

World Food Safety Day Webinar

Theme: Prepare for the Unexpected

Topic: Bridging Gaps in the Informal Sector Concept Note

27 June 2024

I. Background

Food safety issues pose a significant threat to human health, trade, and development. According to the World Health organization, each year, over 600 million people get sick from food-borne disease and around 420,000 die of the same. These numbers are said to be substantially underestimated. Populations in low- and middle-income countries are disproportionately affected due to the limitations of their food safety control systems. The World Bank estimates that low and middle-income countries lose about USD110 billion due to loss in productivity and medical expenses from foodborne illnesses.

In Africa, majority of the population (roughly 70 percent), source their food from the domestic informal food markets. It is thus important to better understand the limitations and opportunities of the informal sector, beyond what seems obvious, for markedly raising food safety levels in the region. The informal sector, as an important player in food supply of most African countries, cannot be left outside the regulatory scheme of countries in order to create level playing field for food business operators and enhance growth of agri-food business.

II. Rationale

Understanding and addressing food safety concerns in the informal market is crucial for safeguarding public health and promoting sustainable development. On the occasion of the World Food Safety Day of 2024 themed “Prepare for the Unexpected”, the Africa Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and the African Union Commission’s Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA), in collaboration with the Food Safety for Africa (FS4Africa) and UP-RISE projects funded by the European Union, are organizing a webinar titled **“Bridging Gaps in the Informal Sector”**.

The webinar serves as a timely platform to raise awareness, facilitate knowledge-sharing, and foster collaborations among stakeholders to enhance food safety practices with focus on the informal food markets. Moreover, the webinar aligns with the objectives of the Food Safety for Africa (FS4Africa) and UP-RISE projects, which are working to significantly contribute to improving food safety in the informal sector through development of innovative solutions, capacity-building and policy recommendations.

More broadly, the webinar aims to raise awareness about continental agenda on food safety, contributions of the FS4Africa and UP-RISE projects to food safety in the informal sector as well as enhance peer to peer learning and potential interventions. At a time when the two projects just took off, the webinar is expected to gather feedback to strengthen implementation

approaches of the two projects. Knowledge-sharing and dialogue among stakeholders, including representatives from the informal sector, food regulatory bodies, and industry associations appears to be timely.

III. Meeting Objectives

The primary objectives of the webinar are:

- Raise awareness about the importance of food safety in Africa's informal food sector and the contributions of the FS4Africa and UP-RISE projects to co-creation of solutions.
- Share knowledge on effective strategies, interventions, and establish networks to reach and support the informal sector in improving food safety practices.
- Facilitate dialogue and knowledge exchange among key stakeholders, including informal sector representatives, regulatory authorities, and industry associations, fostering collaborative approaches.
- Highlight the African Union's role and strategies in promoting food safety within the informal sector and beyond.
- Launch the FS4Africa project's knowledge platform, enhancing capacity-building and dissemination of information on food safety.

IV. Expected Outcomes

The World Food Safety Day webinar is expected to:

- Increase understanding and awareness of food safety related issues in the African informal food sector
- Increase understanding and awareness of the FS4Africa and UP-RISE projects and their contributions
- Enhance understanding and collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including informal sector representatives, food regulatory bodies, and industry associations to improve food safety in informal markets.
- Improve the capacity of stakeholders on strategies and interventions for enhancing food safety in the informal sector.
- Encourage food operators and other stakeholders to adhere to food safety practices through knowledge-sharing and networking.
- Increase awareness of consumers on food safety and the informal food market.

V. Target Stakeholders/Institutions

The webinar brings together the following stakeholders and institutions:

- Food Safety mandate organizations in different regions in Africa and the European Union (e.g., Codex representatives of implementation countries, food regulatory bodies, representatives of informal sector groups/associations)

Meeting Program

Time (WAT)	Activity	Facilitator
SESSION I: Opening and overview		
13:00 – 13:05	Welcoming participants and poll	Moderator/ICT team of host
13:05 – 13:20	Welcome remark: Hans-Joerg LUTZEYER, Active Senior EU-African Union Food Systems R&I, European Commission	Dr. Fadel Ndiame , CEO of Food Systems Transformation Solutions
	Welcome remark – Dr. Janet Edeme, Head of Rural Development and Ag. Head of Agriculture and Food Security, AU Commission	
	Opening remarks: Mrs. Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong, Director, Agriculture, Food Security and Environmental Sustainability, AUDA-NEPAD	
	Session II: Introduction to FS4A and UP-RISE	
13:20 – 13:40	Overview Presentation 1: The Food Safety for Africa (FS4Africa) project - Dr. Titilayo Falade, Project Coordinator for Food Safety for Africa, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)	Dr. Fadel Ndiame
	Overview Presentation 2: The UP-RISE project – Prof. Sarah De Saeger, Project Coordinator for UPRISE and Director of the Centre of Excellence in Mycotoxicology and Public Health, University of Ghent	
SESSION III: Food Safety in Informal Markets		
13:40 – 13:55	Presentation 3: Food Safety in Europe: An EFSA Perspective – Dr. Rumbidzai Changwa, Chief Scientist Office, European Food Safety Authority	Dr. Fadel Ndiame
	Presentation 4 – Food safety in the African informal sector – Dr. Delia Grace Randolph , Professor of Food Safety Systems, Natural Resources Institute, Joint Appointed Scientist ILRI	
SESSION IV: Panel Discussion – Empowering Informal Food Market Actors for Food Safety		
13:55 – 14:00	Presentation 5: Strengthening Food Safety Standards in Africa - The Role of Private Sector and Other Stakeholders - Chiluba Mwape, SPS Coordinator, AUC	Dr. Chris Muyunda , CSO Coordinator Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)
14:05 – 14:30	Moderated discussions with Private sector representative and key informal sector (from countries where we are implementing the projects Andrew Edewa, Director of standards and SPS measures, trademark Africa Dr. Kimutai Maritim, Kenya Dairy Farmers Holdings - National Institute of Public Hygiene of Côte d'Ivoire Dr. Maysa Hamza, Executive director, CFI Egypt Salami, Ayoola Yunus, Akinyele Local Government farmers Chairman (Oyo State, Nigeria) Ali Ahmad , Chairman of Coopetition Forum for Aflatoxin Reduced Agricultural Produce (CFARAP) MD of AHALSON Nig Ltd, Nigeria	

Time (WAT)	Activity	Facilitator
14:30 – 14:40	Interactive Q&A Session	
Knowledge Platform Launch		
14:40 – 14:50	Beta launch of the Knowledge Platform delivered by Food Safety for Africa project	Ubuntoo
SESSION V: CLOSING		
14:50 – 14:55	Key takeaways from the webinar, emphasizing the importance of addressing food safety in the informal sector Call to action for stakeholders to collaborate and support efforts to improve food safety practices in informal food chains	Dr. Amare Ayalew, AUC PACA Ms. Kefilwe Moalosi, AUDA NEPAD
Group Photograph		
14:55 – 15:00	Online poll, Feedback form Thanking participants, speakers, and organizers for their contributions	IITA IT team
End of Event		