

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUB-WORKING GROUP – EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

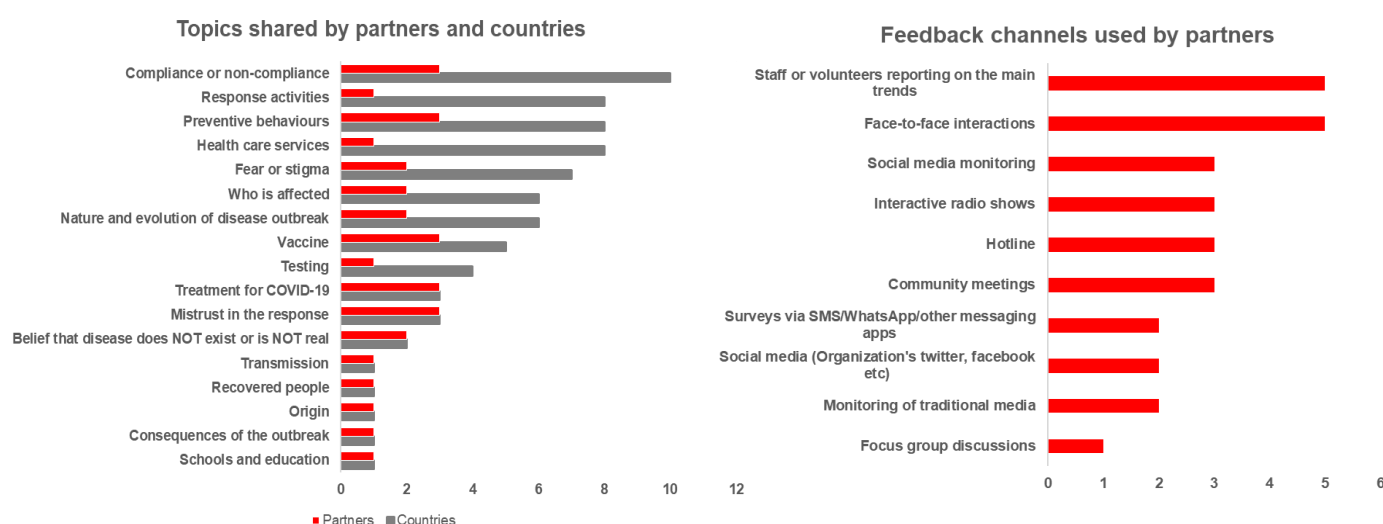
COVID-19 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK TRENDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

September 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 September. 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.

9 partners have shared their priorities (*Centre for Behaviour Change and Communication Africa, Core Group Polio - Global Health Security Project Horn of Africa, Ground Truth Solutions / U-learn, IFRC, Novetta, Save the Children, UNICEF, VSO International, WHO*).

Feedback trends have been heard in **18 countries** in the East and Southern Africa region (*Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe*).



Non-compliance with public health measures *(heard in 13 countries by 3 partners)*

To address **non-compliance in public places and at large gatherings**:

- **CASE MANAGEMENT AND RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Share epidemiological data through traditional and social media highlighting the second wave of cases in Europe and explain the need to continue to follow preventative measures to avoid a similar situation in Africa
- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Share the [factsheet on the risk of asymptomatic transmission](#) with country teams
- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Engage with political leadership to create videos promoting the importance of preventative measures, like videos created in [Malawi](#) and [Botswana](#)
- **RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL AND COUNTRY LEVEL:** Promote Africa Mask Week (23rd – 30th November) with Pandemic Action Network partners and create engaging content (e.g. GIFs, jingles, selfie videos) to share through social media, radio and TV.

To address **non-compliance during burial ceremonies**:

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Work with religious groups to share stories and examples of community-led solutions to promoting preventative measures during burials and other religious events

- **RCCE ACTIONS ON COUNTRY LEVEL:** Share the guidance or communication materials on how and why to practice preventative measures during burials and other religious events developed by the African Council of Religious leaders, which can be accessed [here](#).

To address **non-compliance among youth:**

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Share the '[young people and Covid-19](#)' and '[children and Covid-19](#)' factsheets with country teams
- **CASE MANAGEMENT RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Plan a webinar with partners working with youth groups to promote young people taking a lead in their communities to implement preventative measures to encourage other young people to follow

Rumours and questions about treatment and preventative measures

(heard in 8 countries by 3 partners)

To address questions about the provision of face masks and handwashing:

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Share the facemask factsheet with country teams, which includes information about how to create and make masks from scratch
- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Organise facemask donation events through social media, government ministries, influencers and celebrities – such as the [South Africa 'maskathon' event](#)

To address misperceptions that prayers or alcohol can protect against Covid-19:

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Clarify the difference between using alcohol sanitiser on hands and drinking alcohol in preventing the spread of the virus
- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY AND REGIONAL LEVEL:** Ensure that [guides and messages developed by ACRL](#) are shared by regional partners to country teams
- **CASE MANAGEMENT AND RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Share a resource pack with local journalists on latest information about treatments and WHO/MoH approved preventative measures

Rumours and questions about vaccines *(heard in 6 countries by 3 partners)*

To address rumours and questions about the Covid-19 vaccine:

- **VACCINE DEMAND AND RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** In consultation with MOH, hold orientation meetings with community groups, health care workers, social mobilisers, teachers, religious leaders and traditional healers to explain the potential timeline for a Covid-19 vaccine, progress with vaccine trials and what the targeting criteria will be once a vaccine is available (health care workers, elderly and those with underlying health issues)
- **VACCINE DEMAND AND RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Establish a standing agenda item on the Covid-19 Vaccine Demand and RCCE Sub-WG to review vaccine-related community feedback findings and action recommendations
- **VACCINE DEMAND AND RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Social Science experts to do a 'deep dive' on attitudes and perceptions of the Covid-19 vaccine to inform vaccine demand and RCCE sub-WG strategy

Fear of exposure to the virus as lockdown measures ease *(heard in 7 countries by 2 partners)*

To address **fear of cross-border transmission as borders continue to open for travel and trade:**

- **SURVEILLANCE AND RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Arrange a webinar with partners to share social science data of cross-border contexts

- **SURVEILLANCE AND RCCE ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:** Develop RCCE guidelines for cross-border contexts together with the surveillance TWG, including tackling stigma of those who have crossed a border or live in border communities

To address **concerns among parents on the safety of their children as schools re-open:**

- **CASE MANAGEMENT AND RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Share [children and Covid-19 factsheet](#) with parents' groups, teachers and community leaders to inform them of the lower risks to children and to highlight key preventative measures to follow as schools re-open.

To address **fears of contracting Covid-19 in health care facilities:**

- **CASE MANAGEMENT AND RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Collaborate with health care workers and social mobilisers to inform communities of the measures in place in health care facilities to stop the spread of the virus – organize tours of health care facilities with community leaders to show them what kind of measures are in place

Nature and evolution of disease outbreak *(heard in 6 countries by 2 partners)*

To address **comments and questions about the nature and evolution of the epidemic:**

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Use the [health partners contact list](#) to engage with country level health partners to provide localised and up-to-date information about the disease outbreak to communities

To address **misperceptions that the outbreak will never end:**

- **RCCE ACTIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL:** Share updates on epidemiological data in the traditional and social media, as well as through influencers such as religious and community leaders, and let people know whether the situation is improving or not. Congratulate the population if the trend is good and reinforce messages of greater commitment to preventative measures if the numbers increase

For more information on the work of the RCCE community feedback sub-working group, please contact Eva Erlach at eva.erlach@ifrc.org or 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](#).