AGROECOLOGY'S ROLE IN MITIGATING CLIMATE IMPACT ON FOOD, NUTRITION, AND HEALTH

Dr.Beatrice N. Kiage-Mokua,
PhD. RND.

Key Note Abstract

In the face of escalating climate change, Kenya, like many other regions, is experiencing extreme weather events that are profoundly affecting food security, nutrition, and health. Recent catastrophic floods in Kenya have not only devastated crops but also displaced thousands and threatened the nutritional well-being of communities. This keynote address will explore the intricate nexus between climate change, food systems, nutrition, and health, emphasizing the multifaceted impacts of climate variability on agricultural productivity, economic stability, and dietary quality.

Drawing on global research and local evidence, this presentation will outline the synergistic epidemic of obesity, undernutrition, and climate change, highlighting the urgent need for cross-sector collaboration and integrated efforts. It will delve into frameworks that explain the connections between climate change and nutrition, illustrating the primary channels through which climate affects nutritional outcomes, such as food supply disruptions, healthcare access challenges, and caregiving practices.

Furthermore, the address will advocate for sustainable solutions through agroecology and agroforestry. These nature-positive approaches not only enhance resilience but also promote environmental sustainability. By integrating diverse crop systems, improving soil health, and fostering community engagement, agroecology and agroforestry offer viable pathways to build resilient and nutritious food systems. The presentation will also emphasize the importance of policy and institutional support in promoting sustainable practices and the need for robust research to merge traditional knowledge with modern practices.

The key note address will conclude with actionable recommendations, call for urgent, coordinated action among governments, NGOs, and communities to transform food systems and combat climate-related nutritional challenges. Investing in climate adaptation research, enhancing data systems, and leveraging indigenous knowledge are imperative steps towards achieving a sustainable, inclusive, and healthy future for all.

Keywords: Climate Change, Food Security, Agroecology, Nutrition, Sustainability

Brief Bio of Dr. Kiage

A distinguished clinical nutritionist and dietician with over a decade of experience in transforming nutrition and food systems. As a Senior Lecturer at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology, she has led numerous projects aimed at improving nutrition outcomes through innovative, community-driven solutions. Dr. Kiage-Mokua holds a PhD in Nutrition and Household Economics from Christian-Albrechts-Universität in Germany and an MSc and BSc in Foods, Nutrition, and Dietetics from Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya. Her work among other, focuses on the impacts of climate change on food systems and the role of agroecology in enhancing food security and nutrition. Dr. Kiage-Mokua integrates clinical nutrition and dietetics with food systems and One Health concepts, recognizing the interdependence of human health, animal health, and the environment. Her research interests include the influence of food systems on chronic diseases such as cancer, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and undernutrition, including micronutrient deficiencies. She is dedicated to using local solutions to mitigate these issues. Dr. Kiage-Mokua is also a registered nutritionist and dietician with the Kenya Nutritionists and Dieticians Institute (KNDI), a faculty member, and a reviewer for the KNDI Journal.

As a keynote speaker at the "One Health" conference, Dr. Kiage-Mokua will address the critical role of agroecology in mitigating climate impacts on food nutrition and health and provide insights and recommendations for transforming food systems to meet global health challenges.