



FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

EatSafe: Evidence and Action Towards Safe, Nutritious Food

FOOD SAFETY TRAINING FOR TRADITIONAL MARKET ACTORS IN NIGERIA

Learning From EatSafe

www.gainhealth.org/EatSafe



Summary

Training is foundational for programs focused on improving food safety in traditional markets that sell food. Feed the Future's EatSafe: Evidence and Action Toward Safe, Nutritious Food seeks to enable safer food in traditional markets. EatSafe's training program in Nigeria documented learnings with useful applications to other food safety and food systems programs focused on traditional markets.

Effective training should focus on key elements both in the design and implementation of training, including audience insights, careful preparation, and strategic implementation. This learning summary provides various insights for those planning training activities for traditional market actors.

Background

Market actors, principally food vendors, that operate in traditional food markets are a key audience for food safety training given they source, handle, and sell food. Training on food safety is an important prerequisite activity for interventions aimed at improving food safety because it builds the capacity of key actors by enhancing their knowledge, skills, and competencies through learning activities.

EatSafe implemented training in northwestern Nigeria for two audiences: market vendors and consumer educators (via a train-the-trainer model). Over 10 months, more than 400 market actors were trained. Training content included modules on introduction to food safety; personal health/hygiene of food handlers; clean stands, environment, and utensils; food sourcing and handling; use of clean and potable water; and supplementary issues.

Learnings Overview

The sections that follow provide insights and recommendations from EatSafe's experiences in the design and implementation of a training program. Applying these lessons will result in better training outcomes for vendors and other stakeholders in traditional markets.



TRAINING DESIGN

Audience Insights

1. Objectives
2. Framing
3. Literacy and language

Preparation

1. Training Plan
2. Equitable access
3. Location and logistics
4. Training materials



TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION

1. Training techniques
2. Peer-to-peer learning
3. Utilizing emotion

4. Habit formation
5. Trainee Recognition
6. Feedback and evaluation



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Training Design

EatSafe's [formative research](#) utilized a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods to inform the design of food safety interventions and supporting activities, like training. The findings from this research included insights into market actor demographics, psychosocial characteristics, and the market enabling environment, all of which helped in preparing for the training. Using these insights, EatSafe developed a training and communication plan covering training content, methods, and approaches. Key aspects of the training design are expanded upon in the section below.



Audience Insights



Training is most impactful when designed around participants' motivations for training. By designing the training with these motivations in mind, the likelihood of engagement is high as the training resonates by meeting the needs of the participants. For example, participants may want to be better educated on food safety, and to understand regulatory food safety requirements to avoid potential fines or perceived harassment from government inspectors. For EatSafe, participants' motivations included a desire of self-betterment and a chance to learn more about food safety as it was considered important to their businesses.

OBJECTIVES

1

Successful training means having clear objectives for identified audiences. In general, EatSafe focused on building a culture and set of practices for the shared objective of avoiding and reducing foodborne illness (i.e., "Food safety is everybody's business"). Within that, there were set objectives for the two training audiences – vendors, and consumer educators. For the market vendors, the objectives focused on increasing their knowledge of best food handling practices and building a sense of agency and desire to perform the desired food safety behaviors. This was reinforced with additional business development training. For consumer educators, the objectives included increasing their confidence to speak about food safety to consumers and to identify visual cues around safer food.

FRAMING

2

There are different ways to frame training objectives, and some lead to better engagement from participants than others, depending on the character or nature of the target audience. Formative research helps identify what works best for each audience. In the case of EatSafe, a positive framing was selected - one which communicated to training participants that they already had good food safety knowledge and competencies and that the training was going to strengthen what they already knew or did.



Training Design



3

LITERACY AND LANGUAGE CONSIDERATIONS

Understanding the languages used and literacy levels of the intended audience are important findings from the formative research, and need to be considered when developing training materials, methods, and approaches. Understanding participants' literacy levels helps trainers decide on the visual aids, class exercises, question-and-answer sessions, practical demonstrations, and participatory approaches, to use for the most effective training. As part of the review process, EatSafe recognized that the initial training used materials that were not aligned with the literacy levels of many of the vendors. This was addressed in future training events.

Selecting the appropriate language is also an important part of the design. Participants may have some abilities with a language other than their native language, and the complexity of the training may be such that the training can be given in a second language (i.e., that of the trainer or of standard training materials). In other situations, this is not the case, and the native language should be used. It is important to evaluate the language skills of the audience and match those with the training being given. For example, EatSafe delivered training in both English and Hausa, the local language. Consumer educators were more able to absorb the training in English.

Preparation



TRAINING PLAN

1

A training plan should outline the relevant audience insights and provide trainers with the training content, methods, and approaches to guide the training on the ground. It also helps in assessing the effectiveness of the approach used in achieving the desired outcomes. Using insights from the formative research on local conditions, EatSafe developed a communications plan alongside the training plan to ensure alignment of the food safety messages used in the market.

EQUITABLE ACCESS

2

Ensuring that all target audiences have access to the same training opportunities and resources is key to success. It is important to identify any barriers that might preclude segments of the targeted audience. For example, it is important to consider gender differences when designing training. EatSafe found that some female vendors would only participate in the training if it took place in the market rather than away from the market (e.g., in a hotel).

Another consideration is the economic implications of attending the training. There is often a cost to the participant attending the training – transport to the venue, or time away from their stall. Compensation can alleviate this burden and ensure broad attendance. For example, EatSafe provided a transportation stipend for participants.



Training Design

3

LOCATION AND LOGISTICS

Training preparations should consider location and logistics. EatSafe's market vendor training indicated that training must be short, scheduled, and near the market to minimize lost revenue and time away from their stands. For the consumer educators, participants highlighted the need for in-depth training, and focused sessions, which in this case meant that a hotel training venue was more appropriate.



Training market visit

4

TRAINING MATERIALS

The quality and relevance of the training content and supporting materials makes a big difference. For vendors, EatSafe presentations and materials used photos of the target market when highlighting the food safety cues that consumers seek when buying food. These photos were much more impactful for vendors than generic market photographs. Video clips of the vendors' market were also well received as they built on the sense of ownership and pride that the vendors had for their place of work.



Training in the market



Training Implementation

Following the development of the training plan, EatSafe engaged a consultant to assist with the first round of training. The consultant designed training materials and conducted training over a period of two weeks, one week each for the vendors and consumer educators. The training methods and materials were then evaluated and the insights were used to make improvements to a second round of training.



TRAINING TECHNIQUES

1

Utilizing training techniques that engage and energize the audience ensures training success. Market vendors responded well to practical, participatory, and motivational training activities (Table 1). The market visits sensitized and illustrated food safety behaviors to participants in a practical way. For consumer educators, roleplaying and group brainstorming sessions encouraged participants to think through different questions and scenarios they might face when answering consumers' questions.

Table 1. Training techniques used in Nigeria

METHOD	DESCRIPTION
ROLE-PLAYING	Different scenarios presented trainees with opportunities to practice how to exchange food safety information in the market
MARKET VISIT	Visit to the target market for first-hand observations and situational experience on food safety conditions in the market
VISUAL AIDS	Pictures and video clips, samples where applicable
CLASS EXERCISES	Case studies
QUESTION AND ANSWER	A regular part of training discussion
PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION	Practical exercise by a trainer with participants observing and/or practicing, e.g., handwashing
STORYTELLING	An experience presented a story format with time for discussion

PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

2

EatSafe learned that fostering peer-to-peer learning among trainees was an effective training strategy, utilizing the vendors' desire to support their colleagues. This was refined when the project decided to train the vendors by commodity type groups (e.g., grains, meat, vegetables). This grouping by commodity allowed for more targeted and robust training – group participants related with each other better and could cover more applicable and specific information related to their commodities. After the training, this peer-to-peer sentiment continued - participants shared lessons learned with other vendors, and some vendors even volunteered to be food safety champions in the market.



Training Implementation

3

UTILIZING EMOTION

Delivering risk information, such as food safety hazards and their associated risks, can be best implemented when coupled with emotion. Utilizing emotion can be a powerful motivator and avenue for communication. For food safety, these emotions include trust, fear, disgust, and nurturance. Each of EatSafe's training modules included a story or study to elicit emotion. For example, the first module described both the symptoms and impacts of foodborne illnesses and illustrated this by sharing a case of a local family, struck by foodborne illness that was attributed to locally purchased food.



Soybean processing training in the market



4

HABIT FORMATION

When behavior change is a main objective, as is the case with EatSafe's vendor training, using methods that engage participants' emotions and senses stimulates habit formation. Building on existing habits and creating 'stickiness' through repetition, and targeted nudges, encourages the adoption and reinforcement of behaviors. For example, utilizing other market actors, such as EatSafe's Safe Food Stand, vendor champions enrolled in [EatSafe's Brand](#), or market management to reinforce and remind vendors of best practices, helps create habits.

5

TRAINEE RECOGNITION

Training participants were recognized for their time and effort and were awarded certificates of completion. Additionally, there was a commitment of continued support, through follow-up technical visits and future trainings, which contributed to the sense of recognition.



Training participants receive certificates of completion



Training Implementation

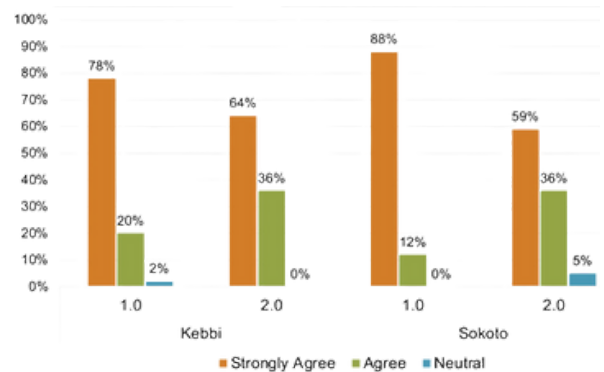
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FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

Post-training evaluations are paramount to the continued success and sustainability of training. EatSafe's training was evaluated using multiple approaches. Vendor surveys, consultant reports, and assessments from EatSafe staff all provided valuable information that was used to strengthen the second round of training.

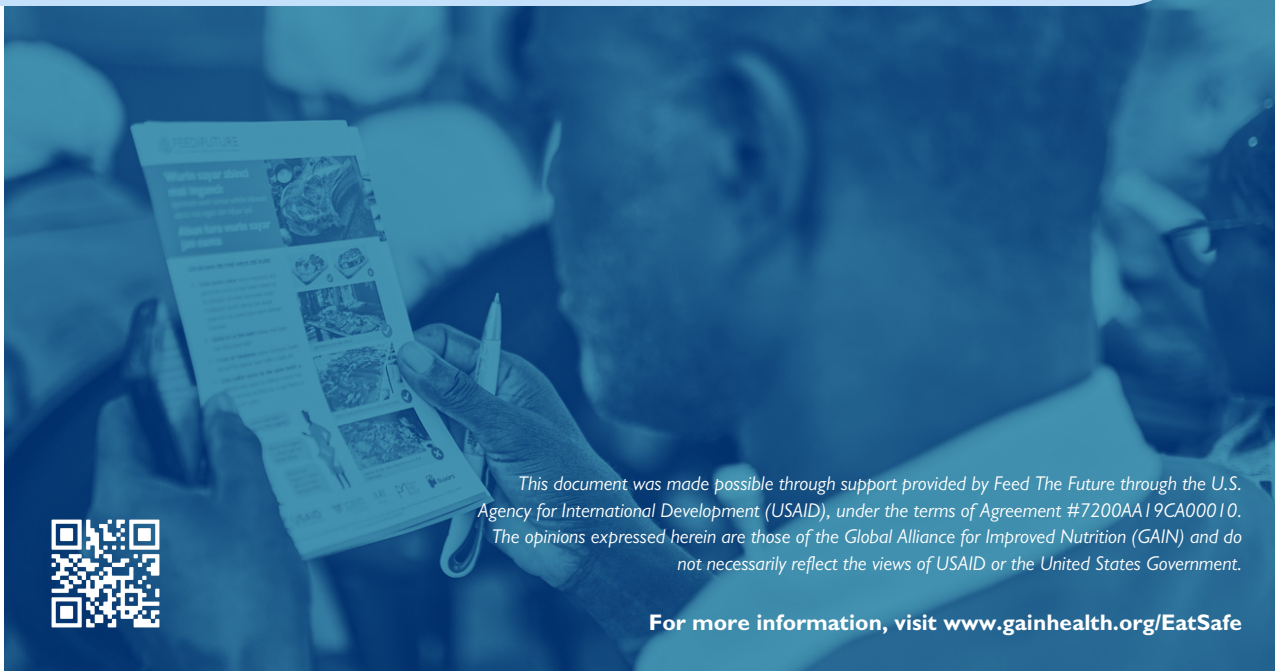
When reflecting upon the training, participants were highly enthusiastic about the training and the importance of food safety. They felt good that they were better equipped to protect their customers. Vendor surveys showed a high level of satisfaction with the training overall.

Figure 2: Vendor Survey Responses to "The training met all my expectations of what I need to know on food handling and hygiene in the market."



Additional Resources

- [Learnings from EatSafe's Phase I Research in Nigeria: From Formative Research to Intervention Design](#)
- [Food Safety Interventions in Africa and Asia: A Review of studies relevant to traditional markets in low-resource settings](#)
- [Consumer-facing interventions to improve food safety perceptions and practices in low- and middle-income countries: A review](#)
- [Normative Guidelines for Governments to Promote Safer Traditional Markets](#)
- [Review of Existing Food Safety Training Processes in Africa and Asia](#)



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