Food Safety in Low Income Countries

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Impact of foodborne diseases in low-income countries

- Food-borne disease is a major cause of diarrhea
- Up to 90% due to microbes in perishable foods
- Most perishables are sold in informal markets
Safe Food, Fair Food project

risk-based approaches to improving food safety and market access in informal markets in sub Saharan Africa

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Codex Alimentarius Commission framework for food safety risk assessment

- Hazard identification
  - Can it be present in food? Can it cause harm?
- Hazard characterization
  - What harm does it cause? How does harm depend on dose?
- Exposure assessment
  - How does it get from source to victim? What happens along the way?
- Risk characterization
  - What is the impact of the harm? What is its likelihood?
- Risk management/Communication
  - Participatory methods fit well
Key messages 1:

- Informal markets form integral part of African economies
- Hazards are common but risk to human health is not necessarily high
- As value chains become longer, more complex, the risk of foodborne disease increases
- Risks in the informal food chains have been under-researched and need attention
- Most vulnerable are the poor
Key messages 2:

- Surveillance and reporting of food borne diseases is inadequate
- Risks vary and may not be as serious as perceived: food safety policy should be based on evidence not perceptions
- Simple but incentive-based interventions could lead to substantial improvements: legalization of informal markets, prerequisites, training...
Key messages 3:

- Participatory methods are useful in studying food safety risks in informal food chains: fast, affordable, flexible, culture-sensitive, inclusive, capacity-building.
- Food safety needs multi-sectoral and multi-institutional approach.
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https://safefoodfairfood.wordpress.com/

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