Food borne disease (FBD) and its rising burden on the society is a major global concern. The Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG), set up by WHO, estimated in its 2015 report that the global burden of FBD in 2010 was 600 million cases worldwide with 420,000 deaths. The burden in South East Asia alone (including India), is about 150 million cases and 175,000 Deaths. India also has the highest mortality for children aged below 5 years’ age.

The challenge in making realistic estimates of a FBD burden in India is the lack of consolidated surveillance data and availability of incidence rates of FBD in the country. The Integrated Disease Surveillance Project (IDSP) set up by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2004, collects reported food poisoning outbreak information. However, there remains large gaps in reporting outbreaks and related follow up investigations to address the root cause and prevent future events. The number of sporadic cases attributable to wider variety and distribution of foods, may also be very large.
OBJECTIVE

The Round Table is an opportunity to bring together all the stakeholders and experts including Regulators, Research Institutes, Industries, Academia, Global Development Bodies, public messaging agencies and related stakeholders, who can contribute to prepare a roadmap for improving surveillance, response to outbreaks and capturing critical data and insights that will help identify priorities and enable addressing the high burden of food borne illness in India.

FOCUS AREAS

- Strengthening epidemiological intelligence and investigations - Pathogen insights and understanding pathogen-food-human link
- Control measures, prioritization of diseases and information sharing / networking mechanisms / platforms (including enhancing laboratory capabilities and their linkages)
- Understanding Pathogen Prevalence (in foods) and disease burden (monitoring & reporting)

CII-HUL Initiative on Food Safety Sciences (CHIFSS) was set up by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in partnership with Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) with the purpose of ‘Driving activities related to science based food safety’ in the country by engaging with all relevant stakeholders.