

Food safety and legislation concerns in developing countries (Zimbabwe)

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Zimbabwe

Abstract

Food safety concerns have existed for a long time, as millions of people across the globe suffer from food borne diseases every year. Contamination of food owing to limited knowledge of food safety practices and legislation primarily increases the risk of food borne illnesses. The need to improve food processing to a healthy and equitable system in developing countries is becoming increasingly worrying and more urgent (Codex 2014). The interest rate on which one can speak depends primarily on whether the government is capable of formulating appropriate policies and, which is very important, the ability of the public bureaucracy to effectively implement the formulated policies. Developing countries have particular challenges for the implementation of the regulations on the health of food products, as they are presented on a global scale, and would therefore benefit from a scientific approach that best suits them.

Some common features of food processors / industries in developing countries include without limitation: small scale, mainly in the background or in dingy premises, more often than the case, are managed by non-food technologists/ scientists and who are reluctant to engage food technologists/scientists whom they believe could be more expensive or unnecessary addition to their current needs (FAO 2007). At the same time, they are a little sceptical about the regulation institutions such as the Standard Association of Zimbabwe, have no idea of the laws and legal requirements governing the premises of food companies and therefore prefer to keep their activity non-official.

Based on the above, it is essentially critical that approaches that address these challenges are applied in implementing food safety standards. Over the years in Zimbabwe, many brilliant policies have been formulated and implemented. However, there is no significant development to show for this, as evidenced by the fact that Zimbabwe has continued to remain in the category of the least developed countries in the world (Leake LL 2017). This suggests that policy formulations should not become the main issue in Zimbabwe, but rather their effective implementation in a way that promotes national development.

In this context, the study explored the importance of governance and public administration in general, its role in policy implementation, examined and critically analysed the main obstacles preventing Zimbabwe from effectively implementing policies. In carrying out the study, secondary sources of information or data collection were mainly relied upon. The basic observation is that there are indeed certain factors and circumstances which constitute serious obstacles to

the effective implementation of the food policies in Zimbabwe. These factors, among other things, include ineffective and corrupt political leadership, deep rooted corruption within the public bureaucracy, poor economy, inadequate or out of date food legislation and ill-equipped food inspectors.

The proposed recommendations for overcoming obstacles and challenges and repositioning Zimbabwe for effective policy implementation include, in fact, that the government should ensure the evolution of identified and responsible political and bureaucratic leaders (it's time the government realises that we need to appoint skilled people with food science and technology background in leadership roles), The need for strong political commitment to implement policies to assist in producing safe food. At the same time the government must constantly develop appropriate programs to improve working conditions, and other incentives for public bureaucrats to strengthen their morale and commitment to the public food safety and health. The need for the country to be proactive in identifying their own problems as well as in developing and implementing solutions to those problems and then requesting external assistance if needed (FAO/WHO 2007).

Speaker Biography:

Nyasha Chiwara is a food science student still in her third year of study. Currently on school internship program at a small scale milling company in Zimbabwe. I am a food science major at Chinhoyi University of Technology. My hobbies are cooking, baking and reading. My aspirations in life include telling a very successful story to the world through food, to be a distinguished food scientist not only in the lab but also to stand and advocate for everything concerned about food, raise awareness considering food in Africa and globally , to initiate food conferences and summits in Africa as in developed countries for the well being of people.

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