

# Safe food, fair food: Building capacity to improve the safety on animal-source foods and ensure continued market access for poor farmers in sub-Saharan Africa

International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)

## The challenge

In sub-Saharan Africa the majority of animal products are distributed through informal markets without adequate hygiene control. As a result, most of the people living in the region are exposed to a variety of food-borne microbes and parasites which cause gastrointestinal infections, along with diseases such as brucellosis and listeriosis. These infections have a severely negative impact on the population, including a high infant mortality, and contribute significantly to the region's poverty. On the other hand, animal products have a high nutritional value which enhances public health, while the production, transportation, processing and retailing of these products provide income and employment to millions.

## Our approach

The project responds to the concern that small scale producers will have difficulties to comply with strict food safety standards and could therefore be prevented from marketing their products. The adaptation of risk-based methods for food safety that are successfully used in developed countries and international trade domestic informal markets is the main approach of the project. These methods would allow an analysis of each step in the "farm to fork"- chain

and would make an intervention on each step possible, according to the assessed risks. For this, it is necessary to build a core capacity through training and practical application in the risk assessment studies and to involve food safety decision-makers through short-term training and national workshops.

Project name	Safe food, fair food: Building capacity to improve the safety on animal-source foods and ensure continued market access for poor farmers in sub-Saharan Africa
Commissioned by	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)
Project region	Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana, Mali, South Africa, Mozambique
Lead executing agency	International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)
Duration	01.01.2008 – 31.07.2012

## The benefits

Training courses of participatory risk analysis (PRA), comprising risk assessment, management and communication, were held for key food-safety stakeholders. These are important decision makers as well as future 'champions' who are supposed to continue to promote the approach after the project end.



*L: Informal food markets are important for African economy. R: Participatory methods were proved to be useful in risk assessment of informally-marketed animal source foods in resource-poor countries.*

Situational analyses, summarizing the food-safety situation, have been carried out so far in six target countries. Thereby, a range of shortcomings regarding the food safety governance could be detected. The PRA trainees were involved in data collection for the purpose of capacity building.

The project links training in PRA with proof-of-concept studies in order to increase effectiveness of capacity-building. MSc and PhD students were attached to the project by conducting proof-of-concept studies. Their research topics covered a range of products (milk, beef, fish, poultry, crabs, game meat) as well as of hazards (among others *Brucella spp*, *Campylobacter spp*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, hydrocarbons, zoonotic parasites). Moreover, risk assessment and risk management studies were conducted. The students were supported by a project website as well as training courses on study design and sampling. Risk management recommendations could be derived from these studies' findings.

National workshops were carried out in all member countries in order to raise policymakers' awareness of food safety hazards. Results of the situational analyses as well as of the proof-of-concept studies were discussed, involving food-safety decision makers.

## Expected impact

Many approaches and applications of participatory risk analysis found in the project can be applied to other countries and developing regions, with modifications to adapt to the local needs and situations. In the future, contributors and co-operators of the project may take the initiative to develop this concept further. By this, the future application of participatory risk analysis will improve the food safety management in informal markets in developing countries.

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