



THE HUMANITARIAN SNAPSHOT

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

**“Amanzi alesduli
samagenga ayakhulula
umntwana nxa
ubeletha.”**

Ndebele, Bulawayo

TRANSLATION:

“Water mixed with termite hill soil helps ease delivery during childbirth.”

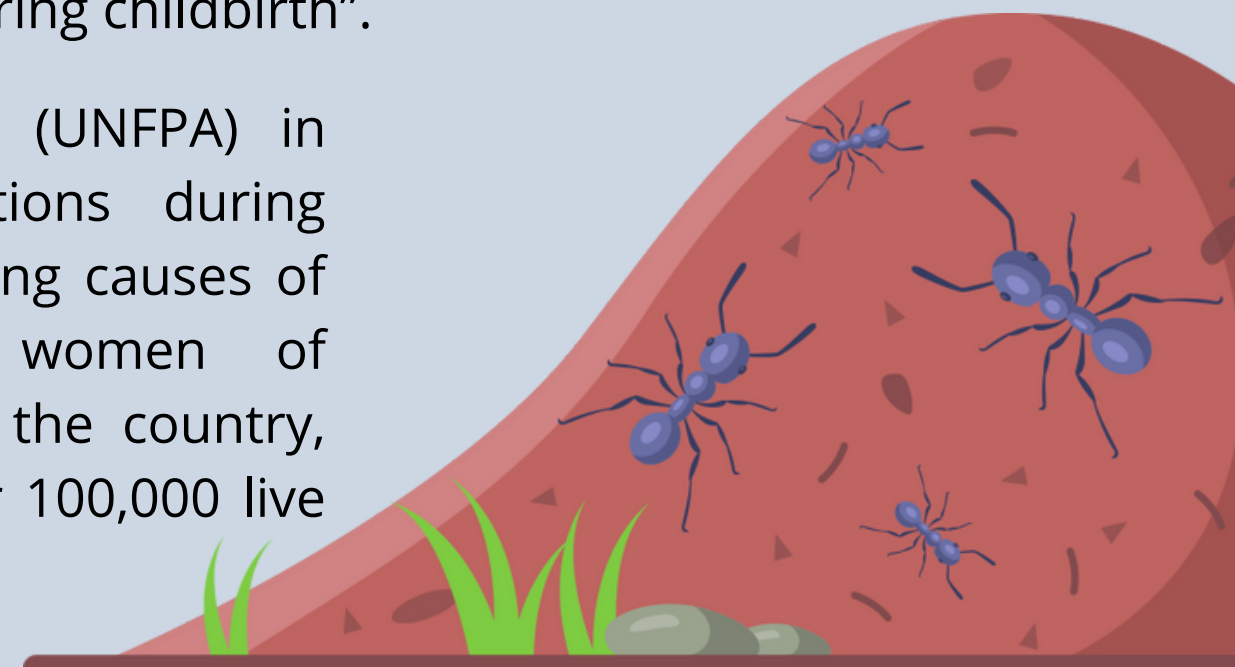
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Facts

The rumour highlights the influence of traditional myths and beliefs on maternal health practices which could contribute to poor maternal health, complications during pregnancy and increased risk of maternal mortality.

Dr Mpumelelo Sibanda an Obstetrician and Gynaecologist says “the belief that using water mixed with termite hill soil to speed up the process of childbirth is common together with that of using elephant dung or goat droppings, however there is no scientific backing to such beliefs. It is also possible that by using such concoctions which are not medically recommended, women put themselves at risk of developing complications during childbirth”.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Zimbabwe notes that complications during pregnancy and childbirth are leading causes of death and disability among women of reproductive age (15-49 years) in the country, with maternal mortality at 363 per 100,000 live births.

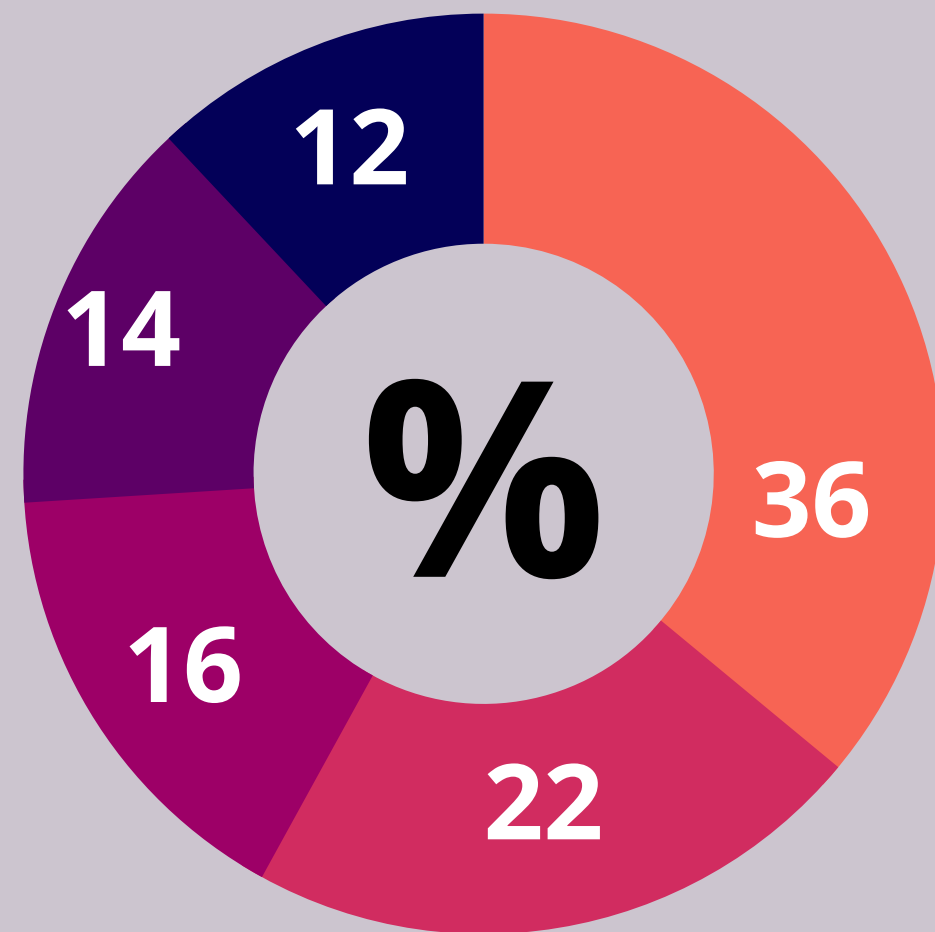


What can we do as humanitarian actors?

- **Share local language (Ndebele, Shona, Kalanga, Tonga, Venda and Sotho)** fact sheets with information debunking common myths related to pregnancy and child birth and highlighting health risks that pregnant women expose themselves and their babies to by following such myths.
- **Distribute Information Education and Communication (IEC)** materials including posters, flyers and infographics illustrating the process of childbirth and factors that influence the length and progression of the child birthing process.
- **Humanitarians working in health care** facilities may use educational sessions with expectant mothers coming for Ante-Natal Care (ANC) visits to debunk myths and misinformation, highlighting risks of using untested concoctions for childbirth.

Rumor Trends Analysis

Trending Rumour Themes



- COVID-19 was never there, it was all a scam.
- Multiple vaccination cause sickness to children.
- Poor sanitation is escalating the spread of Cholera.
- Cancer diagnosis and treatment is worse than cancer itself.
- COVID-19 vaccines will cause death in the near future.

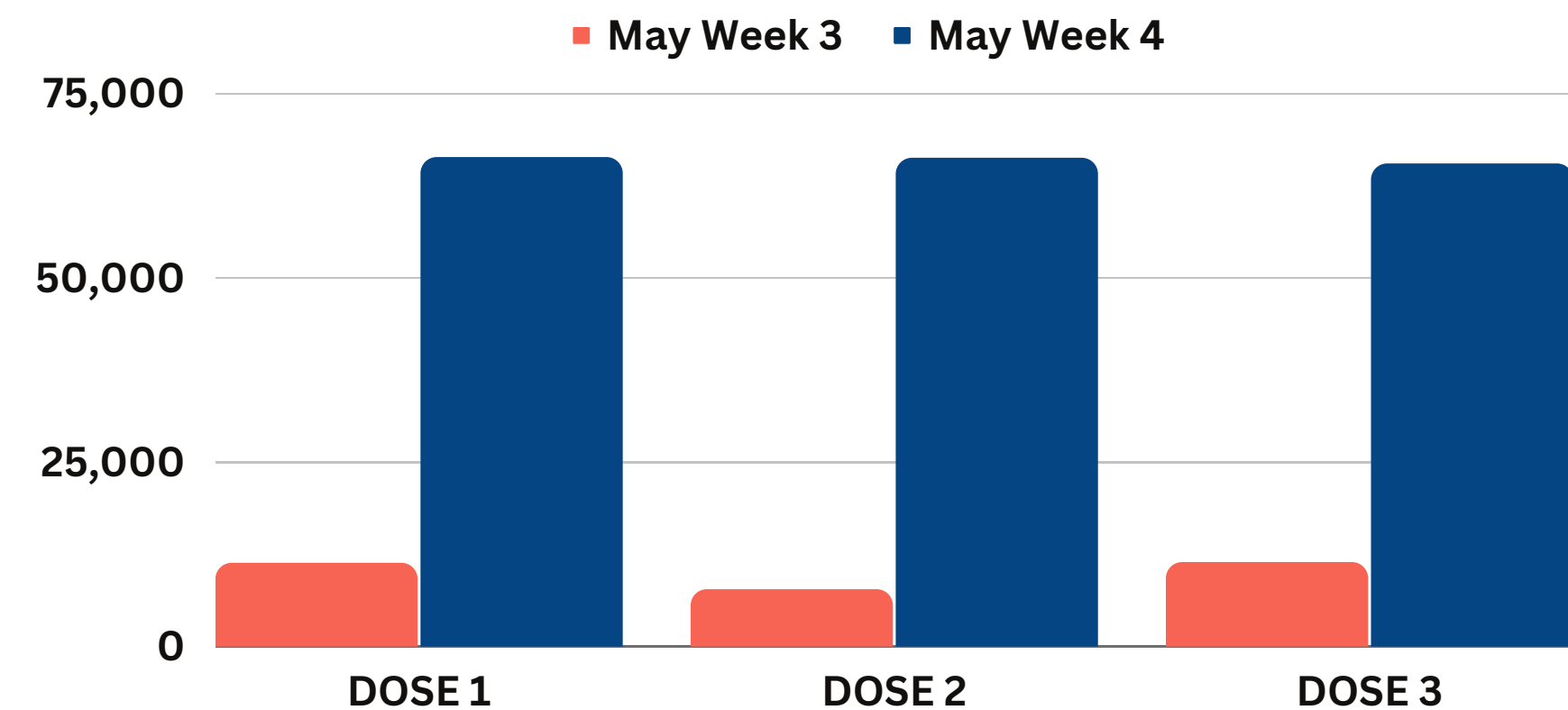
Source: Infographic by Internews: Data by RiT 2.0 Global Rumours Dashboard

Between May 17 and May 23, 2023, Internews in Zimbabwe collected 76 COVID-19, other health and humanitarian related rumours. Of the total, 22 rumours were collected online (Facebook: 16 and Twitter: six) and 54 through in-person interactions. Trending rumour themes were, "COVID-19 was never there, it was all a scam" (36%), "Multiple vaccinations cause sickness to children" (22%), "Poor sanitation is escalating the spread of Cholera" (16%), "Cancer diagnosis and treatment is worse than Cancer itself." (14%) and "COVID-19 vaccines will cause death in the near future." (12%).

COVID-19 context



Week-on-Week Vaccination Comparison



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

- First vaccine dose uptake in Zimbabwe increased by 487% from 11,344 doses administered in week three of May 2023 to 66,291 administered in week four of May 2023.
- There was a 751% increase in the uptake of the second vaccine dose from 7,772 to 66,197 doses and 471% increase in the uptake of the third vaccine dose from 11,446 to 65,425 doses.
- The increase in vaccination rates may be attributed to COVID-19 vaccine awareness efforts conducted by health care workers as they rollout the Polio vaccination campaign between May 23 to May 26, 2023.
- As of May 23, 2023, there were 206 active COVID-19 cases with 14 hospitalised. Of the total, 10 hospitalised cases were vaccinated, and one was unvaccinated. One COVID-19 related death was recorded during week four.
- Cumulatively, Zimbabwe has administered 7,297,030 and 5,459,210 COVID-19 first and second vaccine doses respectively, translating to 54,6% of the herd immunity target of 10 million. A total of 2,097,706 people have received the third vaccine dose.

Cholera update

Concerns around the Cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe continue as reports show no epidemiological link to any country in the region or any place that has recorded Cholera cases.

This suggests that the local environment could be heavily contaminated and nesting volumes of Cholera pathogens. There are fears that Harare, which has the second highest number of suspected cases (307), behind Manicaland province (481) is fast turning into an epicentre of the disease. Efforts put in place to contain the rampant spread of the virus include the closure of all unlicensed and unclean food outlets in Harare, while surveillance of funerals and gatherings has been upgraded in Manicaland province.

Nine out of 10 provinces in the country have recorded cases of the diseases which is affecting 17 Cholera hotspots districts. As of May 24, 2023, there have been 1,317 suspected Cholera cases, nine confirmed case fatalities, 27 suspected Cholera deaths, and 352 laboratory confirmed cases since the outbreak was first reported in Chegutu on February 12, 2023.

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Week-on-Week Cholera Update

