



REPORT

FIVE KEYS TO SAFER FOOD WORKSHOP

**ORGANIZED BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH
(FOOD CONTROL UNIT) WITH THE SUPPORT OF
THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**



**WORKSHOP HELD IN BOSELE HOTEL,
SELEBI PHIKWE, 5TH DECEMBER 2005**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. During the last trimester of the year 2005, the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) country office initiated the promotion of the Five Keys to Safer Food poster. This document reports the activities carried out in Selebi-Phikwe on the 5th December 2005. A half-day workshop was held targeting representatives of Primary and Secondary Schools (teachers in-charge of kitchens), representatives of Hospital kitchen, managers of restaurants and hotels.

1.2. A total of 35 participants attended the workshop and each received copies of the poster (English and Setswana versions).

2. OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this workshop were:

- To promote food safety awareness through the dissemination of the poster “ FIVE KEYS TO SAFER FOOD”.
- To impart knowledge about good hygiene practices.
- To facilitate the voluntary application of food safety measures in the sector of mass catering (school and hospital kitchens and hotels).
- To minimize the occurrence of food borne diseases in the country through adherence to food safety practices.

It was expected that the participants would be able to train the cooks in their own institutions.

3. PROGRAMME

3.1. Opening session

Mr. Bashe, one of the participants, opened the workshop with a prayer at 08:30 hrs.

The Chairperson, Mrs. Christina Matshameko, Health Education officer from the Selebi Phikwe Town Council welcomed all participants to the workshop. She highlighted that learning about “food hygiene” was beneficial for all because everyone wanted to eat safe food. She also told the participants that when leaving the workshop, all participants would be well equipped to follow and disseminate the “Five Keys For Safer Food”. The Chairperson introduced the resource persons and allowed each participant to introduce him/herself. She also explained the objectives of the workshop and urged all participants to fully participate, give comments or ask questions. Finally, Mrs. Matshameko explained that the Representative of the World Health Organization country office could not participate to officially open the workshop, thus, Mr. Allam Mphande would read the opening speech.

Mr. Mphande said that in the present era food was traded from all parts of the world and countries had to put in place systems to assure food quality and safety. He mentioned that without such systems countries could become a dumping area for inferior quality foodstuffs.

Mr. Mphande indicated that the number of people affected by food borne diseases were not declining around the world and that the World Health Organization estimated that 240 million people each year suffered from food borne diseases with 2.2 million deaths. Mr. Mphande explained that from the food borne outbreaks reported cases in Botswana, 80% happened in schools, which meant that, our students were the main victims of lack of proper food hygiene. He further said that the Government, Ministry of Health aimed at educating all food handlers on “good hygienic practices for food handling”. Workshops such as the present one were organized in collaboration with WHO specifically to promote the “FIVE KEYS TO SAFER FOOD”. Finally, Mr. Mphande said that the organizers of this workshop expected that participants would be able to train the cooks in their own institutions and would continue this training to all new cooks.

3.2. Paper presentation

In addition to the presentation of the “Five Keys to safer Food”, the programme included a presentation regarding the “Overview of Food Safety Problems in Botswana”, running through an educative video “Pests on the Menu” and a group exercise design to discuss causes of food poisoning cases. A copy of the programme is attached as Annex 1 and copies of the papers presented are attached in Annex 2.

3.2.1. Overview of Food Safety Problems in Botswana

Mrs. Tsemaletsile Mosinki indicated that food safety was considered an essential public health concern, worldwide. She mentioned that Food contamination created an enormous social and economic burden on communities since many people become sick and consequently the work productivity is reduced.

Mrs. Mosinki informed that Food Control Unit of the Ministry of Health received some reports of food poisoning cases and they happened mostly government institutions mostly primary and secondary schools, prisons and the higher institution of learning like UB, Technical Colleges and Colleges of Education. She added that other cases reported are from various districts where people have suffered illness after consuming food from restaurants, community gatherings and homes.

3.2.2. The Five Keys to Safer Food –Topics: “Keep Clean, “Separate raw from cooked food”

Mrs. Angela Kashani introduced the topic “Keep clean” covering both cleanliness of the food handler and cleanliness of the kitchen. The topic of personal hygiene concentrated more on washing hands ; she also indicated that the Public Health Regulations addresses these issues. Concerning the cleanliness of the food preparation area, Mrs. Kashani explained that adding to the washing/cleaning it was important to sanitize. She gave

examples of sanitizing solutions and its uses and indicated the steps to create a cleaning schedule. Finally she discussed the issue of avoiding pests in the kitchens.

On the topic “Separate Raw and Cooked Food”, Mrs. Kashani explained why raw food should be separated from cooked foods, the benefits of using colour coded knives and cutting boards and gave some advise on storage of these food products.

3.2.3. The Five Keys to Safer Food –Topics: “Cook Thoroughly”, “Keep Food at safe temperatures” and “Use safe water and raw materials”

Ms. Kefilwe Kabomo started with the topic “Cook Thoroughly”. She explained that cooking properly would result in the elimination of microorganisms present in the food. She listed the foods that required more attention during cooking and explained that leftovers should be well reheated until steaming and only once. Lastly she cautioned the audience that it is safer to eat hot food as soon as possible after its preparation.

On the topic “Keep food at safe temperatures”, Ms. Kabomo indicated the effect of different range of temperatures on the survival of microorganisms. She also explained that between 5 °C and 60 °C, the danger zone, microorganisms grow and multiply faster. She gave advise on the effective use of the refrigerators and freezers and showed ways how food can be kept hot.

Lastly, Ms. Kabomo mentioned the need to use safe water and fresh and wholesome foods.

3.3. Group exercise

Participants were divided into five groups and each received three cases of food borne diseases – each case was presented as a sequence of events in pictures, which would result in food poisoning. Each group was asked to study the case and indicate the “wrong” doing that could be the cause of the food poisoning case.

3.4. Video show

After all presentations and respective discussions, the facilitators run a video show called “Food Hygiene”.

3.5. Vote of Thanks

One of the participants thanked the presenters and the organizers of the workshop for having offered to deliver so much important information on food safety. He also thanked all participants for attending and listening to the presentations. Finally he reminded that all should take food safety into practice, therefore participants should go and disseminate the information received.

4. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

After each presentation time was given for comments and questions.

Next follows a summary of questions/comments that arose along the workshop.

- 4.1 A participant asked on how the Ministry of Health was advising the business community on food safety. Facilitators informed that in addition to workshops such as the present one, food safety messages were disseminated by Radio and also through the newspapers.
- 4.2 A question on the safety of soaking sorghum grains overnight was raised. It was explained that the sorghum grains were to be cooked after soaking and cooking would kill any microorganisms present.
- 4.3 A participant raised a concern regarding equipment and utensils in kitchens, which were used for different purposes. It was explained that it was of utmost importance the cleaning and disinfection of equipments and utensils after each use. On the same issue, another participant indicated that schools did use improper cutting boards and in some instances they had a big wood block only. It was, then, discussed the advantages of using plastic cutting boards compared to wooden ones.
- 4.4 Comments were made on how hand washing during funerals had improved: before a common bucket was used for many people but these days water is poured on each person's hands. It was also mentioned that infants and young children should be kept in a clean environment and have their hands frequently washed to avoid diarrhea.
- 4.5 A participant asked about the safety of 'medium done' meat with partial blood flowing. Facilitators explained that "well-done meat" with no blood running would ensure that all possible microorganisms were killed by the heat whereas 'medium-done' would mean that the meat was not thoroughly cooked thus the possibility of having viable microorganisms still present; it was further explained that depending on the health conditions of the consumer (his/her immunity condition) the end result could be different, that is a healthy person could probably eat medium-done meat without getting sick.
- 4.6 A question on shelf life of canned foods was raised and when they should be taken off the shelves. Explanations on the meaning of "use by", "expiry date" and "Best before" were given to participants.
- 4.7 Questions on overuse of cooking oil and ways of its disposal were raised. It was explained that the use of the same cooking oil repeatedly should be avoided because it becomes poisonous and that the change to a dark colour was the sign of chemical reactions that resulted in the formation of substances that act as carcinogens. Regarding disposal it was said that used oil should not be thrown in the drains.
- 4.8 A participant commented that the public was becoming aware of food safety issues but "points of contact" were not well known. He suggested that phone numbers of those contact points should be well visible/advertised. Finally, he suggested that the Government programmes such as Food safety programmes should be well marketed.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations from this workshop were as follows:

- ◆ In schools, more attention should be given to the quality of equipment and utensils used e.g. use of plastic cutting boards instead of wooden ones.
- ◆ To have Government programmes such as on “Food safety” well advertised and with clear indication of where to contact.