



International Conference on  
**NUTRITION AND HEALTH CARE**

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## **TITLE: Mycotoxins, heavy metals, pesticides in cereals in West Africa and toxicological risk assessment: the case of Togo and Senegal**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Cereals are the main crops produced in the world and the pillars of world food security. In Africa, maize is the most widely grown and consumed cereal, followed by rice, which accounts for more than 25% of total cereal consumption. In Togo, maize production accounts for more than 60% of crops and is the main item of household food expenditure, while in Senegal, rice is the most consumed cereal. However, the quality of these cereals is often altered by the appearance of several contaminants. Firstly, pesticides, which are considered to be major contaminants due to their widespread use for crop protection; secondly, heavy metals, which are also omnipresent in the food chain through irrigation with contaminated water, the use of fertilisers and metal-based phytosanitary products, and the rapid industrialisation and urbanisation of agricultural regions. Finally, mycotoxins are secondary metabolites of fungi that often colonise cereals, particularly in Africa where temperatures are favourable for their development and toxin biosynthesis. These contaminants can individually cause significant health problems. Several outbreaks, sometimes resulting in death, have been

recorded, including diarrhoea outbreaks due to microbial contamination, acute aflatoxicosis, lead contamination and other chemical contaminants. Food safety systems in West Africa in general face many challenges, and foodborne diseases are recurrent and take a heavy toll on already fragile and under-resourced health systems.

With this in mind, this study aims to assess the risk to which populations are exposed by consuming cereals contaminated with mycotoxins, pesticides and toxic metals.

The study aims to improve the capacity for food safety surveillance in West African countries and to generate data. Improving food safety will therefore contribute to reducing the burden of foodborne diseases, reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

### **BIOGRAPHY (upto 200 words)**

Dédé Erika Baglo is a 29 years old woman, passionate about food safety and public health. She has a master's degree in food toxicology and another in food safety management. She is a PhD candidate at the Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar.



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