

# Research Methodology Note

Accountability to Affected Populations - Assessment of Community Perceptions of Covid-19 and the Covid-19 vaccine

SSD1905

South Sudan

May 2021

[Version number 1]

**REACH** Informing more effective humanitarian action

## 1. Executive Summary

<b>Country of intervention</b>	South Sudan		
<b>Type of Emergency</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural disaster	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conflict	<input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>specify</i> )
<b>Type of Crisis</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sudden onset	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow onset	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protracted
<b>Mandating Body/ Agency</b>	REACH		
<b>IMPACT Project Code</b>	32iAEI		
<b>Research Timeframe</b>	1. External consultations – 26.4-5.5.2021	5. Data collection – 20.-28.5.2021	
	2. Tool validated – 10.5.2021	6. Data analysed and sent for validation – 15.6.2021	
	3. Pilot FGD – 11.5.2021	7. Outputs sent for validation – 2.7.2021	
	4. Trainings – 18.-19.5.2021	8. Outputs published – 12.7.2021	
<b>Humanitarian milestones</b>	<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Deadline</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donor plan/strategy	--/ /----
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inter-cluster plan/strategy	--/ /----
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cluster plan/strategy	--/ /----
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NGO platform plan/strategy	--/ /----
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify): The findings can be used by the Risk Communication and Community Engagement Technical Working Group (RCCE-TWG) and other actors involved in the vaccine roll-out in South Sudan to inform communication and community sensitisation/engagement strategies		There is no deadline as such
<b>Audience Type &amp; Dissemination</b>	<b>Audience type</b>		<b>Dissemination</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Programmatic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Product Mailing (e.g. mail to NGO consortium; HCT participants; Donors)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Operational	<input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]	<input type="checkbox"/> Cluster Mailing (Education, Shelter and WASH) and presentation of findings at next cluster meeting
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presentation of findings (e.g. at HCT meeting; Cluster meeting)

			X Website Dissemination (Relief Web & REACH Resource Centre) <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]
<b>Detailed dissemination plan required</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	X No
<b>General Objective</b>	To better understand community perceptions of Covid-19, the degree to which communities are informed about the Covid-19 vaccine, as well as levels of and reasons for vaccine hesitancy in South Sudan. This in turn can be used to inform risk communication and awareness-raising around the vaccine.		
<b>Specific Objective(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand community perceptions of Covid-19 in South Sudan, specifically:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the impact Covid-19 has had on communities</li> <li>b. the degree to which communities are concerned about the virus</li> <li>c. the communication channels through which communities commonly hear about Covid-19</li> <li>d. the most trusted communication channels for communities to receive information about Covid-19</li> </ol> </li> <li>• To understand levels of awareness of the Covid-19 vaccine amongst communities across South Sudan</li> <li>• To understand community perceptions of the Covid-19 vaccine in South Sudan, specifically:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The communication channels through which communities have heard/hear about the vaccine</li> <li>b. The most trusted communication channels for communities to receive information about the vaccine</li> <li>c. General community perceptions of the vaccine, including concerns or rumors</li> <li>d. Individual and perceived community willingness to be vaccinated if the vaccine became available and was recommended to them</li> <li>e. Information or activities needed to help communities make an informed decision about the vaccine</li> </ol> </li> </ul>		
<b>Research Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) How do people in South Sudan perceive the impact of Covid-19 on their communities?</li> <li>2) How concerned are communities about Covid-19?</li> <li>3) What are the levels of awareness of the Covid-19 vaccine across South Sudan?</li> <li>4) What are general community perceptions of the vaccine, including concerns or rumours?</li> <li>5) What are the most commonly used and most trusted communication channels for communities to get information about both Covid-19 and the Covid-19 vaccine?</li> <li>6) How willing are people generally to receive the vaccine if it became available and was recommended to them?</li> <li>7) What information or activities are needed to help communities in South Sudan make informed decisions about the vaccine?</li> </ol>		
<b>Geographic Coverage</b>	Across South Sudan (Juba, Kapoeta, Torit, Maridi, Mingkaman, Rumbek, Wau, Aweil, Bor, Akobo, Bentiu, Nyal, Pariang, and Malakal), but with greater coverage in Juba (town and IDP site) due to the vaccine only being available in Juba (as of May 2021).		
<b>Secondary data sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "<a href="#">COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 1</a>," (27 April 2020).</li> <li>• Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "<a href="#">COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 2</a>," (13 May 2020).</li> <li>• Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "<a href="#">COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 3</a>," (3 June 2020).</li> <li>• Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "<a href="#">COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 4</a>," (22 June 2020).</li> <li>• Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "<a href="#">COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 5</a>," (27 July 2020).</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">“Community Rapid Assessment on COVID-19: Behavioural Findings and Insights from Round 1 in Kenya, Madagascar and South Sudan,” UNICEF (2020).</a></li> <li>• Lasuba Memo, <a href="#">“Health ministry concerned over ‘vaccine hesitancy,’” Eye Radio (27 April 2021)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">“Majority of Africans would take a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine,” Africa CDC (17 December 2020).</a></li> <li>• O.C. Ekwebelem, I. Yunusa, H. Onyeaka et al., <a href="#">“COVID-19 vaccine rollout: will it affect the rates of vaccine hesitancy in Africa?” Public Health (28 January 2021).</a></li> <li>• Rumbi Chakamba, <a href="#">“Africans view COVID-19 vaccines as less safe than other vaccines,” Devex (25 March 2021).</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">“South Sudan receives first batch of COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility,” World Health Organisation (25 March 2021)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">“The COVID-19 vaccine roll-out: Why it will only work with a people-centred approach,” Crown Agents (22 January 2021)</a></li> <li>• Tori Hill, Kari Reid, and Ryan Sheely, <a href="#">“Overcoming the Trust Deficit: Engaging Communities to Succeed in Vaccinating the World Against COVID-19,” Mercy Corps (Washington, DC, 2021).</a></li> <li>• Udani Samarasekera, <a href="#">“Feelings towards COVID-19 vaccination in Africa,” The Lancet Infectious Diseases, Vol 21, Issue 3, (1 March 2021).</a></li> <li>• Winnie Cirino, <a href="#">“South Sudan Declares Partial Lockdown on COVID Surge,” VOA News (4 February 2021)</a></li> </ul>					
<b>Population(s)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IDPs in camp	<input type="checkbox"/>	IDPs in informal sites		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IDPs in host communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	IDPs [Other, Specify]		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in camp	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in informal sites		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in host communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refugees [Other, Specify]		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Host communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Other, Specify]		
<b>Data collection tool(s)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Structured (Quantitative)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Semi-structured (Qualitative)		
	<b>Sampling method</b>		<b>Data collection method</b>			
<b>Semi-structured data collection tool # 1</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purposive <input type="checkbox"/> Snowballing <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]		<input type="checkbox"/> Key informant interview (Target #): __ __ <input type="checkbox"/> Individual interview (Target #): __ __ __ __ __ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus group discussion (Target #): 25-30 FGDs (targeting 4-6 participants each) <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] (Target #): __ __ __ __ __			
<b>Semi-structured data collection tool # 2</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purposive <input type="checkbox"/> Snowballing <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Key informant interview (Target #): 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual interview (Target #): __ __ __ __ __ <input type="checkbox"/> Focus group discussion (Target #): __ __ __ __ __ <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] (Target #): __ __ __ __ __			
<b>Data management platform(s)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IMPACT	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNHCR		
<b>Expected output type(s)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Situation overview #: __ __	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Report #: 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Profile #: __ __
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation (Preliminary findings) #: __ __	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Presentation (Final) #: 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Factsheet #: __ __
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interactive dashboard #: __	<input type="checkbox"/>	Webmap #: __ __	<input type="checkbox"/>	Map #: __ __
<b>Access</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public (available on REACH resource center and other humanitarian platforms)				

	<input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted (bilateral dissemination only upon agreed dissemination list, no publication on REACH or other platforms)
<b>Visibility</b>	<b>REACH</b>	
	<b>Donor:</b> FCDO	
	<b>Coordination Framework:</b> N/A	
	<b>Partners:</b> N/A	

## 2. Rationale

### 2.1 Background

Between March and November 2020, REACH bases across South Sudan were mobilised to track rumours and perceptions of communities relating to COVID-19 and collect data on community understanding of COVID-19 and the response. This was collated into a rumours and perceptions tracker developed by REACH, which fed into the ‘Covid-19 South Sudan Rumour and Perceptions Tracking Overview’ products published by the Communication and Community Engagement Working Group (CCEWG) based on data submitted by REACH, IOM and Internews (Issues [#1](#), [#2](#), [#3](#), [#4](#), and [#5](#)). This joint data collection and analysis sought to understand how South Sudanese communities perceived the virus, to understand rumours and concerns regarding Covid-19 and inform risk communication strategies. By late 2020, data saturation, Covid-19 no longer being strategically prioritised to the same degree, and the suspension of the CCEWG publication of joint analysis, led to a decision to discontinue REACH rumour-tracking.

However, the beginning of 2021 saw a marked rise in Covid-19 cases, followed by a partial lockdown.<sup>1</sup> At the end of March, South Sudan received 132,000 AstraZeneca vaccines through COVAX.<sup>2</sup> About a month into the roll-out of the vaccine, only 3,500 people had been vaccinated, prompting concerns of vaccine hesitancy.<sup>3</sup> As outlined in a recent Mercy Corps report, “By the time that vaccine campaigns reach communities in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, there is a very real risk that compliance with public health guidelines will be low and vaccine refusal will be high, further prolonging the spread of the virus and fuelling protracted waves of conflict and economic disruption,” concluding that a “failure to incorporate community-level beliefs and perceptions into vaccine initiatives...can lead to increased mistrust.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, this assessment aims to get a better understanding of community perceptions of Covid-19 after the surge in cases in 2021, gauge awareness of the vaccine across South Sudan, as well as perceptions and willingness to be vaccinated amongst the South Sudanese population.

### 2.2 Intended Impact

As outlined in the journal *Public Health*, “it is paramount to understand how people plan to reject COVID-19 vaccines and the reasons behind their decision. Accomplishing this will help identify types of effective communication and awareness campaigns that might successfully convince people to accept vaccination services...failure to tackle religious, cultural, or other context-specific concerns related to COVID-19 vaccines will result in escalating rates of vaccine hesitancy in Africa.”<sup>5</sup> Understanding and addressing any potential concerns or rumours circulating around the vaccine is key to ensuring a smooth roll-out of the Covid-19 vaccine in South Sudan. This was also seen as an information gap and of strategic priority to the response, as mentioned both in the Risk Communication and Community Engagement Technical Working Group (RCCE TWG) meeting as well as the meeting of the Steering Committee of the NGO Forum. Consultations with key members of

<sup>1</sup> Winnie Cirino, “[South Sudan Declares Partial Lockdown on COVID Surge](#),” *VOA News* (4 February 2021).

<sup>2</sup> “[South Sudan receives first batch of COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility](#),” *World Health Organisation* (25 March 2021).

<sup>3</sup> Lasuba Memo, “[Health ministry concerned over ‘vaccine hesitancy’](#),” *Eye Radio* (27 April 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Tori Hill, Kari Reid, and Ryan Sheely, “[Overcoming the Trust Deficit: Engaging Communities to Succeed in Vaccinating the World Against COVID-19](#),” *Mercy Corps* (Washington, DC, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> O.C. Ekwebelem, I. Yunusa, H. Onyeaka *et al.*, “[COVID-19 vaccine rollout: will it affect the rates of vaccine hesitancy in Africa?](#)” *Public Health* (28 January 2021).

the RCCE TWG confirmed that filling the identified information gaps about Covid– and vaccine–perceptions is important in order to shape risk communication and awareness-raising around the vaccine.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Methodology overview

A qualitative approach will be taken in order to better understand the granular perceptions and concerns around both Covid-19 and the vaccine. Consultations were held with staff based in South Sudan from the World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), as well as the RCCE TWG to understand information gaps and inform the research design of this assessment. The methodology will primarily be focus group discussions (FGDs), as well as a few key informant interviews (KIIs) in locations of particular interest. A total of about 30 FGDs and two to five KI interviews (depending on capacity and accessibility) will be conducted.

### 3.2 Population of interest

FGDs will take place across South Sudan in almost all REACH bases in order to provide a sense of differing awareness and views across the country. A greater number of FGDs will be conducted in Juba since the vaccine has almost exclusively been available in Juba (as of the outset of the assessment). To ensure a balance of perspectives in different settings, some FGDs will be held with people living in urban or rural areas, while others will be held with people living in camp settings. The FGDs will be held with members of the general community in the area who speak the same language or feel comfortable sharing in front of each other, with separate male and female groups in each location. There will be a mix of ages but attempts will be made to include at least one older person in each group. The questions will be asked at a community level.

The key informant interviews will be held in Juba with people who have a sense of general community views or knowledge of trusted communication channels, such as community leaders or religious leaders.

### 3.3 Secondary data review

A thorough secondary review was conducted to inform the objective of the assessment as well as the development of the tool. While there is little academic or in-depth information on Covid-19 vaccine hesitancy in South Sudan, there is a growing plethora of information on vaccine hesitancy focusing on Africa, as well as globally. A study conducted by the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine showed notable variations in willingness to take a Covid-19 vaccine across countries in Africa.<sup>6</sup> Reasons for vaccine hesitancy varied, but were often linked to misinformation and disinformation, demonstrating a need to identify rumours and concerns, as well as trusted information sources, in order to boost vaccine confidence. In an article focusing on the vaccine in Africa, *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* also reported on the importance of understanding what information is out there regarding the Covid-19 vaccine that may impact vaccine confidence.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, another study has stipulated that the success of the Covid-19 vaccine rollout in Africa could affect vaccine confidence or hesitancy regarding other vaccines, making it even more essential to get a grasp of community perceptions and potential reasons for rejection.<sup>8</sup> These studies helped inform the focus of the assessment, as well as the decision to take a qualitative approach to gain a more nuanced and granular understanding of community perceptions of Covid-19 and the vaccine in South Sudan.

Sources consulted to identify information gaps and inform the focus of the assessment:

<sup>6</sup> [“Majority of Africans would take a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine,” Africa CDC](#) (17 December 2020).

<sup>7</sup> Udani Samarasekera, [“Feelings towards COVID-19 vaccination in Africa,”](#) *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, Vol 21, Issue 3, (1 March 2021).

<sup>8</sup> O.C. Ekwebelem, I. Yunusa, H. Onyeaka *et al.*, [“COVID-19 vaccine rollout: will it affect the rates of vaccine hesitancy in Africa?”](#) *Public Health* (28 January 2021).

- Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "[COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 1](#)," (27 April 2020).
- Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "[COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 2](#)," (13 May 2020).
- Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "[COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 3](#)," (3 June 2020).
- Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "[COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 4](#)," (22 June 2020).
- Communication and Community Engagement Working Group, "[COVID-19 South Sudan Rumor and Perceptions Tracking Overview - Issue 5](#)," (27 July 2020).
- "[Community Rapid Assessment on COVID-19: Behavioural Findings and Insights from Round 1 in Kenya, Madagascar and South Sudan](#)," UNICEF (2020).
- Lasuba Memo, "[Health ministry concerned over 'vaccine hesitancy'](#)," *Eye Radio* (27 April 2021)
- "[Majority of Africans would take a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine](#)," *Africa CDC* (17 December 2020).
- O.C. Ekwebelem, I. Yunusa, H. Onyeaka et al., "[COVID-19 vaccine rollout: will it affect the rates of vaccine hesitancy in Africa?](#)" *Public Health* (28 January 2021).
- Rumbi Chakamba, "[Africans view COVID-19 vaccines as less safe than other vaccines](#)," *Devex* (25 March 2021).
- "[South Sudan receives first batch of COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility](#)," *World Health Organisation* (25 March 2021)
- "[The COVID-19 vaccine roll-out: Why it will only work with a people-centred approach](#)," *Crown Agents* (22 January 2021)
- Tori Hill, Kari Reid, and Ryan Sheely, "[Overcoming the Trust Deficit: Engaging Communities to Succeed in Vaccinating the World Against COVID-19](#)," *Mercy Corps* (Washington, DC, 2021).
- Udani Samarasekera, "[Feelings towards COVID-19 vaccination in Africa](#)," *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, Vol 21, Issue 3, (1 March 2021).
- Winnie Cirino, "[South Sudan Declares Partial Lockdown on COVID Surge](#)," *VOA News* (4 February 2021)

### 3.4 Primary Data Collection

Data collection will be conducted by REACH staff across nine of the ten states in South Sudan in May 2021. With the exception of a few locations with limited capacity, all REACH bases will participate in the assessment in order to provide a broad sense of awareness and perceptions of the Covid-19 vaccine in different urban, rural and camp locations. Each of these locations will aim to conduct two FGDs, one with only men and one with only women. A higher number of FGDs will be held in Juba town and IDP site due to the vaccine being available in Juba and not yet rolled out across the country at outset of the assessment. Moreover, a few KIIs with one KI at a time will be held in Juba with either community leaders, religious leaders or community health mobilisers to complement the community-level information gathered through FGDs. As far as is possible, female staff will conduct FGDs with women-only groups. Four to six participants will be mobilised for each FGD, in order to account for Covid-19 social distancing measures. The ages of the participants will be mixed, although efforts will be made to include at least one older participant in each FGD. In terms of geographic mobilisation, participants can belong to/be located in different areas as long as they can speak the same language and feel comfortable sharing openly in front of one another. Participants will be mobilised using snowball sampling, starting with key informants known to REACH who can use their social networks to access specific populations of interest and find people willing and able to participate.

Two separate but similar semi-structured tools have been developed for the FGDs and KIIs, starting with perceptions of Covid-19, then covering awareness of the vaccine, and then perceptions of the vaccine. Through the incorporation of a skip logic after the section covering awareness of the vaccine, the FGD tool will account for the possibility that in some groups everyone might have heard of existence of the Covid-19 vaccine, that everyone in a group may not yet have heard of it, and that there may be a mix of awareness within groups.

Online trainings will be held for field officers and assistants in participating bases to explain the rationale of the assessment and go through the tool question by question. This training will also introduce the enumerator debrief form, in order to ensure that a debriefing takes place and is recorded after each discussion. Each discussion will be led by two REACH staff, one to facilitate the discussion and one to take notes by hand. The transcripts from the FGDs and KIIs will later be written up and sent electronically to the Accountability and Community Engagement Assessment Officer. To protect the anonymity of participants and to put them at ease, discussions will not be recorded.

### 3.5 Data Processing & Analysis

Records from FGDs and KI interviews will be processed in accordance with IMPACT Initiatives [Data Processing and Analysis Guidelines for Qualitative Data](#) and the [Qualitative Data Processing & Analysis Minimum Standards](#). Content analysis will be conducted, which includes the preparation of a Data Saturation and Analysis Grid (DSAG) outlining key topics of conversation. The DSAG will be filled by extracting the information from the transcripts into the different discussion topics (DTs), using the FGD tool as a guide, and discussion points (DPs) based on findings from the discussions. The number of times each DP is mentioned will be counted and used to write a summary of key points. These collated findings will be used to create a narrative report or brief, outlining key community perceptions and common trends, as well as recommendations

## 4. Key ethical considerations and related risks

<i>The proposed research design...</i>	<b>Yes/ No</b>	<b>Details if no (including mitigation)</b>
... Has been coordinated with relevant stakeholders to <b>avoid unnecessary duplication</b> of data collection efforts?	Yes	
... <b>Respects respondents, their rights and dignity</b> ( <i>specifically by: seeking informed consent, designing length of survey/ discussion while being considerate of participants' time, ensuring accurate reporting of information provided</i> )?	Yes	
... Does not <b>expose data collectors to any risks as a direct result</b> of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not <b>expose respondents / their communities to any risks as a direct result</b> of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not involve <b>collecting information on specific topics which may be stressful and/ or re-traumatising</b> for research participants (both respondents and data collectors)?	Yes	
... Does not involve <b>data collection with minors</b> i.e. anyone less than 18 years old?	Yes	
... Does not involve <b>data collection with other vulnerable groups</b> e.g. persons with disabilities, victims/ survivors of protection incidents, etc.?	Depends	Vulnerable groups will not be specifically targeted for data collection but persons with disabilities will not be proactively excluded, as the inclusion of their perspectives is an important part of being accountable to all people affected by crises. The same measures that

		serve to protect all other participants, including anonymity, will apply.
... Follows IMPACT SOPs for management of <b>personally identifiable information</b> ?	Yes	

## 6. Focus group discussion question route

### Part 1. Covid-19 in general

1.1. What do you know about Covid-19?

- *Prompt: What are the signs or symptoms? Do people who are infected always show signs and symptoms? How does it spread? How long has Covid-19 existed in South Sudan?*

1.2. Have there been any cases of Covid-19 in your area?

- If yes, can you tell us what you heard about these cases?

1.3. What impact (if any) has Covid-19 had on your community?

- *Prompt: restrictions on movement, lifestyle changes, schools closing, economic impact, etc.*

1.4. What concerns do you think people in your community have about Covid-19?

- *Prompt: Do people think it is dangerous? Do people think they are at risk of getting sick? Why or why not?*

1.5. Through which communication channels do people in your community usually hear about Covid-19?

- *Prompt: through friends/family, health workers, religious leaders, community leaders, on the radio etc.*

1.6. What do you think are the most trusted communication channels for your community to get reliable information about Covid-19?

- *Prompt: through friends/family, health workers, religious leaders, community leaders, on the radio etc.*

### Part 2. Vaccine awareness

2.1. Have people in your community heard about the Covid-19 vaccine?

<i>If <b>yes</b>, skip to Part 3.</i>	<i>If <b>some say yes and some say no</b>, skip to Part 3.</i>	<i>If <b>no</b>, ask the following questions (2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5) and then skip to Part 4.</i>
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*Moderator to explain the following: Vaccines to protect against Covid-19 have been developed and are starting to be voluntarily administered in countries around the world, including in South Sudan.*

2.2. What are your thoughts on this?

- 2.3. What do you think would be the most trusted communication channels for your community to get information about the Covid-19 vaccine?
- 2.4. What information and/or activities do you think people would need to make an informed decision about the vaccine?
- *Prompt: Information such as how the vaccine is administered, the potential risks and/or activities such as community meetings with healthcare workers where people can ask questions and raise concerns*
- 2.5. If the vaccine became available and was recommended for you or people in your community, do you think most people would be willing to get it?

### Part 3. Vaccine perceptions

*Reminder to Moderator: If **no one** in the group has heard of the Covid-19 vaccine, skip this section and go to Part 4.*

*Moderator read this out:* In case any of you have not yet heard about the Covid-19 vaccine - vaccines to protect against Covid-19 have been developed and are starting to be voluntarily administered in countries around the world, including in South Sudan. We would like to understand everyone's views about the vaccine, so even if you are only hearing about it for the first time now, it would be good to understand your perspective to some of the questions.

- 3.1. Through which communication channels have people in your community heard about the Covid-19 vaccine?
- *Prompt: through friends/family, health workers, religious leaders, community leaders, on the radio etc.*
- 3.2. What do you think are or would be the most trusted communication channels for people in your community to get information about the Covid-19 vaccine?
- *Prompt: through friends/family, health workers, religious leaders, community leaders, on the radio etc.*
- 3.3. What are general perceptions of the vaccine in your community?
- *Prompt: If they start discussing rumours about the vaccine, ask them where/from which sources they heard these rumours.*
- 3.4. Who do people in your community think the vaccine is meant for?
- *Prompt: Do they think that anyone can get it, or that it is only meant for certain groups of people? Do they think certain people will be eligible to get the vaccine before others?*
- 3.5. If the vaccine became available and was recommended for you or people in your community, do you think most people would be willing to get it?
- *Probe: Do they think it will become available in their area?*
  - *If people say no or there is hesitancy: Why do you think people are hesitant about getting the vaccine?*
- 3.6. What information and/or activities do you think people would need to make an informed decision about the vaccine?

- Prompt: Information such as how the vaccine is administered, the potential risks and/or activities such as community meetings with healthcare workers where people can ask questions and raise concerns

#### Part 4. Any other issues

- Do you have any other thoughts on Covid-19, the vaccine, or the Covid-19 humanitarian response that you would like to share?

## 7. Key informant interview question route

### Part 1. Covid-19 in general

#### 1.1. What do you know about Covid-19?

- Prompt: What are the signs or symptoms? Do people who are infected always show signs and symptoms? How does it spread? How long has Covid-19 existed in South Sudan?

#### 1.2. Have there been any cases of Covid-19 in this area?

- If yes, can you tell us what you heard about these cases?

#### 1.3. What impact (if any) has Covid-19 had on communities in this area?

- Prompt: restrictions on movement, lifestyle changes, schools closing, economic impact, etc.

#### 1.4. What concerns do you think people in this area have about Covid-19?

- Prompt: Do people think it is dangerous? Do people think they are at risk of getting sick? Why or why not?

#### 1.5. Through which communication channels do people in this area usually hear about Covid-19?

- Prompt: through friends/family, health workers, religious leaders, community leaders, on the radio etc.

#### 1.6. What do you think are the most trusted communication channels to share information about Covid-19 with people in this area?

### Part 2. Vaccine awareness

#### 2.1. Have people in this area heard about the Covid-19 vaccine?

<b>If yes, skip to Part 3.</b>	<b>If no, ask the following questions (2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5) and then skip to Part 4.</b>
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*Moderator to explain the following:* Vaccines to protect against Covid-19 have been developed and are starting to be voluntarily administered in countries around the world, including in South Sudan.

2.6. What are your thoughts on this?

2.7. What do you think would be the most trusted communication channels for people in this area to get information about the Covid-19 vaccine?

2.8. What information and/or activities do you think people would need to make an informed decision about the vaccine?

- *Prompt: Information such as how the vaccine is administered, the potential risks and/or activities such as community meetings with healthcare workers where people can ask questions and raise concerns*

2.9. If the vaccine became available and was recommended for you or people in this area, do you think most people would be willing to get it?

### Part 3. Vaccine perceptions

**Reminder for moderator:** this section only asked if they said “yes” they had heard of the vaccine

3.1 How did you hear about the Covid-19 vaccine?

3.2 Though which communication channels do people in this area usually hear about the Covid-19 vaccine? *Probe – through friends/family, health workers, religious leaders, community leaders, on the radio etc.*

3.3 What do you think are the most trusted communication channels to share information about the Covid-19 vaccine?

3.4 What are general perceptions of the vaccine in this area?

- *Prompt: If they mention any rumours about the vaccine, ask them where/from which sources these rumours seem to be coming from*

3.5 Who do people in this area think the vaccine is meant for?

- *Prompt: Do they think that anyone can get it, or that it is only meant for certain groups of people? Do they think certain people will be eligible to get the vaccine before others?*

3.6 Do you think there is more support for or hesitancy around getting the vaccine in this area?

*If there is hesitancy: Why do you think people are hesitant about getting the vaccine?*

3.7 If the vaccine became available and was recommended for you or people in this area, do you think most people would be willing to get it?

3.8 What information/activities do you think people would need to make an informed decision about the vaccine?

- *Prompt: Information such as how the vaccine is administered, the potential risks and/or activities such as community meetings with healthcare workers where people can ask questions and raise concerns*

#### **Part 4: Any other issues**

- Do you have any other thoughts on Covid-19, the vaccine, or the Covid-19 humanitarian response that you would like to share?