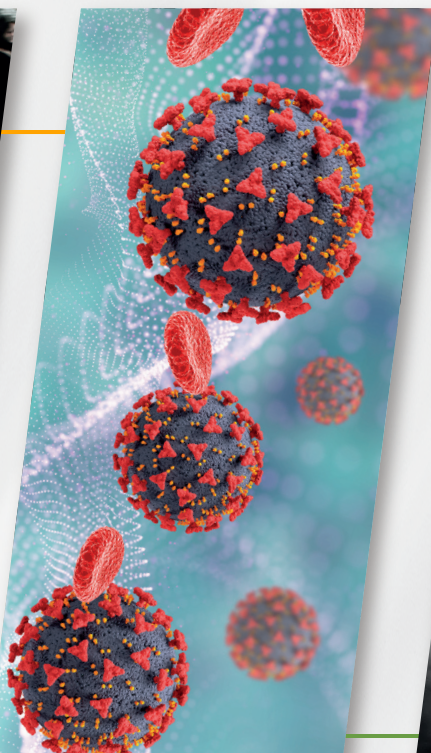


IRAQ SITUATION REPORT

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



November , 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.

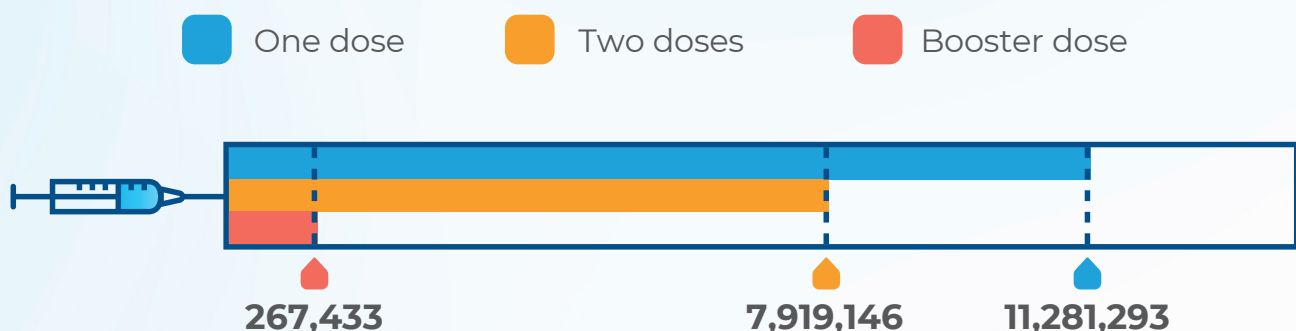
How do we do it?

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 November 2022: **1,846** (98.7% increase compared to October 2022)
- Number of total cases: **2,463,296**
- Total of vaccine doses administrated until November 2022: **19,467,872**
- Total number of fully vaccinated people: **7,919,146** (19.7%)
- Death cases reported during October: **3**
- Total death cases reported until October: **25,363**

Vaccination Uptake Per Dose until November 2022



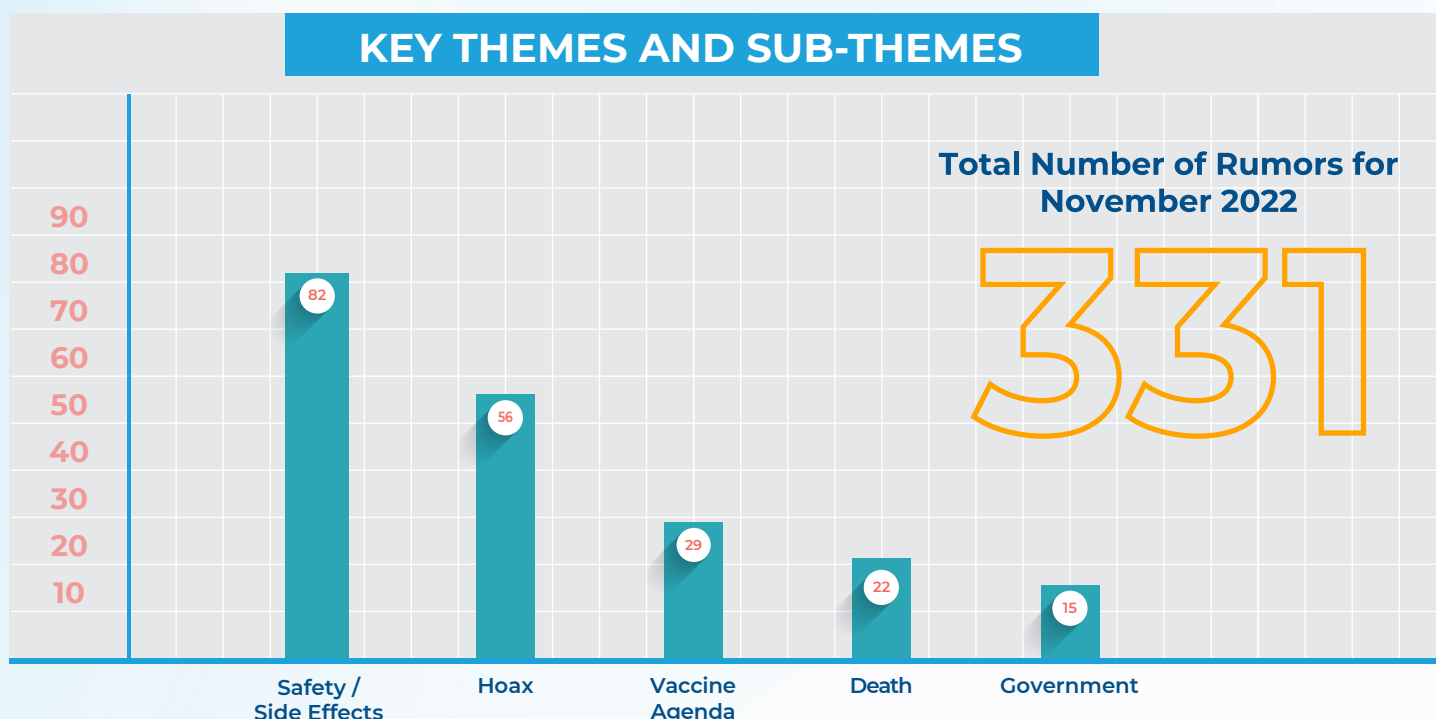
Introduction

Iraq recorded 1,489 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in November, a 98.7% increase compared to October. Deaths reportedly have the same number as in October, in which there were two death cases by the COVID-19 virus in November. Vaccination coverage remains low, with only 19.7% of people fully vaccinated. According to WHO, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases was 2,463,296 by November 28th, 2022. Also, as of the end of November 2022, a total of 19,467,872 vaccine doses had been administered countrywide. Out of these, 11,281,293 people had received their first dose, 7,919,146 people has received their second dose and 267,433 people had received a booster dose.

On November 11th, Riaz Abdul-amir Halafi, Director General of Public Health at the Ministry of Health - Iraq, stated to the local media that "the number of coronavirus cases has increased this week and Iraq has entered the fifth wave of the new coronavirus."² However, on November 30th, the Ministry of Health issued new regulations related to the COVID-19 virus, in which starting from December 1st "people entering or leaving Iraq will not be asked for a vaccine card", also "wearing masks is free and not compulsory in all open and closed public places."³ Regarding Cholera, according to the local media, the disease is still spreading in the country, but there is no update from the government authorities about the increased number of cases in November. However, as of the end of October, confirmed cases have exceeded 3,100 with 20 deaths.

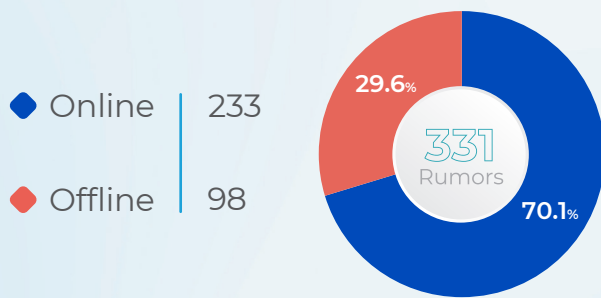
Data Overview

With a total of 331 rumors collected during November 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 331 collected rumors, 98 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 233 online rumors, we collected 138 rumors on Facebook public accounts, groups, and pages during November 2022, which shows that more than %60 of the total online rumors was collected on Facebook. Also, Telegram ranked the second social media platform for spreading rumors in Iraq with 82 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 November were in Arabic.

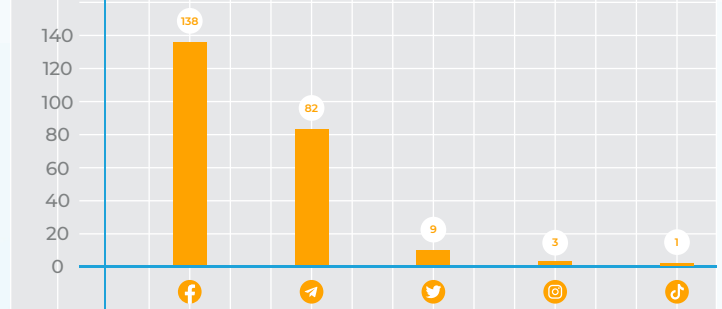


Channels

Online and Offline Rumors



Channel of online rumors



Analysis

Along with increasing the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in November, rumors have also increased by 30% compared to October. This shows that 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 Community Bulletin, Humanitarian Bulletin, Media Bulletin, and social media content 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.ina.iq/170641--.html>
3. <https://www.facebook.com/MOH.GOV.IQ/posts/pfbid02ozHyHrMptJNWuyLyMtMriyZbMSij7tiU13dEucyQedkXRwCBiqvuWnIW2bWgmUqCl>

Contact

Director of Programs

Sara Sofiwan

ssofiwan@internews.org

For more information on the project, please visit:

[Iraq – Rooted In Trust](#)

[Internews In Iraq \(Facebook Page\)](#)