

COVID-19 & HEALTH ISSUES

A weekly snapshot of COVID-19 and other health topics in Zimbabwe

TOP STORY:

12 die from diarrhoea and 34 000 affected.

TOP ISSUES:

- Drinking Coke and Pepsi leads to larger testicles, more testosterone: study
- Going against church doctrine saved my children from measles.
- Mucheke tout dies of suspected drug abuse.
- NGO comes to the rescue of spina bifida babies.

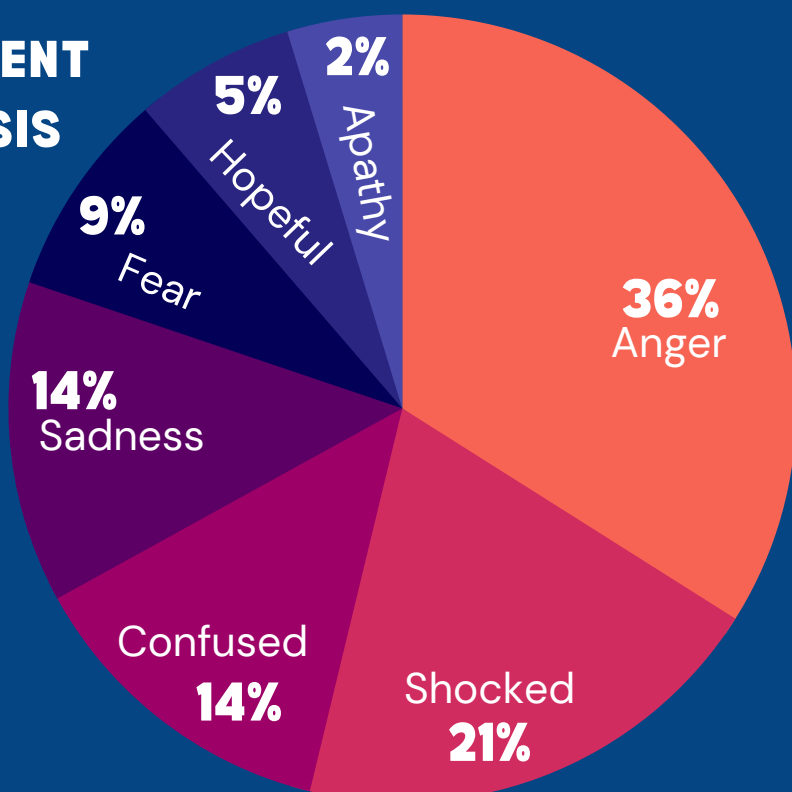
TOP TRENDING POST

The post with the highest reach this week:

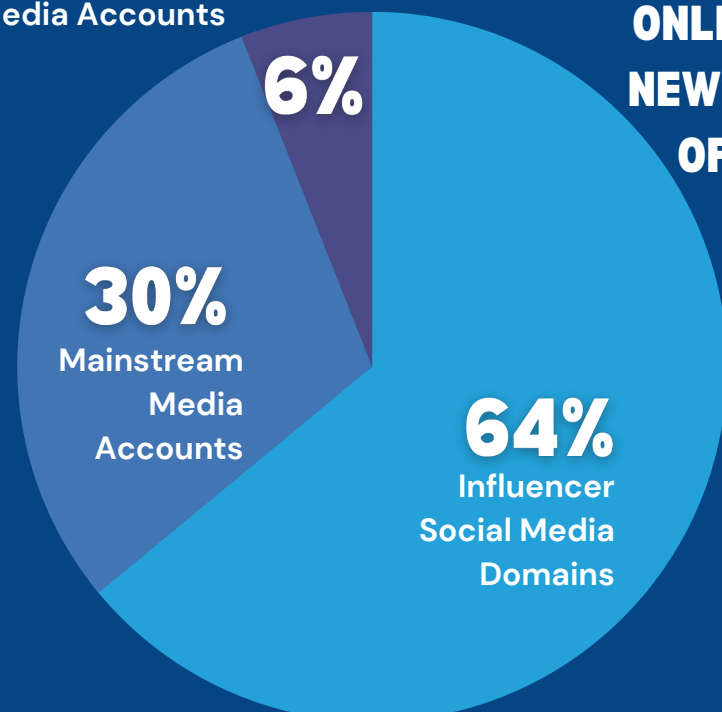
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- Potential Reach: 128.4K
 - Retweets: 159
 - Likes: 608
 - Comments 44

“In Zambia they have MRI scans for animals. In Zimbabwe public hospitals don’t have working MRI scans, a thing that should be in any hospital. I would like to hear the opposition talk more about these issues instead of just ‘Vote For Us’. People are dying, healthcare matters.”
(English: Twitter)

SENTIMENT ANALYSIS



Individual Social Media Accounts



ONLINE HEALTH NEWS SOURCES OF THE WEEK

RUMOR

"It's quite interesting that the "COMPLAINTS" against COVID-19 vaccines have been against the m-RNA vaccines from Pfizer & Moderna... NOT the Chinese vaccines used in Zimbabwe & other countries... Is it because the m-RNA is "new" technology while Chinese vaccines were old tech?" (Twitter, English, February 23, 2023)

FACTS

- Messenger Ribonucleic Acid (mRNA) technology was discovered in the 1960s. Research and development on the technology led to the first clinical trials on humans in 2013. The COVID-19 outbreak came at a time when mRNA technology was ready for use and Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine became the first mRNA product to achieve full FDA approval in the USA.
- Chinese vaccines use Inactivated Vaccine Technology developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s involving an inactivated pathogen used to stimulate an immune system response to infection. It has been used in vaccines for Smallpox and Typhoid.
- Trust Nyirenda, a lecturer and research scientist at the National University of Science and Technology's (NUST) Faculty of Medicine says that "reports by Centres for Disease Control (CDC), published in leading journals such as New England Journal of Medicine, BMC Springer Nature and Lancet prove that the mRNA based SARSCov vaccines have not been associated with any adverse effects. As with other types of vaccines there are incidences of negative side effects, but these are relatively low, hence overall, the vaccines are very effective and safe for the vast majority and should not invoke fear and hesitancy".
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) mRNA vaccine technology have been assessed for safety and clinical trials show that these vaccines produce an immune response. The mRNA vaccine technology has also been studied for several decades including the contexts of Zika, Rabies and Influenza vaccines.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO JOURNALISTS

- Journalists can produce stories, podcasts, documentaries and explainer videos discussing what mRNA technology is, how it works, and production processes to assess their safety upon interaction with the human immune system.
- Journalists can host discussions with health experts on radio, television and WhatsApp comparing and contrasting side effects of mRNA and non-mRNA vaccines, recommending ways of managing the side effects, and outlining risks people with underlying issues need to know before taking either vaccine.

Rooted in Trust is collecting, analysing and responding to rumours in 13 countries with generous support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA). We focus on equipping journalists and humanitarian communicators with tools they need, in languages they prefer, to combat rumours and misinformation in COVID-19 and other health issues of concern.



For more information on the project, visit: [here](#)

