



Government of Sierra Leone
National One Health Risk Communication and Community Engagement Pillar

August, 2022

Key Monkeypox messages for priority and influencing audiences:

- **The public** – People living in areas affected by the monkeypox outbreak should have a clear understanding of their level of risk and how to protect themselves and others. It is important for the public to understand that anyone exposed to the virus through close contact with someone who has, or may have, monkeypox is at risk, and that the outbreak is not specific to a particular area, sex, age, or status.
- **Men** – Monkeypox affects more men and boys than women or girls. This is true in previously affected and in newly affected areas. In countries with recent outbreak, monkeypox is associated with human-to-human transmission and cases have been primarily detected among men having sex with men (MSM). Knowledge of the local practice (MSM) is therefore critical to understanding monkeypox and raising awareness will help to protect those at risk and prevent onward transmission in all contexts.
- **Women** – The risk of monkeypox is not limited to men, however, women who share a household with a person who has monkeypox and partners of MSM or female sex workers are also vulnerable in the context of monkeypox outbreak and must be aware of the risks, how to protect themselves and others, and what to do if they have symptoms.
- **Young People** – Young people may be at risk of monkeypox if they engage in activities that involve close contact with other individuals who are themselves at risk or if they have multiple sexual partners, which would also place them at greater risk. Young people should be proactively engaged in awareness raising activities around this monkeypox outbreak as their risk perception may be low.
- **Pregnant women and children** – Pregnant women and the unborn baby may be at higher risk of severe illness and should avoid close contact with anyone who may have been suspected or confirmed monkeypox. Children are also at risk of more serious illness from monkeypox. If children present symptoms of monkeypox, immediately go to the nearest health facility. The rash that develops with monkeypox may resemble rashes found in other common childhood illnesses, such as chickenpox

- **People who attend events/gatherings-** Gatherings and events are favorable environment for the spread of monkeypox. Event organizers and other key stakeholders involved in gatherings should share up-to-date information about monkeypox with participant. Efforts should be made to inform people ahead of time not to attend the event if they have confirmed or suspected monkeypox. Organizers should ensure attendees observe physical distancing, handwashing/sanitizer, and the use of face mask.
- **Health workers** – Cases of monkeypox have been identified through a range of primary and secondary health care services including sexual health clinics. Health workers require detailed information on early identification and infection, prevention, and control measures to appropriately care for their patients and protect themselves from possible exposure to monkeypox. As trusted sources of information, they must have key messages to communicate with their patients and communities confidently and accurately.
- **Partners, stakeholders, civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Media-** Groups and agencies who work with other target audiences may be helpful as trusted sources through which to share information on monkeypox.