



**Africa Infodemic
Response Alliance**

A WHO HOSTED NETWORK

MONKEYPOX NARRATIVES IN AFRICA

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Infodemic Trend Report May 20th, 2022.

The monkeypox virus outbreak has been picking up significant traction over the last several days and conversations regarding the disease have been seen in multiple countries and in multiple languages.



The most common rumor to date is from African citizens claiming that European/Westerners are trying to blame Africa for the disease. Most of the media showing infected individuals are black, rather than white as would more than likely be the case in European nations. The photos are also causing doubts that monkeypox is even in the US.

- If it's in Europe and America why do you give pictures of Africans with the disease? Is it that all diseases should start from Africa? [\[LINK\]](#)
- “The mentioned affected countries are mainly 90% occupied by white people , the attached photo is for a black fella,,,,, when will u stop putting up black people as examples especially in awkward moments” [\[LINK\]](#)
- “Why don't you show those Europeans that are affected by the so called pandemic rather than displaying pics of black people...Racism must fall!” [\[LINK\]](#)
- “The hands looks black I mean of Malawian hands. Are you sure it's from USA” [\[LINK\]](#)

Initial, flash impressions do not see a cohesive narrative on vectors of transmission. There is some discussion of closing borders to protect people, confusion that monkeys "don't exist" in Europe and Canada. But it's scattered and not cohesive. [\[LINK\]](#)

There is almost no narrative that monkeypox itself is a fake disease.

There is some discussion that, with COVID interest waning, there needs to be a new disease of concern for the WHO. Not a major narrative.

Additionally, there are some comments regarding monkeypox being a result of homosexual activity, but these statements are much more limited.



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- Utakosaje magonjwa ya ajabu Kwa vitendo viovu vya Ushoga?? / How will you avoid strange diseases because of the evil acts of homosexuality? [\[LINK\]](#)

Finally, there are more targeted and aggressive remarks on social messaging apps (WhatsApp/Telegram) claiming this is another purposeful disease release orchestrated by Western/European governments and public health organizations.