COVID-19 vaccine safety remains a concern for many in Sudan, which implies a need for more information about the vaccines. Also, COVID-19 treatment rumors were mostly shared by displaced and conflict-affected people, and only a handful of social media users spoke of COVID-19 cures. People are relying on plant-based remedies as they are trusted and accessible remedies. Black tea, Acacia, Hibiscus and sour lemon are considered effective treatments.
Rumors questioning the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines continue to dominate listening group discussions and social media posts, particularly amongst communities affected by conflict and displacement. For instance, some people believe that the vaccine has expired, and vaccines sent to Sudan from other states are ineffective. Others do not trust pharmaceutical companies developing the vaccine, nor the intentions of public health responders, and consider the pandemic as a means for accessing international funding sources or an experiment on Africans, or a form of population control in Africa. Meanwhile, many have genuine concerns about the safety of the vaccine, notably that vaccines are not safe for those with chronic diseases, can trigger paralysis, and lead to death.
For communities affected by conflict and displacement, discussions about COVID-19 treatments remain popular. Many trust in plant-based and herbal remedies that have been passed down for generations, like Millet water, Neem leaf and Gum Arabic, rather seeking immunization with a vaccine they consider to be experimental. Meanwhile, rumors on social media are positioned between denying the existence of COVID-19, and affirming the end of the pandemic. Some social media users have asked public health authorities to prioritize the Malaria response over COVID-19, as the pandemic is over.

Most rumors collected in September 2022, expressed apathy and indifference, especially for those sharing that COVID-19 is a hoax, others minimizing the severity of the virus by citing the availability of plant-based and localized treatments for COVID-19, and those citing religious rituals as a form of protection. Also, fear was the second most expressed sentiment in rumors. All of the rumors speaking about vaccine safety expressed fear.

People between age 19 and 25, accounted for 25% of the rumor data, followed by those between ages 26 and 35 who account for 24% of the rumors. It is worth noting that 77% of social media rumors were shared by social media users that did not disclose their age, this accounts for 24% of the overall rumor data.
We aim to tackle misinformation and rumors about the pandemic and vaccines, to engage and support humanitarian, public health and media actors in responding to vulnerable communities' COVID-19 information needs.

In September 2022, 69% of COVID-19 and vaccine rumors were collected through listening groups. The above graph shows rumor distribution by state. Additionally, 25% of rumors collected during listening groups were gathered from IDP camps, including Alzareeba, Darti, Ardmata, Abuzar, Omdwayn, Khamis Dageega and Tayba.

Please visit: Internews Sudan COVID-19 Rumor Bulletins
We welcome your feedback and suggestions. Please contact: Mustafa Omer, Data Analyst, momer@internews.org