



Lugara Media Factsheet

#4

South Sudan
MAY 2022



Rooted in Trust 2.0 Project Areas

- Central Equatoria
- Eastern Equatoria
- Jonglei State
- Unity State
- Lakes State

Greater Pibor Administrative Area

The Internews Rooted in Trust 2.0 project in South Sudan is funded by USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID-BHA). It aims to respond to rumors, misinformation, and fake news that shape negative public perceptions towards COVID-19 response in the country.

USAID-BHA Rooted in Trust 2.0 South Sudan. If you want to contribute to or provide feedback on this Lugara Media Factsheet or have information to share, please contact:

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This Media Factsheet has been reviewed by the Ministry of Health, South Sudan

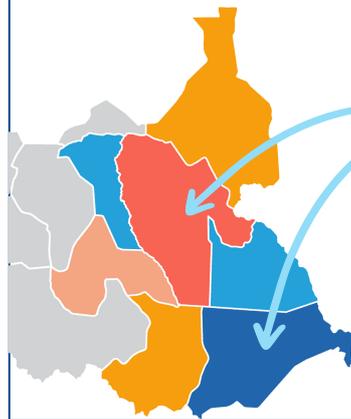
About This Lugara Factsheet

This Media Factsheet is a periodic response to rumors and concerns about COVID-19 and provides verified information for journalists and community correspondents reporting on the pandemic. It is meant to provide information that is essential to understand the facts about the virus, vaccines and related issues, to help journalists respond to their audiences' questions, address rumors, and close the feedback loop.

A lot of information is circulating across South Sudan and beyond its borders about COVID-19, vaccinations and related issues. So, it is important to know what's true and what's not.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY?

Rumor #1 COVID-19 General



"Some people claim Covid-19 is a project for generating money by NGOs and government,"

Bor, Jonglei State, and Kapoeta, Eastern Equatoria State, South Sudan.

Fact File



This rumor is false and was debunked by Ministry of Health. "COVID-19 is not a project, it is a virus that was declared as a pandemic worldwide including South Sudan," Mary Dennis Obat, the Director of Public Health Education at the Ministry of Health.

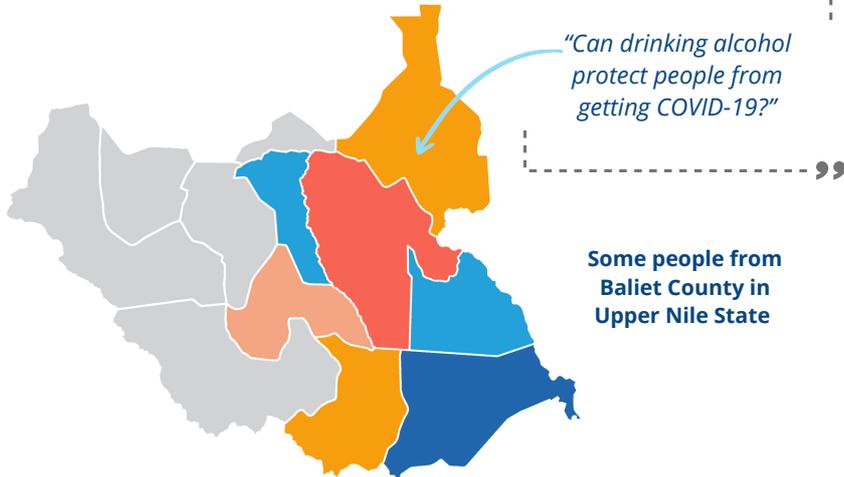


On 5 April 2020, the Ministry of Health in the Republic of South Sudan had confirmed its first case of Covid-19. As of 31 May 2022, a cumulative number of cases confirmed stood at 17,619, with cumulative number of recoveries and deaths stood at 13,516 and 138 respectively. Link to official record of the Ministry of Health, Republic of South Sudan: <https://moh.gov.ss/>

Rumor #2

COVID-19 and prevention

WHAT PEOPLE SAY?



Fact File

✔ This rumor is false and was debunked by the Ministry of Health. “COVID-19 can affect anyone who is exposed to the virus whether he/she drinks alcohol or not. You must prevent yourself from getting COVID-19 virus by observing all the preventive measures, such as putting on facemasks, keeping physical distance, washing hands frequently with soap and water and above all getting vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccine at the nearby health facility,” said Mary Denis Obat, Director of Public Health Education at the ministry of health.

Drinking alcohol does not prevent or cure COVID-19. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are recommended to disinfect hands and surfaces, but drinking or ingesting alcohol is in no way recommended. The World Health Organization (WHO) warns that drinking alcohol will not protect against infection or illness from COVID-19. In fact, alcohol consumption can reduce the immune system's ability to fight infection and increase the chance of developing acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), one of the most severe symptoms of COVID-19.

Rumor #3

COVID-19 and conspiracy theories

WHAT PEOPLE SAY?



Fact File

✔ “There are no reports received by both national and state ministries of health regarding the death of 11 people after receiving the call. In addition to that, the toll-free number has ten digits numbers but were modified to four digits numbers for easy remembrance. The digits are not three but four (6666). The toll-free number operators do not make phone calls but receive calls from the public, hence this statement is not true. Most people are calling the COVID-19 toll-free number across South Sudan to report alerts or inquire on COVID-19 and none of them died,” Mary Denis Obat, Director of Public Health Education at the Ministry of Health.



Tips for Journalists



South Sudan Journalists should note the following facts to improve on their knowledge, reporting techniques, and background checks about COVID-19.

- Journalists should publish or broadcast programs that advise public to continue adhering to prevention measures such as staying at least one meter away from each other, wear a properly fitted mask over your nose and mouth when you can't keep this distance, avoid poorly ventilated places and settings, clean your hands frequently, stay home if unwell and get tested, and stay informed about how much virus is circulating in the areas where you travel, live and work.
- Since COVID-19 rumors are still circulating across all communities of South Sudan, journalists should be wary of the content they produce to avoid spreading misinformation and conspiracy theories deliberately created by some people to mislead the public. Secondly, avoid exaggerating headlines that may attract unwarranted public attention or panic. It is important to present your audience with facts and correct information to de-bunk those claims circulating in your locations.

Key links and resources

- Alcohol and COVID-19: what you need to know. See the link https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/437608/Alcohol-and-COVID-19-what-you-need-to-know.pdf?ua=1
- Official COVID-19 statistics including daily and weekly situation reports by Government of South Sudan's Ministry of Health: <https://moh.gov.ss/covid-19.php>

The Rooted in Trust 2.0 project works to combat COVID-19 rumors and misinformation, responds to the information challenges faced by vulnerable groups, encourages open dialogue between citizens and stronger collaborative partnerships between information providers.

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