



Strategies to Prevent (STOP) Spillover

Impact Brief

Côte d'Ivoire

Reducing Risk of Pathogen Spillover in Wild Meat Processing

Activity 2.2.2: Safe handling and processing of wildlife meat using appropriate biosafety practices.

INTRODUCTION

STOP Spillover aims to build capacity in the prevention of zoonotic risks and focuses its interventions on specific interfaces where potential spillover from animals to humans may occur. In Côte d'Ivoire, the project's interventions include safer interaction of actors in the wild animal meat value-chain with potentially infected wildlife products to reduce contact with, exposure to, and the spread of infectious pathogens while handling and processing wild meat.

This intervention falls into the domain P5.3 of the [Joint External Evaluation tool](#) of the International

Health Regulation (IHR) related to “Sanitary animal production practices” contributing in improving measures to reduce the risk of exposure to zoonotic pathogens during selling, slaughtering, or handling animal bodily fluids or excrement. This intervention activity is a practical example of the application of Côte d'Ivoire’s Veterinary Public Health code to wildlife and will contribute to wildlife policy reforms currently under preparation in the country.



Training workshop participants with trainers and STOP Spillover team

After observing the current processing, handling and selling practices in markets and restaurants in the District des Montagnes, the STOP Spillover team convened local stakeholders to develop guidelines for safe wild meat processing and handling. The team then conducted a training, along with facilitators from research institutions and universities, on safe handling and processing of wild meat for the processors and workers handling wild meat at markets and restaurants in the District des Montagnes. Wild meat hygiene and proper handling are crucial to ensure the safety of handlers, processors, consumers and the environment. The two-day practical, interactive training focused on biosafety and hygiene measures to reduce harm related to zoonotic diseases in the meat value chain.

Activity Outcomes

- Participants understood how to safely handle wild meat and dispose and manage waste.
- Participants acquired knowledge on zoonotic viruses, the risks and behaviours that increase exposure to zoonotic diseases through wild meat handling and how to minimize that risk.
- Participants gained skills in the correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and methods of cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing surfaces and equipment.
- Participants were able to identify any endangered species and gained understanding of the importance of protecting them.

Achievements

In September 2023, 15 wild meat processors, 13 females and 2 males, from markets and restaurants in the three regional capitals of the District des Montagnes: Man, Guiglo and Duékoué were trained. The training focused on the following topics: (1) Overview of zoonotic diseases and risks and behaviours, (2) Hygiene in wild meat processing operations and waste management, (3) Sanitization, cleaning, and disinfection (4) Proper use of PPE and blood exposure accident (5) Endangered wildlife species and conservation. These topics were reinforced through demonstrations.

At the end of the training, the participants received materials and equipment demonstrated during the training. This included a kit of PPE (masks, gloves, face shields, hair covers, shoes, apron), a kit of disinfection consumables and a UV biocide sanitizer lamp.



PPE use demonstration



Handover of biosafety materials and equipment to the participants

The training is conducted in a framework of harm reduction, to prevent pathogen spillover or disease spread. This is not implemented to encourage hunting nor to blame the wild meat actors. STOP Spillover has implemented this training that allows participants to protect human and animal health and encourage conservation. The training provides knowledge on pathogen exposures as well as on wildlife conservation, thus the participants are expected to make better choices toward improved public health, based on the knowledge and skills they acquired in the training.

Next Steps

STOP Spillover will implement a social behaviour change strategy focusing on biosafety monitoring, and protection of endangered species among the trainees and pairs as well as follow up activities in order to increase the adoption of good biosafety practices. Furthermore, additional training in other areas of the District des Montagnes will be done.



Preparation of disinfectant solution with bleach



Session on cutting surface cleaning