

International Livestock Research Institute

Consultative meeting on food safety between the International Livestock Research Institute and the East African Community departments of agriculture, health and trade

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Abbreviations and acronyms

A4NH	CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
EAC	East African Community
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary

Acknowledgements

We thank the East African Community desks on agriculture, health and trade for agreeing to meet with us against the backdrop of many meetings at the close of the year.

We acknowledge funding and logistical support from the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health and the International Livestock Research Institute that made this meeting possible.

We also thank the funders of the collaborative research projects that led to the scientific evidence base on food safety and informal markets in sub-Saharan Africa, namely, the Smallholder Dairy Project (1997–2005, funded by the United Kingdom government), the Safe Food, Fair Food project (2008–16, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), the Rapid Integrated Assessment of Food Safety and Nutrition project (2012–14, funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research), the MyDairy project (2012–18, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland) and the MoreMilk project (2016–21, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the United Kingdom government).

Introduction

Food safety is an integral pillar in the attainment of food security. The East African Community (EAC) member states consider the international Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement and, consequently, food safety as important. Food safety is mentioned in several EAC documents including the EAC Treaty, EAC Development Strategy, EAC Common Market Protocol, EAC Customs Union, EAC Food and Nutrition Security Strategy and Action Plan among other policy instruments.

The CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH), led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), consists of five research flagships, one of which—food safety—is led by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI).

Food safety is key to the attainment of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations: no poverty (SDG 1), zero hunger (SDG 2), good health and wellbeing (SDG 3), gender equality (SDG 5), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) and sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11).

In low- and middle-income countries, significant volumes of animal-source foods and fruits and vegetables are traded in informal markets that lack basic facilities to ensure food safety. For instance, in the EAC countries about 80% of the traded milk is through the informal markets.

Purpose of engagement

ILRI has been leading research on food safety in informal markets in low- and middle-income countries and is interested in partnering with the EAC to scale interventions aimed at improving food safety in informal markets that provide food to over 90% of the population, many of whom are highly vulnerable to foodborne illnesses. This meeting was therefore convened in line with the common interest of EAC and ILRI in food safety; the purpose was to share ideas and findings and discuss how food safety can be improved in informal markets in the EAC member states.

Methods

A roundtable meeting was convened at the EAC Secretariat in Arusha, Tanzania on 10 December 2018 (see Annex 1 for the list of participants and Annex 2 for the program).

Presentations

Food safety overview in the EAC: Fahari Marwa

Food safety is covered under the EAC SPS protocol developed and adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2013. The protocol was ratified by Rwanda in 2014, Kenya in 2016 and Burundi and Uganda in 2017. It is expected that Tanzania will ratify it in 2019 for implementation by all member states. The EAC has developed SPS measures on plant health, food and food safety, fish and fishery products. SPS measures on animal health remain to be finalized before ratification and full implementation. The SPS Bill, SPS Bill Regulations and SPS Standard Operating Procedures are also in place awaiting full ratification of the SPS Protocol by all member states before the Bill is presented to the East African Legislative Assembly for enactment into law.

The EAC SPS Protocol is a milestone towards promoting regional food trade and opening the region to international trade. Apart from the SPS measures, the EAC also has a regional strategy and action plan on aflatoxin prevention and control which was adopted by the 36th Council of Ministers. The secretariat also developed nine multi-sectoral policy briefs with key recommendations to mitigate aflatoxin along food and feed value chains. The five-year (2018–23) EAC Food and Nutrition Security Strategy and Action Plan is another instrument that helps to mainstream food safety in the EAC. The strategy and action plan have been recently adopted by the council of ministers.

Introduction to ILRI and A4NH: Kristina Roesel

ILRI is one of 15 CGIAR research centres that conduct agricultural research for development. ILRI's research portfolio focuses mainly on animal health but includes human health. ILRI works with other CGIAR centres and national and international institutions. A4NH, led by IFPRI, is an example of cross-CGIAR centre collaboration. The program generates food safety evidence at the agriculture–foodborne disease interface, works on institutional innovations to improve safety of animal-source foods and works to better understand how farm-level technologies can reduce exposure to foodborne disease.

Why food safety? Kristina Roesel

The global burden of foodborne disease is of similar magnitude to that of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), malaria or tuberculosis, according to a 2015 report¹ by Havelaar et al. Worldwide, foodborne disease accounts for over 600 million cases and over 420,000 deaths annually; 40% of these occur in children under five years old. The foods incriminated are meat, eggs, fish, vegetables, milk and fruits, in order of importance. Low- and middle-income countries are more at risk due to low investments in food safety for capacity building of food producers and handlers and providing an enabling working environment. Approaches that leverage consumer demand and willingness to pay for safe food pull the supply side to provide safe food, leading to a win–win situation which could be sustainable. This approach requires investment in building capacity of the regulators and value chain actors and monitoring and legitimizing value chains for actors to get the incentives to provide safe food.

Why informal markets? Erastus Kang'ethe

Informal markets are important as they contribute 20–60% of the gross domestic product of sub-Saharan countries. They are important for livelihoods and food and nutrition security. Our research shows that hazards (pathogens or contaminants) are common but may not necessarily pose a risk to the consumer (risk being the probability of a hazard to occur × its health and economic impact). Informal markets are not necessarily dangerous and formal markets are not necessarily safe; problems exist in both markets, but informal markets are perceived to be unsafe due to their appearance and heterogeneity. We found that using participatory methods can improve food safety in informal markets and that capacity building of farmers, traders, retailers, and other food chain actors is important to manage risks combined with understanding incentives for adopting new technologies and changing behaviour. In sub-Saharan Africa, understanding values and cultures in the informal set-ups is crucial for food safety management.

The plenary discussed extensively what is regarded as 'formal' and 'informal' markets and agreed that we need to evaluate if the current definition of 'informal' applies to the EAC situation or if there is a need to formulate a definition specific for the region. The role of metals as contaminants in foods in the region is causing concerns although the disease burden attributable to metals is low in comparison to microbes.

¹ Havelaar AH, Kirk MD, Torgerson PR, Gibb HJ, Hald T, Lake RJ, et al. 2015. World Health Organization global estimates and regional comparisons of the burden of foodborne disease in 2010. *PLOS Medicine* 12(12): e1001923. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001923>

Training in food safety in the EAC: Erastus Kang'ethe

ILRI is focusing on building capacity in three areas:

1. ILRI to revisit the 2009 and 2014 trainings under the Safe Food, Fair Food project and plan another round of training to cover all EAC member states and Ethiopia. In addition, a situation analysis study on food safety (including animal-source food, vegetables and horticulture) will be done in all EAC countries and Ethiopia. It will include comparison with an unpublished report from 2009 for Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia. Prior to finalization, the draft reports will be discussed at the country level and regionally for endorsement and to develop action plans.
2. Development of continuing professional development modules for public health professionals to enable them to manage public health and food safety transformation effectively in the EAC. ILRI hopes to partner with veterinary associations, veterinary boards/councils and human public health professional bodies to develop and roll out the program.
3. Development of a food safety curriculum for the EAC. ILRI and partners will work with universities, commissions for university education and the Inter-University Council for East Africa to develop, pilot and roll out the curriculum at the relevant levels of education in the EAC where impact would be greatest.

ILRI shared some books, manuals and briefs accruing from its research in food safety in informal markets; these are listed in Annex 3.

Action points

1. EAC and ILRI to meet, review and revise the Memorandum of Understanding. ILRI will inform Amos Omore, ILRI's country representative in Tanzania, to follow this up with the EAC Secretary General.
2. EAC to nominate two persons, upon request, to participate in the food safety trainings to be held in 2019.
3. EAC requested ILRI to help in finalizing the draft SPS measures for animal health. Kristina Roesel and Erastus Kang'ethe to discuss with Amos Omore and Fahari Marwa to share the drafts.
4. EAC requested ILRI to familiarize itself with the food safety component of the Food and Nutrition Security Strategy and Action Plan to align its training with the strategy. Fahari Marwa to share the action plan.
5. EAC raised a concern that if ILRI is funded by the United States government, such funds would not currently support activities in the Republic of South Sudan. ILRI would be better off seeking for ways to fund activities in all member states.
6. EAC identified aflatoxins as an area of future collaboration especially with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture and A4NH.

Annex 1: List of participants

No.	Name	Organization
1	Fahari Marwa	EAC Agriculture Department
2	David Balikowa	EAC Agriculture Department
3	Martin Kimanya	European Union–EAC Market Access Upgrade Program
4	Sindi Kasambala	EAC Agriculture Department
5	Timothy E.O. Wesonga	GIZ Preparedness and One Health Program
6	Erastus Kang'ethe	ILRI consultant
7	Kristina Roesel	ILRI and Freie Universität Berlin
8	Jane Mashingia	EAC Health Department
9	Geoffrey Osoro	EAC Trade Department

Annex 2: Program

Time	Activity	Facilitator/presenter
0845	Arrival and registration	All
0900	Welcome and introductions	Fahari Marwa (EAC)
0915	Overview of food safety in the EAC	Fahari Marwa (EAC)
0930	Introduction to ILRI and A4NH	Kristina Roesel (ILRI)
1000	Break	
1030	Why food safety?	Kristina Roesel (ILRI)
1100	Why food safety in informal markets?	Erastus Kang'ethe (ILRI)
1130	Training on food safety in the EAC	Kristina Roesel/Erastus Kang'ethe (ILRI)
1200	Discussions/reactions	All
1230	Road map: Discussions	All
1315	Closing remarks	EAC and ILRI
1330	Lunch and departure	All

Annex 3: Selected recent ILRI and A4NH publications on food safety

A4NH (CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health). 2018. *A4NH 2017 annual report 2017*. Washington, D.C., IFPRI. <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/132706>

Blackmore, E., Alonso, S. and Grace, D. 2015. *Legitimising informal markets: A case study of the dairy sector in Kenya*. IIED Briefing Paper. London, UK: IIED. <http://pubs.iied.org/17316IIED/>

Grace, D., Roesel, K. and Lore, T. 2014. *Food safety in informal markets in developing countries: An overview*. ILRI Research Brief 19. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI. <https://hdl.handle.net/10568/42449>

Grace, D., Roesel, K. and Lore, T. 2014. *Food safety in informal markets in developing countries: Lessons from research by the International Livestock Research Institute*. ILRI Research Brief 20. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI. <https://hdl.handle.net/10568/42452>

ILRI (International Livestock Research Institute). 2017. *MoreMilk: Making the most of milk*. ILRI Project Profile. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI. <https://hdl.handle.net/10568/82842>

Kang'ethe, E., Grace, D., Roesel, K., Hendrickx, S. and Makita, K. 2014. *Safety of animal-source foods in informal markets in the East African Community: Policy engagements*. ILRI Policy Brief 13. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI. <https://hdl.handle.net/10568/52350>

Roesel, K. and Grace, D. (eds). 2014. *Food safety and informal markets: Animal products in sub-Saharan Africa*. London, UK: Routledge. <https://hdl.handle.net/10568/42438>

Roesel, K. and Grace, D. (eds). 2016. *Sécurité sanitaire des aliments et marchés informels: les produits d'origine animale en Afrique Subsaharienne*. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI. <https://hdl.handle.net/10568/79976>

Roesel, K., Ejobi, F. and Grace, D. 2015. *Nutrition and health risks in smallholder pig value chains in Uganda: Results of an assessment*. ILRI Research Brief 48. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI. <https://hdl.handle.net/10568/67243>

Smallholder Dairy Project training manuals for Kenya and Tanzania (in English and Kiswahili). Available at <http://www.smallholderdairy.org>

World Bank. *What makes food safe or unsafe?* Infographic. Washington, D.C.: World Bank. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/infographic/2018/10/16/what-makes-food-safe-or-unsafe>