Perceptions and practices of wild meat consumption: Insights from Kenya-Tanzania border settlements amidst global health concerns

Ekta Patel, International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)

Julie Fa (CIFOR), Moses Yongo (WRTI), Stephan Funk (Nature Heritage), Julie Thompson (TRAFFIC), Camilla Floros (TRAFFIC), Martin Andimile (TRAFFIC)

ILRI — INTERNATIONAL LIVESTOCK RESEARCH INSTITUTE
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Key messages

Wild meat activities could lead to spillover of pathogens which negatively affect communities

- There is an **urgent need to understand the drivers of wild meat activities in sub-Saharan Africa** which is critical for promoting conservation, protecting biodiversity and public health, and ensuring sustainable livelihoods.

- **Policies** should focus on supporting community-based conservation, promote sustainable practices and encourage alternative protein sources through education and incentives for high-risk species. Enhancing research efforts could collectively mitigate risks of pathogens spillover, while protecting the livelihoods of people, animals and ecosystems.
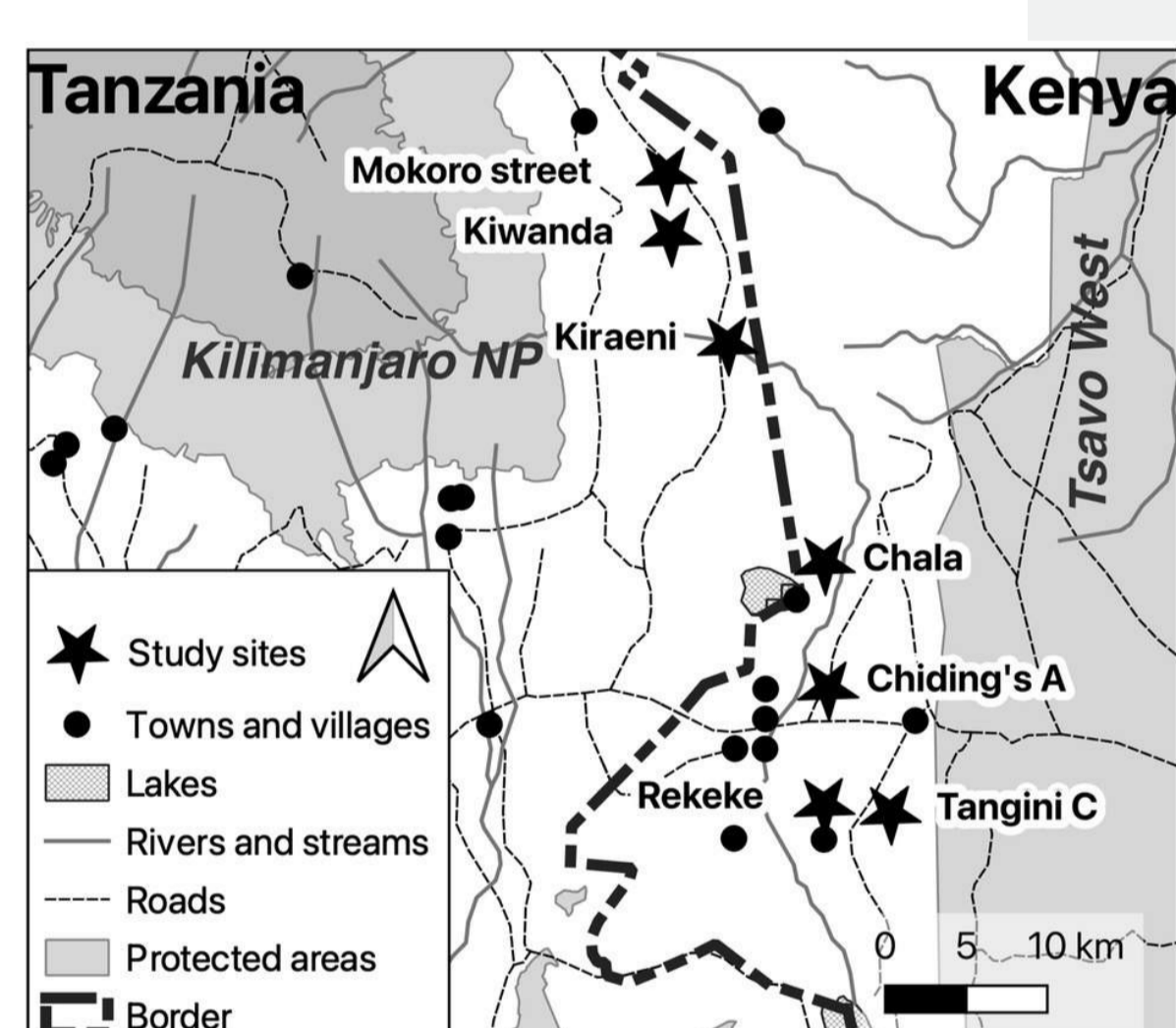
Context

- **Zoonotic disease** are linked to human activities and their close frequent contact with wildlife which provides an environment for spillover of pathogens.

- In Sub-Saharan Africa, **wildmeat activities** are widespread, complex and very little is known about the rural and urban demand of wild meat.

- Communities at the border settlements of **Kenya and Tanzania** can benefit from **evidence on disease risk perceptions.**
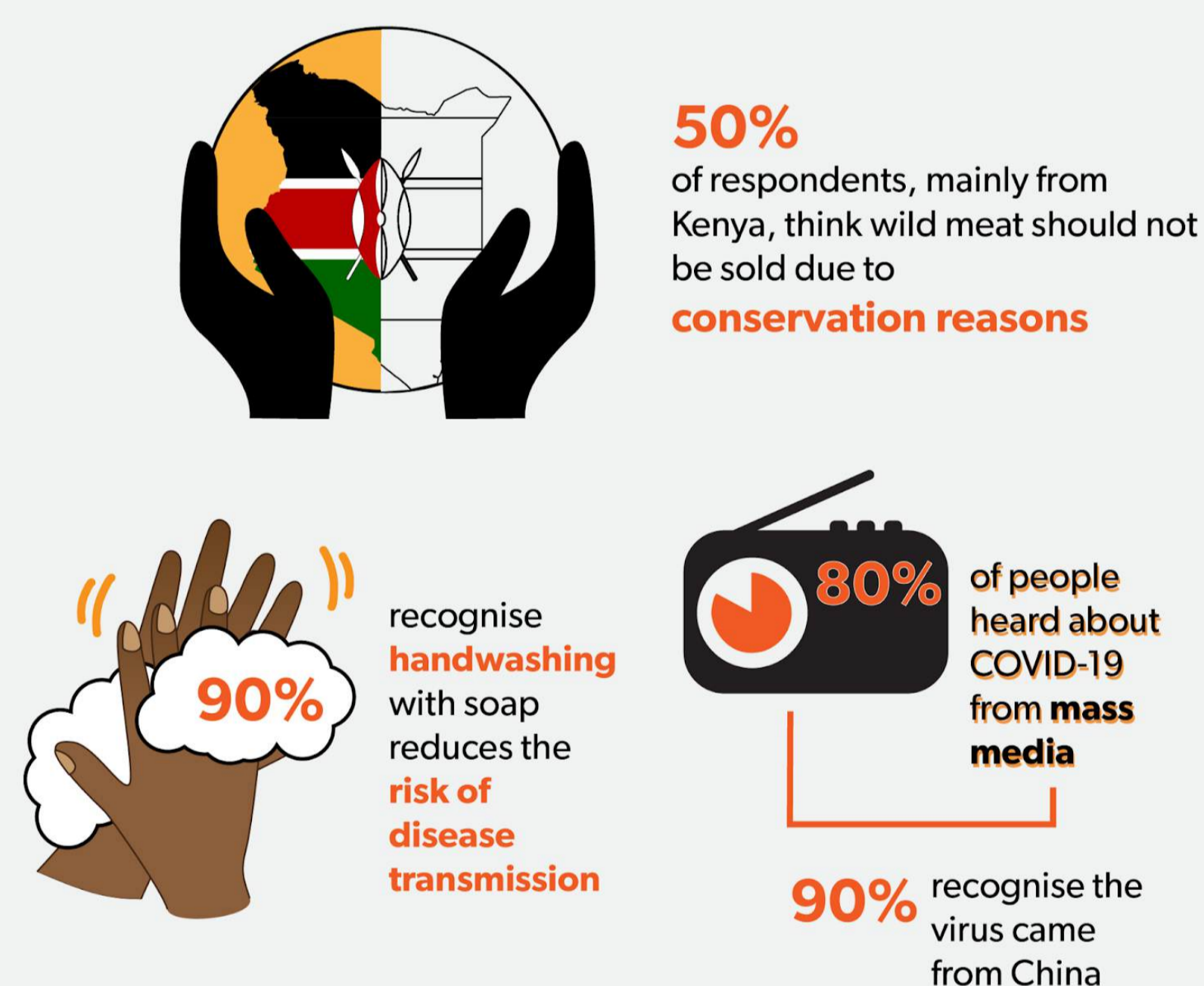
Photos by CIFOR/Axel Fassio

Our approach

Tanzania — **Kenya**
Mokoro street, Kiwanda, Kilimanjaro NP, Kiraeni, Tsavo West, Chala, Chiding's A, Rekeke, Tangini C

Study sites
Towns and villages
Lakes
Rivers and streams
Roads
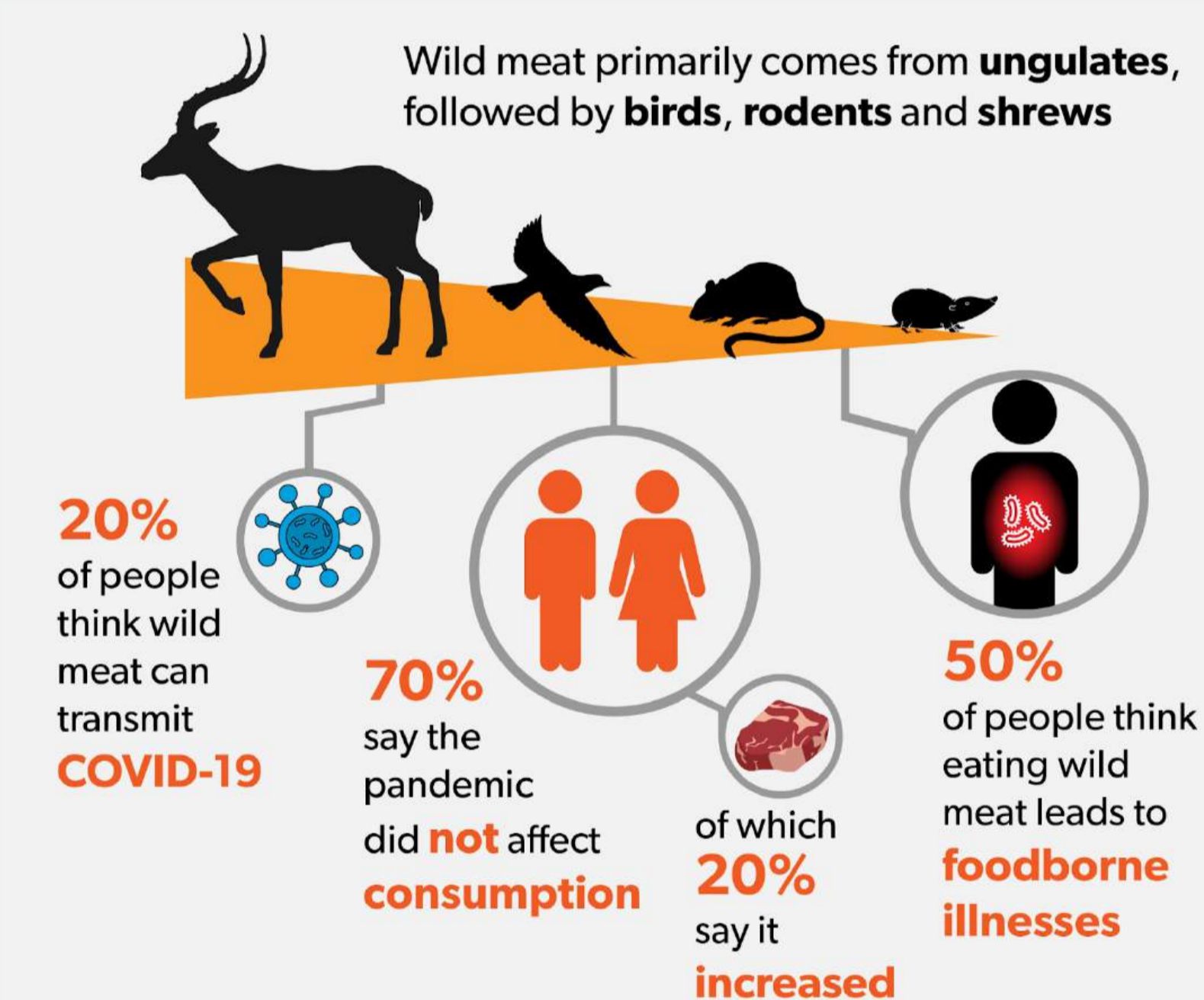Protected areas
Border
0 5 10 km

- Interviewed 299 individuals at the Kenya-Tanzania border – hotspots for bushmeat.

- Impacts of COVID-19 and disease risks associated with wild meat activities.

- Free Prior Informed Consent approach in the villages visited.

Outcomes

50% of respondents, mainly from Kenya, think wild meat should not be sold due to **conservation reasons**

90% recognise **handwashing** with soap reduces the **risk of disease transmission**

80% of people heard about COVID-19 from **mass media**

90% recognise the virus came from China

- Men agreed more than women that wild meat ought not be sold for animal conservation and disease transmission.

- Women were less significantly concerned about COVID-19 from animals then men.

Wild meat primarily comes from **ungulates**, followed by **birds**, **rodents** and **shrews**

20% of people think wild meat can transmit **COVID-19**

70% say the pandemic did **not** affect **consumption** of which **20%** say it **increased**

50% of people think eating wild meat leads to **foodborne illnesses**

https://doi.org/10.3389/fevo.2023.1033336

- 79% of respondents believed that it is risky to eat some animals.

- Majority believed hyaenas to be the riskiest animal to consume, followed by primates and snakes.

Infographics: Annabel Slater, ILRI

Next steps

- Assess differences between rural vs. urban demand for wild meat in Kenya

- Identify gender norms in wild meat activities and assessing interventions methods for behavior change in 'risky' situations

- Implementation of appropriate disease prevention and control strategies through educational and outreach tools

Contact
Ekta Patel, ILRI
e.patel@cgiar.org

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