

LUGARA

COMMUNITY FACTSHEET



Rooted in Trust

This Community Factsheet has been reviewed by the Ministry of Health, South Sudan

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 works to serve communities by collecting rumors and misinformation to understand and address communities' concerns and information needs to strengthen the 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 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.

RISK MEASUREMENT

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

HIGH RISK: A rumor that is very likely to 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 toward 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 on a community or individual's health well-being, 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 on a community or individual's health, well-being, or safety or on the pandemic response.



What the people are saying!

Question #1

Theme: Measles outbreak
Risk Rating: Medium

Is the measles outbreak related to flooding?

FACT-CHECKING



WHAT IS MEASLES?

Measles is a highly contagious disease caused by the measles virus and occurs as a seasonal disease in endemic areas. In tropical zones, most cases of measles occur during the dry season, whereas in temperate zones, incidence peaks during late winter and early spring. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news/item/2023-DON440>

Dr. Brendan, WHO stated that *“Whilst it is the case that flooding is associated with disease transmission – as in the case of cholera – it is not directly the case that measles is linked to flooding. Measles is an air-borne disease whereas cholera and acute watery diarrhea are indeed water-borne”*.

“However, it merits mentioning that displacement due to inundations/flooding likely increases the risk of infectious disease transmission, including that of measles, due to crowded living conditions because of being displaced to an area that is not flooded. Thus, the risk of transmission of measles through coughing and sneezing in crowded spaces amongst groups of persons that have been displaced is increased”, Dr. Moses added.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash a few days later. Some people may also get small spots in their mouth.
- A rash usually appears a few days after the cold-like symptoms.
- High fever (may spike to more than 104°),
- Cough,
- Runny nose (coryza), and
- Red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis).

Measles can be prevented with MMR vaccine. The vaccine protects against three diseases: measles, mumps, and rubella. You can find the vaccine at the nearby health facility.

More: [Measles Signs and Symptoms | CDC](#)

Question #2

Theme: Hepatitis
Risk Rating: Medium

Does Hepatitis kill more than the coronavirus?

FACT-CHECKING



“Clearly, hepatitis is a serious life-threatening condition, especially Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. It is likewise the case that COVID-19 – caused by the coronavirus – has caused more than 6.8 million deaths since the start of the pandemic in 2020. Thus, both hepatitis and COVID-19 are preventable conditions that contribute significantly to the global burden of disease and death, including in Africa,” said WHO COVAX coordinator, Dr. Brendan Dineen’s clearance.

Dr. Brendan added that, *“In the Africa Region, there are an estimated 990,000 new Hepatitis B cases, with approximately 80,000 deaths due to this disease. Similarly, 210,000 new Hepatitis C cases and 45,000 deaths occur annually in Africa”*.

More: [Hepatitis B - FAQs, Statistics, Data, & Guidelines | CDC](#)



What the people are saying!

Question #3

Theme: COVID-19 General
Risk Rating: Medium

COVID-19 ended long time ago, why are we still disturbed about it?

FACT-CHECKING



"According to WHO, approximately 10.5 million new cases and over 90,000 deaths were reported in a 28-day period, from 9th January to 5th February 2023. As these figures indicate, COVID-19 has not ended and thus continues to be a public health issue requiring attention and action, especially testing and vaccinations," said Dr. Brendan, COVAX coordinator, WHO.

More: [Basics of COVID-19 | CDC](#)

Tips for Social mobilizers and Community health workers

1. The measles outbreaks in multiple African countries reveal information gaps and misinformation rapidly spreading through social media platforms and in communities. Social mobilizers and community health workers should understand the basics of measles transmission and the vaccine. In addition, collecting community feedback and fact-checking with MOH and partners will be important to provide accurate and timely information and address the spread of rumors.
2. Social mobilizers and community health workers should inform the community that COVID-19 is not over and provide fact-checked information on the importance of getting vaccinated. The Ministry of Health and partners launched a COVID-19 vaccine campaign on January 28th, 2023; and will be underway in the coming three (3) months. While the country-wide campaign aims to reach 70% of the population, vaccination coverage remains low in South Sudan.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call the toll-free number: 2222

Visit: <https://moh.gov.ss/>

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

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)

