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EFFECTS OF FISH HANDLING PRACTICES ON FISH QUALITY:
A CASE STUDY OF KIYINDI AND BUSAANA
LANDING SITES IN BUIKWE
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of fish handling practices on fish quality in Kiyindi and Busaana landing sites, Buikwe district, Uganda. The main objective of this study was to identify the different fish handling practices used at Kiyindi and Busaana landing site and their effects on the quality of fish and fisheries products from these landing sites. Cross-sectional research design was used, in which relevant grey literature was reviewed from the main libraries and offices involved in the fisheries management in Buikwe District and Uganda Government Department of Fisheries. Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focus-Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with the various key stakeholders both at Kiyindi and Busaana landing sites as well as the District offices. Sensory evaluation and physical observations were used in assessing the quality of fish and fisheries products. The findings revealed that the main fishing gear used for catching fish landed in both Kiyindi and Busana landing sites were gill nets 67% followed by the lampara nets used for catching the small pelagic particularly mukene 43% respectively. Poor fish handling practices lead to tremendous deterioration in the quality of fish and fisheries products from these landing sites which resulted in lots of postharvest losses. It is recommended that Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) measures should be adopted at every stage of fish handling as a way of ensuring good fish quality and reduced postharvest losses. It is also recommended that the fishermen are provided with improved and non-destructive fishing vessels and gears through credit facilities. Beach Management Units (BMUs) and fish inspectors be provided with adequate fisheries inspection support to ensure the implementation of hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP). The landing sites should be provided with ice manufacturing plants, fish preservation and processing facilities, modern fish stores, fish packaging items, quality water supply and good road networks to ensure good hygienic fish handling practices at every stage of fish handling.