

ZIMBABWE

COMMUNITY PERCEPTION AND RUMOR TRACKER

Understanding perceptions, questions, and rumors in Zimbabwean communities



What is the CPT?

The CPT is an approach that uses a mobile tool to enable staff to capture, analyse and understand the perceptions of communities during disease outbreaks. **It is only relevant as an overlay to an existing programme.**

Action Against Hunger (ACF) Zimbabwe and Africa AHEAD (AA) are employing a Community Perception Tracker (CPT) on the KoBo Collect platform to understand perceptions around COVID-19. The CPT is not a survey or an accountability system, instead it allows partners to monitor perceptions and rumors in the community so that information can be formally collected and utilized to adapt the programming. All data is anonymous and the perceptions are collected during normal program activities; for example, when field teams speak with a community health worker or a teacher who mentions an interesting perception about COVID-19, the team asks for consent and records the perception.



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Overview

83 Perceptions collected
/355
Total to date

45 MALES:
3 boys, 42 men

37 FEMALES:
2 girls, 32 women and 3 elderly women

1 perception was collected from a mixed group

59% "WORD OF MOUTH"
as the source of information

89% \square 11%

Community members vs. Medical staff who shared perceptions

Women from Driefontein Mission: "We are now depending on natural methods like fever tea, steaming and lemons so that we stay safe from the pandemic"

Medical staff from Chimanimani: "The hospital is failing to handle COVID-19 cases because of lack of resources, no testing kits and no PPE for staff"

Highlights of the Month

"COVID-19 is a real killer disease" acceptance vs denial.

This month we have seen a number of perceptions that are linked to the acceptance that COVID-19 is dangerous. These perceptions are mainly coming from people in urban areas. There is a significant number of perceptions where people are taking lockdown regulations as a good measure to reduce the spread of COVID-19. There are also reports of those defying the regulations in order to make a living.

There is an increase in trusting home remedies to treat or prevent COVID-19.

A significant number of people are now resorting to drinking "fever tea" (Zumbani) as a measure to prevent or treat COVID-19. There are a number of concerns and beliefs that going to the hospital is fatal as opposed to utilization of home remedies

COVID-19 vaccine beliefs - will it work?

A significant number of people are concerned or against taking the COVID-19 vaccine once it's available. Some people think that the vaccine is poisoned to kill people especially Africans.

Concerns over livelihoods, COVID-19 has greatly impacted on a number of livelihoods especially businesses.

There are widespread fears of hunger and starvation. Businesses are closed and employers cannot afford to pay employees.

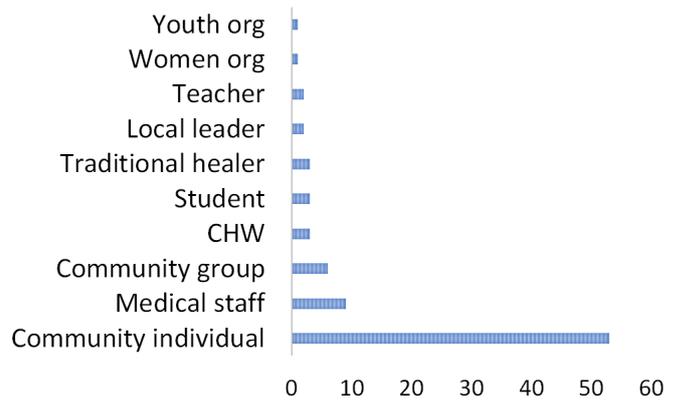
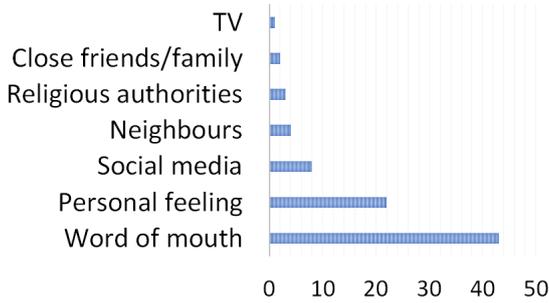
"People are dying because of COVID. It is better to follow guidelines like wearing face masks and hand washing"

"Fever tea can treat COVID-19"

"Our government should not accept this COVID vaccine because it's said to be killing people especially Africans"

"We are not working because of COVID-19, we have no food"

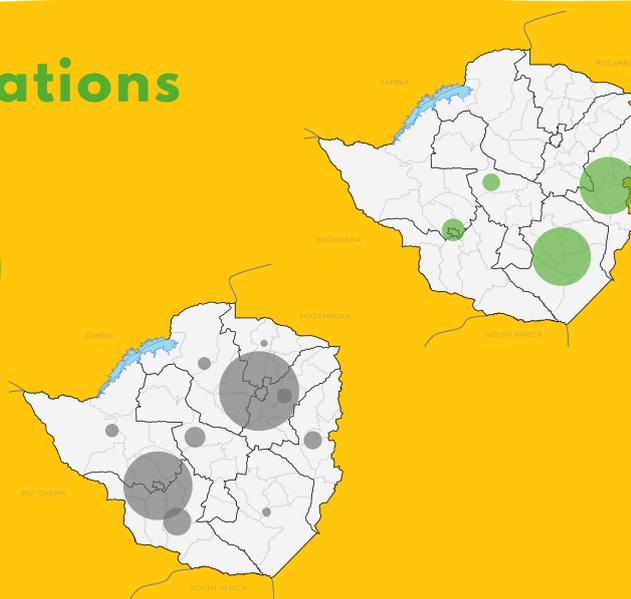
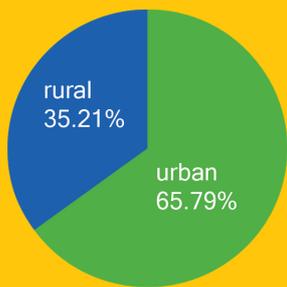
Data Sources



HOW? Information on COVID-19 is spreading within the communities where teams work. *Word of mouth* remains the most common channel of spreading the information.

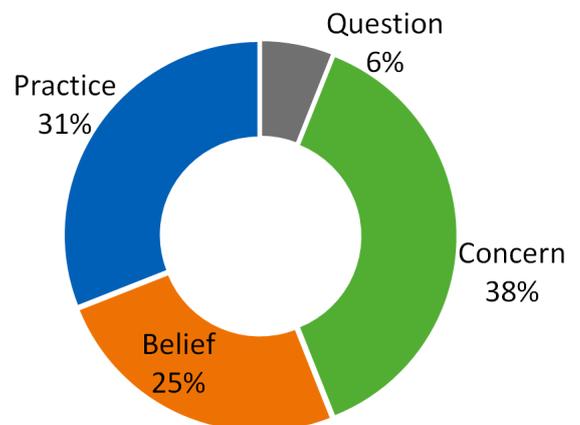
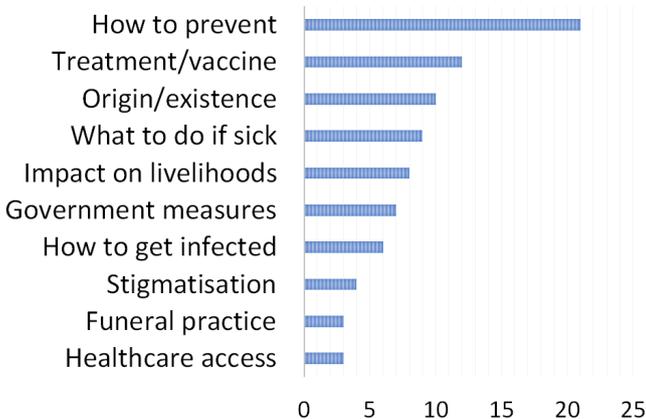
WHO? *Community individuals* remain the major source of perceptions. Other perceptions have been collected from medical staff and other groups within the communities with whom ACF and AA teams work.

Data Locations



65% perceptions were collected from urban areas. Perceptions were collected in four provinces, 12 districts and 20 wards. Masvingo and Manicaland have the most number of perceptions collected this month. The map in **GREEN** indicates where CPT was used, and the map in **GREY** indicates where recent cases of COVID-19 were recorded.

Perception Types



Captured perceptions are categorized by **theme** and **type**; **21** perceptions were categorized as *how to prevent COVID-19* as a theme, and **38%** were categorized as *a concern* as a type of perception.

Category & Theme

Perception theme	Community group	CHW	Community individual	Local leader	Medical staff	Student	Teacher	Traditional healer	Women org	Youth org	Total
Healthcare access					3						3
Funeral practice			3								3
How to get infected		1	3	1			1				6
How to prevent	1	1	11		4	2		1		1	21
Impact on livelihoods	2		5	1							8
Government measures			6			1					7
Origin/existence			10								10
Stigmatisation			2					1	1		4
Treatment/vaccine	3		6		2			1			12
What to do if sick		1	7				1				9
Total	6	3	53	2	9	3	2	3	1	1	83

Who provides the perception \square **theme:** shows that CPT teams have collected a lot of perceptions on prevention, treatment, and origins of COVID-19. The high number of perceptions on prevention may indicate a high concern/level of engagement from the public on this topic, and therefore needs more clear information from government and organisations in communities.

Who provided information	Community group	CHW	Community individual	Local leader	Medical staff	Student	Teacher	Traditional healer	Women org	Youth org	Total
A belief			15	1		2	2	1			21
A concern	4	2	18	1	5	1		1	1		33
A practice	1	1	17		3			1		1	24
A question	1		3		1						5
Total	6	3	53	2	9	3	2	3	1	1	83

Perception category \square **who provide the perception:** shows very few *questions* being asked around COVID-19. With the recent spike in cases, at the end of December 2020, multiple platforms including SMS, WhatsApp, etc. have been utilized to spread information about COVID-19, often without being verified. Although the lack of questions may indicate that the majority of participants feel confident in their information, the rise in misinformation is a concern if unverified information is trusted.

Users with Specific Needs



3% of perceptions captured from pregnant or lactating women



7% of perceptions captured this period were from people with a visible disability

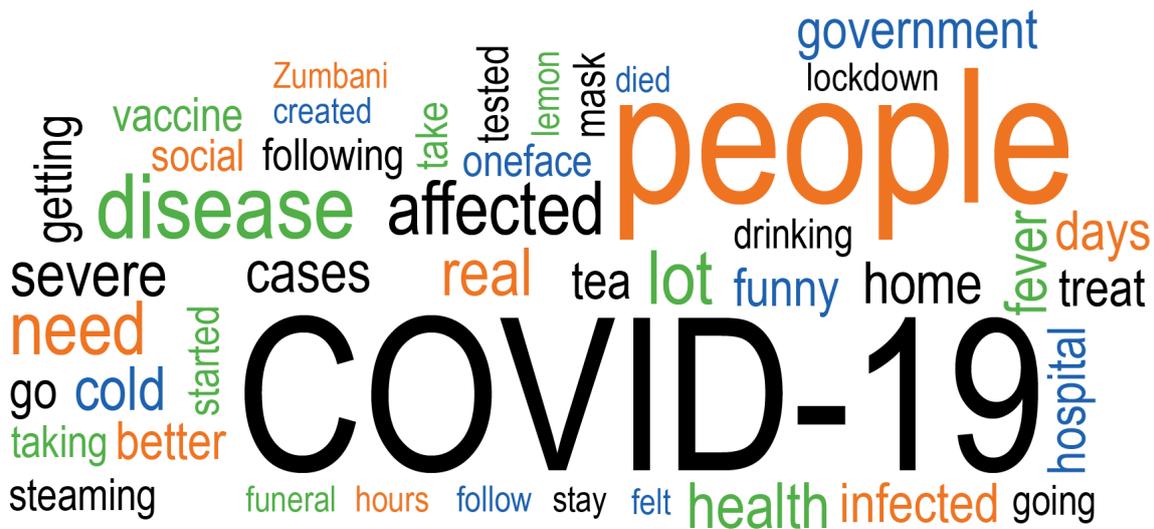


4% of perceptions captured this period were from the elderly

"COVID-19 affected my source of income, I used to get income from bus transporters but now they are not operational" - A blind man in Mashonaland East

"Test results take some time to be released and there are people who continue with their daily business while awaiting test results (symptomatic or not) instead of going into isolation. This careless attitude poses a huge risk to the whole community" - An elderly woman in Bulawayo

Word Cloud



This **word cloud** gives weight to words said most often in perceptions collected during this month. The more often a word is said, the more weight it is given across perceptions, and the larger it appears.

Recommendations

COMMUNICATION

- Improve on the information related to COVID-19 vaccines, especially for healthcare workers and medical staff
- Target misinformation, encourage influential leaders to seek safe and correct information
- Increase messaging on protection issues, in particular, child marriages, unintended pregnancies, gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse

Key Actions Taken This Month:

- Published 1st CPT Bulletin for the last quarter of 2020
- Surpassed 300 CPT perceptions collected!
- Edited the CPT questions to be more in line with the context

ACTIONS

- Focus on frontline health workers, particularly with PPE and training in order for them to stay protected
- Assist people with disabilities whose livelihoods have been affected the lockdown measures
- MoHCC and organisations engaging with communities should take an official stance on the increasing reliance on home remedies
- Increase messaging on eliminating GBV through road shows, radio discussions, and use WhatsApp platforms to identify root causes and how it can be reduced.