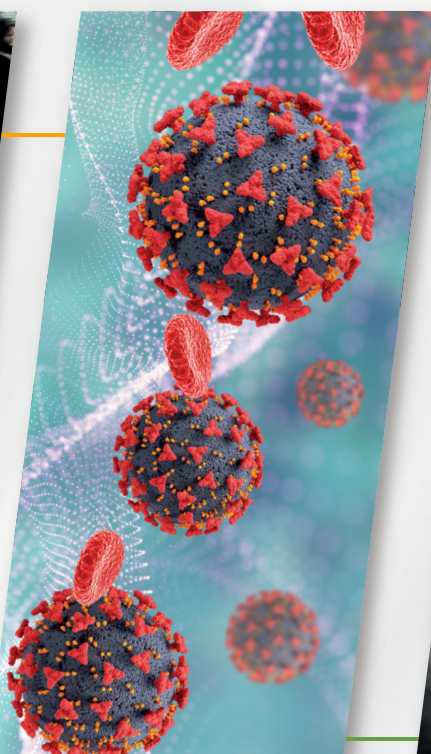


IRAQ SITUATION REPORT

A monthly situation report aimed at combating
COVID-19 rumors to debunk the infodemic



September , 2022

About Rooted in Trust

Rooted in Trust is collecting, analyzing, and responding to rumors in 10 countries with generous support from USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA). We focus on equipping journalists and humanitarian communicators with the tools they need in the languages they prefer, to combat rumors and misinformation during the COVID19 crisis.

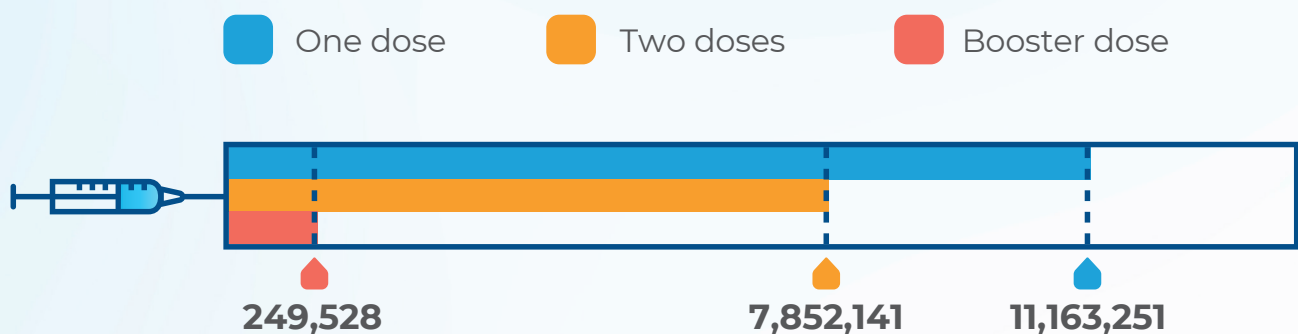
How do we do it?

We identify and analyze rumors to help humanitarian actors and health workers better inform their Risk Communication & Community Engagement (RCCE) strategies.

Situation by the Numbers (WHO)¹

- Positive Covid-19 cases reported during September 2022: **1,634** (88.4% decrease compared to August 2022)
- Number of total cases: **2,459,505**
- Total of vaccine doses administrated until September 2022: **19,264,920**
- Total number of fully vaccinated people: **7,852,141 (19.6%)**
- Death cases reported during September: **6**
- Total death cases reported until September: **25,346**

Vaccination Uptake Per Dose until September 2022



Introduction

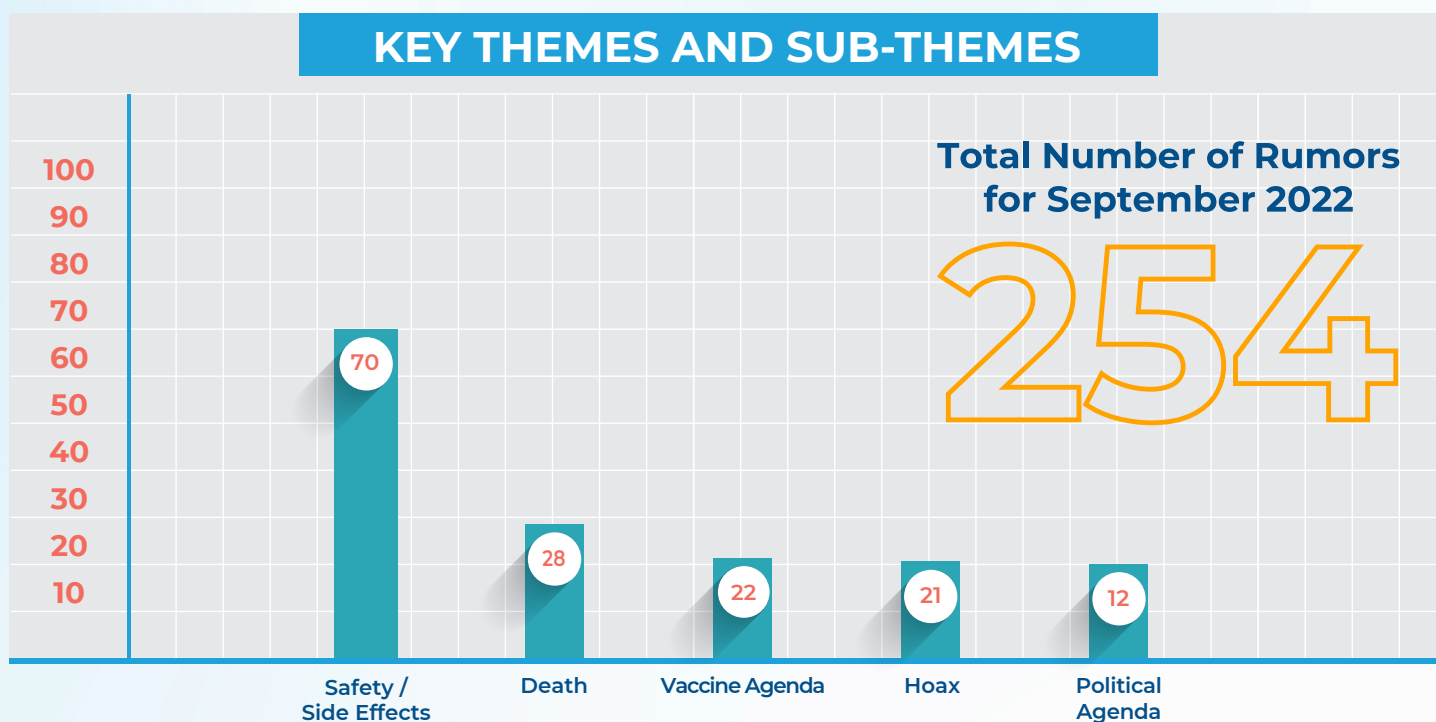
Iraq recorded 1,634 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in September, an 88.4% decrease from August. Deaths also reduced from 33 in August to 6 in September. Vaccination coverage remains low, with only 19.6% of people fully vaccinated. According to, WHO, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases reached 2,459,505 by September 30. Saif Al-Badr, Ministry of Health's spokesperson, stated "we have not yet reached 27% of the Iraqi people vaccinated for the first dose of the novel coronavirus vaccine, and much less than that for the second dose." He also added that one of the reasons that negatively affected citizens in taking the vaccine is some social media users and media outlets have turned into free platforms to promote misinformation on the vaccine.²

Regarding Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases, the Iraqi Ministry of Health confirmed that "the number of confirmed CCHF cases has reached 311, including 60 deaths, from the beginning of 2022 until the mid of September. Moreover, Cholera disease is still spreading in various areas of the country, in which until the mid of September, the confirmed cases have exceeded 1,250, including six deaths."³

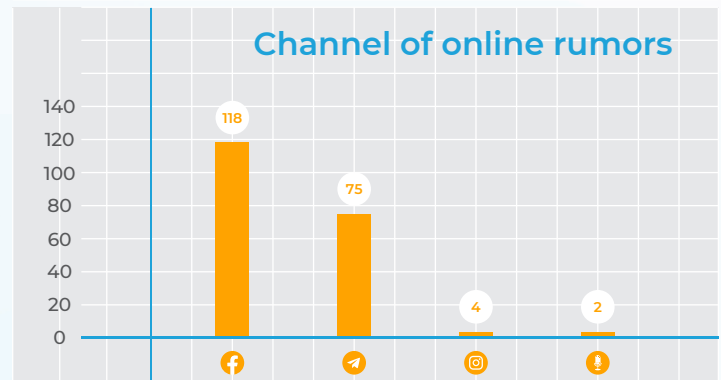
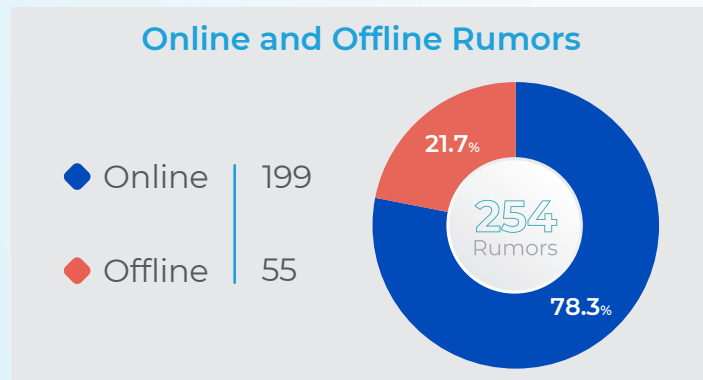
Iraq is still struggling with political conflicts and forming a new government cabinet, protests continue in Baghdad and some other cities during September. Also, on September 28th, Iran used suicide drones and missiles to strike several Iranian-Kurdish opposition parties stationed deep in the Kurdistan Region, killing at least nine and injuring over a dozen others.⁴

Data Overview

With a total of 254 rumors collected during September 2022, we have noticed that misinformation trends are revolving around the top subtheme of "safety/side effects"; they mainly stated the risk and danger of taking the vaccines. Rumors linked to death, vaccine agenda, hoax, and political agenda also continue to circulate among different communities in Iraq, especially IDP communities in northern Iraq. Out of the 254 collected rumors, 55 of them were collected from IDPs inside and outside the IDP camps in Erbil Governorate. On the other side, Facebook is one of the top online sources for spreading false information, out of 199 online rumors, we collected 118 rumors on Facebook public accounts, groups, and pages during September 2022, which shows that approximately %60 of the total online rumors was collected on Facebook. Also, Telegram ranked the second social media platform for spreading rumors in Iraq with 75 collected rumors only from public accounts and groups.



Channels



Analysis

Despite the political and economic issues in Iraq, rumors and false information on COVID-19 (mainly on the COVID-19 vaccines) spread on a daily basis among Iraqi communities through online and offline practices. The rumors are also associating the COVID-19 vaccine with other outbreaks and diseases such as CCHF and Cholera.

Moreover, the vaccination rate is still low, and there are no effective campaigns to encourage people to get vaccinated. Meanwhile, people constantly develop thoughts and theories against the COVID-19 vaccines. All the theories have generally one main purpose, in which they work on deepening people's hesitancy in taking the vaccine.

Under the activities of Rooted in Trust 2.0, Internews Iraq team continues to collect and analyze the trend rumors and false information that spread in Iraq. Then, several publications including [Humanitarian Bulletin](#), [Community Bulletin](#), [Media Bulletin](#), and social media cards will be produced every month as a response to the trending rumors. These publications provide the fact-check and recommendations for various target groups.

Sources

1. <https://covid19.who.int/region/emro/country/iq>
2. <https://ninanews.com/Website/News/Details?Key=998988>
3. <https://www.ina.iq/164999--.html>
4. <https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iran/280920221>

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For more information on the project, please visit:

[Iraq – Rooted In Trust](#)
[Internews In Iraq \(Facebook Page\)](#)