



Lugara Media Factsheet



South Sudan
NOVEMBER, 2022



Rooted in Trust 2.0 Project Areas

- Central Equatoria
- Eastern Equatoria
- Jonglei State
- Unity State
- Lakes State

Greater Pibor Administrative Area

The Internews Rooted in Trust 2.0 project in South Sudan is funded by USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID-BHA). It aims to respond to rumors, misinformation, and fake news that shape negative public perceptions towards COVID-19 and Ebola Virus Disease preparedness and response in the country.

USAID-BHA Rooted in Trust 2.0 South Sudan. If you want to contribute to or provide feedback on this Lugara Media Factsheet or have information to share, please contact: **Tusiime Wilfred Romeo (Akiiki)** (atusiime@internews.org) or **Dr. Michael Gubay,** (mgubay@internews.org)

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About This Lugara Factsheet

This Media Factsheet is a periodic response to rumors and concerns about COVID-19 and Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), and provides verified information for journalists and community correspondents reporting on the pandemic. It is meant to provide information that is essential to understand the facts about the virus, vaccines and related issues, to help journalists respond to their audiences' questions, address rumors, and close the feedback loop.

A lot of information is circulating across South Sudan and beyond its borders about COVID-19, vaccinations, EVD, and related issues. So, it's important to know what's true and what's not.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY?

Rumor #1

COVID-19 vaccines

'Can COVID-19 Vaccines cause chronic lung diseases?'



Rumor heard from Juba, South Sudan.

Fact File

'There is no known evidence that any of the COVID-19 vaccines are associated with causing chronic lung disease. In fact, COVID-19 vaccines provide effective protection against moderate and severe illnesses as well as reduce the risk of dying from coronavirus infection. Given that COVID-19 disease is principally a lung-related condition, being vaccinated against the infection is particularly useful to prevent chronic respiratory problems. Therefore, in summary, the rumor that COVID-19 vaccines may cause chronic lung disease is unfounded,' said Dr. Brendan Dineen, WHO COVAX Coordinator, Republic of South Sudan.

Rumor #2

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

WHAT PEOPLE SAY?

“What is Ebola? I think people changed the coronavirus’s name to Ebola”

A rumor heard from communities in South Sudan, and from South Sudan refugees living in Bweyale Refugee Camp in Uganda.

Fact File

“Ebola is a virus that causes a dangerous disease that can lead to death in a short time if the infected person doesn’t receive adequate help. It affects human beings and some wild animals (monkeys, gorillas, and chimpanzees). Even though Ebola virus disease (EVD) is a very serious disease, it can be prevented,” said Dr. Brendan Dineen, WHO COVAX Coordinator, Republic of South Sudan.

Ebola virus disease (EVD), formerly known as Ebola haemorrhagic fever, is a severe, often fatal illness affecting humans and other primates. The virus is transmitted to people from wild animals (such as fruit bats, porcupines and non-human primates) and then spreads in the human population through direct contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected people, and with surfaces and materials (e.g. bedding, clothing) contaminated with these fluids.

The average EVD case fatality rate is around 50%. Case fatality rates have varied from 25% to 90% in past outbreaks. The first EVD outbreaks occurred in remote villages in Central Africa, near tropical rainforests. The 2014–2016 outbreak in West Africa was the largest and most complex Ebola outbreak since the virus was first discovered in 1976. There were more cases and deaths in this outbreak than all others combined. It also spread between countries, starting in Guinea then moving across land borders to Sierra Leone and Liberia. It is thought that fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family are natural Ebola virus hosts. Link: https://www.who.int/health-topics/ebola#tab=tab_1

Rumor #3

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

WHAT PEOPLE SAY?

“Some South Sudanese say they are worried about their children studying in Bweyale Refugee Camp in Uganda because they heard Ebola kills and blinds people in Uganda”

A rumor heard from South Sudan

Fact File

“Indeed, there is an ongoing outbreak of Ebola virus disease in Uganda and as of 05 Nov 2022, there had been 132 confirmed cases and 51 deaths. While the virus can be detected in the vitreous fluid within the eyes or causes bleeding from the eyes, blindness is not a typical symptom (refer to typical symptoms in Q&A). Hospital staff and children in Uganda need to follow the advice of the MoH and the Government of Uganda regarding EVD (including IPC in the community). Also, the Government of Uganda and the Ministry of Education have suspended all school visitations. This should allay some of the fears,” said Dr. Brendan Dineen, WHO COVAX Coordinator, Republic of South Sudan.

Rumor #4

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

WHAT PEOPLE SAY?

“People think Ebola is not as serious as coronavirus because they can do their normal businesses without lockdown”

“

A rumor heard from people at Hai Referendum and Juba Town residential areas in Juba City, Central Equatoria State.

Fact File

“While both diseases are extremely serious there is a much higher case fatality rate for EVD once affected. Also, there is currently no EVD in South Sudan. In Uganda, the epicenter of the outbreak is locked down,” said Dr. Brendan Dineen, WHO COVAX Coordinator, Republic of South Sudan.



Tips for Journalists



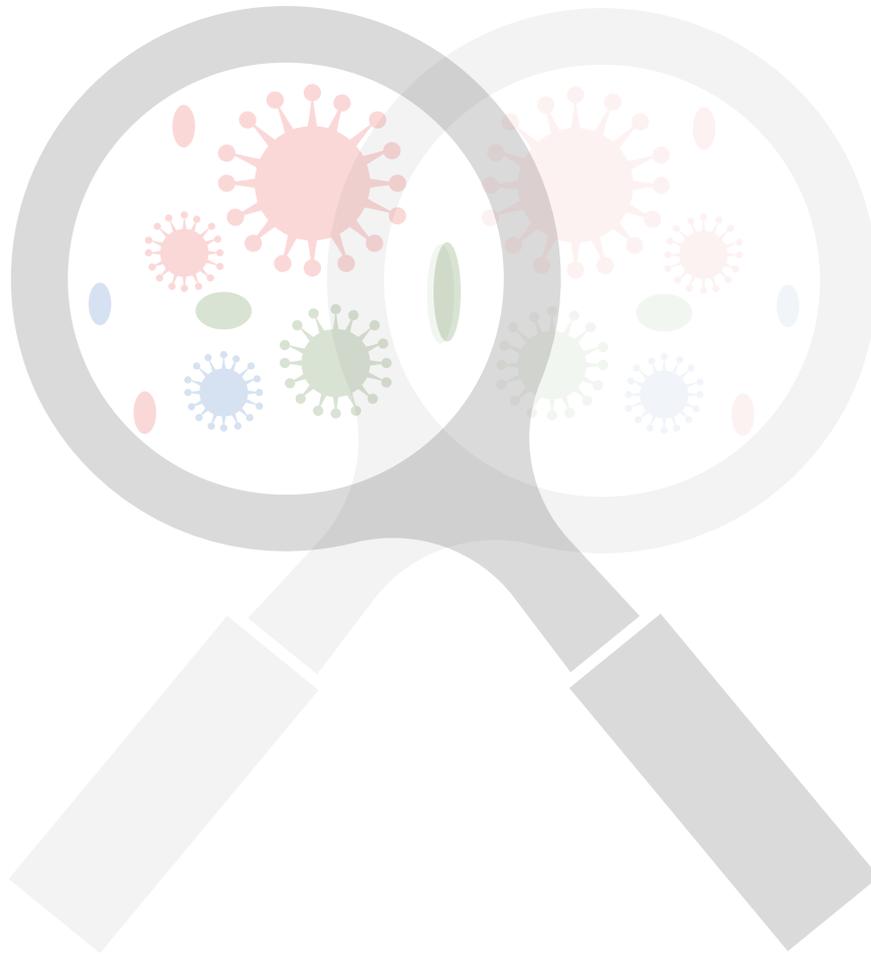
South Sudan Journalists are recommended to take note of the following to improve their knowledge, reporting techniques, and background checks about COVID-19, EVD, and related reporting.

- Journalists should understand the basics of the disease, and the background of the situation and have well-researched information. They must also update their contact list of experts knowledgeable about the situation; and be allies with other journalists and medical responders
- Triangulate and verify, fact-check all information before compiling stories. Note that you communicate numbers or data sensitively and accurately. Numbers tell a story. Put the story out there as soon as all facts are established. Timely and accurate information is lifesaving.
- Always do not report out of context. Attribute accurately for trust-building.
- South Sudan journalists are highly recommended to study this short online course on how to report on zoonotic diseases and their origins. For instance, COVID-19, Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), Monkeypox, etc. Link: <https://earthjournalism.net/from-animals-to-humans-an-online-course-to-report-on-zoonotic-diseases-and-their-environmental>

Key links and resources

- To get reliable information about Ebola, you can consult WHO's Ebola website: <http://who.int/csr/disease/ebola/en/>
- Frequently asked questions and answers about Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), link: [Ebola virus disease \(who.int\)](http://who.int/ebola)
- Further reading on how human, environmental, and animal health affect each other:

<https://earthjournalism.net/video-highlight/journalism-in-the-covid-19-era-why-health-reporting-must-focus-on-human-animal-and>



The Rooted in Trust 2.0 project works to combat COVID-19 rumors and misinformation, responds to the information challenges faced by vulnerable groups, encourages open dialogue between citizens and stronger collaborative partnerships between information providers.

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