

If you have questions, suggestions, or information, please contact us: **Isadora Starling** (istarling@internews.org), Project Manager, or **Samilly Valadares** (svaladaressoares@internews.org), Community Engagement and Accountability Officer.

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Rooted in Trust

The **Rooted in Trust 2.0 (RIT) project by Internews** seeks to strengthen information ecosystems and carry out activities to approach, listen to and engage communities on the issues of information media, rumor analysis, COVID-19 and vaccination. The **Rooted in Trust** works with indigenous and quilombola communities in the states of Amapá, Pará and Roraima in a process of response to the 'infodemic', seeking to strengthen existing communication networks to make them safer and healthier.

About this bulletin

This bulletin presents rumors identified among **Indigenous communities in the states of Roraima, Amapá and Pará and Quilombola communities in the states of Amapá and Pará in May**. These publications attempt to guide and inform about the risks associated with the rumors and provide suggestions to humanitarian actors in how best to address them. Two rumors were selected from a total of 212 collected between May 9 and June 9. Check out the impact analysis the rumors below:



OVERVIEW OF THE COVID-19 SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

• **31.360.850** CASES

• **667.790** DEATHS

+ 45.073
NEW CASES

+ 143
NEW DEATHS

Since the last record on 06/08/2022.

 **317,8**
MORTALITY PER
100,000 INHABITANTS

According to the **press vehicle Consortium**, in the last **14 days** the **moving average of deaths from COVID-19 is at +13%** and indicates a stable trend. And the moving average of known cases is up.

 • **178.578.775** 1ST DOSE

 • **166.344.538** 2ND DOSE+ SINGLE DOSE

 • **93.629.821** BOOSTER DOSE

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

• **71821** CASES

• **1311** DEATHS

Data from APIB (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil) consider both Indigenous people who are in traditional territories and those who are in an urban context.

 • **376.127** 1ST DOSE

 • **357.602** 2ND DOSE AND SINGLE DOSE

QUILOMBOLAS

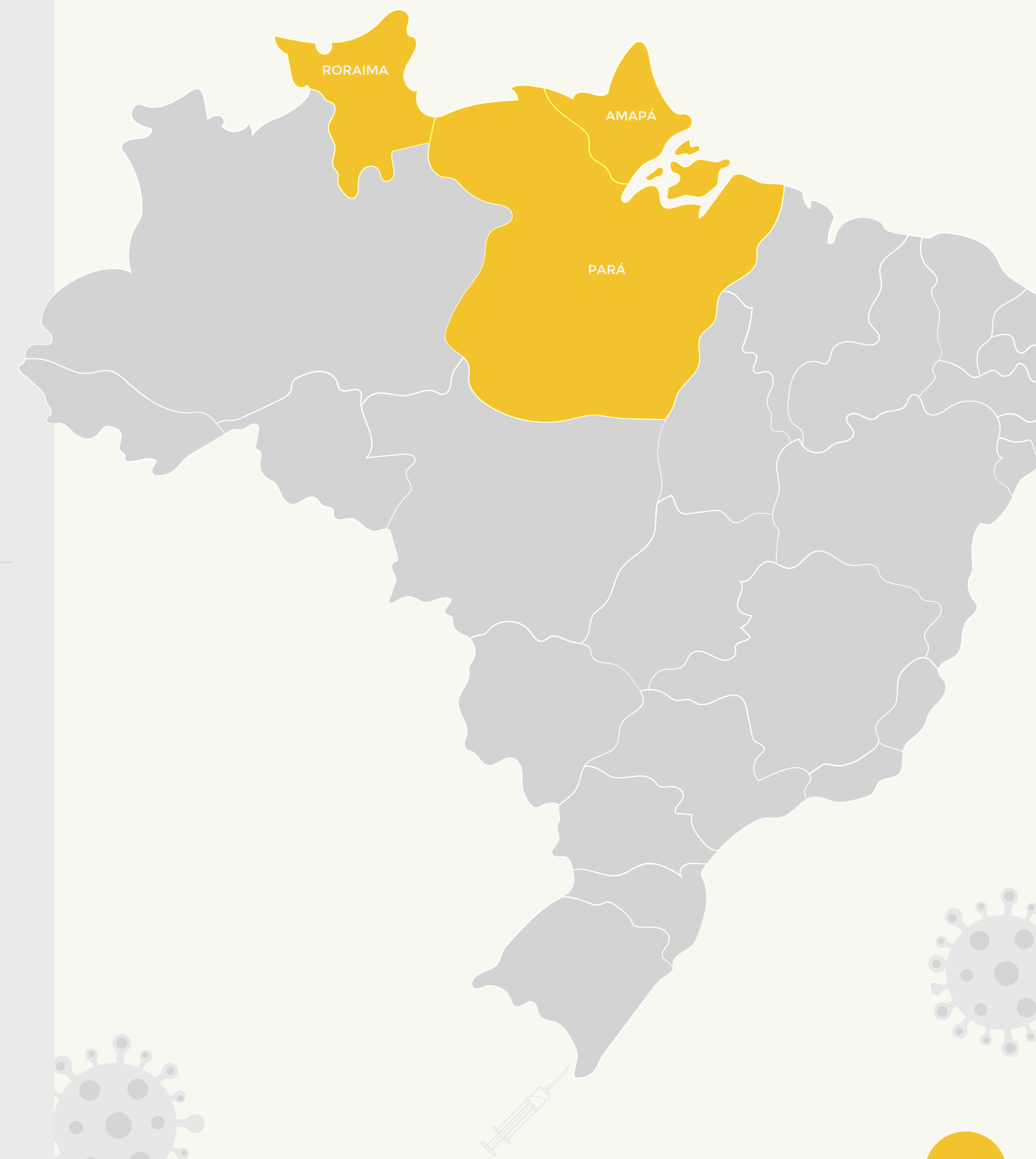
• **5.666** CASES

• **301** DEATHS

 • **598.444** 1ST DOSE

 • **549.074** 2ND DOSE AND SINGLE DOSE

Target Public



MONKEYPOX / ADENOVIRUS VACCINE AGAINST COVID-19



"Hey guys...? Infected patients who haven't been on a trip where the smallpox is endemic... Is there any relationship with vaccines, the chimpanzee adenovirus in Astrazeneca and JJ, is there any relationship???" (reflection copied from another group) put your BRAIN CELLS to work and question the facts... otherwise you will be doomed to die for the EVILS who want the world for them... and if you think it will be those other 4% that will help the bad guys destroy the 95% there's a high chance it won't work for you".



WHAT'S BEHIND THE RUMOR?

The COVID-19 scenario causes a constant state of alert in the face of information received and shared.

The possibility of the emergence of diseases and new pandemics impacts the entire society.

Traditional communities in Brazil are historically more vulnerable to various diseases and epidemics, which was repeated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A 2020 study by anthropologists and geographers led by demographer Marta Azevedo of Unicamp shows that Indigenous peoples are especially susceptible to viruses because communities were contacted recently, mostly in the 20th century, and had little biological contact with pathogens. Also according to the study, traditional communities are historically more vulnerable due to the precariousness of

the system for Indigenous and Quilombola healthcare, the distance from communities from centers with Intensive Care Units (ICU), in addition to the lack of basic sanitation in these communities.

The rumor dialogues with the fears and apprehensions of these populations, which join the population's uncertainties about the immunizing agent.



With the COVID-19 pandemic since 2020 and everything that has happened in this context: social isolation, sudden deaths, loss of loved ones and of dreams and projects, fear of the virus and the experience of the post-COVID symptoms, the emergence of another virus and any rumors and information associated with it are easily spread. This associated with an ideological dispute, it is easier to believe, without checking, what is aligned with our beliefs and convictions, and, in this context of fragility brought by the pandemic, people tend to be more vulnerable to believe in certain information without verifying them.



Lorena Cunha, Psychologist and coordinator of the National Articulation of Black Psychologists and Researchers in the state of Pará



The rumor in question:

Associates the vaccination against COVID-19 to the cases of monkeypox

Appropriates fears and insecurities lived during the pandemic

Distorts information about the composition of vaccines

Fears of getting sick, of not being able to generate income, of losing loved ones, all act as mobilizing concerns and doubts about vaccination and, when if not resolved, they can strengthen the anti-vaccine discourse and the decision-making on whether to get vaccinated or not.



The process of disinformation impacts Indigenous and Quilombola communities and makes it necessary to have constant dialogue with health professionals, to deconstruct the rumors, so that people are aware of the truth and so that there is an increase in vaccination coverage. It is important to know that the adenoviruses that are in vaccines have a different molecular structure from the smallpox virus. This adenovirus does not replicate inside cells, it was only used to synthesize the S (Spike) protein of SARS-CoV-2.



Thamara Nunes, biological sciences undergraduate and graduate student in Education for Ethnic-Racial Relations

FACT CHECKING

- ✓ The information that vaccines against COVID19 cause smallpox in monkeys has already been denied by the president of the **Brazilian Society of Virology**.
- ✓ The confusion comes from the name "chimpanzee adenovirus" used in the production of some vaccines and the term "monkeys" in the name of smallpox. However, there is no relationship between these two types of viruses, or even between the smallpox virus and chimpanzees.

About adenovirus in vaccines:

- ✓ It is true that the AstraZeneca vaccine contains a **chimpanzee adenovirus, but it is replication deficient**, meaning it does not reproduce in the body of a person who has been vaccinated.
- ✓ The chimpanzee adenovirus genome is genetically manipulated so that it is **unable to replicate itself**, and to insert the spike protein (S protein) gene from SARS-CoV-2.
- ✓ It is associated with the virus that causes the common cold and, in the case of the vaccine, it is harmless.
- ✓ Beyond this, it belongs to a different family from the smallpox virus. Therefore, the vaccine has nothing to do with the monkeypox outbreak.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

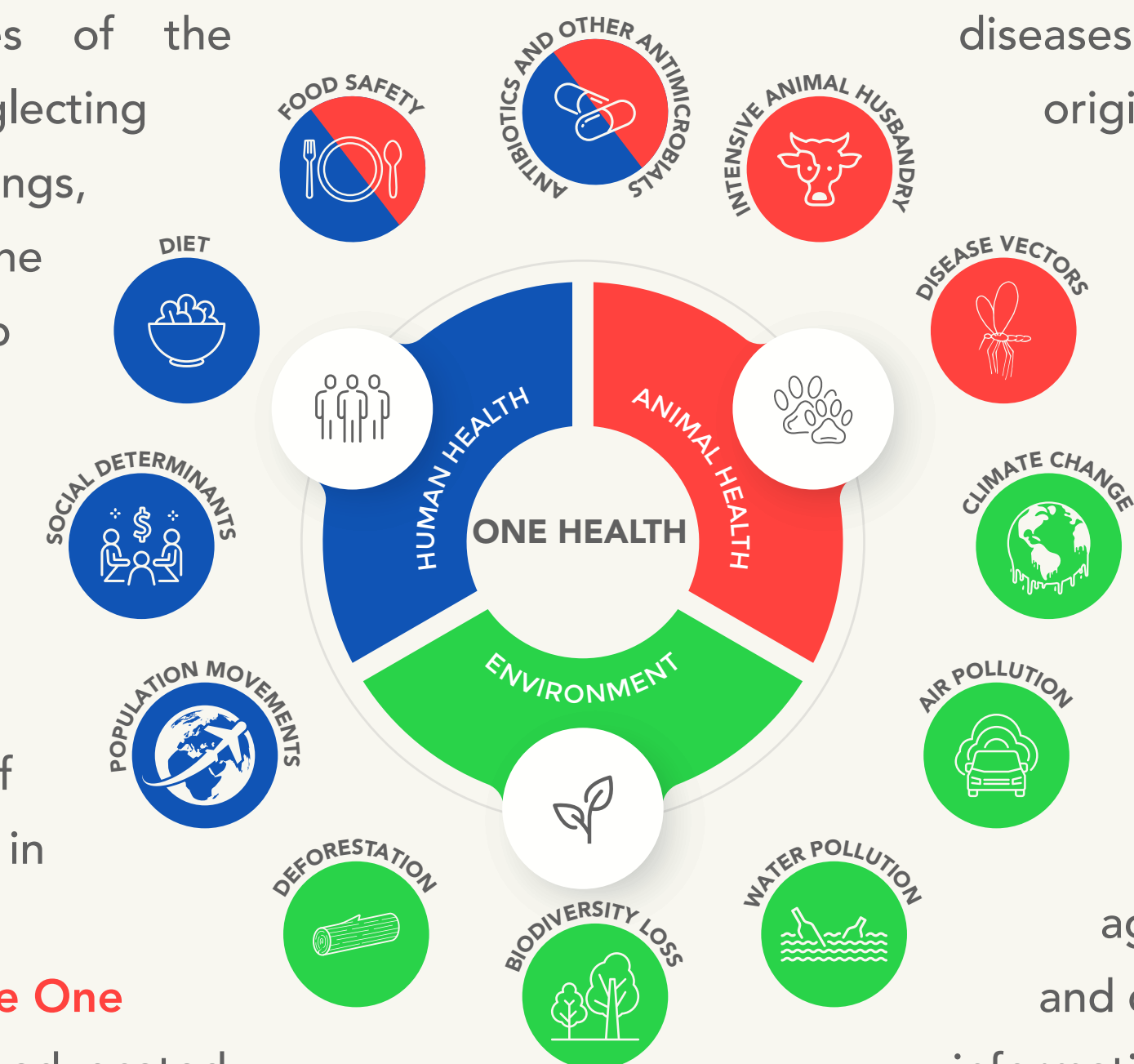
By associating monkeypox with the chimpanzee adenovirus present in vaccines against COVID-19, the rumor privileges the search for an immediate cause for the new cases of the disease, neglecting other crossings, such as the relationship between human, animal and environmental health. in the emergence of new epidemics in the world.

According to the One Health concept, advocated by the WHO, human and animal health are interdependent and related to

the environments in which they coexist.

Data from the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) indicate that 60% of known human infectious diseases are of animal origin, both domestic and wild.

By blaming the vaccine for the emergence of new cases of monkeypox, the rumor increases distrust of the immunizers used against COVID-19 and deepens the lack of information in communities about diseases transmitted from animals to humans.



MOBILIZATION & POSSIBLE ACTIONS

In addition to analyzing rumors, Internews considers it relevant to reflect on possible actions in response to the “infodemic”. Here we suggest some possible responses, such as:

It is important to strengthen communication networks, fight environmental racism in the territories and promote human, animal and environmental health.

Promoting periodic meetings with communities, health professionals and media representatives becomes strategic for the construction of contextualized informative materials, as well as for sharing experiences and safe information.

As the institutions are already doing, it is important to hold face-to-face or virtual debates that answer the doubts and concerns of the communities. In the case of the rumor pre-

sented, bring up discussions with epidemiologists, address the issue of ethnodevelopment, vaccination and COVID-19 in the territories. We have some recommendations:

▶ The book **“Traditional Peoples and Biodiversity in Brazil – Contributions of indigenous peoples, Quilombolas and traditional peoples to biodiversity, policies and threats”**, published by the Brazilian Society for the Progress of Science, which presents discussions on the contributions of traditional peoples to the environmental protection and public

policies that positively and negatively affect these populations.

▶ The **Environmental Racism** blog, coordinated by journalist, historian and educator Tânia Ferreira, which publishes articles, bulletins and discussions on the topic and its impacts on society.

▶ The **Zoonoses, Single Health and Food Safety webinar**, available for free on Youtube, dives into the importance of the One Health concept and its wide application in public health, the risks that zoonoses represent as possible public health emergencies of international concern.

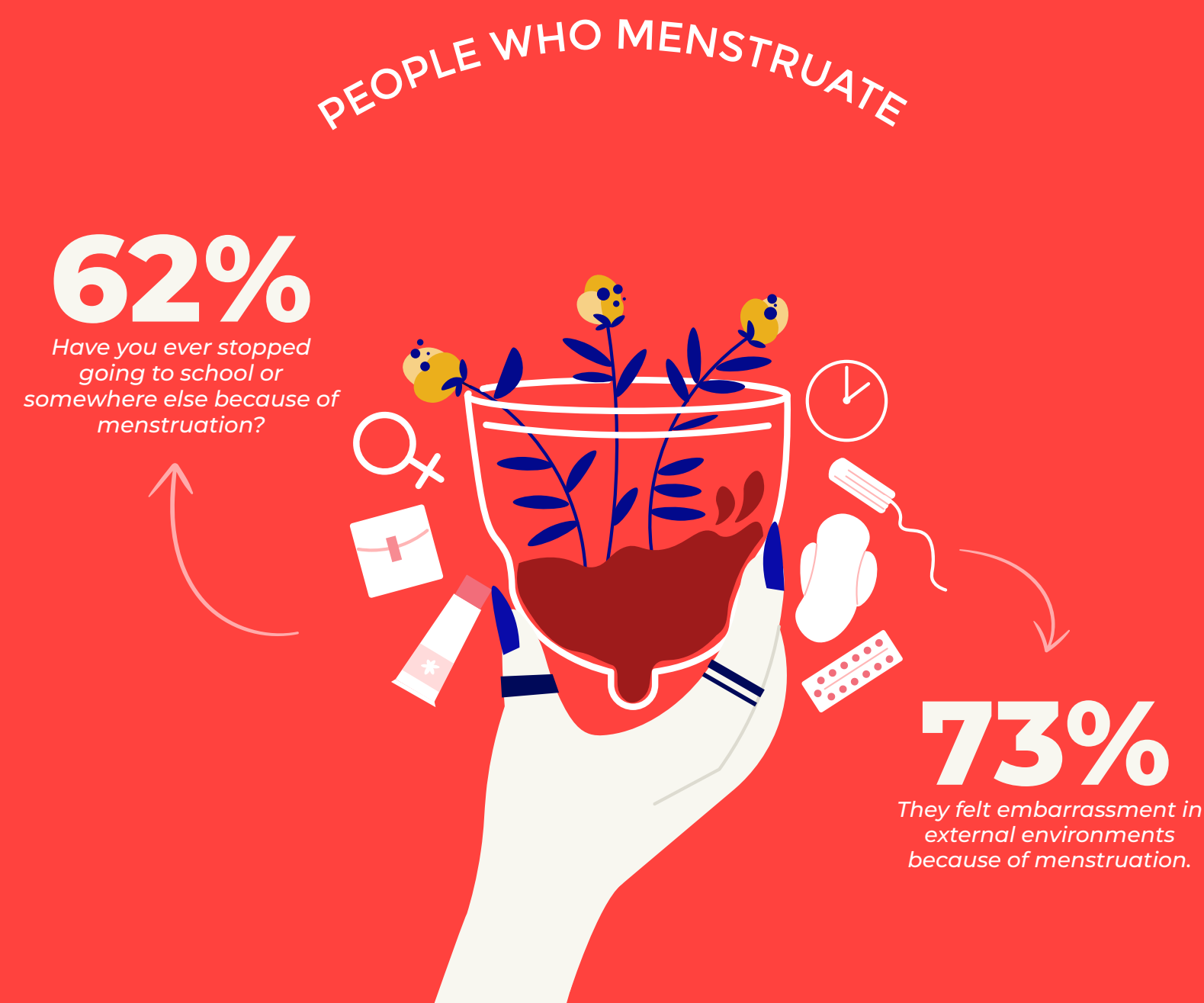
MENSTRUAL CYCLE VACCINE EFFECTS

“As of the end of March this year, the Netherlands has 24,090 reports of menstrual disorders following an experimental C19 bite. Most reports were of heavy menstruation, delayed menstruation, irregular menstruation. Interim bleeding was also common.”

WHAT'S BEHIND THE RUMOR?

Menstruation is still a **taboo**, especially among young people. In a survey carried out by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), with people who menstruate, 62% said they had already missed school or other occasions because of periods, and 73% felt embarrassment in these environments.

Even though it is a natural process of the human body, the theme is full of stereotypes and misinformation. In Brazil, **debates about menstrual health are recent.** Thousands of girls grow up with little or no access to contextualized information or decent medical care and basic menstrual care resources.



FACT CHECKING

- ✓ Vaccines against COVID-19 in use in Brazil had their efficacy and safety data approved by the National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA) **which certifies that they are not experimental.**
- ✓ Like any other medication, they may have side effects, most often mild or moderate, such as: pain at the application site, fever, fatigue, muscle aches and headaches.

Some recent studies point out that:

COVID-19 vaccines may cause a **small increase** in menstrual cycle length, there may be **slight delays** or change in cycle intensity. However, the changes are temporary and, for the most part, are not clinically significant. These types of reactions are not limited to the COVID-19 vaccine. **There is evidence that the flu and HPV vaccine can also temporarily affect the menstrual cycle.**

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The rumor uses information about the impacts of vaccination on the menstrual cycle to propagate the idea of an “experimental vaccine” and can gain strength in the face of the challenges experienced by menstruating people in adverse scenarios.

According to the report **Menstrual poverty in Brazil: inequalities and violations of rights**, menstrual poverty is a complex, multidimensional and transdisciplinary phenomenon and is related to taboos and prejudices, structural issues, insufficient or incorrect information, lack of access and lack of services.

In addition, the rumor has also been associated with the claim that being vaccinated can cause infertility, which generates concerns about the vaccination of women and men who wish to have children.

Faced with the precariousness of health and information services and a scenario of menstrual poverty, the rumor can mobilize resistance to vaccination in the territories.

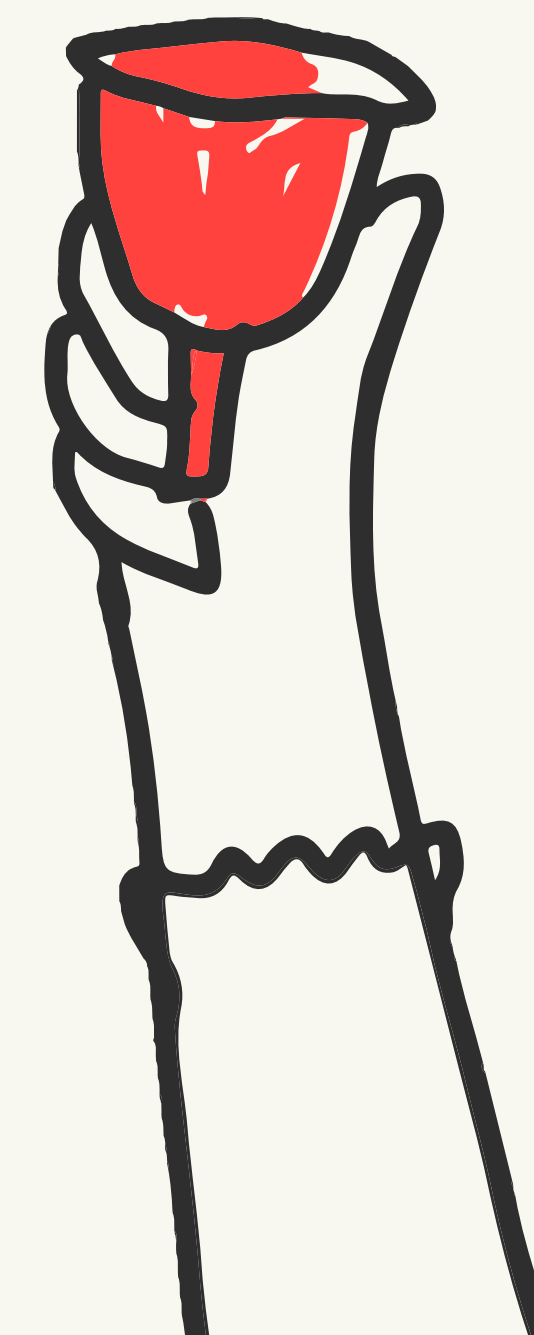
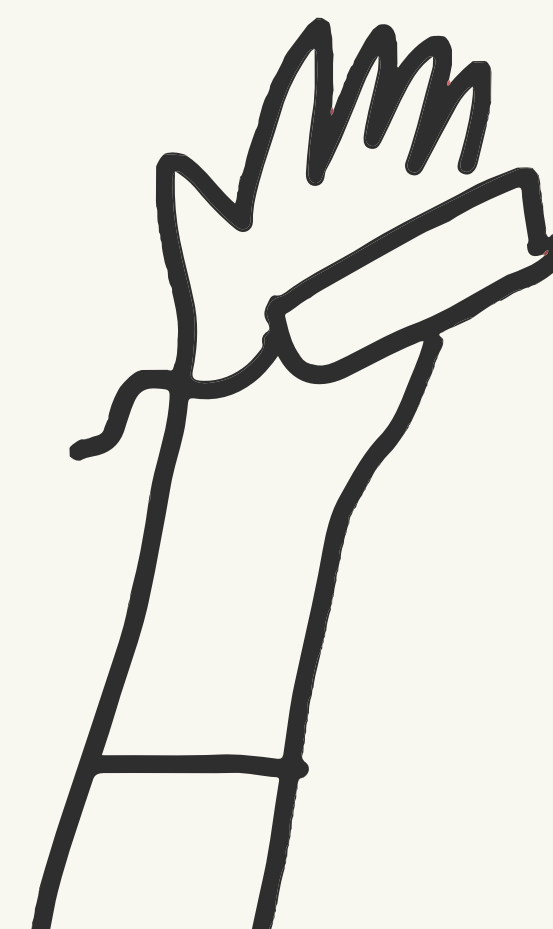
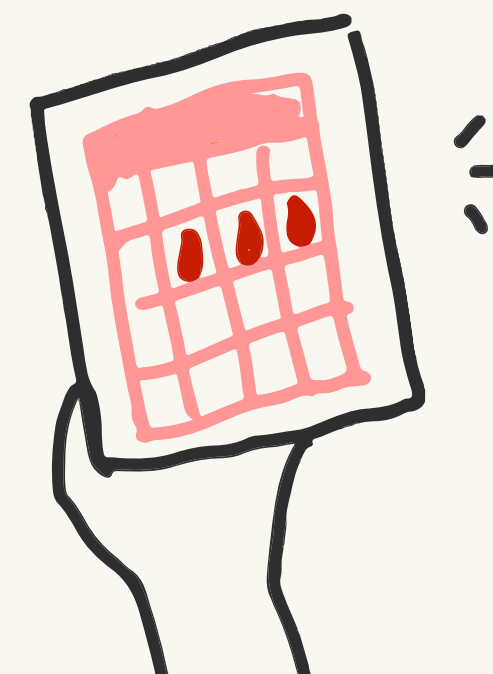
Micele Silva, coordinator of the Quilombola youth group in Pará, emphasizes the difficulties experienced by communities regarding access to health services and the issue of menstruation.



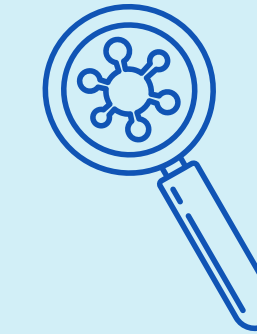
“It is worth remembering that when it comes to public health management, the precariousness is explicit. The public health units, in addition to not focusing on the specifics of the health of the black population, are rare and work with a scarcity of basic materials. There is no effective work focused on menstrual health within the territories by the state, what supports us is our ancestral knowledge”.



Therefore, when a rumor brings up a topic that is taboo in society, such as menstruation, involves debates about social inequalities and relates to the effects of COVID-19 vaccination, it can **discourage people who menstruate from getting vaccinated and increase the taboo in relation to care during the menstrual cycle.**



MOBILIZATION & POSSIBLE ACTIONS



In addition to analyzing rumors, Internews considers it relevant to reflect on possible actions in response to the “infodemic”. Here we suggest some possible responses, such as:

Foster dialogue about menstruation in a safe way so that people who menstruate feel comfortable to share anxieties and doubts. In addition, it is important to foster spaces for dialogue in families, schools and communities in order to demystify information and promote well-being.

In the constitution of these spaces, it is important to adopt contextual strategies of dialogue that consider beliefs and gender relations so that people who menstruate, especially women, can talk about this topic in an open way.

Establish an information and training channel with health and education professionals who work in Indigenous and Quilombola territories so that they are attentive and qualified to listen to rumors and address community demands.

Some recommendations:

Watch the Period Poverty documentary - the film presents the impacts of menstrual poverty on the lives of people in Brazil.

The Advocacy and Public Policy Course is being offered online and free of charge by the

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in partnership with Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV). Its target audience is nursing and midwifery professionals, women's health services and social movements. Registration through [this link](#).

Pode Falar is a virtual help channel in mental health and well-being for teenagers and young people aged 13 to 24. A partnership of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) with several organizations that provides listening and support for themes related to physical and emotional well-being.



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