

Summary report of validation event for the Good handling practices for Fish, Tomato and GLVs

On October 23, 2023, the “Research project to support Africa’s micro small and medium enterprises to deliver affordable, safe and nutritious food” – RSM2SNF held a validation exercise for its proposed guidelines for good hygiene practices in Nigeria with key stakeholders and to discuss how the guidelines can implemented. The one-day event led by the food safety team lead brought together 81 participants who are diverse stakeholders from the government (particularly the local government offices and departments of hygiene), civil society, academia, and the private sector (including MSMEs all along the value chain operating in our focal value chains). The event was held at the Adis Hotel New Bodija in Ibadan, Oyo State.



Fig 1: The PI during her presentation

The project's principal investigator, Prof Saweda Tasie, gave the welcome remarks and a brief introduction of the project and its objectives. During her presentation, she stated that the three main products of focus for the project are fish, green leafy vegetables and tomatoes and the areas of concern throughout the research are food safety, gender roles in consumption process of food eaten and the environment/climate change. She further stated that the aim of the validation event was to discuss feedback of the proposed guidelines for good hygiene practices in Nigeria with key stakeholders and engage with the market leaders on how the guidelines can be implemented in the markets. Other keynote addresses were made by representatives from The Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) who stated that it is important that the developed draft guide be upgraded to the National code of practices and that SON is on board to ensure that this is achieved, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) who implore the government representatives to recognize that they have a crucial role to play in achieving safe food handling in the markets, and the local governments in Oyo state. They welcomed the effort of the project and stressed the importance of collaborative effort from the relevant stakeholders to achieve the objective of the developed guidelines.



Fig 2: Some participants at the event

Following the remarks and keynote addresses, the RSM2SNF food safety team lead presented key points from the draft of Good hygienic practices for Fish, fresh tomato and green leafy vegetables given the findings from the review relevant policies associated with food safety in Nigeria and a rapid reconnaissance exercise that the project carried out in the first year of the project. Some of the key points from the presentation include (i) The steps the project has taken around food safety to begin the process of co-creating interventions, which include review of different national food safety policies and global codes of hygienic practices for fresh tomatoes and green leafy vegetables, visits to markets where fresh tomatoes and green leafy vegetables are being sold within the state. He further stated that during the visit, It was discovered that vegetables are mixed together with other farm produce during harvesting which could result to cross-contamination and it is dropped on the bare floor in the market. Environment where these trading activities is carried out is dirty and so is the water is used in washing the tomatoes, (ii) proposed next steps and planned project activity.

During the presentation by the food safety team lead, participants gave feedbacks on the draft as well as the presentation, some of which were that the observation made during the project's visit resonated with them in terms of what is carried out or observed in the markets. The summary report of the feedback can be found [here](#). This feedback is reflected in the final developed guidelines.

Another highlight of the event was the execution of partnership agreement between parties which was the signing of memorandum of Understanding MoU with the markets authority in order to begin steps of co-creating interventions that ensure food safety practices in the markets. The 4 identified markets: Rahama Market, Bodija Market, Orita Merin Market, Shasha Market, and their respective local government representatives, signed the memorandum of understanding (MOU), and have all agreed to partner in ensuring that these produce are handled in the market in a way that it safe for consumption.



Fig 3: Prof Saweda signing the MOU with representatives from the LGA



Fig 4: Prof Saweda with representatives from the LGA