

FOOD SAFETY AND NUTRITION NEXUS: IMPACT IN HUMAN HEALTH.



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Key Note Abstract

The assurance that when food is prepared and taken according to intended use will not cause any harm is a critical component of any food security system that all Food Business Operators must take into consideration during production, handling and processing. Food safety, however, remains a major challenge especially in developing countries and globally, one in ten people fall ill after consuming contaminated food and 420,000 die from food-related illnesses every year. Sadly, children under five years carry 40% of the foodborne disease burden, accounting for 125,000 deaths every year with diarrheal episodes being the most prevalent. Inadequate preparation and improper cooking practices, such as those involving cross contamination, insufficient processing, poor hygiene and the re-use of leftovers, are responsible for causing 14% of these diseases. On the other hand, most focus on food safety aspect are on microbial cases while chemical safety gets less attention due to the chronic rather than acute occurrence. Food-borne diseases and outbreaks are no doubt crucial contributors to morbidity and mortality worldwide with African countries lacking or having weak surveillance systems, thus investigation of food-borne disease causative factors and magnitude of exposure being inadequate. The link between animals and human diseases cannot be

overemphasized, and the effect on human health and disease burden causing untold suffering and mortality. The current paper looks at the nexus between food safety and nutrition with focus on effects on human health.

Key words: food hygiene, disease burden, chemical safety, microbial safety, food born illness

Brief Bio of Prof. George Abong'

George Ooko Abong' holds a bachelor, masters and doctorate degrees in Food Science and Technology and a Food Safety and Quality Assurance ITPDip from Ghent University. He currently works as an Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Food Science, Nutrition and Technology at the University of Nairobi, Kenya. He is a researcher in safe processing of foods and human nutrition-related issues where he has published 130 peer-reviewed publications, 1 book and 8 scholarly book chapters. He has supervised 78 post graduate students: 7 PhDs, 69 MScs and 2 Post-graduate Diploma. He is a trained food safety expert with vast knowledge in quality assurance and risk analysis from the University of Ghent, Belgium and he was a co-chair of the communication working group of the Global Food Safety Partnership, an initiative championed by the World Bank to ensure food safety worldwide for the year 2015. He has also been recognized as the best-performing lecturer in the Faculty of Agriculture-UoN and the best researcher at the University of Nairobi (2022 and 2023). He has made a noticeable contribution to food standards development since 2009 to date in several national, regional and global technical committees (TC) and sits in a number of Codex committees engaged in development of food safety standards and international level, and recently Co-chaired the 54th Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH54).