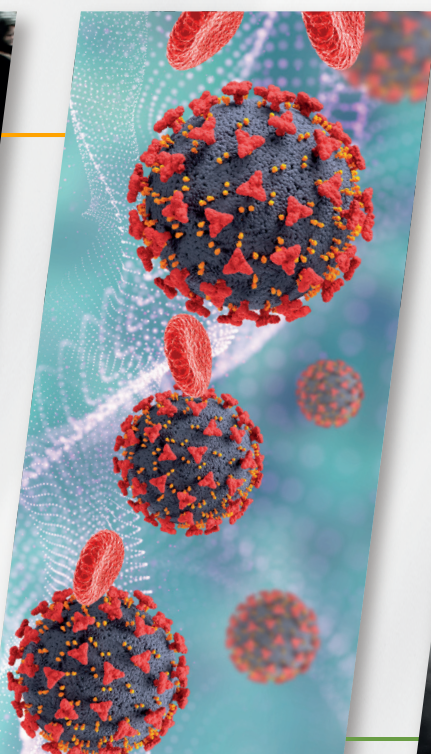


IRAQ SITUATION REPORT

A monthly situation report aimed at combating
COVID-19 rumors to debunk the infodemic



October , 2022

About Rooted in Trust

Rooted in Trust is collecting, analyzing, and responding to rumors in 10 countries with generous support from USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA). We focus on equipping journalists and humanitarian communicators with the tools they need in the languages they prefer, to combat rumors and misinformation during the COVID-19 crisis.

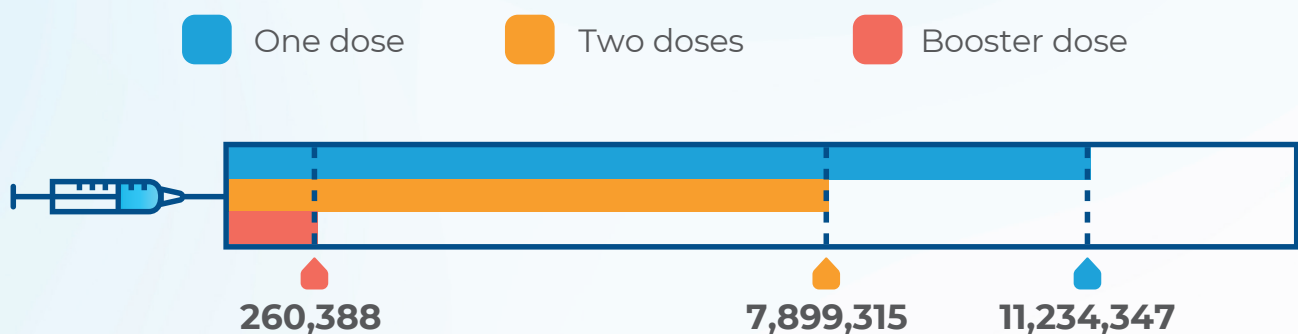
How do we do it?

We identify and analyze rumors to help humanitarian actors and health workers better inform their Risk Communication & Community Engagement (RCCE) strategies.

Situation by the Numbers (WHO)¹

- Positive Covid-19 cases reported during October 2022: **929** (43% decrease compared to September 2022)
- Number of total cases: **2,461,247**
- Total of vaccine doses administrated until October 2022: **19,394,050**
- Total number of fully vaccinated people: **7,899,315** (19.7%)
- Death cases reported during October: **2**
- Total death cases reported until October: **25,358**

Vaccination Uptake Per Dose until October 2022



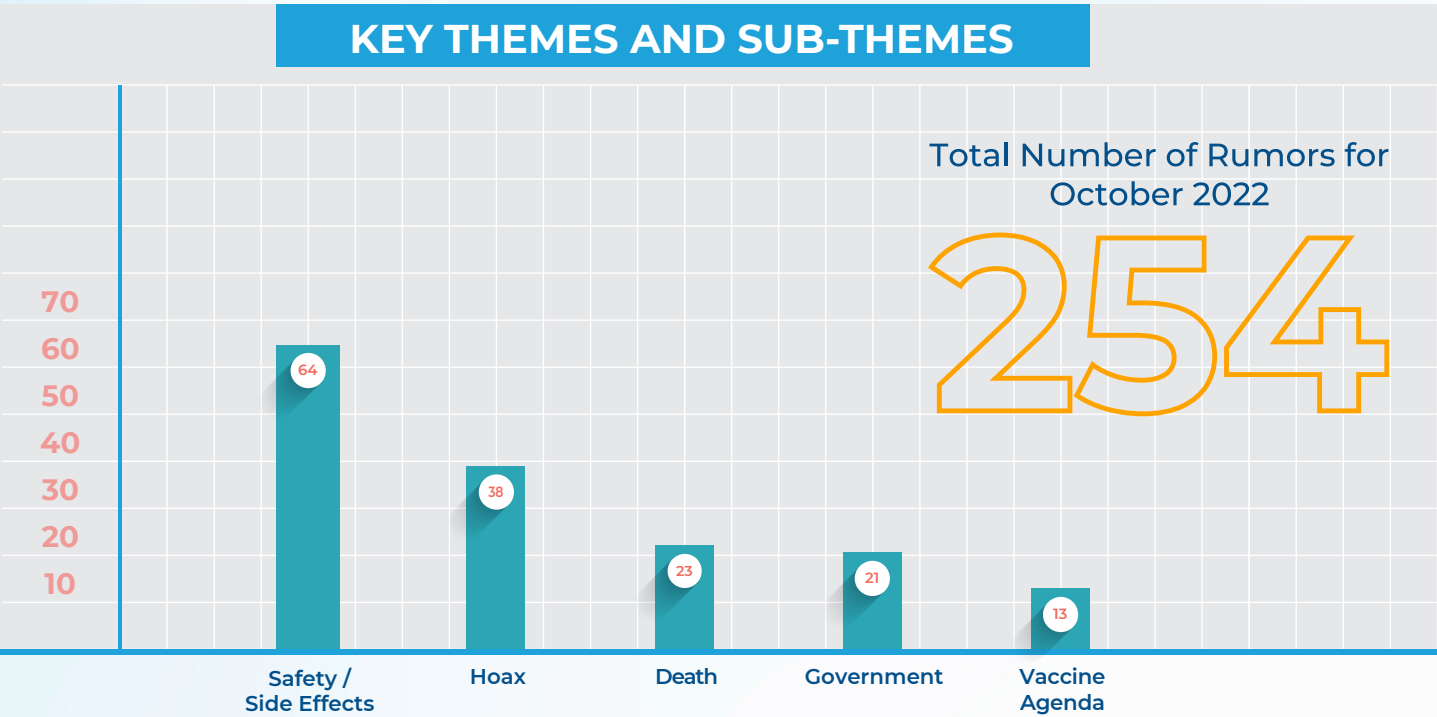
Introduction

Iraq recorded 929 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in October, an 43% decrease from September. Deaths also reduced from 6 in September to 2 in October. Vaccination coverage remains low, with only 19.7% of people fully vaccinated. According to, WHO, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases reached 2,461,247 by October 31. Also, as of the end of October 2022, a total of 19,394,811 vaccine doses were administered countrywide. Out of these, 11,234,347 received the first dose, 7,899,315 received the second dose and 260,388 received the third dose. In October, there were new recommendations released by the Iraqi Ministry of Health, including the age group 5-12 years old for the COVID-19 vaccination and providing the 4th dose of the COVID-19 vaccine after 6 months from the last dose.

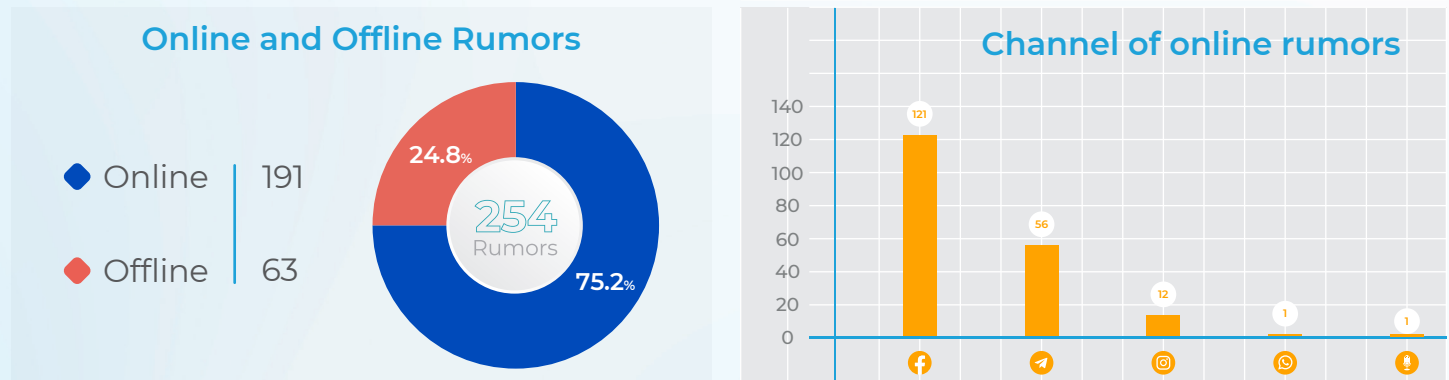
Saif Al-Badr, the Ministry of Health’s spokesperson, stated to the local media "Although there are fewer cases, however, the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic still exists." He also added, “the danger of COVID-19 still exists, especially after entering the winter season and spreading the seasonal flu”.² Regarding Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases, the Iraqi Ministry of Health confirmed that "the number of confirmed CCHF cases has reached 336, including 66 deaths, from the beginning of 2022 until mid-October. Moreover, Cholera is still spreading in various parts of the country and confirmed cases have exceeded 3,100 with 20 deaths by the end of October."³

Data Overview

With a total of 254 rumors collected during October 2022, we have noticed that misinformation trends are revolving around the top subtheme of "safety/side effects"; they mainly stated the risk and danger of taking the vaccines. Rumors linked to death, hoax, government, and vaccine agenda also continue to circulate among different communities in Iraq, especially IDP communities in northern Iraq. Out of the 254 collected rumors, 63 of them were collected from IDPs inside and outside the IDP camps in Erbil Governorate. On the other side, Facebook is one of the top online sources for spreading false information, out of 191 online rumors, we collected 121 rumors on Facebook public accounts, groups, and pages during October 2022, which shows that %63 of the total online rumors was collected on Facebook. Also, Telegram ranked the second social media platform for spreading rumors in Iraq with 56 collected rumors only from public accounts and groups. The majority of both online and offline rumors were in the Arabic language, in which more than %80 of collected rumors during October were in Arabic.



Channels



Analysis

Despite the political, economic, and environmental issues in Iraq, rumors and false information on COVID-19 (mainly on the COVID-19 vaccines) spread on a daily basis among Iraqi communities through online and offline practices. The rumors are also associating the COVID-19 vaccine with other outbreaks and diseases such as seasonal flu and Cholera.

Moreover, the vaccination rate is still low, and there are no effective campaigns to encourage people to get vaccinated. Meanwhile, people constantly develop thoughts and theories against the COVID-19 vaccines. All the theories have generally one main purpose, in which they work on deepening people's hesitancy in taking the vaccine.

Under the activities of Rooted in Trust 2.0, Internews Iraq team continues to collect and analyze the trend rumors and false information that spread in Iraq. Then, several publications including Humanitarian Bulletin, Community Bulletin, Media Bulletin, and social media cards will be produced every month as a response to the trending rumors. These publications provide the fact-check and recommendations for various target groups. These publications can be found on [Iraq – Rooted In Trust](#).

Sources

1. <https://covid19.who.int/region/emro/country/iq>
2. <https://www.nasnews.com/view.php?cat=95982>
3. <https://www.ina.iq/168768--.html>

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For more information on the project, please visit:

[Iraq – Rooted In Trust](#)
[Internews In Iraq \(Facebook Page\)](#)