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**Early experiences from and outcomes of an interactive food safety training intervention among pork vendors at traditional markets in Vietnam**

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**Abstract:**

**Background/Objective:** Foodborne diseases from eating contaminated animal products is a growing One Health concern in low- and middle-income countries, notably within traditional “wet” markets which typically have challenges with hygiene and cross-contamination. A randomized controlled trial in 68 markets (34 cases, 34 controls) across five provinces in Vietnam aims to assess a food safety intervention by providing equipment and training to vendors. Here, we present the experiences and outcomes of this intervention.

**Methods:** We 1) interviewed women and men vendors to understand their hygienic practices and perspectives on safe pork; 2) described the intervention; and 3) reflected on the process and outcomes.

**Results:** Interviews revealed poor hygienic practices (e.g. placing pork on cardboard or cloth; lack of separation of raw meat, raw viscera and cooked meat) and environmental factors (e.g. facilities inadequate to allow washing of table surfaces). Vendors associated safe pork with farmers' livestock practices or believed it came from “meat of healthy pigs with no disease or sickness”, rather than recognizing the role of bacterial contamination from their selling practices.

The food safety training program was designed for vendor interaction by setting up two pork stalls demonstrating hygienic and unhygienic practices. Vendors role-played various scenarios, imitated their working practices, and then learned from peers’ comments, reflecting the ‘interactive’ nature of the intervention. In total, 359 vendors received training and 159 were equipped with key tools across 34 trial markets. Many vendors showed enthusiasm and engagement during training but reflected a lack of infrastructure to follow the suggested practice.

**Conclusion:** The enthusiastic vendor participation highlights the training's potential public health impact, to be assessed post-intervention. For sustainability, it should integrate with community food safety programs and involve One Health collaboration between human and animal health staff. We expect further important recommendations for a safer food system in Vietnam.

**Keywords:** food safety, education, One Health, wet markets, sustainable