

COMMUNICATION TO UNLOCK CHANGE

Agriculture remains central to nutrition and health and can significantly contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal 1. The FAO Regional Office for Africa considers important to join efforts in raising awareness and strengthening the dialogue on food safety and nutrition, among all the actors and at all stages of the food chain.

Empowering consumers, in particular women, to improve their health by changing what they eat and how they eat it, according to local specificities, calls for strategies that use participatory approaches and combine traditional knowledge and scientific evidence.

We consider that communication is key to unlock the change for development, a strong resource to increase public awareness and healthy behaviors.



Ensuring Access to Safe and Nutritious African Foods

AFRICA DAY

For Food and Nutrition Security

31st October 2012
Addis Ababa

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« Access to nutritionally adequate and safe food is a basic individual right »

Safe food and nutrition awareness



FAO Regional Office for Africa

**THE REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA OF
THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)
IS LAUNCHING A FOOD SAFETY AND NUTRITION
AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.**

Raising awareness on the importance of safe and nutritious food has now become imperative to support the full development of children and the active life of adults in developing countries, where undernutrition, overnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are often rooted in poverty, and poor people have limited or no access to information.

A RIGHT TO FOOD FOR A GROWING POPULATION

Sub-saharan Africa is growing at a remarkable pace: its population, 856 million in 2010, is projected to exceed 2 billion shortly after 2050 and the continent belongs to the youth, with over 200 million people between 15-24 years of age.

Access to safe and nutritious food has now been recognized, for more than 2 decades, as a fundamental human right. However, foodborne diseases (FBD) and malnutrition are still among the major public health concerns worldwide.

Sub-saharan Africa needs to meet the demand for nutritious and safe food of an increasing population to achieve its development goals, such as the millennium development goals, and have a sustainable impact on the life and economy of the entire region.



THE DOUBLE BURDEN OF MALNUTRITION

Alongside with the increase in population, African cities are also booming: at the rate of 3.4% per year, Africa is the fastest urbanizing continent in the world.

As urbanization increase, people gradually adopt more sedentary lifestyles with reduced physical activity, more meals away from home and an increased consumption of energy-dense and nutrients-poor semi-processed foods. We are experiencing a nutrition transition, with the world increasingly facing the double burden of malnutrition, the combination of overnutrition and micronutrients deficiencies.

This translates in the co-existence, in the same household, of undernourished children with overweight parents suffering of diet-related chronic diseases.

**FEEDING AFRICA
WITH SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOODS**

Sub-saharan Africa is subject to extreme natural events, scarcity of food and famines. Safe foods and good nutrition play a double role: they are both an input and an outcome of sound interventions to enable households to be more resilient, to be better prepared to mitigate the impact of food crisis, to recover rapidly and « build back better ».



Between 2004 and 2008, African economies grew an average of 6.5% a year, and growth is expected to continue at more than 5% in 2012, in Sub-saharan countries. We have to ensure that this remarkable economic sprint is fully reflected in, and supported by, the achievement of the nutritional wellbeing of all, in particular of the neediest. Growth must benefit the poor and development must become nutrition sensitive.

