

FISOROKA

Community bulletin Madagascar

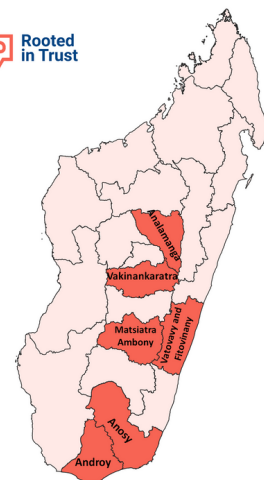
The Rooted in Trust project by responding to information needs aims to:

- Strengthen the information ecosystem;
- Mitigate the risks of disinformation for vulnerable populations affected by humanitarian crises during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction

Rooted in Trust 2.0 is 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 of Radios and finally VIAMO. These partners are divided between collecting rumours, setting up listening groups and focus groups and research for a better understanding of this information ecosystem.

The Rooted In Trust 2.0 project focuses on listening to and collecting rumors around climate change, COVID-19 and public health issues by putting communities and individuals at the center of concerns. Through this listening, the project seeks to give more trustworthy information to communities, media and humanitarians so that they can make decisions that will benefit them.



About this bulletin

This is the last community bulletin of the project. Its purpose is to give communities, source of rumours, additional information for better decision-making. Among the rumors collected, some will be analyzed and accompanied by recommendations for all those who need them.

RUMOR STATISTICS

The RIT 2.0 project has two data collection methodologies: collection of offline rumours through partners who are located in the 6 regions of intervention and online rumors through the monitoring of information circulating on social network platforms.

94 rumors
collected

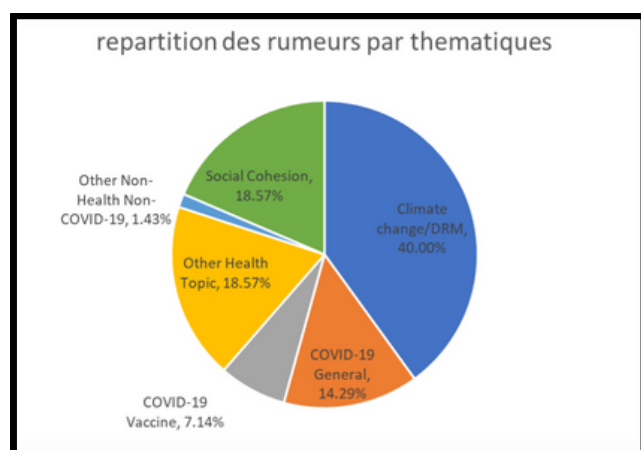
63.87%
offline



36.17%
online



Breakdown of rumors by theme



Our main themes are climate change, social cohesion and health, including COVID-19 and other health issues. We decided to focus on these themes because we believe that there is a lack of truthful information in society, which leads to rumors.

Discussions that are likely to be rumor focused on food security/nutrition (18.57%). This information highlights the situation in the Vatovavy district of Ikongo and the chronic situation of malnutrition affecting southern Madagascar. In the district of Ikongo, the local population alerts the authorities to the situation of malnutrition affecting some communes and also the situation of a family that was killed by eating certain types of tubers. On the other hand, the information collected speaks to theories on the origins and causes of climate change or hazards likely to affect the region (11.43%) and effect (10%) of climate change.

According to the thematic classifications, 40% of the rumours or misinformation collected talk about climate change / disaster risk management whose discussion is focused on malnutrition / food security and theories on the causes or origin of climate change and its effects on the environment. According to our data, 18.57% discuss social cohesion that inform about the injustices that are seen in through the actions made by the state, the effects of poverty on the community. On health information, discussions on the flu come back a little that are considered by Internet users in COVID-19 but COVID-19 not aggressive, according to a user: "the current flu wave is a less serious covid-19 less serious coronavirus".

Rumor #1

Climate Change and COVID-19

Why it's important ?

Such a belief can block the efforts of climate change stakeholders to improve the drought situation in regions where low rainfall is one of the major problems for building the resilience of the community concerned. The reason is that the community may refuse foreigners access to their territories because they believe they are the reason for their illness. Indeed, most aid comes from abroad, and the fact that the community thinks it's the foreigners who are producing the rain for them to fall ill with coronavirus is a blockage for humanitarian actors.

This rumor fuels community beliefs that COVID-19 was invented by foreigners to further weaken people in developing countries. It highlights the community's needs on learning about the COVID-19 disease as well as climate change.

Fact checking

- According to the weather service of Atsimo Andrefana: "artificial rain consists of modifying the structure of a cloud in order to increase the possibility of precipitation, by injecting with the help of an aircraft particles of very fine salts into the clouds, these form additional condensation nuclei and accelerate the formation of water molecules. When the drops of water are heavy enough, they can fall as rain."
- According to the rumor, the community believes that rain created by foreigners brings covid. The water brought in by the rain will transmit the virus to them.. However, according to the World Health Organization, COVID-19 is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus and is transmitted from person to person in several ways. It spreads easily in crowded settings, closed spaces with poor ventilation, or through prolonged contact with an infected person. This is because as a person infected with the Covid-19 breathes, talks, coughs, or sneezes, liquid particles of various sizes are expelled into the air. The virus can be contracted if infected particles come into contact with our eyes, nose or mouth. That is why we need to keep a distance of at least 1 meter, whether indoors or outdoors.

Kay antoe mapiavy oragneo
tifireo vazahao rahogneo amizay
avy oragney le mandrare
corona, amizay maniloke ondatio



Translation : The reason it's raining is because the clouds were pulled by foreigners, so the coronavirus comes later and everyone is sick.

Source: community meeting, Anosy region, male between 15 – 18 years old

Recommendations

- Community agents should link up with the local weather service and work together. They should reach out to the community and organize a roundtable to teach them about what artificial rain is, why and how they do it and what it brings to areas where drought is prevalent. Before every intervention, community agents and local weather service should contact local radios to warn the population to reassure them.
- Health workers should take inspiration from this official WHO video : [How the COVID-19 virus is transmitted - YouTube](#) , translate it into Malagasy and the dialects of the regions concerned, and show it to communities so that they understand how the virus is transmitted. If showing a video is not possible, health workers can work with a local radio and broadcast the sound so that communities can listen to it in their local language.



Rumor #2

Food security

Why it's important ?

Given the food situation in some regions of Madagascar, households are looking for solutions to be able to feed themselves. They rely only on their knowledge of nature sometimes involving decision-making that can harm their health by eating certain toxic foods.

Veoveo is a poisonous tuber if not prepared in the right way. During the lean season, its consumption is common, which can cause cases of death by poisoning.



Fact checking



- The "veoveo" or its scientific name Dioscorea sansibarensis pax Tis a species of flowering plant in the yam family, commonly known as the Zanzibar yam or Hofika/Veoveo in local language. It is native to Madagascar and tropical Africa from Tanzania to western Guinea and southern Mozambique.
- The bulbils are up to 6 centimeters wide and can be purplish. In some parts of Africa, this plant is believed to have magical properties. Tubers and bulbils are poisonous.
- The tuber is poisonous. It is used by the inhabitants of the southern regions of Madagascar to poison the crows that ravage crops. But in times of extreme lean season, part of the population uses it for human consumption.
- Its consumption must necessarily go through detoxification. To do this, it is necessary to remove the hard bark and the hard part of the medium that is the most toxic. The rest is cut into strips and left to dry in the sun. Once dry, it is put in a bag that is immersed in water for at least a week to remove toxins.
- According to an official at the National Office of Nutrition, the most likely reason for people to die as a result of veoveo consumption is that they did not follow all these steps of preparation, due to starvation.

Tena we io mihtsy ve no nahafaty , sakafo njaza io nefa mapitombo lanja azy , mirary fihononn feno



EN: That's really what killed them, it's food for the children and it makes them gain weight, my condolences..

Context : This rumor talks about a tuber called "veoveo" in the local language, which caused the death of a family who ate it. This commentary claims otherwise, and says that the tuber is children's food that helps them gain weight.

Source: Facebook, woman between 26 and 35 years old

Recommendations

-Community workers could request and obtain information from competent authorities such as the Institut Pasteur or the National Office of Nutrition such as the list as well as the specifics of tubers used in the fight against malnutrition., This information can then be adapted and shared with the public by organizing a series of activities like workshops to inform the community so that they understand the principle.

-It is possible to create posters or visual information panels within each intervention community with the real images of the tubers used in the fight against malnutrition, as a dietary supplement, so that the information is always available and verifiable at all times by the population.

