



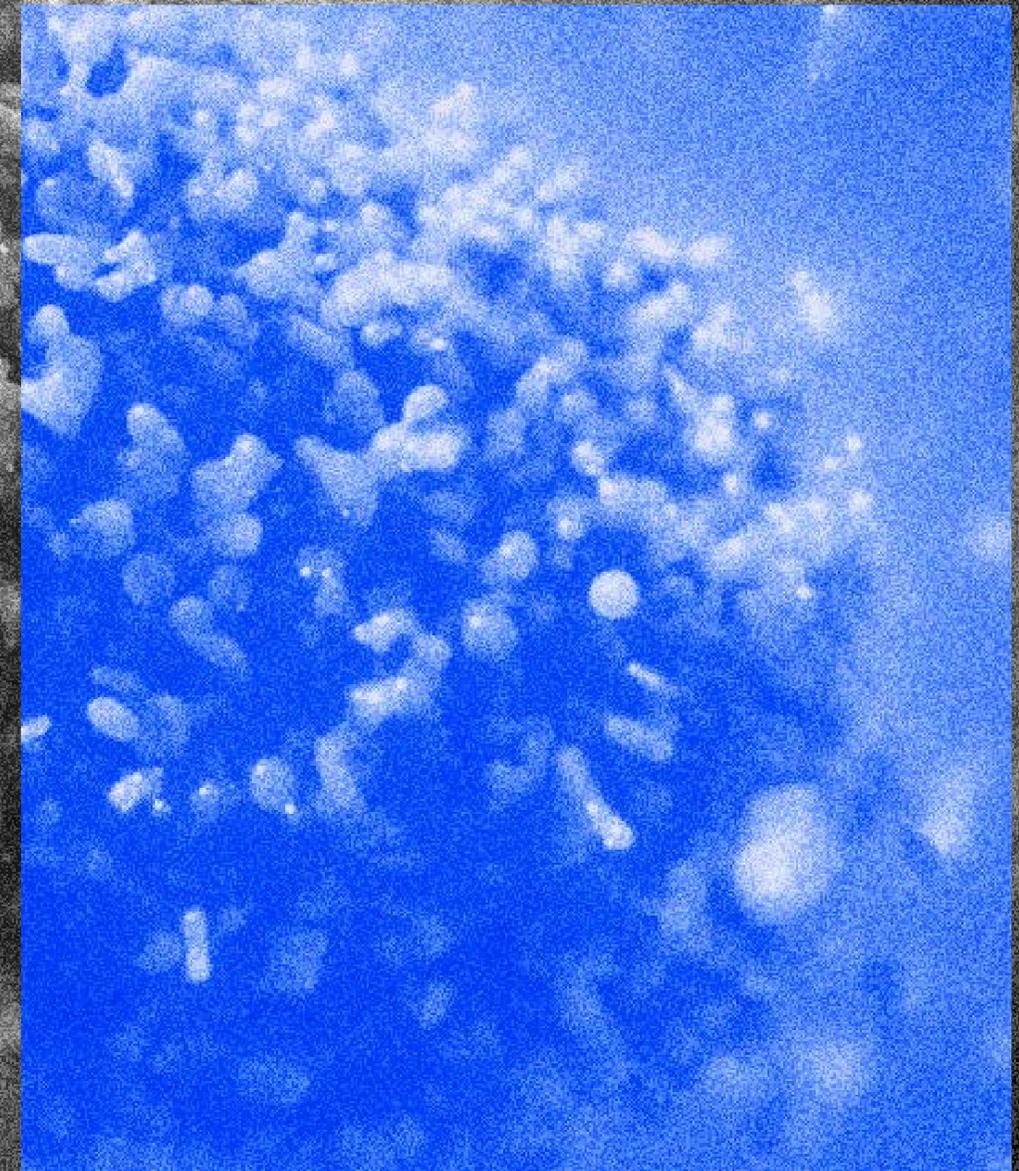
Territorial Dialogues

Bulletin for humanitarian organizations

Tenth edition 02/11/2022

Central themes of this publication

Monkeypox misinformation and discrimination



Introduction

The national government is in the process of acquiring biologicals to mitigate the health emergency caused by smallpox; However, discriminatory rumors have arisen that call for an active role of representatives and activists of the LGBTIQ+ community to speak out about the lack of these vaccines in Colombia.

Why does the communication around this disease focus more on those who suffer from it rather than the risk factors and scientific aspects surrounding it?

What implications does this stigmatizing approach have on the communication of health issues?

How to communicate without discriminating or generating fear about smallpox? These and other questions are addressed below.





Information collected between: 1 to 31 octubre of 2022

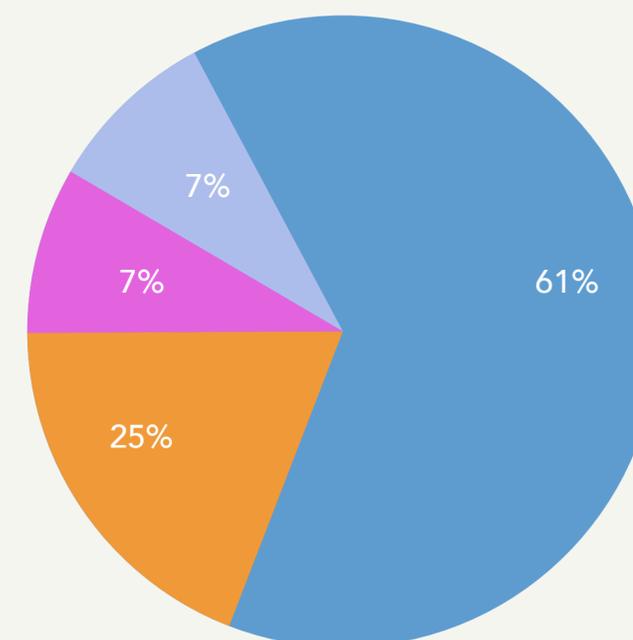
Risk: 99 % low risk rumors and 1 % medium risk.

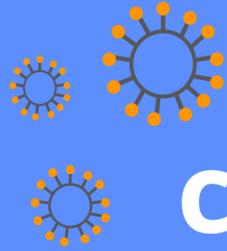
Information collected on social networks

- Twitter 
- Offline 
- Facebook 
- Telegram 

key words

COVID, vaccine, Colombia, smallpox, monkey, pandemic, death, information, health.





COVID-19 Data



100,510 new doses were assigned in the last 15 days (November 19, 2022).



There are 36,804,956 million people (72.10% of the population) with the complete vaccination schedule (November 11, 2022).

- **712 municipalities in Colombia already have 70% of their schemes completed.**



- **Coverage by Department:**

- x Caquetá (53,14 %).
- x Chocó (37,52 %).
- x Putumayo (44,57 %).
- x Vaupés (32,491 %).

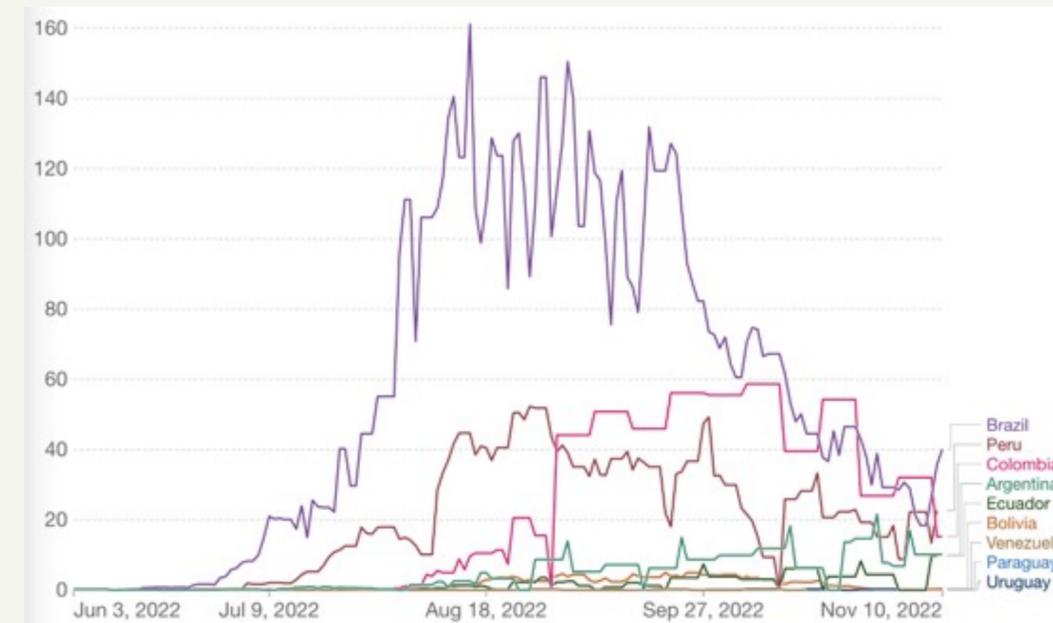
Data provided by the Colombian Ministry of Health and the National Institute of Health, as of September 19, 2022.

Monkeypox in data

In a new assessment of monkeypox in Colombia, the National Institute of Health (INS) at the end of the second week of November 2022 had confirmed 3719 cases in Colombia.

The National Institute of Health (INS) reports cases in Bogota (1,904), Antioquia (10,712), and Cali (288). Of the confirmed cases, men represent about 3612 of the cases, while women represent a much smaller number of cases with 107. By population group, there are nine children between zero and nine years old, 752 people between ten and 19 years old, from 20 to 29 years old there are 1,429, while from 30 to 39 years old there are 1,570 people affected.

Despite the increasing number of infections, there is a downward trend compared to peak weeks. There are small increases in relation to the weeks in which a higher number of confirmed cases were reported.



<https://ourworldindata.org/monkeypox>

Data from: Our World in Data and World Health Organization

1.

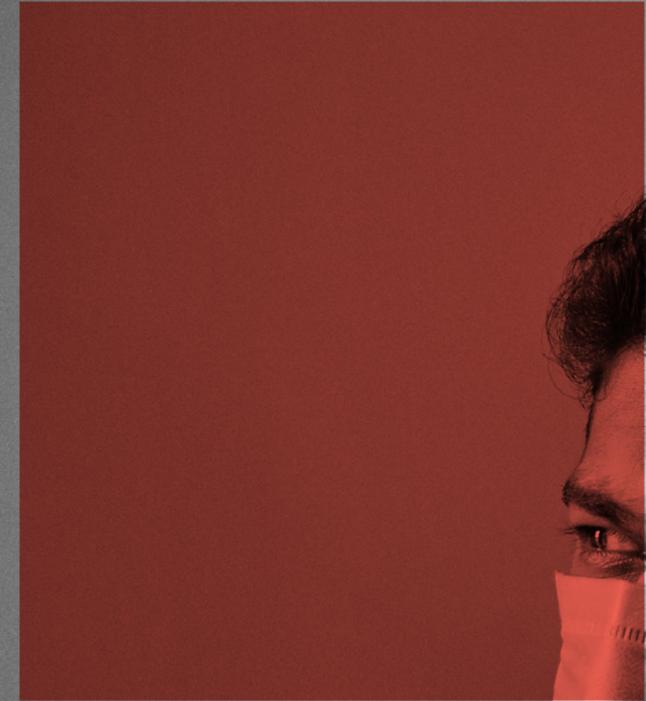
▶ Trend

Disinformation and discrimination about monkeypox

Comment

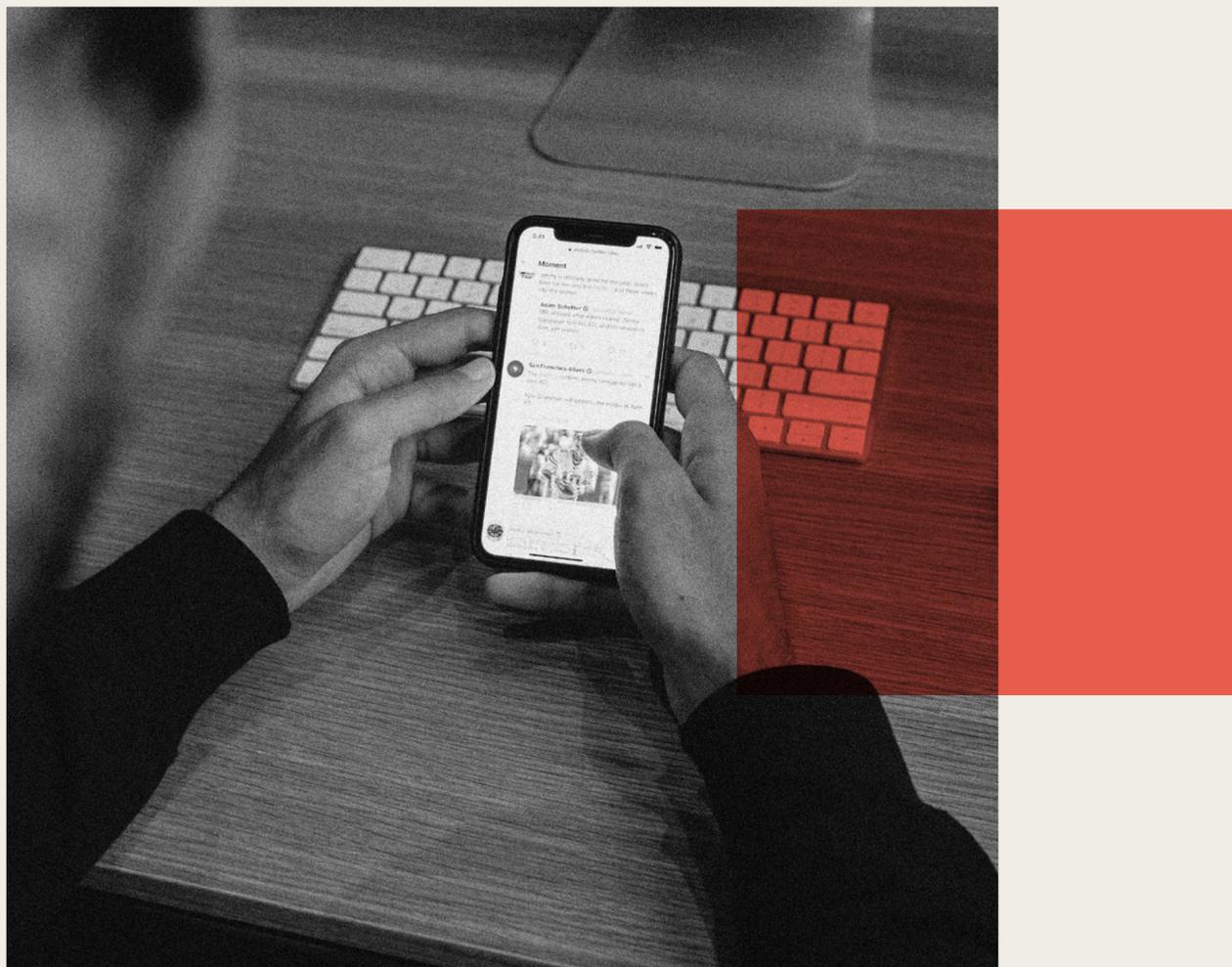
“

Honestly, I haven't seen any of those LGBT people in positions of power talking about the lack of monkeypox vaccines in Colombia.”



Context

This rumor was compiled in a social network and generated reactions that reinforce the stigma and discrimination towards the LGBTIQ+ population, by assuming that this disease only affects “gay men” and, therefore, **leaders, activists and representatives of the diverse population have a direct responsibility to manage strategies to mitigate this health problem.**



What can we do as humanitarian actors to respond to this rumor?

1. Understanding what is happening with vaccine supply

- The delay in the arrival of vaccines against smallpox is not exclusive to Colombia and is partly due to the fact that the infection rates of this disease have exceeded the production capacity of biologicals, while there is a great demand from governments to mitigate the health emergency.
- Colombia has more confirmed cases than countries such as Chile or Brazil, which already have biologicals available.



- It is important to clarify that there are several pharmaceutical companies producing their own vaccines; however, **the only one with FDA approval in the United States is the JYNNEOS vaccine**, from the company Bavarian Nordic, which is currently working on strategic alliances to guarantee global vaccine coverage by 2023.
- In August, the Ministry of Health announced **the possible acquisition of 5,600 vaccines**. However, Minister Corcho stated that there were unconstitutional aspects in the clauses of the purchase order and that the acquisition of the biologicals would be postponed until this was solved.
- On October 20, **the Ministry announced that it is negotiating the acquisition of 25,000 doses of the vaccine**, with the support of the Pan American Health Organization, but so far there is no official statement on the date of arrival or the steps to follow to access the vaccine.



2. Think about the implications of this rumor:

- In addition to perpetuating discrimination and stigma towards the LGBTIQ+ population, this approach has a negative effect on the prevention of infection in people who do not identify with these gender identities, as it assumes that it only affects the diverse community and that, therefore, they do not have to follow the care recommendations to avoid getting sick.
- At the same time, the assumption that it is exclusive to the LGBTIQ+ community may discourage infected heterosexuals from reporting their symptoms and seeking medical support to overcome the disease, as they are confronted with the stigma that these rumors and the very risk communication surrounding the disease have recently stimulated and proliferated.

This does not mean that prevention campaigns should not be carried out among the most affected groups, but information on monkeypox cannot continue to focus on who is becoming infected, but rather on the risk factors and ways of contracting the disease, based on simple but scientifically rigorous communication.

3. Provide information on the JYNNEOS vaccine:

The following are excerpts from the JYNNEOS vaccine data sheet:

- **How does it work?**
It contains an attenuated form of the virus, which allows the immune system to recognize and eliminate it in case of infection. It is important to clarify that vaccines do not transmit the virus or generate contagion.
- **How many doses?**
Se debe aplicar una primera dosis y luego esperar 28 días para una segunda dosis final.



- **Are there any side effects?**
So far, the following have been reported: tiredness, headache, muscle pain, redness, swelling, pain and itching at the injection site.
- **Who CANNOT be vaccinated?**
Persons who have an allergic reaction to the first dose of JYNNEOS should immediately discontinue treatment. Likewise, those who are allergic to gentamicin or ciprofloxacin, or to chicken protein or eggs, should inform their health care professional before getting the vaccine. Finally, those who have already had smallpox should not be vaccinated, as their body already has a response system.

4. Know how to communicate on this topic:

Below are four practical resources that Internews has created to communicate about monkeypox without generating fear or discrimination in communities:

1. [Podcast El Vos a Voz](#)
2. [Conversation: Monkeypox: What do we know so far?](#)
3. [Internews Health Journalism Network Toolbox](#)
4. [Article: Monkeypox: the media's role 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 and 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. Any feedback or comments will be considered for future content pieces.

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