



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK REPORT: COVID-19 Vaccine

Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society, January 2024



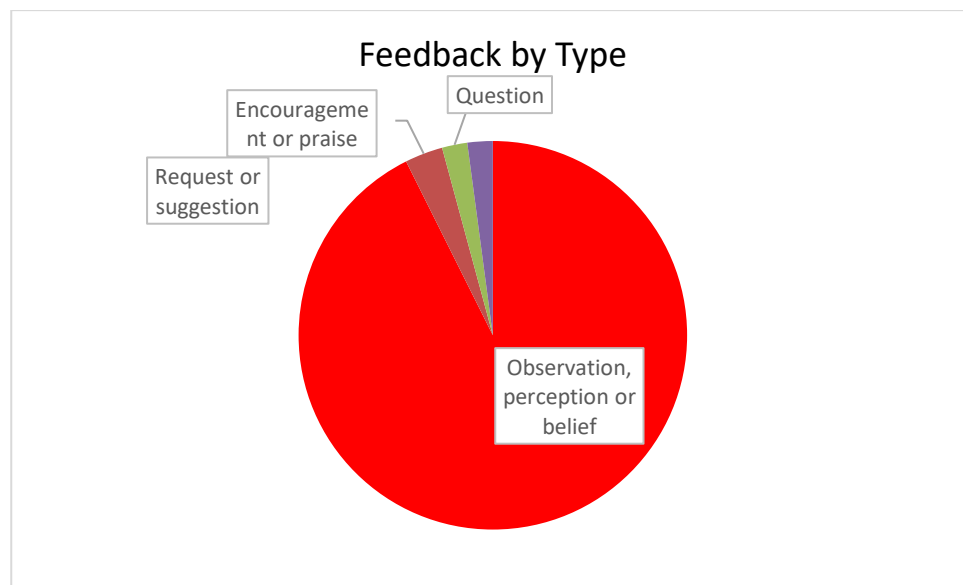
Country context:

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is a country located in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. It occupies the eastern half of the island of New Guinea and numerous smaller islands. It shares the island of New Guinea with Indonesia to the west and is north of Australia.

The country has diverse cultures and languages, with over 800 spoken. Rich in natural resources like gold and oil, the country faces challenges in development, including poverty and limited access to healthcare. Its stunning landscapes, unique wildlife, and traditional customs make it a culturally vibrant yet complex nation.

Community Insights:

Community feedback considered in this report was collected between 24th October and 09th November, 2023 by Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society, Autonomous Region of Bougainville Branch. 97% of the feedback were conducted through face-to-face interaction with the community members and only 3% through mobile phone feedback. Total number of feedback is 95 (38 Male, 55 Female & 2 Unknown sex). The data that has been collected represents a limited number of community in respective districts and should be noted that data is not representative and has limitations.



Total number of feedback (n=95)

In the data collated, 93% of the feedback type received from the interviewees was on; 'Observation, perception or belief'. The remaining 7% of the feedback data were on; '

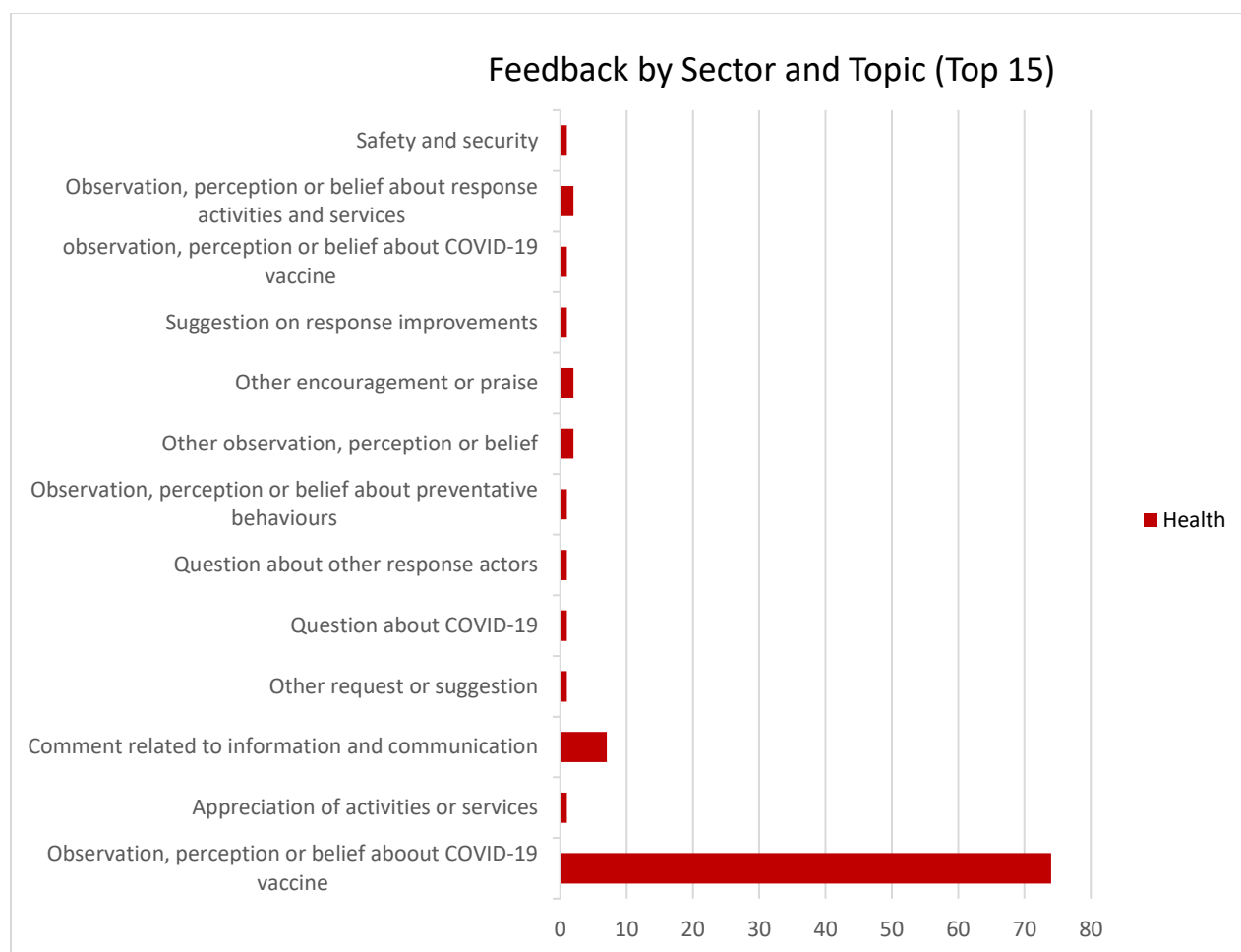
'Encouragement and praise – 3%' and 2% each on the feedback type, "Questions and Request or Suggestion". Analysis of the feedback types indicates that most of the feedback were related to COVID-19 vaccine. Common feedbacks identified were on:

- Beliefs or perception of COVID 19 vaccine through social media and religious beliefs
- Negative perceptions on COVID19 vaccine side effects
- A few alleged stories that COVID19 vaccine was the cause if a few deaths.
- A few medical practitioners advising people not to take the vaccine.

From the data analysis most of the feedbacks that are more pertaining to negative beliefs and perceptions, thus not many of the people have not taken the COVID19 vaccine.

That are related to; 'Report of a concern of incident, Questions and Request or suggestion.' The feedback are more related to queries and also the interviewees just wanting to get more information about COVID19 and the vaccines, thus indicating the feedback type.

Feedback by sector and topic:



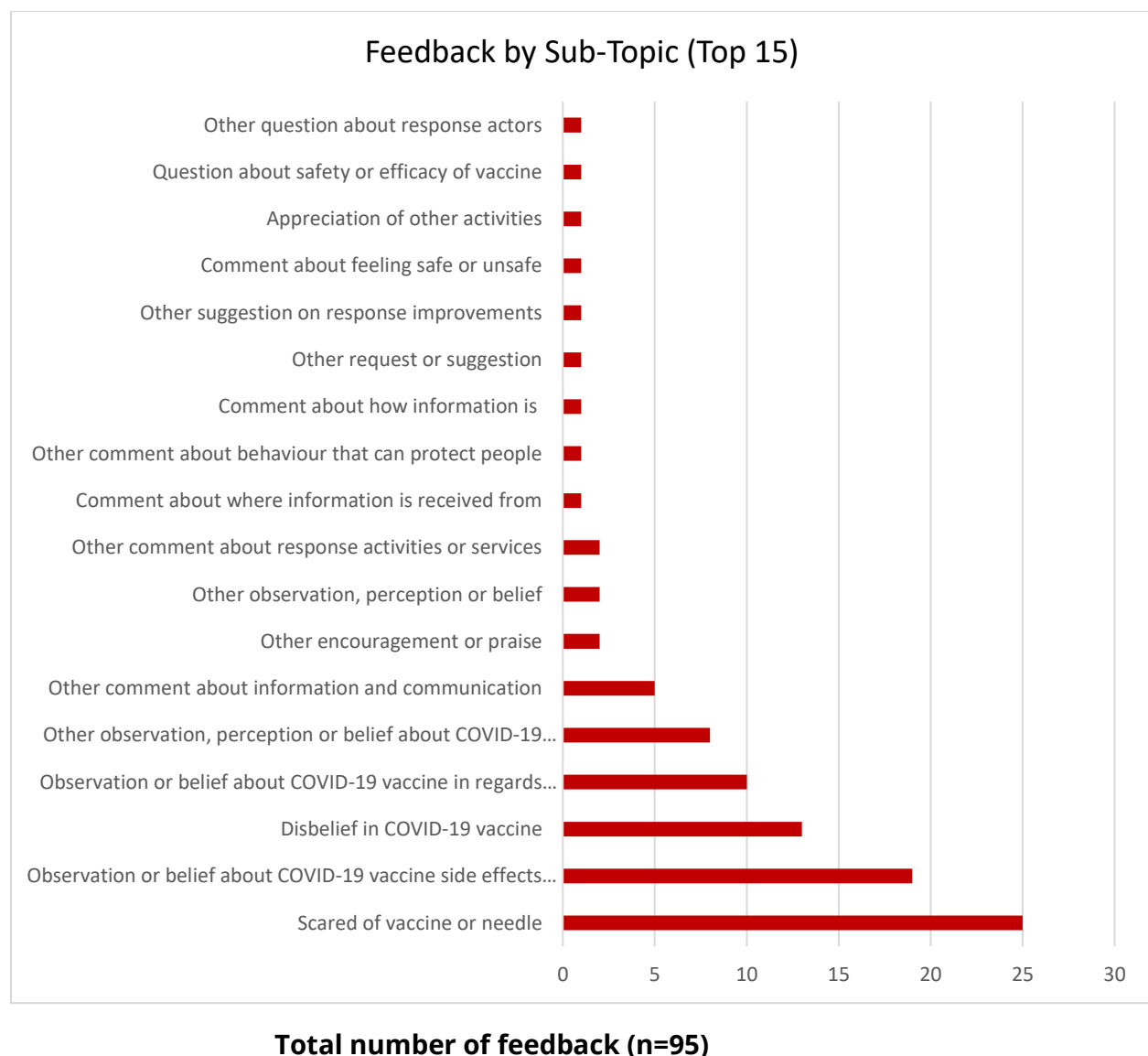
Total number of feedback (n=95)

About 97% of the feedback was collected through face-to-face interactions. Majority of the feedback was on the topic, "Observation, perception or belief" and it was mainly on information that they have read, seen or heard that had a negatively impacted people's mindset and decision on COVID19 vaccine. It was clear, that 99% of the interviewees were not vaccinated due to these negative information. A few of the feedback indicated information received from medical practitioners which were discouraging them to get vaccinated. Since most people trust medical practitioners this also had negative implications on the COVID19 vaccination.

Feedback by subtopic: The subtopic feedback data analysis indicates, that a lot of the interviewees were scared of the vaccine and it was mainly due to the belief or perceptions

around the side effects and allegation of information that people had died after receiving their COVID19 vaccine. It was also interesting to note that about 11% of the interviewees feedbacks were belief and perceptions on COVID19 vaccine in relation to religious beliefs.

From the analysis, it can be noted, that there were different factors that had negative implications and influence that had an impact on people's decision to be vaccinated and also the lack of information sharing and awareness. A few were interested to be vaccinated but they didn't have the information in order to make an informed decision. And others mentioned that they had some sort of medical conditions and so they were not medically fit to take the vaccination.



More than 95% of the interviewees have responded negatively, especially on the COVID19 vaccination.

Examples of positive and negative feedback received:

Positive feedbacks:

" All I want is to run a proper awareness relating to immunization. Awareness to be conducted to rural areas about the advantages and disadvantages of immunization. " (Female, age 30-39, ARoB branch, PNG)

"I took the vaccine, first dose and after a feeling of headache and flue. Couple of minutes later it was all normal." (Male, age 18-29, ARoB branch, PNG)

Negative Feedbacks:

"I read that vaccination protects people from severe illness and death from COVID-19 but I also saw a video in YouTube where the foreigner claiming to be a Doctor said all this information is not true. That's why I am scared to get vaccinated.." (Female, age 18-29, ARoB branch, PNG)

"I don't want to get vaccine because I just don't want to and also I think my immune system is strong enough to fight any disease." (Female, age 50-59, ARoB branch, PNG)

"Bad rumors said that it cause sickness. I am afraid. Life expectancy will be short. I am confused, a chip of 666 is in that vaccine and its against religious believes.." (Male, age 40-49, ARoB branch, PNG)

Recommendations:

These recommendations collectively suggested are based on the analysis of the feedback data:

- Dissemination of information: Vital information is clearly communicated to the communities through awareness during bigger community gatherings and events. And also integration of messaging in collaboration with the health authorities during community health patrols.
- IEC materials on "Myths & Facts": Distribution of IEC materials during community events to ensure people have to right information. Materials to be also translated to local language (Pidgin, Motu and etc) so can be easily understood, especially people in the rural communities.

- Engagement and Collaboration with Local Leaders and Community Based Organizations (CBO): Facilitate a Leadership training with the intention to integrate the COVID-19 and Vaccination messaging and awareness. Leaders includes the community leaders, women and youth leaders, church leaders and etc. The training to ensure that the leaders are equipped with the right information and also understanding what their role and responsibility during any emergencies is or in this situation COVID19 pandemic that has an impact on their community members.
- Story telling or Community Conversations: Community members who had been vaccinated sharing their experiences. This will trigger questions and discussions and creating a 'safe space' for community members to openly discuss. Part of this concept is also to understand any learnings and how the community to learn from them. Community to initiate their own recommendation on how they can keep their community safe.
- Capture the learning from community engagement for COVID-19 vaccine promotion emphasize the significance of listening, tailored information sharing, and localized accessibility. These lessons, rooted in trust-building and cultural sensitivity, should be used for wider learning.
- Partnership Collaboration: More collaboration with health authorities and other health institutions to ensure that the correct information is disseminated to the communities in both urban and rural areas. And ensure that the medical interpretation of vaccination is clearly communicated and understood at the community level given the low literacy rate of most of the people.

For more information about PNGRCS and its activities please contact, PNGRCS communication and dissemination officer Bradley Asa <basa@redcross.org.pg> and or IFRC head of delegation PNG maki.igarashi@ifrc.org