



"I Have Doubts"

Perspectives on Food Safety in Peri-Urban Tanzania among Adults Affected by HIV

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Diet, Environment, and Choices of Positive Living: **DECIDE STUDY**

GOAL

- Characterize the drivers of food choice, food environment, and dietary adequacy among families affected by HIV and living in urban/peri-urban Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Personal and external food environment influences on diets among PLHIV and families in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



Foodborne Illness

- Growing public health concern
- Sub-Saharan Africa
 - Largest per capita burden
 - 91 million acute illnesses
 - ~137,000 deaths
- People living with HIV (PLHIV) are especially susceptible
- Perceptions of food safety

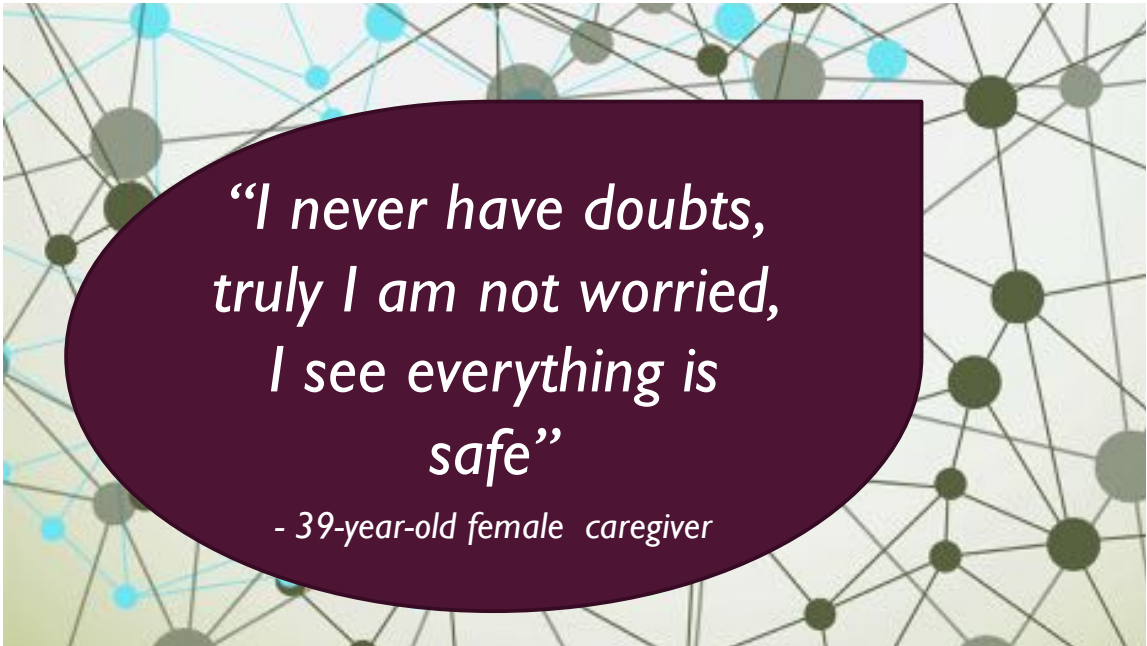



Qualitative Interviewing

- 40 interviews, July 2019 – March 2020
 - Conducted in Swahili, transcribed and translated
 - Several findings emerged

Characteristic	PLHIV (n=20)	Caregivers (n=20)
Gender, # female	12	14
Age, years	38 (30,8, 45.8)	39.5 (28.3, 44.8)





*“I never have doubts,
truly I am not worried,
I see everything is
safe”*

- 39-year-old female caregiver

Findings

~60% discussed their food safety concerns

Collating food safety information

- Media
- Experiential
- Observational



Why people believe the myth of 'plastic rice'



By Anisa Subedar
BBC Trending

5 July 2017



Here is The Prove of The Plastic Rice being in The Gambia 🇬🇲.

YOUTUBE

A video which falsely claims to "prove" the existence of fake plastic rice in the food supply

Despite little evidence that it's a widespread problem, rumours of "plastic" rice being sold in Africa and elsewhere persist on social media - driven in particular by viral videos which show bouncing rice balls.

Finding I: Media

- "Plastic rice"
 - <https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-40484135>
- Processed juice & maggots



Photo source: <https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/news/Why-some-juice-vendors-in-Dar-deserve-a-ban/1840340-2678084-pt001x/index.html>

Fresh-squeezed Juice: Media & Own Observations

- Newspaper article, 2015

- <https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/news/Why-some-juice-vendors-in-Dar-deserve-a-ban/1840340-2678084-pt001x/index.html>

- One PLHIV said that they avoided buying juices because:

- “... do not make it in hygienic environment.”

- female caregiver, age 40

Finding 2: Media & Health Promotion

- Male participant said:

“...to a washroom without washing your hands with soap and then you touch food.”



Finding 3: Perceptions about food vendors



Vendor Familiarity

“I buy vegetables from
two women only...I
don't just
buy vegetables to
any vendor, no!

Finding 3: Perceptions about food vendors



“Normally I buy meat from a specific butcher. Its environment is clean, it is made with glass (window), and they cut meat with a machine.”



Visuals



Finding 3: Perceptions about food vendors

Improved Chickens

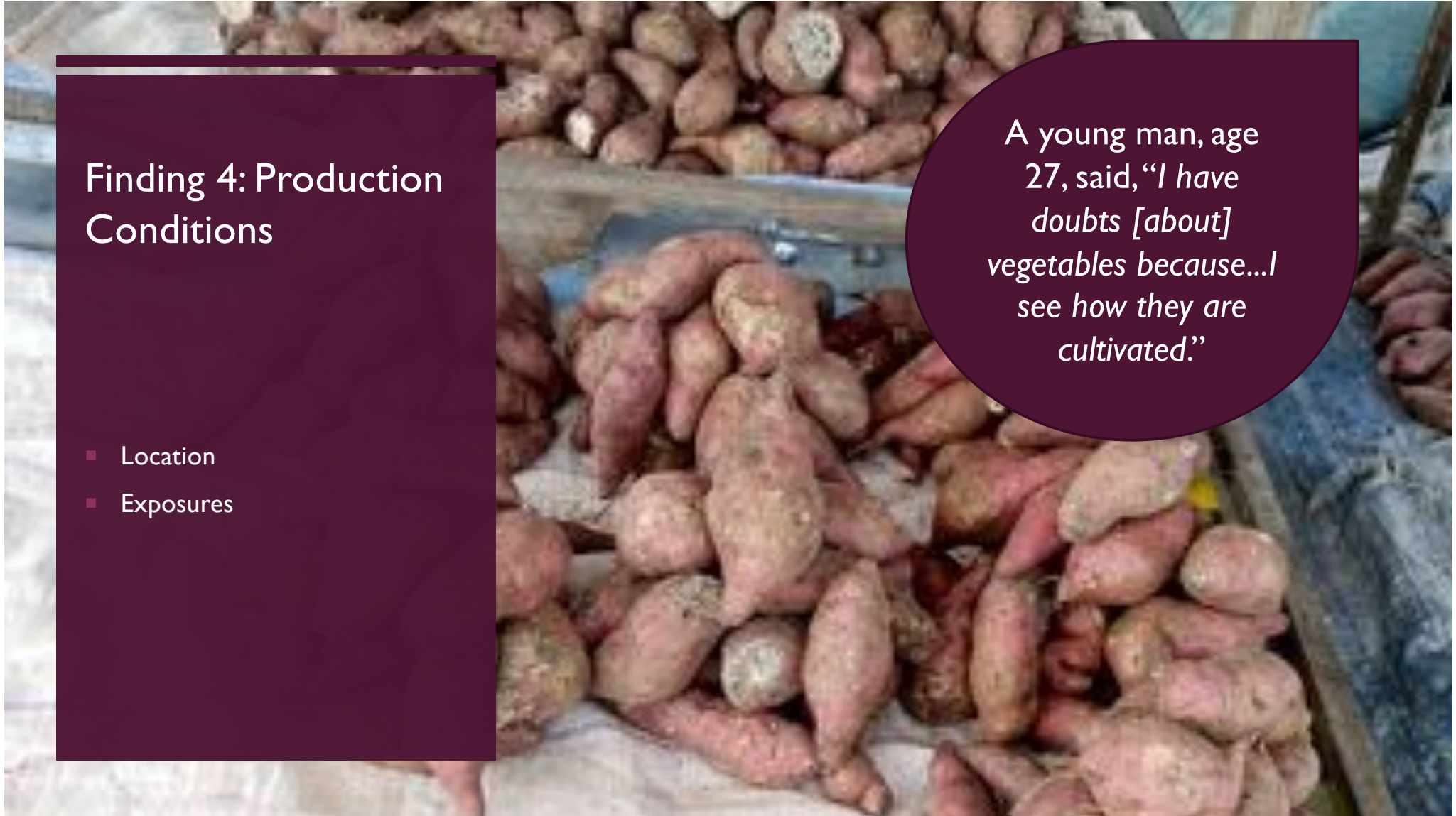
- Worries centered on how these improved chickens are raised
 - Antibiotics
 - Growth rate
 - Coops



Finding 3: Agricultural Chemicals

- Multiple participants discussed worrying about the pesticide residues on leafy greens and tubers





Finding 4: Production Conditions

- Location
- Exposures

A young man, age 27, said, “*I have doubts [about] vegetables because...I see how they are cultivated.*”



Finding 5: Protective Strategies

- Home
 - Eat in
 - Wash foods
- Purchasing
 - Vendor loyalty
 - Hygiene

Summary: Food Safety as a Driver of Food Choice

- In the context of little regulation and few objective indicators, participants relied on pieces of information to make food purchasing and eating decisions
- Three areas: agricultural chemical, production conditions, and human contamination



Summary: Food Safety as a Driver of Food Choice



- Source of protection include:
 - Trust, built from experiences and vendor loyalty that grows with time
 - Direct observations: growing conditions and appearance of sanitation
 - Vendors employ practices that imply cleanliness (aprons, modern equipment, displays)

Next Steps



- Methodologically, however, we did not reach saturation on the topic of food safety,.
- Highlights need for additional research to expand on this work
 - Role of social media in the sharing of accurate and inaccurate information
 - Gendered perspectives on food safety as men and women have differential access to social media
 - Identify if/how these data can begin to inform the development of tools to capture perceptions of food safety at multiple levels



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