THE Sauti Stream
Interactive Radio Campaign

TRAC fm
Transparency • Accountability

Human Rights Awareness in Uganda



JULY 2024

In Partnership with Faraja Africa Foundation



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This report presents findings from the Sauti Stream interactive radio campaign undertaken by TRAC FM International (TRAC FM)

Additional information may be obtained from TRAC FM International;
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i. Key findings



1.LACK OF AWARENESS:

Nearly half of respondents (49%) understand human rights as a way to demand basic needs and services, while 51% hold misconceptions or are unaware of what human rights are.



2.ECONOMIC PRESSURES:

A significant majority of respondents prioritise basic needs over democratic rights raising the concern that everyday poverty overshadows political and inclusive freedoms.



3.INFORMATION GAPS:

A majority of respondents (64%) either failed to obtain information about their rights or were unaware they have rights, underscoring the need for improved public awareness and effectiveness of the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC).



4.COMPETING NORMS:

A majority of respondents (54%) are primarily guided by religious teachings, compared to national laws (26%) and traditional customs (20%), highlighting the challenge of harmonizing these belief systems with human rights principles.

ii. Quick Stats

4
4 Multiple-choice Poll Questions

11
Radio Stations

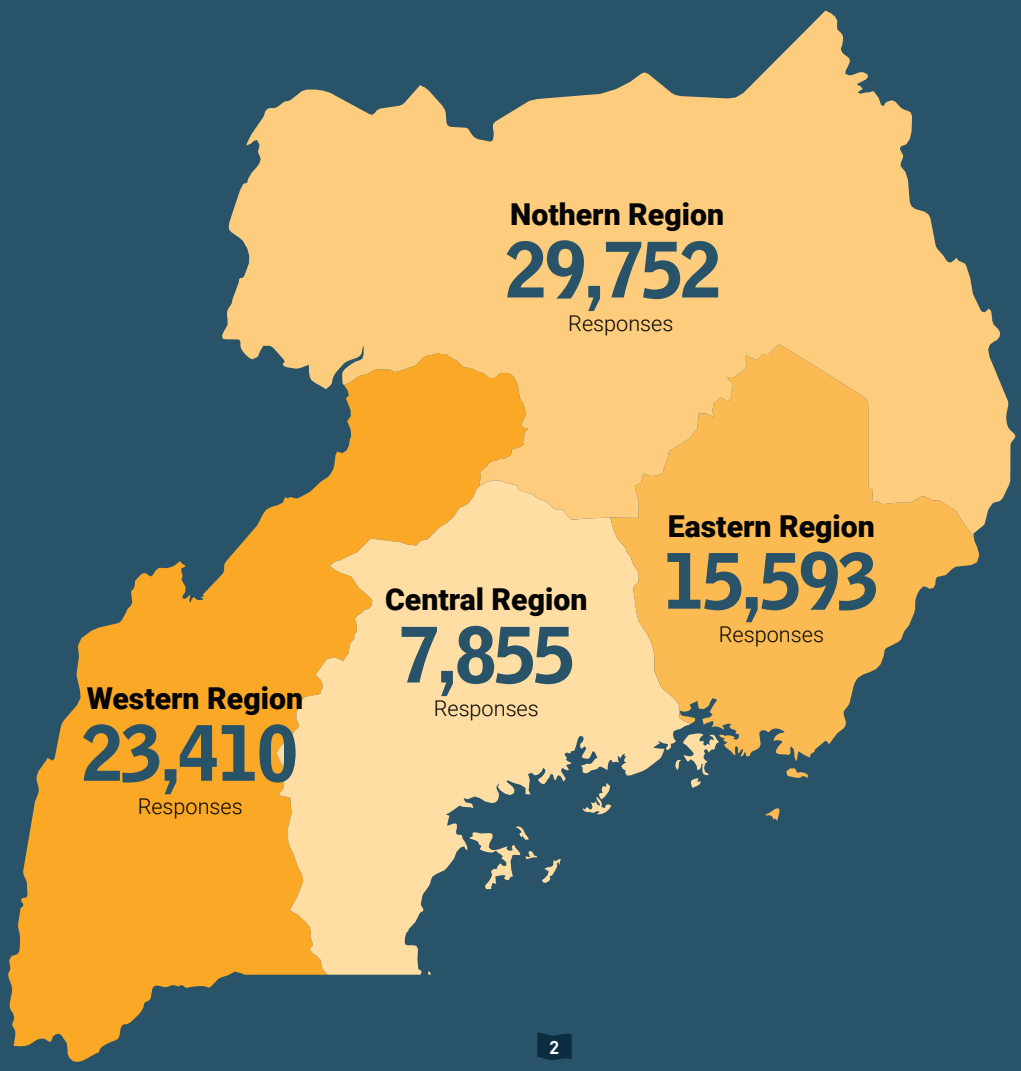
44
Talk Shows

86* Out Of 136
Districts Covered

76,610
Total Responses

*Districts with 40+ responses were considered

Number of Responses per Region



iii. List of Acronyms

UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UN-OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner, Human Rights
CSO	Civil Society Organization
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
SDGs	UN Sustainable Development Goals

Radio Partners Per Region



iv. Acknowledgments

Firstly, we thank the tens of thousands of Ugandan citizens who contributed to this report. Through their answers to multiple-choice radio polls and surveys, we obtained valuable insights into community perspectives on human rights awareness. In three months, we received over 76,610 responses to four poll questions aired on 11 radio stations throughout Uganda. These citizens' perspectives are crucial to a more inclusive and informed debate.

This report was prepared by TRAC FM in collaboration with Faraja Africa Foundation. The core TRAC FM team included Innocent Amanyire, Mohazzab Abdullah, Wouter Dijkstra, Maurice van Rooden, Pasqualino Okello, and Patricia Helen Amutuhaire. Faraja Africa's contributing staff consisted of Emmanual Wabwire and Shalom Nahurira. Through Faraja Africa, TRAC FM maintained a close collaboration with elected youth representatives of the 6th National Youth Parliament. As a result, youth leaders from every subregion of the country played a role in co-designing our poll questions and discussing poll results on 44 local-language radio talk shows. Youth leaders include Okot Olaa Sam, Bob Owinyi, Katuutu Sylvia, Okema Emmanuel, Agaba Charity, Patricia Sitaraya, Auma Tamali, Akori Gloria, Angelina Abura, Kasozi Abdul Wahab, Kidega Amos Bacwa, Tusubira Simon Peter, Muyambi Prosper, Haward Muhwezi, Drijaru Emily, Pedun Clare.

We are grateful for the topical expertise on human rights in Uganda, international human rights instruments, and Ugandan bodies and constitutional provisions for human rights provided by local scholars, human rights experts, and government officials. Special thanks to Jacob Ereyu, Chairperson of the National Youth Council; Ivan Bwowe, Advocate at the High Court; Sylvia Pimer, Youth Officer at the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development; and John Abimanyi at the Office of Democracy, Rights, and Governance, USAID. We also extend our gratitude to Dr. Jonathan Tumwebaze, Christian University Partnerships Manager, Uganda Christian University for his significant and valuable input in reviewing the methodology.

Furthermore, we appreciate the contributions of the Regional Representatives of the Uganda Human Rights Commission for their participation in our third round of talk shows, which focused on sources of information on human rights. These representatives include Fionah Opoka, Chelimo Florida Chebet, Harriet Kajobe Rwakabbira, Carol Gumoshabe, Bosco Kurut, Nicho Ogwang, Auma Vicky Gloria, Lomongin Peter Santos, Juliet Logose, and Norah Asekenye. Their insights and involvement have been instrumental in enriching our discussions and ensuring the success of our initiatives.

This report drew upon data collected through radio polls that were aired on 11 radio stations across the country. We gratefully acknowledge the support of our radio partners Hits FM, Radio West, Radio Simba, Baba FM, Delta FM, Radio WA, Radio Pacis, Mega FM and Akica FM, Voice of Karamoja/Etoil, and Radio Hoima. Special thanks go to the talk show guests invited by our radio partners, who contributed their knowledge of local contexts and their experience with communities to lively radio debates: Winnie Agero, Kintu Muhanga Willy, Namuhungo Lukia, Acidri Mawa Robert, Otim Anthony, Abbo Sandra, Nicholas Busobozi, Peace Gloria, Dina Honorato, Dawa Gloria, Lisa Adur, Buyi Meable Nambuba, Nakazibwe Angela, Kainemukama Grace, Rev. Beseri Otekat, Rev. Muhanga, Othieno Fulgence, Ayoo Janeth Phoebe Obol, Asiimwe Emmanuel, Fr. Riyo, C.P Okello, Francis Owiny, Shk. Hafidhu Huzairu Kayiira, Rev Kitalibara John.

Finally, we would like to thank the Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA), United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG) for financial and programmatic support through the 'Your Rights' Consortium. The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of TRAC FM and Faraja Africa Foundation and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

CIPESA

1. Foreword

We are proud to present the findings of our recent campaign, which offers unique data and a refreshing citizen-driven narrative on human rights awareness and engagement in Uganda. At TRAC FM, our mission has always been to amplify citizen perspectives and explicitly include the voices of remote and underserved communities, ensuring their views are included in policy development and public discourse.

Through our extensive network of radio stations and innovative use of SMS technology, we received 76,610 unique responses to our multiple-choice radio polls questions from all corners of Uganda. This report illuminates critical issues such as the lack of awareness about human rights, the overwhelming economic pressures overshadowing democratic rights, and the significant information gaps hindering effective civic participation. It also highlights the complex interplay between traditional, religious, and legal norms that shape citizens' beliefs and behaviours.

This report offers valuable insights for policymakers, NGOs, and human rights advocates, emphasising the urgent need to bridge gaps in human rights awareness and education, particularly in rural areas where immediate needs often overshadow long-term political engagement and emancipation. With 70% of the Ugandan electorate living in rural areas, it is crucial to recognize the significant divide between the central urban region and other regions when discussing human rights. Over-reliance and investment in the social media bubble in Kampala risks leaving other regions behind and should be balanced with broader dissemination via radio, which remains by far the most popular, inclusive, and, when used correctly, effective medium available to strengthen broad support for democracy and a rights-based society.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all the citizens who participated in our polls, our dedicated team, and our partners who made this campaign possible. By fostering a more informed and engaged citizenry across all regions, we can work towards a society that upholds and respects human rights for all. Together, we are making strides towards a more inclusive and democratic Uganda.

2. Objectives and Methodology

> *Democratic public life only thrives where institutions enable citizens to debate matters of public importance."* [1]
>
> **- Jürgen Habermas**



Objectives

❶ Strengthening Public Debate:

By enabling citizens to discuss matters of public importance in an objective, evidence based and transparent manner, TRAC FM enhances the civic space. We raise questions to spark critical public debate, build confidence to discuss complex issues in a simple way and empower citizens with data and knowledge to hold their leaders accountable.

(i) *Our broadcasts in Uganda have the potential to reach 27 million people, with 20.000 listeners responding to poll questions within a few days. The quality of our radio debates is evaluated through feedback from listeners, radio hosts, and guests, as well as reviews of recorded broadcasts.*

❷ Amplifying Citizen Voices in Policy Development:

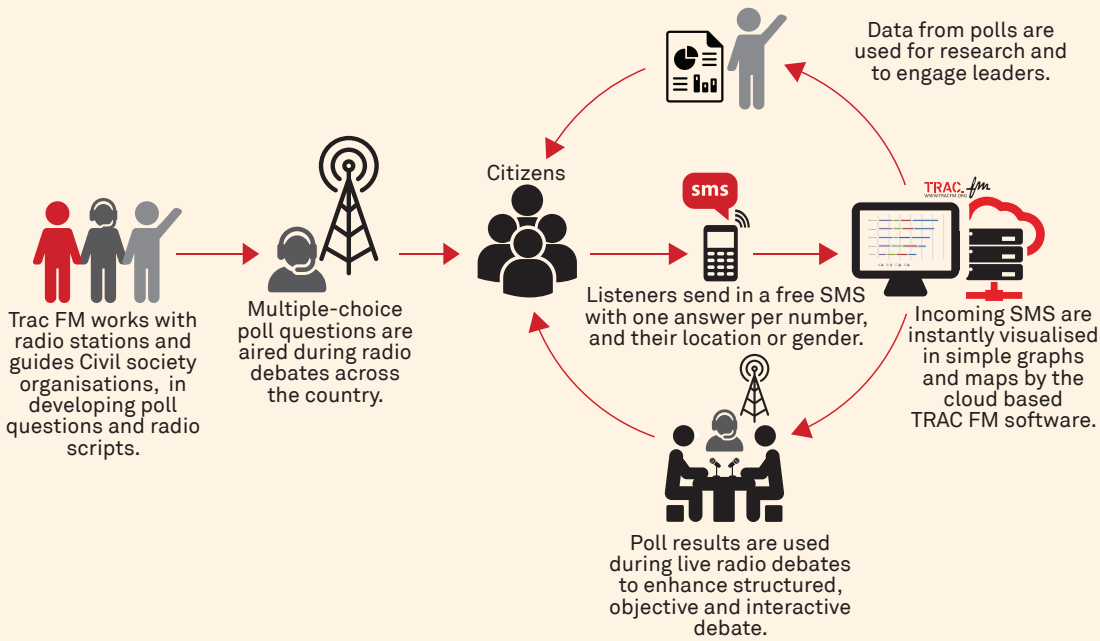
TRAC FM and its CSO partners use citizen feedback to design infographics, produce high-quality campaign reports, and develop strategic advocacy plans. This approach amplifies citizens' voices at key moments and platforms, ensuring they are considered in policy development by central and local governments, NGOs, academics, and the media.

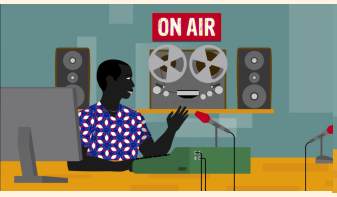
(i) *Results are based on the successful dissemination and exposure of our data among relevant leaders and stakeholders. This includes incorporation into policy papers, presentations, parliamentary engagements, and sparking further debate on influential online platforms.*

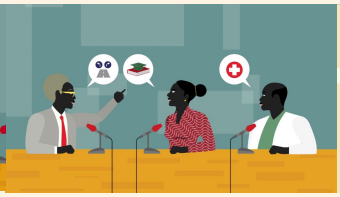
1 *Habermas, Jürgen. The Theory of Communicative Action. Volume 2, Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason. Beacon Press, 1987.*

Methodology

Large-scale dialogues on matters of public importance are both costly and complex. Financial and logistical challenges mean that comprehensive public opinion data collection is infrequent in Uganda.[2] As a result, there are significant gaps in understanding public perspectives, which weakens accountability mechanisms that rely on broad citizen engagement and representation. TRAC FM bridges the gap through a unique blend of old and new media technologies that allow citizens and their leaders to engage in a data-driven dialogue. In Uganda, 78% of people regularly listen to the radio, and 74% own a basic mobile device[3,4]. Internet usage is much lower, especially in the rural areas[5] where the majority of Ugandans reside. For these reasons, it is debatable whether influential online platforms such as X, Facebook, and WhatsApp are inclusive of the views of the majority of Ugandans. A rights-based society can only flourish when the majority of its population actively participates in defending their rights. For more on TRAC FM's data and methodology, please read chapter 8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning











2 *2021 - Uganda. https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/5545*

3 *BBC Media Action. 2019. Uganda – Media Landscape Report. Community Engagement Hub.*

4 *National Information Technology Authority. National IT Survey Report 2018.*

5 *National Information Technology Authority. National IT Survey Report 2022.*

3. Background

"Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings - *they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are inherent to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status."* [6]



Photo by Hajarah Nalwadda

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the most widely accepted set of rights globally, serving as a foundation for many national constitutions. Chapter 4 of the Ugandan Constitution incorporates these principles, clearly outlining a set of rights that form the basis of the government's responsibilities towards its citizens.[7] Human rights establish a framework that holds the state accountable to its citizens, ensuring that individuals can live with dignity and freedom.

Despite their universal importance, the concept of human rights remains both misunderstood and vague to many. Through this report, this gap in understanding also becomes evident in Uganda, where numerous citizens encounter barriers to understanding, recognizing and demanding their rights.

Through feedback from tens of thousands of radio listeners in Uganda, TRAC FM and its partners have identified four challenges limiting public demand for human rights. The findings indicate the following:

- **Lack of Awareness:**

  Many do not know what human rights are.

- **Economic Pressures:**

  Everyday poverty overshadows concerns about human rights.

- **Information Gaps:**

  Access to information about their rights is limited.

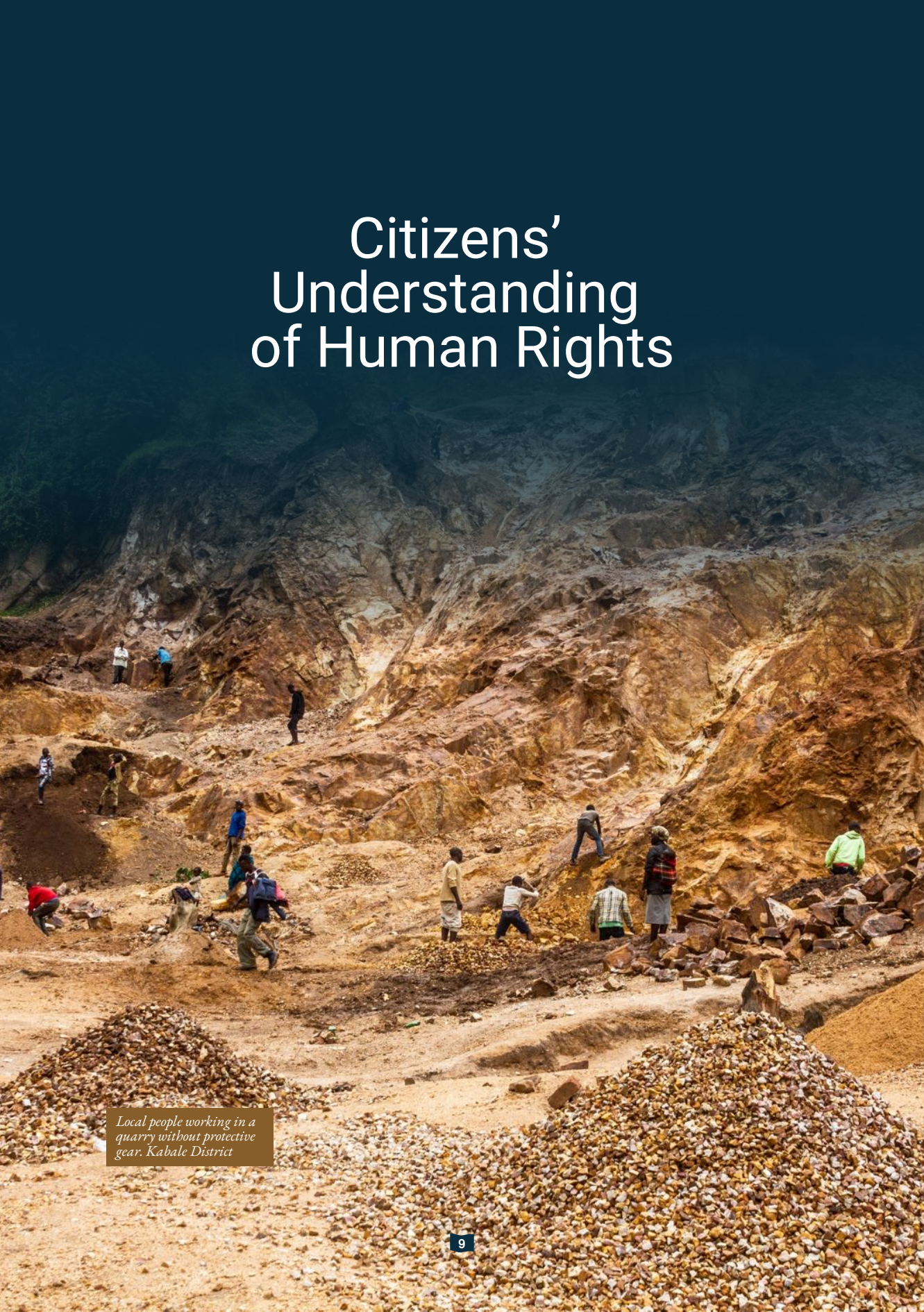
- **Competing Norms:**

  Local customs or religious guidelines are seen as more important.

6 *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (n.d.). What are human rights? Retrieved July 3, 2024, from https://www.ohchr.org/en/what-are-human-rights*

7 *Get your copy of the Ugandan constitution here - scroll to chapter 4 https://www.parliament.go.ug/cmis/views/e138f-baf-95f5-4cbc-ac33-b4678be3577a%253B1.0*

Citizens' Understanding of Human Rights



Local people working in a quarry without protective gear. Kabale District

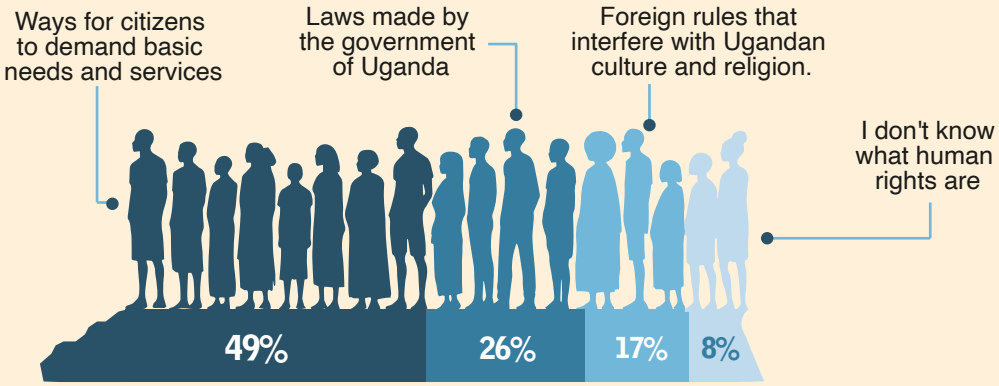
4. Poll findings

4.1 POLL 1: **Citizens' Understanding of Human Rights**

Background

How can citizens demand their rights when they do not know what their rights are? Accountability in a democracy stems from citizen demands; When citizens do not understand human rights, accountability mechanisms can fail. In Uganda, it often seems that digitally-connected urban elites dominate the human rights debate on television and social media. On the other hand, almost 70% of the population lives in rural areas.[8] Only 3.2% of Ugandans had used a computer device in the last 3 months, and only 10.3% had used the internet at all in the last 3 months at the time of being surveyed.[9] The rural-urban gap in access to digital debate has created a significant gap in the understanding of human rights. In rural Uganda, this lack of understanding hampers citizens' ability to hold their government accountable for the fulfilment of their human rights.

What does 'Human Rights' mean to you?



TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS : **20,130**

This multiple choice poll question ran 11 radio stations across Uganda from 10 March to 25 March 2024

Poll Analysis

With 49%, almost half of 20,000 respondents correctly indicate that human rights are a way to allow citizens to demand the fulfilment of their basic needs and access to essential services.

51% of respondents picked one of 2 misconceptions or indicated they do not know what human rights are.

8 *"Annual Labour Force Survey 2018/19." UBOS. https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/05_20212018-19_ALFS_Report_FINAL.pdf*

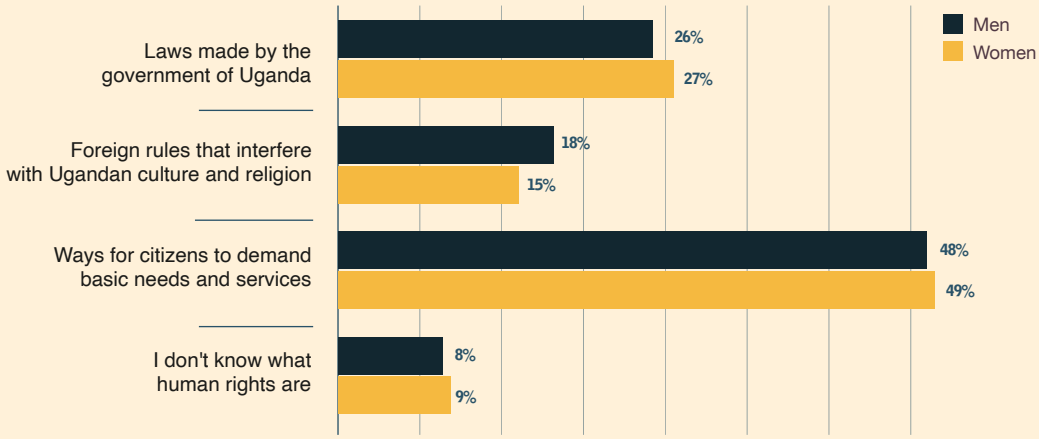
9 *National Information Technology Authority: https://www.nita.go.ug/sites/default/files/2022-12/National%20IT%20Survey%20Report%202022%20-%20Final.pdf*

26% of respondents thought their rights were the same as laws, which can limit their understanding of their inherent rights in a democratic society. This confusion might lead them to passively accept government laws as the only source of their rights. As a result, they may be less likely to assert their rights through demand, voting and protest, believing their rights are solely determined by the government.[10]

A significant number of respondents (17%) view human rights as a foreign agenda that interferes with Ugandan culture and religion.

This perception is likely influenced by recent controversies surrounding issues such as the anti-homosexuality debate and other contentious rights where traditional, religious, and democratic institutions hold differing views—such as inheritance rights for women, polygamy, abortion, and physical punishment of children. Misconceptions and intentional misrepresentations of these contentious rights threaten to distort the overall perception of human rights, leading a substantial portion of the population to reject human rights altogether.

Poll results by gender





10 *Emmanuel Wabwire, ED, Faraja Africa Foundation*

Image: New Vision

Priority Areas for Human Rights



Women celebrating after receiving brown envelopes from a politician.

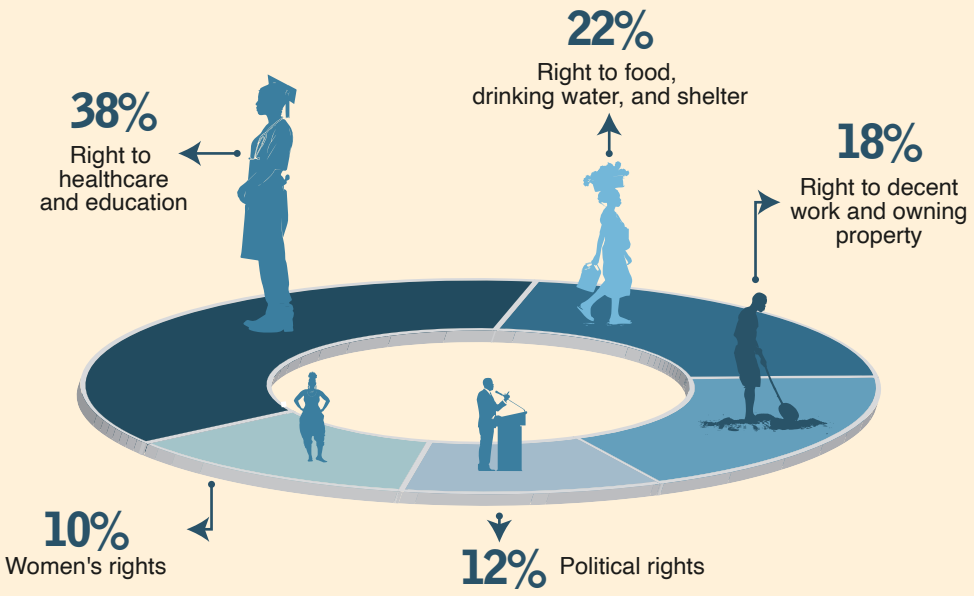
Image: New Vision

4.2 POLL 2: **Citizens' Priority Areas for Human Rights**

Background

According to the UN-OHCHR, "one set of rights cannot be enjoyed fully without the other."[11] However, awareness of the importance of specific rights can vary among individuals. In this poll, we categorised rights according to common frameworks used in international human rights law.[12] Based on these categories, we sought people's opinions on which set of rights they believed required the most urgent attention in Uganda.

Which area of human rights do you think requires the most urgent action in Uganda?



TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS : **17,495**

This multiple choice poll question ran 11 radio stations across Uganda from 3 April to 15 April 2024

"To me I see that women's Right is suppressed - government should work on the Rights for women to go for family planning"

Mary
Lamwo District

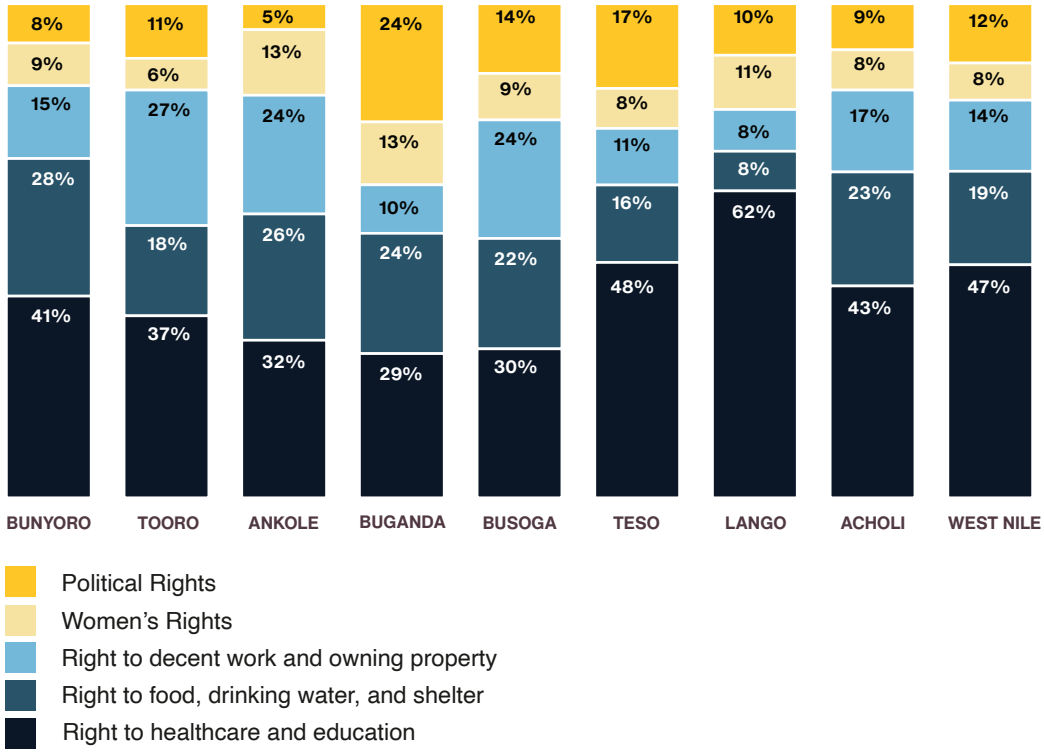
11 *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (n.d.). What are human rights? Retrieved July 3, 2024, from https://www.ohchr.org/en/what-are-human-rights*

12 *The categorization of rights used in this poll question aligns with common frameworks used in international human rights law: make up the International Bill of Human Rights.*

Poll Analysis

60% of 17,500 respondents rank basic needs like food, water and healthcare as their top priorities over political freedoms and women's rights (22%). The results of the poll begs the question: Are people who are faced with poverty in their communities more concerned with their basic needs and services and therefore less concerned with political rights and the right to equality and non-discrimination?[13] Tusubira Simon Peter, Representative of the 6th National Youth Parliament, believes that this is the case. "Sheer poverty can drive those in need of basic necessities to prioritise immediate poverty relief over long-term political change". Other Youth Parliament representatives noted an extreme, but not uncommon occurrence in their constituencies: citizens selling their votes for bags of sugar. According to 2011 general election research by Afrobarometer, 4 out of 10 Ugandans state that an electoral candidate or party worker attempted to purchase their vote with offers of food, a gift, or money.[14]

Our data shows that interest in political rights is significantly higher among the more urbanised and connected populations in the central region and around Kampala (24% compared to the national average of 12%). The urban elite, who are prominent in online debates, often influence the agendas of international organisations and national CSOs headquartered in Kampala. However, interest in political rights is markedly lower in other sub-regions of Uganda. In northern Uganda, poverty, low political engagement, and the lingering memory of recent conflicts contribute to apprehension about political participation, leading to a greater focus on stability over political rights, as noted by Okot Olaa, Speaker of the National Youth Parliament and representative of the Northern Acholi Subregion.

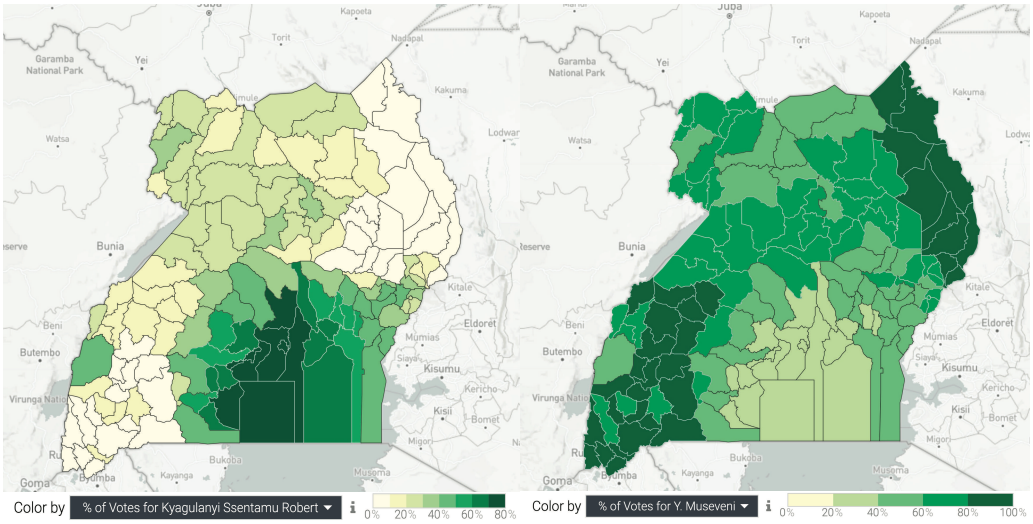


13 *Article 21 of the Ugandan constitution*

14 *Peter S Mwayi. 2021. Tracking Voter Bribery. The Observer. https://www.observer.ug/news/headlines/68169-2021-tracking-voter-bribery*

Uganda's political landscape is marked by the centralization of power and resources in urban areas, which exacerbates regional disparities. Urban centres benefit from better education and more developed media and communication infrastructure, giving residents a greater understanding of the importance of structural change over short-term relief. The ruling party secures strong support from rural areas, which comprise 70% of the electorate. Our poll data suggests that this support is partly due to the fact that the long-term benefits of political rights have not yet deeply penetrated rural communities. In these areas, immediate needs often overshadow the push for enduring social, economic, and political reform, allowing elections to be influenced by short-term promises and financial patronage.

To address these disparities, policies should aim to improve political awareness and engagement in rural areas through better education, access to information, and infrastructure development.



Source: Uganda Elections Data Portal (UEDP) - 2021 results



Participants attending the Planning conference for the fourth National Development Plan

Image: New Vision

Sources of Information on Human Rights



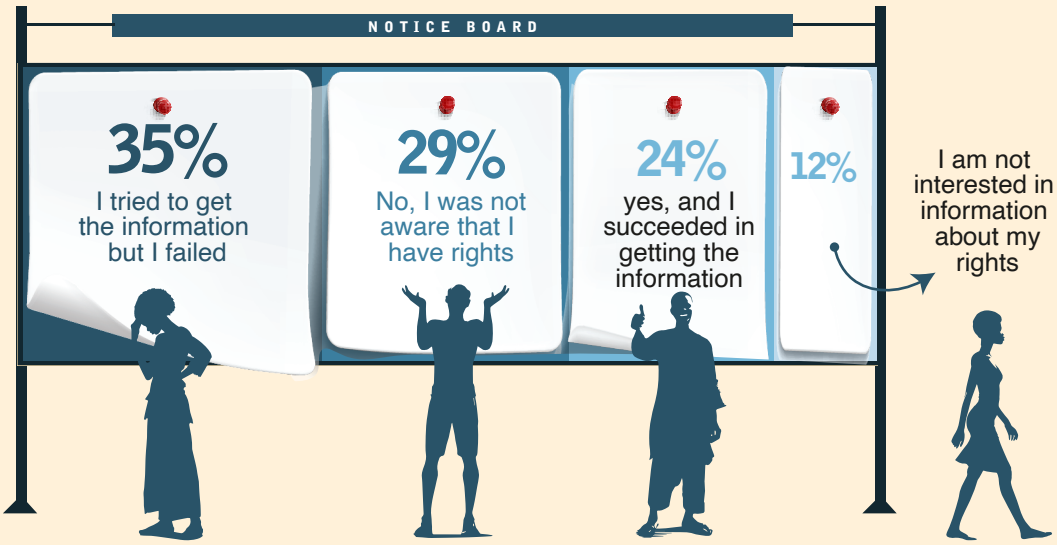
A woman in a rural area holding her radio receiver. Such receivers are a common sight both within and outside Uganda's urban centers.

4.3 POLL 3: **Citizens' Sources of Information on Human Rights**

Background

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, under Article 9, recognizes the right to receive information, express opinions, and disseminate those opinions.[15] These rights are fundamental for protecting other human rights and freedoms, enabling effective participation in public affairs, and influencing decisions that affect people's lives. In Uganda, human rights awareness is enshrined in Chapter 4 of the constitution, specifically Article 38, which addresses citizens' access to information regarding their rights. Evaluating efforts by entities mandated to provide information on human rights often highlights a disconnect, as the focus tends to be on what these entities (e.g., URHC and MPs) have done to inform people. In contrast, Poll 3 shifts the focus to the demand side, examining citizens' efforts to obtain knowledge about their rights.

Have you ever tried to get information on your rights?



TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS : **18,004**

This multiple choice poll question ran 11 radio stations across Uganda from 22 April to 5 May 2024

I've never received, nor do I know what I'm supposed to receive education on my rights...Maybe the government through radios and TVs can teach us, but we've never got that.

Andrew
Namutumba, Mubende

15 *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Adopted June 27, 1981. OAU Doc. CAB/LEG/67/3 rev. 5, 21 I.L.M. 58 (1982).*

Poll Analysis

76% of 18,000 respondents failed to successfully obtain information about their rights. 6,300 respondents (35%) indicated that they had tried to get information about their rights but failed. Another 7,300 reported either not being aware of human rights (29%) or not being interested in learning about them (12%). Only 4,300 respondents (24%) successfully obtained information about their rights.

Human rights cannot be upheld without public awareness and understanding. The poll results raise significant concerns about the effectiveness of the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) in fulfilling its core mandates enshrined in Chapter 4 of the Ugandan Constitution. Throughout this report, we have observed a substantial lack of awareness and even resistance among the population regarding their rights. In defence of the UHRC, Commissioner Crispin Kaheru has noted that the Commission is the least funded national human rights institution in the world.[16] The UHRC claims that severe underfunding hampers its ability to conduct widespread awareness and educational campaigns effectively.

The UHRC's 2023 annual report highlights a significant allocation of financial resources towards the Commission's administrative costs rather than the direct implementation of human rights activities at the regional and grassroot levels.[17] Funding for human rights awareness core activities largely rely on support from donor partners. In the face of insufficient funding from the GoU, the UHRC relied upon donors for up to 10% of its 2023 budget. The report notes that these funds support activities like complaints management, civic education, monitoring and inspections of detention facilities and other human rights-related facilities, as well as administrative operations.

The closure of operations of the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) in 2021 and the failed renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the GoU and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which lapsed in 2023, further highlight the diminished funding and attention towards human rights in Uganda.

I have never looked for information about my rights – I don't know that I have rights. I want responsible people to teach me about my rights.

Sarrah Nalongo
Hoima

I've never tried to go to such organisations for matters concerning my human rights, because I fear! When some of my colleagues went there they weren't helped. Because even the one you've run to seeking for help to get your human rights also wants some money!

Namusubo Betty
Budondo, Jinja

I am lucky to have some knowledge on human rights. There was a time I went to work in Kampala, I noticed employees there were working constantly without leave days and were not allowed to visit their families back home. I helped them to understand that even leave days are part of rights as workers and things changed.

Lawino
Pece-Laroo, Gulu City

16 *Uganda Human Rights Commission. Posted May 24, 2024. " Our 26th Annual Report on the State of Human Rights and Freedoms in the Country was presented to Parliament yesterday. Hon. Crispin Kaheru moved..." Accessed July 2, 2024. https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=812223193789019*

17 *Uganda Human Rights Commission, 26th Annual Report 2023, accessed June 27, 2024, https://uhrc.ug/download/uhrc-26th-annual-report-2023/?wpdmdl=2286&refresh=6672da92162921718803090.*

Belief systems: Laws, Tradition, and Religion



Labour Day celebrations, Pallisa, Bakatikoko Banamwera clan leader, John Wayabire (r) and religious leaders - 01.05.17

4.4 POLL 4: **Citizens' Belief systems: Laws, Tradition, and Religion**

Background

Lives are governed by a complex web of rules, customs, and regulations designed to promote fairness and respect within our communities. However, these rules can sometimes conflict. For instance, certain religions advocate for the benefits of physical punishment of children, while human rights principles discourage such practices. Similarly, while some traditions encourage polygamy, specific religions may oppose it. Human rights promote equal rights to inheritance of land by women, a practice that is not widely accepted in many traditional cultures. Speaking out against leaders is encouraged by human rights, but is discouraged by tradition and religion. These contradictions highlight the challenges in harmonising diverse cultural, religious, and human rights perspectives.

Which rules guide you the most in life?



TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS : **20,981**

This multiple choice poll question ran 11 radio stations across Uganda from 13 to 29 May 2024

Without God, I wouldn't be here today. So many things happened when I was growing up till date, all my decisions are based on religious teachings and that makes me put religion ahead of all the others.

Adokorach
Kanyagoga, Gulu City

Poll Analysis

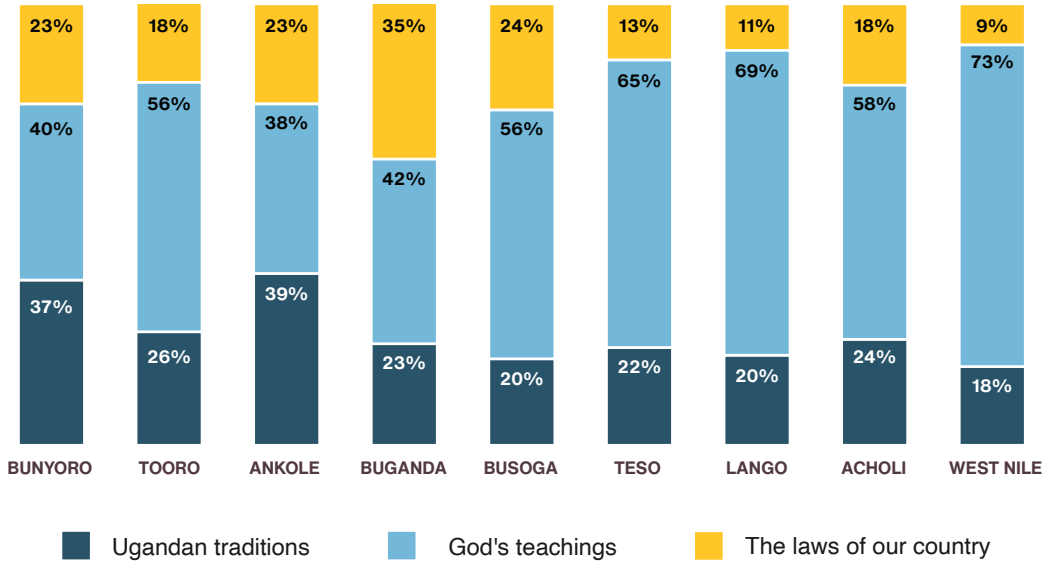
Belief systems play a crucial role in shaping societies and influencing individual behaviour. They provide a sense of identity, purpose, and belonging, and help individuals navigate the complexities of life. In Uganda, adherence to traditional and religious belief systems remain significant. Until 1900, Ugandan society was deeply rooted in traditional culture, with clans, tribes, chiefs, rituals, nature spirits, and ancestor worship playing central roles. Christianity began gaining a significant foothold in the latter half of the 19th century with the arrival of missionaries in 1877 and 1879, but its widespread acceptance and influence on Ugandan society grew mainly in the 20th century, particularly from the 1950s onwards.[18]

The cultural significance of religion in Uganda has evolved over time. Initially, traditional beliefs played a central role in societal norms and values. With the introduction of Christianity, there was a gradual blending of religious practices.[19]

We should first follow cultural rules. We are all born in our respective cultures and we should respect the cultural norms.

Sarrah Nalongo
Hoima

Today, Christian and Islamic belief systems dominate the normative frameworks in Uganda, as evidenced by 54% of respondents indicating religious rules guide them most in life. Interesting are the sub-regional differences where the Baganda dominated centre has significantly more support for traditional culture (35% for Buganda compared to an average of 17% nationally), the northern sub regions are generally more supportive of religious belief systems and Ankole stands out as the strongest supporter of the laws of the country (39% in Ankole compared to 23% nationally).



18 *https://www.britannica.com/topic/history-of-Uganda*

19 *African Traditional Religion and Sustainable Cultural, Social and Economic Dynamics https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-89500-6_33*

Without God, I wouldn't be here today. So many things happened when I was growing up till date, all my decisions are based on religious teachings and that makes me put religion ahead of all the others.

Adokorach
Kanyagoga, Gulu City

Integrating democratic principles and human rights into Uganda's societal fabric often competes with existing belief systems. Tensions arise when democratic norms clash with Christian or Islamic doctrines, particularly on issues like contraceptives, abortion, and LGBT rights. These conflicts are exacerbated when human rights and democratic frameworks challenge the cultural and religious elite, who derive power from traditional norms. For instance, advocating for gender equality threatens patriarchal privileges, while questioning outdated religious norms can undermine the authority of religious institutions and leaders. These dynamics create a complex environment for promoting inclusive governance and social justice.

Religious norms often emphasise fundamental moral and ethical principles such as justice, fairness, and the dignity of individuals. These principles closely align with the core values of democracy. For instance, the emphasis on justice and equality in many religious teachings supports the democratic ideals of equal treatment under the law and the protection of individual rights. Societal and cultural changes are inherently gradual, spanning generations and requiring patience and persistence as Uganda continues to evolve its unique democratic identity. For sustainable development and a human rights-led society, it is crucial to include more citizens in shaping this journey.

20 *An indicative trend chart shows the general direction of trends over time without specifying or claiming exact numerical values.*

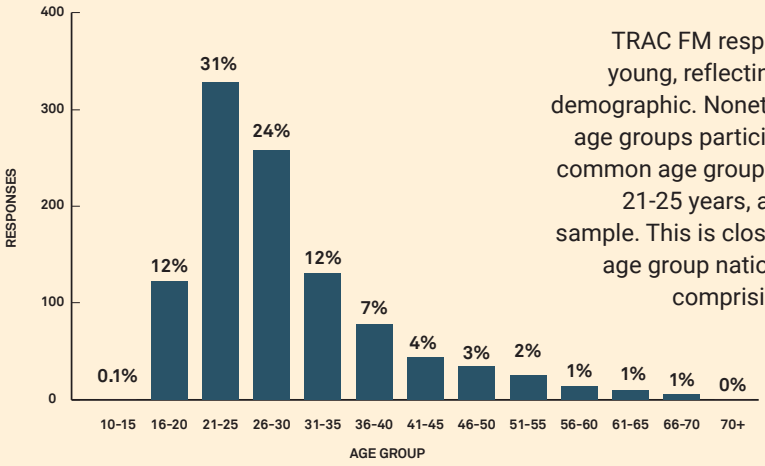
5. Follow-Up Call Center Interviews

5.1. Demographic Profiles

Through its call center, TRAC FM conducts interviews with randomly selected respondents. The demographic data collected from these respondents are then compared with national averages from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) to evaluate the representativeness of our data relative to the Ugandan population. In our demographic survey, which included a total sample size of 1,000 respondents, the following data were observed:

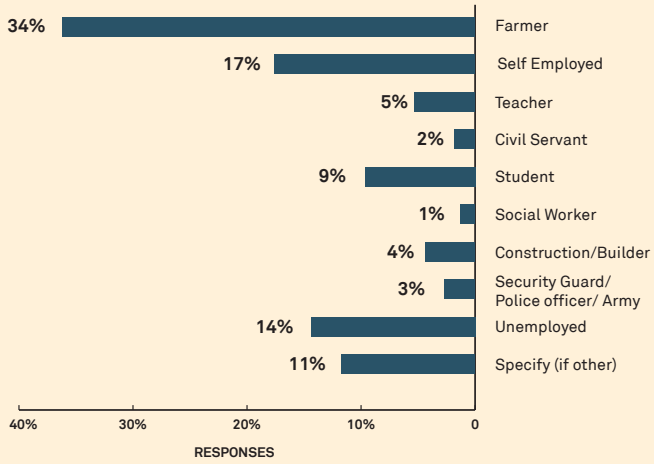
AGE GROUP

TRAC FM respondents are predominantly young, reflecting the national population's demographic. Nonetheless, individuals from all age groups participate in our polls. The most common age group among our respondents is 21-25 years, accounting for 31.5% of the sample. This is closely aligned with the largest age group nationally, which is 20-24 years, comprising 23% of adult Ugandans.[21]



OCCUPATION

TRAC FM reaches people engaged in a diverse range of occupations. The most common occupation is farming (34% of respondents), slightly higher than the national percentage of Ugandans engaged in agriculture at 29%.[22] Unemployment is reported by 13.5% of respondents, remarkably close to the national unemployment figure of 11.9%.[23]



21 *Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS). 2020. Projected Mid-Year Five year age groups, 2018- 2020(000's). To compare respondent characteristics to national averages, TRAC FM adjusted population-age data from UBOS by removing age groups 0-4, 5-9, 10-14, and 14-19. In a nation where 55% of the population is under 18, TRAC FM's focus extends to engaging young adults, acknowledging the challenges in directly reaching children who typically lack personal access to mobile phones and radios. Therefore, our analysis of respondent demographics excludes those under 19, aligning more closely with our actual audience.*

22 *"National Labour Force Survey 2021," pp. xxi. UBOS: ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/11_2022NLFS_2021_main_report.pdf*

23 *"National Labour Force Survey 2021," pp. xiii. UBOS: ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/11_2022NLFS_2021_main_report.pdf*

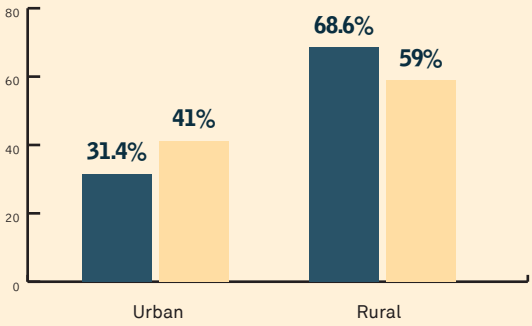
GENDER

25% Female Respondents

75% Male Respondents

The sex of most respondents is Male (75%). This also reflects significantly lower radio and phone access among the female population on a national scale. [24] TRAC FM addresses this discrepancy by asking each poll respondent to indicate their gender. This allows TRAC FM to clearly differentiate and analyze the views of men and women separately.

URBAN / RURAL

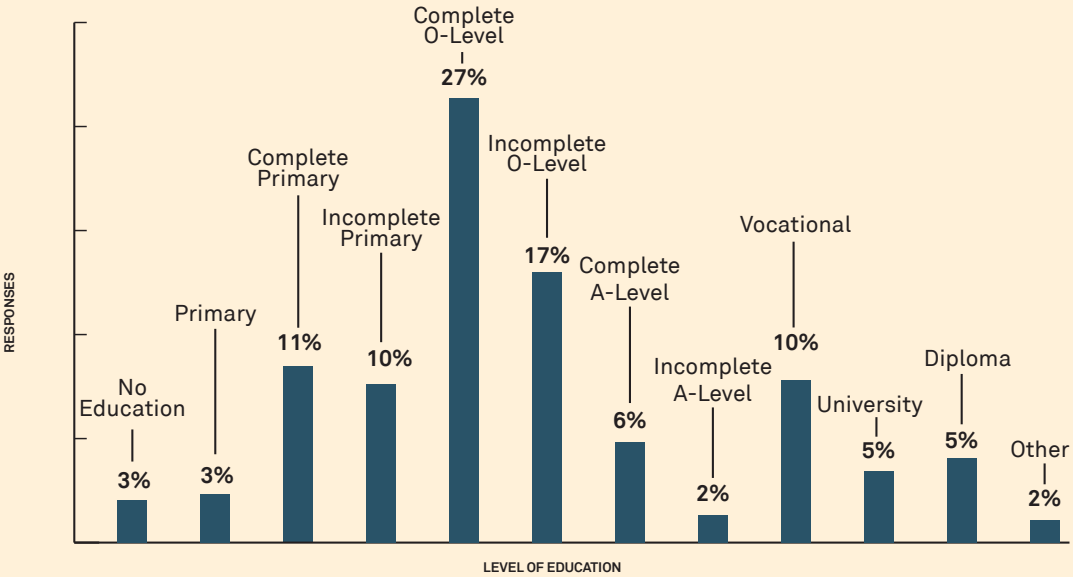


The rural-urban split is 59% rural to 41% urban. Our respondents are slightly more likely to be urban-based than the average Ugandan citizen.

National Demographics

TRAC FM Respondents

EDUCATION



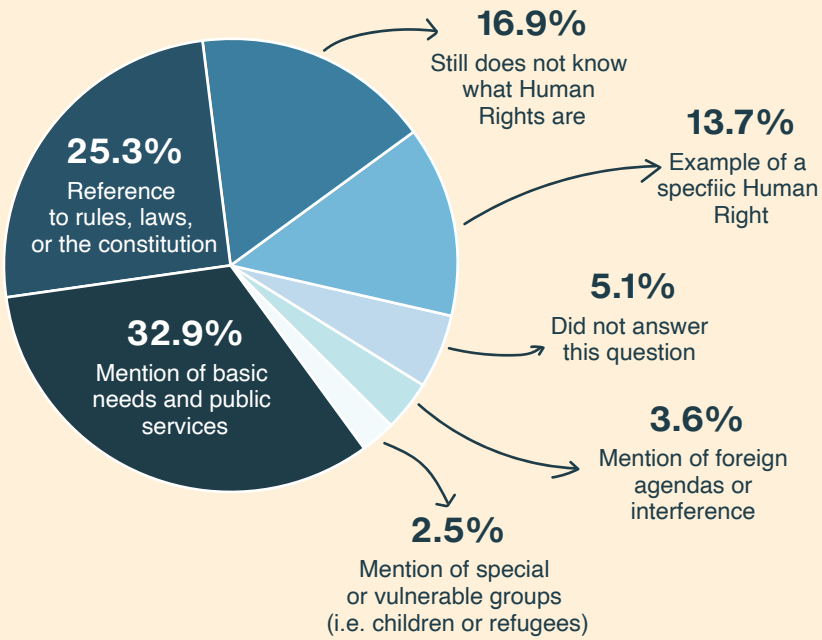
24 *Note that radio listenership and mobile phone access is higher among men (90.5%; 51.4%) than women (68.7%; 43.8%). Sources: National Information Technology Authority, National IT Survey Report 2018; National Information Technology Authority, National IT Survey Report 2022.*

5.2. Qualitative Interviews

In addition to collecting demographic data, TRAC FM conducts follow-up interviews with a subset of its respondents. For this campaign, respondents from the initial poll who indicated they were unaware or misinformed about human rights were selected.[25] This subset [26] was then interviewed about any changes in their perception of Human Rights after being exposed to TRAC FM radio talk shows.

74% of the 526 respondents who were previously 'uninformed' or 'misinformed' about Human Rights demonstrated an improved understanding of Human Rights after four months of exposure to TRAC FM programming.[27] The graph shows the gain in learning and the new, more informed views of our sample of respondents after exposure to TRAC FM programming.

Post-Programming Views on Human Rights



25 *Votes for Option B were counted as 'misinformed' responses; votes for Option D were counted as 'Uninformed' responses*

26 *Sample: Option B "Foreign rules that interfere with Ugandan culture and religion" [242 respondents]; Option D "I don't know what Human Rights are" [284 respondents]. Both groups stratified evenly by gender and subregion for a total sample of 526 Respondents.*

27 *More than one correct example, definition, or feature of Human Rights was also mentioned by 68 interviewees. This reflects a greater volume and complexity of thinking that is not captured in the graph.*

6. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

The TRAC FM methodology uniquely integrates social scientific methods and therefore requires a tailored approach to Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) to ensure data quality and assess the impact of our campaigns. We invest considerable effort in collecting additional data from our target populations to understand who they are and how our programming influences their lives and behaviors. Below is a description of some MEL tools used by TRAC FM and the considerations made to evaluate the success of our work.

Telephone Surveys

We conduct large telephone surveys as part of each campaign to:

1. Assess representativeness by collecting demographic profiles of respondents
2. Collect additional qualitative data on respondent perspectives
3. Select promising candidates for in-person fieldwork interviews



With 1000 total responses per campaign, these surveys provide valuable qualitative insight into who our respondents are and the spectrum of impact that participation in our methodology entails for our respondents.

Ethnographic Fieldwork

TRAC FM selects respondents for more in-depth fieldwork interviews on location to better understand the context in which participants engage with our program and to find out what effects participation in TRAC FM polls may have on respondents and their environment. To these ends, TRAC FM produced a documentary where a number of participants describe how their engagement in TRAC FM polls and talk shows led to behavior change and positive outcomes.[28]

28 *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7y9wH5Eb7SY - TRAC FM Documentary*

Methodological Limitations:

TRAC FM possesses significant reach and impact, with poll data reflecting the views of tens of thousands of Ugandan respondents. However, we do not claim that our data is statistically representative of the entire Ugandan population. This limitation stems from the reliance on radio and mobile phone technologies, which, although widespread, may not fully capture the demographics of individuals with less access to these mediums.[29]

Mitigation Strategies:

TRAC FM actively works to mitigate these limitations through several strategies. To measure the robustness and representativeness of our datasets, TRAC FM compares respondents' demographic profiles with national demographics by UBOS to see how the TRAC FM target population relates to the average national population. Regular reviews of the methodology are conducted with the assistance of academics and statisticians, ensuring the continuous improvement of data collection processes and assessment of data significance.

Enhancing Question Design:



TRAC FM informs question design and poll results data analysis through strategic partnerships with CSO partners, who play a crucial role in developing relevant poll questions and multiple-choice response options. Collaboration with subject matter experts (see acknowledgements) further aids in interpreting and contextualising the data. To enrich the dataset, TRAC FM employs a multi-method approach encompassing telephone surveys, ethnographic fieldwork, and social scientific as well as policy-level desk research. Additionally, culturally sensitive and context-relevant translations of poll questions are informed by full-day content workshops involving radio stations, journalists, and representatives from each sub-region where TRAC FM operates.

29 *National Information Technology Authority, National IT Survey Report 2018; National Information Technology Authority, National IT Survey Report 2022*

Ethical considerations of respondent data:

TRAC FM places a high priority on the responsible handling of respondent data. Participation in poll questions is entirely voluntary, prompted by radio announcements, and poll responses are never solicited directly. Personal data, including telephone numbers used for contributions, are securely stored and never shared with third parties, partners, or any other institutions. Only aggregated and anonymized data sets, which display overall poll results, are made publicly available. For participants involved in additional Vox Pops, telephone interviews, or fieldwork interviews, informed consent is obtained by local-language interpreters for the use of their comments in reports. To ensure their privacy, participants' names are anonymized. TRAC FM is registered with the Uganda Data Protection Office (DPDO), ensuring full compliance with data protection legislation.



Blessing, a TRAC FM poll respondent in Pece Laroo Parish, Gulu District, looking at poll results data during an ethnographic interview.

7. Link to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

TRAC fm
Transparency • Accountability

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

UN Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable institutions at all levels. TRAC FM amplifies the views of the most remote, hard-to-reach citizens on governance and service delivery by using accessible radio and basic SMS technology. Citizen data is collected, visualized, and conveyed to decision-makers, and then back to the public through local-language radio talk shows. This citizen data and government performance feedback loop supports the principles of transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making – core tenets of SDG 16. By facilitating more open dialogue between citizens and authorities at a large scale but low cost, TRAC FM contributes to building stronger, more responsive governance structures in a low-resource environment.

For 14 years, TRAC FM has communicated government data to citizens and citizen data to decision-makers. This strongly aligns with SDG target 16.7, which calls for responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels. By also conveying citizen data not only to leaders, but almost instantly back to rural populations, TRAC FM enhances civic participation and supports the principles of sustainable development as emphasised in the Rio+20 Conference outcome document and Chapter 40 of Agenda 21. This methodology has significantly contributed to civic spaces and participation in Uganda.

References to UN documents:

UN Dept. of Economic and Social Affairs on 'Information for Integrated Decision-making and Participation: "**The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development focuses on decision-making with particular reference to participation of vulnerable groups,** such as women (SDG target 5.5), developing countries, including African countries, least developed countries, land-locked developing countries, small-island developing States and middle-income countries (SDG target 10.6) **to the decision-making process.**" [30]

SDG target 16.7 calls upon actors to "**Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**".The findings in this report, for example, also form the basis of a National Youth Parliament position paper containing recommendations for the Parliament of Uganda's Committee on Human Rights.[31]

Paragraph 14 of the outcome document arising from the **Rio+20 Conference** (Future We Want) recognizes that "**opportunities for people to influence their lives and future, participate in decision-making and voice their concerns are fundamental for sustainable development.**"

Chapter 40 of Agenda 21[32] is focused on information for decision-making. It emphasises that "**everyone is a user and provider of information…**That includes data, information, experience and knowledge. The need for information arises at all levels, **from that of senior decision-maker at the national and international levels to the grass-roots and individual levels.**" [33]

30 *United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Information for Integrated Decision-making and Participation." https://sdgs.un.org/topics/information-integrated-decision-making-and-participation*

31 *United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. 2012. A/RES/66/288: "The Future We Want." https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/futurewewant.html*

32 *United Nations SDG Knowledge Platform. Updated December 2022. "Agenda 21." https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/outcomedocuments/agenda21*

33 *United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Information for Integrated Decision-making and Participation." https://sdgs.un.org/topics/information-integrated-decision-making-and-participation*

8. CSO Partners

Faraja

Most African countries face numerous challenges, including high mortality rates, ignorance, lack of community support, political instability, high poverty rates, limited financial facilities, difficulties in initiating entrepreneurial ideas and innovations, unemployment, and lack of access to technological advancements. In 2013, a team of young entrepreneurs gathered to showcase Africa's emerging young human capital, leading to the creation of "Faraja Africa" (Swahili for comfort) as a vehicle for change.

Faraja Africa Foundation's commitment to youth empowerment and engagement has resulted in numerous collaborations with local and international funding entities and government agencies across East Africa and the continent, starting in Uganda and expanding to Tanzania and Kenya. Officially registered in Uganda on January 13, 2016, and later in Tanzania and Kenya, Faraja Africa operates a digital social enterprise to fund its mission. Its dedication has positioned it as the go-to entity for digital storytellers, conveners, and youth-led social entrepreneurs.

9. About TRAC FM

TRAC FM transforms radio audiences from passive listeners into active participants. Through SMS polls and radio talk shows, citizens of Uganda and other East African countries engage in inclusive and well-informed public debates on social development, public policy, and governance. Leveraging its network of partner stations, TRAC FM reaches the most remote and excluded citizens using basic mobile phones, free SMS, and interactive FM radio talk shows, all broadcasted in local languages.

TRAC FM International is an NGO registered in the Netherlands and Uganda, with programs across East Africa. Are you looking to efficiently and effectively engage with the local communities you serve?

For interactive radio campaigns, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning partnerships, and other inquiries, please contact us at **info@tracfm.org**.



TRansparency
ACcountability

Sauti Stream radio workshop on Human Rights Awareness with Radio partners and Youth leaders from 10 sub-regions


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www.tracfm.org info@tracfm.org

/ TRAC FM / TRACFMOfficial

TRAC FM collects valuable data from citizens and enables organisations, researchers and government institutions to reach out to remote communities in a direct and cost effective way.

Contact info@tracfm.org for more information.