



**HEROES FOR GENDER
TRANSFORMATIVE
ACTION**

Supporting Community Solutions for
Sustainable Health Outcomes

NO MORE SILENCE

Teenage Pregnancy

Interactive Radio Campaign

JUNE 2024





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This report presents findings from the No More Silence 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 Accidental Teenage Pregnancies Lead to Child Marriages

The majority of poll respondents (66%) indicated that accidental pregnancies result in child marriages more often than the reverse. Sexual education and access to contraceptives can therefore be a means of preventing both teenage pregnancy as well as child marriage, but both are neglected in the National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy.¹



2 Natural Curiosity and Economic Necessity are Drivers for Teenage Sexual Behavior

Despite efforts to end sexual violence and child marriage, teenage pregnancy figures are stagnant. Poll data suggests that this may be due to a misguided assumption that most teenage pregnancies result from forced sex or marriage. Instead, the primary drivers appear to be economic necessity (58%) and a natural desire for sexual exploration (25%).



3 There is an Absence of Formal Accountability Mechanisms for Teenage Fathers

Limited trust in police, fear of legal procedures, and lack of clear accountability mechanisms further deter teenage mothers and their families from seeking childcare through formal channels. The National Strategy is largely silent on mechanisms to hold fathers accountable in cases of accidental teenage pregnancies.



4 Widespread Stigma Prevents Clear Communication Around Condom Use

The most commonly chosen reason for not using condoms was partner resistance, with 29% of respondents stating, "I want it but my partner does not." This is followed by 21% who admit they do not know how to use condoms and cannot ask anyone.



ii.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

H4GTA	Heroes for Gender Transformative Action
PSI	Populations Services International
(S)GBV	(Sexual and) Gender-Based Violence
SRHA	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Partner Radio Stations

Baba FM



Eastern Voice



Radio Ssesse



iii.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, we thank the thousands of Ugandan citizens who contributed to this report. Through their answers to radio polls and surveys, we obtained valuable insights and community perspectives on the causes of teenage pregnancy. Despite having a much smaller geographical scope than our nationwide projects, the No More Silence campaign received 12,900 citizen responses to four poll questions aired on only three radio stations, in just three months. Citizens' perspectives are crucial to a more inclusive and informed debate.²

This report was prepared by TRAC FM in collaboration with AMREF Health Africa in Uganda under the Heroes Programme. The core TRAC FM team included Innocent Amanyire, Mohazzab Abdullah, Wouter Dijkstra, Maurice van Rooden, Pasqualino Okello, and Helen Patricia Amutuhaire. AMREF Uganda's contributing staff consisted of Michael Muyonga, Lilian Kamanzi Mugisha, and Dr Patrick Kagurusi. Over the years and through previous campaigns, TRAC FM has developed significant internal expertise on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, especially Teenage Pregnancy in Uganda. However, we make a practice of seeking external, and in particular, local expertise and data. Topical expertise, policy perspectives, and insights from the field were provided by the broader Amref team and Sharminah Kauma, Senior Sociologist at the Ministry of Health.

We also gratefully acknowledge the support of our radio partners Baba FM, Eastern Voice, and Radio Sseese. These radio stations aired our poll questions as well as the talk show debates that communicated poll result data back to the public: a total of 12 talk shows in three months. Special thanks go to the talk show panelists, one of whom was invited by the host radio partner and the other by AMREF, respectively, for each talk show. These guests contributed their knowledge of local contexts and their experience with communities to lively radio debates: Asabawebwa Deogratus, Mugambe Herbet Gitta, Babirye Jane, Madam Namugwe Harriet, Habene Bety, Nakalyango Christine, Kyakuwa Solomon, Hon. Mulebeke Abaliwano Joyce, Sr. Nambwere Caroline, Masiga Denis, Namukose Jackie, Kisakye Esther, Birungi Sophie, Bisobye Moureen Sharon, Namulondo Irene, Nakalyango Christine, Namutebi maria, Nalubega Jovial, Bulamu Gonza, William Nkumbi, Anyango Zaituna, Namukose Jaliat, David Dunbar, Bisiki Paul, Ndugwa Denise, Bogere Isa, Esther Morine.

For interviewing 500 randomly selected poll respondents from the No More Silence campaign, we thank Efcia Winnie, Ayikoru Hope Grace, and Amati Andrew. TRAC FM's telephone surveys provide valuable demographic data and allow us to conduct follow-up interviews with poll respondents that are more in-depth than our multiple-choice polls. All survey staffers are current and former students at the International University of East Africa.

Finally, we would like to thank Amref Health Africa in Uganda, Cordaid, MIFUMI, and the Embassy of the Netherlands in Uganda for financial and programmatic support through the 'Heroes For Gender Transformative Action' Program.

1.0

FOREWORD

Teenage pregnancy in Uganda remains a critical issue with far-reaching impacts on young girls' health, education, and future prospects. Despite ongoing efforts, high rates of teenage pregnancies persist, necessitating innovative, context-sensitive solutions. Amref Health Africa, supported by the Netherlands Embassy, launched the "No More Silence" campaign, revealing that accidental pregnancies often lead to child marriages. This challenges prevailing assumptions and highlights the need for targeted interventions. Comprehensive policies must address teenage sexual behaviors, socio-economic drivers, peer influences, and the role of men and boys, promoting accountability and responsible sexual behavior.

Cultural and religious stigma around contraceptive use hampers communication and access to effective contraception, increasing the risk of unintended pregnancies. Addressing these barriers through culturally sensitive educational campaigns and community engagement is crucial. Amref Health Africa, in collaboration with Cordaid Uganda and Mifumi, is committed to evidence-based interventions to significantly reduce teenage pregnancies. By fostering collaboration, accountability, and open communication, they aim to create an environment where young people can make informed choices and lead healthy, empowered lives, ensuring every young person has the opportunity to thrive.

Dr. Patrick Kagurusi

COUNTRY MANAGER
AMREF HEALTH AFRICA IN UGANDA



2.0

TRAC FM'S APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY



Objectives

① 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.

② Amplifying Citizen Voices in Policy Development:

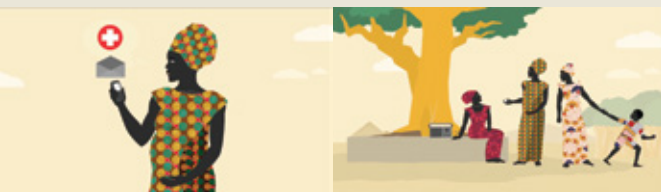
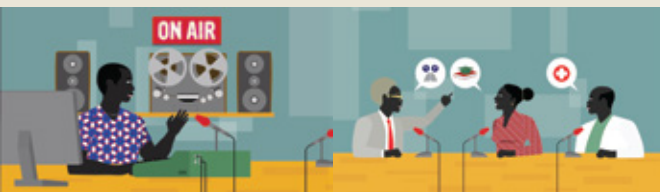
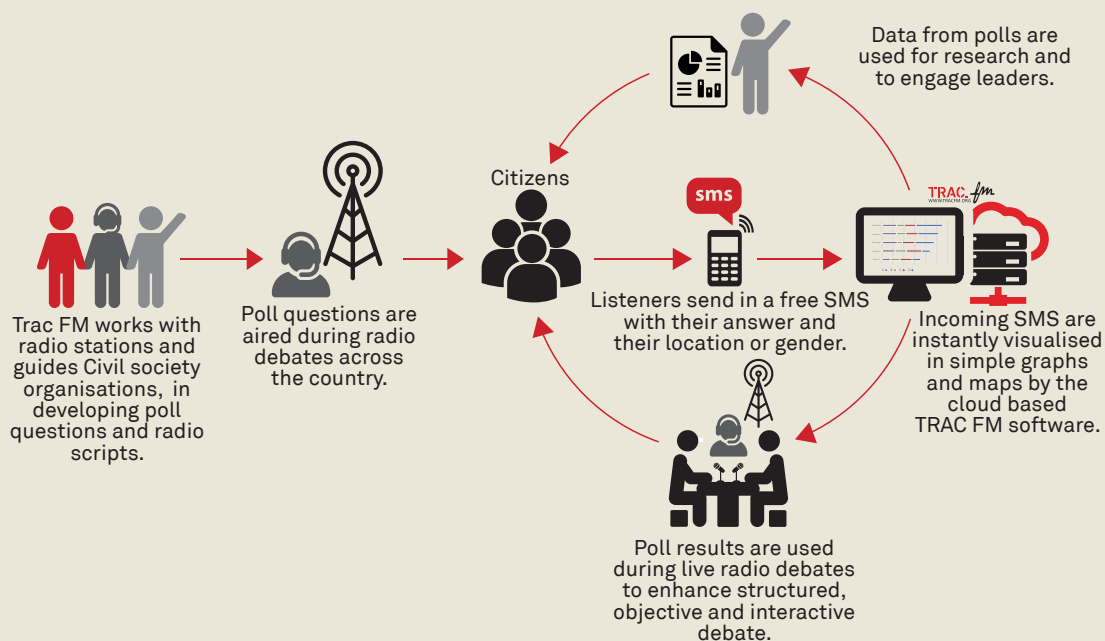
TRAC FM and its CSO partners use citizen feedback to design infographics, produce high-quality campaign reports, and develop strategic advocacy plans. This approach amplifies citizens' voices at key moments and platforms, ensuring they are considered in policy development by central and local governments,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

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.³ 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.^{4,5} Internet usage is much lower, especially in the rural areas⁶ where the majority of Ugandans reside. Influential online platforms like X, Facebook, and WhatsApp often fail to represent 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 6. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning.



³ 2021 - Uganda. <https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/5545>

⁴ BBC Media Action. 2019. Uganda – Media Landscape Report. Community Engagement Hub.

⁵ National Information Technology Authority. National IT Survey Report 2018.

⁶ National Information Technology Authority. National IT Survey Report 2022.

3.0

BACKGROUND

In Uganda, over 1,000 girls under 19 become pregnant each day. This is the highest teenage pregnancy rate in East Africa. Despite national and international efforts, the number of teenage pregnancies has not gone down for the past eight years. Many teenage mothers live in impoverished rural areas, and early pregnancy can rob them of their education and cause severe health complications.

There is little consensus on how to approach this complex issue, with opposing belief systems and social taboos hindering informed debate. This has led to misrepresentations of the main causes of teenage pregnancy and censorship of effective solutions. For instance, The National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy (Ministry of Gender, UNICEF (2022)) characterizes child marriage as a cause of the teenage pregnancy crisis. There is relatively little attention paid to the possibility that accidental pregnancies lead to child marriages. However, our poll data indicates accidental pregnancies lead to child marriages far more often than the reverse (No More Silence Poll 1).

That is why TRAC FM, by collecting citizen opinions, hopes to gain a deeper understanding of the causes of teenage pregnancy and teenage sexual behaviors. Citizen responses indicate that:

1. **Causes of teenage pregnancy:** Accidental teenage pregnancy is more likely to cause child marriage than the other way around. This is the opposite of the trend highlighted by the National Strategy.
2. **Sexual behavior and practices:** Transactional sex & exploration among consenting teenagers deserves more policy attention than simplistic reductions to rape and defilement
3. **Responsibility of men/boys:** There is no accountability for fathers. The National Strategy is silent on mechanisms to hold fathers accountable in cases of accidental teenage pregnancies.
4. **Condom use:** Men and Women both think their partners do not want to use condoms. Communication around contraceptives is difficult due to cultural and religious stigma and taboos

These findings and the citizen data they are based on should guide policymakers, NGOs, and SRHR advocates in the development of policies addressing the root causes of teenage pregnancy.

Sources: UNICEF Uganda; Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (2022). The National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy in Uganda 2022/23-2026/27; Fact Sheet Teenage Pregnancy, UNFPA (2021), Population Matters: Issue Brief 17; UNFPA (2021), Family Planning Atlas - Issue Brief 18; UNFPA (2022), Population Matters: Issue Brief 19; Monitor Uganda (2023), The double standards of single parenthood, citing UBOS; Uganda Bureau of Statistics (Retrieved 2024), Uganda General Information; Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2016), Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS)

4.0

POLL FINDINGS

4.1

Poll One Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy

The first poll question of the No More Silence interactive radio campaign aims to identify the primary cause of teenage pregnancies among girls in Uganda. Alarming, 1,000 girls under 19 become pregnant each day. The reasons behind this high rate of teenage pregnancies remain unclear. According to Uganda's National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy (2022/23-2026/27), the high incidence of teenage pregnancy is attributed to the prevalence of child marriage. However, a less publicized but significant cause is the high rate of unprotected sex among young people.

In a previous campaign run by TRAC FM, it became evident that unprotected sex leading to unintended pregnancies seems to be the main cause of teenage pregnancies (TRAC FM, Serious Citizens 1.9 (2022)).⁷ To gain further clarity on this issue, TRAC FM launched the following poll question:

What is most common in your community?



66%

A teenage girl accidentally gets pregnant and then gets married off.

34%

A teenage girl gets married first and then becomes pregnant.

TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS :

4,038

This poll question ran on 3 radio stations: BABA FM in Jinja, Radio Ssesse in Kalangala & Eastern Voice in Bugiri from 24 February to 8 March 2024

⁷ Read TRAC FM's full 2022 report on teenage pregnancy here: <https://tracfm.org/s/campaign/236/serious-citizens-interactive-radio-campaign/>

Analysis

The preliminary results from the No More Silence poll reveal significant insights into the relationship between teenage pregnancy and child marriage in Uganda. With 4,038 responses collected, a substantial majority (66%) indicate that unintended pregnancies precede child marriages. This suggests that unprotected sex and the resulting unintended pregnancies are the primary catalysts for child marriage, rather than the reverse. These findings underscore the critical need for targeted sexual education and accessible contraceptives to address the root cause of teenage pregnancies, which subsequently lead to child marriages.

Understanding that unprotected sex and unintended pregnancies are the primary drivers behind child marriages shifts the focus for policymakers. It becomes evident that efforts should concentrate on enhancing sexual education programs and ensuring the availability of contraceptives to minors. By addressing these core issues, there is potential to significantly reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancies and, consequently, the practice of child marriage. This approach advocates for proactive measures in educating teenagers about their sexual health, thereby empowering them to make informed decisions and ultimately curbing the cycle of unintended pregnancies leading to child marriages.

“Girls, it isn’t advisable to start sexual matters when you’re still young. The bad thing in this is that you are going to carry responsibilities! You are still children but again giving birth to another child”

Nabukalu from Wakisi,
Buikwe District:

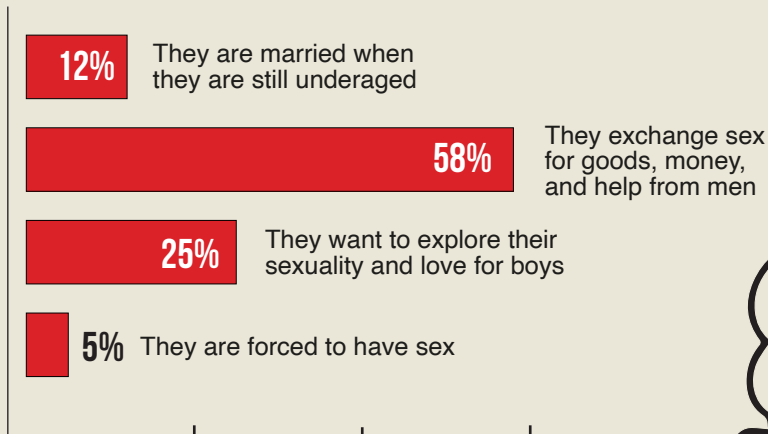


4.2

Poll Two Young Peoples' Sexual Behaviour

For years, Uganda has struggled to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies, with 250 girls under 15 years old becoming pregnant each month and over 1,000 girls under 19 getting pregnant every day. The numbers of teenage mothers keep growing. Although there are horrible cases of rape and incest known, many of these underage girls willingly choose to engage in sexual behavior but underestimate the risks and consequences of pregnancy. To effectively address and reduce teenage pregnancies, it is crucial to understand what drives these young girls to engage in sexual activity.

What leads underage girls to be sexually active?



"I can go to a boyfriend when I need something. But to give that thing to me we have to first play sex"

Sarah from Kibanga,
Kalangala District:

TOTAL NUMBER OF
RESPONDENTS :

3,178

This poll question ran on 3 radio stations: BABA FM in Jinja, Radio Ssesse in Kalangala & Eastern Voice in Bugiri from 16 March to 1 April 2024





Image: Badru Katumba

“Girls have their friends so some are forced to become sexually active through peer influence, to be like their colleagues!”

Ssebagala from
Kakumbi village,
Luuka District:

Analysis

In Uganda, teenage pregnancies are frequently attributed to rape and defilement, though concrete evidence supporting this is limited. Our recent polls suggest that transactional sex and sexual exploration among consenting teenagers are more significant factors. Specifically, a majority of respondents indicated that girls engage in sexual activities primarily to exchange sex for goods, money, and help from men, or to explore their sexuality and love for boys. This insight challenges the prevailing narrative and points to the need for a reevaluation of current intervention strategies.

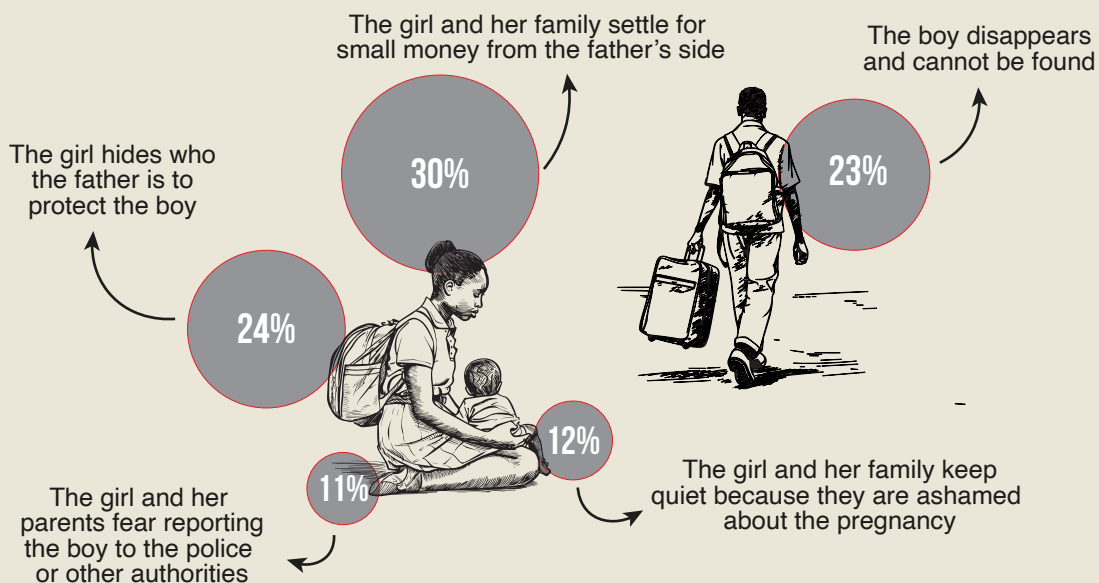
The current approach in Ugandan fora to combat teenage pregnancies has largely focused on fighting sexual violence through measures such as building safehouses, providing psychosocial support for victims, and imposing harsher penalties on perpetrators. Despite substantial financial investments in these protection efforts, the number of teenage pregnancies has not decreased. Our findings suggest that this may be due to a misguided assumption that most teenage pregnancies result from forced sex. Instead, the primary drivers appear to be economic necessity and a natural desire for sexual exploration. Therefore, it is essential to address the socio-economic conditions and provide comprehensive sexual education and access to contraceptives. By focusing on these areas, we can empower teenagers to make informed decisions and reduce the incidence of unintended pregnancies.

4.3

Poll Three Lack of Accountability for Fathers

When a teenage girl gets pregnant, it can often seem easy for the father to shirk childcare responsibilities. The burden of teenage pregnancy and childcare therefore rests disproportionately with the teenage mother and her family. In Poll Three, therefore, we asked our respondents why it is so easy for boys in Uganda to avoid their responsibility and run off without taking care of the baby or the mother.

Why is it so easy for teenage fathers in Uganda to avoid properly taking care of the baby or the mother?



TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS :

2,310

This poll question ran on 3 radio stations: BABA FM in Jinja, Radio Ssesse in Kalangala & Eastern Voice in Bugiri from 4 April to 20 April 2024

Analysis

The third poll question of the No More Silence campaign investigated why it is easy for teenage fathers in Uganda to evade their responsibilities towards the baby and the mother. Preliminary results from 2,310 respondents indicate that the most significant reason is that the girl and her family settle for some small money from the father's side, receiving 30% of the votes. This is followed by 24% who believe that girls hide the identity of the father to protect him, 23% who state that the boy disappears and cannot be found, 12% who indicate that the girl and her family keep quiet due to shame about the pregnancy, and 11% who say the girl and her parents fear reporting the boy to the police or other authorities.

These findings reveal a pervasive practice of teenage fathers shirking their responsibilities, often with little community or familial accountability. The National Strategy provides clear guidance on punitive actions and cultural sensitization against child marriage and forced sex but remains largely silent on mechanisms to hold fathers accountable in cases of accidental or unplanned teenage pregnancies. This gap highlights the need for policies that address the socio-economic realities and cultural practices that enable fathers to evade responsibility. Financial constraints, the desire for quick resolution, and emotional considerations often drive families to settle privately, thus avoiding prolonged legal battles and public scrutiny. Additionally, limited trust in the police, fear of legal consequences, and lack of access to legal representation further deter families from seeking justice through formal channels. Addressing these issues through sensitivity training for authorities, community engagement, and providing legal aid could help create a more supportive environment for teenage mothers and ensure fathers are held accountable.

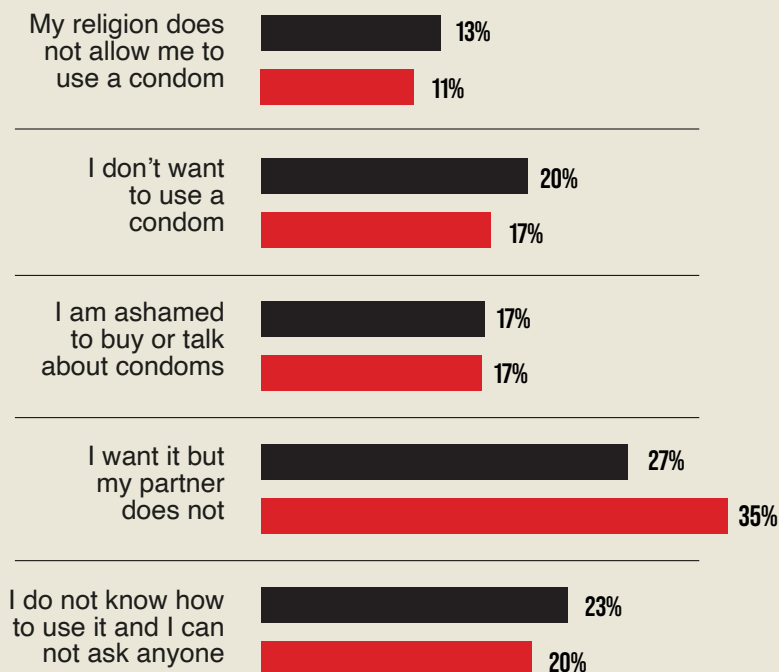


4.4

Poll Four Reasons Behind Low Condom Use

The No More Silence campaign's fourth poll was designed to explore the underlying reasons for the low uptake of condom use among young people in Uganda, despite widespread awareness campaigns and free condom distribution. According to UNFPA and PSI, only 19.1% of Ugandan males and 12.1% of Ugandan females aged 15-49 reported using a male condom during their last sexual encounter.⁸ Understanding these barriers is crucial to addressing the high rates of teenage pregnancies. This poll aims to identify specific factors such as partner resistance, lack of knowledge, and social stigma, which hinder effective condom use. By gaining insights into these issues, we can develop targeted, evidence-based interventions to promote safer sexual practices and reduce teenage pregnancies.

What is the main reason why you would not use a condom?



TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS :

3,425

This poll question ran on 3 radio stations: BABA FM in Jinja, Radio Ssesse in Kalangala & Eastern Voice in Bugiri from 27 April to 13 May 2024

⁸ UNFPA Uganda: <https://uganda.unfpa.org/> and PSI: <https://www.psi.org/>



*"I think condoms
have chemicals
which might infect
people"*

Martha from
Bugembe, Jinja City:

Analysis

The fourth poll question of the No More Silence campaign aimed to uncover the reasons behind the low uptake of condom use in Uganda, despite extensive awareness campaigns and the availability of free condoms. Results from 3,425 respondents reveal that the most significant reason for not using condoms is partner resistance, with 29% of respondents stating, "I want it but my partner does not." This is followed by 21% who admit they do not know how to use condoms and cannot ask anyone. Other reasons include a personal dislike for condoms (20%), shame in buying or discussing condoms (17%), and religious prohibitions (13%).

These findings highlight the complex social and cultural barriers that hinder condom use in Uganda. The predominant issue of partner resistance underscores the need for better communication and education within relationships about the importance of condom use. Additionally, the significant number of individuals who lack knowledge on how to use condoms and feel unable to ask for help points to gaps in comprehensive sex education. Addressing these barriers requires targeted, non-judgmental education and support from policymakers, NGOs, and health organizations. Efforts should focus on breaking down the stigma associated with condom use, improving access to accurate information, and promoting gender equality in sexual health decision-making.

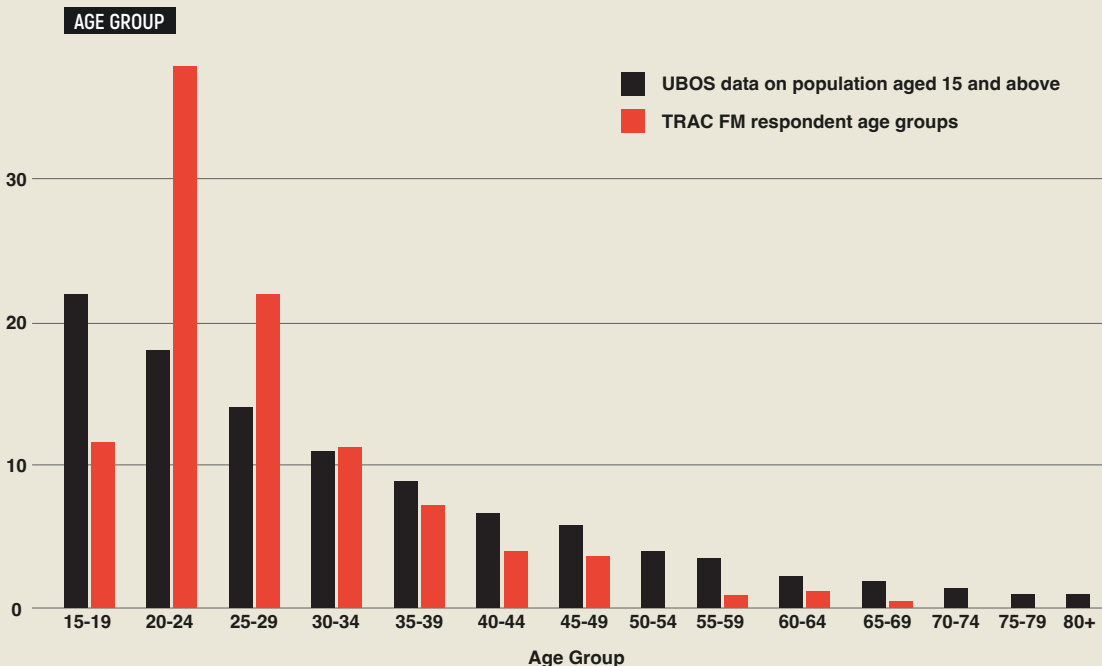
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RESPONDENT PROFILES

This telephone survey report presents demographic profiling data on a random selection of 125 male respondents and 125 female respondents to the first No More Silence campaign (2024)⁹. Respondent profiles were compared with national demographics from UBOS, excluding the population under 15 years of age.¹⁰

DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Broadly speaking, our 250 respondents include diverse age groups but are mostly within the 20-29 age group in alignment with a young national population. The rural-urban splits of our 250 respondents, as well as their unemployment rates and engagement in agriculture, match national figures even more closely. About 9% are either persons with disabilities or caretakers for persons with disabilities.



Among respondents, the most populous age group is 20-24 (95 responses), followed by 25-29. These two age groups are also the 2nd and 3rd largest nationally (TRAC FM does not aim to reach children, which explains lower participation from the largest national age group of 15-19).¹¹ TRAC FM also reaches diverse age groups, with over 16% of respondents aged over 50.

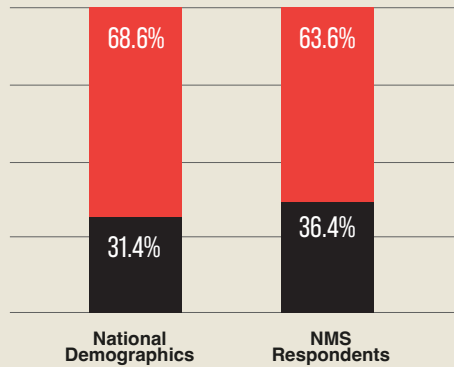
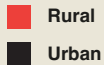
⁹ Participation solicited among SMS poll participants. Consent to record and share response data was obtained verbally from every respondent in their respective local language.

¹⁰ The adjusted national averages, with sources, are available in the demographic annex at the end of this document

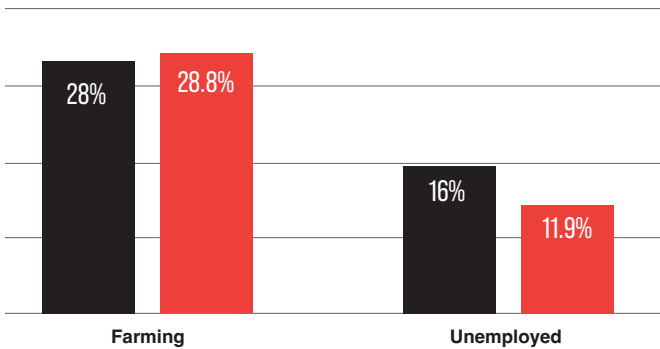
¹¹ Ibid.

URBAN / RURAL

The rural-urban split, at 64% (rural) and 36% (urban), closely aligns with the national split. Our respondents are slightly more likely to be urban-based than the average Ugandan citizen.



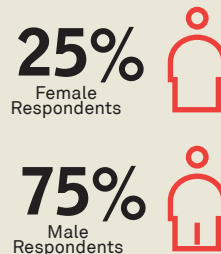
OCCUPATION IN FARMING / UNEMPLOYMENT



The most common occupation is farming (28% of respondents), remarkably close to the national percentage of Ugandans engaged in agriculture at 29%. Unemployment is reported by 16% of respondents, which is 4% higher than the national unemployment figure of 11.9%.¹²

GENDER

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.¹³ 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.



¹² "National Labour Force Survey 2021," pp. xxi. UBOS

¹³ 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.

6.0

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.¹⁴

¹⁴ <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.¹⁵

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. 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.



¹⁵ National Information Technology Authority, *National IT Survey Report 2018*; National Information Technology Authority, *National IT Survey Report 2022*

7.0

LINK TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)



Transparency • Accountability

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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."** ¹⁶

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.¹⁷

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 ¹⁸ 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."** ¹⁹

¹⁶ 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>

¹⁷ United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. 2012. A/RES/66/288: "The Future We Want." <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/futurewewant.html>

¹⁸ United Nations SDG Knowledge Platform. Updated December 2022. "Agenda 21." <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/outcomedomuments/agenda21>

¹⁹ 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>



8.0

CSO PARTNERS

About Amref Health Africa in Uganda



Amref Health Africa, founded in 1957 and headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, envisions lasting health change in Africa. Since the mid-1980s, we've partnered with Ugandan communities and set up a Kampala office in 1987. Collaborating with various ministries and organizations, we work to improve health services across 45 districts through our four program areas: WASH, RMNCAH, Disease Control, and Human Resources for Health. We focus on training health workers, creating healthy environments, and enhancing access to essential health services in remote, marginalized communities. These communities face multiple challenges, including limited education, gender disparities, and climate change impacts, which hinder quality healthcare delivery. Our mission is to catalyze and drive community-led, people-centered health systems while addressing social determinants of health.

About Heroes4GTA



The 'Integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights Programme in High Burden Districts of Uganda' (ISPHD) programme now known as the Heroes for Gender Transformation Action Program (H4GTA) is an integrated intervention that has been established to address Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) which is one of the most severe forms of gender inequality and discrimination in Uganda. SGBV remains a critical Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) problem where national GBV indicators show that 56% of people in Uganda aged 15 – 49 have experienced Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), of which the far majority are girls and women. SGBV is an issue that affects women disproportionately, as it is directly connected with the unequal distribution of power between women and men.

The programme is targeting young girls and boys (age 10-24) and women of reproductive age (age 25-49) including underserved groups, in the districts of East Central: Kalangala, Bugiri, Mayuge, Iganga and Namayingo; and the East: Mbale, Budaka, Bukwo, and Kween, to address the root causes of SGBV and unfavourable SRHR outcomes.

9.0

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?

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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.