

Uganda – Media Landscape Report

February 2019

BBC Media Action has created this media landscape report on Uganda to support the Red Cross in their *Community Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness Program (CP3)*, funded by USAID.

The full list of data sources is included in the appendix at the end of the report.

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1. Media Landscape

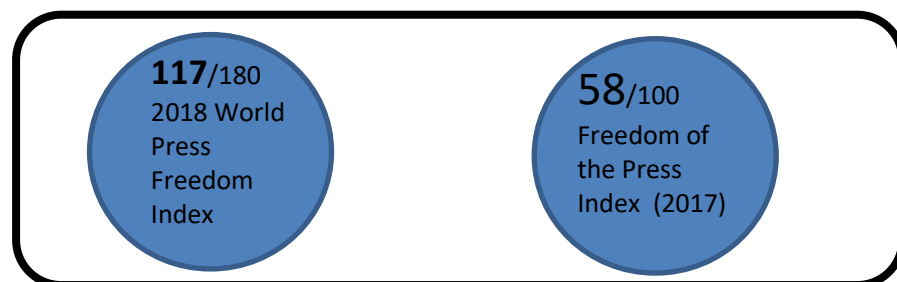
Uganda has a diverse media sector. There are nearly 300 licensed radio stations and 30 (free to air) TV stations [1] serving an estimated population of 39 million [2]. Radio is a more popular medium than TV mainly due to poverty and lack of electricity [3]. Almost three-quarters of the population own a mobile phone, although only 16% of these mobiles are smart phones [4]. Uganda had an estimated 19 million internet users by December 2017 according to internetworldstats.com

President Yoweri Museveni, the leader of the ruling National Resistance Movement's (NRM), has been in power since 1986. In 2016 he won his fifth consecutive term. Since then the Ugandan Parliament passed an amendment to the constitution on age restrictions (that president candidates must be under 75 years of age) allowing Museveni to continue to run for future elections. The EU Election Observation Mission report of the Uganda 2016 elections stated that the president and his party had access to funding and means, including public media which were not equally available to his competitors. The overall reporting environment during the election was also conducive to self-censorship, and yielded coverage overwhelmingly in favour of the current president [5].

International reports on media freedom are mixed. On the surface the media in Uganda may seem vibrant and flourishing. Freedom House in 2017 reported that the government and the media have settled into a predictable relationship. In moments of stress, authorities lash out but such heavy-handed actions tend not to permanently disrupt operations. [7]

However, Reporters without Borders ranked Uganda 117 out of 180 countries in its 2018 World Press Freedom Index [6]. They described that acts of intimidation and violence against reporters is an almost daily occurrence. The security services often target journalists, arresting them arbitrarily. Any criticism of the authorities can result in journalists being beaten, abducted, or deprived of their equipment with impunity. Many journalists who do not toe the government line have been banned from working altogether.

[The Human Rights World Report 2019](#) also lists some of the arrests and attacks against journalists in 2018. The report also highlighted that in July 2018, police fired live bullets and tear gas to disperse a demonstration deemed 'illegal' in the capital. People were protesting against the government's social media tax which requires users of WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook to pay a daily fee of 200 Ugandan Shillings. Protestors argued that this tax is a violation of Ugandans rights to free expression and information.

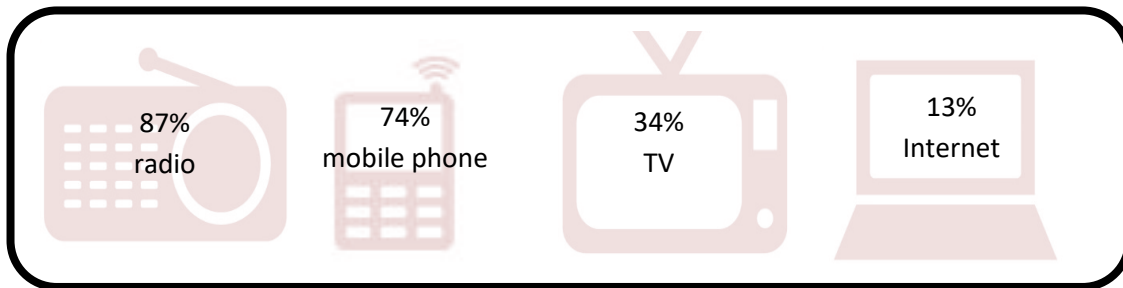


World Press Freedom Index [6], Freedom of the Press Index 0=Best, 100=Worst [7]

2. Media Access

In 2015, BBC World Service's nationally representative survey found that the majority of the Ugandan adult population had a working radio (87%) and mobile phone (74%) in their household. Only a third had a working TV (34%) and only 13% of the adult population had access to the internet within their household.

Q: Which, if any, of the following do you have working in your household? (Name of platform)



Base: 3027

Radio listenership is high

Listenership figures also show that radio is the most popular medium in Uganda. People can listen to the radio at home, at their friends, relatives or neighbours, and at work.

In 2017/18, 78% of individuals said they listened to the radio according to the National Information Technology Survey [4].

- Almost all males (90.5%) listened to radio, compared to females (68.7%).
- 80% of those living in urban areas listened to a radio compared to 76% in rural areas.

Mobile phone ownership is also high

In June 2018, there were reported to be 21.6 million mobile subscriptions for an estimated 39 million population according to the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC)[1].

The National Information Technology Survey 2017/18 report gave more details to mobile phone ownership. Their report found that 71% of all individuals owned a mobile phone, and of these only 16% of individuals, who owned a mobile phone, owned a smart phone. Other findings from the report showed that;

- More males (81.6%) owned a mobile compared to females (63.2%)
- More urban respondents (78.5%), compared to rural respondents (65.7%) owned a phone.
- There was equal ownership across age groups - 60.7% of 15-24 year-olds and 64.6% of 75+ years owned a mobile phone
- But younger people were more likely to own a smart phone: 28.0% of 15-24 year-olds, compared to 4.2% of 75+ year-olds

TV viewing is more widespread in urban areas

In 2017/18, 41.3% of individuals said they watched TV, according to the National Information Technology survey.

- Half (52.1%) of urban respondents said they watched TV compared to only a third (33.9%) of rural respondents
- Slightly more males (44.2%) watched TV compared to females (39.2%)

Pilot areas

The Uganda National Household Survey 2016/17 found great variation in television ownership across regions [2].

- Kampala had the most households (42%) who reported that they owned the television individually
- While only 3% of households owned a television individually in Kigezi where the pilot area Kabale is situated.
- Television ownership was very low in Teso (2%), Bukedi (2%), Acholi (2%) and West Nile (1%). No household in Karamoja reported that they owned a television individually.
- The data in the report did not cover the area Tooro, where the pilot areas - Bundibugyo, Kamwenge are situated.

Social media and internet access is growing

The Internet World Stats shows that Internet users grew from only 40,000 internet users in Dec 2000, to 19 million in Dec 2017 [8] - a jump from less than 1% of the population in 2000 to approximately 43% of the population in 2017.

Country	Population (2018 Est.)	Internet Users 31/12/2000	Internet Users 31/12/2017	Penetration (% Population)	Internet Growth % 2000 - 2017	Facebook subscribers 31/12/2017
Uganda	44,270,563	40,000	19,000,000	42.90%	47400%	2,600,000

In 2017/2018, the National Information Technology Survey found much lower rate in their survey where they reported that 12% of respondents said they had used the internet from any location in the last 12 months.

In this report - young, male and urban respondents were more likely to say they had used the internet, similar to other trends across the world.

- 19.5% urban compared to 7.1% rural
- 15.8% male compared to 9.5% female
- Most individual Internet users were in the young age groups of 15 to 24 (22.3%) and 25 to 34 (16.4%) compared to 2.6% 55-64, 1.5% 65-74 year olds.

3. How frequently people access different media platforms

Radio is the most regular source of news

The Afrobarometer Uganda round 7 report (January 2017), found that 52% of respondents got their news from the radio every day, compared to only 15% who said they got their news from the TV every day. [9]

How often do you get news from the following sources?

Sources	Every day	A few times a week	A few times a month	Less than once a month	Never	Don't know
Radio	52%	22%	6%	6%	14%	
Television	15%	8%	5%	8%	64%	0%
Internet	7%	4%	3%	2%	82%	1%
Social Media	8%	5%	3%	2%	81%	2%

Base: 1200

4. Radio Usage

The Uganda Communication Commission reported that there were 292 licensed FM radio stations in Uganda in June 2018. This shows a growth in the number of radio stations since 2016 where BBC Monitoring reported that there were over 200 licensed radio stations.

GeoPoll Media Measurement service 'Uganda Quarter 1 2018: Radio & TV Audience Ratings Report' looked at the top radio stations at the national level in Uganda. It looked at the audience share of the market**. [10]

Its survey found that Capital FM had the highest share of listeners (10%) followed by Bukedde FM (4%), and Radio West (4%).

Uganda Radio Audience Share Q1, 2018

Station	Q1 2018
Capital FM	10%
Bukedde FM	4%
Radio West	4%
NBS FM	3%
Radio Simba	3%

The top radio stations are described below:

- Capital FM** (sometimes called Capital Radio) <https://capitalradio.co.ug/>
https://www.facebook.com/pg/CapitalFMUganda/about/?ref=page_internal
 Capital FM is an English radio broadcaster. It covers two thirds of the country and broadcasts on 91.3 in Central Uganda, 90.9 in the East and 88.7 in the West. Programmes include the *Gaetano And Lucky In The Morning*, *The Capital Gang*, *The Late Date and Dance Force*.
- Bukedde FM** <https://www.bukedde.co.ug/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Bukedde-FM-403451976460839/>
 Bukedde is based in Kampala, Uganda. It features a mix of content such as news and talk shows. It is the leading Luganda radio station - operated by the state-owned Vision Group - that has a nationwide reach. The station, like its newspaper counterpart, is seen to operate as a mouthpiece of the Ugandan government according to the BBC Monitoring report [3]. It is on air in Kampala on 100.5 and in Masaka on 106.8 FM.

- **Radio West** <https://www.radiowest.co.ug/>
The station is based in the district of Mbarara and broadcasts in English, Runyankore and Rukiga languages. It's owned by the Vision Group and is reportedly the leading radio station in the west. Media observers have criticised the station for its pro-government editorial line [3]. It is available on 100.2 FM.

Most popular radio stations in each region

North	%
Mega FM	20%
Capital FM	16%
Radio Rupiny	10%
Southern Eastern	%
NBS FM	17%
Basoga Baino FM	15%
Smart FM	11%
South West A	%
Voice of Toro FM	11%
Endigito Radio	10%
Capital FM	10%
South West B	%
Radio West	17%
Vision Radio	11%
Capital FM	10%
Western	%
Radio Maria	13%
Radio Kitara	11%
Central	%
Capital FM	11%
Radio Simba	8%
Galaxy FM	8%

Eastern	%
Capital FM	19%
OPG FM	19%
Akaboozi FM	8%
Mid East	%
Etop FM	22%
Capital FM	14%
Voice of Tesco FM	12%
Mid North	%
Voice of Lango FM	19%
Unity FM	14%
Divine FM	10%
North Eastern	%
Karibu FM	39%
Nenah FM	9%
Step FM	8%
North Western	%
Radio Pacis	17%
Arua One FM	11%
Pakwach FM	11%

International Stations

There are a number of international radio stations available:

- **BBC World Service** is on the air 24/7 via its own FM relays in Kampala (101.3), Arua (northern Uganda - on 99.4), Mbale (east - on 107.3) and Mbarara (southwest - also on 107.3). It can also be heard in English and Swahili on several partner stations.
- **Radio France Internationale (RFI)** is on 93.7 FM in Kampala.
- **China Radio International (CRI)** is on FM in Kampala (107.3) and Jinja (107.1).

Transmitter maps

The transmitter footprint maps are available from the following website - for each station there is a link to a transmitter map: <https://fmscan.org/net3.php?r=f&m=s&itu=UGA>

Pilot Areas

The footprint maps highlight the local radio stations that are available in the pilot areas. (Audience share information % was not found).

Pilot areas	Local Radio
Kampala (Capital)	<p>Kampala remains the centre of radio operations List of stations: https://fmSCAN.org/net3.php?r=f&m=s&itu=UGA&rg=kmp</p> <p>Example stations: Capital FM (capitalradio-ug.com) broadcasts in English from Kampala and is said to enjoy the widest reach of all the music stations. CBS (cbsradiobuganda.com), which broadcasts from Kampala on 88.8 FM, CBS is reportedly Uganda's largest commercial FM radio station KFM - This Kampala-based station (kfm.co.ug) Sanyu FM (sanyufm.com) The commercial station - broadcasting in English and Luganda - transmits on 88.2 FM in Kampala.</p>
Bundibugyo	UBC Voice of Bundibugyo 93.30 FM, Facebook Page
Kamwenge	<p>Kamwenge FM Rwenzori FM Western FM Voice of Kamwenge</p>
Kabale	<p>Kachwekano FM Radio Kachwekano Radio West Roots FM UBC West Voice of Kigezi Freedom Radio Kabale 94.7 FM Facebook Page Hills FM http://hillsfm.co.ug/</p>

5. TV Usage

Digital migration was completed in 2015, and has led to the growth in the number of channels that viewers can access. According to the Uganda Communication Commission there are 33 operational TV stations and eight Pay TV service providers in June 2018.

The Geopoll Uganda Quarter 1 2018: Radio & TV Audience Ratings Report showed Uganda's Top Five national TV Stations were NTV, Bukedde, NBS FM, Bukedde2 and Spark TV.

Uganda Top 5 TV Stations in Audience Share for the first quarter of 2018.

Station	Share Q1 2018
NTV	20%
Bukedde	13%
NBS FM	11%
Bukedde2	7%
Spark TV	7%

Description of largest broadcasters:

- Nation TV Uganda (NTV)** <http://www.ntv.co.ug/> NTV Uganda is said to be the most popular in Uganda and is widely considered to be the most reliable, objective and comprehensive news source in the country. It broadcasts in English and Luganda. The station airs across Uganda on both free-to-air as well as on DStv channel 283. It offers a wide variety of programming such as reality shows, soaps, drama, comedies, cartoons, and musical shows.

- Bukedde** <https://www.bukedde.co.ug/> YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/bukeddetv
 The free-to-air Bukedde TV is a Luganda-only channel. It is owned by majority state-owned New Vision Printing and Publishing Company Ltd, which also owns the New Vision and Bukedde dailies. As with its radio and newspaper counterparts, the channel has a strong pro-government editorial line. Seen as the leading channel in central Uganda, Bukedde TV's signal can reach areas within a 60 mile radius from Kampala. It is popular with members of the Baganda community living abroad.
- Nile Broadcasting Services (NBS)** www.nbs.ug
 NBS is a leading 24-hour channel owned by media tycoon Kin Kariisa. It provides reliable news coverage and current affairs talk shows. The channel broadcasts in Kampala and surrounding areas and is aimed at a broad cross-section of Ugandans. In April 2014, the Nairobi based Standard Group (a leading Kenyan media house) signed a partnership deal with NBS, marking the entry of the group in Uganda.
- Spark TV** <https://www.facebook.com/SparkTvUganda/>
 This new Luganda channel launched in December 2015 in Kampala. It is a sister station of NTV Uganda. The channel joins other Luganda-only TV stations such as Bukedde TV, Delta TV and Star TV.
- UBC TV** <https://ubc.ug/> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Uganda-Broadcasting-Corporation-1331241396936355/>
 The main state broadcaster is Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC). Its main aim was to broadcast through both radio and TV to the whole country as the national broadcaster. It is state-owned but not fully government funded, so it takes advertisements.

The Afrobarometer Sierra Leone round 7 report (July 2018), found that only 15% of respondents got their news from the TV every day. [9]

How often do you get news from the following sources? Television

Category	% Total
Every day	15%
A few times a week	8%
A few times a month	5%
Less than once a month	8%
Never	64%

Base: 1200

6. Languages spoken

English and Luganda are the languages most used by the national media, but local languages are also used by regional radio stations

Uganda is ethnologically diverse, with at least 40 languages in usage according to Ethnologue. These local languages can be grouped into the main language families: Bantu, Central Sudanic, and Nilotic. [13] Ethnologue provides a map of the local languages by region:

<https://www.ethnologue.com/country/UG/maps>

English and Swahili are the official languages of Uganda. However, Luganda is the most common spoken local language and is spoken by the Baganda the largest ethnic group found mostly in the southern and central regions (BBC Monitoring) [3]. Other common local languages include Runyankole, Ateso and Lusoga.

The Afrobarometre survey (2016/18) found that Luganda is the most common language.

Which Kenyan language is your mother tongue or language of origin?

Luganda	22.2%
Runyankole	13.4%
Ateso	12.1%
Lusoga	8.0%
Langi	7.5%
Rukiga	5.6%
English	0.5%
Swahili	0.1%

Base: 1200

What is the primary language you speak in your home now?

Luganda	27.60%
Runyankole	12.40%
Ateso	11.10%
Lusoga	9.20%
English	1.80%
Swahili	0.40%

Base: 1200

The above tables show that English may not be considered a mother tongue or primary language, however, it is taught in schools and understanding of English is high. A survey in 2015 by the BBC World Service found that 70% of 3073 respondents reported that they understood English.

Pilot areas

Desk research found the following local languages for each of the pilot areas.

Pilot areas	Local languages
Kampala (Capital)	Most common languages English and Luganda.
Bundibugyo	Lubwisi
Kamwenge	Rutooro, Rukiga, Rutagwenda
Kabale	Rukiga

Example of the languages used by Uganda's state radio broadcaster

UBC Radio is the corporation's national service, with programmes in English, Swahili, Luo and Nubian.

The UBC's various radio services transmit in English, Luganda and 25 local languages, in line with the corporation's stated mission to "inform, educate, guide and entertain the public through maintaining a sustainable national coverage".

Alongside its national service are a number of UBC-operated local and regional stations: Buruli FM (central), Butebo FM (east), Magic 100 FM (Kampala), Mega FM (north - see below), Ngeya FM (west), Star FM (Kampala), UBC West (west), Voice of Bundibugyo (west) and West Nile FM (northwest).

BBC Monitoring <https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/country/UGA>

7. Overall Trust

Trust in public institutions including state media has decreased

The 2017 National Governance, Peace & Security Survey Report (April 2018) by UBOS [11] showed that citizens' trust* in nearly all public institutions, including the state media, had decreased between 2014 and 2017.

Trend in percentage of respondents with trust* in Public institutions

Institution	2014	2017	Amount decreased between 2014 & 2017	Amount increased between 2014 & 2017
Social security system	44%	23%	21%	
State media	57%	40%	17%	
Courts of Judicature	62%	47%	15%	
Uganda Police Force	57%	46%	11%	
Tax/customs authorities	39%	29%	10%	
Public Service	61%	54%	7%	
Public healthcare facilities	75%	69%	6%	
Public school	73%	68%	5%	
Mayor	50%	62%		12%

*Trust means somewhat or very much trust in the institution. (Nationally representative sample of: 3,369 households).

Religious leaders are trusted

However, the Afrobarometre 2016/2018 found that most people trusted religious leaders 'a lot'.

	A lot	Somewhat	Just a little	Not at all	Refused	Don't know
Religious Leaders	67%	23%	7%	3%	0%	1%
Traditional Leaders	42%	26%	12%	8%	1%	11%

Base: 1200.

The survey also found that 55% of respondents had 'often' or 'a few times' contacted a religious leader about an important problem or to give them their views.

During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views? Religious leaders

Often	A few times	Only once	Never
28%	27%	8%	37%

Base: 1200.

Some studies have shown the potentially important role of religious leaders, given their influential place in the community, but some caution needs to be taken about what role they are being asked to have and information they are being asked to convey.

Case Study: UNICEF's 'Ending Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy in Uganda Final Report' – (December 2015)

Formative research found that institutional spaces like churches, mosques, cultural centres were said to attract large numbers of people and thus are spaces with a wide audience and big listenership.

Religious and cultural leaders were reported to have the power to influence change in attitudes, beliefs and practices associated with child marriage in local communities. This was confirmed by women, men and adolescents in all the study districts.

Through the church or mosque, religious leaders both Christians and Muslims mobilised their

congregations to create awareness among people with different messages for children/youth and adults.

The main messages for the young people focused on abstinence and chastity urging them to avoid sex before marriage and highlighting the consequences of early sex (teenage pregnancy, STIs including HIV and early marriage). For the parents, discussions focus on responsible parenting.

“Christian leaders including Pastors, Reverends talk about child marriage, teenage pregnancy, in the churches. They give advice to the young people.” (IDI father of married girl – Bugiri)

“In the church, associations like the Mothers’ Union have taken charge to move to all schools especially secondary to advise girls to stay in school and complete studies before getting married and other pieces of advice.” (FGD Adults - Arua).

According to the Muslim leaders who participated in the study, the Quran prohibits early marriages and encourages people to avoid child marriages.

“We highly condemn it because we want girls to be able to make the right decisions at the right age. We want the children to be successful like the female successful women in the country like the speaker”. (KII Religious Leader – Bugiri)

Extracts taken from the UNICEF, Formative Research Ending Child Marriage & Teenage Pregnancy in Uganda report.

https://www.unicef.org/uganda/Formative_Research_Ending_Child_Marriage_and_Teenage_Pregnancy_in_Uganda.pdf

8. Media Campaigns

Below are three case studies of health projects that have used media campaigns in Uganda.

Case Study: HOW’S YOUR LOVE LIFE? (Sexual Reproductive Health Campaign) USAID

As part of a USAID sexual reproductive health campaign, four different media programmes were created to improve information/ knowledge, motivation/risk perception, skills, norms and supportive environment to adopt relevant health actions around:

Condom use • HIV Testing and Counseling (HTC) • Safe Male Circumcision (SMC) • Reduction of multiple con-current sexual partners • ART adherence and discordance • Family planning/pregnancy prevention • TB testing and adherence to TB drugs

The four programmes were broadcast on 42 radio stations countrywide;

- OBULAMU Radio spots (5 x a day)
- DJ led conversations/mentions (1 topic/health issue, 5 times a day)
- Health expert guest (1 x a week)
- Radio talk show (1 x a month)

Radio stations:

Step FM, Etop Radio, Teso Broadcasting Service, Rock Mambo, NBS Radio, Signal FM, Vero FM, Kamuli Broadcasting Service, Baba FM, Nenah FM, All Karamoja FM, Trinity FM, Unity FM, Mega FM, Speak FM, Luo FM, Arua One, Trans Nile Broadcasting Station, Radio Phaidha, Voice of Tooro, Life FM, Liberty FM, Hits FM, Kagadi Community Radio, Radio Messiah, Guide FM, Vision Radio, Radio

West, Voice of Kigezi, Radio Muhabura, Rwenzori FM, Radio Buddu, Kiboga FM, Buruli FM, Sun FM, Capital FM, Radio One, CBS One, Super FM, Radio Sanyu, Radio Simba and Mbabule FM.

TV Coverage

Two national TV stations (NTV Uganda and Bukedde TV), ran campaign TV spots daily between 7-10pm during peak viewing times

Health Partners

2,000 OBULAMU Campaign Champions were used at community level including volunteers already working with several partners in various parts of the country

Champions included:

Health workers • VHTs • Expert clients • Linkage facilitators • Mentor mothers • Peer educators/peer leaders, including KPs • Pharmacists and drug distributors • Teachers • Journalists • Cultural and religious leaders • Influential local leaders • Gate keepers at water collection points, local shops/trading centers, markets, landing sites, night clubs, hot spots, among other

Print materials were created in 18 local languages

Posters/billboards, stickers, talking points, lovers passport, champions materials, among others.

These materials were available in **18 local languages which include**; Luganda, Runyankore-Rukiga, Rufumbira, Rukhonzu, Runyoro-Rutoro, Luo-Langi, Luo-Acholi, Ateso, Lusoga, Lugbara, Alur, Swahili, Ngakaramajong, Lumasaba, Kupsabiny, Dhopadhola and Lusamyia. [USAID campaign](#)

Case Study: Live Your Dream

Live Your Dream Campaign is ON AIR in 11 radio stations and 2 television channels throughout Uganda as part of 'Better Life for Girls: Preventing teenage pregnancy and under-age marriage to reap the girl effect dividend in Karamoja and Eastern regions of Uganda(2016-2018)', implemented by UNFPA and supported by KOICA and GDEF Korea

<https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/live-your-dream>

Case Study: Health Radio Drama – Rock Point 256 (2010)

Rock Point 256, a 30-minute radio serial drama for young people in Uganda, was voted the best radio program of 2010 by readers of New Vision, the leading daily newspaper in Uganda.

Rock Point 256 told the story of people who live in a fishing and farming community in Uganda. The radio serial was designed to influence the actions of its young listeners by modeling behavior change among the “transitional characters” who are similar to the program’s intended audiences. It seeks to help young people choose attitudes and lifestyles that protect them from HIV, unplanned pregnancies and other social problems

Rock Point 256 **broadcast weekly in four languages on 16 radio** stations across Uganda.

According to a survey conducted by the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs in 31 districts of Uganda, more than half the young people had listened to the series and one half of listeners tuned in weekly or more often.

Overall, 75 percent of young people who listened to Rock Point 256 reported that it had influenced them to take an action.

Young people who listened were significantly more likely than those who did not to plan to use condoms during their next sexual encounter, get circumcised, get tested and counselled and discuss HIV status with spouse/partner.

Rock Point 256 listeners were more knowledgeable about HIV and had more gender equitable attitudes.

<http://ccp.jhu.edu/documents/UgandaEEBackgrounder.pdf>

Appendix

1. Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), Post, Broadcasting and Telecommunications Market & Industry Q2 Report, 2018. Report available online: <https://www.ucc.co.ug/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Communication-Sector-Performance-for-the-Quarter-ending-June-2018.pdf>
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