

The community feedback data under consideration for this monthly report was collected between the **31<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021** and shared by Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) focal points in **8 African countries**.

The community feedback data considered in this report was collected through conversations with community members during social mobilisation activities such as household visits, community meetings and focus group discussions in Ghana (218), Liberia (42) and Ivory coast (24). Comments related to COVID-19 were also received through the NS hotline from Sierra Leone (214), Ghana (30), and Liberia (2), as well as interactive radio shows, social media and WhatsApp in Ghana (24), Cote d'Ivoire (7), Liberia (2). Feedback was also collected through meetings, trainings or briefings with staff and volunteers in Cote d'Ivoire (13), Ghana (9), Liberia (7) and from focal points in Botswana (10), Eswatini (10), Lesotho (5), Zimbabwe (3).

During this reporting period there were many comments related to the **evolution of the pandemic**, in particular there were many concerns over the rising number of cases in the Africa region and questions about **how long the pandemic will last**.

**Mistrust in the response** was also a common topic in community feedback this month, with claims that the Government is intentionally spreading COVID-19 by spraying homes with the virus or beliefs that people and institutions are making money

from the pandemic. There were also beliefs that the new COVID-19 cases are coming from India.

In relation to the rise in cases, there has also been an increase in comments related to **consequences of the pandemic** with statements that the third wave of COVID-19 will kill many people. There were also mentions of the outbreak affecting the economy and that the prices of goods has increased.

As with previous months, there were many questions and comments about the **COVID-19 vaccines** across the countries. People asked questions about why some vaccines require a 2<sup>nd</sup> dose and there were concerns about whether there are enough vaccines available to vaccinate people twice as demand for the vaccine increases. There were also questions about why there are different types of vaccines, as well as where to access the vaccines and who is eligible to take the vaccine, particularly why children are not being offered the vaccine. In addition, there were a couple of comments on vaccines being sold in hospitals. People also asked about the purpose of the vaccine and its efficacy, with questions on whether vaccinated people can still catch the virus. We continue to see concerns over the safety and side effects of the vaccine, such as that it can cause blood clots, infertility or that it can kill. There were also statements indicating suspicion of the vaccine, with claims that the vaccines contain the virus or that they have expired.

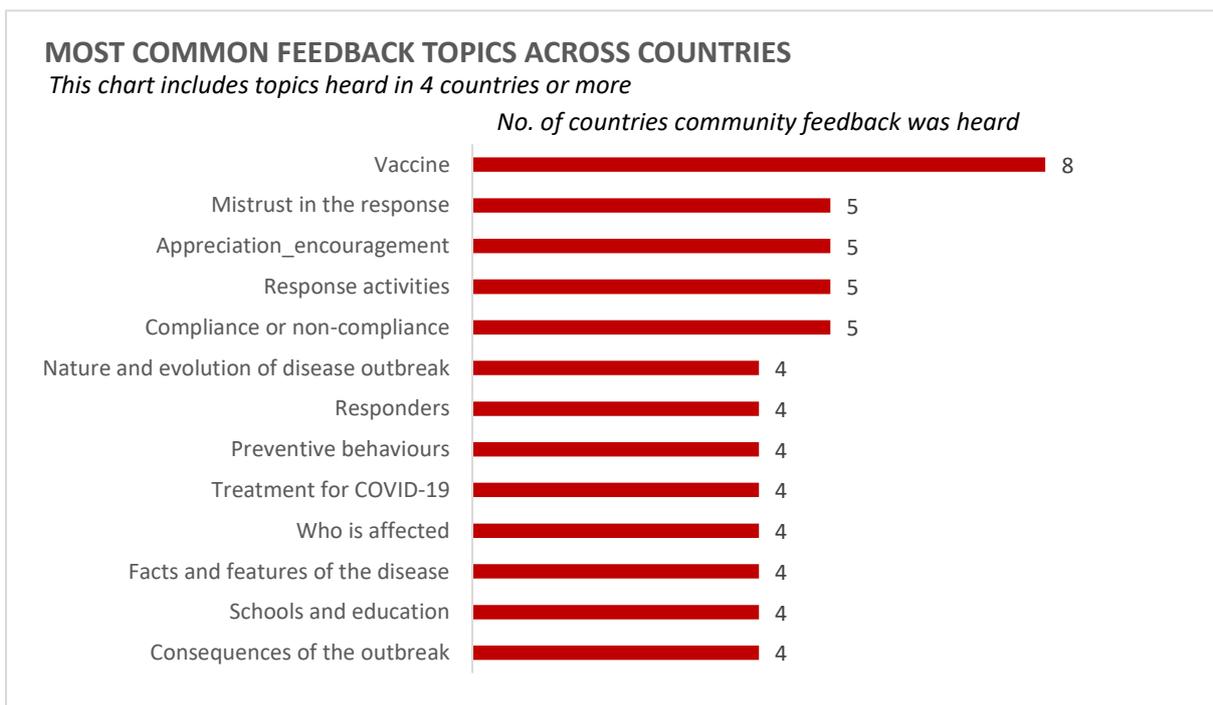
## TO ADDRESS THIS FEEDBACK, WE NEED TO:

- As cases rise across many African countries, we need to make sure community members are kept informed of the evolution of the epidemic. Many are concerned with the new wave of cases or are requesting information on the response. We need to provide up to date information on the number of cases and the outlook for Africa, be clear on the fact that the pandemic is not over and it's crucial that we continue to comply with the public health



measures, even if we have been vaccinated. These factsheets and Ask Dr Ben [video](#) can be useful to help explain why we need to continue with the measures ([#27](#), [#31](#)). Be ready to answer questions about the epidemiological situation in your country, including reasons why cases are rising or going down. You can use these factsheets for advice on how to access the latest number of COVID-19 cases in your country and information on the situation ([#21](#), [#26](#), [#28](#)).

- Actively address people’s perception that people or institutions are intentionally spreading the virus or making from the pandemic. You can use the [guidance note on mistrust and denial in communities](#). Among other options, is to mobilize and engage with youth groups to stop the spread of misinformation, engage trusted community leaders and key influencers, explain more clearly the case rate in your country and what can be expected in the future and develop radio and TV drama/show content about COVID-19.
- Make sure that volunteers are updated on the COVID-19 vaccine developments and that they can respond to community member’s questions and concerns about the vaccine. Use this [vaccine FAQ guide](#) to help explain the vaccine’s safety and benefits, when the vaccine will be ready for distribution, who will be immunized, IFRC’s role and many more! To debunk claims that the COVID-19 vaccines are not effective against the virus ([here](#), [here](#)) or that they can [cause infertility](#), [blood clots](#), or [death](#) use the latest Viral Facts Africa and Ask Dr Ben videos to help explain to community members why this is false information. Access all available materials on the COVID-19 vaccines [here](#).
- Work in partnership with communities to find and support local, practical solutions to preventing the spread of infection and bringing the outbreak under control. Use the [community-led solutions webinar package](#) and the [guidance note on community-led solutions](#), which provides step-by-step guidance to work with communities to plan COVID-19 response measures.



## MOST COMMON COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ACROSS COUNTRIES

### 1. Questions and beliefs about the evolution of the pandemic and how long it may last

Heard in: Sierra Leone, Botswana, Liberia

#### Questions:

***“When will COVID-19 end in the world?”*** – Sierra Leone, National Society hotline, 25 June 2021

***“Which district is recording the highest number of COVID-19 cases?”*** – Sierra Leone, National Society hotline, 18 June 2021

***“How long will the virus stay in the country this time”*** – Liberia, National Society radio show, 23 June 2021

#### Rumours, observations and beliefs:

***“the community is concerned on the increase of covid-19 related deaths management”*** – Botswana, From National Society focal points reporting to IFRC, 02 June 2021

***“COVID-19 cases is rapidly increasing in Sierra Leone”*** - Sierra Leone, National Society hotline, 18 June 2021

***“Is this the last phase of the virus in our country”*** – Liberia, Face to face through social mobiliser, 22 June 2021

### 2. Observations and beliefs about the consequences of the pandemic

Heard in: Sierra Leone, Ghana

#### Rumours, observations, and beliefs:

***“Covid is affecting the economy”*** - Ghana, Household visit, 23 June 2021

***“The third wave of COVID-19 Virus will kill many people in Sierra Leone”*** – Sierra Leone, National Society hotline, 23 June 2021

***“Price of commodities are getting higher everyday as a result of COVID-19”*** - Sierra Leone, National Society hotline, 31 May 2021

### 3. Observations and beliefs indicating mistrust in the response

Heard in: Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote D'Ivoire

#### Rumours, observations and beliefs:

***“The new wave of the COVID in Liberia is imported from India and from Indians”*** – Liberia, Community meeting, 22 June 2021

**"Government spraying houses with COVID-19 Virus"** – Sierra Leone, From National Society hotline, 18 June 2021

**"It is the evil that the whites wanted to do to the Africans that turned against themselves. They created this disease in order to exterminate the blacks, unfortunately for them, God thwarted them."** – Cote D'Ivoire, Household visit, 08 June 2021

**"People has already received money to spread the virus"** – Liberia, Community meeting, 21 June 2021

## 4. Questions and beliefs about the COVID-19 vaccine

Heard in: Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Eswatini, Liberia

### Questions:

**"why are the AstraZeneca vaccine being administered twice"** Ghana, Community meeting, 31 May 2021

**"Can COVID-19 Vaccine protect you from having COVID-19?"** - Sierra Leone, National Society hotline, 25 June 2021

**"Why is the Covid 19 vaccine so important?"** Liberia, Household visit, 14 June 2021

**"Why is the vaccine for sale on the international market?"** - Ghana, National Society radio show, 31 May 2021

**"why are children not eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine?"** Ghana, Face to face through social mobilizer, 20 June 2021

### Rumours, beliefs and observations:

**"Low rate for covid-19 vaccination to vulnerable people"** - Botswana, From National Society focal points reporting to IFRC, 02 June 2021

**"The covid-19 vaccine gives the disease."** – Cote d'Ivoire, Household visit, 15 June 2021

**"Happy that there's a vaccine for Corona Virus."** – Liberia, Community meeting, 09 June 2021

**"Some people don't want to take the vaccine because of stories they have heard about the side effect ."** – Ghana, Community meeting, 27 June 2021

**"COVID-19 Vaccine is expired."** – Sierra Leone, National Society hotline, 25 June 2021

**"Some say they are waiting to see how the health of the first people vaccinated changes before accepting the vaccine."** – Cote d'Ivoire, National Society radio show, 09 June 2021

**"The Hospitals are selling the vaccine for huge amount."** – Liberia, Focus group discussion with volunteers, 19 June 2021

**"When you take COVID-19 Vaccine you will never have COVID-19."** – Sierra Leone, National Society hotline, 18 June 2021

### Suggestions or requests:

**"We should be sent a text message when its time for the second dose "** - Ghana, Household visit, 27 June 2021

**"Only sick people should be given COVID-19 Vaccine"** – Sierra Leone, National Society hotline, 31 May 2021

***"The vaccination card should be an international recommendation"*** – Ghana, National society hotline, 13 June 2021

## APPRECIATION - ENCOURAGEMENT

The statements of thanks and encouragement listed below represent the most frequently heard comments across countries in the IFRC Africa region.

### Statements of thanks and encouragement

Heard in: Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone,

***"Thanks to Red Cross for the fight against COVID-19, disaster response, cash transfer and NFI Support"*** - Sierra Leone, National society hotline, 25 June 2021

***"We see the ravages of this disease throughout the world and in the face of this danger we salute the determination of all actors engaged against this pandemic especially the Red Cross and health workers."*** Cote d'Ivoire, Focus group discussion with community, 16 June 2021

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON IFRC EFFORTS TO DOCUMENT, ANALYSE AND USE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON COVID-19 IN AFRICA, PLEASE CONTACT ELISABETH GANTER RESTREPO AT [ELISABETH.GANTER@IFRC.ORG](mailto:ELISABETH.GANTER@IFRC.ORG).