

EPI-WIN webinar (26th of November 2024)

Strengthening RCCE response to mpox outbreak in the African continent: countries' experience

CONTINENTAL JOINT MPOX RESPONSE AND RCCE INTERVENTIONS

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- On August 13, 2024, the Africa CDC declared the mpox outbreak a Public Health Emergency of Continental Security (PHECS).
 - On August 14, the WHO declared it a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), under the International Health Regulation (IHR, 2005)
 - A coordinated, continent-wide co-led by the African Union (AU) through the Africa CDC and the World Health Organization (WHO), in close collaboration with global partners working under a unified Strategic and Preparedness Response Plan, budget, and monitoring framework (SRP)
 - **Period: September 2024-February 2025**
 - **14 affected countries and 15 others for readiness**
1. Coordination and leadership
 2. Risk communication and communication and engagement
 3. Surveillance,
 4. Laboratory,
 5. Case management,
 6. Infection prevention and control,
 7. Vaccination,
 8. Research and innovation,
 9. Logistics and financing,
 10. Continuity of essential services

Strategic Objective: Support and engage communities, particularly the most vulnerable members, so that they practice key public health recommendations and access the needed services to reduce mpox transmission, morbidity, mortality and secondary impacts.

Actions:

- Engage communities in public health response and ensure their perspective and realities drive the mpox response interventions
- Develop and implement continental RCCE plans and strategies tailored to mpox response
- Support countries in developing/revising and implementing their evidence-based RCCE plans based on target populations
- Support countries to collect and use social and behavioural data
- Support the participation of civil society and community-based organizations
- Support countries in developing impactful and contextualized communication campaigns
- Assist in the creation and dissemination of culturally and linguistically appropriate messages
- Build the capacity of frontline workers and other stakeholders
- Support countries to develop/strengthen community feedback mechanisms
- Support countries in collecting, analyzing, and addressing rumours and infodemics, and counter misinformation and disinformation
- Support media engagement and capacity building of the media personnel (health journalists).

- Engagement with countries via online meetings to deep dive, assess the gaps and agree on the ways to address those (CAR, Congo Republic, Burundi, Kenya, DRC, Nigeria)
- Development of vaccination materials and support the contextualization
- Collecting feedback from communities - tools shared and harmonized for better joint analysis and recommendations
- Guide for vaccinators and CHW
- Workshops with RCCE national partners to reinforce their capacities
- Mapping of stakeholders (youth and schools' representatives)
- Workshop to review IEC materials
- Technical assistance to Member States
- Rapid Qualitative and Quantitative Assessments Tools package
- Collection and documentation of Community insights
- Capacity building
- Development of harmonized tool for feedback mechanisms

Infodemic management

- October -



Rwanda: Conducted training for 40 personnel from MoH (RCCE/IM dept) on Infodemic Management and the Africa Misinformation Portal (AMP) to support field responders in rapid response to mpox and Marburg misinformation in the field.

Media dialogue: AIRA partnered with Internews, WHO and IFRC to organize a media dialogue to update francophone journalists from the region on the mpox outbreak and upcoming vaccines - making science accessible, engaging on key recommendations to report adequately and address info voids/misinfo.

- **Regular social listening:** Ongoing online social listening and triangulation of offline data/data from dark channels with COs and partners.
- **Infodemic reports:** Produced 4 weekly social listening reports and 4 mpox weekly infodemic updates. Disseminated internally (WHO), to regional WGs, and mailing list of regional partners (around 800 recipients).

- **A series of 8 mythbusters was co-developed with Africa CDC and UNICEF** in response to main rumours identified in the country throughout previous months, and released through several social media channels.
- **A total of 11 mpox explainers/debunks** were produced as part of Viral Facts Africa pillar in Swahili and Lingala.



- 79,000 people reached through social media using the hashtag #StopMpoxRDC created by young web watchers.
- A briefing on MPOX for web watchers and U-Reporters brought together more than 500 participants, including 300 in person.
- More than 100 young web watchers briefed and engaged in the fight against false information and discrimination online around MPOX.
- A guide to rumors and key answers has been developed and is updated daily.
- IEC materials validation workshop and translation into national languages. Immediate reproduction of more than 10,000 visuals. Graphics support for social networks

- **Briefing of 50 journalists at national level** on the particularity of mpox vaccination,
- **Community engagement of key populations in Kinshasa, North_Kivu and South-Kivu provinces** (integrated capacity building of about 150 peer educators and representatives, vaccination, continuous sensitization, etc.)
- Contextualization of districts RCCE plans and of messages
- Integration of vaccination related issues in the implementation of RCCE activities through CAC-RECO, Peer Educators, ACSA, opinion leaders and leaders of specific targets.
- **SMS announcing vaccination in the Health Zones** concerned
- **More than 30 radio stations broadcasting spots, and dialogue spaces on mpox in North Kivu**, (estimated 2.6 million people).
- **Partnership with Radio Okapi** (national audience of 26 million people) broadcasting spots several times a day, **in French and in all local languages on symptoms, prevention, including at school and vaccination**. Estimated national total: 38 million



INDICATORS					
Country	KPI	Target	Achieved	Performance (%)	Status
All	Number of RCCE training modules finalised and shared	4	1 training module RQA+ 1 guide communicator	50%	On track
All	Number of countries supported to co design and co-implement community engagement interventions	16	7 countries supported (Bu+ SA+DRC+Congo +CAR+ Nigeria+ Uganda)	44%	On track
All	Number of experts equipped with knowledge on mpox at continental level	800	Training of 50 RCCE Experts in the DRC+ 80 Nigeria webinar	16%	Expect to be reached this week
All	Number of coordination meeting organized through the RCCE exchange platform	9	4 (CoP and Epi Win)	44%	On track
All	Number of countries supported to conduct behavioural qualitative and quantitative rapid assessments	11	21 countries supported	190%	Achieved
All	Number of validation workshop on the IEC tools for school settings and youth	1		0%	Ongoing
DRC, CAR, Burundi, Congo	Number of Youth Health Advocates trained and deployed in 4 MS (DRC, CAR, Burundi, Congo) to mobilize and sensitize their communities on Mpox	240	ongoing	0%	Ongoing
All	Number of countries to which specific recommendations are produced based on social listening and feedback reports	7	5 (DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Uganda)	71%	On track

Challenges and next steps

Challenges

- Lack of enough qualitative and quantitative data for continental analysis and better overview of the needs and priority RCCE interventions from a continental perspective
- Financial resources to support countries

Next steps

- Action tracker to follow up on recommendations
- Adaptation to continental of the qualitative and quantitative data collection package
- Support countries to collect qualitative data from communities (surveys, Focus Group Discussions, community dialogues, community feedback and social listening online and offline, etc.)
- Conduct advocacy for funds allocation

Thank you
