

Social and Behavior Change Materials Developed for the Kingsway Corner Wild Meat Market in Kenema District, Sierra Leone

Social and behavior change (SBC) played a crucial role in improving Ebola biosafety risk reduction behaviors in the Kingsway Corner wild meat market in Kenema District in Sierra Leone. SBC materials and related content developed by the STOP Spillover team and partners helped raise awareness about the risks associated with handling wild meat with bare hands, and the importance of adopting biosafety measures. The SBC content, activities, and approaches also enhanced the relatability and cultural and social acceptability of safer behaviors.

The SBC materials and content included the following. Click on the links below to see and/or hear a Bluetooth song, jingle, radio story, and posters.

- A Bluetooth song played in the market about the proper use of personal protective equipment, hand hygiene, and safe food handling practices ([script in English](#) and [audio file in Mende](#))
- Jingles developed in local languages and aired on the radio ([script in English](#) and [audio file in Mende](#))
- A radio story about Ebola virus risk reduction ([script in English](#) and [audio file in Mende](#))
- Posters placed strategically in the market to reinforce biosafety practices ([posters](#))
- The participation of wild meat traders, processors, and One Health-Design, Research, and Mentorship (OH-DReaM) Working Group members in weekly phone-in radio discussion programs

Community engagement and the participation of market sellers, customers, and community leaders in designing and disseminating materials created space for market actors to voice their concerns about proposed risk reduction practices, and express their willingness to adopt or adapt safe practices. Interactive approaches, such as phone-in radio discussion programs, dialogues, meetings to address compliance issues and challenges and the enforcement of bylaws, and workshops, were used to encourage collective action for biosafety.

The SBC materials served as visual cues and reminders about desired behaviors. The SBC initiatives included monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the materials and content. Feedback from the market community helped identify areas for improvement and ensure that the messages and materials resonated with each intended audience.

The Bluetooth messages played in the market emphasized the importance of protecting wild meat actors, their family members and loved ones, and their communities as a whole by safeguarding them against the risks of wild meat handling. The messages targeted wild meat traders, processors, and consumers, urging them to take precautionary measures to prevent the spread of diseases and ensure the safety of everyone involved.

The Bluetooth messages highlighted the correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g., gloves, aprons, boots, and face shields) to minimize the risk of contamination. The messages also stressed the importance of maintaining good hygiene practices, such as proper waste disposal and using a clean surface (butcher block) for meat processing. Hand washing

before and after handling wild meat was also encouraged to prevent the spread of germs and bacteria.

Additionally, the messages reminded wild meat traders, processors, consumers, and other listeners to follow market bylaws and to use the biosafety materials effectively and correctly. The messages emphasized that by adhering to these guidelines, wild meat traders, processors, and consumers can make a positive impact on themselves and their communities and reduce the risk of potential health hazards. Overall, the Bluetooth messages and jingles served as a reminder of the importance of responsible purchasing and handling of wild meat to protect oneself, family, and community and to ensure the safety of everyone involved in the wild meat market.

Respondents found all approaches (jingles, radio programs, meetings, and handwashing stations) to be valuable and recognized the SBC materials as sources of education and awareness. The materials guided them in their daily activities within the market. The messages consistently reminded respondents of best practices and safety measures. Monthly meetings held significant value for participants. Missing a meeting caused frustration for respondents because they felt they were missing out on important information. A wild meat trader said, *“For me, the monthly meetings mean a lot. When I was unable to attend meetings, I became very angry because I felt I had missed a lot.”*

Overall, while most of the SBC materials were valued, the radio discussion program did not resonate with some respondents due to their lack of access to or use of a radio. For this reason and in this context, the Bluetooth jingles in the market were more effective than the radio messages, but the meetings were considered most helpful in reinforcing adoption of the behaviors described in the messages and solving adoption challenges.

The SBC materials and content were developed by the following members of the Sierra Leone OH-DReaM Working Group and Momjah Jabbie:

- Harold Thomas (Mr): Health Education Program Manager/One Health Risk Communication Technical Lead, Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MOHS)
- Patrick Lansana (Mr): Deputy One Health Risk Communication and Community Engagement officer, Ministry of Health/National Public Health Agency
- Ibrahim Sorie Koroma (Mr): Senior Health Education Officer, MOHS
- Fatmata Bakarr Sesay (Mrs): Communication and Outreach Manager, Environment Protection Agency (EPA-SL)
- Francis A. Suma (Mr): District Social Mobilization Coordinator, District Health Management Team, Kenema
- Mohamed Conteh (Mr): Senior Communication Officer, Ministry of Agriculture