

LUGARA

MEDIA FACTSHEET

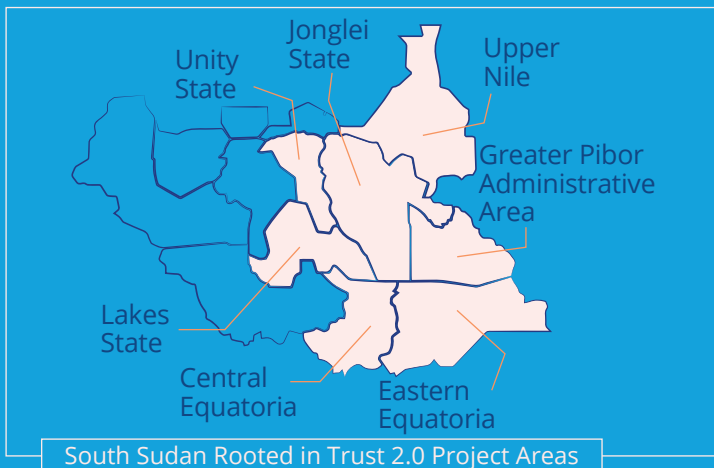


This Media Factsheet has been reviewed by the Ministry of Health, South Sudan

ABOUT THE FACTSHEET

This Media Factsheet is a periodic response to rumors and concerns about COVID-19 and Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), and provides verified information for journalists and community correspondents reporting on the pandemic. It is meant to provide information that is essential to understand the facts about the virus, vaccines and related issues, to help journalists respond to their audiences' questions, address rumors, and close the feedback loop.

USAID-BHA ROOTED IN TRUST 2.0 SOUTH SUDAN



ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Internews Rooted in Trust 2.0 project in South Sudan is funded by USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID-BHA). It aims to respond to rumors, misinformation, and fake news that shape negative public perceptions towards COVID-19 and Ebola Virus Disease preparedness and response in the country.

If you want to contribute to or provide feedback on this Lugara Media Factsheet or have information to share, please contact: Tusiime Wilfred Romeo (Akiiki) (atusiime@internews.org) or Dr. Michael Gubay, (mgubay@internews.org)

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A lot of information is circulating across South Sudan and beyond its borders about COVID-19, vaccinations, hepatitis, and related issues. So, it is important to obtain factchecked information timely to know what's true and what's not.



” #1 - What people say

“The IDPs are saying that the measles outbreak is due to flooding”

Rumor heard from Bentiu POCs, South Sudan

Fact File

“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 as a result 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,” said **Dr. Brendan Dineen, WHO COVAX Coordinator, Republic of South Sudan.**

” #2 - What people say

“Can hepatitis kill more than the Coronavirus?”

Rumor heard from Juba, Central Equatoria State

Fact File

“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 worldwide 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 **Dr. Brendan Dineen, WHO COVAX Coordinator, Republic of South Sudan.**

“There are 1.5 million new cases of Hepatitis B and an additional 1.5 million persons diagnosed with Hepatitis C each year. These two types of hepatitis are responsible for the great majority of deaths (96% as of 2019) due to hepatitis.

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,” **Dr. Dineen added.**

” #3 - What people say

“Some people claim COVID-19 has ended and wonder why they were still being disturbed about it”

Rumor heard from various communities in South Sudan

Fact File

“According to the WHO, approximately 10.5 million new cases and over 90 000 deaths were reported globally during 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 Dineen, WHO COVAX Coordinator, Republic of South Sudan.**

TIPS FOR SOUTH SUDAN JOURNALISTS IN HEALTH REPORTING

It is recommended that South Sudan Journalists take note of the following to improve their knowledge, reporting techniques, and background checks about COVID-19, hepatitis, measles, and related reporting.

1. South Sudan journalists must prioritize reporting about infectious diseases like COVID-19, hepatitis, cholera, and measles; surveillance and immunization campaigns in the country. The media content must stress the importance of vaccinating children under five years not only against measles but other vaccine-preventable diseases.
2. Journalists should understand the basics of the disease, and the background of the situation and have well-researched information. They must also update their contact list of experts knowledgeable about the situation; and be allies with other journalists and medical responders.
3. South Sudan Journalists 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 months. While the country-wide campaign aims to reach 70% of the population, vaccination coverage remains low in South Sudan.

KEY LINKS AND RESOURCES

1. Global progress against measles threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic <https://www.who.int/news/item/10-11-2021-global-progress-against-measles-threatened-amidst-covid-19-pandemic>
2. More reading about hepatitis: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/hepatitis>
3. Good to know: is the COVID-19 pandemic over? <https://healthjournalism.internews.org/resource/good-to-know-is-the-covid-19-pandemic-over/>
4. Tips for avoiding mistakes in headlines about health and medical research: <https://journalistsresource.org/health/writing-headlines-health-research/>

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)



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