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PROPOSED DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR FOOD HYGIENE CONTROL MEASURES IN TRADITIONAL MARKETS FOR FOOD

(Prepared by the Electronic Working Group chaired by Kenya and co-chaired by Bolivia and Nigeria)

Codex Members and Observers wishing to submit comments on the discussion paper should do so as instructed in CL 2024/11-FH available on the Codex webpage/Circular Letters 2024: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circular-letters/en/>

INTRODUCTION

1. The 53rd Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH53)¹ which took place in San Diego, California, United States, from November 27th to December 2nd, 2022, resulted in several key decisions, one of which was to submit a proposal for new work on the development of Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Markets for Food and the formation of an Electronic Working Group (EWG) to be chaired by Kenya and co-chaired by Bolivia and Nigeria. The EWG was established to prepare a draft Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Markets for Food which would provide national and local governments worldwide, with relevant advice to ensure that traditional markets for food were designed and managed effectively to promote food safety. The new work was approved by CAC46 which also requested CCFH to carefully consider the relationship between the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CXC 1-1969), the regional texts on street vended foods, and these proposed guidelines.

2. In line with the Codex Procedural Manual for the elaboration of Codex Standards, Kenya developed a Draft Proposal that was informed by the four regional guidelines for street-vended foods. These guidelines had crucial advice on the management of markets, information for food business operators, food handling, and health and hygiene practices relevant to ensuring the safety of food sold in the markets.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

3. CCFH53 agreed to:
- Establish an EWG, chaired by Kenya and co-chaired by Bolivia and Nigeria, working in English, to prepare, subject to the approval of the Commission, the proposed draft guidelines for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at CCFH54; and
 - Submit a report of the EWG to the Codex Secretariat at least three months before CCFH54 for circulation for comments at Step 3.

PARTICIPATION AND METHODOLOGY

4. As it was agreed during CCFH53, an EWG was formed and subsequently chaired by Kenya and co-chaired by Bolivia and Nigeria. The Chair and co-Chairs prepared a draft of the Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Markets for Food, and circulated the zero draft to members of the EWG.

5. The EWG undertook two rounds of consultations as follows:
- The zero draft was circulated to members and observers through the EWG Forum on 3rd April 2023 with a deadline of 31st May 2023 for the first round of comments. Out of 52 participants, comments on the zero draft were received from ten Members including Brazil, Japan, Mexico,

¹ REP23/FH para.144ii

Morocco, Singapore, Thailand, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Uruguay, and two Observers i.e. Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI).

- ii. Comments received were considered in the development of the first draft.
- iii. The first draft was circulated on 29th July 2023 with a deadline for submission of comments set for 30th September 2023. Comments were received from nine member countries namely Argentina, Canada, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Thailand, USA, and Uruguay, and 1 observer organization namely GAIN.
- iv. After considering the comments from the second round, the third draft was developed and submitted to the Codex Secretariat and is attached as Appendix 1.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

6. The Chair and co-Chairs gathered a significant amount of information and a variety of perspectives through the two rounds of consultations with EWG members, and this served as the foundation for the development of these guidelines.

7. Notably, the proposed draft guidelines heavily borrows from various regional codes of practice and guidelines. The EWG noted the challenge of adopting either a set of guidelines or CoP structure and consequently, adopted a unique structure to accommodate all the Guidelines and Codes of Practice referenced.

8. The EWG is requesting the views of Members and Observers on the following issues for further consideration by CCFH54:

- Whether the title should be retained as “Guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food” or changed to “Guidelines for hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food”
- Whether this set of guidelines should adopt a guidelines structure, CoP structure, or the proposed unique structure;
- Whether the structure and headings capture all the key issues to be addressed;
- Whether there are any other issues to be covered by the guidelines; and
- Considering the request of CAC46 to carefully consider the relationship between these guidelines and the existing four regional Guidelines/Codes of Hygienic Practice related to street food (e.g., CXG 22R-1997, CXC 43R-1995, CXC 71R-2013, CXC 76R-2017), whether these guidelines might be considered as complementary to or replacement for those existing texts.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

9. The EWG completed the main task at hand in line with the terms of reference as per their programme of work; to develop Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Markets for Food.

10. The Chair and co-Chairs further request CCFH54 to:

- consider the proposed draft Guidelines as presented in Appendix I;
- respond to the specific questions listed above, and provide suggestions and comments for revision, and
- recommend whether the document can be advanced in the Codex Step process.

GUIDELINES FOR FOOD HYGIENE CONTROL MEASURES IN TRADITIONAL MARKETS FOR FOOD

INTRODUCTION

Traditional markets for food are dedicated spaces for food wholesalers, retailers and consumers to sell and purchase food for direct consumption, preparation and other uses. These markets have many names around the globe that include but are not limited to street food markets, local markets, public markets, community markets, municipal markets, open-air markets, wet markets and farmers' markets. These markets could either be open-air or enclosed and vary widely in size and the number of people who trade in them. They could also have formal or informal management structures with varying levels of infrastructure. Handling, preparation, artisanal processing and packaging also take place in these markets.

Traditional markets for food are important food sources that supply affordable and readily accessible food to households, both raw and ready-to-eat foods. They also provide employment opportunities in the various nodes of the food value chain.

Despite the benefits derived from traditional markets for food, hygienic handling practices in these markets are often inadequate. These guidelines will provide competent authorities, food business operators (FBOs) and consumers with the necessary knowledge to strengthen food hygienic capacities in these markets to assure food safety.

SECTION 1 – OBJECTIVES

The guideline is intended to provide guidance in developing and implementing policies and regulations to ensure that traditional markets for food are designed and managed effectively to promote food safety.

The guidelines provide FBOs, consumers, market authorities and other stakeholders with advice on food hygiene-including food handling, personnel health, training and education, environment and hygiene relevant to ensuring food safety.

SECTION 2 – SCOPE AND USE

2.1 Scope

These guidelines provide guidance on food safety regulation, and hygienic handling activities to all stakeholders relevant to traditional markets for food where raw, prepared and /or ready-to-eat foods are sold. These guidelines exclude foods sold in supermarkets and animals sold alive.

2.2 Use

These guidelines are intended for use by competent authorities and other stakeholders in the development and/or implementation of food safety measures in traditional markets for food where:

2.2.1 Government stakeholders have an overall responsibility to ensure compliance with this guideline, the adequacy of the large physical structures, infrastructure and community services to the market, in coordination with the market authorities where they exist.

2.2.2 FBOs should apply the hygienic practices set out in this document to provide food that is safe and suitable for consumption.

2.2.3 Consumers should follow relevant instructions and apply appropriate hygiene measures.

2.2.4 This Guideline can be used in conjunction with relevant Codex texts, including but not limited to the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CXC 1-1969).

SECTION 3 - TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of these guidelines, the terms used herein should have the following definitions:

Competent authority: The government authority or official body authorized by the government that is responsible for the setting of regulatory food safety requirements and/or for the organization of official controls including enforcement (CXC 1-1969).

Consumer: Persons and families purchasing and receiving food in order to meet their personal needs (CXS 1-1985).

Crockery/Cutlery: All tools used for food serving and consumption, whether non-disposable or disposable and they may include cups (glasses), dishes, plates, sauce-trays, mugs, spoons, forks, ladles, chopsticks, etc. (CXC 76R-2017).

Equipment: The whole or part of any apparatus, vessels, containers, utensils, machines, instruments, or appliances for use in preparing, storing, handling, cleaning, selling, or supplying/delivering food.

Food business operator (FBO): The entity responsible for operating a business at any step in the food chain (CXC 1-1969).

Food handler: Any person who directly handles packaged or unpacked food, food equipment, utensils, or food contact surfaces and is therefore expected to comply with food hygiene requirements (CXC 1-1969).

Food hygiene: All conditions and measures necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of food at all stages of the food chain (CXC 1-1969).

Food grade: Refers to materials and products that are safe for use in food handling, processing, storage, and packaging.

Food safety: Assurance that food will not cause adverse health effects to the consumer when it is prepared and/or eaten according to its intended use (CXC 1-1969).

Food vendors: Refers to those who sell food and beverages in a traditional market for food.

Hazard: A biological, chemical or physical agent in food with the potential to cause an adverse health effect (CXC 1-1969).

Perishable food: Food that is subject to rapid decay, spoilage and/ or growth of microorganisms with or without the production of toxins or metabolites when not kept under the required storage conditions including but not limited to milk and milk products, eggs, meat, poultry and fish (CXC 76R-2017).

Potable water: Water fit for human consumption (Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production and Processing).

Traditional markets for food: Spaces open to the public with physical infrastructures including premises or individual stalls for the food trade, generally from local FBOs such as fruits, vegetables, food of animal origin, seeds/grains, ready-to-eat foods, street foods, preparation, and other uses.

Market authority: Market management which may include market committees and associations of food business operators.

SECTION 4 – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Policies, Rules, and Regulations

4.1.1 Appropriate rules and regulations should be formulated and implemented with the aim of guiding operations to ensure food safety during food purchase, preparation, processing, storage, packaging, and consumption. Such requirements should be elaborated either separately or incorporated into existing food regulations.

4.1.2 The general hygienic requirements and practices to be followed by the FBOs should be translated by the competent authorities into codes of practice which can be applied considering the conditions and risk factors specific to each operation.

4.1.3 The risk of the operation should be evaluated in terms of market size, especially the size of the population of the city or town where it is placed, infrastructure, type of food sold and kind of activities.

4.1.4 Competent authorities should regulate and promote food safety controls and the use of the guidelines established in this document in addition to CXC 1 – 1969.

4.1.5 Competent authorities should put in place surveillance systems in the event of a food-borne disease outbreak.

4.1.6 Competent authorities should approve the types of food that can be marketed, the location and characteristics of the points of sale, and incorporate details regarding the sanitary conditions that should be met.

4.1.7 Competent authorities should implement food safety controls including but not limited to the issuance of permits and licenses, and where applicable, apply sanctions.

4.1.8 Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders should be clearly defined and documented, including their legal obligations.

4.1.9 The government in coordination with the FBOs should be responsible for maintaining the traditional market for food.

4.1.10 Market authorities should be empowered to assist the competent authorities with licensing and registration through a mutually agreed mechanism to promote self-regulation of FBOs.

4.2 Market Infrastructure

4.2.1 The traditional markets for foods should be designed to provide the basic infrastructure that promotes good hygienic practices for food handling and business operations.

4.2.2 The infrastructure should be suitable for maintenance and sanitation activities.

4.2.3 When planning market infrastructure, high-risk areas, such as where raw meat, poultry and fish are handled, should be physically separated to prevent cross-contamination of foods.

4.3 Conditions for licensing/registration

4.3.1 FBOs should meet the minimum requirements as set by competent authorities.

4.3.2 It is essential that basic training in food hygiene should be carried out before issuing an operating license/registration of FBOs.

4.3.3 The frequency and the type of training should be agreed upon by stakeholders considering the market requirements, kind of food products offered, FBO practices and other aspects as may be determined appropriate.

4.4 Pest, animal and zoonotic risks control

4.4.1 The management and FBOs in traditional markets for food should provide effective mechanisms for the control of animals and pests (rats, mice, pigeons, insects, etc.).

4.4.2 Any food found to have become contaminated/infested by animals and/or pests should be hygienically disposed of in a manner to prevent contamination/infestation of other foods.

4.4.3 Pest and animal control with chemical, physical or biological agents should be carried out without posing a threat to the safety or suitability of food.

4.4.4 Zoonotic risks should be managed with appropriate biosafety measures, which may include human and animal disease surveillance; cleaning and disinfection; and other steps necessary to control the spread of disease.

SECTION 5 – FOOD BUSINESS OPERATORS

5.1 Health status of food handlers

5.1.1 All food handlers in traditional markets for food should undergo daily health checks before handling food as well as a scheduled medical examination and, where necessary be certified and /or immunized.

5.1.2 No food handler shall be allowed to perform his/her duties if showing any symptoms of jaundice, diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, sore throat with fever, discharge from ear, eye, and nose, visibly infected skin lesions such as boils and cuts. In such cases, they shall cease from handling food in any capacity and seek medical treatment.

5.1.3 Any food handler who has been identified as or is known to be a carrier of foodborne disease organism(s), shall not be involved in any food handling activity until certified fit by a medical doctor.

5.2 Personal hygiene and behaviour

Food handlers, during the conduct of their business, should observe the following:

5.2.1 Wear clean and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

5.2.2 Properly wash hands with soap and running potable water, before handling food. If running potable water is not available, an acceptable hand sanitizing method should be used.

5.2.3 Keep fingernails short and clean at all times and avoid wearing jewellery or ornaments during food preparation.

5.2.4 Keep the hair, including facial hair clean, tidy, and covered during food handling.

5.2.5 Cover cuts and wounds with suitable waterproof plasters.

5.2.6 Avoid smoking or chewing gum while preparing or serving food.

5.2.7 Refrain from any unhygienic practices such as spitting and picking nose, ears, or touching any body part while handling food.

5.2.8 Avoid sneezing or coughing over or onto the food.

5.2.9 Use food stalls exclusively for their intended purpose.

5.3 Training and Competence

5.3.1 Food handlers should undergo adequate training in food hygiene and demonstrate competence before licensing and further training as required by the competent authority.

5.3.2 Training on food hygiene should be conducted by the competent authorities or other institutions recognized by the competent authorities. Food vendors should also be trained on their responsibility to offer safe and suitable food products to consumers.

5.3.3 Relevant authorities, including extension and community health workers as appropriate, should engage market authorities and other stakeholders to assist in food handler training, especially those that are required before licensing and in facilitating the adoption of food handler training by FBOs.

5.3.4 Simple posters illustrating the “dos” and “don’ts” of food handling during vending should be widely and prominently displayed in relevant places for the benefit of both food handlers and consumers.

5.3.5 The training material should incorporate pictorials with less text. The key information should be reinforced in short and crisp messages and where possible translated into the local languages. The training material may be waterproof so that food vendors can refer to it/ keep it/hang it on their food vending cart/stall too.

5.3.6 Training programs should take into consideration the knowledge and skills levels of the food handlers being trained.

5.4 FBO associations

5.4.1 The formation of FBO associations or cooperatives should be encouraged to provide support and a liaison point with the relevant authorities to facilitate the implementation of hygiene measures.

5.4.2 FBO associations should encourage continuous capacity building and self-regulation for improved adherence to food safety requirements.

5.5 FBOs responsibilities

FBOs are responsible for the hygiene and protection of the food they handle and for all aspects related to its safety including:

5.5.1 developing, implementing, and verifying processes that provide food that is safe and suitable for its intended use,

5.5.2 providing an efficient record-keeping system,

5.5.3 ensuring personnel are competent as appropriate to their job activities,

5.5.4 ensuring there is a simple one-step forward, one-step back traceability system in the food chain where applicable,

5.5.5 Complaint Management System for consumers,

5.5.6 building a positive food safety culture by demonstrating their commitment to providing safe and suitable food and encouraging appropriate food safety practices,

5.5.7 ensuring that consumers have clear and easy-to-understand information to enable them identify the presence of food hazards including allergens, protect their food from contamination, and prevent the growth/survival of foodborne pathogens during storage, handling, and preparation of food hygienically,

5.5.8 taking appropriate measures to keep market stalls free from animals, pests and insects to prevent contamination of food. However, animals such as guide dogs may be allowed but precautions should be taken to avoid food contamination,

5.5.9 immediately take all practicable measures to get rid of the identified pest or harbourage sites and to prevent re-infestation.

SECTION 6 – LOCATION, DESIGN, LAYOUT, AND STRUCTURES

6.1 Location

6.1.1 Competent authorities have overall responsibility for setting standards to ensure the adequacy of the location, infrastructure and utilities. Market authorities and FBOs should therefore comply with the set standards. Where market improvements are required, they should be done in consultation with food safety experts, which may include relocation advice for FBOs.

6.1.2 The traditional markets for food should be located away from:

6.1.2.1 environmentally polluted areas and industrial activities that are reasonably likely to contaminate food,

6.1.2.2 areas prone to flooding,

6.1.2.3 areas prone to infestations of pests,

6.1.2.4 areas where wastes, either solid or liquid, cannot be removed effectively.

6.2 Design and Layout

6.2.1 The design and layout of the traditional market for food should:

6.2.1.1 be reviewed and approved beforehand by the competent authority,

6.2.1.2 provide adequate space for food vendor stalls, carts, display cases, food preparation, handling, storing, serving, and selling areas,

6.2.1.3 allow for the flow of materials and goods, in and out of the markets, in a manner which will prevent food contamination,

6.2.1.4 have graded and compacted pathways such that they allow adequate drainage of expected levels of rainfall,

6.2.1.5 have stalls with access to an inlet and outlet of a drainage system or other suitable means of hygienic disposal of wastewater,

6.2.1.6 allow for market segmentation to separate areas for sale of high-risk foods from areas allocated to low-risk foods,

6.2.1.7 allow for the proper placement of client and vendors facilities, such as toilets, hand washing basins, and eating facilities in a manner that prevents food contamination,

6.2.1.8 provide suitable, sufficient, and properly placed areas for solid waste storage, crockery/cutlery, and appliance cleaning, washing, and disinfecting,

6.2.1.9 be adequately ventilated to remove hazardous gases and offensive odours such as cooking fuel fumes and provide a continuous and sufficient supply of fresh air,

6.2.1.10 provide adequate power supply to support the food vendors in the market to operate appliances, processing and cooling equipment, and other implements used in the preparation, handling, storage, serving, and selling of food,

6.2.1.11 have an ample supply of potable water, under adequate pressure and of suitable temperature, with adequate facilities for its storage, distribution, and protection against contamination,

6.2.1.12 be designed in such a way that it allows for adequate lighting,

6.2.1.13 provide space in and around the food stalls which should be free of unnecessarily stored goods or items to permit easy access for cleaning,

6.2.1.14 provide adequate space for loading/offloading,

6.3 Structures

6.3.1 Structures in traditional markets for food should be approved by the competent authority and should be made of impervious materials that can be cleaned, disinfected, and maintained in a good state of repair.

6.3.2 Food preparation areas should be made of smooth, non-absorbent materials, and be inert to the food, detergents, and disinfectants under normal operating conditions.

6.3.3 Surfaces that come into direct contact with food should be in sound condition, durable, and easy to clean, disinfect and maintain.

6.3.4 All cooking areas, washing equipment, working tables, shelves, and cupboards on or in which food is placed should be at an appropriate height above the ground.

6.3.5 There should be adequate light to ensure reasonable illumination in every part of a food stall to facilitate all activities in the traditional market for food.

6.3.6 The traditional market for food should be roofed to minimize the effects of extreme weather conditions on food and the build-up of dirt and condensate from the atmosphere.

6.3.7 Where appropriate, suitable facilities should be available for temperature, humidity and moisture controls to maintain food safety and food product integrity.

6.3.8 Effective protection against pest access and harbourage should be provided for.

6.3.9 Floor drains for purposes of removing surface water to facilitate cleaning and sanitizing should be provided.

6.3.10 Where applicable, provide for smoke hoods and flues above cooking areas to enable the removal of cooking gases, smoke, and fumes into the open air.

6.3.11 Provide for centralized or individualized appliances, crockery/cutlery, and other implements' washing facilities, equipped with running potable water and where necessary hot potable water, with appropriate drains to an approved sewer or drain system, to ensure complete cleaning needs.

6.3.12 Traditional markets for food should comply with any other requirements by the competent authority.

6.4 Food Storage Equipment

6.4.1 Equipment used for storage of food should be appropriately designed using food-grade materials that are easy to clean and sanitize.

6.4.2 Refrigerators and freezers' temperatures should be monitored. Where ice is used for cooling raw food, for example, fishery products, it should be added in adequate quantity and replenished to keep the products chilled and covered.

6.4.3 Monitoring devices and any other equipment that could impact food safety should not be used for purposes other than their intended use.

6.4.4 Calibration programmes should be established for monitoring devices such as thermometers, refrigeration unit controls, weighing scales and recording thermometers.

6.4.5 Frequency of calibration, responsible person, monitoring and verification procedures, appropriate corrective actions, and record keeping should be specified.

6.5 Sanitation

6.5.1 **Water supply** – Traditional markets for food should ensure a sufficient supply of potable water.

6.5.1.1 **Liquid waste disposal**- Traditional markets for food should have an efficient wastewater disposal system approved by the relevant competent authority, which should be maintained in a good state of repair and working condition. The system should be large enough to carry peak loads and be provided with traps to prevent solid waste material from being discharged into the drain/sewer.

6.5.2 **Solid waste disposal**-Traditional markets for food should ensure:

6.5.2.1 Solid waste material is handled in such a manner as to avoid contamination of food and/or potable water,

6.5.2.2 Solid waste is removed from the working area of the stalls as often as necessary and at least once daily,

6.5.2.3 Provision of waste bins at strategic places within the markets,

6.5.2.4 All solid waste is segregated and properly disposed into suitable containers, including recycling bins which are secured with tight-fitting lids or placed in waste bins,

6.5.2.5 The waste bins are emptied and cleaned as often as necessary to ensure a hygienic environment,

6.5.2.6 In areas without garbage collection service, solid waste is disposed of in a sanitary manner, as recommended or approved by the competent authority,

6.5.2.7 Waste equipment and waste storage areas are cleaned and disinfected as and/or when required by the competent authority,

6.5.2.8 Only appropriate disinfecting agents are used, and

6.5.2.9 Routine inspection of solid waste disposal areas for the presence or harbourage of pests, taking any practical measures to eliminate and further prevent any infestation.

6.5.3 **Toilets and sanitary facilities** – Every traditional market for food should have easily accessible toilets and other sanitary facilities which should be kept clean and operational. Toilets should be provided with separate chambers for both males and females.

SECTION 7 – FOOD PREPARATION

7.1 Requirements

Every FBO involved in food preparation should ensure the following:

7.1.1 Supply of all raw materials and other ingredients including ice be from appropriate known and

reliable sources.

7.1.2 Freshness and wholesomeness of ingredients.

7.1.3 Raw materials and other ingredients should not be placed in containers that were originally used for harmful materials including chemicals such as detergents and pesticides.

7.1.4 Transportation of raw materials and other ingredients be done in a manner to prevent contamination.

7.1.5 Cold chain transportation of foods should be implemented where necessary.

7.1.6 Only permitted food additives are to be used and the amount added should be as per the relevant national, regional or international specifications such as CXS 192.

7.1.7 Maintain traceability and record-keeping systems.

7.2 Equipment Cleaning and Sanitation

7.2.1 All equipment used in food preparation should be kept clean before and after use. Only food-safe cleaning agents should be used.

7.2.2 The equipment, including containers for storing potable water, should be food grade, resistant to corrosion, and capable of withstanding repeated cleaning and disinfection.

7.2.3 Every FBO should ensure that all defective, damaged, cracked, rusted, chipped and unsuitable equipment and crockery/cutlery are removed from use and discarded.

7.2.4 Every cutting surface used in the preparation of food should be free from cracks and crevices and should be easy to clean and disinfect.

7.2.5 All food handling equipment should be maintained in a good state of repair and working condition.

7.2.6 All non-disposable utensils should be regularly cleaned by thoroughly washing them in potable water using soap or other suitable detergents.

7.2.7 Disposable utensils should be used only once and properly disposed off.

7.3 Cooking and Handling

7.3.1 Food handlers should thoroughly wash fresh vegetables and fruits whether for cooking or consuming raw with running potable water to remove surface contamination.

7.3.2 When feasible, food handlers should also disinfect fresh vegetables and fruits which will be consumed raw.

7.3.3 To prevent cross-contamination, food vendors should not store or wash raw food including raw meat, fish and poultry with other foods that will be consumed raw or in a semi-cooked state. There should be at least an area for handling, storing, cleaning, and preparing raw food, separate from the cooked food handling, display and serving areas.

7.3.4 Utensils used for cooked and uncooked food should be handled separately to prevent cross-contamination.

7.3.5 Thawed meat, fish, and poultry products should be checked frequently to make sure the thawing process is complete before further processing, or the processing time should be increased to take into account the initial temperature of the products. Frozen foods should be thawed once using appropriate methods and used immediately for food preparation. Thawed foods should not be frozen again.

7.3.6 Food that requires refrigeration should be maintained in those conditions during handling and storage until its use.

7.3.7 The time and temperature of cooking should be sufficient to destroy or reduce to safe levels any pathogens that may be present in the food.

7.3.8 Potable water should be used for drinking, and preparation of hot or cold drinks and beverages.

7.3.9 Ice should be made from potable water, handled and stored to prevent contamination.

7.3.10 Containers used to transport or store ice should meet the requirements for potable water containers.

7.3.11 Food should not be re-heated more than once and only the portion of the food to be served should be re-heated.

7.3.12 Utensils used for tasting food should be washed immediately after each use or if disposable, discarded after use.

7.4 Serving food

Every food handler should observe the following:

- 7.4.1 Cooked foods should not be handled with bare hands. If gloves are worn, appropriate measures should be applied to ensure the gloves do not become the source of contamination.
- 7.4.2 Clean tongs, forks and spoons should be used when handling, serving or selling food.
- 7.4.3 All utensils used should be clean and dry and not handled by touching the food contact surfaces.
- 7.4.4 Plates filled with food should not be stacked one on top of the other during display, storing, or serving.
- 7.4.5 Food-grade packaging materials should be used when packaging and serving ready-to-eat food.
- 7.4.6 Printed material such as newspapers, magazines etc. should not be used as a primary package for food wrapping or serving food.
- 7.4.7 Polythene bags and wrappers should not be used to serve warm or heat food.
- 7.4.8 Food handlers shall not blow into plastic bags, wrappers, or packages used for food.
- 7.4.9 All beverages offered for sale should be dispensed only in their individual, original, sealable containers or from taps fitted to bulk containers and made of food-grade material. Bulk containers should be covered with tight-fitting lids.
- 7.4.10 Cut fruit or other foods ordinarily consumed in the state in which they are sold should be set out in an enclosed display case, cabinet, or similar type of protective device and should be displayed in a manner to protect the food from contamination and at appropriate temperatures.
- 7.4.11 Food handlers should avoid handling money. If this is unavoidable, the food handler should wash their hands and/or change gloves before handling food.
- 7.4.12 Ready-to-eat foods intended for continuous serving should be protected from environmental contamination.
- 7.4.13 Food intended for continuous serving should be kept at the following recommended holding temperatures to minimize or prevent the growth of harmful microorganisms:
 - a) above 60°C for food served hot,
 - b) below 5 °C for food served cold,
 - c) -18°C or below for food served frozen.
- 7.4.14 A food warmer should be used to maintain continuous holding temperatures and should not be used for re-heating purposes.

7.5 Unsold Food

- 7.5.1 Unsold cooked/prepared food should be properly packaged and stored under conditions that do not contaminate or cause deterioration.
- 7.5.2 All unsold cooked food and prepared beverages that cannot be properly preserved should be safely disposed of at the end of the day.

7.6 Transportation of prepared/cooked foods

- 7.6.1 Food requiring transportation to the point of sale/stall should be placed in a well-protected, covered and clean container to avoid contamination.
- 7.6.2 Any means used in transporting food should be clean and in good hygienic condition, appropriately equipped to accommodate any special requirements of the food being transported and provide protection from environmental contamination.
- 7.6.3 Vehicles used to transport prepared/cooked food should be exclusively used for that purpose.
- 7.6.4 Perishable food should be transported under temperature control.
- 7.6.5 Prepared/cooked food should not be transported together with raw food, ingredients, and any other materials which may contaminate the food.

7.7 Food storage

- 7.7.1 Food should be adequately protected from pests, environmental contaminants and stored at recommended temperatures.

7.7.2 Readily perishable food should be placed or stacked so that it is not likely to be contaminated by contact with pet food, toxic materials, or any other materials which may cause contamination.

7.7.3 The bulk of readily perishable foods should be stored in clean containers at recommended temperature.

7.7.4 All dry ingredients should be stored and maintained in their original labelled commercial container where possible. Any other container used for storing dry ingredients should be properly labelled and designed to prevent moisture absorption.

7.7.5 All non-perishable food should be stored in a clean, protected, and closed container/cupboard to prevent cross-contamination by pests.

7.7.6 Perishable raw food including wet milled legumes, cereals and pulses, should be stored in separate clean containers, preferably placed in a clean ice box, a refrigerator or a freezer to prevent spoilage and/or pathogen growth.

7.7.7 Low moisture foods such as cereals and legumes should be stored in air-tight packages and elevated from the floor using pallets.

7.7.8 Refrigerators and freezers should not be overloaded and their temperatures should be maintained at a maximum of 4°C and -18°C or below, respectively.

7.7.9 All enclosed spaces, cupboards, shelves, and racks used for the storage of food should be made in such a way that they are easily accessible for routine cleaning and inspection. All bulky food should be stored in an orderly fashion to facilitate ventilation, inspection, and the detection of pests.

7.7.10 In stock rotation, the principles of "First in, first out" and "First expiry, first out" should be applied considering labelling and storage date information to avoid wastage.

7.7.11 Date marking on all food containers should be checked before the food is used. Expired food shall not be sold or used for the preparation of food.

SECTION 8– CONSUMERS

8.1 General requirements

All consumers in the traditional markets for food should adhere to general hygienic practices which include but are not limited to:

- 8.1.1. prevention of contamination of food,
- 8.1.2. washing or disinfecting hands before touching food,
- 8.1.3. avoidance of unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food,
- 8.1.4. avoidance of spitting, sneezing, coughing, littering, smoking, or use of tobacco in areas where there is unprotected food or surfaces likely to contact food,
- 8.1.5. proper disposal of leftovers in waste bins,
- 8.1.6. report to the market authorities about the unhygienic behaviour of any food handler if noted, and
- 8.1.7. report and seek medical attention whenever they experience foodborne illness related symptoms such as diarrhoea, vomiting and stomach pain.

8.2 Consumer Awareness

All consumers should:

- 8.2.1 obtain sufficient information from relevant sources on guidance and instructions for food handling, preparation, storage, and waste disposal,
- 8.2.2 be aware of the importance of reading and understanding information on product label,
- 8.2.3 be aware of the need for proper hand washing before handling food,
- 8.2.4 understand the intended use of the food, e. g. whether it is ready-to-eat or whether it is intended for further processing,
- 8.2.5 be informed of their responsibility of not contaminating food vending areas, and
- 8.2.6 be informed of the presence of allergens in food.

8.3 Waste disposal

All consumers should:

8.3.1 dispose waste appropriately into the designated waste disposal systems and facilities, and

8.3.2 comply with any other relevant authority requirements related to liquid and solid waste disposal.

SECTION 9 – MONITORING AND EVALUATION

9.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Programs

9.1.1 Competent authority and FBOs should use monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the food hygiene and safety practices in traditional markets for food.

9.1.2 Market assessments should be regularly employed to identify areas for improvement and determine priorities and pathways to improve food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food. Market authorities can support regular monitoring activities.

9.2 Stakeholder Committee

Each market, whether in permanent or temporary premises, should be encouraged to form a stakeholder committee consisting of FBOs, competent authorities, consumers associations, and market authorities, where they exist, to advise on regular market cleaning, repairs, and access to critical services like potable water and waste management.

9.3 Incentive programs

Incentive-based programs can be used to facilitate improved FBO and consumer food safety practices.