

WHO Webinar Series: Updated Estimates of the Global Burden of Foodborne Diseases (2000–2021)

Overview

The World Health Organization (WHO) hosted a series of technical webinars in June 2026 to present the updated global, regional, and national estimates of the burden of foodborne diseases for the period 2000–2021. Developed under the guidance of the WHO Technical Advisory Group, the Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG), these estimates represent the most comprehensive assessment to date of illnesses, deaths, and disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) caused by 42 biological and chemical foodborne hazards.

The webinar series highlights new methodological advances, expanded hazard coverage, and the first-ever national-level burden estimates. Sessions bring together global experts to discuss data, modelling approaches, key findings, and implications for food safety policy and public health action.

Webinars

1. [Webinar 1: WHO estimates of attribution of burden of diseases to transmission pathways and foods: approach and key findings](#)
2. [Webinar 2: WHO estimates of the burden of nine foodborne chemicals, 2000-2021](#)
3. [Webinar 3: WHO estimates of the burden of 22 foodborne enteric disease hazards, 2000-2021](#)
4. [Webinar 4: WHO global launch webinar on 14 foodborne invasive parasitic diseases 2000–2021](#)
5. [Webinar 5: Building WHO estimates of the burden of foodborne diseases: Data, methods and modelling](#)
6. [Webinar 6: Using updated WHO estimates of the burden of foodborne diseases to improve food safety at the country-level: Governance and Economic Impact](#)

Webinar 1: WHO estimates of attribution of burden of diseases to transmission pathways and foods: approach and key findings

Date/time : 9 June 2026, 13:00 – 14:00 CET

Moderator: Richard Kumapley, Epidemiologist, Department of Nutrition and Food Safety, WHO

Background: Identifying the sources of foodborne diseases is crucial for guiding national food safety strategies and supporting policies that promote safe and sustainable food production. We will present global estimates of the proportions of burden of disease attributable to foodborne transmission, other major transmission pathways, and specific food categories for 29 viral, bacterial, parasitic, and chemical hazards, based on a structured expert judgment (SEJ) study commissioned by the World Health Organization (WHO) and supervised by the WHO Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG) for 2021-2025.

Agenda (time in CET)

13:00 – 13:05	Welcome Yuki Minato, Technical Officer, Department of Nutrition and Food Safety, WHO
13:05 – 13:10	Source attribution aims and approach Dr Sara M Pires, Chair of the Source Attribution Task Force, WHO technical advisory group, Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG) 2021-2025 / Senior Scientist, National Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark, Denmark
13:10 – 13:20	Methodology Dr Tina Nane, Associated Professor, Delft Institute of Applied Mathematics, Delft University of technology (TU Delft), Kingdom of the Netherlands
13:20 – 13:30	Results Dr Sandra Hoffmann, Member, Source Attribution Task Force, FERG 2021-2025, Affiliate Professor, George Washington University, United States of America
13:30 – 13:40	Policy implications of the source attribution results Dr Sara M Pires
13:40 – 13:58	Questions and answers
13:58 – 14:00	Closing remarks, Yuki Minato, WHO

Related links:

Source attribution [WHO website] <https://www.who.int/teams/nutrition-and-food-safety/monitoring-nutritional-status-and-food-safety-and-events/foodborne-disease-estimates/source-attribution>

Webinar recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8NnmrlZZRA&feature=youtu.be>

Webinar 2: WHO estimates of the burden of nine foodborne chemicals, 2000-2021

Date/time : 11 June 2026, 13:00 – 14:00 CEST

Moderator: Luc Ingenbleek, Technical Officer, Department of Nutrition and Food Safety, WHO

Background: Diseases caused by harmful chemicals in our food remain a significant and largely preventable cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide, affecting people of all ages and placing a disproportionate burden on vulnerable populations. Following the previous WHO estimates published in 2015, the 2026 edition of the WHO estimates of the global burden of foodborne diseases provides updated and improved assessments of illnesses, deaths, and burden caused by nine major foodborne chemicals. These estimates, including the first-ever national level estimates from 2000 to 2021, are produced under the guidance of the WHO Technical Advisory Group, the Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG), drawing on the latest data, refined methodologies, and consultation processes with countries.

This webinar, hosted on the occasion of the launch of the 2026 edition of WHO estimates of the global burden of foodborne disease on World Food safety Day, will present the key findings for the chemical hazards of the 2026 edition, highlight methodological approaches, and discuss their implications for food safety policy and public health action.

Agenda (time in CET)

13:00 – 13:05	Welcome and Background Dr Luc Ingenbleek, Technical Officer, Monitoring and Surveillance Unit, Nutrition and Food Safety Department, WHO
13:05 – 13:20	Technical overview of the process of hazard selection, model development and data collection for WHO estimates of the global, regional, and national disease burden of nine foodborne chemicals, 2000–21 Dr Lea Sletting Jakobsen, Co-chair of Chemicals and Toxins Taskforce, WHO technical advisory group, Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG) 2021-2025 / Technical University of Denmark, Denmark
13:20 – 13:40	Key findings of WHO estimates of the global, regional, and national disease burden of nine foodborne chemicals, 2000–21 Dr Antonio Agudo, Co-chair of Chemicals and Toxins Taskforce, FERG for 2021-2025, Catalan Institute of Oncology, Spain
13:40 – 13:55	Questions and answers

13:55 – 14:00

Closing remark

Mr Bruce Gordon, Director a.i. Environment, Climate Change, One Health and Migration Department, WHO

Webinar recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osY6sck-q1Y&feature=youtu.be>

Biographies of the speakers (alphabetical order of the last name)



Antonio Agudo, Head of the Unit of Nutrition and Cancer, Catalan Institute of Oncology (ICO) Antonio Agudo graduated in Medicine (MD) from the University of Barcelona and specialized in Preventive Medicine and Public Health. He also holds an MSc degree in Clinical Epidemiology and a PhD in Public Health and Methodology of Biomedical Research. He conducts both epidemiological and clinical research, including studies involving large population cohorts and clinical trials. His main research areas include the role of chemical compounds and related biomarkers in the carcinogenic process; the relationship between environmental carcinogens and genetic susceptibility in gastrointestinal and lung cancers; and the role of diet, body composition, and physical activity in breast cancer and other hormone-related tumours. In addition to his work with the World Health Organization Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group, he has collaborated with the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) and the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR). He has also contributed to the IARC Monographs on the Identification of Carcinogenic Hazards to Humans published by the International Agency for Research on Cancer.



Bruce Gordon Director a.i. Environment, Climate Change, One Health and Migration, WHO is also the Unit Head of Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH) and Health at the WHO and recently served as the Vice Chair of UN-Water. He oversees a portfolio of work that broadly falls under two pillars: the development of global guidelines on drinking-water, sanitation, and hand hygiene; and WHO's global monitoring of the WASH and WASH-related burden of disease. Current priority interests include strengthening WASH in health care facilities and in health

programmes, such as maternal health, infection prevention and control, antimicrobial resistance, neglected tropical diseases and quality of care. Prior to joining the WASH unit at WHO in 2004, he contributed to the Organization's work on sustainable development with a focus on children's health and environment. He has an academic background in biochemistry and environmental management.



Luc Ingenbleek, Technical Officer, Nutrition and Food Safety, WHO

Luc graduated with a BSc in biochemistry, a MSc in food science and technology, and a PhD in public health. After six years working in the private sector in food safety and quality, he joined the Benin WHO Country Office (Food Safety and Nutrition 2010-2013). From 2014 to 2018, Luc coordinated from the field the first regional Total Diet Study in Sub-Saharan Africa (Benin, Cameroon, Mali and Nigeria), which was supported by FAO/WHO. Between 2019 and 2021, Luc worked with FAO as Food Safety Consultant in Rome, where he supported various officers from the Food Systems and Food Safety Division in the implementation of capacity development projects. Since December 2021, Luc joined the WHO Nutrition and Food Safety Department, as a Technical Officer within the Monitoring and Surveillance Unit. Luc is supporting the Department with dietary exposure assessments and contributes to the works on healthy diets monitoring and the generation of the foodborne diseases estimates, with a focus on chemical hazards.



Lea Sletting Jakobsen, Senior Researcher, DTU

Lea Sletting Jakobsen is a senior researcher at the National Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark. She conducts public health research and provides research-based advice to governmental institutions in the domain of food science and technology with a focus on food safety, disease burden of food-associated diseases and health risk benefit assessments of foods and diets. As a member of the World Health Organization Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group, she contributes to the estimation of the global burden of foodborne disease. Lea holds a PhD degree in food safety and disease burden of chemical contaminants from the Technical University of Denmark and MSc degree in Food science and technology from University of Copenhagen.

Webinar 3: WHO estimates of the burden of 22 foodborne enteric disease hazards, 2000-2021

Date/time : 16 June 2026, 13:00-14:30 CET

Moderator: Dr Tesfaye Gobena, Haramaya University, Ethiopia

Background: Foodborne diseases remain a significant and largely preventable cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide, affecting people of all ages and placing a disproportionate burden on vulnerable populations. Following the previous WHO estimates published in 2015, the 2026 edition of the WHO estimates of the global burden of foodborne diseases provides updated and improved assessments of illnesses, deaths, and burden caused by 42 major foodborne hazards. These estimates, including the first-ever national level estimates from 2000 to 2021, are produced under the guidance of the WHO Technical Advisory Group, the Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG), drawing on the latest data, refined methodologies, and consultation processes with countries.

This webinar will present detailed methods and results for the 22 enteric disease hazards of the 2026 edition, 14 diarrhoeal and 8 non-diarrhoeal, including for three diarrhoeal hazards not previously in the 2015 edition: rotavirus, enteroaggregative *E. coli*, and *Cyclospora cayentanensis*. Implications for policy and public health action will be discussed, and there will be an opportunity for audience questions about specific results and methods.

Agenda (time in CEST)

13:00 – 13:02	Welcome and introductions - Dr Tesfaye Gobena, Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group for 2021-2025 (FERG) member; Associate Professor, Haramaya University, Ethiopia
13:02 – 13:03	Opening - Yuki Minato, Technical Officer, WHO
13:03 – 13:13	WHO estimates of the global burden of 22 foodborne enteric diseases hazards, 2000–2021: methods, results, and implications - Dr Shannon Majowicz, Chair of the Enteric Disease Task Force, FERG; Professor, University of Waterloo, Canada
13:13 – 13:30	14 diarrhoeal hazards: Methods and results

	- Dr Elaine Scallan Walter, FERG member; Professor, University of Colorado Anschutz, United States of America
13:30 – 13:40	8 non-diarrhoeal hazards: methods and results
	- Dr Martyn Kirk, FERG member; Professor, Australian National University, Australia
13:40 – 13:45	Implications: diarrhoeal diseases estimates
	- Dr Margaret Kosek, Professor, University of Virginia, United States of America
13:45 – 13:50	Implications: non-diarrhoeal disease estimates
	- Dr John Crump, Professor, University of Otago, New Zealand
13:50 – 14:15	Questions and answers
14:15 – 14:20	Closing remarks

Webinar recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lsVGwhZDLw&feature=youtu.be>

Biographies of the speakers

(alphabetical order of the last name)

Moderator

Tesfaye Gobena, Haramaya University



Dr. Tesfaye Gobena is a senior public health researcher and Associate Professor with a PhD in Public Health at Haramaya University, Ethiopia, where he serves as a lead researcher with extensive experience in infectious disease epidemiology and implementation science research. He has a proven track record in designing and conducting studies on food safety, foodborne diseases, and infectious diseases in low-resource settings, with a strong focus on generating evidence to inform policy and strengthen public health practice. He possesses strong expertise in health systems strengthening, particularly in health data quality improvement, data management, and the use of information for evidence-based decision-making, and has actively contributed to capacity-building initiatives within the health sector. He has collaborated with a wide range of national and international stakeholders and global partners in the field of infectious diseases, including foodborne diseases. In addition, he is supervising the research work of several Public Health, Epidemiology, and Environmental Health Sciences postgraduate (MSc and PhD) students.

Speakers

John Crump



John Crump is Professor of Medicine, Pathology, and Global Health and Director, Otago Global Health Institute, University of Otago; and an Adjunct Professor of Medicine, Pathology, and Global Health at Duke University. He graduated from the University of Otago Medical School in 1993 and trained as both an internist in infectious diseases and as a pathologist in medical microbiology, training at Christchurch Hospital, New Zealand; the Royal Free Hospital, London; the Canberra Hospital, Australia; Duke University Medical Center; and with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He is a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia, a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of the United Kingdom, and a diplomate of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. His main interests are in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of infectious diseases in low-resource areas, with particular focus on febrile illness; invasive bacterial diseases especially the salmonellosis; bacterial and viral zoonoses; and enteric infections. He also works ethics issues in global health, including for global health training and health nationalism.

Martyn Kirk



Professor Martyn Kirk is an epidemiologist and public health leader specialising in foodborne disease surveillance, outbreak investigation, and innovative methods of public health, including whole genome sequencing and artificial intelligence. As a Professor of Applied Epidemiology at the Australian National University, he has led national research programs that integrate infectious disease surveillance, data science, and public health intelligence to strengthen Australia's preparedness for emerging threats. His work spans large-scale cohort studies, real-time analytics, and the development of workforce capability across government and academia. Martyn is widely recognised for advancing evidence-based policy and for championing responsible, transparent approaches to public health data analysis. Professor Kirk is the current director of the Australian Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP).

Margaret Kosek



Dr. Margaret Kosek is a physician and an infectious diseases specialist with an enduring interest in the epidemiology, burden, and long-term impact of diarrheal disease in children in LMICs. She has worked to provide balanced global estimates of global diarrhea disease burden since 2002.

Shannon Majowicz



Dr. Shannon Majowicz is a foodborne disease epidemiologist and Professor in the School of Public Health Sciences, University of Waterloo (Canada). She holds a BSc in Biomedical Sciences (1998), and an MSc (1999) and PhD (2004) in Epidemiology from the University of Guelph (Canada). Prior to joining academia, Dr. Majowicz spent a decade as an epidemiologist with the Canadian federal government (Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada), where she investigated the burden of foodborne and diarrheal diseases in the Canadian population. Her main interests are the epidemiology of foodborne and enteric infections, including disease burden, risk factors, vulnerabilities, and effective interventions, environmental health, knowledge synthesis and public health practice, scenario approaches, and food safety and foodborne disease within the larger system of food and health.

Elaine Scallan Walter



Dr Scallan Walter is a professor of Epidemiology at the Colorado School of Public Health, University of Colorado Anschutz where her research focuses on the overall human health impact of foodborne diseases and improving foodborne disease surveillance and outbreak response. She is the co-Director of the Colorado Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence, one of five CDC-designated Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence established in 2012 to support state and local health departments to build their capacity track and

investigate enteric diseases, and co-Principal Investigator for the Colorado Foodborne Disease Active Surveillance Network (FoodNet), an active laboratory and population-based surveillance system to monitor the incidence of foodborne diseases and to conduct epidemiologic studies designed to help public health officials better understand the epidemiology of foodborne diseases of public health importance in the United States.

Webinar 4: WHO global launch webinar on 14 foodborne invasive parasitic diseases 2000–2021

Date/time : 17 June 2026, 13:00 – 14:00 CET

Moderator: Yuki Minato, Technical Officer, Department of Nutrition and Food Safety, WHO

Background: Parasitic diseases remain a major, yet often under-recognized, contributor to global foodborne illnesses and deaths, with the greatest burden falling on low- and middle-income countries. The last comprehensive global assessment, published in 2015 using 2010 data, estimated that 12 foodborne parasites were responsible for 8.78 million DALYs, of which 76% were directly attributable to foodborne transmission.

The new WHO estimates of the global burden of foodborne diseases (2000–2021) update and expand this evidence base using comparable methodology, while introducing several important refinements. For the first time, the analysis includes *Trypanosoma cruzi*, the causative agent of Chagas disease, providing long-needed estimates of its foodborne contribution. The study also generates national-level burden estimates, enabling countries to identify priority parasites and design targeted interventions. Importantly, it examines two decades of trends, offering a dynamic view of how burdens have evolved from 2000 to 2021.

This webinar will present the rationale, methodological advancements, and key findings from the latest WHO publication. It will deepen global understanding of invasive foodborne parasitic diseases and highlight shifting patterns across regions and countries. By focusing specifically on the foodborne fraction of parasitic diseases, the study provides countries with a baseline for monitoring progress, evaluating interventions, and strengthening food safety systems. The session will also explore how these estimates can be applied within existing national, regional, and global programmes to support more effective prevention and control strategies.

Agenda (time in CET)

13:00 – 13:03	Welcome, Yuki Minato
13:03 – 13:10	Estimating the burden from foodborne invasive parasitic diseases: Background and rationale - Dr Paul Torgerson, Co-chair of the Parasitic Disease Task Force, Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group 2021-2025 / Professor of Veterinary Epidemiology at the University of Zürich, Switzerland
13:10 – 13:15	Methodological consideration

	- Dr Brecht Devleesschauwer, FERG membr, Senior epidemiologist, Sciensano, Belgium
13:15 – 13:30	Key findings - Dr Lucy Robertson, Co-chair of the Parasitic Disease Task Force, Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group 2021-2025 / Lucy Robertson, Professor of Parasitology, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences
13:30 – 13:40	Updated estimates: applications and implications - Dr Bernadette Abela, Scientist, Department of Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases, WHO
13:40 – 14:58	Questions and answers
13:58 – 14:00	Closing

Webinar recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73zK7BvHQLw&feature=youtu.be>

Biographies of the speakers (alphabetical order of the last name)

Dr Bernadette Abela



Dr Bernadette Abela's work bridges the critical intersection of human, animal and environmental health. She currently serves at the World Health Organization (WHO) within the newly formed Department of Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases, where she leads initiatives focused on zoonotic disease prevention and control. With a career rooted in both veterinary science and international public health, Dr. Abela has held roles at WHO's Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses, she advanced strategies including to combat antimicrobial resistance, a mission she also pursued in collaboration with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Her scientific contributions include research in Cameroon with the French Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), where she investigated the emergence of simian immunodeficiency viruses in non-human primates—work that has informed understanding of viral spillover and HIV pandemic risk and the bushmeat trade.

Dr Abela also worked at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and in clinical veterinary practice. Her multidisciplinary approach continues to shape innovative, cross-sectoral solutions for the prevention and control of neglected tropical diseases, reinforcing her commitment to equitable and resilient global health systems.

Dr Brecht Devleesschauwer, Senior epidemiologist, Sciensano, Belgium



Dr Brecht Devleesschauwer is a senior epidemiologist at Sciensano and head of the Service Health information. He is also appointed as visiting professor in Epidemiology and Risk Analysis at Ghent University. He conducts policy-driven public health research in the domain of composite measures of population health and health inequalities. As a member of the World Health Organization Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group. He contributes to the estimation of the global burden of foodborne disease.

Currently, he is coordinating the Belgian National Burden of Disease Study, and chairing the European Burden of Disease Network(link is external). Brecht holds PhD degrees in Public Health and Veterinary Sciences, and MSc degrees in Biostatistics and Veterinary Medicine.

Dr Lucy Robertson



Lucy Robertson is a Professor of Parasitology at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU-VET) where she leads the parasitology team. With a PhD concerned with interactions between parasitology and host nutrition from the University of Glasgow, Lucy has a long-term interest in zoonotic parasites and has been involved in research on food/waterborne parasites for over 30 years; zoonotic parasites remain one of the focus research topics of the parasitology team at NMBU-VET, as well as approaches for mitigating

against transmission. She chaired the 2025 FAO Expert Meeting on microbiological risk assessment of helminths in foods. Lucy was a member of the WHO Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG), where she co-chairs the Parasitic Diseases Task Force and was a member of the Impact Measurement Task Force. One of her major goals in FERG was to ensure that parasites, and the considerable impact on human health and wellbeing caused by these neglected pathogens, were not overlooked.

Dr Paul Torgerson



Paul Torgerson is Professor of Veterinary Epidemiology at the University of Zürich. Trained as a veterinarian with a PhD from the University of Cambridge, Dr Torgerson has held previous academic appointments at University College Dublin, University of Zürich and Ross University in parasitology, epidemiology, and veterinary public health. His present research includes the epidemiology of parasitic diseases and zoonoses and has a particular interest in the burden

of zoonotic diseases. He currently has research projects in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uganda and is part of the consortium that is developing estimates for the global burden of animal diseases

(GBAD). He was a member of the first Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group, leading the parasitic diseases task force. He has also acted as advisor to several international organizations and governments on the control and prevention of zoonotic diseases. He has more than 250 scientific journal publications and is co-editor of the “Oxford textbook of Zoonoses”.

Webinar 5: Building WHO estimates of the burden of foodborne diseases: Data, methods and modelling

Date/time : 23 June 2026, 13:00 – 14:00 CEST

Moderator: Yuki Minato, WHO

Background: The 2026 edition of the WHO estimates of the burden of foodborne diseases represents the most comprehensive assessment to date of the global impact of foodborne hazards. Developed under the guidance of the Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG) and the WHO Technical Advisory Group, these estimates provide national, regional, and global assessments of illnesses, deaths, and burden associated with 42 biological and chemical foodborne hazards between 2000 and 2021.

Producing these estimates required the collection, harmonisation, and analysis of a vast body of epidemiological evidence from around the world, combined with advanced statistical and computational modelling approaches. The process involved systematic reviews, data standardisation, consultation with countries, and the integration of multiple sources of uncertainty to generate robust and comparable estimates across settings.

This webinar will provide an overview of the methods behind the 2026 WHO foodborne disease burden estimates. Speakers will present the approaches used for data collection and harmonisation, describe the computational framework used to generate the estimates, and discuss key lessons learned regarding data availability and quality. The webinar will also highlight opportunities for governments, researchers, and international partners to strengthen national data systems and contribute to improved burden estimates in future assessment rounds.

Agenda (time in CET)

13:00 – 13:05	Welcome and opening by
13:05 – 13:15	Introduction to the general methodology Dr Brecht Devleesschauwer, FERG member, Senior Epidemiologist, Sciensano
13:15 – 13:25	Overview of data collection and the efforts undertaken to ensure consistency Carlotta di Bari, epidemiologist, Sciensano
13:25 – 13:35	Presentation of the computational model Louise Vaes, epidemiologist, Sciensano
13:35 – 13:45	From Data Gaps to Better Estimates Carlotta di Bari, Epidemiologist, Sciensano
13:45 – 13:55	Questions and answers

13:55 – 14:00

Closing remarks,

Webinar recording:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9uM-tsfxVY&feature=youtu.be

Biographies of the speakers (alphabetical order of the last name)

Brecht Devleesschauwer



Brecht Devleesschauwer is a senior epidemiologist at Sciensano and head of the Service Health information. He is also appointed as visiting professor in Epidemiology and Risk Analysis at Ghent University. He conducts policy-driven public health research in the domain of composite measures of population health and health inequalities. As a member of the World Health Organization Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group. He contributes to the estimation of the global burden of foodborne disease. Currently, he is coordinating the Belgian National Burden of Disease Study, and chairing the European Burden of Disease Network(link is external). Brecht holds PhD degrees in Public Health and Veterinary Sciences, and MSc degrees in Biostatistics and Veterinary Medicine.

Carlotta di Bari



Carlotta Di Bari is a scientist at Sciensano and a PhD candidate in the Department of Translational Physiology, Infectiology, and Public Health at Ghent University. She actively contributes to the WHO Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG), providing support to the Computational Task Force and coordinating commissioned works and systematic reviews. She is also involved in the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)-funded EFSABOD project, which aims to strengthen burden of disease methodologies and their application to zoonotic diseases in Europe. Her research focuses on improving the evidence base for burden of disease assessment, with particular emphasis on neglected zoonotic diseases, foodborne diseases, and One Health approaches.

Louise Vaes



Louise Vaes is a mathematician and scientist at Sciensano. She contributes to the computational work of the WHO Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG) project to estimate the burden of foodborne diseases. Through her work, Louise combines mathematical rigour with efficient,

reproducible workflows to support evidence-based public health research. Her research focuses on disease burden modelling and the automation of analytical processes in R.

Webinar 6: Using updated WHO estimates of the burden of foodborne diseases to improve food safety at the country-level: Governance and Economic Impact

Date/time : 25 June 2026, 11:30 – 12:30 CET

Moderator: Dr Sandra Hoffmann, George Washington University, United States of America

Background: Countries today face a complex and evolving landscape of food safety challenges. The updated WHO estimates of the global burden of foodborne diseases provide the most comprehensive picture to date of how unsafe food affects health, economies, and development. These new data, covering 42 major hazards across 194 countries, show that while progress has been made since 2000, the burden remains unacceptably high, particularly for children under five and for populations in low and middle income countries.

The estimates highlight four imperatives for action: strengthening governance, improving surveillance and data use, investing in prevention across food systems, and addressing the growing pressures of climate change and antimicrobial resistance. WHO also estimated with external experts the enormous economic toll of unsafe food.

This webinar brings together experts involved in generating, interpreting, and applying these estimates to explore how countries can translate evidence into stronger food safety systems. Speakers will discuss governance models that work, the economic rationale for investment, and the specific productivity impacts that often remain invisible in policy debates. The session aims to support countries in using the updated estimates to prioritize interventions, mobilize resources, and strengthen multisectoral collaboration under a One Health approach.

Agenda (time in CET)

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| 11:30 – 11:35 | Welcome, Dr Sandra Hoffmann |
| 11:35 – 11:40 | Opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dr Amina Benyahia, One Health Initiative Lead, World Health Organization |
| 11:40 – 11:45 | Background to global estimates <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dr Elaine Scallan Walter, Co-chair Country Support Task force under the WHO technical advisory group, Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology |

	Reference Group (FERG) 2021-2025 / Professor, University of Colorado Anschutz, United States of America
11:45 – 11:50	Economic costs of foodborne diseases - Dr Sandra Hoffmann, Co-chair of the Impact Measurement Task Force, FERG 2021-2025 / Associate Professor, George Washington University, United States of America
11:50 – 12:00	Productivity loss - Dr Steve Jaffee, Member of the Working Group 2, WHO Global Alliance for Food Safety / University Lecturer, University of Maryland, United States of America - Dr Spencer Henson, Co-chair of the Working Group 2, WHO Global Alliance for Food Safety / Professor, University of Guelph, Canada
12:00 – 12:15	Governance and implementation - Dr Karen Keddy, Co-chair of the Country Support Task Force, FERG 2021-2025 / Professor, University of Pretoria, South Africa
12:15 – 12:20	Summary & Accessing Estimates - Dr Elaine Scallan Walter
12:20 – 12:30	Questions and answers

Webinar recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PruhkJ84vmA>