

TRUST CODES: Mistrust, Trusted Voice, Trusted Source of Information Codes appearing in the same excerpt as at least one of the "trust" codes (n=38)	Co-coded with trust All appearances in data				Example of a coded excerpt for each theme
	Interviews (n=22)	Excerpts (n=47)	Interviews (n=46)	Excerpts (n=799)	
1 Mistrust of government	8	8	8	8	National Communications Director working for the Government: You're always stressed because you aren't only fighting Ebola, you're fighting the people, because there are negative rumours against the state, against the government, against the national coordination.
2 Rumours: examples of rumours, influence of rumours, prevalence of rumours	6	6	16	26	International Director of a humanitarian organization in Sierra Leone: We didn't want to be associated with the lockdown...because it did create fear, there was a sense that soap was poisoned etcetera etcetera. Unfortunately this was downplayed and in some places denied.
3 Genuine community involvement: The desire to have local involvement occur in genuine, sustainable ways; includes involvement of local organizations, involvement of survivors, and training of community members in response efforts; examples of genuine community involvement	5	8	37	112	Local social mobilizer for a humanitarian organization: I wanted to see more local involvement. I would've liked to see more contacts to [Country], where people are just clear with the traditions and their traditional leaders. I can see the power, for example, like if an Imam was in a mosque were to stand up and talk to his congregation and a pastor were to stand up and talk to his congregation in church. You can't compare the two. So experts coming from a far country, you know maybe a rights man coming to talk to these people, they can't understand and...there was room for improvement in some of the attitudes of the experts. I wanted to hear more [National] voices, I know I went to a lot of meetings and all I could hear was experts, experts, talking, more talking and no listening to us and I was very disappointed that they were just out rightly arrogant
4 Ineffective government response: belief that government response in one of the three affected countries was ineffective; example of a government's ineffective response strategy	5	5	18	32	International Director of a humanitarian organization in Sierra Leone: We didn't want to be associated with the lockdown...because it did create fear, there was a sense that soap was poisoned etc. etc. unfortunately this was downplayed, um, and in some places, denied by both government and U.N. agencies, but I think subsequent reports have demonstrated that it did set us back
5 Denial of epidemic: account of themselves or others denying Ebola's existence	4	4	9	13	International Executive Director for a humanitarian organization in Liberia: That was another challenge...there was a lot of denial in the beginning, people saying "oh that's again the government, they're just coming up with something so they can get money so they can eat the money." I also think that this group was... so yeah that's a huge challenge... that the government and the communities, there was disconnect, you know lack of trust and confidence is a huge challenge in emergency. You need to trust the people running the country. And we saw the opposite in Liberia. Lack of trust and confidence.
6 Local context: Interviewee articulates the importance of understanding the local context during epidemic response	3	3	27	54	International anthropologist for a humanitarian organization: There was a day that I was in... going around with our volunteers and talked to an older man ... he got really upset at the volunteers that were talking to him, and said that white people had been going door-to-door poisoning people and this was one of those, those times when it might have been, that could easily just see crazy conspiracy theory or just, you know, some odd person. But yeah, he got really upset, and he drew a crowd and we sort of had to get out of there, but continued walking around the neighborhood, as we were asking people about recent illnesses, a lot of people were saying that if they'd been feeling weak and nauseated lately, after, after taking some [?], and it turned out that [?] had done a blanket distribution of [?] in that neighborhood and, from what I could tell had tried to also distribute information about potential side effects, or if you know the, the way to take these tablets with food or with plenty of water and all these things, but to potentially an illiterate population or people that didn't have a lot of food...so it seemed that a lot of people that had taken the tablets reported feeling sick, um, as a direct result, so, um, you know, after learning that, I kind of felt, like, well, you know...there needed to be not just that information given out to people but maybe more effort made to have someone from that area...who was able to really make sure that people understood the information and ... had some place to go if they did experience side effects or, you know, had other questions about it.

7	Mistrust of response teams	3	3	3	3	Local clinical supervisor for a Sierra Leonean psychosocial organization: So people were just thinking of the health workers to be responsible in some ways for the outbreak of the, the, the Ebola. And so, that anger was there, that misunderstanding was there, you know?... that kind of uh ideology where in community people against the health workers.
8	Poor communication: examples of poor communication from governments, healthcare workers, humanitarian aid workers etc.	3	4	12	19	International virologist working in Sierra Leone: there were some stupid messages. For the whole month of June, people were sensitizing in town on like a speaker, a speaker phone. And every time I would walk through that speaker, I would hear to not eat monkey, to not eat bush meat. It is so beyond the “do not eat monkey, do not eat bush meat” point, y’know? Like wrong message, wrong person, wrong time.
9	Fear: Experiences of fear during the epidemic	2	3	24	61	International Director of a humanitarian organization in Sierra Leone: on a national level, the lockdowns are more obvious because we saw direct... direct impacts of increased fear, increased mistrust um, more people disappearing into communities, hiding of sick and dead, we saw that direct impact.
10	Flow of information – Disconnect: Experiences of disconnect between on the ground experience and recommendations/policies offered by external sources	2	2	17	35	International Monitoring Evaluation Advisor for a humanitarian organization: And we had no way, we didn’t have eyes on the ground yet, and so we had no way of really know what the sitreps were looking like, what was real information and it was really frustrating and scary because no one else was talking about it at that point.
11	Government - Corrupt: Belief that government is corrupt; example of a government’s corruption	2	2	7	11	Local social mobilizer for a humanitarian organization: its like the haves or the upper class. I think they need to try to understand the lower class. I think that would help this cause...this divide. That is why a lot of people were angry. That is why some people thought “Well the government was doing this for making money”, you know because, you know there are no ambulances and yet here are these people you now making a lot of a money, issues about corruption, lack of transparency and the use of uniforms. That didn’t help to bring confidence in the people
12	Quarantine - ineffective: responder believes quarantine was an ineffective response measure	2	2	18	25	International director of a humanitarian organization involved in Sierra Leone and Liberia: in Liberia, the minister said, ‘well we, you know, we weren’t trying to control Ebola transmission with, uh quarantine, we were trying to convey the seriousness of the issue,’ right, so you know, that’s the wrong way to use quarantine, it’s, it conveys that you can’t trust the government, it conveys a lot of things. Um, it does convey sort of that seriousness, but it’s a political kind of ‘See, we’re doing something’ response rather than convincing people that you’re doing something effective.
13	Biomedical communication, ineffective: responder found that biomedical communication was done ineffectively	1	1	7	9	International virologist working in Sierra Leone: Europeans and the US, they have a general knowledge what antibodies are, sort of. But the other general idea that someone that has antibodies is not something that is harmful, right. It doesn’t mean that you’re gonna die/you’re infected. But in these villages, try and walk up and tell a villager, “You are anti-Ebola antibody positive”. [laughs] The reaction number one is that all the other villagers are gonna run away from that person, that poor guy, or they’re gonna stone him! I would use something very silly, like you know when an elephant walks on the forest it leaves footsteps, footprints? Well that’s what I’m looking for in Ebola. Ebola is long-gone, the elephant is long-gone, but you can still see the footsteps in the mud. And that’s what I’m looking for; footsteps to show that you had it before, so there’s no worry, no one gets upset, don’t get scared, this person doesn’t have Ebola. Um and people understand that- they’re not stupid, they just have a different reference than you do! But that is very difficult for some people to do! I would say a lot of the response teams, not organizations as a whole, but a lot of response teams had no clue about this or how to deal with this. And something else that my boss would tell you that is very simple, if you don’t know how to explain something, ask your driver. Your local driver will explain it a hundred times better than you. So we need the local drivers on every single investigation team. You cannot send out a team...that maybe know[s] their science but they don’t know their driver language. That just

<p>14 Clinical trial and mobile labs: responder recounts experiences with experimental health structures on the ground during the epidemic</p>	1	1	8	35	<p>Local West African journalist: Those of us who were making the Ebola show [for a local news network] asked ourselves the question what is the motivation for sending a new vaccine when there aren't any cases and when no one is eligible to get the vaccine. And then as if by accident, there are new cases. You know, there are things that make you wonder, even if you can't</p>
<p>15 Communication between victim and family: lines of communication are established between Ebola patients and their family members</p>	1	1	5	5	<p>International Executive Director of a religious humanitarian organization working in Sierra Leone and Liberia: religious structures especially in that affected area still are given much credibility and respect. The messages we were able to pass through our community mobilization and education efforts were, were heard and accepted uh because they also saw the other kinds of caring work that was being done by the church. Uhm and so that, that certainly was a very effective means of communicating quickly uh the ways of prevention, uh, the the need to be able to refer family members who were already sick to the specialized ebola treatment units and also the kind of ongoing support that we could give to those families that were in, in uh quarantined in observation because they may have had contact with infected members of their family or other community members. Uh so I think that was the most effective part of what we did</p>
<p>16 Community rxn to response equipment: lay community members perception of and reaction to response structures, such as ETCs, appearing in their communities.</p>	1	1	9	12	<p>International Public Health Program Director for a humanitarian organization: the ways in which the international [responders] approached the Ebola response and the first phase of you know having ETU's where people don't know what's happening in them and you have you know at the beginning you had a hundred person death's in the ETU's right so if you go you die you know of course that nourishes and that uh in a sense only adds to this vicious cycle of mistrust uh in terms of the community</p>
<p>17 Empathy, importance: responder advocates for the importance of empathy in epidemic response</p>	1	1	5	7	<p>Local Executive Director of a Sierra Leonean psychosocial organization: So we think that this is very crucial for this time and it is believed that if the proper traditional rights are performed for the disease, the surviving realities are experiencing helplessness, hopelessness, and emotional distress. So not being able to perform ceremonies according to their religious and traditional faith, so we think that this is very crucial. Let me also add this. There is also a mistrust between the community and the health worker. If we do not come in and try to bridge this gap between Ebola because they no longer have trust between their health worker. So it needs to be reviewed again for people to see and a visit a health worker for Ebola.</p>
<p>18 Empowering communities: examples of communities empowered to enact own response efforts; belief that communities should be empowered to enact own response efforts</p>	1	1	8	11	<p>Local social mobilizer for a humanitarian organization: One day we had a usual meeting, a briefing, and in this briefing some of the locals would take a backseat and they would sit there and just listen to the experts and they would talk and talk and talk. And you know they would hardly be the ones to listen to us. I mean there are times where you have consideration and its difficult and I don't think they kind of empowered us for, you know, for them to listen to us. I think it was very structured and you didn't have results. And say you have Ebola come back to [Country] ten years from now, god forbid, like I see these experts coming, I don't think local people will listen because they were very very disappointed. Like I keep saying how I want to see [Nationals] in the front row and the experts in the backseat, you know, but that was not the case.</p>
<p>19 Expertise, lack of community expertise: responder has belief or recounts the belief of others that communities lack the necessary expertise to fully participate in epidemic response</p>	1	1	10	15	<p>International Health Systems Analyst for a humanitarian organization: [Country] where I think has a very low capacity to be able to respond to this kind of emergency, it must have the kind of expertise to do that and the expertise of course, can come from within, but at the time, it can only come from outside of the country.</p>

<p>20 Flow of information – top down: example of top down flows of information during the response; opinion of top down information flow during the response</p>	1	1	16	24	<p>International anthropologist for a humanitarian organization: especially in [Country1] it's been really frustrating to see this very top down approach where I feel like the town has been even more than in [Country2] has been really stigmatizing it and blaming the effected families and communities, you know, these kind of cumulative bylaws that talk about how you like hiding sick people or secret [burials?] without, you know, really understanding what's going on there or the issue of denial, you know, well, denying what and to whom and not being very specific about that...and when you actually go to people and ask them why, supposedly, they're denying or resisting all of this, you know, a lot of it is based on very negative experiences in the early response and, you know, also totally rash fears, about what will happen to them based on those early responses.</p>
<p>21 Flow of information – reciprocal: example of reciprocal flows of information during the response; opinion of reciprocal information flow during the response</p>	1	1	9	11	<p>Local Programs Manager for a religious humanitarian organization: It was much more successful when...[someone] knows a particular child from the neighborhood and knows that this child is a very serious child and focused in in in his work or academic work. He's talking to this individual about Ebola and trying to get them to educate, and trying to get them educated and we we used a lot of conversational approach...to people instead of they would talk to that it was about the confusion or about the [?] information we got on Ebola...we will encourage them that they talk about those issues to the the the social mobilizers, the community help workers, so that they will, they will actually um give them feedback. This is about them. We always have a home phone that they should call us 'cause we give them four units so that they can call us at any time. If the question is too difficult for us we will ask the ministry of health specialist,</p>
<p>22 Flow of information – bottom up: example of bottom up flows of information during the response; opinion of bottom up information flow during the response</p>	1	1	6	7	<p>International anthropologist for a humanitarian organization: I had ...really great discussions, for example, often with women's groups and hearing from them, just really, really practical suggestions on how to move forward, or how to engage with people much, much better. just pointing out small things to me, like, well, you know, you hired volunteers that are from the communities, so to speak, but actually for us, unless you're from our particular subdivision, you know, we don't really feel that that person's from our community, you know, it'd really help that there are people that we actually knew were more, you know, to us, a part of the community. Let's see, there were some, there were some good days...I really appreciated discussions with survivors, particularly families, who I mean, you know, the fact that people were willing to be interviewed at that time was meaningful, and being able to describe what that experience was actually like, so that someone like [?] and try to address you know, for, for other families that had not yet been affected, some of the, some of the [?] that they experienced, some of the pain that they experienced, that was just, that was so incredibly generous to be willing to reveal that to a stranger so that, you know, maybe the, maybe the next time around, things will be better.</p>
<p>23 Gaps in information between community & international aid: examples of information gaps between community members and international aid organizations/responders</p>	1	1	3	3	<p>International Director of a humanitarian organization in Sierra Leone: A lot of organizations abandoned their programming very quickly, even some of the bigger organizations for the first month... that, I think limited their capacity to understand what was happening in the communities and it also created mistrust in the communities of those organizations who left uh... when the going got tough. Um... and I know some organizations would say international staff can't go here but national staff can uh, I don't know whether that's right or wrong, it probably makes sense, uh, but of course it creates a... an uncomfortable kind of situation around the response.</p>
<p>24 Involving survivors: examples of survivor involvement; advocating for survivor involvement; opinion of survivor involvement</p>	1	1	7	11	<p>International Senior Vice-President of Program Management a humanitarian organization working in Guinea: We're not sufficiently using survivors' knowledge, integrating it into evolving systems of care.</p>

<p>25 Government - Paternalistic: example of government response that was paternalistic in nature, e.g., assumed what was best for the general population and enacted it without consultation or consideration of the affected population's experiences/priorities.</p>	1	1	3	3	<p>International anthropologist working in Sierra Leone: some of the main aspects of the Sierra Leonian national response, I feel, are quite problematic and represent a lack of trust, I, the way I've always been, kind of been saying it is, there's always a lot of talk about trust, and there's a lot of talk about communities not trusting the government and the state and various authorities, but there's also the government, I don't think, trusted communities to have, and people to be able to respond in ways that were effective or appropriate, and thought that they basically had to control Ebola with force. That, in some senses to me seems like the national, kind of, line on Ebola (laughs) as represented by policies like quarantine.</p>
<p>26 Government - Authoritarian: example of government behaving in an authoritarian manner</p>	1	1	1	2	<p>International anthropologist working in Sierra Leone: People might be not happy with the burial policy, and they might be not happy with the way the CCC jobs were allocated, but it was working through a structure that was deemed to have legitimacy, and, I think, that is probably where Sierra Leone managed to, kind of, roll out some pretty authoritarian, kind of policies. Like, I think it's crazy that every death in Sierra Leone is, um, is to be reported and buried medically. I mean, it doesn't happen in all cases, but a lot of them do. You know, I think the idea that every single death now is, you call this centralized number and, and, um, and submit to this quite antisocial burial policy. The fact that that's been possible is probably because it was worked through these chieftom structures have some legitimacy.</p>
<p>27 Government - Performative: example of government responding performatively, e.g., a lot of talk and little action; or paying attention to the outbreak as a means of sustaining international attention & aid without actually doing much themselves.</p>	1	1	2	3	<p>International director of a humanitarian organization involved in Sierra Leone and Liberia: in Liberia, the minister said, 'well we, you know, we weren't trying to control Ebola transmission with, uh quarantine, we were trying to convey the seriousness of the issue,' right, so you know, that's the wrong way to use quarantine, it's, it conveys that you can't trust the government, it conveys a lot of things. Um it does convey sort of that seriousness, but it's a political kind of 'See we're doing something' response rather than convincing people that you're doing something effective.</p>
<p>28 Helpless: responder recounts feeling helpless during the outbreak</p>	1	1	7	9	<p>Local Executive Director of a Sierra Leonean psychosocial organization: So we think that this is very crucial for this time and it is believed that if the proper traditional rights are performed for the disease, the surviving realities are experiencing helplessness, hopelessness, and emotional distress. So not being able to perform ceremonies according to their religious and traditional faith, so we think that this is very crucial.</p>
<p>29 Holistic approach to response: individual or group enacts a holistic approach to response efforts, e.g., incorporating multiple perspectives, incorporating multiple approaches rather than superficially separating the response into independent aims with no cross talk (e.g., healthcare, psychosocial).</p>	1	1	2	3	<p>Local Programs Manager for a religious humanitarian organization: when we started getting into the process very deep, when we understood exactly the whole, the whole essence, and the need for community engagement and community involvement, we were using all, for [?] especially, all our social mobilizers that we actually afford to do social mobilization of even the psycho-social counselor of people who provide a counseling at that level...all the the psycho-social counselors that we engaged, all the social mobilizers we engaged were drawn from the communities so people actually had lots of respect for them.</p>
<p>30 Need to train community members: belief that community members should be trained in response efforts</p>	1	1	15	25	<p>International Director of a humanitarian organization in Sierra Leone: We needed to use our pre-existing volunteers because...they know how to work with communities, we wanted young people that have worked professionally as development workers before so, what we did is we took someone from that district, so they spoke the same language uh... and we put them together with someone from that community so this young man had a partner who is a female from her own community so they worked together as a team. So every community... and of course this was all done with approval and conjunction with the village chief and the paramount chief of the chieftom.</p>
<p>31 Negative opinion of media response: responder recounts negative impression of media response (incl. radio, tv, internet etc.)</p>	1	1	6	16	<p>International anthropologist working in Sierra Leone: it was just a, kind of a, (laughs) a lesson, in not trusting,...the way the media deals in, kind of, simple stories...they're scrabbling around. They've got, like, their, kind of, correspondent that's based in Ghana assigned to work on this Ebola epidemic, but it's just, kind of, desperate for anyone that's been there, and people like me are annoying, and they won't talk, and,... it's I guess, hard in a context like that to actually get the real story and let [alone] you know, the, all the complex number of stories that are going on</p>

<p>32 Positive access to academic information and research: responder recounts positive experiences with ability to access academic information and research resources during the outbreak</p>	1	1	10	13	<p><i>Interviewer:</i> what were people doing with the research that they were receiving? International Communications Program Worker for an International Institution working in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea: Oh, it-it made a huge difference in terms of informing a lot of things around like, um, campaign design, messages, and so forth. Like who were the trusted sources of information and how can we make sure those trusted sources are getting the correct information. I mean, we as an organization always rely very heavily on research and so since we didn't have time to field a lot of our own, it was invaluable to have access to, to the studies that have already been done.</p>
<p>33 Positive communication: responder recounts example of a positive communication approach</p>	1	2	6	9	<p>International Executive Director of a religious humanitarian organization working in Sierra Leone and Liberia: We in terms of the clergy or the religious leaders in the community,...and also the Muslim leaders. they have an automatic communication mechanism that many other organizations envy because they are in communication with people sometimes on a daily basis or at least on, on the religious day of the week whether that be Friday for the Muslims or Sundays for the Catholics and other Christians. So we had a way of directly communicating to people of trying to help to calm the panic and the fear but also to alert them to the health challenges that were present as a result of Ebola and to the need for solidarity and also to counteract the kind of stigma and discrimination that was going on in those communities. people continued to come to the churches and to the mosques during those the heaviest times of Ebola in those countries...they were able to get you know direct and reliable information. the other thing is that many of the churches and the mosques have large numbers of volunteers so they were able to give their time and their effort and their energy and what we needed to do then was to train them so that they</p>
<p>34 Violence & resitance: responder recounts encounters with violence and/or resistance during the outbreak</p>	1	1	17	36	<p>Local West African journalist: It's dangerous because us journalists were targeted by the population. There is a team that followed us one day, where people almost set our vehicle on fire, they even put oil under it, they almost burned the vehicle, but luckily well it was more to scare us than to cause harm.</p>
<p>35 Difficulty of receiving/maintaining routine healthcare in epidemic: responder recounts the difficult of receiving and/or sustaining day-to-day healthcare needs as Ebola-related-care took precedence over all other priorities</p>	1	1	11	17	<p>International Health Systems Analyst for a humanitarian organization: I think the largest challenge at the time was community engagement of social mobilization because I was informed that families, mothers, children were not going to the primary healthcare centers anymore and also hospitals because it's like there was distrust between the community and the health care environment because, as you are aware some healthcare workers also go the infection, and this is like in the newspapers, and for example, eleven doctors got infected and eleven doctors died, and of course some nurses, et cetera. And so the people were thinking, if those who know already how to stop the transmission are still getting the disease, then what about us?</p>
<p>36 Tension - Intl Intl Staff: examples of tension between international and national staff members of the same organization/group</p>	1	1	4	7	<p>International Director of a humanitarian organization in Sierra Leone: A lot of organizations abandoned their programming very quickly uh, even some of the bigger organizations for the first month um... that, I think limited their capacity to understand what was happening in the communities and it also created mistrust in the communities of those organizations who left uh... when the going got tough. Um... and I know some organizations would say international staff can't go here but national staff can uh, I don't know whether that's right or wrong, it probably makes sense, uh, but of course it creates a... an uncomfortable kind of situation around the response.</p>
<p>37 Tension - Intl Local Tension: examples of tension between international responders and local populations</p>	1	1	22	49	<p>International Director of a humanitarian organization in Sierra Leone: A lot of organizations abandoned their programming very quickly uh, even some of the bigger organizations for the first month um... that, I think limited their capacity to understand what was happening in the communities and it also created mistrust in the communities of those organizations who left uh... when the going got tough.</p>

<p>38 Tension - IntraNtl: examples of tension between amongst people from the same country</p>	1	1	10	13	<p>Local social mobilizer for a humanitarian organization: I think they all see this problem of, umm should I say communication or you know its like the haves or the upper class. I think they need to try to understand the lower class. I think that would help this cause...this divide. That is why a lot of people were angry. That is why some people thought "Well the government was doing this for making money", you know because, you know there are no ambulances and yet here are these people you now making a lot of a money, issues about corruption, lack of transparency and the use of uniforms. That didn't help to bring confidence in the people</p>
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