

**ORIGINAL: ENGLISH**

## **RESOLUTION**

### **FOOD SAFETY AND HEALTH: A STRATEGY FOR THE WHO AFRICAN REGION (document AFR/RC57/4)**

The Regional Committee,

Guided by the WHO Constitution which includes mandates on food safety for the Organization;

Acknowledging the World Health Assembly Resolution WHA53.15 of May 2000 recognizing food safety as an essential public health function;

Mindful of the Regional Office Strategic orientations for WHO action in the African Region (2005) emphasizing the importance of food safety in disease prevention;

Recalling Regional Committee Resolution AFR/RC53/R5 of September 2003 entitled Food safety and health: A situation analysis and perspectives;

Recognizing that most contaminants in food originate from unhygienic environments, low awareness and inadequate knowledge of the role of toxins, pesticides and pathogens in disease causation;

Concerned that contaminated food and water continue to cause up to five episodes of diarrhoea per child per year resulting in 5.7% to 7.1% of lost disability adjusted life years in the African Region;

Cognizant of the fact that lack of surveillance and research hinders the early detection of food safety incidents and evidence-based interventions;

Approving the document entitled "Food safety and health: A strategy for the WHO African Region;

1. URGES Member States:

- (a) to include food safety in overall national development policies and the fight against poverty as well as provide the legal framework for national food safety assurance;
- (b) to include food safety in education curricula at all levels;
- (c) to strengthen national and regional analytical capacity through appropriate training, capacity-building and establishment of quality assurance protocols and procedures;
- (d) to strengthen national laboratory capacity to monitor foods especially food imports including GMOs;



- (e) to strengthen foodborne disease surveillance as part of national and regional integrated disease surveillance and response systems;
- (f) to strengthen multisectoral food safety inspection from production to consumption and proactively ensure compliance;
- (g) to establish a diversity of approaches to enhance consumer awareness and participation in food safety activities and promotion of food safety education, including the integration of food safety in maternal and child survival programmes as well as healthy settings, poverty alleviation, and health promotion initiatives;
- (h) to ensure individual responsibility as well as participation of women, communities and consumer associations in decision-making;
- (i) to develop effective links and coordination among food safety agencies, including reviewing of responsibilities and capabilities as well as clarifying overlaps in regulatory roles.

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (a) to continue carrying out advocacy among policy-makers, international partners and other key stakeholders on food safety and food security;
- (b) to strengthen joint efforts in capacity-building, international standard setting, effective participation in the relevant committees of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, food safety monitoring, information sharing, etc;
- (c) to facilitate effective linkage, cooperation, collaboration and coordination among agencies involved in food safety;
- (d) to provide technical and material support for planning, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of interventions;
- (e) to report to the Regional Committee for Africa every two years.