

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUB-WORKING GROUP – EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

COVID-19 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK TRENDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

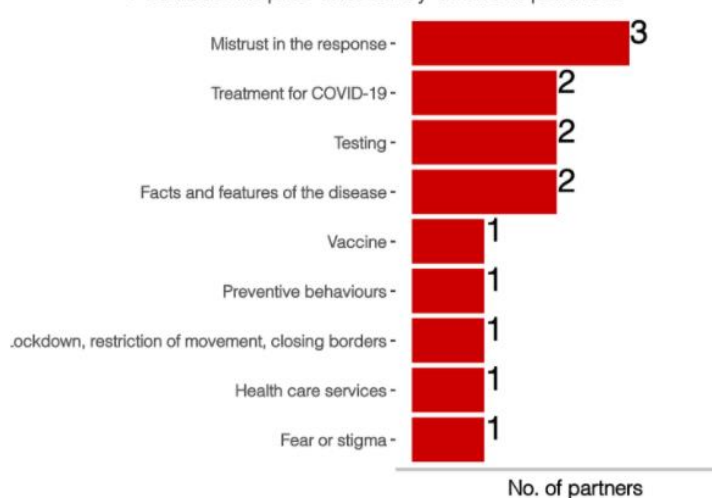
November 2020

This report documents the main trends in community feedback reported by agencies responding to COVID-19 across East and Southern Africa for the month of November. It was prepared by the community feedback sub-working group, which is part of the COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Interagency Working Group.

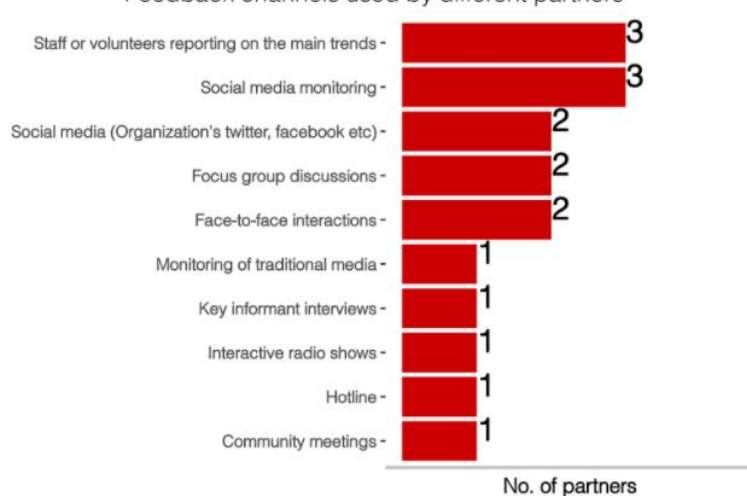
5 partners have shared their priorities (*IFRC, Internews, Novetta, UNICEF and WHO*).

Feedback trends have been heard in **13 countries** in the East and Southern Africa region (*Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe*)

Feedback topics shared by different partners



Feedback channels used by different partners



Mistrust in the response (heard in 5 countries by 3 partners)

To address **criticisms of the government's handling of COVID-19**:

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Share this feedback with the Covid-19 SAG to highlight the consistency with which feedback on mistrust in the response has come up in the feedback data each month.

To address **non-compliance of preventative measures during elections and political activities**:

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Design messages and IEC materials targeting politicians to encourage the uptake of preventative measures including how to conduct public events safely

To address the **belief that some people or institutions are making money** because of the pandemic:

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Encourage more transparency from Governments and organisations on their response activities including how their funding is being spent during the COVID-19 response and communicate this at the community level.

Facts and features of the disease *(heard in 4 countries by 2 partners)*

To address the **beliefs that the disease does not exist, that it's not real or that it has already ended:**

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Update the [tip sheet on collecting and sharing testimonials](#) to include specific guidance on working with community leaders to create safe spaces at community level to share experiences of recovering from Covid-19. Also include links to existing stories of people affected by Covid-19 in Africa e.g., those included in the [mistrust and denial factsheet](#).
- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY AND REGIONAL LEVEL:** To avoid causing stigma anonymous testimonials can be recorded using audio only or without showing the individual's face - these can be made into animations and shared as Viral Facts products by the Africa Infodemic Response Alliance.
- **RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Collaborate with UNESCO and AIRA to showcase good examples of how the media have been tackling this issue and what the impact has been.

RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL: Share lessons learned from the Polio Survivors Group and make recommendations on how to set up a similar network.

To address **questions about mental health symptoms:**

- **RCCE AND MHPSS ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Update joint guidance on MHPSS considerations for community health volunteers and community mobilisers to share at country level
- **RCCE AND MHPSS ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Hold awareness raising campaigns on direct and indirect COVID-19 impacts on mental health, as well as outline of healthy habits - especially for high-risk individuals who are isolated or shielded
- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Most COVID-19 mental health response plans in east and southern Africa are only partially funded or not funded at all. Country teams should share this community feedback with decision makers to advocate for more funding to be committed to supporting mental health programming during Covid-19.
- **RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Collaborate with MHPSS WG to develop key messages to promote the adoption of mental health hotlines at country level.

Testing *(heard in 3 countries by 2 partners)*

To address concerns about use of fake tests and illegal crossings due to tests being expensive or inaccessible:

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Compile this feedback and share with the Covid-19 regional Strategic Advisory Group to develop a cross-pillar response
- **RCCE AND SURVEILLANCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL AND COUNTRY LEVEL:** Work together with the Lab TWG to compile a list of the facilities at country level which are available to provide tests, how much they cost and how long results take to come back and share through trusted channels of communication at community level.

Treatment for Covid-19 *(heard in 2 countries by 2 partners)*

To address the concerns about lack of bed space and high cost of treatment:

- **RCCE ACTIONS SPECIFICALLY FOR KENYA:** There is limited bed space in hospitals in Kenya. The Core Group's [home-based care guidance](#) should be adapted for the Kenyan context, translated into Swahili and other relevant local languages, and shared widely through networks in Kenya to ensure that those with mild symptoms or asymptomatic cases are able to recover safely at home.
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For more information on the work of the RCCE community feedback sub-working group, please contact Sophie Everest at sophie.everest@ifrc.org.

For information on how these topics and previously highlighted topics are addressed, please visit our [online tracking table](#).