

Africa Infodemic Response Alliance

A WHO-HOSTED NETWORK



AIRA Infodemic Trends Report
20 December 2024 - 3 January 2025
Weekly brief #145

Top concerns

[South Sudanese complain about lack of access to basic commodities amidst cholera outbreak and Zambian fear school closure, label cholera outbreaks “annual tradition” in January.](#)

Online discussions about cholera in South Sudan and Zambia include a mix of frustration at local authorities and panic about public health measures amidst response to outbreaks in both countries.

[Conversations surrounding mpox in Kenya, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo often center on widespread distrust in local and health authorities, rather than the measures to stop the spread of the disease.](#)

Discussions about mpox are dominated by a deep-seated distrust of local and health authorities, overshadowing concerns and response measures about the disease itself.

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Public Health Infodemic Trends in the African Region

This weekly report provides key highlights and operational recommendations based on social listening data from 20 December 2024 - 3 January 2025 in Africa.

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South Sudan, Zambia

South Sudanese complain about lack of access to basic commodities amidst cholera outbreak and Zambian fear school closure, label cholera outbreaks “annual tradition” in January.

Engagement/ South Sudan: 16 posts, 3360 likes, 630 comments

- In analyzing the online discussions about the cholera outbreak in South Sudan, several key themes and sentiments emerge. A significant number of posts shared by South Sudanese radio stations on their Facebook pages, express deep concern about the rising cholera death toll, with reports of over 157 deaths [\[LINK, LINK\]](#). Online users are concerned over the escalating cholera outbreak with speculations that the actual death toll could be higher, especially in remote areas where health records are incomplete or non-existent. [\[LINK\]](#)
- Online users voiced frustration with the Ministry of Health's recommendation to drink safe water, pointing out that many communities in South Sudan lack access to basic commodities such as clean water, soap, and food. [\[LINK\]](#) At the same time, many commenters express frustration at the ongoing gun violence in the country, with guns being used to harm South Sudanese rather than focusing on collective solutions to public health issues. [\[LINK, LINK\]](#)
- On a positive note, a sentiment of gratitude is expressed towards international organizations, with online users emphasizing that their support in combating the cholera outbreak has a real impact. For example, one commenter notes, *"USAID's support is vital to our survival, especially given the lack of meaningful assistance from our own government."* [\[LINK, LINK\]](#)
- When it comes to vaccines, South Sudanese online users expressed strong support for the arrival of cholera vaccine doses, highlighting the critical need for these vaccines to be distributed to the country's most vulnerable states. Many emphasized that regions most affected by the outbreak, particularly those with limited healthcare access, should be prioritized to ensure that the vaccines reach those who need them most. [\[LINK, LINK\]](#)

Why is it concerning?

- Epidemiological context:** UNICEF's third cholera flash update, as of December 22, 2024, reported 9,102 suspected cholera cases and 146 deaths across 28 counties in seven states. The highest caseloads were in Rubkona County, with

4,972 suspected cases (averaging 300 new cases daily), and Juba County, with 1,547 suspected cases. Children are the most affected, with the highest proportion of cases occurring in the 0-4 age group (32.5%), followed by the 5-14 age group (22.8%). [\[LINK\]](#)

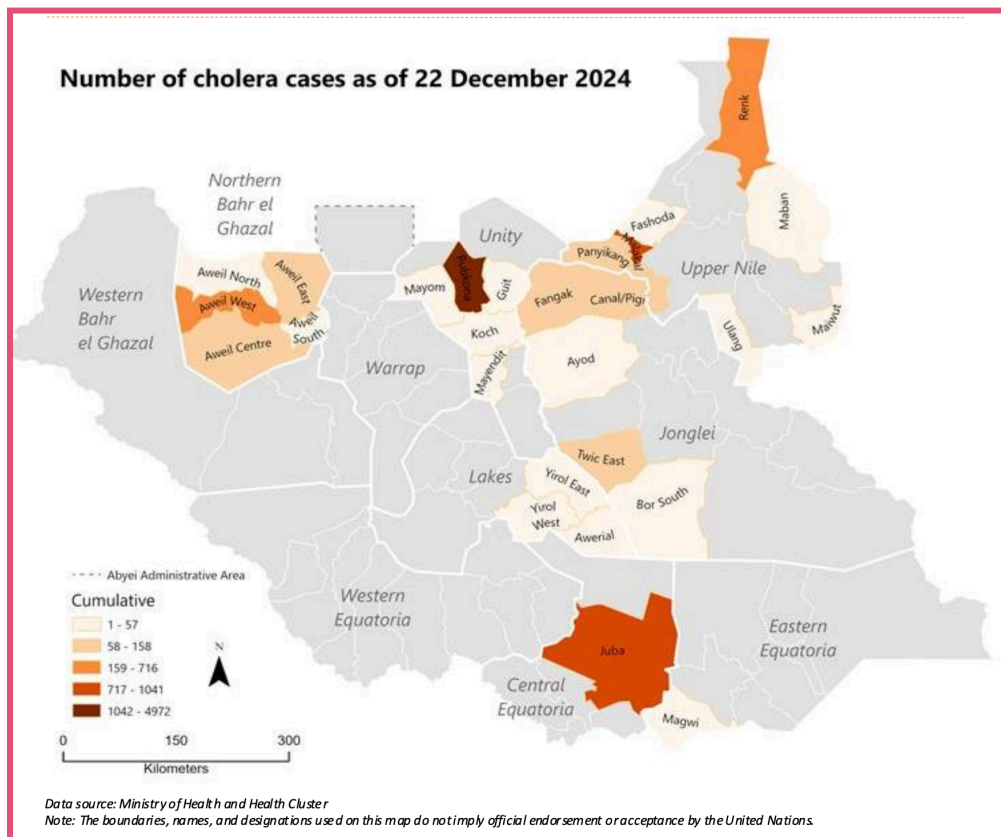


FIGURE 1: Number of cumulative cholera cases as of 22 December 2024 in South Sudan (UNICEF)

- Erosion of confidence in local authorities:** The fact that people are questioning what the South Sudanese authorities have done to address the cholera outbreak signals a significant lack of faith in the government's ability to respond effectively. Public doubts about the Ministry's response may also lead to the spread of misinformation or rumors, complicating efforts to control the outbreak. This is especially dangerous in areas where healthcare literacy is low and where rumors can fuel fear and exacerbate the spread of the disease. Below are some

comments from online users [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#)

This is a servere tragedy that needs action not only to be announced to the public. people are dying of pandemic outbreak that can easily be managed by government, What a government!
People are dying on their watch.

That's a very big shame to the country where corruption is on the Lead

Under their watch!! The only action they're doing is to announce it to the public. Please act to save lives, don't come to radio stations to announce your weaknesses

So far what has the ministry and government done apart from reporting deaths 🙄🙄

- Refugees and IDPs at higher risk due to limited healthcare and sanitation resources:** An overview of YouTube videos and articles by South Sudanese media highlight that the outbreak is mainly affecting camps for refugees and internally displaced people spread around the country including the capital Juba [\[LINK\]](#). The overcrowded and unsanitary conditions in camps is concerning, as it increases the potential spread of infectious diseases. Limited access to healthcare, inadequate sanitation facilities, poor nutrition, and a lack of sufficient clean water contribute to the vulnerability of the displaced populations. In addition, the constant movement of people between camps and surrounding areas complicates containment efforts. The combination of these factors amplifies the potential for the disease to spread rapidly, further challenging the country's already fragile health infrastructure.[\[LINK\]](#)
- Patients affected by cholera face WASH challenges:** Online discussions acknowledge that the disease has now gotten worse (first declared in Upper Nile State in October, the outbreak has now spread to seven states) and is worsened by the practice of open defecation and inadequate sanitation practices. [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#)

What can we do?

- Engage about steps taken to mitigate the spread of cholera:** Actively engage with online communities by sharing detailed updates on the steps being taken to mitigate the spread of cholera. This includes regularly posting updates on the distribution of medical supplies, vaccination efforts, and public health interventions. Engaging local influencers and trusted community figures in these efforts can further amplify the message and build credibility and trust.

- Provide SBC and WASH recommendations to communities in need:** For complex SBC topics, consider using simple animations to demonstrate behavioral changes (e.g., handwashing, proper waste disposal) as children are primarily affected by cholera. Collecting questions, suggestions, or concerns about WASH and SBC can also provide more data on community needs.

Engagement/ Zambia: 15 posts, 12 486 likes, 4934 comments

- Following the announcement of cholera cases in Nakonde District, located at the border with Tanzania, several media outlets in Zambia shared reports on their Facebook pages claiming that Lusaka had also recorded 13 cholera cases. [LINK](#), [LINK](#), [LINK](#), [LINK](#)
- However, as of 3 January, the Ministry of Health hasn't confirmed cholera cases in Lusaka [LINK](#). Online discussions have since erupted, with online users expressing concerns about the potential spread of cholera to other provinces, including Lusaka.
- Many online users are highlighting the unhygienic conditions in the country, such as limited access to safe water, widespread littering, and the unavailability of soap in public toilets, which are further fueling fears that the cholera outbreak could worsen.
- There is also skepticism surrounding the credibility of media reports, with some users accusing the outlets of misleading the public and causing unnecessary panic.
- Additionally, there are growing concerns about the potential impact of the cholera outbreak on the opening of schools across various provinces, with many fearing it could disrupt the school year.
- Some online users are voicing concerns that cholera has become a recurring annual issue in Zambia, especially around the rainy season in January, pointing to the lack of lasting solutions to prevent its spread. [LINK](#), [LINK](#), [LINK](#), [LINK](#)
- Here are some examples of social media conversations:

Provided sanitation and hygiene levels don't improve cholera will never end,Lusaka especially the CBD awe it's dirty and a sorry sight!

Please let this not affect other provinces coz teaching for 14weeks is not a joke with only one week holiday 🙄🙄🙄🙄 this time around let only the affected areas be considered closed schools and let others go ahead and open 🙄🙄

Ministry of health has said lusaka has not yet recorded any cholera cases so how true is your information

Elo this cholera shouldn't affect other provinces from opening schools....last year it was hell teaching for 14weeks without a holiday and move to the next term.... this year let the calendar just change in lsk the rest we can continue

Why is it concerning?

- Gap between media reports and official reports about cholera cases:** The disparity between official health ministry statements and social media discussions can create confusion among the public about the true scale of the outbreak. If people see conflicting information—such as reports of cholera cases in Lusaka that have not been confirmed by health authorities—they may struggle to understand the situation. This can lead to panic and speculation of misinformation, both of which can hinder effective public health interventions.
- Fear over cholera impact on school year:** Fear about school reopening stems from last year's experience, when Zambia was forced to postpone the opening of schools due to a cholera outbreak. In 2023, the health ministry reported over 4,000 cholera cases and about 150 deaths since October, leading to a delay in school openings from Monday until January 29. Given the ongoing concerns about the spread of cholera, many are worried that a similar disruption could occur this year, further impacting education and the school calendar.[\[LINK\]](#)
- Cross border transmission:** The cholera outbreak in Nakonde, a district bordering Tanzania, is particularly concerning for public health due to the risk of cross-border transmission, which can rapidly escalate the spread of the disease across regions. Nakonde serves as a major transit point for people, goods, and services between Zambia and Tanzania.
- Zambia faces both mpox and cholera outbreaks:** The simultaneous outbreaks

of mpox and cholera in Zambia are concerning due to the strain they place on its healthcare system. The spread of both diseases in areas with limited resources (Nakonde for cholera and Kitwe for mpox) heightens the risk of widespread infection and mortality. Additionally, public distrust in health authorities complicates response efforts, making it harder to control both outbreaks and protect vulnerable communities.[\[LINK\]](#)

What can we do?

- Provide specific consequences for communities:** Specifically address the impact of cholera on the school year including if schools are going to be closed, how long schools are expected to remain closed, and the broader impact on students, particularly with regard to school year completion and academic performance.
- Strengthen collaboration with media outlets:** Collaborate closely with credible media organizations to ensure that all cholera-related information shared in the public domain is aligned with official reports. Regular briefings or press releases should be issued to media outlets, ensuring that the information is consistent and up-to-date, minimizing the risk of misinformation.

Kenya, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo

Conversations surrounding mpox in Kenya, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo often center on widespread distrust in local and health authorities, rather than the measures taken to control the spread of the disease

Engagement 36 posts, 13580 likes, 2700 comments

- Online conversations in **Kenya** surged following the Ministry of Health's announcement urging citizens to exercise caution in the face of a rapidly spreading new wave of mpox infections across the country. [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#)
- In response to Kenya's announcement about the new wave of mpox infections, online users expressed skepticism and outright rejection of the mpox vaccines, which were allocated to help control the outbreak. Kenya is also working with Tonix Pharmaceuticals to conduct a clinical trial for TNX-801, an investigational mpox vaccine.[\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#)

- ❑ Many online users also voiced frustration over reports of abductions targeting youth, suggesting that the mpox situation might be used as a distraction from ongoing protests and unrest related to these abductions [\[LINK\]](#). The sentiment reflected widespread distrust in both the government and its handling of current crises. [\[LINK, LINK, LINK\]](#)
- ❑ Online conversations in **Uganda** largely focused on social media posts reacting to President Kaguta Museveni’s end-of-year address, in which he warned the nation about the growing threat of mpox. However, many online users dismissed the warning, expressing widespread skepticism and discrediting the president’s message, with many citing a deep distrust in his leadership. [\[LINK, LINK, LINK\]](#)
- ❑ Online conversations in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** surged after President Félix Tshisekedi chaired the official handover ceremony of medical equipment for the response to the mpox epidemic in the country. [\[LINK, LINK, LINK, LINK\]](#). However, online users expressed concern, highlighting the president’s prominent participation in events like the handover ceremony, while stressing the need for greater focus on addressing more immediate and pressing challenges faced by the population.

Why is it concerning?

- ❑ **Epidemiological context:** As shown in the epidemic curve below, pertaining to the weekly WHO surveillance report. [\[LINK\]](#), Uganda continues to face a steady increase of mpox cases with a total of . According to the Mpox Daily situation report Situation update 05-January-2025, there are 1,552 cumulative confirmed cases [\[LINK\]](#) The movement of people between Kampala and Nakasongola (two major provinces affected) can facilitate the spread of infectious diseases, amplifying urban-to-rural transmission. [\[LINK\]](#)
- ❑ As of 30 December 2024, Kenya had reported 31 mpox cases according to the Ministry of Health of Kenya. The cases have been reported from 12 counties with Nakuru and Mombasa leading the way in the number of cases. The spread of mpox in these regions highlights the challenges of controlling outbreaks in densely populated areas.[\[LINK\]](#)
- ❑ According to the epidemiological report in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** shared by the Ministry of Health on its Facebook page, the country is grappling with more than 55,387 suspected cases of mpox. [\[LINK\]](#)

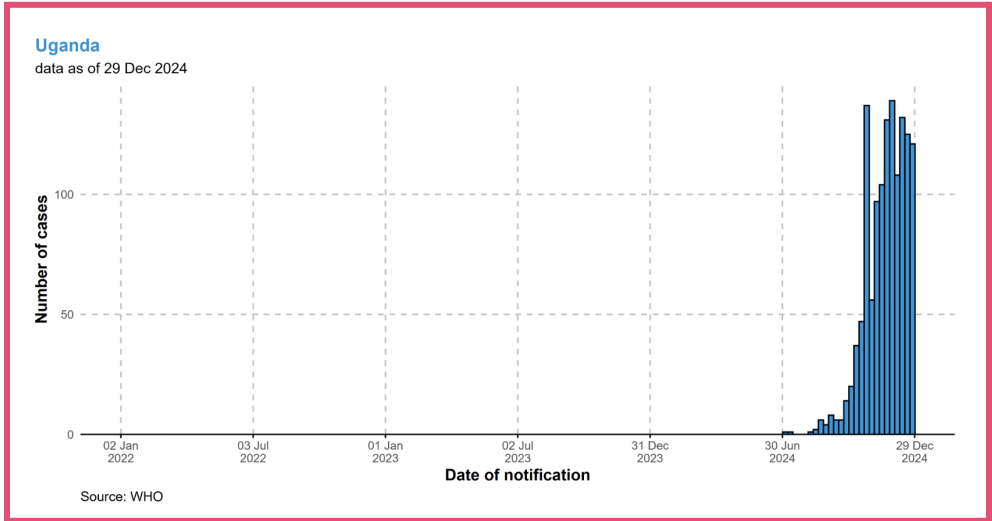


FIGURE 2: Epidemic curve from 2 June to 29 December for cases confirmed in Uganda.

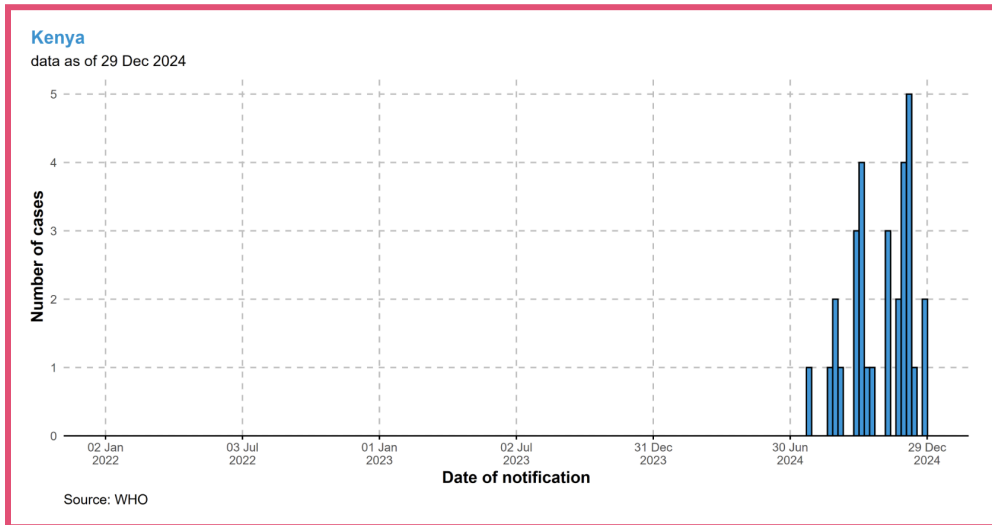


FIGURE 3: Epidemic curve from 2 June to 29 December for cases confirmed in Kenya.

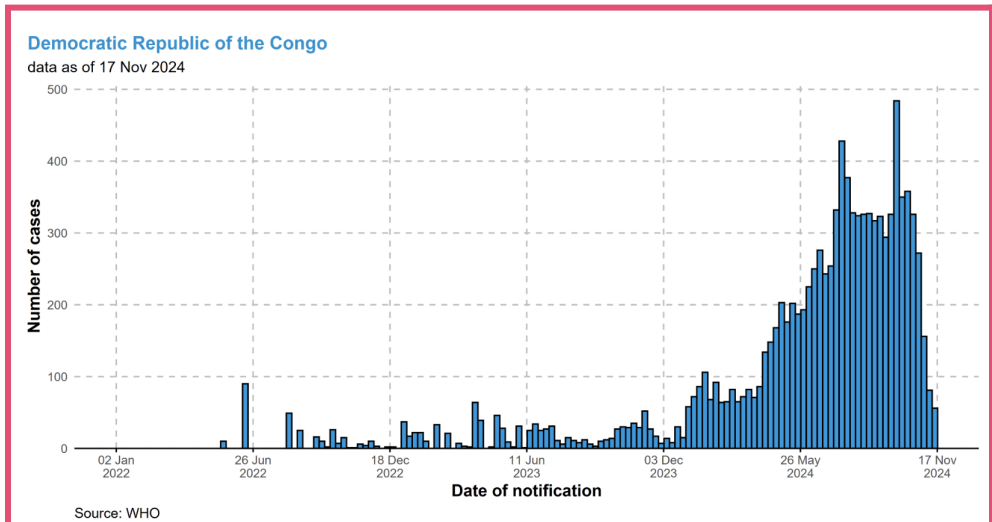


FIGURE 4: Epidemic curve from 2 June to 17 November for cases confirmed in the Democratic Republic of Congo..

- Distrust in local authorities:** Skepticism toward government responses and public health interventions has become a significant barrier to effective communication and control efforts, exacerbating misinformation and fears about the virus. While these issues complicate efforts to manage and prevent the spread of mpox, the ongoing spread of mpox in the region remains a priority concern. Both **Uganda and Kenya** have seen rising numbers of mpox cases, which further strains regional health resources. The severity of the disease, combined with its potential for rapid spread, poses a significant public health threat. The ability of mpox to affect both urban and rural areas makes it even more difficult to contain.[\[LINK\]](#)
- Political and social dynamics continue to shape public discourse on health crises, ultimately influencing the ability of authorities to contain and address the virus in different regions.

What can we do?

- Developing trust-building strategies for effective conversations about mpox:** Setting up independent community task forces that include health professionals, local leaders, and representatives from civil society ensures transparency and community input in the response efforts. Organizing regular feedback sessions where community members can raise concerns and get direct answers from health authorities can also help.
- Shifting conversations for better engagement:** Given the growing fatigue and frustration surrounding mpox, it's important to shift the focus of conversations beyond just preventive measures. For example, that can be through the broader socioeconomic implications of the outbreak.

Explainers

Response to concerns on the acute respiratory infections complicated by malaria (previously undiagnosed disease) found in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

- Between 24 October and 5 December 2024, 406 cases of an undiagnosed disease with symptoms such as fever, cough, and body ache were reported in Panzi health zone, Kwango Province. An update by the WHO released on 27 December clarified that as of 16 December, laboratory results from a total of 430 samples indicated positive results for malaria, common respiratory viruses

(Influenza A (H1N1, pdm09), rhinoviruses, SARS-COV-2, Human coronaviruses, parainfluenza viruses, and Human Adenovirus). Further explanation is found here. [\[LINK\]](#)

- A total of three online media agencies in the Democratic Republic of Congo have addressed concerns regarding the undiagnosed illness that sparked panic among parents of children in the Panzi province, Kwango province. [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#).
- Online social listening has revealed concerns among users about critical shortages in the Panzi health zone, including a lack of essential medicines, equipment, and ambulances for patient transport. Additionally, a user warned about the ongoing crisis of severe acute malnutrition in the Kwango province, and that it leads to numerous health complications. [\[LINK\]](#)

Account spreads disinformation on Lakana trial funded by Bill Gates in collaboration with the Center for Vaccine Development in Mali

- A Facebook post by a known disinformation account shares multiple misleading claims including that a clinical trial named "LAKANA" is allegedly being conducted without consent on children aged 1 to 11 months in Mali, that people are entering homes without consent and that when legal action was attempted, money was paid to village chiefs to suppress investigations. In addition, the message frames the situation as a "health terrorism" operation, suggesting a deliberate plot to harm children. [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#)
- According to Lakana's website, "LAKANA is a large-scale trial being conducted in Mali, West Africa, to determine whether the mass administration of azithromycin antibiotic to asymptomatic children can reduce the high mortality rate of 1 to 11 month-old children" [\[LINK\]](#)
- While the study was expected to be completed in December 2024, clinical trials are regulated and follow strict ethical guidelines. [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#) According to the article published BioMed Central (BMC), a United Kingdom-based, for-profit scientific open access publisher, the "LAKANA trial may offer a partial solution to successfully reduce the high child mortality in Mali and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa"¹.

¹ Adubra, L., Alber, D., Ashorn, P. et al. Testing the effects of mass drug administration of azithromycin on mortality and other outcomes among 1–11-month-old infants in Mali (LAKANA): study protocol for a cluster-randomized, placebo-controlled, double-blinded, parallel-group, three-arm clinical trial. *Trials* 24, 5 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-022-06966-7>

- CDC Mali acknowledges the work of Lakana as a result of numerous collaborations at the international, national, regional, and local levels, and expresses sincere gratitude for the support received in the preparations for the study. [\[LINK\]](#)

Persistent trend

High distrust in Kenyan authorities in conversations about planned livestock vaccination persistent among social media users

Engagement: **12 posts, 28855 likes, 19220 comments**

- The debate on livestock vaccination in Kenya is still heated and engaged in political and economic dilemmas. Online users frequently express strong opinions, with the majority criticizing the vaccination of livestock.
- A video by Alex Jones, American conspiracy theorist, has also been circulating in some comments [\[LINK\]](#) that warns that Globalists/Big Pharma allegedly may target the beef supply with mRNA technology to eliminate meat consumption and features Bill Gates speaking about the vaccination of cows to reduce methane emissions from cows.
- Several themes have been discussed by online users both on X and Facebook, including fears of side effects of vaccines, how livestock vaccinations can impact the local economy, and if livestock vaccination is needed only because of international standards. Other online users claim vaccination is not a current priority, but instead ask local authorities to focus on cost reduction of basic commodities. Below are some examples: [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#)

What about the consequences? Are kenyan to eat the meat of those vaccinated cows? Stop joking with our life bwana!

How does Livestock vaccination help in economic development, Mr. President?

Kenya lost 2.6 million livestock to drought NOT Disease in 2023 estimated at 226 Billion. GoK should prioritize preparedness in arid & semi-arid areas to prevent such losses every time rains & prayers fail. Water harvesting and dams are good exmaples.

looks like a plan to enhance taxation over animal produce. I dont need the government to help trace my cattle. I have since long used African juju to keep track of my cattle effectively

- ❑ **Recommendation:** Media can play a crucial role in informing the public on the benefits of livestock vaccination for animal and human health by breaking down the topic into clear, digestible articles or holding Q&A sessions with experts .

Trend to watch

Unverified claims about “state of emergency” declared in China over multiple viruses

- ❑ A social media post by 'SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19)' goes viral on X and gains over 7.3 M views. it misinforms the general audience about a state of emergency declared by China over an epidemic overwhelming hospitals and crematoriums [LINK](#). (Figure 4 below)

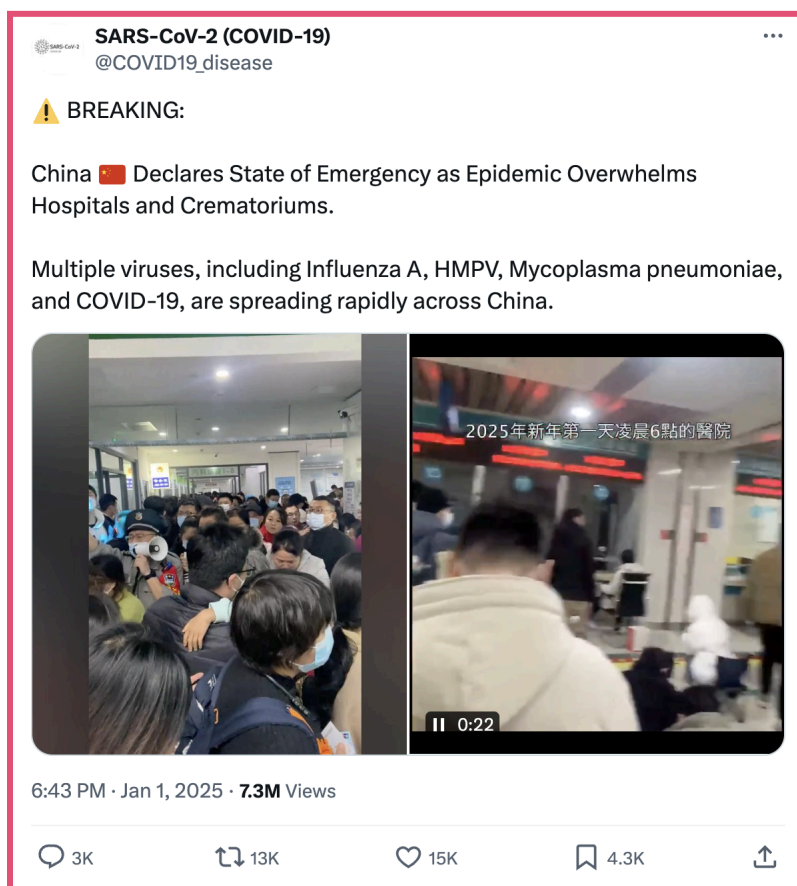


FIGURE 5: Viral post circulating offline and online about the declaration of the state of emergency in China.

- ❑ According to WHO’s disease outbreak news released on 7 January 2025, *Trends of acute respiratory infection, including human metapneumovirus, in the Northern Hemisphere*, “The observed increase in respiratory pathogen detections is within the range expected for this time of year during the Northern

hemisphere winter. In China, influenza is the most commonly detected respiratory pathogen currently affecting people with acute respiratory infections. WHO is in contact with Chinese health officials and has not received any reports of unusual outbreak patterns. Chinese authorities report that the health care system is not overwhelmed and there have been no emergency declarations or responses triggered.” [\[LINK\]](#)

- Similarly, in late 2023, China saw a notable rise in respiratory illnesses, especially among children in the northern regions. This increase was linked to known pathogens, including influenza, *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). [\[LINK\]](#)
- The national sentinel surveillance data on acute respiratory infectious diseases, collected by the Chinese Center for Disease Control (CCDC) from December 23rd to December 29th, indicated a continuing upward trend in overall cases. However, the trends vary depending on the pathogen responsible for the infections. Influenza, which is currently in its seasonal epidemic phase, is seeing a rapid increase in the positivity rate for the influenza virus. This period remains one of high incidence for respiratory infectious diseases.
- Both the CCDC and the National Health Commission of China have issued guidelines for protective measures. [\[LINK\]](#) Health authorities continue to manage the situation through enhanced surveillance and public health measures.
- According to Reuters, China's National Disease Control and Prevention Administration launched a pilot monitoring system for pneumonia of unknown origin to improve early detection and response. This initiative aims to streamline reporting procedures for laboratories and ensure proper verification and management of cases. [\[LINK\]](#)

Reaction of African social media users

Engagement: 23 posts, 22 771 likes, 9594 comments

- Across Southern and East Africa, there is a shared sense of anxiety, frustration, and distrust regarding the potential spread of HMPV (Human Metapneumovirus), with many online users expressing fear of history repeating itself in the form of another global pandemic. [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#), [\[LINK\]](#)
- Commonly, there is a strong blame and stigma placed on China, particularly for its food practices, which are perceived as the source of new viral outbreaks. This

has fueled conspiracy theories, with some suggesting deliberate efforts to destabilize the world. [[LINK](#), [LINK](#), [LINK](#)]

- There is widespread concern about the economic impact of another lockdown, especially in African countries where poverty and hunger are already major challenges. Many are calling for immediate government action—such as closing borders, restricting immigration, and considering lockdowns—but also expressing doubts about governments' preparedness and the efficacy of health measures like vaccinations. [[LINK](#), [LINK](#), [LINK](#)]
- There is a desire for strict preventive actions, including isolation and border controls, and a deep fear that any delay in action could lead to widespread suffering and further economic decline. The overall sentiment is one of vigilance, frustration, and a yearning for swift, effective responses to avoid a repeat of the COVID-19 crisis. [[LINK](#), [LINK](#), [LINK](#)]
- Recommendation:** Accurate reporting on this situation is crucial to prevent unnecessary panic. This could lead people to wrongly associate the current surge in respiratory illnesses with another COVID-19 outbreak or a new pandemic, which could exacerbate public anxiety.

Key resources

Mpox

Resources for social listening analysts

- [WHO](#), Public health taxonomy for social listening on mpox conversations

Resources for journalists & fact checking

- [Internews](#), reporting on mpox, a guide for journalists
- [WHO](#), comprehensive list of mpox webinar series
- [AFP Fact check](#), WHO mpox emergency declaration does not advise lockdowns
- [DW](#), Fact check: No link between mpox and COVID vaccination
- [DW](#), Fact check: Four fakes about mpox

Resources/Content for social media

- [Viral Facts Africa](#), mpox social media kit with engaging explainers and debunks
- [WHO](#), LIVE: Q&A on #mpox. Join us and #AskWHO your questions!
- [WHO](#), Episode #124 - mpox: what you need to know

Technical update

- [WHO](#), Strategic framework for enhancing prevention and control of mpox
- [WHO](#), Mpox in the Democratic Republic of Congo
- [Africa CDC](#), Mpox situation in Africa

- [WHO](#), Multi-country outbreak of mpox, External situation report#44 - 23 December 2024

Public health guidance/RCCE

- [WHO](#), the Global Mpox Dashboard
- [WHO](#), Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) for monkeypox outbreaks: interim guidance, 24 June 2022.
- [WHO](#), Public health advice for sex workers on mpox
- [WHO](#), Considerations for border health and points of entry for mpox: interim guidance
- [WHO](#), Community protection for the mpox response: a comprehensive set of actions

Mpox vaccines

- [WHO](#), Mpox Q&A, vaccines
- [WHO](#), Mpox immunization

Cholera

Resources/Content for social media

- [WHO](#), cholera outbreaks, W&A
- [WHO](#), Cholera fact sheet
- [Viral Facts Africa](#), cholera social media toolkit with engaging explainers and debunks
- Social Science in Epidemics: [cholera lessons learned](#)

Resources for social listening analysts

- [Global Task Force on Cholera Control](#), clarifying rumors and community concerns

Human metapneumovirus

- [WHO](#), Disease Outbreak News, Trends of acute respiratory infection, including human metapneumovirus, in the Northern Hemisphere

Methodology

The social media listening process relies on a combination of social media analyses conducted for French, English and Lusophone-speaking countries. 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, and 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 (siloe engagement).

The monitoring reports are produced using NewsWhip Analytics, Google Trends.

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 or groups (e.g. private Facebook groups). We also rely on infodemic managers based in Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya to provide insights into relevant national infodemic trends or offline content, as well as country-level reports. As we produce more content, we seek to triangulate and corroborate information across these groups to strengthen our infodemic response.