

THE HUMANITARIAN SNAPSHOT

A product which provides a quick snapshot, on health rumor data, analysis and recommendations in Zimbabwe.

RUMOR

“Malangazuba
ayendelana achino
chamuntu ,kubapati
tiyangojata loko pe mbuli
mwida.”

Community Listening
Group, Binga,

Translated:

“Malaria affects people differently
according to age, elderly people are
not mostly affected.”

Background

The rumor stems from Binga in Matabeleland North Province, an area prone to Malaria outbreaks. The rumor has potential of fuelling complacency towards Malaria among adults who may believe they have a lower risk of contracting the disease.

Facts



Malaria has always been a threat in Zimbabwe with a significant number of cases recorded annually. In 2020, Zimbabwe recorded 447,381 Malaria cases and 400 deaths, while in 2021 there were 133,134 cases and 121 deaths. Meanwhile, in 2022 the country recorded 94,013 cases and 156 deaths.



In the first week of January 2023, Malaria cases increased by 22% going up to 1,960 cases, from 1,601 recorded in the last week of December 2022 with children aged below five years contributing 212 of reported cases during this period. Six Malaria deaths were recorded in Zimbabwe during the week ending January 8, 2023, compared to two recorded in the last week of December 2022.



According to Dr Nyasha Masuka, a local physician, children under the age of five and pregnant women are at risk of contracting Malaria. Children under five are vulnerable as they have lost their mother's immunity and are yet to develop their own. While the elderly who live in Malaria prone areas may develop immunity over time, they are still at risk of contracting the disease.

What can we do as humanitarian actors?

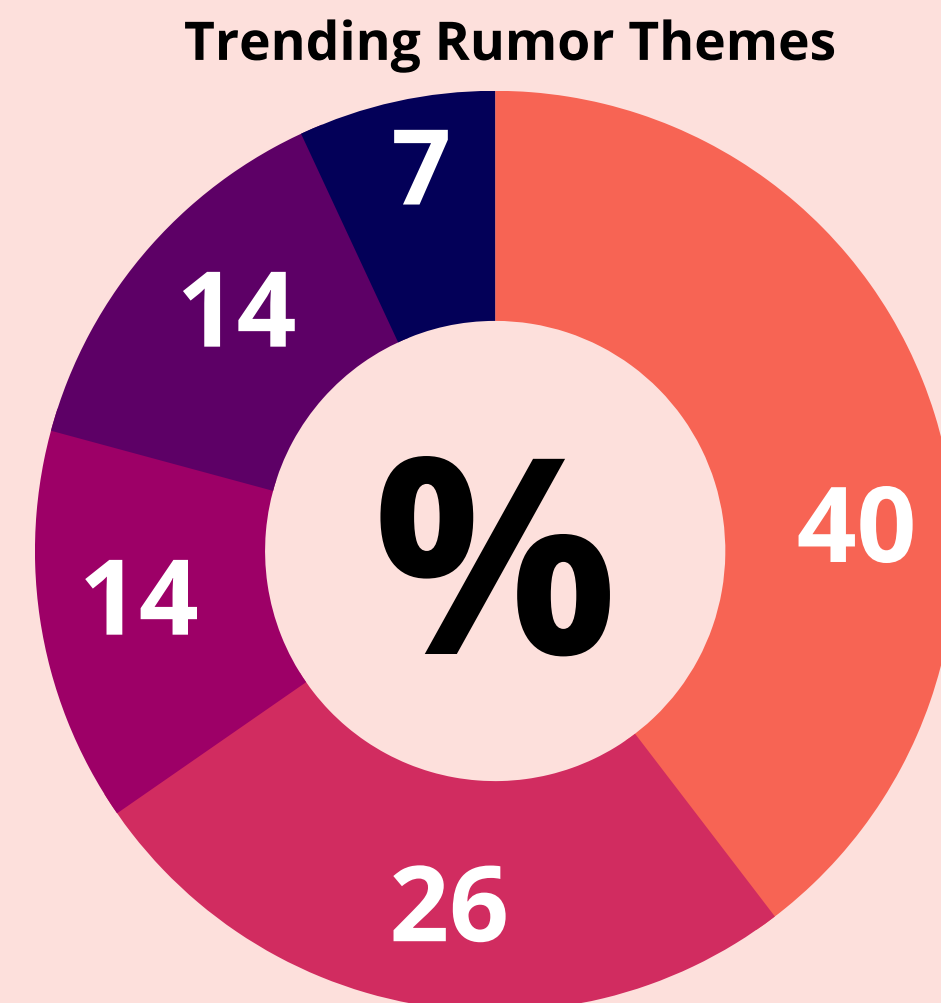


Humanitarian actors working with community health workers can share pamphlets and posters raising awareness on signs and symptoms of Malaria, and explaining who can be affected by the disease while providing preventive measures that can be employed by community members.



Partners working in communities can share local language (Tonga, Nambya, Shona, Kalanga, and Ndebele) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) factsheets advising migrants, men, women, and youth on how Malaria is transmitted, its signs and symptoms, and how they can prevent Malaria when travelling to areas with high Malaria transmission.

Rumor Trends Analysis



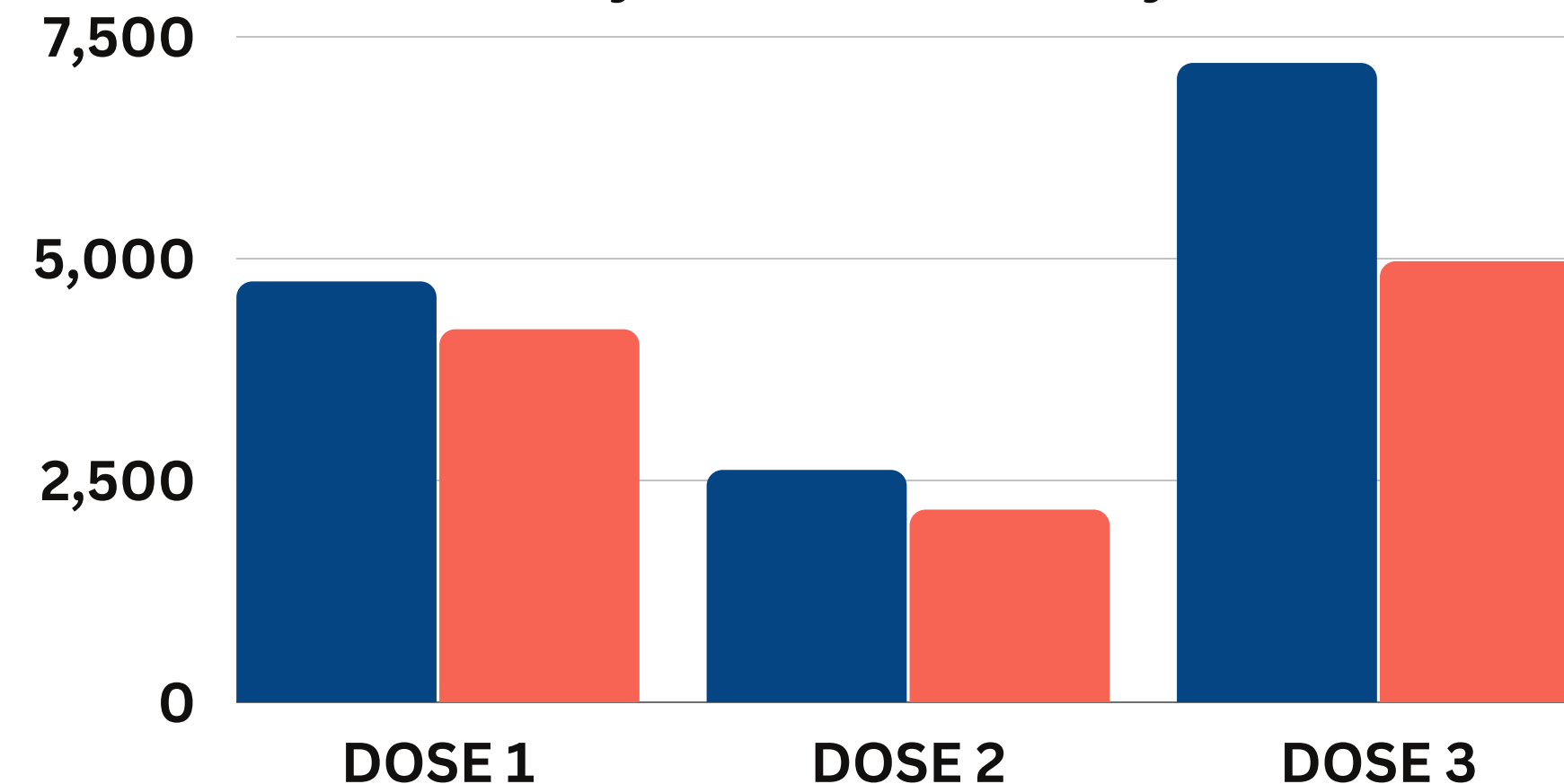
Source: Infographic by Internews; Data by RiT 2.0 Global Rumors Dashboard

Between January 25, and January 31, 2022, Internews in Zimbabwe collected 55 COVID-19 rumors. Eight (8) rumors were collected online (Facebook: One and Twitter: Seven) and fifty-one came from in-person communications. Trending rumor themes were, “COVID-19 is being used for corruption” (40%), “COVID-19 vaccines are experimental” (26%), “Drug abuse is escalating among the youth” (14%), “COVID-19 is a punishment from God” (14%) and that “Home remedies are better than COVID-19 vaccines” (7%).

COVID-19 context

Week-on-Week Vaccination Comparison

■ January Week 4 ■ February Week 1



Source: Visualisation by Internews; Data by Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC)

- Zimbabwe recorded a 11% decrease in first vaccine dose uptake from 4,736 doses administered in week three to 4,198 doses in week four of January 2023.
- There was a 17% and 31% decrease in the uptake of second and third vaccine doses respectively. Second vaccine dose uptake decreased from 2,612 to 2,166 doses while third vaccine dose uptake decreased from 7,198 to 4,966 doses.
- New COVID-19 cases increased by 80% from 443 cases recorded in week three to 799 recorded in week four. This can be attributed to increased migration between Zimbabwe and neighboring countries during and post festive season together with complacency towards observation of COVID-19 regulations as many believe the pandemic is over.
- As of January 31, 2023, there were 1,178 active COVID-19 cases with 36 hospitalisations (30 vaccinated and 6 unvaccinated). Two COVID-19 related deaths were recorded during week four of January 2023.
- Cumulatively, Zimbabwe has vaccinated 6,599,601 people with the first vaccine dose and 4,962,410 people with the second vaccine dose, translating to 49,6% of the 10 million herd immunity target initially set for end December 2022. A total of 1,303,187 people have received the third vaccine dose to date.