How to Live Safely with Animals for Healthier Communities
How to Use This Book

The purpose of this picture book is to help you talk with community members about how to work with and live safely with animals for healthier individuals, families, and communities.

Key messages on what to do, how to do it, and why we should do it are on the back of each picture.

To use this book, follow the steps below for each page in the book.

1. **SHOW** the picture to the people you are talking to.
2. **ASK** them what they see or understand by the picture.
3. **THANK** them for their ideas – there is no right or wrong answer!
4. **EXPLAIN** the key messages and information on the back of the picture.
5. **CHECK** if the information was understood.
6. **ANSWER** any questions.
Animal health is important for human health
**Key Message:** Animal health is important for human health.

**WHY?**
- Animals are a source of food, a source of income, and help our forests grow.
- Animals can get sick just like people can, and they can pass some of those sicknesses to people and other animals.

**Key Message:** It is important we are careful when working with and living near animals, because animals can pass some sicknesses to people even if they look healthy.

**Key Message:** Some of the sicknesses that animals can pass to people are Rabies, Ebola, Lassa Fever, Plague, Anthrax, and animal flu such as bird flu.

**Key Message:** Sickness can pass from animals to people when:
- An animal bites or scratches us
- We touch a sick animal or its wet, toilet, blood, or spit
- We touch, eat or drink something that has the animal’s wet, toilet, blood, or spit on it.
How can we stay healthy when working with and living near animals?
**Key Message:** There are actions you can take to help keep yourself, your family, and your community healthier when you work with and live near animals. Five key actions to remember are:

1. Stay away from animals that look sick and animals that you find dead.
2. Report any dead animal or animal that looks sick to your community animal health worker or vet/livestock officer.
3. Cover your hands with plastic bags or plastic gloves if you must touch a dead animal or animal that looks sick, and always wash your hands with soap and water immediately after removing the plastic.
4. Always wash your hands with soap and clean water after touching any animal, even if it looks healthy.
5. Wash any animal bite or scratch immediately with soap and clean water for 15 minutes, and go to your nearest health facility or community health worker.

**Today, we are going to talk more about each of these key actions to understand why they are important and how we should do them.**

Even though this picture book shows mostly bats in the pictures, it is important to remember that what we talk about today is meant for all animals.
**Key Message:** Stay away from animals that look sick and animals that you find dead.
- Do not touch an animal that looks sick or animals that you find dead.
- Do not eat an animal that looks sick or that you find dead.

**Key Message:** Report any animal that looks sick or that you find dead to your community animal health worker or vet/livestock officer.

**WHY?**
- Sick animals and animals you find dead can pass their sickness to you if you touch or eat it.
- Reporting an animal that looks sick and that you find dead can help district health and animal health teams know about sicknesses before they become a problem for people.
**Key Message:** If you **must** touch an animal that looks sick or is dead, cover your hands and arms with clean plastic bags or plastic gloves to protect your skin.

**Key Message:** When removing the plastic bags or plastic gloves from your hands after handling an animal that looks sick or is dead, be careful you do not touch any wet, toilet, blood, or spit on the plastic, and immediately wash your hands and arms with soap and clean water.

**Key Message:** Burn or deeply bury the dead animal along with the plastic bags or plastic gloves you used to touch the animal far from where water is collected and where household activities take place, and immediately wash your hands and arms with soap and clean water.

**WHY?**
- Sickness can pass from animals to people when we touch the animal, its wet, toilet, blood, spit, or anything from the animal that touched the plastic bags or plastic gloves.
**Key Message:** Always wash your hands immediately with soap and clean water after touching any animal—even if the animal is alive and looks healthy.

**WHY?**
- We cannot always see the signs of sickness.
- Washing hands well with soap and clean water after touching an animal can help stop sicknesses passing from animals to people.
**Key Message:** Do not eat fruit or food that has been bitten by an animal.
- Do not cut off the part that was bitten. Do not eat any part of the bitten fruit or food.
- Do not give the bitten fruit or food to an animal to eat.

**Key Message:** Always wash all fruits and vegetables before eating or cooking.

**WHY?**
- Sickness can pass from animals to people when we touch, eat or drink something that has an animal’s wet, toilet, blood, or spit on it.
- We cannot always see the signs of sickness.
**Key Message:** Always cover food and water and their containers to make sure animal wet or toilet, flies, and dirt cannot enter.

**Key Message:** Make sure to keep your cooking area and all food, cups, spoons, trays, and all cooking items clean and away from animals and animal wet and toilet.

**WHY?**
- Animal wet or toilet, flies, and dirt that enter our food, water, or containers of the food we eat or water that we drink can make us sick.
- Keeping our food covered and our homes clean helps to stop rats and other animals from visiting us, and from eating and drinking our food and water.
**Key Message:** Animals that come into your home leave their wet and toilet in your home. This can pass sickness from animals to people.

**Key Message:** Sweep the house every day that animals have been inside, and make sure to regularly wash the floor, mats, and walls; the clothes and blankets; and all of the food and water covers and containers to remove any animal wet and toilet.

**Key Message:** When sweeping your home after animals have been in the house, always make sure to:

- Wet the floor with water before sweeping to stop dust from flying into the air
- Use clean plastic bags to cover your hands
- Tie or use a damp cloth to cover your face
- Use glasses to protect your eyes.

**Key Message:** Keep animals like chickens, goats, sheep, and pigs outside of the house.

**WHY?**
Sickness can pass from animals to people when:

- We touch, eat or drink something that has the animal’s wet, toilet, blood, or spit on it.
Key Message: (1) Wash an animal bite or scratch immediately with soap and clean water for 15 minutes.

Why?
• Washing a bite or scratch well with soap and clean water can help stop sickness passing from animals to people.

Key Message: (2) After washing a bite or scratch very well, go to your nearest health facility or community health worker.

Why?
• Reporting an animal bite or scratch can help the district health and animal health teams know about animal sicknesses to help keep our communities healthier.

Key Message: (3) If a person gets sick or dies after contact with a sick or a dead animal, report the person to your nearest health facility or community health worker and call 117.

Why?
• Reporting any sickness or death after contact with an animal can help to identify the cause of the sickness or death and save lives of others in Sierra Leone.
Our house pledges to take action to live with animals safely. What action will you take?
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