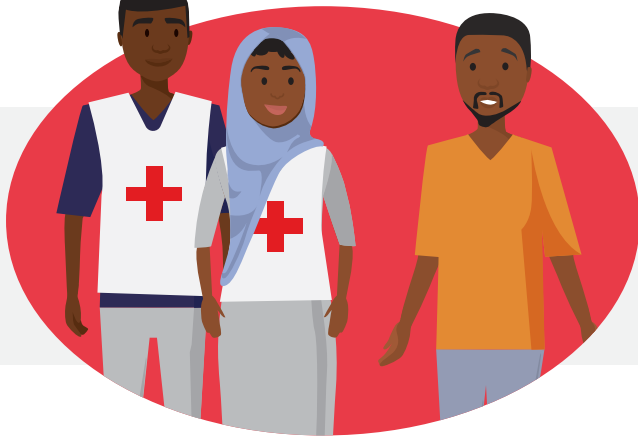
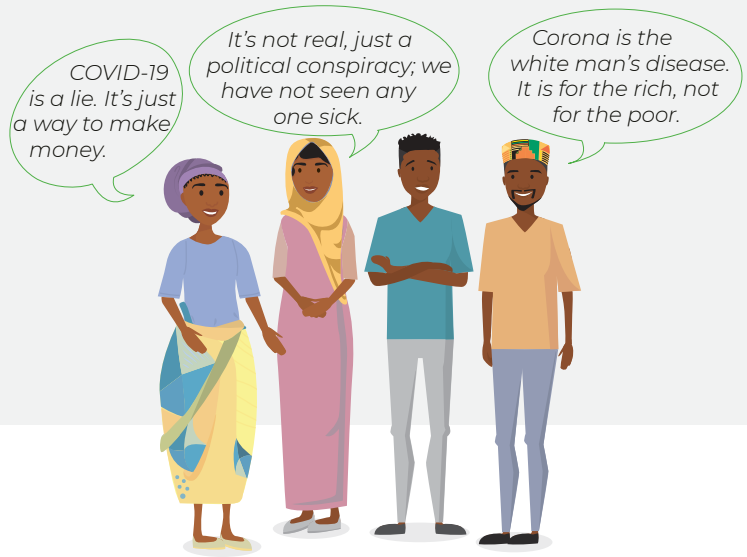




## FIGHTING COVID-19 MISTRUST AND DENIAL IN COMMUNITIES

### WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING?



### WHY DO WE NEED TO ADDRESS THIS?

If people don't believe COVID-19 is real or can affect them, they won't follow health measures like physical distancing and handwashing, and cases and deaths will keep rising.

### WHAT CAN MY NATIONAL SOCIETY DO?



- 1 Hold focus group discussions and key informant interviews to understand why people don't believe COVID-19 is real or can harm them.

- 2 Share stories of local people who have recovered from COVID-19, so people believe the virus is real\*:

- Ask volunteers who have had COVID-19 to tell their story on the radio or in community meetings.
- Invite people who have recovered onto your National Society radio show.
- Encourage trusted local leaders, influencers, and healthcare staff, to share their stories of having, or looking after people, with COVID-19.
- Fight stigma so people are willing to share their story publicly.



\* But be careful not to expose people to discrimination, stigma or harm by sharing their story



- 3 Organise a media webinar to brief journalists on the issue, the impact it can have, and ask for their ideas and help to tackle the problem.**

**4 Mobilize trusted community and religious leaders and youth groups to help stop the spread of misinformation:**

- Train them on COVID-19 so they can lead prevention efforts in their community.
- Set up WhatsApp or social media groups with leaders to share factual information and answer their questions.



**5 Brief Government and partners on feedback showing mistrust and denial and discuss how to tackle it together:**

- Organise journalist visits to COVID-19 treatment centres.
- Suggest Government press briefings on the case rate and that easing lock down does not mean the outbreak is over or not real.
- Encourage more transparency from Government about how funds are being used to tackle the view that the virus is just a tool for political gain or to make money.

**6 Build trust in the response:**

- Listen to community feedback and act on it, to show people their concerns are important to you – including meeting needs outside of health and COVID-19.
- Show you are there for people before, during and after COVID-19 to avoid being associated with the perceived “money making business”.
- Don't just tell communities what to do – also listen to their ideas and suggestions to prevent and manage the outbreak and support them to implement these.

