

Progress Update Bulletin

unicef  | for every child



SMS JOIN to 8500

 @UReportUganda

 U-Report Uganda

 www.ureport.ug

 www.unicef.org/uganda



U-Report Uganda brings to you the 2nd issue of our progress bulletin. This bulletin highlights activities and achievements between August to October 2021. The bulletin reports on U-Report engagement polls, partners activities and new innovative tools.

ABOUT U-REPORT

What is U-Report?

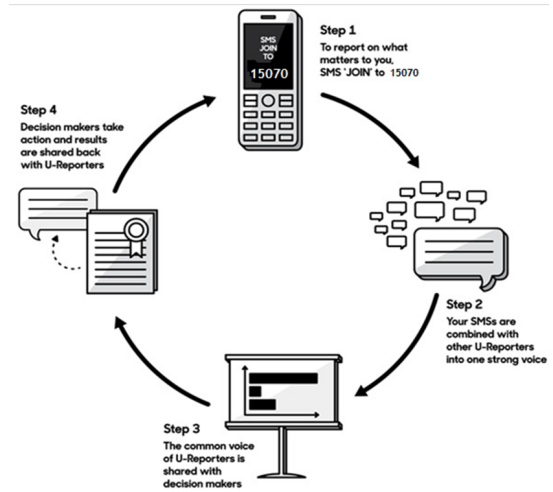
U-Report is a messaging platform that allows Ugandans to report on issues affecting them and their communities. Users also get real-time information and feedback on new initiatives or campaigns.

- ◆ U-Report offers young Ugandans and the public a chance to voice out their opinions on pertinent issues such as health, education, youth unemployment among others.
- ◆ It is a platform where young people can access life saving information on critical issues such as COVID-19 vaccine, violence against children (VAC), online child sexual exploitation and abuse, HIV/AIDS etc .
- ◆ It allows citizens to speak-out on what is happening in their communities and provides a forum to amplify their voices through media, alerts to key stakeholders and feeds back useful information to the U-Reporters.



How it works

SMS polls and alerts are sent out to U-Reporters and real-time response information is collected. Results and ideas are shared back with the community



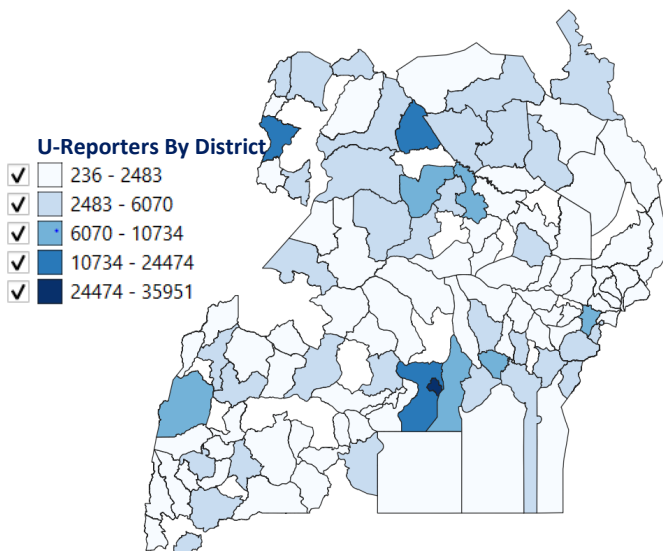
U-Report can be used in different ways to deliver on **development, humanitarian and advocacy** priorities

WEEKLY POLLS	LIVE CHATS	U-REPORT BOTS	MOBILIZING PEOPLE
Template Dashboard / website	U-Partners Partner case management White label: CasePro	Rapid Pro Machine automated responses	Connecting young people physically to take an Action

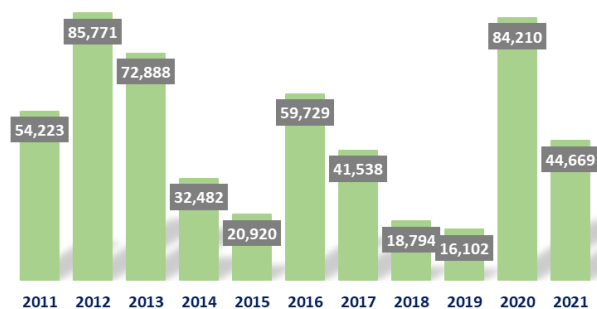
U-Reporters in Uganda

538,534 U-Reporters in Uganda

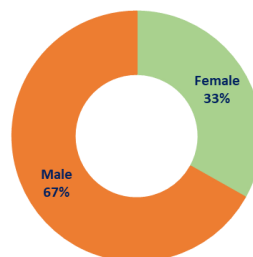
PARTNERING WITH **17,035,018** U-REPORTERS



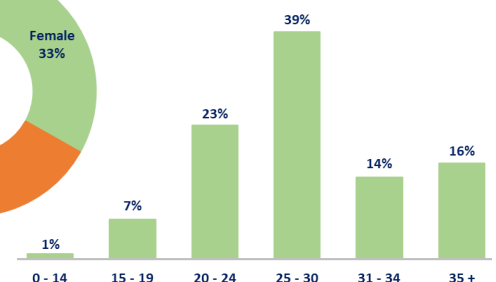
U-Reporters enrollment by year



By Gender



By Age Groups



Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

New U-Report Innovations /Artificial Intelligence Chatbots

A chatbot is a computer program designed to simulate a conversation with human users at scale. RapidPro enables U-Report to design messaging experiences, such as chatbots, and deploy them over several communication channels (e.g. SMS, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp and Viber).

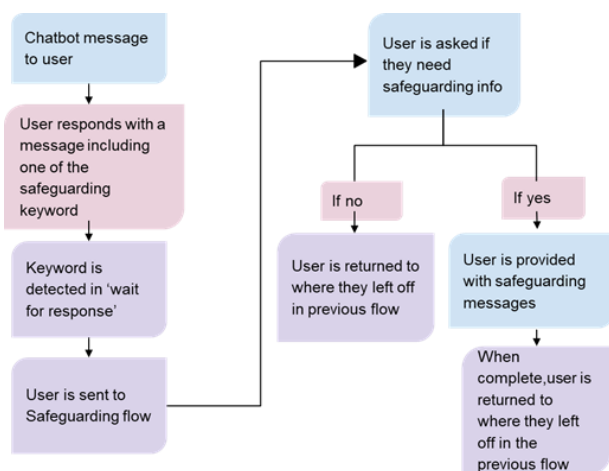
Overview

U-Report Uganda has introduced chatbots on the platform to improve the way we share information with our users especially those at risk of Gender Based Violence (GBV)/ Violence Against Children (VAC) and those seeking for life saving information such as information on disease outbreaks. Learn about our chatbots below:

The safeguarding chatbot

This is designed purposely to provide users with information on where they can seek services for Gender Based Violence/ Violence Against Children (GBV/VAC). It caters for children 18 years and below, adults above 18 years and people living in refugee communities in Uganda.

How it works



How does one access the safe guarding chatbot?

1. By texting a keyword “Sauti” to 8500:

A user texts the keyword “Sauti” and sends it to the U-Report short code 8500. The user is automatically directed to the safeguarding flow and follows the message prompts for required information.

2. Access for new members at the onset of the registration process:

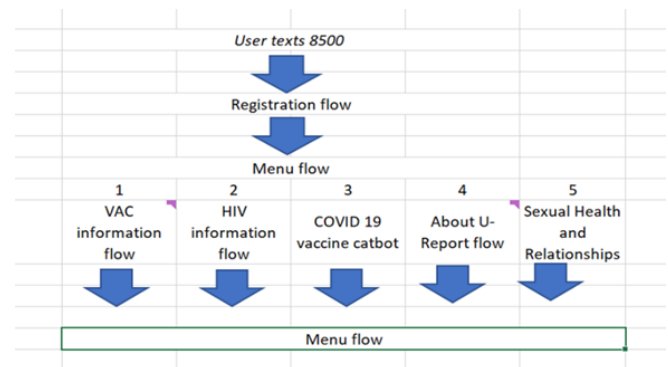
A safeguarding message has been added to the U-Report registration flow. Once a person begins the registration process to become a U-Reporter they receive the following message:

“We value your safety so if you ever need urgent help with Gender-Based Violence or refugee issues, type our safe word SAUTI to be referred to some trustworthy professionals.”

3. Access through the U-Report Menu Flow:

When a U-Reporter has completed registration, they are added to a Menu flow where they are given options of different topics they can access as they still wait for their first poll. One of the topics they can access is the GBV/VAC safeguarding information. Below is the automated message to usher them onto the Menu flow;

“Get informed on these important topics while you await your next poll. Choose one of the options below to learn more A) Sexual health & Relationships B) Violence against Children C) HIV & AIDS D) Covid-19 Vaccine E) About U-Report F) Online Child Exploitation and Abuse”



4. Safeguarding keywords auto-detection system:

In collaboration with our partners Uganda Child Helpline and Straight Talk Foundation, a list of safeguarding-related keywords has been identified and added at the back end of the U-Report system. An example of such words is rape, defilement, bullied and FGM

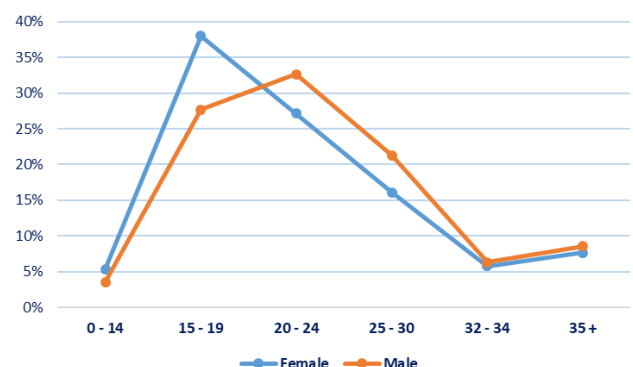
The system automatically identifies these words in messages sent to the platform and the user is directed to the safeguarding chatbot.

Progress/ Current Status

The safeguarding chatbot was officially launched on 19th August 2021 and to date, there are over **7, 045** users in Uganda who have successfully interacted with the chatbot.

Gender and age brackets

Majority of the users that accessed the chatbot are females between 15—19 years.



The COVID-19 vaccine chatbot

The COVID-19 Vaccine bot aims to strengthen UNICEF's ability to teach young people and communities about the vaccine, boost confidence, identify rumors and help to combat misinformation.

The content in the chatbot is sourced from the regularly updated UNICEF website <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/what-you-need-to-know-covid-vaccine>

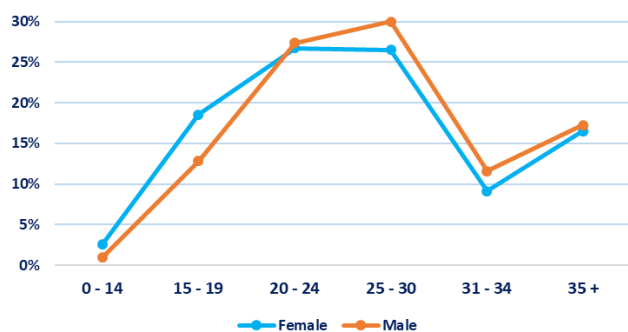
In Uganda, the COVID-19 Vaccine chatbot has been reviewed and customized to the Ugandan context based on information from the Ministry of Health, frequently asked questions, myths/rumors and includes references to government of Uganda chatlines or other authoritative local resources.

How it works

The U-Report COVID-19 Vaccine Chatbot provides automated response & referral information to users complimenting the work of the Ministry of Health Call Centre team that are providing one-on-one responses to U-Reporters COVID-19 related questions via our U-Partners page.



To access the COVID-19 vaccine chatbot, anyone can simply text and send the keyword "COVAX" to the U-Report Uganda short code 8500 then follows the message prompts to move from one step to the other.

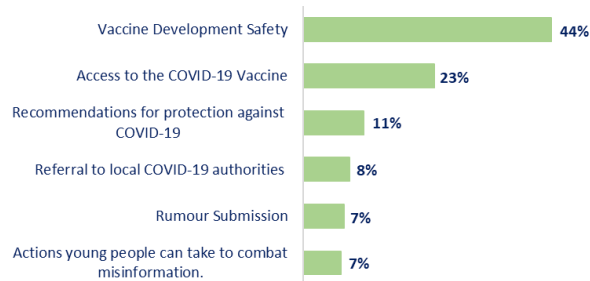


Progress/ Current Status

Over 21,627 users have so far interacted with the COVID-19 vaccine chatbot since its official launched on 19th August 2021.

Gender and Age groups: There is more interest amongst the U-Reporters 25-30 years. In the age group of 15—19 years, female users accessed the COVID-19 vaccine chatbot more times than the males.

Information mostly accessed: The majority of users (44%) were interested in the "Vaccine Development Safety" information.



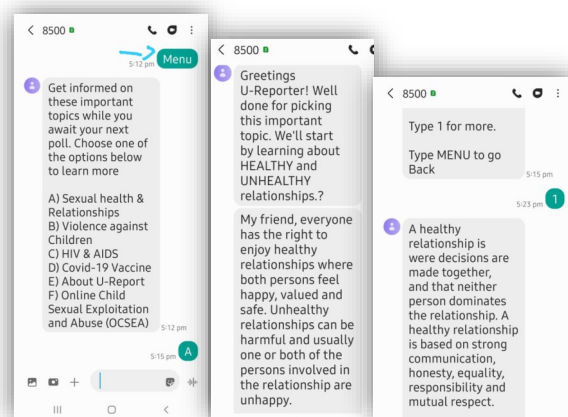
The U-Report Menu/Informational Chatbots

U-Report Uganda has developed a collection of interactive chatbots to provide information on different topics selected based on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) by young people via the U-Partners page.

The topics include HIV and AIDS, About U-Report, Sexual Health and Relationships, Violence Against Children (VAC) and Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA)

How to access the information flow chatbots

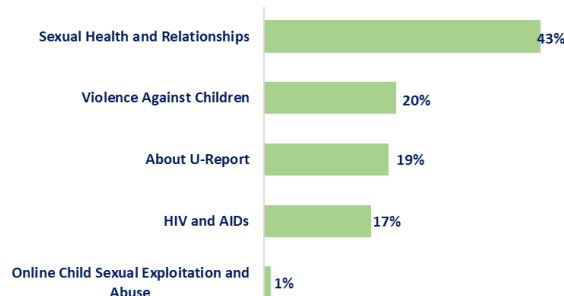
1. Through the **Trigger word "MENU"**: Anyone can access the Information chatbots menu by simply texting the word "MENU" to 8500. Select any of the topics you are interested in and follow the message prompts to learn more.



2. **Through U-Report Registration flow:** After completing the registration process, a U-Reporter is automatically added onto the Menu flow where they can choose the topics of interest as they wait to participate in their first poll.

Current Status for U-Report Information Chatbots

Over 14,157 users have interacted with the U-Report information chatbots since the launch in August 2021. The majority of users (43%) were mainly interested in the sexual health and relationships information as shown in the graph below.



Violence Against Children (VAC) and Child Welfare Systems



Spotlight Initiative

To eliminate violence against women and girls

U-Report and Spotlight initiative.

UNICEF Uganda is using U-Report through the Spotlight Initiative as a way to gauge the perceptions of Ugandans on key issues related to Violence Against Women and Girls. Poll questions were developed based on two thematic areas of: Understanding of violence against women/girls, and Access to services related to violence against women and girls.

Target Group

A total of 82,877 U-Reporters across all age groups based in the seven spotlight districts were the primary target for the engagement.

Spotlight Districts	Number of U-Reporters
Amudat	987
Arua	21,149
Kampala	38,356
Kasese	9,900
Kitgum	5,362
Kyegegwa	1,802
Tororo	5,321

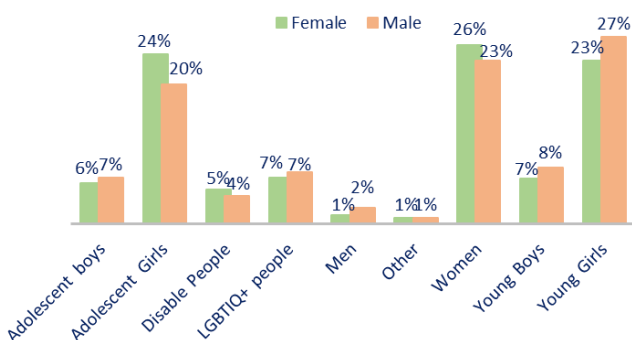
Understanding of Gender Based Violence (GBV)/ Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Under this thematic area, polls questions and informational messages were designed to assess the perception of U-Reporters of GBV/VAC; to assess changing views towards GBV/VAC in Spotlight districts; and to provide information on where to report cases of GBV/VAC and access services.

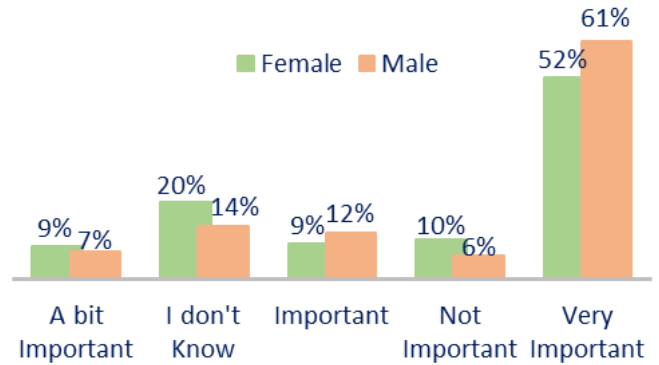
Participation: 5,325 U-Reporters participated in the poll.

Poll Results:

Most affected by GBV: Poll results indicated that the majority of U-Reporters believe young girls (26%, women (24%), and adolescent girls (23%) are the most affected by GBV.



Importance of men and boys in ending SGBV: Overall 58% of U-Reporters polled think that it is very important for men and boys to play a role in ending SGBV against women and girls, 11% said its important, 8% a bit important, 16% did not know while 7% think that it is not important at all.



Knowledge on national agenda to reduce all forms of violence: 51% of U-Reporters polled are aware of the is national agenda to reduce all forms of violence against women and girls while 24% are not aware of it and 25% were not sure.

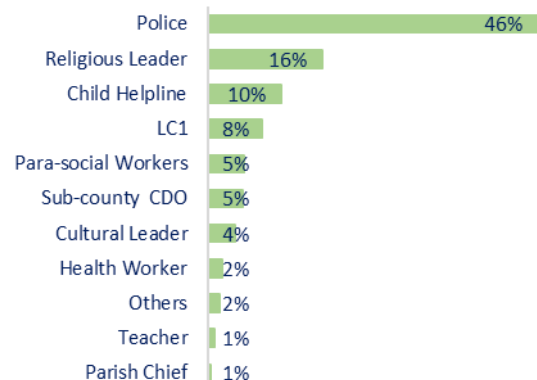
Participation in reducing GBV: Overall, 88% of U-Reporters polled believe that they can participate in reducing gender-based violence, 5% said no and 7% were not sure

How they can support to end GBV:

Category	% tage
By Reporting cases	33%
Joining a local group which already fights against GBV	23%
Talking with friends/families about GBV and how to change their day today attitude	17%
Advising or Accompanying a friend or family member to	16%
Being a male voice to support and empower women against toxic masculinity	8%
I don't think there is anything I can do to fight against GBV at my level	3%

Knowledge on reporting mechanisms: Overall, 60% of U-Reporters polled are aware of the different mechanisms, institutions through which VAC cases can be reported while 30% did not know any while 10% were not sure

Recommended reporting channels: The majority of U-Reporters (46%) would recommend victims of GBV to report to the Police.



For detailed poll results report on Understanding of violence against women and girls, please follow the link here: https://unicef-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/aokiror_unicef_org/EZzz768C1ExAhDNxVDdhO7QB8qKmdkJeWF0V7rvrH69Dbg?e=7hwSwl

Violence Against Children (VAC) and Child Welfare Systems

Access to services related to violence against women and girls.

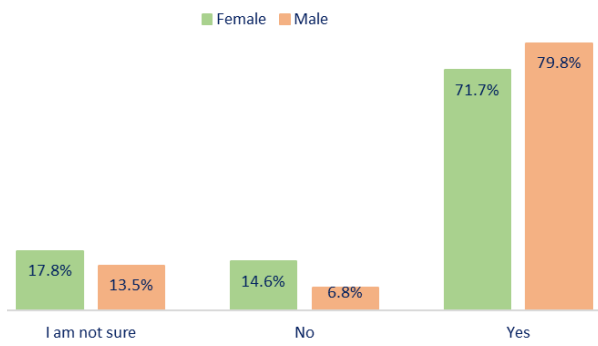
The objectives of this poll were

1. To assess the perception of U-Reporters on existing GBV/VAC reporting channels and services in their location
2. Understand barriers and facilitating factors for reporting at the community level
3. To provide information on where to report cases of GBV/VAC and access services in communities

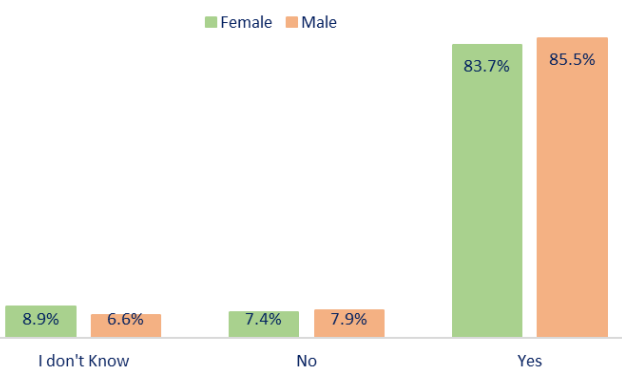
Poll Results

Participation: 5,945 U-Reporters participated in the poll.

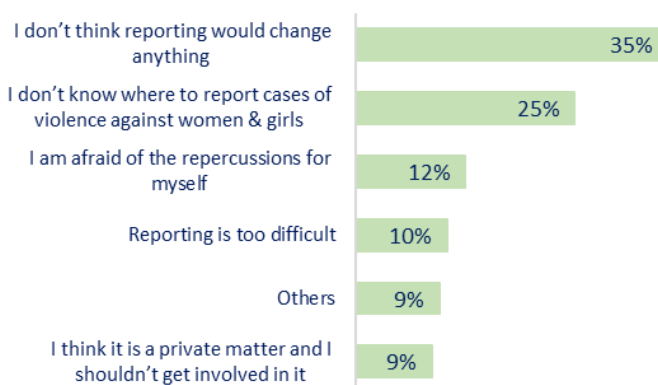
Is GBV/VAC punishable by Law? The majority (77%) of U-Reporters polled knew that violence against women and girls is punishable by law, 8% did not know while 15% were not sure



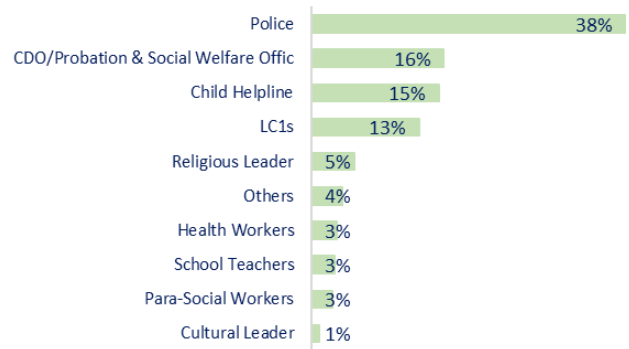
Reporting GBV cases: The majority (87%) of U-Reporters said they would report if they were/knew someone who is a victim of GBV, 8% would not report while 7% were not sure



Reason for not reporting: the majority (35%) of those who said they would not report GBV cases believed that reporting would not change anything.



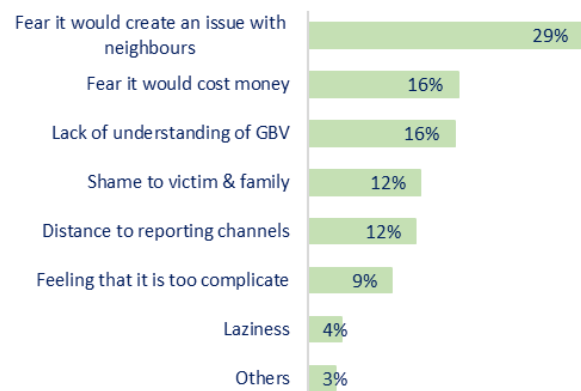
Most comfortable reporting Channels: The majority (38%) feel most comfortable reporting to the Police as compared to other reporting channels. This is because they trust them or they are close to where they live.



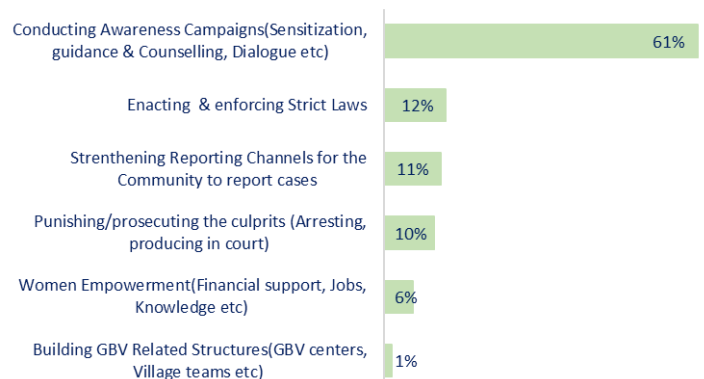
Reporting channels U-Reporters feel uncomfortable with: Interestingly when asked about channels they would not feel comfortable reporting cases of GBV to, the majority (38%) selected police, LC1s (18%), and Community Development Officers/Probation social welfare officers. (17%). Others mentioned child helpline (9%), school teachers (7%), health workers (4%), para-social workers (3%) and 4% did not specify.

They would not feel comfortable reporting to through these channels because they will be asked for money or that reporting channels are too far from where they live.

Biggest Barrier to reporting cases: Overall the majority of respondents (29%) would not report cases because they fear it would create an issue with neighbours and others fear it would cost them money(16%)



What can be done to stop GBV: The majority (61%) suggested conducting awareness campaigns (sensitization, guidance & counselling, dialogue).



For detailed poll results report on Understanding of violence against women and girls, please follow the link here: https://unicef-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/aokiror_unicef_org/_E5iHyQBAPxNAkf0JZzKpIKsB-H2Yfy7byDI-gjfyEPJ5Jg?e=cgf8gm

The National Food Systems Summit Dialogue 2021

U-Report Uganda in collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinators office, Office of the Prime Minister and support from other UN agencies and partner organizations engaged U-Reporters in discussions on the food systems in their communities in preparation for the national food systems dialogue.

U-Report was used as an innovative component to complement the food systems dialogues to raise awareness, amplify voices especially of youth and women on issues regarding food systems in the country.

In this section, we feature key highlights of the feedback we received from U-Reporters during the various engagements.

Participation:

67,970 U-Reporters participated in the polls.

Gender: 71% of U-Reporters who participated in the food systems summit dialogue polls were males while 29% were females.

Age Groups: The majority of U-Reporters (52%) who participated were 24 years and above.

Occupation: The majority (27%) of the participants were students while 19% were farmers.

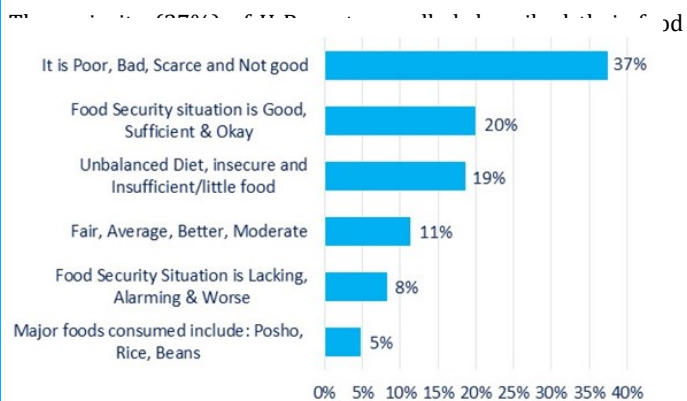
A consolidated report can be accessed via the UN Uganda public website: <https://uganda.un.org/en/701792-u-report-poll-results-uganda-un-food-systems-summit-dialogues-2021>

Sample poll Results

Action Track 1: Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all with focus on ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition

QN: How can you describe the food security situation in your household and community?

39,607 Total Participants



(90%) of U-Reporters are faced with food inadequacies sometimes, only 10% responded that they have adequate food.

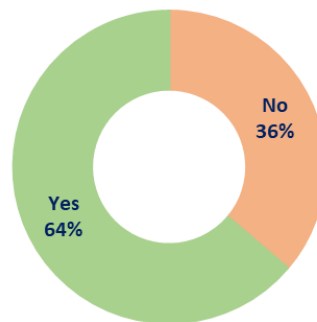
For a detailed report and full Action Track 1 poll results, please follow the link here: https://unicef-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/aokiror_unicef_org/E5cNkCg7089Mgf4507EArcB7meyZyg16Yf2FNARXJ66jg?e=8SVjxz



Action Track 2: Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns

Key Highlights

Healthy Diets: The majority of U-Reporters (64%) believe that their diet is healthy while 36% disagree



What does a healthy diet would look like? The majority of U-Reporters (36%) mentioned "Fruits and vegetables", 32% mentioned "food rich in proteins such as legumes, beans, meat, fish, etc"

Change in consumption of processed food: Overall 51% of U-Reporters polled had witnessed an increase in consumption of processed food

Factors to change in consumption: Key factors to the changes in consumption that were shared included lack of access to healthy foods, limited knowledge on healthy diets, ability to afford processed food among others

Combating consumption of processed foods: The majority (37%) of reporters believe that raising awareness about a healthy diet is the best measure in combating consumption of processed food, 26% mentioned setting up kitchen/backyard gardens.

Learning about healthy diets: 33% of the U-Reporters shared that they learn about healthy diets from the school curriculum. 24% said they learn from radio talk shows.

Food wastage: 28% of U-Reporters said that rotting is one of the reasons people throw away food

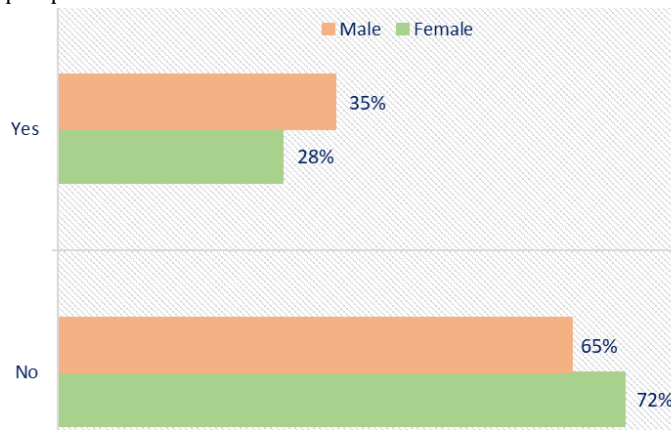
Combating food wastage: The majority (34%) of U-Reporters believe that meal planning at household level is the way to go to reduce the amount of food wastage

For detailed poll results for Action Track 2, follow the link: https://unicef-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/aokiror_unicef_org/EcOHPJvaWZFEqds3aYC1bwkBvgmUMVKRQp9u8J8flTqHAQ?e=oXzIaB

Action Track 3: *Protect natural ecosystems against new conversions for food and feed production, Sustainably manage existing food production systems to the benefit of both nature and people and Restore degraded ecosystems and rehabilitate soil function for sustainable food production.*

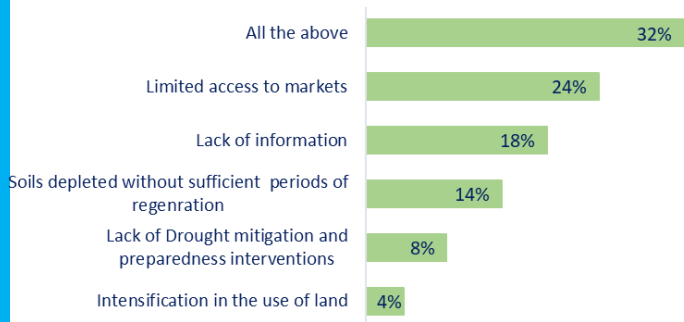
Key Highlights

Knowledge on interventions to protect the natural ecosystems: Overall the majority of U-Reporters (66%) did not know of any current interventions on the protection of natural ecosystems while 34% said they knew. Below is the gender perspective

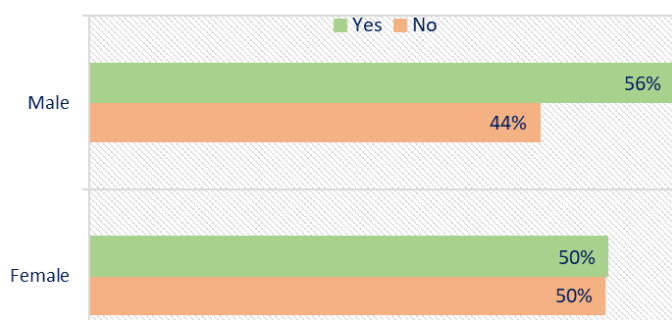


Interventions to sustainably manage existing food production systems: Overall 49% of U-Reporters polled knew of interventions helping to manage food production systems while 51% did not know of any

Challenges to Interventions to sustainably manage existing food production systems: The majority (32%) chose all the listed options. Among the most mentioned challenges mentioned limited access to markets (24%) and lack of information (18%).



Interventions to restore degraded ecosystems The majority 56% of U-Reporters knew of current interventions aimed at restoring degraded ecosystem, 44% did not know of any

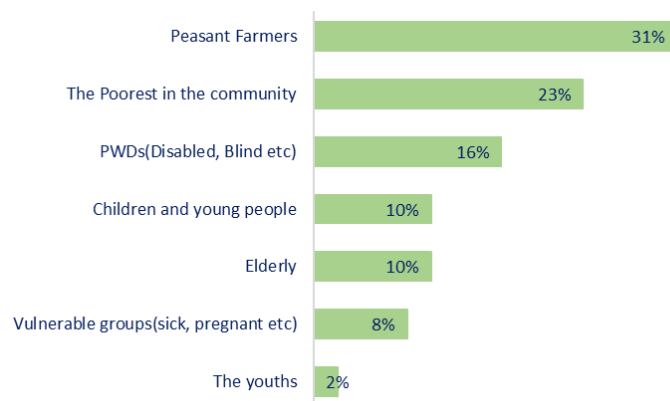


For detailed full poll results report for Action Track 3, Follow the link: https://unicef-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/aokiror_unicef_org/EbHbK1N3H4pHiuzOraiE-

Action Track 4: Promoting full and productive employment and decent work, Transforming smallholder to commercial agriculture and Reducing risks for the country's poorest, vulnerable and marginalized groups

Key Highlights

Groups excluded from full, productive and decent work within the food systems activities : Overall the majority of U-Reporters 33% mentioned peasant farmers as the most excluded group of people. Among other groups include

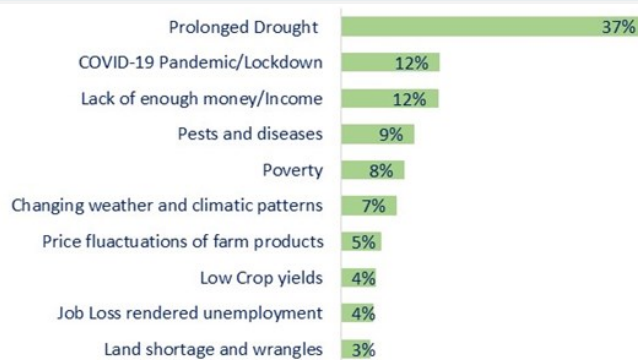


For a detailed full poll results report for Action Track 4, Follow the link: https://unicef-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/aokiror_unicef_org/ERJDGOg7pf5DnAU_ZG7MFcwb-VXsSHuAE0h51BtOsLDArw?e=7hMFdz

Action Track 5: Building resilience requires that people, institutions, infrastructure, services of the Food Systems have the capacity to anticipate shocks, manage risks, prevent or reduce exposure, absorb (respond to and cope), adapt to evolving risks."

Key Highlights

QN: Over the past 12 months, what are the shocks that you have experienced in your household and have affected food



Other shocks mentioned include;

- Land shortage and wrangles
- Job loss leading to unemployment
- Low crop yields
- Price fluctuations of farm products
- Changing weather and climatic patterns
- Poverty
- Pests and diseases
- Lack of enough money/Income

For a detailed full poll results report for Action Track 5, Follow the link: https://unicef-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/aokiror_unicef_org/EQkCjCv3xHfhqvQX1CCMYBl-7Y8WDyZfQ25HogbrV8Ww?e=lmZemb

Emergency Monthly U-Report Poll—Youth as champions for change

Background

U-Report Uganda supports the Field Operations and Emergencies section to engage U-Reporters in the refugee hosting districts and flood-prone areas on issues that affect them.

Polls are developed according to different thematic areas and conducted on monthly basis to gauge the U-Reporter's views and feedback on issues affecting them and how they can best be supported for improved service delivery.

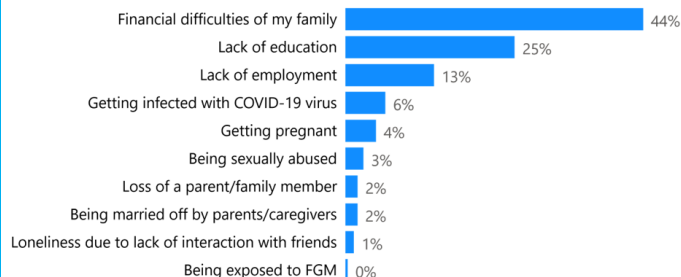
In this bulletin, we feature highlights of the poll conducted in the month of September 2021 on the youth as champions for change thematic area

Key Highlights

Target groups: U-Reporters 15-24 years both males and females. **Reach:** 20,038 U-Reporters participated in the poll.

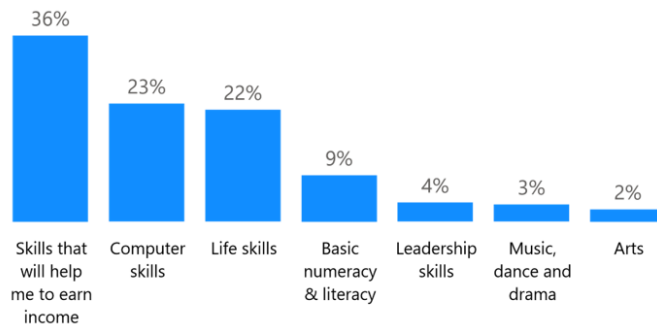
Sample Poll Results

What are you most worried about in this COVID-19

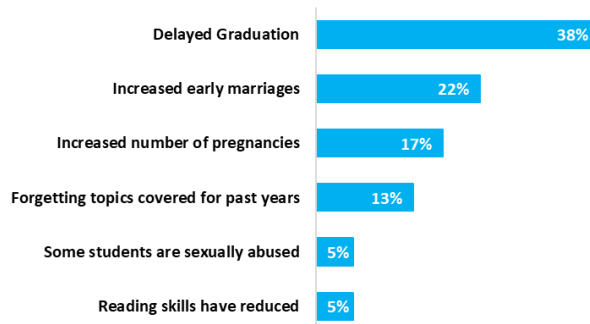


What would you be most interested in learning if the opportunity would be available for you

12,809 Participants



How delayed school reopening affected young people and their friends: The majority (38%) of young people mentioned that it led to delayed graduation and 22% mentioned increased early marriages.



For a detailed poll report of the youth as champions for change , Follow the link: https://unicef-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/aokiror_unicef_org/Ec-g9USh7RljhYX2qvUwgKUB1qgIggDQpuN9WuZymYY2qQ?e=ZmedQT

U-REPORT PARTNERS' SPOTLIGHT

U-Report Uganda works with and grows through partnerships such as Civil Society Organizations, government partners, and other United Nations Agencies. UNICEF's U-Report team collaborates with partner organizations to determine on the topics to discuss with U-Reporters, act on recommendations made and use information for development, emergency, and advocacy priorities.

Partners also play a key role in responding to issues raised by U-Reporters including providing counseling and advice. Some of the partners we collaborate with include the following:

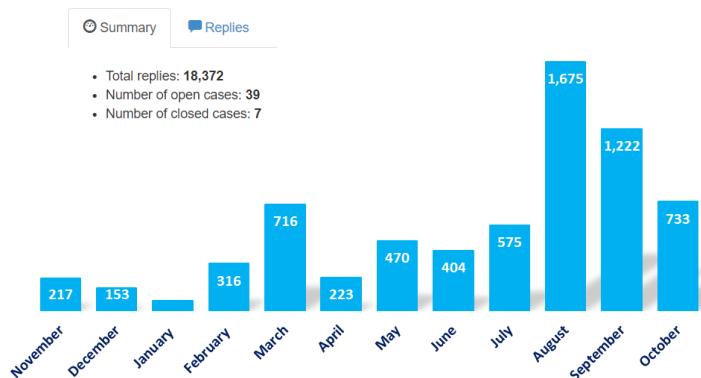
Government Agencies	CSOs/Other NGOs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uganda Red Cross Society
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Education and Sports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trailblazers Mentoring Foundation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development/ Uganda Child Helpline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straight Talk Foundation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kampala City Council Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Save The Children Uganda
UN Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doctors with Africa (CUAMM)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Nations Resident Coordinators Office (UNRCO) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baylor College of Medicine Uganda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AVSI Foundation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> War Child Canada

In this issue, we put a spotlight on the work of two of our partners, the Ministry of Health (MoH) Call Centre and Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Children (UPFC).

The Ministry of Health Call Centre

Ministry of Health is using U-Report as an integral feedback channel for referrals using the short code 8500. The Ministry of Health Call Centre directly responds to U-Reporter's questions, provides health-related information, and acts on alerts (emergencies) raised by U-Reporters through the U-Partners dashboard.

Over 15 call center workers provide one-on-one responses to U-Reporters via the U-Partners dashboard. Below are the number of responses made by the helpline in the past 12 months.



Do you need help?



The Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Children

On 16th October 2021, the U-Report Uganda team conducted orientation/training of the new Members of Parliament under the Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Children (UPFC).

The purpose of this partnership is to create a dialogue between citizens and decision-makers by sharing feedback and facts from young people. This information can then be used to improve service delivery, voice amplification and empowerment of young people achieved through direct connections with Members of Parliament of different constituencies.

How will U-Report work with the Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Children?

- Enrollment of UPFC members of parliament to the U-Report system
- Facilitate discussions between the members of parliament and young people in Uganda.
- Encourage members of parliament to use U-Report data to lobby for positive change in policy.
- Using U-Report data as evidence to legislate on issues that affect children in Uganda e.g teenage pregnancies, Immunization, Violence in Schools, Girl Child Education, Children with disabilities, Employment and Skills building

The collaboration

The collaboration between MOH and UNICEF has seen U-Report being used for major campaigns and during disease outbreaks to send alerts/messages through out the country such as the Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Nets (LLINs) campaign against malaria, Polio campaign, Integrated Child Health Days (IChDs), Ebola outbreak and the most recent COVID-19 pandemic.

U-Report supports the MoH Risk Communication component for example during the COVID-19 pandemic, U-Reporters have received lifesaving messages designed in collaboration with the ministry about the COVID-19 virus, causes, prevention, access to services, facts about the virus, vaccination and where they can report suspected cases.



Frequently asked health related questions from U-Reporters are on topics such as COVID-19, Sexual Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS, Immunization, and Access to



U-REPORTERS SPEAK OUT

U-Reporter's quotes on what should be done to stop VAC in their communities

"Community awareness to family heads and teach women & girls about GBV effects on them and where to report such problems when it happens to them" U-Reporter, Arua, 20, M

"The law should be strict on irresponsible men and whoever participates in this violence against women". U-Reporter, Kampala, F

"Communities need special places only meant for reporting GBV cases that offer serious punishments and also providing rehabilitation for the affected." U-Reporter, Arua, 24, F

Reasons for food wastage

"There is a point when we prepare too much that we can't consume hence the balance we throw"

"Greed, if the food was shared, nobody would be hungry and nothing would be wasted, poor storage and wastage during harvest are added to that"

"Low prices and some times foods are in plenty especially fruits, and lack of processing factories such as avocado, mangoes guavas, etc"

NEXT ISSUE:

1. Schools Reopening during the COVID-19 Pandemic
2. Impact of Covid-19 on diets
3. Integrated Child Health Days
4. U-Report and the members of parliament
5. U-Report Partners' Spotlight



For more information, contact:

- Mandi Chikombero mchikombero@unicef.org
 Fatuma Namukose fnamukose@unicef.org
 Abraham Okiror aokiror@unicef.org