



What is this report about?

This report aims at providing infodemic managers, communicators and public health practitioners with key infodemic insights that can further support in shaping relevant public communication, media production or risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) to the needs of communities, as well as informing public health policy and programming. This report is produced on a bi-weekly basis by the **Africa Infodemic Response Alliance (AIRA)**, a WHO-hosed network of international and regional organizations aimed at detecting and responding to health misinformation and improving information ecosystems in the African Region.

What did we find during this period?

- **Between 10-23 July 2025, we monitored 4,571 media articles published in the African region and 3,117 social media posts across Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok (1).** The media posts generated a total of 158,819 interactions, including reactions, comments, and shares. We complemented this data with community feedback data (2) and messages circulating through communities, collected through community-based offline mechanisms.
- **Among these, 57 posts were identified as containing relevant insights into infodemics circulating across communities, accounting for 21,773 comments.** Following AIRA's methodology, a total of 107 relevant infodemic data points (3) were recorded, falling under 17 overarching themes (see chart 1), with over 40% of conversations recorded in Kenya (see chart 2). This does not necessarily mean there are no similar conversations occurring in other countries, as representativity of these conversations may be influenced by differing patterns of internet access and social media usage across the region. However, it is important to highlight it given the recent public health events that took place in the country.

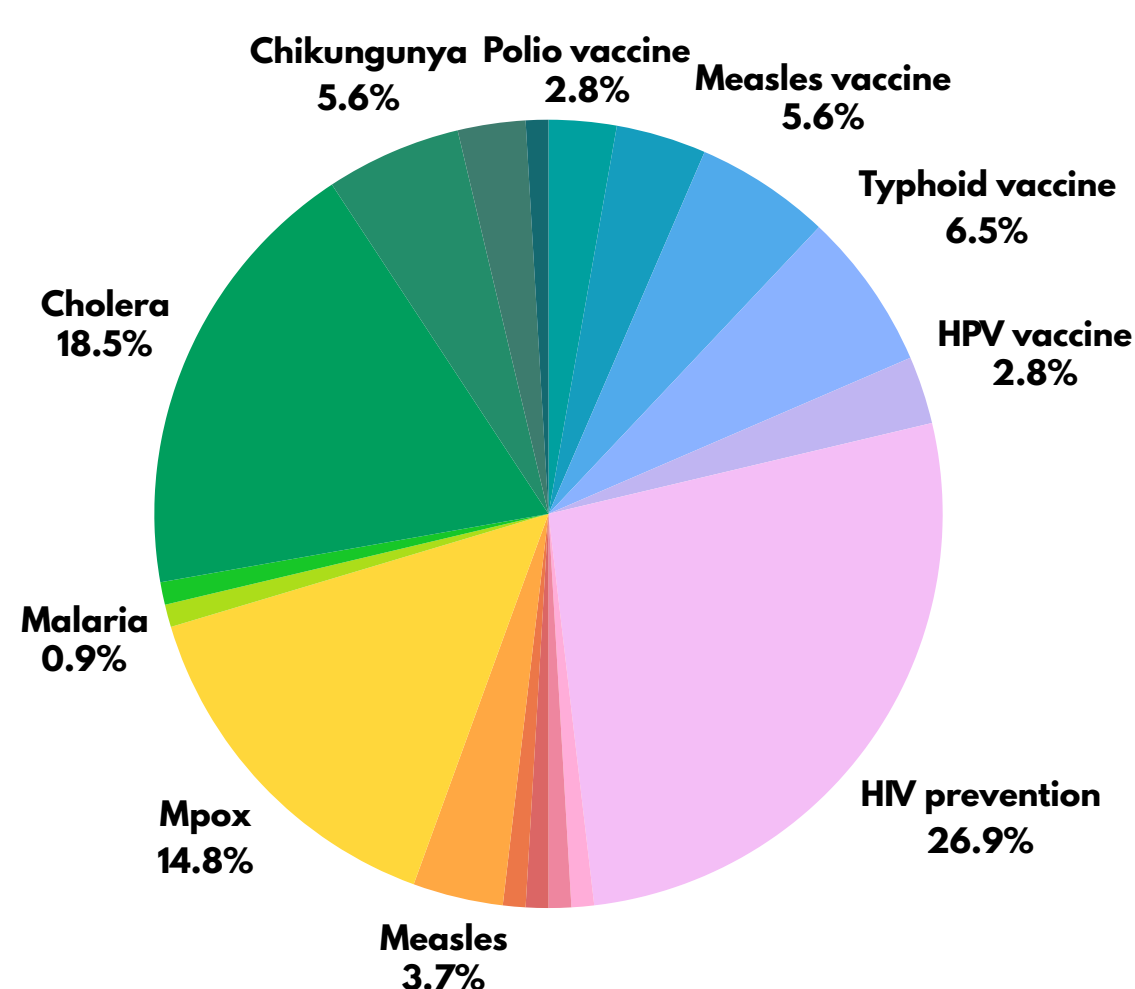


Chart 1. Distribution (%) of topics identified across our data for 10 – 25 July 2025 (4)

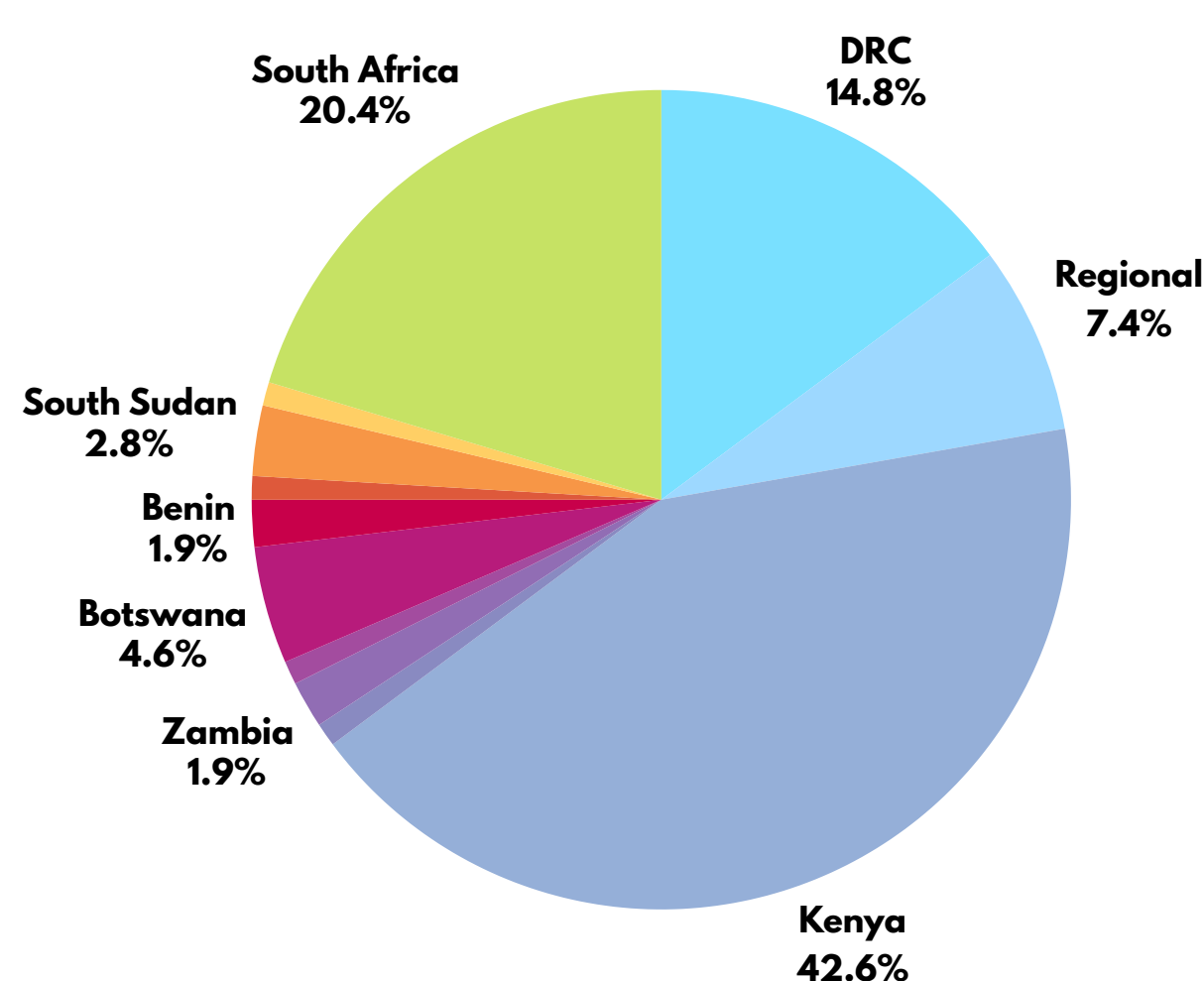


Chart 2. Distribution (%) of countries (as per media or social media page origin) identified across our data for 10-23 July 2025 (5)

Most frequently discussed topics:

The most frequently discussed topics this week relate to:

1. **WHO's landmark recommendation endorsing injectable lenacapavir for HIV prevention**, alongside broader announcements from Global Fund and national health authorities regarding upcoming rollout plans in several countries (accounting for 27% of all recorded data).
2. **The continued increase in cholera cases in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** amidst challenging WASH conditions in Kinshasa, highlighted by key influencers and journalists (accounting for over 18% of all recorded data).
3. **Detection of new mpox cases in South Africa, and the announcement of two people dying from mpox in Mombasa, Kenya** (accounting for almost 15% of all recorded data).

Overview per public health priority

Infodemic Insights Report 10-23 July, 2025

This section provides an overview of the most relevant issues identified across our data, presented by main public health emergencies. While we have identified concerns related to other issues (see chart 1), we selected those for which there are sufficient and relevant findings for discussion or those that can offer significant insights for operational response.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

MPOX (6)

Medium risk

South Africa, Kenya

- **Mpox remains a grade 3 emergency in the region.** From 1 January to 20 July 2025, 24 countries in Africa reported 28,152 confirmed mpox cases, including 133 deaths (CFR 0.5%). Of these, 21 countries on the reported ongoing active transmission of mpox in the last six weeks (as of 31 July, 2025) [\[link\]](#).
- Following the trend for the last months, mpox remains a widely discussed topic. However, the volume of conversations for this period has lowered in comparison to previous reports. **This time, conversations peaked in South Africa following the detection of two new cases in Gauteng and Western Cape and arrival of vaccines in the country [\[link\]](#), as well as the death of two people (7) in Mombasa, Kenya [\[link\]](#).**
- South Africa recently detected two laboratory-confirmed cases of mpox with no previous history of travel, increasing the total cumulative number of confirmed cases to ten since the beginning of the year 2025 (as of July 16, 2025) [\[link\]](#). Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health announced the arrival of approximately 10,500 doses of the mpox vaccine, Imvanex, as a donation from the Africa Centre for Disease Control and the beginning of a vaccination programme in affected provinces.
- Following these events, we have identified ongoing public concern in South Africa around mpox vaccines, making this the most discussed topic for mpox in the period. **Common misinformation narratives include fears about the use of mRNA technology in mpox vaccines, claims that these vaccines are poisonous, and suspicions that mpox vaccines are a disguised form of COVID-19 vaccination.** Additionally, many netizens question the need for widespread vaccination following the Ministry of Health's announcement of a targeted campaign focused on the most affected provinces—Gauteng, Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal. **This reflects a significant information gap, as the public seems unaware that the strategy is targeted to at-risk populations** and wonders why mass vaccinations is needed after detection of only two new cases [\[Example 1\]](#), [\[Example 2\]](#).

- From February 17 to 13 July 2025, Kenya officially reported 240 confirmed mpox cases, including 5 deaths (as of CFR]: 2.1%) across 20 counties [\[link\]](#). This information has been updated to 314 cases as of 31 July identified across 22 counties [\[link\]](#). The announcement on the death of two people in Mombasa, the most affected county in the country, triggered conversations around the response [\[link\]](#).
- **Top infodemic insights in Kenya suggest fatigue among netizens due to overlapping announcements of disease outbreaks i.e. mpox, chikungunya and vaccination efforts**, including the recently completed 10-day national vaccination campaign for typhoid, measles, and rubella, together with ongoing conversations around the need for mpox vaccination [\[Example 1\]](#), [\[Example 2\]](#).

CHOLERA (8)

High risk

Democratic Republic of Congo

- **Cholera remains a grade 3 emergency in the region.** From 1 January to 29 June 2025, a total of 143,762 cholera cases were reported across 19 countries in the African Region, with the highest number of cases reported from South Sudan, DRC and Angola [\[link\]](#). In June 2025 alone, the African Region reported 17,480 new cholera cases across 14 countries, marking a 27% decrease compared with May [\[link\]](#). However, there were 347 cholera-related deaths, a 15% decrease compared with the previous month [\[link\]](#).
- While cholera conversations have been prominent during the last months of our monitoring, they continue to wind down for the period. **Main concerns continue to be identified in the DRC, following trends for last week.** In June 2025, the country reported 5,715 new cholera cases and 193 cholera-associated deaths, with a CFR of 3.4%, marking a 2% decrease in cases and 58% increase in deaths compared to May 2025 [\[link\]](#).
- **The most commonly identified concern among social media users is the limited capacity of national authorities to control the outbreak, primarily due to inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure, especially in Kinshasa** [\[Example 1\]](#). Public reactions to journalists' reports on the poor waste management conditions in the capital have been further intensified by widespread criticism over the misuse of public funds, following the announcement of a US\$ 45 million tourism promotion deal between the DRC and FC Barcelona [\[Example 1\]](#), [\[Example 2\]](#).
- **We continued identifying a continuous lack of public awareness about the presence of cholera in Kinshasa**, an issue that requires high attention, considering that the city is one of the key hotspots for the outbreak, together with Tschopo and South Kivu. This challenge was already highlighted in the latest [AIRA Report 26 June-9 July 2025](#), which points to the ongoing need to strengthen risk communication.
- As identified in the media monitoring, **the fishing season in Mai-Ndombe province has also become a new driver of cholera spread.** Due to the lack of clean water and proper sanitation in fishing camps on the islets, fishermen seem to infect each other and contribute to spread the disease to the general population upon returning [\[link\]](#).

IMMUNIZATION

Low risk

TYPHOID VACCINE (9)

Kenya

- During the final days of the 10-day national vaccination campaign held from July 5th to July 14th, 2025, which introduced the Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine (TCV) for the first time in Kenya —administered alongside the Measles-Rubella vaccine [\[link\]](#)—concerns emerged around the issue of consent for vaccination. These concerns emerged in reaction to incendiary headlines that framed the government's reminder to vaccinate as some kind of a threat [\[Example 1\]](#), [\[Example 2\]](#). Examples include:

- Such headlines sparked extensive public commentary, including debates over the right to informed consent in vaccination campaigns, expressions of fear that vaccines might become mandatory and concerns over the tone and messaging used by authorities [\[Example 1\]](#), [\[Example 2\]](#).

MEASLES VACCINE (10)

Low risk

Kenya, South Africa

- **Conversations around measles vaccines have reemerged in Kenya**, in the context of the ongoing 10-day Measles-Rubella vaccination campaign held from July 5th to July 14th, 2025 [\[link\]](#).
- Insights identified include **parents' concerns over children being vaccinated without consent in schools and lack of trust on governments' intentions** to conduct nation-wide vaccinations [\[Example 1\]](#), [\[Example 2\]](#). Despite this, we also identified many users trying to support their peers in understanding the need for measles vaccines, often countering claims against authorities' efforts to reach every child.
- Following what was identified in the most recent [AIRA Report 26 June-9 July 2025](#), **marginal influence of international anti-vaccine narratives has also been observed for this period in South Africa**, seeding doubt on their safety. While it's only very few comments, these make a direct sharing of content from the US-based anti-vaccine organization Children's Health Defense, as well as other misleading articles of low scientific value.
- **It is important to closely monitor and remain alert to these narratives** in the country, as even marginal influence from global anti-vaccine trends can further erode public trust, amplify misinformation, and potentially undermine confidence in vaccine safety and uptake.

OTHER:

MEASLES (11)

Medium risk

South Africa

- Despite the detection of 520 laboratory-confirmed measles cases during the epidemiological week 29 (14-20 July 2025) in South Africa [\[link\]](#), public reactions to social media posts on the ongoing efforts to control the outbreak **reveal a low-risk perception of the disease** [\[Example 1\]](#).
- Commentary also reveals some **confusion between measles and Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD)**, a separate childhood illness for which cases were reported in early 2025 in the KwaZulu-Natal (one of the provinces also affected by the measles outbreak) [\[link\]](#). Many users compare symptoms without a clear understanding of the differences between the two diseases [\[Example 1\]](#).

HIV PREVENTION (12)

High risk

Regional with a focus on Kenya

- **Conversations around HIV long-term prevention offered by injectable lenacapavir continue to gain momentum following the WHO's recommendation for its use** [\[link\]](#) and announcement on its broader rollout across several African countries, supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria [\[link\]](#). This issue has been widely covered in our latest reports [AIRA report 19-25 June 2025](#) and [AIRA Report 26 June-9 July 2025](#), following the injectable's approval by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in mid-June 2025 [\[link\]](#).
- **The majority of conversations have been recorded from Kenya**, as the Ministry of Health announced that the country will be one among nine in the region selected to introduce lenacapavir by January 2026 [\[link\]](#).
- Top insights point to a **widespread fear about experimentation**, identified in almost half of the data recorded [\[Example 1\]](#), [\[Example 2\]](#). Additional concerns expressed by netizens are around cost and the need for clarification on state subsidies to access the injectable [\[Example 1\]](#). Confusion on whether it is for treatment or prevention was also identified across our data [\[Example 2\]](#). For more information, please consult the next section, 'Trend in Focus'.

Trend in focus: Discussions around HIV prevention injectable roll-out in the region

Infodemic Insights Report 10-23 July, 2025

What is happening?

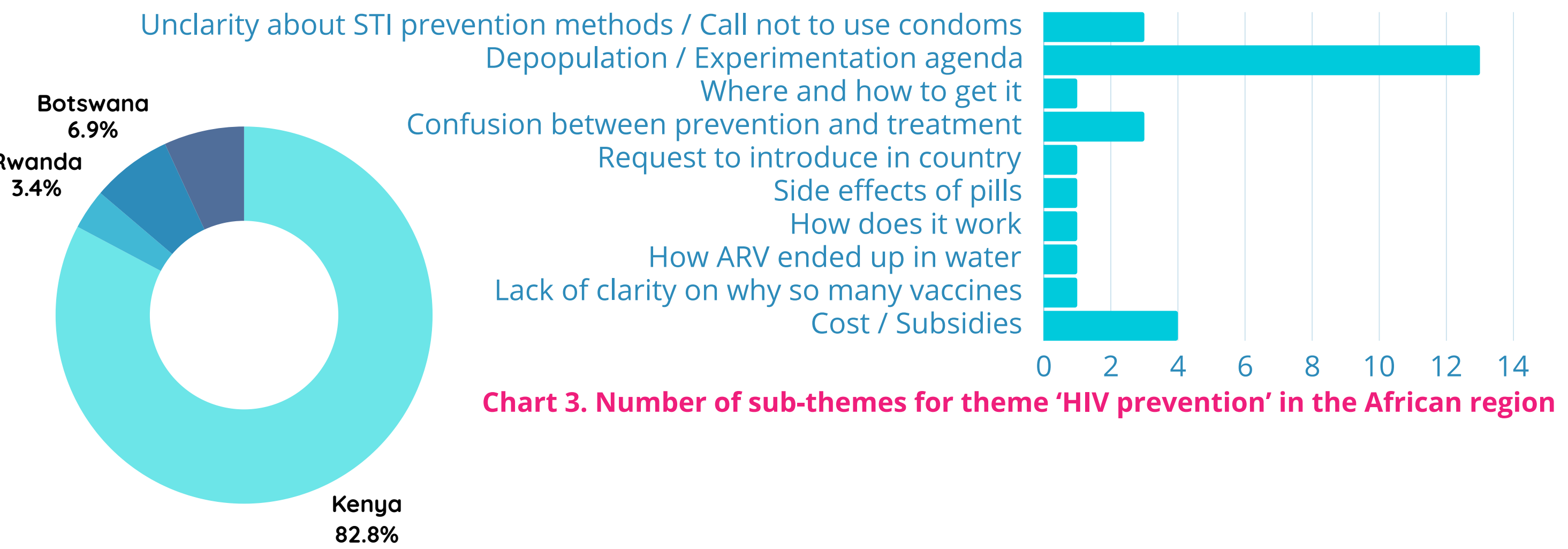
On 15 June 2025, the US FDA approved lenacapavir as a long-acting injectable pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV prevention [\[link\]](#), with clinical trials showing $\geq 99.9\%$ effectiveness in reducing the risk of HIV transmission [\[link\]](#), [\[link\]](#), [\[link\]](#). While PrEP to prevent HIV has been available for a decade, it typically requires taking one pill a day. Lenacapavir simplifies this by requiring only two injections per year, eliminating the need for daily adherence [\[link\]](#).

On 14 July 2025, **WHO issued new guidelines recommending injectable lenacapavir for global HIV prevention programmes with prequalification expected to accelerate national regulatory approvals** [\[link\]](#). The Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria has also signed an agreement with Gilead, the manufacturer, to procure lenacapavir at cost for low- and middle-income countries, aiming to reach 2 million people over three years. The aim is to reach at least one African country by the end of 2025, particularly targeting high-incidence settings like South Africa [\[link\]](#), [\[link\]](#).

In Kenya, the Division of National AIDS and STI Programme, of the Ministry of Health, announced that the country was one of the early adopters of the injectable, with plans to be rolled out in 2026 [\[link\]](#), [\[link\]](#). Yet concerns remain on how it will be rolled out with the departure of the United States' President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which supported HIV programmes in Kenya [\[link\]](#).

Overview of infodemic insights

Between 10-23 July 2025, **we monitored 800 media articles and 908 social media posts from Facebook, YouTube and Instagram responding to our search criteria** (13) We identified 17 posts containing relevant insights into infodemics for the theme HIV prevention in the African region, accounting all for 16,998 comments. Following AIRA's methodology, 37 relevant infodemic data points (14) were recorded, falling under 10 overarching themes (see chart 3). Kenya accounted for the highest number of data points, representing nearly 83% of the total (see chart 4).



Key findings

The top sub-themes identified included:

1. **Concerns about its rollout in Africa, particularly in Kenya, with allegations of experimentation on African populations**, which accounted for nearly half of all recorded data (44.8%) and appeared with notably high frequency in the posts [\[Example 1\]](#), [\[Example 2\]](#), [\[Example 3\]](#).
2. Questions and concerns about **the cost of the medication** and the possibility of subsidies [\[Example 1\]](#);
3. **Confusion regarding whether lenacapavir is a treatment, a cure, or a preventive measure** [\[Example 1\]](#); and
4. Significant information gaps and misunderstandings around **HIV prevention versus the prevention of other sexually transmitted infections (STIs)**. In this regard, some users explicitly called for an end to condom use, disregarding other STIs that are prevented through physical barriers [\[Example 1\]](#), [\[Example 2\]](#).



Box 1. Examples of extracts from commentary for 'HIV prevention' in Kenya (originally identified both in English and Swahili and translated with Google Translate)

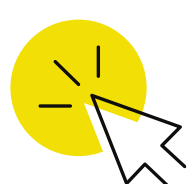
Why is it concerning?

- **Kenya's health system is facing a critical transition as PEPFAR winds down support given US funding cuts.** The loss of infrastructure, funding, and trust built over decades could leave major gaps in HIV service delivery. Nearly 150 HIV clinics have closed, leaving thousands of antiretroviral therapy patients without care [\[link\]](#), thousands of healthcare workers supported by USAID have been laid off or remain unpaid [\[link\]](#) and access to essential commodities like HIV test kits, and condoms has been compromised [\[link\]](#). This interruption has also impacted health education, community outreach and training [\[link\]](#) – **essential areas to build trust and adherence when a new intervention such as the injectable lenacapavir is being introduced.**
- Kenya is preparing for a national rollout in 2026, but these findings, gathered just weeks after the FDA and WHO announcements, show that **public sentiment is already forming in the country with a significant portion of the public mistrusting this new intervention, largely outside of official and expert messaging.** This gap between global guidance and local perception highlights an urgent need for coordinated, early, and community-centred communication efforts.
- **Misconceptions about lenacapavir's protection may dangerously undermine sexual health in Kenya, where STIs remain prevalent across different populations and age** [\[link\]](#), [\[link\]](#), [\[link\]](#). Calls to abandon condom use or the misconception that only HIV poses a risk can lead to increased transmission of other STIs. Continued promotion of condom use is crucial to protect against a wide range of infections beyond HIV.

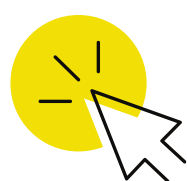
What could we do about it?

- **It is essential to communicate clearly and transparently about the next steps in the rollout of lenacapavir in the country, before it actually begins.** This must be done considering any funding limitations that may restrict the immediate scale-up of lenacapavir across all of Kenya, helping manage public expectations and preventing misinformation, by explaining next steps in the process, who will have access, how, and when.
- Launch comprehensive campaigns across various media platforms to educate the public about lenacapavir's safety and efficacy. **Highlight that lenacapavir has undergone rigorous testing in multiple countries**, including South Africa, Uganda, the United States, and Thailand, demonstrating its effectiveness and safety profile [\[link\]](#), [\[link\]](#), [\[link\]](#).
- **Leverage trusted community networks to address fears:** Partner with local leaders, peer educators, and community health volunteers in high HIV-burden counties in Kenya (e.g., Kisumu, Nairobi, Nyanza) to co-develop culturally sensitive messaging that confronts experimentation fears and supports community uptake.
- **Organize training sessions for community health workers** to equip them with accurate information about lenacapavir while emphasizing on the need to continue using other preventive methods for STIs, even if lenacapavir is being used.

RESOURCE BOX



TO INFORM YOUR COMMUNICATION: WHO Recommendations on Injectable Lenacapavir for HIV Prevention (July 2025)



TO INFORM STI PREVENTION MESSAGING: FHI 360 Toolkit to design social media campaigns that promote condom use



TO SUPPORT WIDER HIV PREVENTION: Global HIV Prevention Coalition - Resource Hub

Methodology & Footnotes

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What is our methodology?

AIRA’s methodology combines online social listening at the regional level with offline data where available, depending on the local data collection capacities of AIRA’s members. The online social listening is supported by the systematic monitoring of offline data in the DRC, Kenya, and Nigeria to detect viral content circulating among communities. AIRA further draws on a wide network of over 350 infodemic managers, RCCE practitioners, and fact-checkers who share relevant infodemic insights that are documented for analysis.

Social media and online media monitoring is supported by tools such as NewsWhip (Spike) and Google Trends. Analyses of online conversations are guided by performance indicators such as engagement rate (number of “likes,” comments, reactions, and shares). However, these indicators have limitations: they do not always capture the full reach or the intent behind responses. To address this, the team conducts a qualitative analysis of comments and assesses risks based on emerging narratives, public health priorities, and the potential for disruption to operational response.

FOOTNOTES

- 1.The social media monitoring software used does not support geolocation for activity in X. However, we actively monitored this platform, with a resulting number of 15,405 relevant posts originating within and beyond the African region.
- 2.Community feedback is defined as “word of mouth” conversations happening in communities. For this issue, we gathered community feedback data from the Democratic Republic of Congo
- 3.These infodemic data points include misinformation, information gaps, concerns, claims or requests, expressions of celebration or positive reactions as well as instances of journalistic malpractices that are also recorded.
- 4.This data does not aim at being representative of the whole infodemic landscape in the WHO African Region but it provides a snapshot of the main themes identified following AIRA’s social listening methodology.
- 5.This data does not aim at being representative of the whole infodemic landscape in the WHO African Region but it provides a snapshot of the main countries represented in conversations and identified following AIRA’s social listening methodology.
- 6.A total of 7 posts, with a total of 1,365 reactions and 313 comments were identified as containing relevant infodemic insights following a preliminary search using the following keywords: ("mpox") OR ("monkeypox") OR ("smallpox") OR ("orthopox") OR ("poxvirus") OR ("rash") OR ("skin lesions") OR ("swollen lymph nodes") OR ("mpox vaccine") OR ("vaccination campaign") OR ("contagious disease") OR ("quarantine") OR ("isolation"), applied to content in all languages and published in Africa, for the period of June 10-23 July, 2025. This search originally resulted in 179 media articles with 4400 interactions and 525 social media posts, including X, which is not geographically focused on the African Region.
- 7.As of the time of writing this report, three more deaths have been recorded in Mombasa. See more in: <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2025-08-01-5-deaths-reported-as-kenya-confirms-314-mpox-cases>
- 8.A total of 14 posts, with a total of 3,213 reactions and 454 comments were identified as containing relevant infodemic insights following a preliminary search using the following keywords: ("cholera") OR ("kolera") OR ("choléra") OR ("cólera") OR ("kkolera") OR ("kipindupindu") OR ("?????"), applied to content in all languages and published in Africa, with a focus on DRC, for the period of June 10- 23 July 2025. This search originally resulted in 233 media articles with 7000 interactions and 80 social media posts, including X, which is not geographically focused on the African Region.
- 9.A total of 5 posts, with a total of 4,527 reactions and 1,325 comments were identified related to thyphoid vaccine introduction in Kenya as containing relevant infodemic insights following a preliminary search using the following keywords: ("vaccine safety") OR ("vaccine") OR ("vaccin") OR ("vaccine campaign") , applied to content in all languages and published in Africa, with a focus on Kenya, for the period of June 10-23 July 2025. This search originally resulted in 125 media articles with 10,400 interactions and 238 social media posts, including X, which is not geographically focused on the African Region.
- 10.A total of 2 posts, with a total of 778 reactions and 1,081 comments were identified as containing relevant infodemic insights for measles and vaccines in South Africa, following a preliminary search using the following keywords: ("vaccine safety") OR ("vaccine") OR ("vaccin") OR ("vaccine campaign") OR ("measles") OR ("rougeole") OR ("???") OR ("sarampo") OR ("sarampión") OR ("surua") OR ("rubeola"), applied to content in all languages and published in Africa, for the period of June 10-23 July 2025. This search originally resulted in 18 media articles with 60 interactions and 1,012 social media accounts, including X, which is not geographically focused on the African Region.
- 11.A total of 2 posts, with a total of 778 reactions and 1,081 comments were identified as containing relevant infodemic insights for measles and vaccines in South Africa, following a preliminary search using the following keywords: ("vaccine safety") OR ("vaccine") OR ("vaccin") OR ("vaccine campaign") OR ("measles") OR ("rougeole") OR ("???") OR ("sarampo") OR ("sarampión") OR ("surua") OR ("rubeola"), applied to content in all languages and published in Africa, for the period of June 10-23 July 2025. This search originally resulted in 18 media articles with 60 interactions and 1,012 social media accounts, including X, which is not geographically focused on the African Region.
- 12.A total of 17 posts, with a total of 45,901 reactions and 16,998 comments were identified as containing relevant infodemic insights for this theme following a preliminary search using the following keywords: ("HIV") OR ("VIH") OR ("SIDA") OR ("AIDS") OR ("condom") OR ("sexually transmitted") OR ("antirretroviral") OR (anti-retroviral) OR ("ARV") OR ("ART") OR ("PREP") OR ("pre-exposure prophylaxis"), applied to content in all languages and published in Africa, with a focus on Kenya, for the period of 10-23 July 2025. This search originally resulted in 800 media articles with 41,600 interactions and 1, 908 social media posts, including X, which is not geographically focused on the African Region.
- 13.The social media monitoring software used does not support geolocation for activity in X. However, we actively monitored this platform for HIV prevention-related content, with a resulting number of 1,000 relevant posts originating within and beyond the African region.
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