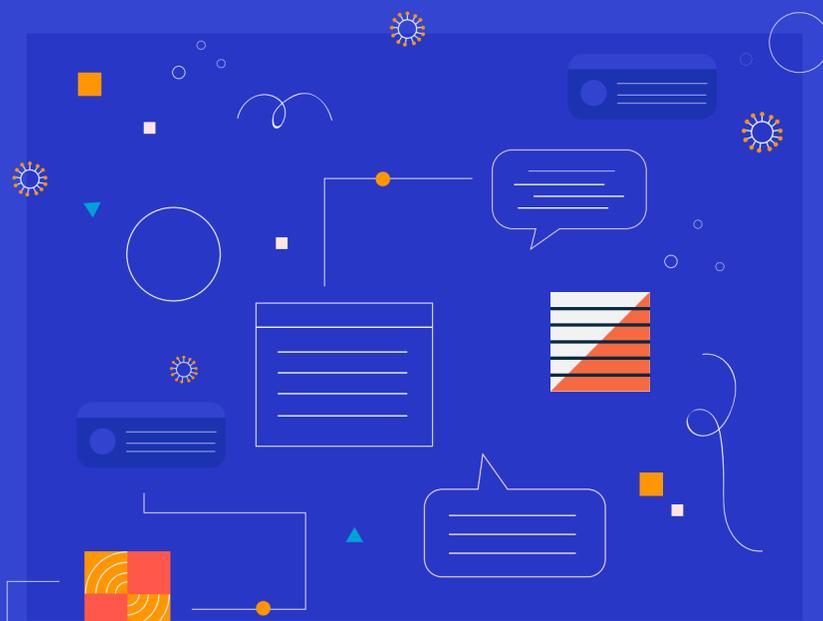
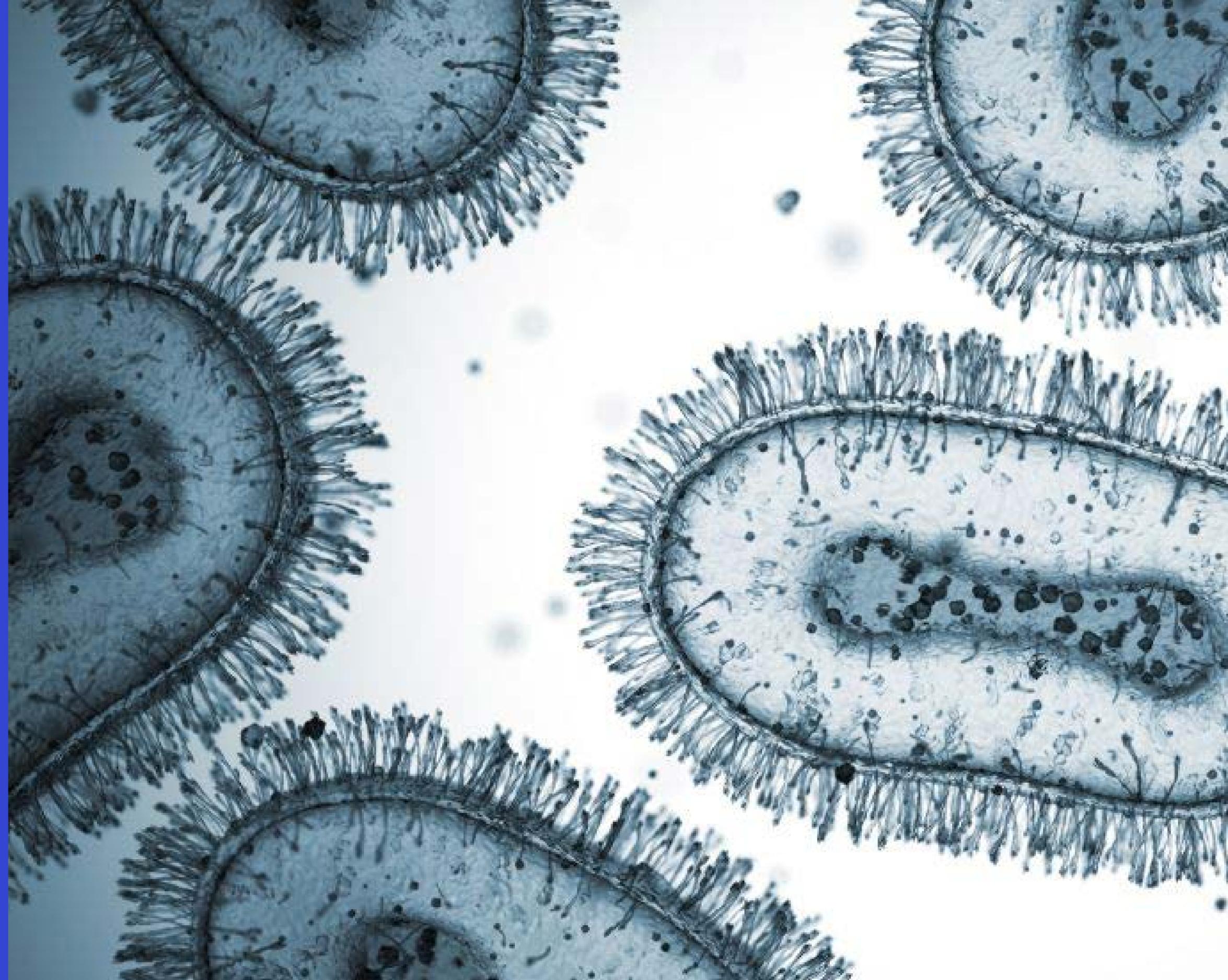


# Territorial Dialogues

► Bulletin for humanitarian organizations  
Ninth edition 02/11/2022

## Central topic of this issue

- Monkeypox: disinformation and discrimination





# Introduction

The WHO has declared a public health emergency of international scope on account of recent outbreaks of monkeypox, initially noting that the disease “is concentrated in men who have sex with men, especially those with multiple sexual partners.” Although this statement responds to a statistical finding, it has generated a wave of rumors, misinformation, and discriminatory factors towards members of the LGBTIQ+ community.

In this regard, the director general of the WHO later stated that “stigma and discrimination can be as dangerous as any virus”, a message that we at Rooted in Trust 2.0 adhere to. We hope that this newsletter can function as a quick guide with key facts about the disease and tools so that we can communicate about this topic in a clear and effective way, without generating fear or discrimination.



Information collected between: 1 September to 30 September, 2022

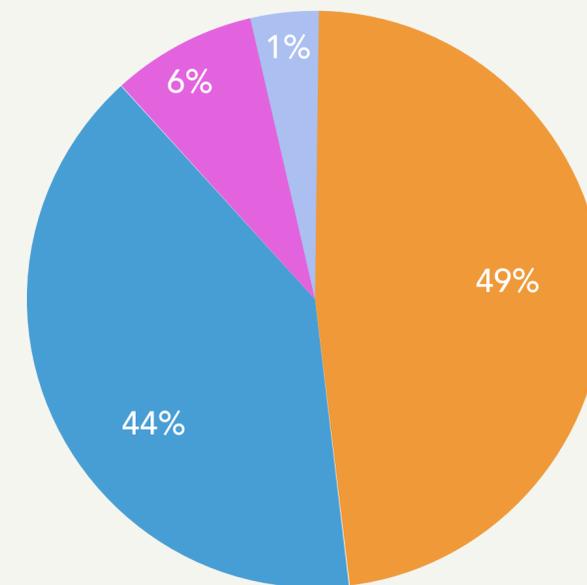
Risk: 96% low risk rumors and 4% medium risk.

## Information collected on social networks

### Key words

- COVID
- Vaccine
- Monkey
- Smallpox
- disease
- Community
- Pandemic
- Colombia
- Health
- Indigenous
- Sick
- Indigena
- Dead
- Virus
- Territory

- Twitter 
- Offline 
- Facebook 
- Telegram 



# COVID-19 data



105,368 new doses were allocated in the last 15 days (as of October 11, 2022)



36,670,153 million people (71.83% of the population) are fully vaccinated. (as of October 7, 2022).

- **711 municipalities in Colombia already have 70% of their schemes complete.**



- **Coverage according to department:**
  - × Caquetá (52,29%).
  - × Chocó (36,95%).
  - × Putumayo (44,15%).
  - × Vaupés (30,01%).

# Seismic Smallpox Data

According to the PAHO/WHO response report on seismic smallpox in Colombia, by the end of October, 3110 cases had been confirmed in Colombia, 54% of these cases in Bogota, 23% in Medellin and 7% in Cali, reaching the largest cities in Colombia in precise order (with no deaths and 77% recovered). Of the confirmed cases, men accounted for about 97.4% of the cases, with the 30-39 age group having the highest concentration of these cases (43%), while women accounted for a much smaller number of cases (2.6%).

Despite the increasing number of cases, there is a downward trend compared to peak weeks, with unexpressive increases compared to the weeks with the highest notifications of confirmed cases. Due to the high number of cases in men, prejudice and stigma towards gay men, and other members of the LGBTIQ+ community, may be exacerbated. With this, we also see that there is a need for greater communication, within the strategy being developed in Ministry of Health, in order to reduce the stigma of the LGBTIQ+ community, in addition to better explaining the symptoms, as we see in this bulletin.



► Trend

**Misinformation and discrimination about monkeypox.**

1.



## Comentario

“

“Monkeypox causes genital malformations”.



# Context

In a listening group a young man expressed his concern regarding the contagion of monkeypox, because he heard about a post on social media about genital deformation because of monkeypox contagion. This causes fear among people and could possibly lead to people preferring one virus over another. More specifically, because monkeypox leaves external marks and on face and body. This can lead to stigma and discrimination, especially towards the LGBTQI population.



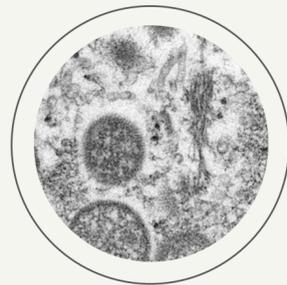
# Factcheck

- [A new study revealed](#) some atypical and very rare symptoms of monkeypox identified in 2022; among them, a swelling of the genital organs reported in 31 out of 197 patients studied. This would partially confirm the aforementioned rumor.
- It should be noted that in the past, symptoms such as [swollen lymph nodes](#) -small filters scattered throughout the body, including the genitals, which collect foreign substances and can become inflamed by viruses or bacteria- have been reported, which could also explain the swelling in this area.



# What can we do as humanitarians to respond to these rumors?

## 01. Get the facts straight:



### What is it?

Monkeypox is a disease caused by a virus of the same name that can affect people.



### How does it affect?

People may experience fever, usually on the face, feet, or hands, which then spreads to other parts of the body, forming pus-filled blisters and then scabs that fall off within 2 to 4 weeks. Other symptoms include headache, muscle and back pain, chills, tiredness, and swollen lymph nodes.



### How is it spread?

01. By direct skin-to-skin contact with the rash, scabs, or body fluids of an infected person.
02. By touching clothing, bedding or towels and other surfaces used by that person.
03. By contact with their respiratory secretions.



### How to prevent infection?

Viruses do not discriminate, and anyone can become infected. If you notice symptoms, you should isolate yourself and call 123 or your health care provider, EPS ([here is a directory](#)).



### How do I know if I have the disease?

Not all outbreaks are synonymous with monkeypox. Therefore, it is important to go to a medical professional who can order a PCR test to detect the virus.



### If I already have the disease, is there a cure and how can I alleviate the symptoms?

Treatment for this disease is outpatient and focuses on reducing the intensity of symptoms through smallpox medications.



The ACAM2000 and Jynneos smallpox vaccines can also prevent monkeypox and the Ministry of Health has already announced the delivery of 5,600 doses.

## 02. Understand what is beyond the rumor:

- There is still a lot of doubt and uncertainty about this virus in communities. This is due, in part, to the stigma and discrimination surrounding the disease, **especially for members of the LGBTIQ+ population.**
- This stigma generates a double effect, as those who are not infected avoid accessing health information and counseling from medical professionals due to apprehension of being judged, and those who already have symptoms or suspect they are infected do not report them to health agencies and, in many cases, **avoid accessing medical treatment.**
- These prejudices are fed by chains of misinformation and rumors stimulated by media headlines, which implicitly indicate that **“the disease is exclusive to gay men or that having monkeypox is synonymous with promiscuity”.**

## 03. Know how to communicate on this topic:

Here are four practical resources that we at Internews have created to communicate about monkeypox without generating fear or discrimination in communities:

01. [Podcast El Vos a Voz](#)
02. [Conversation: Monkeypox: What do we know so far?](#)
03. [Internews Health Journalism Network Toolkit](#)
04. [Article: Monkeypox: The Role of the Media in Mitigating Stigma and Discrimination](#)



As Rooted in Trust 2.0 we seek to add to communication without discrimination. Therefore, we extend our support through workshops to strengthen risk and health communication processes. Also, together with our partner Caribe Afirmativo we can advise and accompany people of the LGBTIQ+ community in cases of discrimination and / or gaps in access to services. You can contact us at [jsandovalvasco@internews.org](mailto:jsandovalvasco@internews.org) and [info@caribeafirmativo.lgbt](mailto:info@caribeafirmativo.lgbt).



For more information about the project or access to our content repository, please visit our website: [Internews](https://internews.org)



If you would like to give us your feedback on this newsletter and/ or the “Rooted in Trust 2.0” project, please feel free to write to us at [jsandovalvasco@internews.org](mailto:jsandovalvasco@internews.org). Any feedback or comments will be considered for future content pieces.

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