

Issue brief

# Ensuring safe and healthy food in a competing world

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Safe, good quality food is essential to food security, public health and long term economic development. The Centre for Development Innovation delivers services in the area of food safety, animal and plant health that enables individuals, organizations of and groups of stakeholders to improve their performance and become more confident in managing relevant aspects of food health and safety governance in the context of developing and emerging economies.

In the past governments and sector development organizations often focused on technical support and the improvement of infrastructure. This approach delivered very tacit but short term successes: laboratory capacities were improved to monitor diseases or residues of veterinary drugs in shrimp, but capacities to collect samples and to follow up on health hazards were still very limited. Often these constraints were not adequately identified and taken up in development projects.

In many cases we learned that oversight in techno-managerial aspects, and efforts to engage specific interests and capacities from both public and private organisations are crucial to achieve comprehensive and effective governance systems.



The Centre for Development Innovation (CDI) is the knowledge broker of Wageningen University & Research centre (Wageningen UR). We have built an extensive international track record on issues such as food and nutrition security; sustainable markets; adaptive agriculture; ecosystem governance; conflict, disaster and reconstruction; and innovation and change. In our experience, only an integrated approach leads to sustainable change. Our staff have a unique combination of substantive knowledge, an international network and excellent process management qualities. In this issue brief we would like to share how we deal with ensuring safe and healthy food for everybody and illustrate this with a number of examples.

At CDI we believe that by investing in efforts to get these organisations to work better together, food production and marketing will be better geared to the needs of the people in developing countries and emerging economies. Improvements will be reflected in laws, regulations and policies, good practices tailored to increase health and welfare of the population.

## Engaging in personal and organizational competencies

In the MATRA-MTEC<sup>1</sup> Strengthening Food Safety Systems training programme we trained government officials from new and candidate Member States of the European Union.

<sup>1</sup> MATRA – MTEC: *Maatschappelijk Tranformatieprogramma - Matra Training Program for European Cooperation*: The Matra Programme aims to contribute to the transformation process in Central and Eastern European countries towards a modern democratic state of law and a multiform society. Funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Royal Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The trainees learned how to implement EU regulations in their own countries, making use of existing governance structures, but also how to manage the interests and to involve capacities of various stakeholders, such as producer organisations, veterinary service providers, consumer interest associations, retail organizations, etc. Participants highly valued sharing experiences as well as receiving practical tools to engage in processes which aim to create the desired institutional change in their own countries.

In Indonesia we assisted the Quarantine Agency of the Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen their food safety inspection and certification for the import and export of food. Having received the mandate to implement food safety inspections at border control stations, the Agency expressed the need to conduct technical competency trainings. However, we realised together that better inspection performance also required organizational changes. To enable this we included managerial and policy making officials within the ministry to align with the desired changes in governing the Agency. Coordinating staff at the national Agency as well as inspectors at the stations in the regions, appreciated the techno-managerial approach and gained confidence to continue to adjust the Agency to their new tasks.

### **Take CDI with you on your journey**

Our staff will assist and guide you through the steps to design process of learning and development which will lead to sustained improvements in ensuring healthy and safe food. Let us help you to take stock of the wealth of experience in multi-stakeholder processes, organizational



and institutional change in the area of safe and healthy food in developing countries and emerging economies. Whether you are looking for an intensive three week training course or a comprehensive tailor made change programme, or if you would like to know how you can benefit from our approach, please contact us!

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