



# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK REPORT: COVID-19 Vaccine

## Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society, October 2023



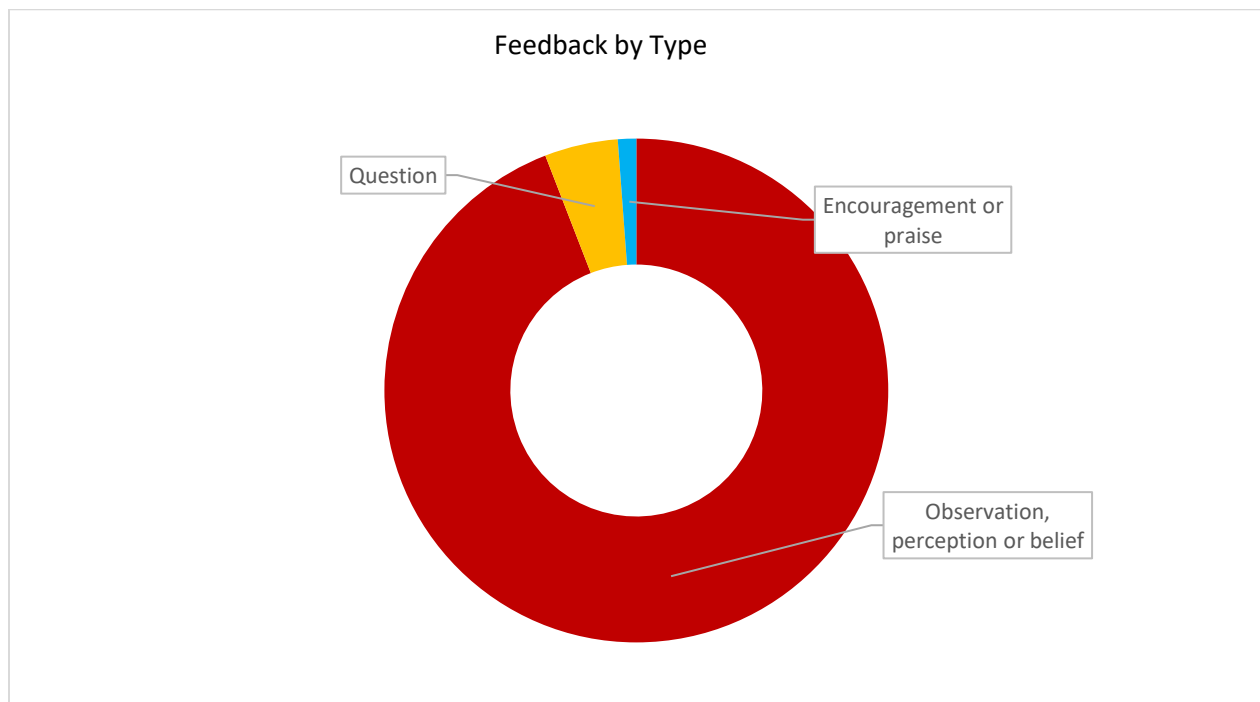
### Country context:

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:

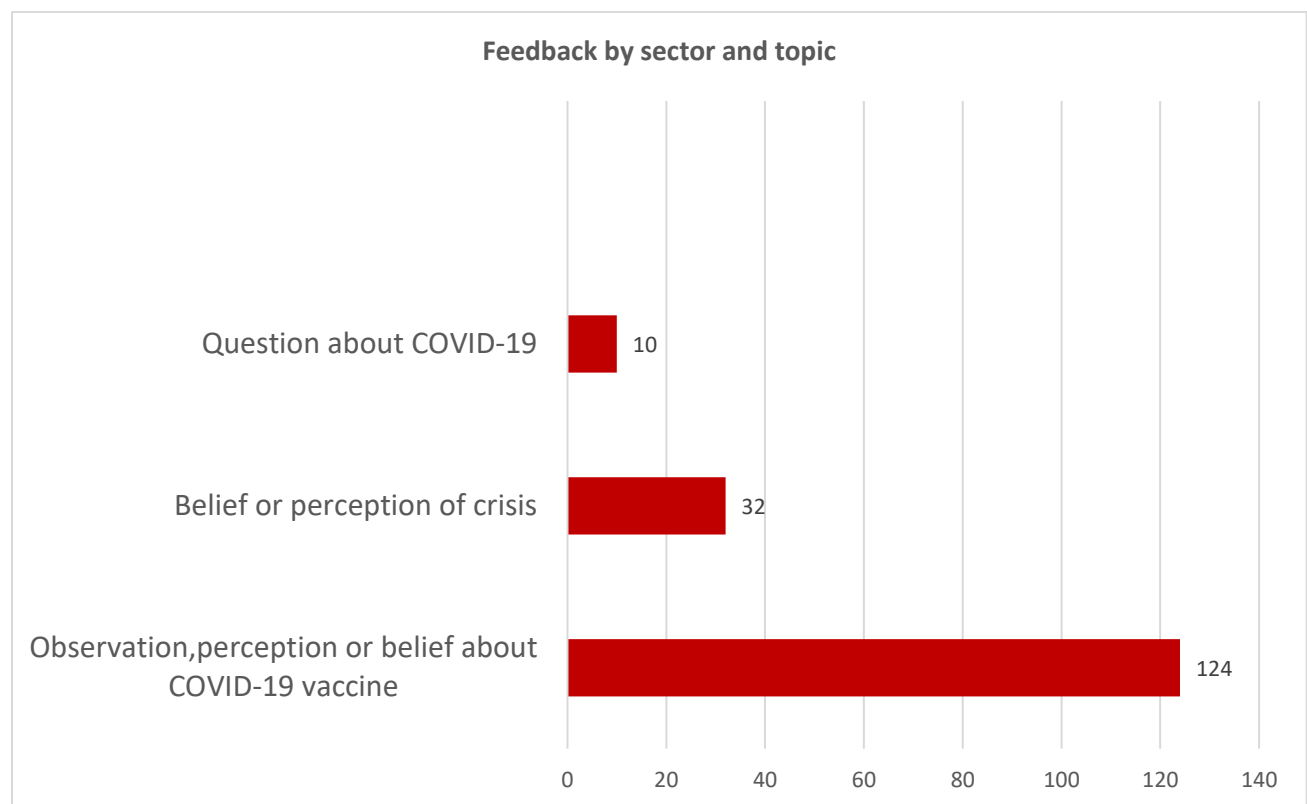
Community feedback considered in this report was collected between 10 October and 12 October, 2023 by Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society, Nation Capital District Branch. All the feedback were received via face to face interaction with the community members. Total number of feedback is 173(88 Male, 85 Female). It should be noted that data is not representative and has limitations.



### Total number of feedback (n=173)

Highest number of feedback received are observation perception or belief followed by questions and encouragement and praise.

### Feedback by sector and topic:



### Total number of feedback (n=173)

The face-to-face interactions with PNGRCS volunteers-initiated discussions, with the main topic centering around observations, perceptions, or beliefs concerning the COVID-19 vaccine. This was the most commonly shared theme among participants, indicating a considerable interest and concern regarding the vaccine's efficacy, safety, and potential impact.

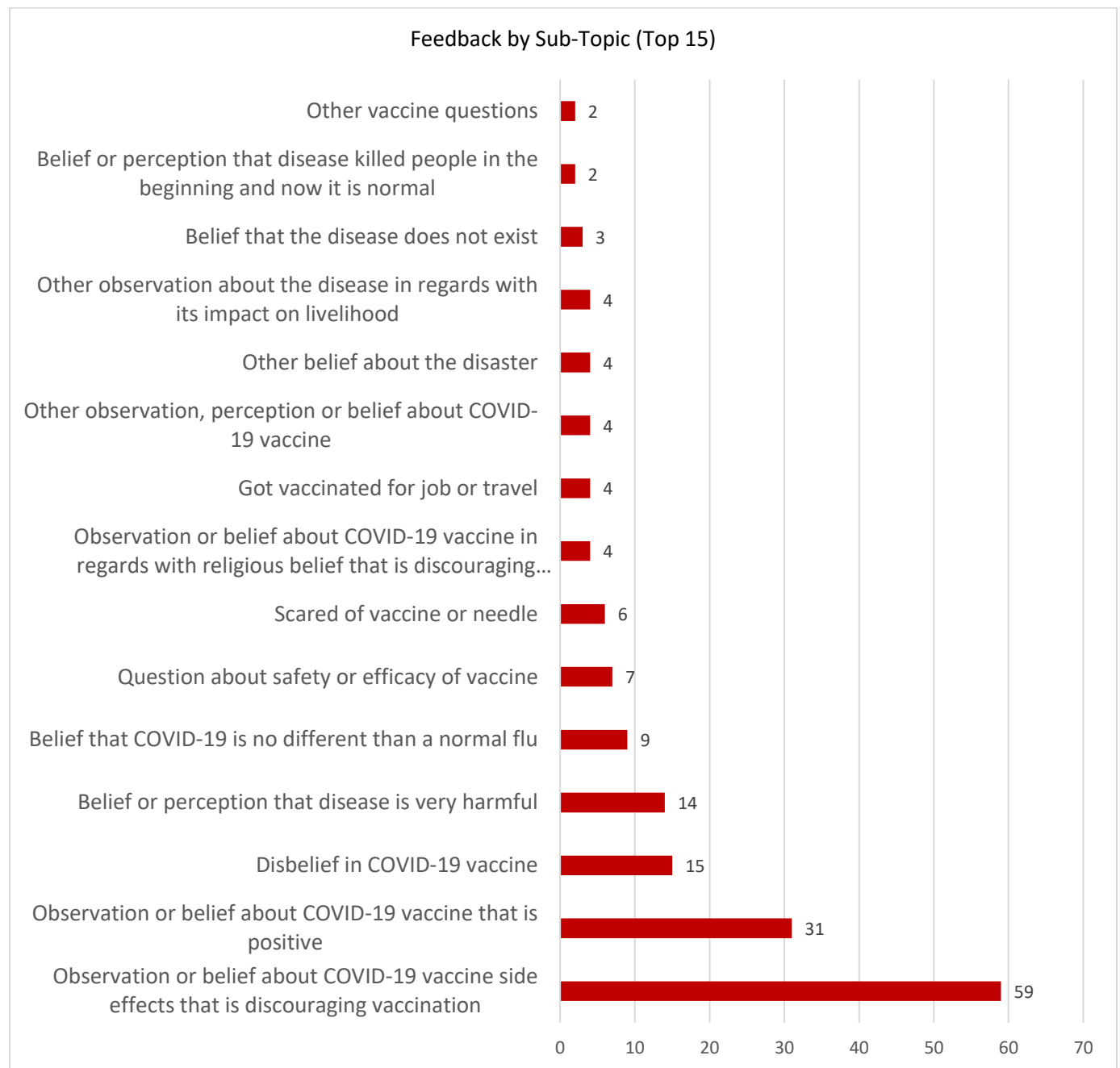
Following closely behind was the second most prevalent topic, about beliefs or perceptions surrounding the crisis posed by COVID-19.

Interestingly, the third most popular topic revolved around questioning and seeking clarification about COVID-19. This shows still there are some people who have questions about COVID-19 that they would like to get answers.

### Feedback by subtopic:

In the subsequent phase of analysis, a detailed examination was conducted specifically focused on individual subtopics extracted from the feedback data. Each subtopic was

thoroughly inspected to gain insights into the community's sentiments and concerns surrounding COVID-19 vaccine.



**Total number of feedback (n=173)**

The primary feedback that stood out the most was related to concerns and doubts surrounding the potential side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine. Many community members expressed their worries, citing these concerns as a major constraint to getting vaccinated.

This sentiment seemed to discourage a significant number of individuals from opting for vaccination.

In contrast, the second most prominent feedback highlighted a more positive perspective on the COVID-19 vaccine. People shared their experiences of needing the vaccine either for their job requirements or for travel purposes. Despite the initial hesitancy or concerns, approximately 31 individuals out of the 173 respondents shared positive accounts regarding their decision to get vaccinated. Their reasons varied, but the consensus was that vaccination was a necessary step for their professional commitments or travel plans.

Another prevailing sentiment emerged among those who did not believe in the COVID-19 vaccine at all. This disbelief constituted the third most discussed topic. These individuals held firm in their skepticism about the vaccine's efficacy or even its existence, contributing to a notable portion of the feedback collected.

Following this group were individuals who strongly believed in the severe and harmful nature of the COVID-19 disease.

Overall, the feedback reflected a diverse range of opinions and beliefs regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, ranging from concerns about side effects to firm convictions both for and against its efficacy and necessity.

#### **Examples of feedback received:**

For instance: **"I am afraid to get the vaccine because I am concerned about how quickly a vaccine had been made for the Covid-19 virus while other viruses/diseases/sicknesses such as HIV/Aids still does not have a cure."** (Male, age 40-49, PNG, NCD)

**"I'm unsure about the reality of COVID-19. Despite being together in crowds, even during lockdowns, none of the people I know personally have died from COVID-19. However, some individuals who were vaccinated experienced side effects and unfortunately passed away a few days later. What's concerning is that their deaths weren't mourned or handled in accordance with our traditional practices. Hospital staff, dressed in protective gear, placed them in a common grave without the customary rites. This departure from our cultural customs feels unsettling and different from how we traditionally honor our departed."** (Male, age 30-39, PNG, NCD branch)

**"I wanted to get the vaccine but after hearing about the side effects of the vaccine from people who have been vaccinated, I changed my mind and decided not to get the vaccine."** (Female, age 18-29, NCD branch)

**“I think the vaccine is just like any other vaccine that is given to avoid sicknesses. I am vaccinated and no I did not experience any side effects after being vaccinated. I would recommend others to get vaccinated too because I think it is safe. I have been vaccinated for 3 years now and I have not experienced any side effects.”** (Female, age 18-29, NCD branch)

### **Recommendations:**

Community engagement for COVID-19 vaccine promotion is crucial for widespread acceptance and uptake. Here are some recommendations drawn from the analysis of feedback data:

1. Face to face engagement: continue face to face engagement with the community members to listen about their concerns related to COVID-19 vaccine. Actively listen to their worries or questions and provide clear, understandable answers.
2. Continue use of information communication materials: continue use of information communication materials to reach diverse communities. Focus on debunking myths, providing accurate information, and emphasizing the vaccine's safety and efficacy.
3. Collaborate with Local Leaders and Organizations: Partner with community leaders, religious groups, nonprofits, and local businesses to amplify the message. Engage them in discussions about the vaccine's importance and address any concerns or questions they might have.
4. Community Events: Host community meetings to address vaccine hesitancy. Invite healthcare professionals to provide information and answer questions directly from community members.
5. 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.

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