ABOUT THIS FACTSHEET

This Factsheet is meant for all stakeholders working with the communities like Community Health Workers, Health Care Workers, Outreach Workers, Community Leaders, Religious Leaders, Community Based Associations, and the community. RiT 2.0 Internews in South Sudan periodically collects feedback from the community, shares citizen’s concerns on COVID-19 and Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) works to serve communities by collecting rumors and misinformation to understand and address communities’ concerns and information needs to strengthen information ecosystem, the vaccine, and other complex health topics. We respond by increasing the flow of accurate, timely, trusted, and contextualized information between local media, public health and humanitarian agencies, and communities.

WHAT IS A RUMOR?

A rumor is a currently circulating story or report of unverified information collected from firsthand sources within the community which could take the shape of a question, criticism, concern or a general comment on a situation or topic. A rumor can be tricky because it might have some element of truth in it.

WHY RUMORS?

In the absence of information that responds to the concerns and reality of communities rumors thrive and become believable by the communities in which they are circulating. Rumors shape public perception and can be harmful if not countered in a timely and consistent manner. Rumors thrive because of lack of relevant and contextualized information that is rooted in our target communities and can tell us a lot about where the community is at and what they need. Community health workers, local community leaders and associations should provide the community with information as well as recommendations and credible and reliable sources that can help them navigate the risks of misinformation.

COVID-19 Situation Update

As of December 6th, 2022, South Sudan registered 18,362 cumulative positive cases, 18,115 had recovered and 138 deaths. This is reported by the national Ministry of Health in South Sudan https://moh.gov.ss/daily_updates.php

Cumulative Summary of Statistics November, 2022

- 19.31% of cases have received at least one dose
- 18,362 Positive Cases
- 18,115 Recovered Cases
- 138 Deaths

Source: Ministry of Health, South Sudan

Risk Rating: Risk is measured based on a range of factors including a) cultural relevancy, b) timing, c) online engagement, d) the believability of a rumor, and most importantly, e) the potential negative impact a rumor may have on the health, well-being, and safety of local communities or service providers.

- **HIGH RISK:** A rumor that is very likely be believed among the larger community with potentially severe negative impacts resulting in serious harm to an individual or group including inciting violence or creating widespread fear/panic. High risk rumors may encourage widespread avoidance of testing/treatment or harm towards health workers and other service providers.
- **MEDIUM RISK:** A rumor that has the potential to be believed among the larger community with potentially moderate negative impacts to a community or individual's health wellbeing, or safety. Medium risk rumors may have a moderate impact on health seeking behaviors.
- **LOW RISK:** A rumor that is either unlikely to be believed among the community or with limited negative impacts to a community or individual's health, well-being, or safety or to the pandemic response.
**RUMOR: 1**

*Does Ebola kill and blind people in Uganda?*

**Theme:** Ebola Virus Disease  
**Risk Rating:** Medium

*There is an ongoing outbreak of Ebola virus disease in Uganda and as of 05 Nov 2022, there have been 142 confirmed cases and 55 deaths. While the virus can be detected in vitreous fluids within the eye, or cause bleeding from the eyes, blindness is not a typical symptom, Dr. Brendan Dineen, WHO COVAX Co-Ordinator - South Sudan.*

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**RUMOR: 2**

*Is Ebola not as serious as coronavirus. Can't people continue with their normal businesses without a lockdown?*

**Theme:** Lockdown  
**Risk Rating:** Low

*While both diseases are extremely serious there is a much higher case fatality rate for EVD once affected. Also – there is currently no EVD in South Sudan. In Uganda, the epicenter of the outbreak is locked down, Dr. Brendan Dineen, WHO COVAX Co-Ordinator - South Sudan. Uganda extends Ebola lockdown in two hotspot [medicalxpress.com]*

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**WHAT IS EBOLA?**

Dr. Brendan Dineen, WHO COVAX Co-Ordinator - South Sudan, stated that, Ebola is a virus that causes a dangerous disease that can lead to death in a short time if the infected person doesn’t receive adequate help. It affects human beings and some wild animals (monkeys, gorillas and chimpanzees). Even though Ebola virus disease (EVD) is a very serious disease it can be prevented. Origin of Ebola virus - Search (bing.com)

**Signs and symptom of Ebola virus disease?**
- Sudden onset of high fever
- Extreme tiredness
- Body pain
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Skin rash
- Red eyes
- Sometimes unexplained bleeding from body openings

Dr. Brendan added that, people get Ebola through direct contact with body fluids such as blood, saliva, tears, stool, vomitus, urine, or semen from an infected person, animals, or items contaminated with body fluids (e.g. beddings, clothing).

It takes between 2 to 21 days (and an average of 10 days) from the time the person is infected, for symptoms to start manifesting.
Can Ebola be treated?
Currently, there is no specific medicine to cure Ebola, so those infected are provided with intensive supportive care and some recover from the illness. However, there are some new treatments that may assist in recovery that are being tried in the hope that ultimately a cure can be found. Potential treatments include blood products, immune therapies and drug therapies.

Is there a vaccine against Ebola?
One vaccine (only for the Ebola Zaire strain of the virus) has been used on trial basis during outbreaks both in West Africa and DRC among health workers and close contacts of those affected by Ebola. It has proved to be highly protective against the virus in a major trial in Guinea. It is currently available for use on compassionate grounds only and is waiting to be licensed for routine use.

There are no recorded Ebola cases in South Sudan linked to the outbreak in Uganda. The MoH in collaboration with WHO and partners have established monitoring and screening points in high-risk locations to help prevent importation of the disease to South Sudan.

For more information, call the toll-free number 6666.
For more information visit, https://moh.gov.ss/

The Rooted in Trust 2.0 project works to combat COVID-19 and Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) rumors and misinformation, responds to the information challenges faced by vulnerable groups, encourages open dialogue between citizens and stronger collaborative partnerships between information providers.

USAID-BHA Rooted in Trust 2.0 South Sudan
If you want to contribute to or provide feedback on this Lugara Community Factsheet
or have information to share, please contact:
Peter Sokaom Daniel Atem (datem@INTERNEWS.ORG),
Tusiime Wilfred Romeo (Akiiki) (atusiime@internews.org) or
Dr. Michael Gubay (mgubay@internews.org)