## COVID-19 Infodemic Trends in the African Region

This report seeks to communicate **operational recommendations** based on social media monitoring from November 6-12, as well as relevant information on current mis/disinformation.

Target countries include **Angola**, **Kenya**, **Nigeria**, **South Africa** (ENG), **Ivory Coast**, **Burkina Faso**, **Senegal**, **Democratic Republic of Congo** (DRC), **Mauritania**, **Mali**, **Cameroon,** **Mauritius** and **Niger** (FR). We have outlined what we mean by “engagements” and how we gather information in the methodology section at the end of this report.

**CONCERNING TRENDS**

* [4th wave and conspiracy theories on the “fabrication of upcoming waves”](#pmn375b803ce)
* [Concerns about COVID-19 deaths of vaccinated people](#d1h6i8krf9td)
* [Doubts about the safety of Sinovac vaccine and Moderna](#c5z27mr4nlrm)
* [Vaccine Hesitancy and side effects](#500kboah9c2c)
* [Persistent “forced vaccinations” complaints](#973y7jk9lbys)

**TOPICS OF INTEREST**

* Based on the UNICEF ESARO Report “COVID-19 vaccine digital conversation in Eastern and Southern Africa:
  + News that Pfizer’s COVID-19 pill has shown high efficacy in clinical trials generated interest on social media. Some users have argued that having an effective treatment makes the vaccine useless.
  + Concerns around vaccine effectiveness continue to circulate in the region, particularly in relation to conversations on waning immunity, booster shots and vaccine passports.
  + News of a BMJ investigation around data integrity issues in the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine trial was associated with negative sentiment. Claims that the vaccine is experimental and general concerns around safety continue to be tracked.
* Nigeria: COVID-19 **Q and A with Nigerian Actress Kate Henshaw** answering questions dispelling rumour COVID-19 vaccinations require payment (reported in 1 Nov 2021 AIRA brief) ([LINK](https://www.facebook.com/heyspringsterNG/videos/264136052213726)) with over 11k views.

**POTENTIAL INFORMATION VOIDS (KEY QUESTIONS)**

* In **Angola**, the **inauguration of Specialized Center for Treatment of Endemic Diseases and Pandemics** has been applauded by the population. However, questions about whether there are enough qualified staff in the country had been raised a few times [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1742470772625694&id=983550461851066)
* Ongoing since last week in South Africa: Government is offering a R100 grocery voucher to any person over the age of 60 who is willing to get their COVID-19 vaccine in November. [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/168892509821961/posts/4887098364667995) and [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/168892509821961/posts/4887098364667995). Concerns expressed that this is a bribe showing there is something wrong with the vaccine:
  + ‘Grocery voucher, I call it a bribe. Government is insulting our intelligence. Please use the money for the poor who are suffering.’
  + ‘If this doesn't prove that there is something wrong here, then people are blind.. if something is really good for you, you must pay for it.. if they have to bribe you to go get it, the question must be "what's wrong with it?"..’
  + ‘Disgusting, that you now have to go to these lengths and bribe the poor to take something they have no intention of wanting.’

**TRENDS and TOPICS TO WATCH**

* **People were** **sceptical of the rising COVID-19 case numbers after the elections**, suspicious that this was manipulated for political gain by the ruling party. “What a jump from a mere 100 to 344’. Others said that “It was expected because of the gatherings at the election with zero physical distancing.” ([Here](https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/sa-records-344-new-coronavirus-cases/?fbclid=IwAR1YLhW8hGkaEsrM8AgA1iV-FHjAYrsyBV17vRilxYrPnB7VmUG0mohT7jI), [Here](https://twitter.com/SABCNews) and [Here](https://www.facebook.com/SABCNews/)).
* The **news that Pfizer has made billions in profits from their COVID-19 vaccine has not been well received**, with more negative comments ([Here](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sabcnews.com%2Fsabcnews%2Fpfizer-expects-2021-2022-covid-19-vaccine-sales-to-total-at-least-65-bln%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR2HPC6q5672DfcEaKslVcjULlagN3up36iaXG5PCraB9CbZJCxpJX9kTgs&h=AT3ZSd3Vj6hLvc9noR6SACfpdrS4QrKyvUnoNjfJOdm1nAWUd3mo8cL_ucBzQqiJpD15fC9dPrIPGJ68GtVRCk6JQ5GIucf02uUoCvTi-5A3ugTsioRmi5ccEUl5yZiTVw5e&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT1GQyjjQZMhgNyd23cWgyI-zOGySmjTiXtC8eCAKOzU1IpE_0kLRTQemu7XbdXkSi2uuyMUz8_1aGueusXpr-HXUZSfyYHVta76wZG6IRLjS4A9chDsDgcFFUQGbgY7DvrVFRVDSEqhJtn6L22p_n8w0cIgYacYPszW01h9wo_s-w30)) describing the company as “modern-day drug dealers”, accusing the company of being “a money scheme” and that “covid was created” for that purpose. ([Here](https://www.facebook.com/SABCNews/) and [Here](https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/pfizer-expects-2021-2022-covid-19-vaccine-sales-to-total-at-least-65-bln/)).
* Kenya’s Social Listening Collated Report notes posts around the [high cost for COVID-19 test before travelling and compulsory COVID-19 certificates](https://twitter.com/NYC_YouthVoice/status/1457700227964674049), as “paying between USD 110 and USD 170 for a COVID-19 test to be allowed to travel across the region is not right” “We request the regional leadership to look into this matter as it is hindering regional” ([LINK](https://twitter.com/NYC_YouthVoice/status/1457700227964674049)).
* A **team of researchers from the Polytechnic Institute of Porto (IPP) is developing an edible vaccine against covid-19, in yoghurt and fruit juice** format. The `in vitro' trials are already underway and will soon begin in animals [LINK 1,](https://www.facebook.com/145840599253628/posts/1217784278725916) [LINK 2](https://www.facebook.com/180431522657278/posts/884920575541699), [LINK 3](https://www.facebook.com/76011077573/posts/10157808855582574)
* A third dose of the Pfizer vaccine could reduce transmission of COVID-19, which could minimise infection in unvaccinated people and breakthrough infections in vaccinated people, a new study has found. [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/10227041841/posts/10160085361301842)
* In South Africa, the long-awaited booster shots against COVID-19 are set to start on Tuesday for health care workers who took part in the Sisonke trials. "Sisonke 2" aims to boost the immunity of healthcare workers for the fourth wave. [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/10227041841/posts/10160081651551842)
* Local production of vaccines awaited in Nigeria: “covid-19 recovery: enhancing local capacity for vaccine production crucial for Africa” LINK
* South Africa Stand your ground FB posts from August ([LINK](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=10226141003696369&id=1376650743)), was reported in Guardian Nigeria this week ([LINK](https://www.facebook.com/176502461635/posts/10159802554186636)). The article reports it as new content with 2.4 million views.
* **Positive narrative sentiment towards COVID-19 vaccines has fallen again this week across the 6 EARS AFRO countries from 33.6% to 29.62**. In Kenya, positive narrative sentiment has decreased from 40.77% last week, to 33.6% this week.
* Anti-vaxxers oppose vaccination for children in South Africa [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/160836574053016/posts/2491202727683044)

**4th wave and conspiracy theories on the “fabrication of upcoming waves”**

* **Continued fear (for a few weeks now) of the fourth wave and conspiracy theories on the “fabrication of upcoming waves”:** Many people are concerned about the arrival of the fourth wave of COVID-19 which is expected in South Africa in December or January. Others are already pointing fingers, and are suspicious about how a future surge in Covid can be predicted if it isn’t planned and controlled by people (see [Here](https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/uncertainty-over-sas-fourth-wave-of-covid-19-in-december/), [Here](https://www.facebook.com/SABCNews/), [Here](https://m.facebook.com/HealthZA/photos/a.1029148150468051/4851231658259662/?type=3&source=48&refid=52&__tn__=EH-R) [here](https://www.facebook.com/10227041841/posts/10160083242036842) and [Here](https://www.facebook.com/SABCNews/)). Other experts are unsure if there will be another surge in cases, as many people have now been vaccinated” ([Here](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sabcnews.com%2Fsabcnews%2Funcertainty-over-4th-wave-of-the-coronavirus-specialist-lessells%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR1V5VXUEntH4mNYOwNLWeFbLVbeVMlIt_J0FfV_j4L2FaGTtc9mytKc9Z4&h=AT2Ihq_QEm5RkAj1KM7hAdpYKiVIR7c4aK102mFk_PB9qMFIUrkizmjpPUizp49BCjIt-A9AeM3toHM8sZwUqvdIZrMfzAZcVHXV0BxyWN-ERUwX6IYAOJDuBtkMsgkinYV6&__tn__=%2CmH-R&c%5b0%5d=AT2heVE9STX1mjmcoVvJqIGxHl6MCsaVjf0n-MnWgTgVhx443vXL27tkXfsAuJVqwt5bid56I1lujGTYnR8-VDkNjBBFydbwpQLvNfVNNMSVk-lS6frci_rmVccg2JZyezzUiruEQlMPQ7ykB2Z1Dmgu9AbfKU18y_7Oh6KvCmdZ7oxs) and [Here](https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/pfizer-expects-2021-2022-covid-19-vaccine-sales-to-total-at-least-65-bln/)). The same occurs in Angola, as the weekly report notes that after the President of the Republic approved a decree to temporarily provide a daily allowance for administrative employees and agents directly involved in the process of preventing and combating COVID19, a lot of rumours have emerged associating it with a political campaign stunt given that elections are taking place next year [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/novojornal.ao/posts/1702427276619470) (A Viral FActs Africa video is being prepared on the above)
  + ‘Why aren't they reporting about the fact that the government was taken to court to prove the veracity of their virus and the government could not provide evidence? And the case is at the constitutional court now, however, they never said a word about it.’
* Post with high engagement asking about whether the COVID-19 lockdown was a tragic mistake for Nigeria ([LINK](https://twitter.com/Morris_Monye/status/1458991548830556160)). Mixed responses with some supportive of the lockdown, others questioning COVID-19 existence,
  + ‘Quick question do you in every honesty as a person with morals and good conscience believe that their was/is coronavirus in Nigeria?’ ([LINK](https://twitter.com/DesSanctity/status/1459063552983977986?s=20))
* Concern about lockdowns and restrictions being reimposed in Europe despite high vaccination numbers ([LINK](https://edition.cnn.com/2021/11/09/europe/denmark-restrictions-europe-covid-intl/index.html?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter))

**What can we do?**

* Tailor messages reiterating that no one is immune to the virus, even if the severity of symptoms varies
* If possible, outline scientific processes required for identifying and communicating  
  new COVID waves
* Explain the risk of complacency to infection prevention and control

**Concerns about COVID-19 deaths of vaccinated people**

* **Mauritius** :
  + Of the 863,578 people vaccinated, 63 died of COVID-19. This was revealed by Dr Kailesh Jagutpal in Parliament during the PNQ on Tuesday, 9 November. 61 were admitted to hospitals and 2 died in self-isolation. 44 had been vaccinated with Sinopharm, 5 with two doses of Astra Zeneca, 7 with Covaxin, and 7 with Johnson. ([LINK](https://www.lexpress.mu/article/401279/63-personnes-vaccinees-sont-mortes-covid-19)) **4,8 K interactions**
  + The Faikoo and Jokonah families are once again saddened. They have lost one of their own, Lovena Faikoo, 34, who tested positive for COVID-19 and was doubly vaccinated. The young woman, a resident of La Flora, died in ENT hospital on Friday 12 November. Her death comes a few months after that of her mother, Chundunee Jokonah, who also died of the virus. ([LINK](https://defimedia.info/avinash-mo-p-aler-aster-bye-bye-les-dernieres-paroles-de-lovena-34-ans-emportee-par-la-covid-19-quelques-mois-apres-sa-mere)) **16,7 K interactions**
* **Cameroon**: "Cameroonians are fleeing the COVID-19 vaccine like the plague''
  + Only 1.1% of the target population is fully vaccinated against the coronavirus that has already killed more than 1,600 people in the country. They whisper, not daring to approach the nurse to register. These vaccines have too many consequences," says Stella, adjusting the mask that eats part of her face. On social networks, they say that people die after taking them. ([LINK](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2021/11/03/les-camerounais-fuient-le-vaccin-contre-le-covid-19-comme-la-peste_6100834_3212.html))
* **Kenya**:
  + High engagement tweet about someone dying from the COVID-19 vaccine in Kenya “Her life took the wrong turn on the day she took her jab. She finally lost the battle. She gave up. She is gone. Rest in everlasting peace Mama Annet. RIP.([LINK](https://twitter.com/RobertKiberenge/status/1458313436471889924))”
    - “Which JAB did she take? My parents took this Johnson thing, They are now both dead coz of the same.([LINK](https://twitter.com/CharlesChavo/status/1458350779824230402))”
    - ‘ Ours died of blood clot. Astrazeneca’
* **Angola**:
  + Reports of fully vaccinated Angolans dying ([LINK](https://www.facebook.com/120410341490558/posts/1706684706196439))
* **Global**:
  + High circulating news story of fully vaccinated person with COVID-19 dying on a flight. ([LINK](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10156793/Fully-vaccinated-air-passenger-infected-Covid-dead-flight-Turkey-Germany.html)) Shared [here](https://www.facebook.com/100044497173730/posts/435966514563251) and [here](https://www.facebook.com/653656581426800/posts/4227954417330314). Posts observed in South Africa

**What can we do?**

* **Produce content explaining why vaccines are considered safe and effective  
  ↪ Viral Facts example here**
* **Continue to manage expectations around possible side effects**, underlining the  
  safety profile of different vaccines and providing information on the systems public  
  health practitioners use to investigate AEFIs (UNICEF ESARO Feb recommendation)
* Clarify **indicators of potential side effects** for people to watch out for and **how to respond** (WHO EPI-WIN report recommendation)  
  ↪ Viral facts example here
* Produce content for journalists on Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) reporting and best practices, including using non-scientific language that is clear and understandable

**Doubts about the safety of Sinovac and Moderna vaccines**

* **Mali**:
  + In a **video that has been doing the rounds of WhatsApp groups** in Mali, (according to the voice in the video, attributed to France24 whose sound has been translated into Bambara). **The author of the video argues that the "Sinovac" vaccine is not effective against COVID-19 because the vaccine exported by China is different from the one used in China**.
* **Kenya**:
  + Concern expressed after reports French authorities have recommended Pfizer over Moderna for under 30-year-olds. ([LINK](https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/french-health-authority-advises-against-moderna-covid-19-vaccine-under-30s-2021-11-09/)). This news has been widely shared globally.
    - ‘Sorry for the loss. But Mordena not safe for people below thirty I think you should know’
    - ‘Some countries like Sweden and Denmark have sited reproductive issues for under 30 men.’
    - Concerns about Moderna side effects ([LINK](https://twitter.com/Missanniemburu/status/1457032723114168326?s=20))

**What can we do?**

* Create a spot (60-second explanatory video) explaining the components of the Sinovac vaccine;
* Produce content in local languages explaining why vaccines are considered safe and effective;
* Establish a network of traditional communicators to convince the population to accept the Sinovac vaccine.
* Watch for changes in advice about Moderna and community reactions.

**Vaccine Hesitancy and side effects**

* **South Africa**:
  + Former chief justice Mogoeng Mogoeng is currently under investigation by the Judicial Service Commission for praying that God destroys by fire COVID-19 vaccines 'marked by Satan'. [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/10227041841/posts/10160088336381842)
    - **What can we do?** A video noting that vaccines have no connection with any religious organization and have no power to possess or bewitch anybody could be developed
  + Three people claimed to have experienced shingles after vaccination and cited conspiracy theories to explain the effects. “it is because this thing suppresses the immune system and the situation is worse for someone with underlying conditions” ([Here](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sabcnews.com%2Fsabcnews%2Funcertainty-over-4th-wave-of-the-coronavirus-specialist-lessells%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR1V5VXUEntH4mNYOwNLWeFbLVbeVMlIt_J0FfV_j4L2FaGTtc9mytKc9Z4&h=AT2Ihq_QEm5RkAj1KM7hAdpYKiVIR7c4aK102mFk_PB9qMFIUrkizmjpPUizp49BCjIt-A9AeM3toHM8sZwUqvdIZrMfzAZcVHXV0BxyWN-ERUwX6IYAOJDuBtkMsgkinYV6&__tn__=%2CmH-R&c%5b0%5d=AT2heVE9STX1mjmcoVvJqIGxHl6MCsaVjf0n-MnWgTgVhx443vXL27tkXfsAuJVqwt5bid56I1lujGTYnR8-VDkNjBBFydbwpQLvNfVNNMSVk-lS6frci_rmVccg2JZyezzUiruEQlMPQ7ykB2Z1Dmgu9AbfKU18y_7Oh6KvCmdZ7oxs) and [Here](https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/pfizer-expects-2021-2022-covid-19-vaccine-sales-to-total-at-least-65-bln/)).
  + Parents falsely believing their children should not vaccinate because of the perceived low risk of children being infected due to perceived “good immune systems”, with concern about the risk of myocarditis in young children due to vaccination. Others believing that both the parent and child should be empowered with information to make informed decisions ([Here](https://m.facebook.com/HealthZA/photos/a.1029148150468051/4851231658259662/?type=3&source=48&refid=52&__tn__=EH-R), [Here](https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2021/11/03/1051299050/covid-vaccine-kids-5-11) and [Here](https://theconversation.com/ethical-decisions-weighing-risks-and-benefits-of-approving-covid-19-vaccination-in-children-ages-5-11-169820)).
  + The South African Medical Association, which represents doctors, said there must be a choice of COVID-19 booster vaccine after Johnson & Johnson won the right to run research on the half a million health workers who took the company’s shot in an initial study. [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/10227041841/posts/10160084286951842)
* **Nigeria**:
  + Muhammadu Buhari welcomed the offer by UAE to partner with Nigeria in the areas of renewable energy, agriculture, infrastructure logistics, and the provision of vaccines to further control the COVID-19 pandemic- comments section positive about this engagement and further vaccinations in Nigeria [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/100044219794363/posts/451456566338333)

● **Kenya:**

○ Point of note is that majority of the side effects including thrombosis, GBS and pericarditis have been reported in the younger demographic receiving the vaccine. With the low risk of severe disease and death in this group, why the insistence on vaccinating them? ([LINK](https://twitter.com/OkeyoSeith/status/1458344604290461702))

○ Tweets expressing concerns and questions about vaccines in response to the circulating tweet regarding the death of a vaccinated woman ([LINK](https://twitter.com/CharlesChavo/status/1458350779824230402)).

○ ‘[@WHO](https://twitter.com/WHO) [@MOH\_Kenya](https://twitter.com/MOH_Kenya) how safe are the vaccines you’re administering? How safe is the COVID 19 jab? [@Twitter](https://twitter.com/Twitter) is quick to suppress those who raises issues but you don’t want to address this.’

○ ‘I keep warning people to not take vaccines. They are killing children now. Wake up.’

● **Angola:**

○ Claims that the vaccine AstraZeneca is causing heart inflammation [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/portalangop/posts/2706453579501483) (Facebook)

○ Questions raised about the relation of conception and getting vaccinated and its safety [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/EntreNos2016/photos/a.1054486438001597/4592001227583416)

**What can we do?**

* **Continue to work with local partners to produce targeted, country-specific information about vaccine side-effects and vaccine benefits.**
* **Continue providing information that demonstrates that the risks associated with contracting COVID-19 far outweigh the risks of vaccination, and why  
  vaccines are considered safe and effective.**
* **Produce content for journalists on Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) reporting and best practices, including using non-scientific language that is clear and understandable**
* The Official COVID-19 online resource and new portal from the Govt of South Africa notes under-reporting of side effects. A new video could be developed on this note.

**Persistent “forced vaccinations” complaints**

● **South Africa:**

○ There are reports that some people are not vaccinating for fear that if they go to a health facility, they might be diagnosed with HIV or other serious diseases.

○ Ongoing concern about giving incentives (Vooma vouchers of R100 groceries to over 60s who vaccinate) are described that as “coercion” bribing poor people with food: Another said, “It is a choice to accept the incentives, and older people are vulnerable to the virus because of co-morbidities and need support.” ([Here](https://m.facebook.com/HealthZA/photos/a.1029148150468051/4851231658259662/?type=3&source=48&refid=52&__tn__=EH-R)).

● **Kenya**:

○ This week’s Kenya’s Social Listening Collated Report notes forced vaccination on people attending Church, Hotels and Bars: An uproar on social media as Kenyans will soon be required to produce COVID-19 vaccination certificates when going to social places, attending church or going to hotels ([LINK](https://www.facebook.com/K24TVNews/posts/10159213248738141))

● **Angola**:

○ Mandatory Vaccine Certificate, or proof of the first dose, or COVID test to access public places, such as stadiums  [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=261302869283149) , or restaurants [LINK](https://www.facebook.com/PizzaHutAngola/posts/3359307744296153)

* **Democratic Republic of Congo**:
  + Questions about travel measures, including about cross border vaccination systems, about DRC registered vaccines not being recognised in Europe and about vaccine requirements. Alert levels raised for DRC ([LINK](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/republic-of-the-congo-trav)) and ([LINK](https://www.globaldiasporanews.com/covid-19-in-the-republic-of-the-congo-covid-19-high-level-3-covid-19-high-travel-health-notices-travelers-health-2/))

**What can we do?**

* Encourage governments and health authorities to make reassuring statements about vaccination processes

**PERSISTING ONLINE TRENDS**

\* bolded trends appear to circulate more this week

* **Debates on plurality of vaccines**
* **Frustration with double standards around health and safety measures (e.g. politicians not wearing masks)**
* **Frustration with slowness or mismanagement of vaccine rollout**
* **Vaccines don’t prevent death or the virus’ spread / vaccines are not effective**
* COVID-19 palliatives are being hidden/ denied to citizens
* Lockdowns are not an effective way of controlling COVID-19
* **Clinical trials were rushed**
* **Africans are lab rats or being used to test vaccines (Viral Facts response** [**here**](https://twitter.com/viralfacts/status/1384779123302752257)**)**
* New pandemic waves/ COVID-19 are caused by vaccines
* Other issues and/or diseases are more important than vaccination
* **Vaccines won’t stop the need for protective measures, why bother (Viral Facts response** [**here**](https://twitter.com/viralfacts/status/1377241510039683073)**)**
* COVID case numbers/ mortality rates are exaggerated
* **Foreign companies or governments profit from the vaccine rollout in Africa**
* **Fear of vaccine side effects/ long-term effects**
* **COVID does not exist (Viral Facts response** [**here**](https://www.facebook.com/WHOAFRO/videos/1059407544571240/)**)**
* Effectiveness of herbal remedies (Viral Facts response [here](https://twitter.com/viralfacts/status/1389878262743060483))
* **Effectiveness of ivermectin and alternative remedies (particularly in South Africa) (Viral Facts response** [**here)**](https://twitter.com/WHOAFRO/status/1394643247272706051)
* Frustration with looting and mismanagement of COVID funds
* Moderna vaccination pause in Finland ([**here**](https://www.facebook.com/261061365404/posts/10166067524165405))
* The upcoming seasonal flu campaigns at global level ([**LINK**](https://twitter.com/BernieSpofforth/status/1448567678281596928)), that may develop into potential discussions to be anticipated ([LINK](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/09/science/mrna-flu-vaccines.html))
* China’s coronavirus patients subject to abuse and bullying as new outbreaks emerge [(**LINK**)](https://www.thestar.com.my/aseanplus/aseanplus-news/2021/10/08/chinas-coronavirus-patients-subject-to-abuse-and-bullying-as-new-outbreaks-emerge)
* A [map of Africa’s vaccine progress to date](https://ewn.co.za/2021/09/21/africa-s-covid-19-vaccination-progress-to-date) illustrates alarmingly low vaccination rates on the continent
* Concerns emerge as COVID mutates in HIV positive people [here](https://www.facebook.com/100059283082154/posts/281296797189754) and [here](https://www.moneyweb.co.za/news/south-africa/worlds-worst-hiv-epidemic-stymies-south-africas-covid-fight/), complicating the fight against the COVID pandemic (articles from this week’s WHO EARS report)
* Hospital data in South Africa demonstrates that [COVID deaths primarily occur in unvaccinated individuals](https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/health-officials-say-hospital-data-proves-vaccines-are-safe-396a59f7-b9d4-403f-8760-b0a6230df0c3)
* Claim that the NCDC Vaccination Department director stated [AstraZeneca could be administered as a second dose](https://www.libyaobserver.ly/inbrief/permission-granted-astrazeneca-be-administered-second-dose-sputnik-v-vaccine) for those who received the Sputnik V vaccine
* Claim that [India plans to begin exporting vaccines again](https://www.citizen.co.za/news/covid-19/2629057/india-says-covid-vaccine-exports-to-restart-in-october/) in October
* Amnesty International states that [COVID vaccine firms are fuelling a human rights crisis](https://www.citizen.co.za/news/covid-19/2630544/vaccine-fuelling-human-rights-crisis/) by refusing to waive intellectual property rights for COVID vaccine technology

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*Methodology*

AIRA has implemented a temporary new social media listening set-up to fill the gap left by the departure of the AIRA Social Data Analyst until a new full-time person is recruited.

The new temporary social media listening set-up relies on a split of social media analysis conducted for French, English and Lusophone speaking countries. The social media analysis for French-speaking countries is conducted by the AIRA Infodemic Manager Consultant based in Guinea, the one for Lusophone speaking countries by the AIRA Infodemic Manager Consultant based in Angola, and the one for English speaking countries by a WHO AFRO social media officer.

The final report is a combination of the three analyses and recommendations. The shift from a social media listening monitoring conducted by only one person for the whole African region into a combined one based on the analysis conducted by three different people may result in a less detailed and exhaustive report.

Engagements, otherwise known as interactions, **refer to the number of likes, comments, reactions, and re-shares on a post**. This is not a perfect measure of engagement:

* Some may have seen the post and chosen not to interact with it;
* Commenting on or re-sharing a post may constitute a more meaningful form of engagement than simply reacting to it;
* We are not systematically distinguishing between the types of responses that each engagement generates (e.g. while a post may contain misinformation, people may be countering/ debunking it in the comments).

We seek to mitigate these limitations by:

* Scanning comments and monitoring reactions to qualitatively evaluate responses to each post;
* Assessing the velocity of a post (i.e. how fast is it obtaining reactions, likes, shares) and the re-emergence of specific themes;
* Identifying whether the post is shared across a variety of platforms and sources (broad engagement), or simply soliciting a high level of attention within a given community/ platform (siloed engagement).

The monitoring reports are produced using NewsWhip Analytics, TweetDeck, Crowdtangle, Google Trends, UNICEF Talkwalker dashboards as well as the WHO EPI-WIN weekly infodemic insight reports and WHO EARS platform. As a result, data may be biased towards data emerging from formal news outlets/ official social media pages and does not incorporate content circulating on closed platforms (e.g. Whatsapp) or groups (e.g. private Facebook groups). We also rely on our fact-checking partners, who provide invaluable insights into relevant national and regional trends or content, as well as country-level reports, including the South Africa Social Listening Weekly Report and the Mali Social Listening Weekly Report.

In producing these summaries and recommendations, we have consulted community feedback survey reports, as well as monitoring and recommendations from AIRA partners. We also draw from WHO EPI-WIN weekly reports and UNICEF monthly reports to formulate recommendations. As we produce more content, we seek to triangulate and corroborate information across these groups to strengthen our infodemic response.

Our commercial social listening tools include:







WHO social listening tools:

