. Invest more funding and specialized equipment to support inspection and control activities; provide professional training for staff in charge of FS; strengthen communication directly to staff in charge of FS; introduce mechanisms to control food transacted through e-commerce and social media (Lang Son FS Sub-department)
 69. Invest more financial and physical resources for FS management. Introduce proper mechanisms (Hai Phong FS Sub-department)
 70. Agree upon a contact agency to manage and invest sufficiently in infrastructure and for management (Bac Lieu FS Sub-department).
 71. Conduct regular communication and information to enhance FBOs' awareness in ensuring FS before the products reach consumers (Dak Nong DOIT)
 72. Invest funding and provide training of human resource (Phu Tho FS Sub-department)
 73. Regulate a single contact agency to prevent the fact the too many agencies are managing FS at the same time (Bac Lieu DOIT)
 74. Organize regular training on sampling for staff in charge of FS inspection (Tra Vinh DOIT)
 75. Improve the system of legal documents on FS; enhance communication and dissemination of legislation, especially contamination risks; establish a board specialized in FS; organize training for professional staff; supplement funding and enhance testing capacity and scope of related units; apply information technology; strengthen FS inspection and monitoring (Hai Duong DOIT)
 76. Enhance professional training and provide sufficient infrastructure for FS activities, enhance communication and education of FS legislation (Phu Tho DOIT)
 77. Improve the FS structure toward a single contact agency which has advising function to provincial People's Committees in performing the State management of FS so as to ensure the scientificness, strictness and effectiveness; solve the current problem of overlapping and unstrict management of FS (Son La DOIT)
 78.
 - Continue to enhance post-inspection activities, provide FBOs with guidelines to comply with relevant legislation on FS;
 - Enhance the collaboration among related agencies to prevent overlapping responsibilities for the State management of FS.
 - Continue to improve the State management structure for FS to ensure consistency, harmonization and effectiveness (Binh Dinh DOIT)
 79. Establish inspection missions and, at the same time, take samples to analyse the hazards at the inspection time. Increase punishments for administrative violations (Tra Vinh FS Sub-department)
 80. Enhance effectiveness of FS inspection and monitoring at FBOs (Dien Bien DOIT)
 81. Enhance professional qualification (DOIT)

82. Improve the document system, human resources and equipment as well as facilities to implement their tasks (Quang Tri FS Sub-department)
83. Organize professional training for FS staff, especially staff at district and commune levels; invest in improving equipment and facilities for FS inspection, control and monitoring (Phu Tho FS Sub-department)
84. Improve relevant legislation (Ben Tre FS Sub-department)
85. Continue DOIT's enhancement and participation in coordinated inspection and monitoring of FS (Binh Phuoc DOIT)
86. Conduct legislation communication. Provide professional training on inspection and control (Thanh Hoa DOH)
87. 1) Continue to improve capacity of FS structure
2) Enhance FS testing capacity (Inspectorate of Lai Chau DOH)
88. Organize in-depth training for staff in charge of FS at provincial, district and commune level; invest in equipment and facilities for monitoring (Phu Tho FS Sub-department)
89. Strengthen the oversight of food poisoning inspection along the chain, from the Central to local level; strengthen training on FS (Bac Giang FS Sub-department)
90. Intensify inspection and post-inspection, and handle strictly violations (this is a necessary, urgent, deterrent, educational and preventive solution); disclose transparently violation cases to the public so that the public know and boycott dirty products and food (Ninh Thuan FS Sub-department)
91. Define compensation mechanisms for staff in charge of FS, unify the documents related to FS, provide frequent training for staff in charge of FS (Lai Chau FS Sub-department)
92. Organize regularly training courses to enhance professional capacity of staff in charge of FS inspection and control. Provide more funding for State management agencies in charge of FS so that the FS inspection and control can be regularly, continuously and effectively implemented (Cao Bang FS Sub-department)
93. – Pilot a provincial FS Management Department to reduce contact agencies, decentralization and inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms... Enhance the management efficiency and effectiveness, attribute specific main responsibilities for FS to a main unit.
 - Formulate FS division/board model at district, town and provincial city level, and this division/board works independently in the areas as assigned.
 - Formulate a work position scheme, build a human resource with sufficient number and quality to implement the assigned tasks.
 - Apply special mechanisms on salary to meet demand and attract talented and qualified staff.... (Lai Chau Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Management Sub-Department)
94. Issue a mechanism for coordination among agencies related to FS management (Soc Trang DOIT)
95. Define specific provisions in legal documents (Ha Tinh DOIT)
96. Enhance inspection and handling of administrative violations (Ninh Thuan DOH)
97. Organize training courses for individual management sectors (Kien Giang DOIT)
98. Agree upon a single ministry/agency to manage FS to promote their responsibilities, prevent overlapping between sectors and in the same sectors, with decentralization at commune, district and provincial levels; define clear mechanisms in the Law to clarify

functions and structure of FS management agencies to prevent the fact that different provinces have different ways of doing; improve State management regulations that are not proper or feasible; provide means to test quickly and disclose unbiased results at once. Introduce strict and safe measures for sample taking and storage; staff performing FS inspection and control must be familiar with the relevant legislation, have some certain administrative skills and good health (preferably selected through examination of legislation knowledge and skills for document preparation, presentation, situation handling; profession, public work performance... following guidelines of “ Physical, Verbal/Language, Writing, Judging” abilities); regulate moral standards for the staff involved in inspection and control, and have proper special compensation policies; disseminate food hygiene and safety knowledge to people on different channels so that people can understand well and comply with the FS assurance regulations (Long An FS Sub-department)

99. Establish a FS warning system for all CAs, this system must be continuously updated and provided with accurate information. The information may be provided by CAs or people or businesses... The executing agency is responsible to explain social opinions publicly and transparently on FS management situation on the website (Long An FS Sub-department)
100. – Improve capacity of FS management structure
 - Enhance capacity of staff in charge of FS
 - Enhance capacity of FS testing system
 - Promote education, communication and dissemination of knowledge and legislation on FSP
 - Strengthen inspection, control and handling of FS violations (Lao Cai DOH)
101. Provide professional training, supplement human resources, increase funding, empower administrative punishments for Director, improve FS management structure at local level (Quang Binh FS Sub-department)
102. Concentrate FS inspection in a contact agency, meaning that DOH, DOIT and DARD should be merged (Tay Ninh FS Sub-department)
103. Agree upon a single agency for FS management from Central to district level. Specify power for FS inspection from Central to district level (Inspectorate of Vinh Long DOH)
104. Revise legal documents related to FS inspection and control to add guidelines on specific implementation procedures so that related local agencies can do consistently.
 - Establish a shared network at the national scale to manage dossiers of FBOs, from their establishment, licensing to inspection and violation handling history, to facilitate the information management and traceability.
 - Provide regular training to enhance professional capacity of local FS management staff in inspection, control and trouble shooting. (Vinh Long FS Sub-department)

5.5 Annex 5 Description of Questionnaires

A. RESPONDENTS

Based on the current legislation on assignment and decentralization of FS inspection and control in Viet Nam, the questionnaire refers to the assessment of communication, coordination and support between CAs and the interactive relations between the CAs and those related to

food quality and safety, including the laboratories that are nominated, authorized or provide sample analysis services, agencies authorized to implement FS inspection and control, research institutions, academia involved in FS risk analysis and assessment, mass media, FBO associations, actors in the food chains (from production, distribution, storage, wholesale, retail to consumption). This interaction represents their role and importance and helps identify capacity and areas for improvement by CAs implementing FS inspection and control, the main respondents of the assessment questions in the FAO/WHO FCSA tool.

B. STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

- **Part I: Introduction**

This part introduces SAFEGRO project, tasks under Component 1 and Activity 1112.1.2, commitment to keep the responses confidential and follow the uses of survey results.

- **Part II: Some abbreviations**
- **Part III: Guidelines to answer the questionnaire**
- **Part IV: General information**

This part includes procedural questions on administrative information for respondents

- **Part V. Survey content**

The questionnaire includes 116 questions (from 1 to 116), related to information from the competency criteria of the national FS control system in the FAO/WHO FCSA tool, selecting the most suitable criteria for Viet Nam, continuing and confirming some elements which have been surveyed on FS incident handling, food poisoning and FBDs.

This part separates main groups of system competencies, by the indicators and guidance of ACs in the FAO/WHO FCSA tool, based on the principle that the ACs are interactive (e.g., the legal framework has influence on infrastructure, human resources and the relationship among stakeholders...). The questions are divided into different sections, and each section includes a group of system competencies with multiple questions covering different aspects of the system. The professional questions are based on the selected core issues, use clear and easy-to-understand words so that the respondents have the best possible objective and accurate answers. The respondents, based on their actual conditions and existing recording, can select 1 from 3 alternative response options (meet fully, meet partially, not meet or not implement), and can provide some evidence or signs to have assessment and responses to a question. Particularly, this part consists of:

- A. **Legal base, infrastructure and finances of CAs**
 - B. **Human resources of CAs**
 - C. **Coordination, interaction with stakeholders**
 - D. **Scientific base and FS inspection as well as control**
 - E. **Emergencies, FBDs and FS incidents**
 - F. **Quality management and continuous improvement**
- **Part VI. Recommendations to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of FS inspection and control**

The consultant team also designs an open question at the end of the questionnaire (question 117 in the survey form) so that the respondents can provide their recommendations for better efficiency and effectiveness of the FS inspection and control. This open question aims to get exactly the personal ideas from the respondents, based on their actual conditions and experiences in all aspects related to CAs and FS inspection and control from the viewpoint of the implementers in the context of Viet Nam. It is expected to collect diversified and objective ideas to help the consultant team confirm the relevance of its recommendations. Based on analyzing the survey results and comparing with respondents' ideas, the consultant team prepares a report with recommendations for the competent persons to select the optimum measures to raise CAs' capacity, improve effectiveness of the national control system.
