Introduction

The Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) Lusaka is a centre for action (policy) research, advocacy and networking on issues of Consumer Welfare, Economic Governance and Trade and Development. CUTS also places a strong focus on crucial cross cutting issues such as Climate Change and Development as well as Gender and Governance.

FoodForAfrika.com is a continent-wide agriculture publication celebrating sustainable agriculture. CUTS, Lusaka in partnership with FoodForAfrika.com is implementing a year-long campaign titled "Promoting Healthy Diets, Food safety, and minimizing Food Loss and Waste in Zambia" supported by Solidaridad Zambia. The aim of this campaign is to give attention to food contamination as a result of unclean water, and unsafe and unregulated pesticide use in the fruit, vegetables and soy sector.

Promoting Healthy Diets, Food safety, and minimising Food Loss and Waste in Zambia

CUTS International

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CUTS International Solidaridad

Promoting Healthy Diets, Food safety, and minimising Food Loss and Waste in Zambia

CUTS INTERNATIONAL LUSAKA

Background

Informal, street and neighbourhood markets have a defining role in the food distribution system in Zambia.

A study conducted by CUTS in 2017 showed that:

Approximately 60% of households are located in low-income residential areas, which make up 79% of Lusaka's population.

This is a matter of concern as access to water and conservation conditions in these markets are not desirable causing a huge challenge in access to hygiene facilities and clean running water.

Vegetables and fruits are a significant part of food items traded in these markets and therefore adequate measures ought to be taken to reduce any contamination. Based on this background, the project is aimed at the following objectives.

Objectives

- Promote sustainable consumption to contribute to food and nutrition security as well as a healthy life for present and future generations.
- Highlight the annual transition of select fruit, vegetable and soy smallholder farmers to good practices and safer food production in a mission to transform Zambia's food systems.
- Promote the reduction of food contamination due to poor production processes and the capacity to comply with food safety measures and protocols.

Resultant Harm

Common bacteria and viruses that can be found on food include:

1. Salmonella: Bacteria can be found in raw or undercooked poultry, eggs, and meat, as well as on fruits and vegetables that have come into contact with contaminated water.
2. Listeria: Bacteria can be found in unpasteurized dairy products, processed meats, and some soft cheeses.
3. E. coli: Bacteria can be found in raw or undercooked ground beef, as well as on produce that has come into contact with contaminated water or soil.
4. Norovirus: The virus can be found in contaminated water, as well as on food that has been handled by an infected person.
5. Campylobacter: Bacteria can be found in raw or undercooked poultry and meat, as well as on produce that has come into contact with contaminated water

These are just a few examples of the many diseases that can be caused by viruses and bacteria found on food. It is important to properly handle and cook food to minimize the risk of contamination

> government agencies are paying increasing attention to food safety issues, but public awareness is low and life-threatening outbreaks of food poisoning can happen.