



## CI's involvement in Food and Nutrition-

Consumers International has been working on food issues over the past 30 to secure consumers' rights to safe and nutritious food.

- A key motivation for CI to work on food issues is to ensure that governments and Local authorities – among other stakeholders such as corporations, and civil society – live up to their national and international commitments in promoting this basic right.

Highlights from previous food programme

- working with Codex Alimentarius to set fair food standards
- lobbying and campaigning for safety, labeling, traceability and liability of products and foods derived from GMO's
- Promoting and advocating for adoption of sustainable models of production and consumption
- Campaigning to fight sugar consumption and obesity with WHO
- Promoting the implementation of WHO global strategy on diet, physical activity and health for prevention of non communicable diseases

## CI's involvement in Food and Nutrition (Cont'd)

- At the grass roots level
  - Promoting nutrition security by helping to educate consumers and distributing information on nutritional facts, informative labelling, SVF and hygiene practices
  - Implementing pilot projects for access to basic commodities, water and sanitation by disadvantaged communities especially women and children
  - School feeding programmes and feeding programmes for under 5's

## CI's work on food safety issues

Work has involved looking at:

- Changes in the operation of food systems
- Adulteration of foods
- Pesticides in foods
- Nutritional quality
- Food irradiation
- Food market stabilisation and security
- Marketing practices and advertising

## CI's work on food cont'd

- Established regional food networks, exchanged information
- Healthy Foods Safe food, Responsible consumers campaign
- Advocating at Codex level
- CI's Global Street foods programme; CI Africa member surveys in 18 countries (on policy review of the regulatory environment to improve safe foods)  
(also hoped to initiate advocacy campaigns with different stakeholders, vendor training programmes in good hygiene practices, results formed part of the material content to develop CI's microsite on the street food sector.

## Consumer concerns on Food Safety

- Concerned about lack of comprehensive laws and regulations to safeguard consumers (CI is working to develop comprehensive CPL in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia)
- In SA where the law was recently passed, have introduced quality and safety guarantees, products fit for purpose, truthful and clear labelling, consumers right to simplified information in plain and understandable language
  - The law makes provision for market surveillance to ensure compliance
  - Sanctions effected for non compliance to compulsory specifications
  - Evaluation of food safety systems
  - Interpretation of food standards ( e.g. meats, canned meals, fish
  - Effective inspection, policing and effective recourse
- From farm to fork all food products need to respect food safety standards and reduce risks to consumers
- Also concerned about levels of pesticides in foods, use of hormones as feed additives, and the hygienic nature of food production and distribution

## CI and Food Safety Communication

- Promotion of consumer rights and respect for consumers concerns
- Engaging in research, campaigning and training activities
- Regional food networks for increased exchange and sharing
- National level initiatives by CI members in respective countries
- Advocacy and lobbying in international committees
  - For example: CI's representation in Codex committees
- Capacity Building of CI members

## Food Safety communication

- WHO recognises that safe food is a shared responsibility between govt, industry and consumers
- Multistakeholder working approaches to be used
  - CO's to be involved and supported as they have the mandate to represent, educate and communicate to consumers
  - CI has used various methods to communicate information among members and general consumers such as:
    - Regular monthly bulletins
    - Public sensitisation, education and awareness programmes
    - Media campaigns waged through print and radio networks
    - Increased capacity building of COs to lobby and campaign
    - Strengthening regional and global alliances among members and other civil society organizations

## Conclusion

- Food safety a shared responsibility and an ongoing regulatory responsibility
- Stakeholders to communicate best practices for enhanced food safety and potential risks
- Information should be clear, concise and timely (avoid sensationalising)
- Where uncertainties exist in information or underlying science, this should be acknowledged for transparency and balance

Thank you!