



Maka Toky - Rooted in Trust 2.0

Humanitarian bulletin - December 2022

"The Rooted in Trust project in addressing information needs aims to strengthen the information ecosystem; to mitigate the risks associated with misinformation, for vulnerable populations affected by humanitarian crises during the COVID-19 pandemic."



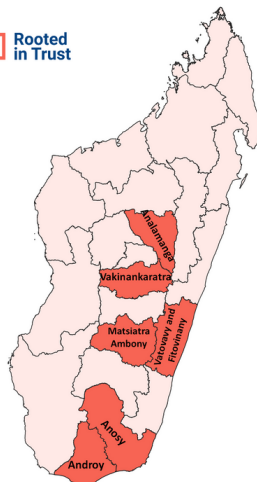
In Madagascar, the Rooted In Trust2.0 project focuses on listening and gathering rumors around COVID-19 and issues of public health, immunization, and the COVID-19 response by putting communities and individuals at the center.

Rooted in Trust 2.0 is being implemented in 6 regions in Madagascar, including Androy, Analamanga, Vakinankaratra, Haute Matsiatra, Vatovavy, and Anosy. Four local partners are involved in the project for rumor collection and listening, namely the NGOs Communication Idea Development and ILONTSERA; the Coalition des Radios and finally VIAMO. These partners share the task of collecting rumors, setting up listening groups and focus groups.

ABOUT THIS BULLETIN

This bulletin, which will be periodic for the duration of the project, will report on some of the rumors collected and analyzed by humanitarian actors involved in the fight against COVID-19 and in public health issues. These analyses will be accompanied by recommendations for all those who provide any kind of response to communities and the population in Madagascar.

The period of rumor collection and information gathering contained in this bulletin runs from November 1st to December 31st, 2022. During this period, 129 rumors were collected, 101 on social media and other online platforms and 29 offline through focus groups. The majority were related to immunization and child health issues, some of which will be reported below.



OUR PARTNERS



COVID-19 Status Update - Source MSP



SITUATION EPIDEMIOLOGIQUE COVID-19

Cas du 10 au 16 Décembre 2022

Nombre de tests :	851
TOTAL CAS	63
NOUVEAUX CAS	59
TRACING CONTACT	04

Cumulés

CONFIRMES	67 684
Par test:	66 995
Par scan 2ème vague :	689
Guéris :	66 069 (97,61%)
Décès :	1 415 (2,09%)
Nombre tests:	521 617

CAS ACTIFS: 200

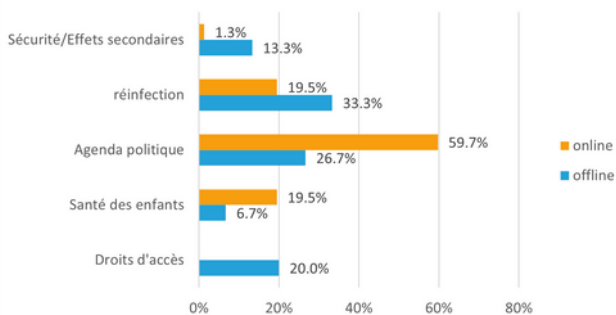
https://twitter.com/Msnp_Mada/status/1604714964358496256?ext=HHwWgIC8hcHwi8UsAAAA

According to the latest figures from the Madagascar Ministry of Public Health, there are still active cases and new cases to date. For the week of December 21, 2022, 59 new cases have been recorded, bringing the total number of active cases to 200.

The Analamanga region has the most cases, but others have also been recorded in the Haute Matsiatra, Vakinankaratra and Anosy regions.

With the approach of the end of year celebrations, a period of great concentration of crowds, meetings and exchanges between families and friends, there is a risk of higher exposure to the virus, and therefore a possible resurgence of positive cases towards the beginning of the year.

Tendance des rumeurs



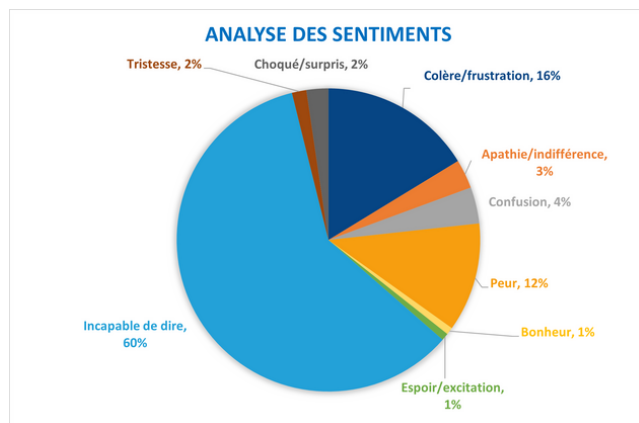
Graph title: Trend of rumors

Concerns about children's health and reinfection issues are predominant, both on online platforms and within communities.

To the question "How do you feel about these rumors?" the majority, 60%, cannot identify the feeling behind the rumors. On the other hand, 30% feel anger, frustration or fear about the rumors.

Feelings are difficult to discern through people's comments or publications, which represent 60% of the collected rumors. On the other hand, almost 30% of the rumors were generated by fear, anger or frustration.

Graph title: Sentiment analysis





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TOPIC: Administration of COVID-19 virus by hospitals and health centers



Zio raha kiniandreo afafy am vahoaka, ny olona izay marary mandeha any am hopitaly mintsy no ampidirandreo virus io. Aiza ve 0 cas de lasa misy cas marobe afaka andro vitsivitsy. Misy raha tsy normal ataon'ny Fanjakana raiky ty

Translation:

"They voluntarily spread this disease (COVID-19), they administered the virus to patients who go to the hospital. Before, it was 0 cases, and a few days later, many cases were reported. This government is doing something suspicious."

Rumor 1

SOURCE: PRIVATE
FACEBOOK GROUP
VAOVAO FARANY - FIL INFO
- OFFICIALY TALKING ABOUT
THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS
IN MAHAJANGA.

Why is important

This kind of speech shows that there is a part of the community that has not yet fully understood how the COVID-19 virus spreads. Apart from that, the belief in a conspiracy persists. For this reason, part of the population believes that the government has received and will continue to receive funding from abroad as long as the disease continues to claim victims.

The population, especially vulnerable people who do not have the means to verify this information, could suffer. Indeed, such a rumor could dissuade them from going to hospitals to get effective treatment for COVID-19, but also for any other disease, for fear of being administered a virus. The mistrust thus caused could lead the community to disbelieve in the danger of the speed and ease of transmission of the virus, and thus lead them to minimize the measures put in place for an effective fight against COVID-19.

Fact checking

-The WHO, on its official website shares that "the virus can be spread when **small liquid particles are expelled through the mouth or nose** when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, sings or breathes deeply" *Maladie à coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) : comment se transmet la COVID-19 ? (who.int)*

- "The virus can also be **transmitted in poorly ventilated and/or crowded indoor spaces, where people tend to stay longer**, as aerosols remain airborne or travel distances greater than one meter (long distance)." *Maladie à coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) : comment se transmet la COVID-19 ? (who.int)*

-Barrier measures such as wearing masks in enclosed areas, social distancing, and handwashing remain among the most effective ways to control the spread of coronavirus. This includes social distancing, mask wearing, routine hand washing, and use of hydroalcoholic gels.

-In Madagascar, the Ministry of Public Health has recently reminded the importance of respecting barrier measures in order to fight against COVID-19 during this holiday season which is conducive to family visits. Indeed, in the last two months, the numbers on COVID-19 have again climbed. This calls for great vigilance.

Recommendations

-**Consider the participation of local actors:** it would be interesting to strengthen the collaboration and involvement of community agents in risk communication to build community confidence in the mode of transmission of COVID-19 and the health response.

-**Listening to the community:** setting up community discussion groups to listen to the concerns of the communities concerned and to provide the necessary clarifications and details could also be a course of action. This will ensure responses are adapted to their information needs rather than to what we think is important (but may not be).

-**Encourage collaboration with local media :** Community media can facilitate the exchange and transmission of essential information so that communities can access and use it appropriately... This also requires training for journalists to give them the essential content, relevant messages, and research or verification tools needed for reliable information.





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TOPIC: Vaccination and mortality



Mahafaty ny fanaovana vaksiny COVID-19

Translation:
"COVID-19 vaccine is deadly"

Rumor 2

SOURCE: MAN BETWEEN 36-45 YEARS OLD, DISCUSSION IN A LISTENING GROUP IN THE ANOSY REGION IN ANTANOSY DIALECT



Why is it important

Such a rumor demonstrates that the information campaign on the vaccine and the importance of vaccination has not been effective and/or sufficient, especially on the effects of the vaccine. This would lead to a reluctance to vaccinate, thus exposing vulnerable people to the risk of developing a severe form of the disease.

Although vaccination is not mandatory in Madagascar, it remains the best possible means of prevention. In addition, vaccination should be encouraged in view of the health response resources available to hospitals and the country in the event of a resurgence of the epidemic, in order to ensure the safety of communities. The spread of the virus in the community and the multiplication of severe forms could make certain social groups even more vulnerable. Indeed, the medical expenses would become a burden for needy and/or very poor families.

Fact checking



-In Madagascar, authorities have yet to report any deaths related to the Covid-19 vaccine.

-The regional health directorate in Androy has noted an impact of this mistrust on routine childhood vaccinations. Reluctance to use the COVID-19 vaccine caused a drop in the rate of children's routine immunization during 2022. For this region in particular, while the goal was to reach 95% vaccination rate on routine vaccines, only 45.01% were vaccinated on the Pentavalent and 43.32% for the measles vaccine.

-Not only does the reluctance undermine the response to COVID-19, but it also exposes children who need to be vaccinated to vaccine-preventable diseases. Cases of polio have been detected in Imanombo, while in Ambovombe, cases of measles have been identified.

Source: Regional Directorate of Public Health - Androy
Figures on the status of vaccination against COVID-19 in Madagascar :

- Number of doses distributed: 2,308,343
- Number of individuals vaccinated: 1,992,277
- Fully vaccinated: 1,916,926
- Boost doses: 101,498

Source : covid-19-data/Madagascar.csv at master · ovid/covid-19-data · GitHub

Recommendations

-Value feedback : It is important to understand the cause of community concern and lack of confidence in vaccines. To do this, a community feedback and discussion system should be set up. This system can also be used as a channel for disseminating necessary and useful information to the community.

-Create a space for dialogue and exchange within communities on the subject of vaccines, while providing the necessary information to groups for objective and consistent discussions;



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TOPIC: Flu or COVID-19 in children



**Pédiatre mits no nilaza fa Corona no maazo n
akamaroan ankizy amzao, tsara Tonga d
manangona dokotera vao mafanafana n Zaza**

Translation:

"It was a pediatrician who said that this disease that was affecting children at this time was the Coronavirus, so the best thing to do is to immediately take the child to see a doctor as soon as they have a little bit of a temperature."

Rumor 3

SOURCE : PRIVATE GROUP
HARENA NY ZANAKA
"WEALTH IS CHILDREN", -
ABOUT AN UNIDENTIFIED
EPIDEMIC AFFECTING
MAINLY CHILDREN
TOWARDS THE END OF
NOVEMBER.

Why is it important

Pediatricians, like any other health care worker, are among the default people mothers and parents trust with their children's health issues. If pediatricians say this, parents may put their children on the COVID-19 treatment protocol without the child actually being affected. This could lead to resistance in the children later on in case of real infections in the children.

The rumor may persist given the health news in Madagascar, relayed by the media.

Fact checking

-Dr. RAMAROSANDY Antsasoia amitia, state-qualified doctor : - "A wave of influenza is raging and attacks children first. The first symptoms are fever and cough. There are some who present vomiting or diarrhea."

"All you have to do is put the children in light clothing and possibly give painkillers to bring the temperature down."

"If after three days, the flu persists, the child should be taken to the doctor. It is important not to give antibiotics directly. You should let the doctor decide on the appropriate treatment."

-Dr. RALAINARIVO Zoly, Head of Information Watch of the Ministry of Public Health:

"It is currently strongly advised to resume the barrier measures to avoid the spread of these diseases: avoid crowds in public places, and always wear masks."



Recommendations

-The rumor having appeared on the social network Facebook, like the majority of rumors about COVID-19 and health listed so far in the project. It is important to address these rumors via the same channel through which they are conveyed, thus, it would be interesting to see on social networks. The groups and communities to be engaged must take into account that parents are the first concerned. Several groups are dedicated to children's health and parental exchanges on the social network Facebook. For example, the group Zaza Tomady Reny Salama.

-"Influencers" can also be mobilized to carry messages. These people can be identified on several platforms and social networks and already have a community of parents who follow them.

-Talking to doctors: Some pediatricians and renowned pediatric clinics can also serve as a bridge and point of information about COVID-19 in children and the procedures to follow in such cases.



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TOPIC: Treatment and care



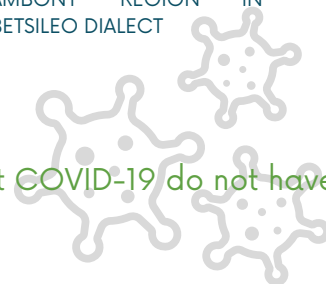
Tsy mahazo fitsaboana ny zaza raha tsy manao vakisiny COVID-19 ny reniny

Translation:

"Children whose mothers are not vaccinated against COVID-19 do not have access to care."

Rumor 4

SOURCE: MAN BETWEEN 26-35 YEARS OLD, DISCUSSION IN A LISTENING GROUP IN THE MATSIATRA AMBONY REGION IN BETSILEO DIALECT



Why is it important

To this day, the care provided to patients in hospitals and other health centers in Madagascar is not dependent on the vaccination status of the people treated there. Furthermore, vaccination is not mandatory in Madagascar, but voluntary. If communities believe that care is dependent on vaccination status or not, it could.

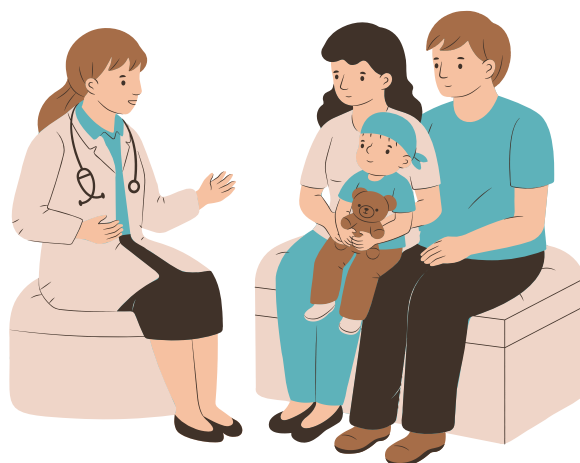
This rumor could discourage and/or hinder people from accessing care at the health center level.

Access to health centers and care in public facilities must be guaranteed to all regardless of any criteria.

Fact checking

According to the Ministry of Public Health through Dr. Zoly Ralainarivo, responsible for information monitoring:

- Vaccination is not mandatory. It remains optional.
- No child could be deprived of care because of it.
- The unvaccinated people, more than anyone else, must be responsible and take the necessary measures to avoid contaminating others or being the vector of propagation of the virus.



Recommendations

-Listening to and understanding fears: Taking into account the current vaccination campaigns, it is important to remember that vaccination against COVID-19 is voluntary and does not imply any exclusion from public services. It is also very important to consider the fears and reluctance regarding vaccines as well as the fact that this is a fully voluntary process. The issue is to allow communities and individuals to be as calm as possible about vaccines and vaccination issues.

-Refer to health personnel: For all information related to the availability of care at health facilities, health personnel are and will remain the best people to answer questions from their communities. Therefore, it is important to include them in the distribution of information and in communication.

Si vous souhaitez prendre contact avec RiT2.0 Madagascar

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