

Uganda Public Health Fellowship Program

COVID-19 Vaccine misinformation in Uganda, September 2021

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Sub optimal vaccines coverage in Uganda

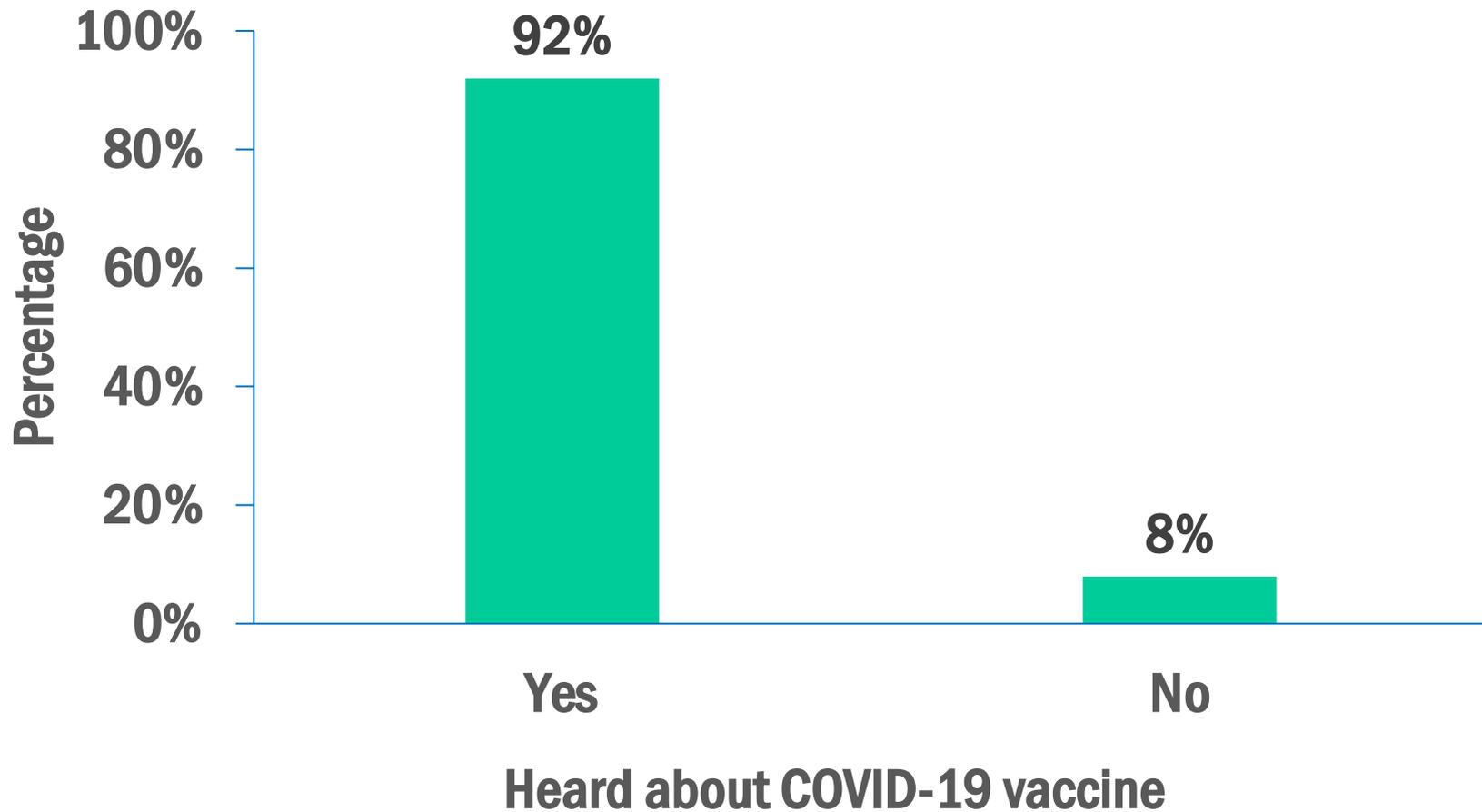
- For example, HPV coverage is 22% among girls
- In part, due to:
 - Negative media reporting
 - Side effects
- Other vaccines, such as DPT-Hep-Hib, face barriers:
 - Misconceptions that the vaccines are fake, especially in Kampala.

Study area

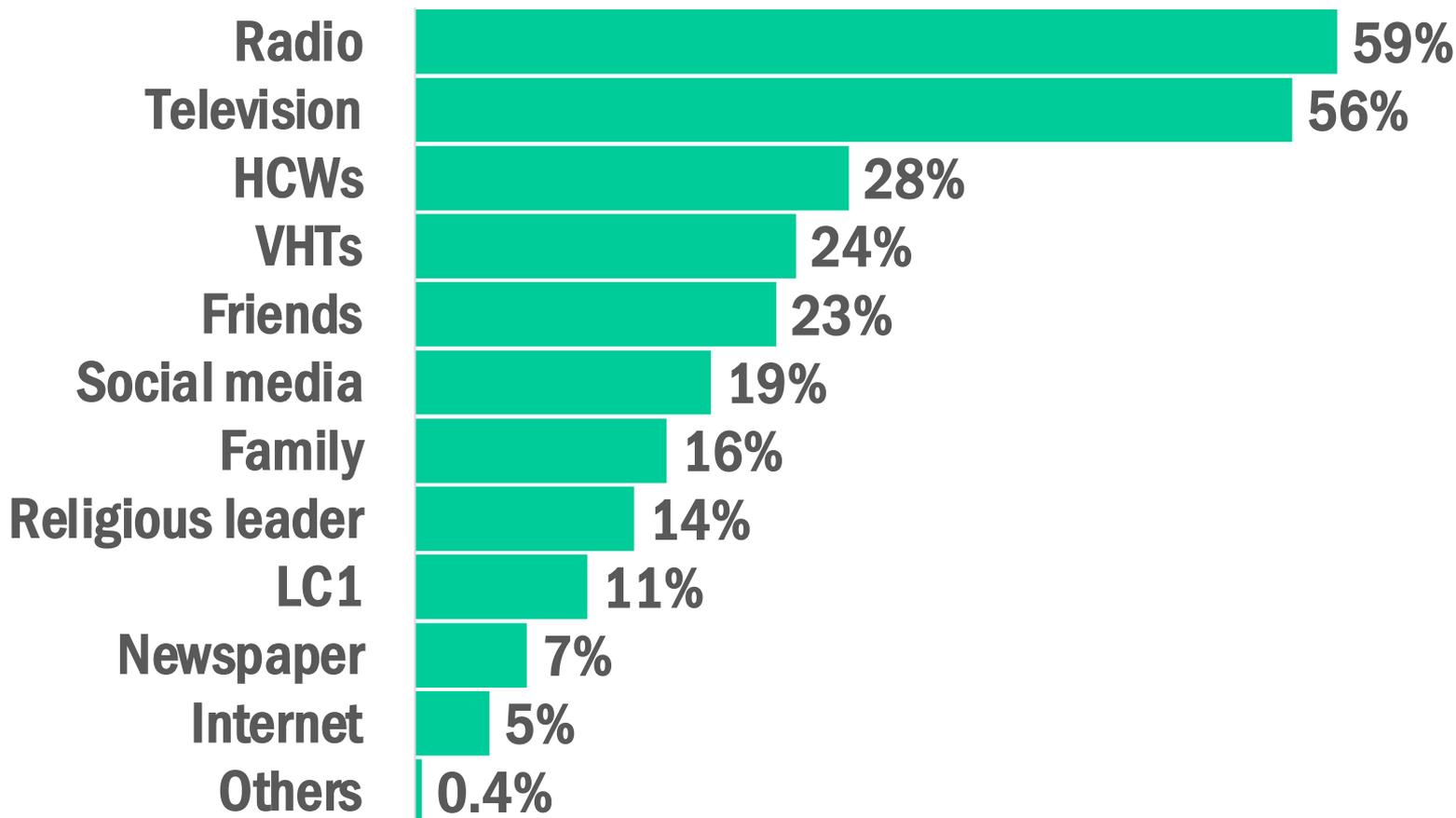
- **Kampala city (highest number of COVID-19 cases)**
 - Selected 3 out of 5 divisions: Kawempe, Nakawa, and Central
- **Ankole sub-region (fewest COVID-19 cases)**
 - Selected 3 out of 12 districts: Rwampara, Kazo, and Sheema

- **Cross-sectional assessment**
 - **Household survey (q'aire adapted from Larson et al)**
 - **Socio-demographic (sex, age, place of residence, religion, marital status, educational level, monthly income)**
 - **Perceptions**
 - **Knowledge**
 - **Barriers to taking COVID-19 vaccine**
 - **Focus group discussions (FGDs)**
 - **Key informant interviews (KIIs)**

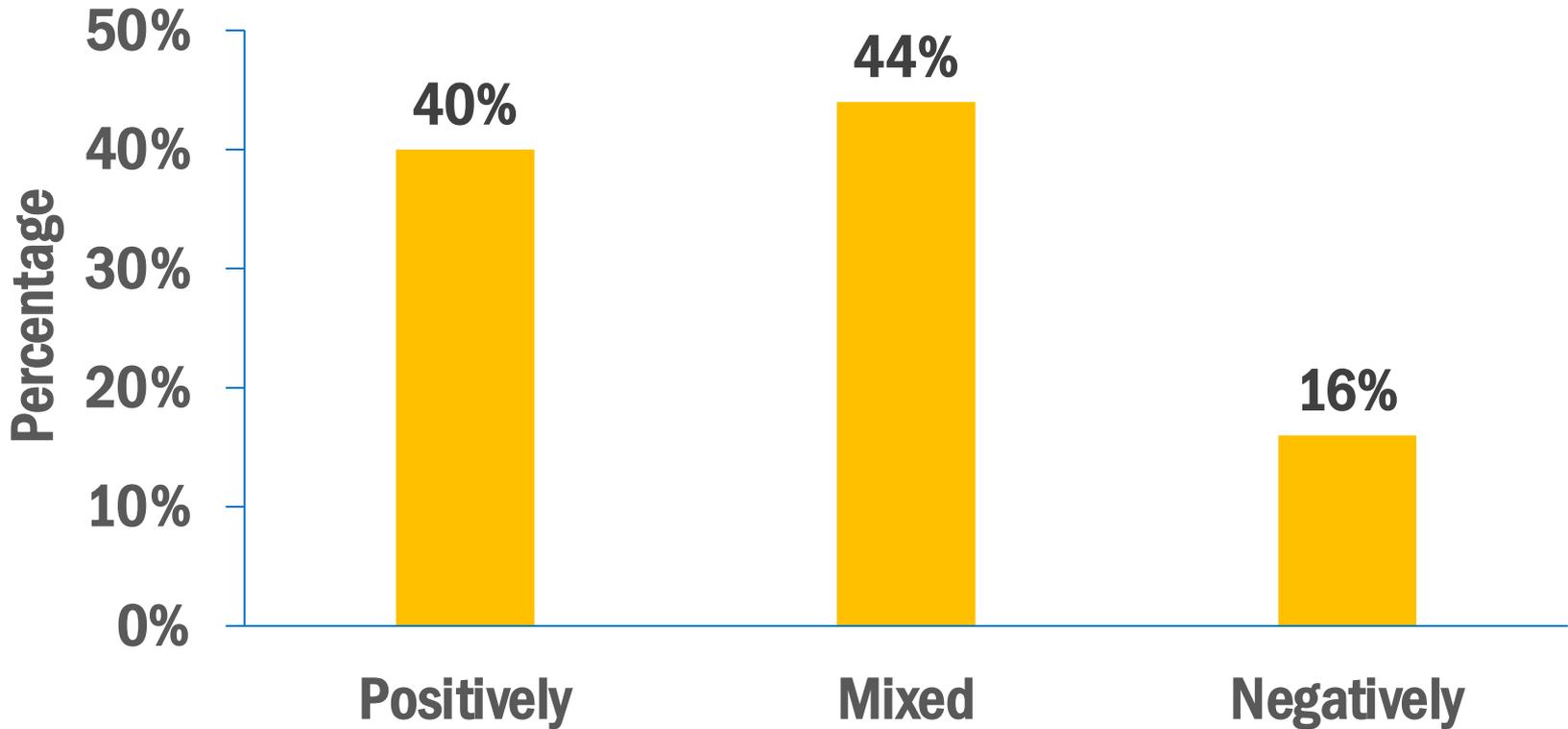
Majority of respondents had heard about COVID-19 vaccine (n=1,728)



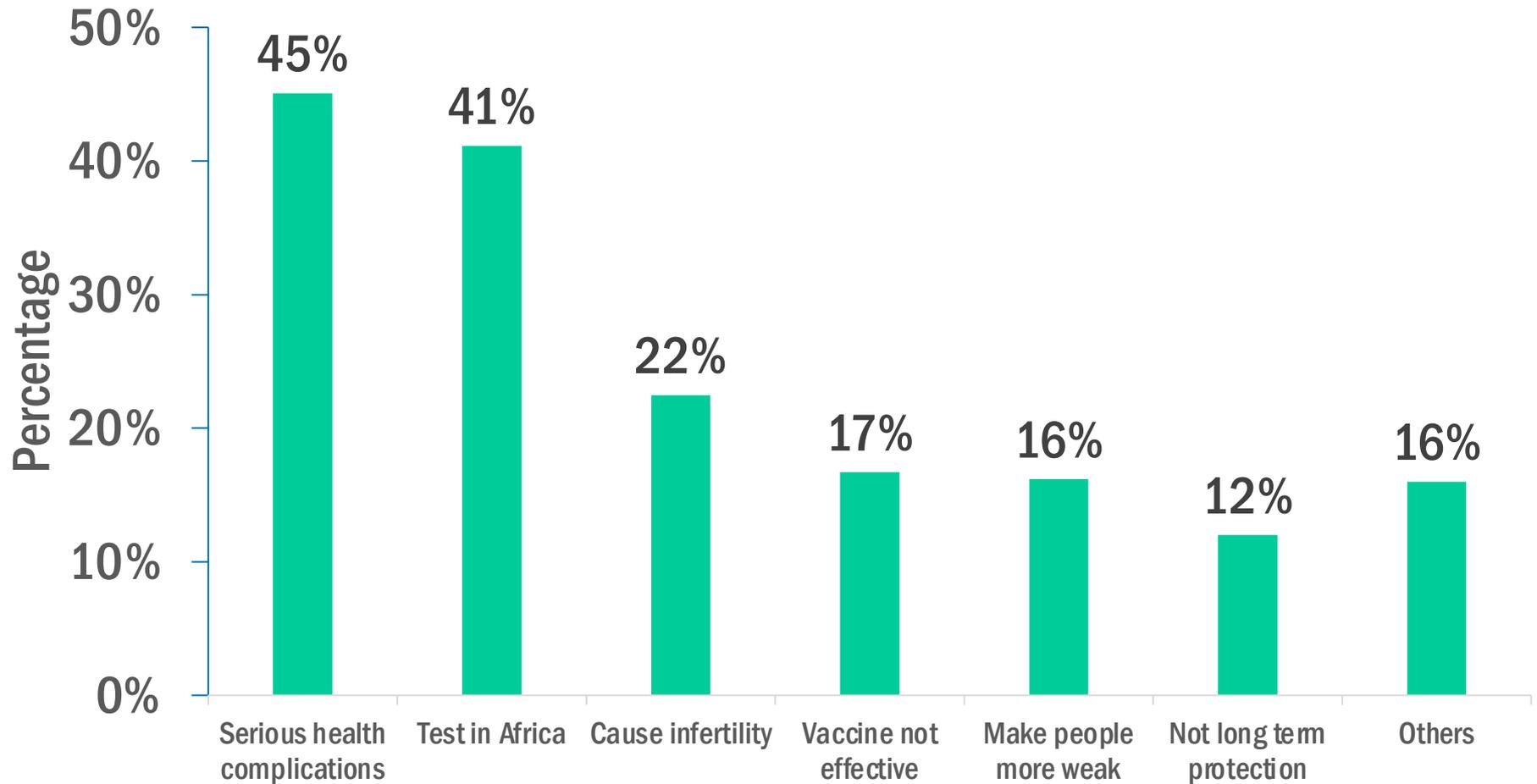
Radio spread messages about COVID-19 vaccine most (n=1,589)



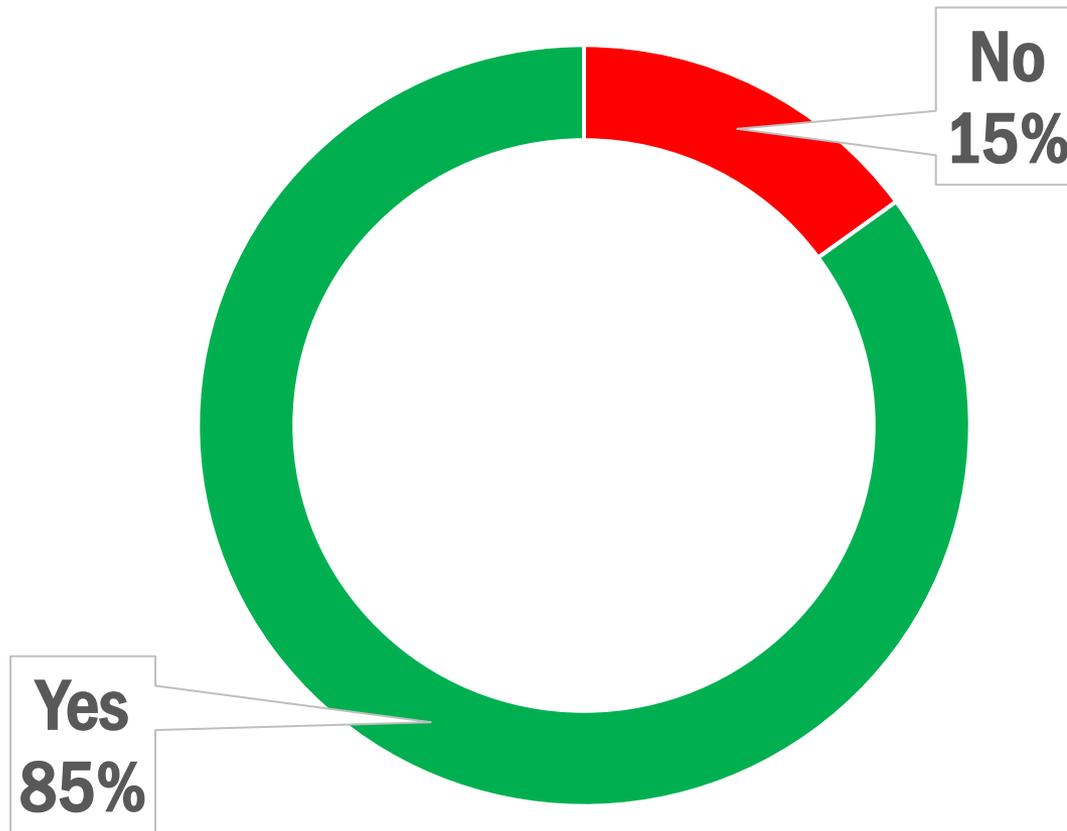
Largest proportion of respondents heard mixed information about COVID-19 vaccine (n=951)



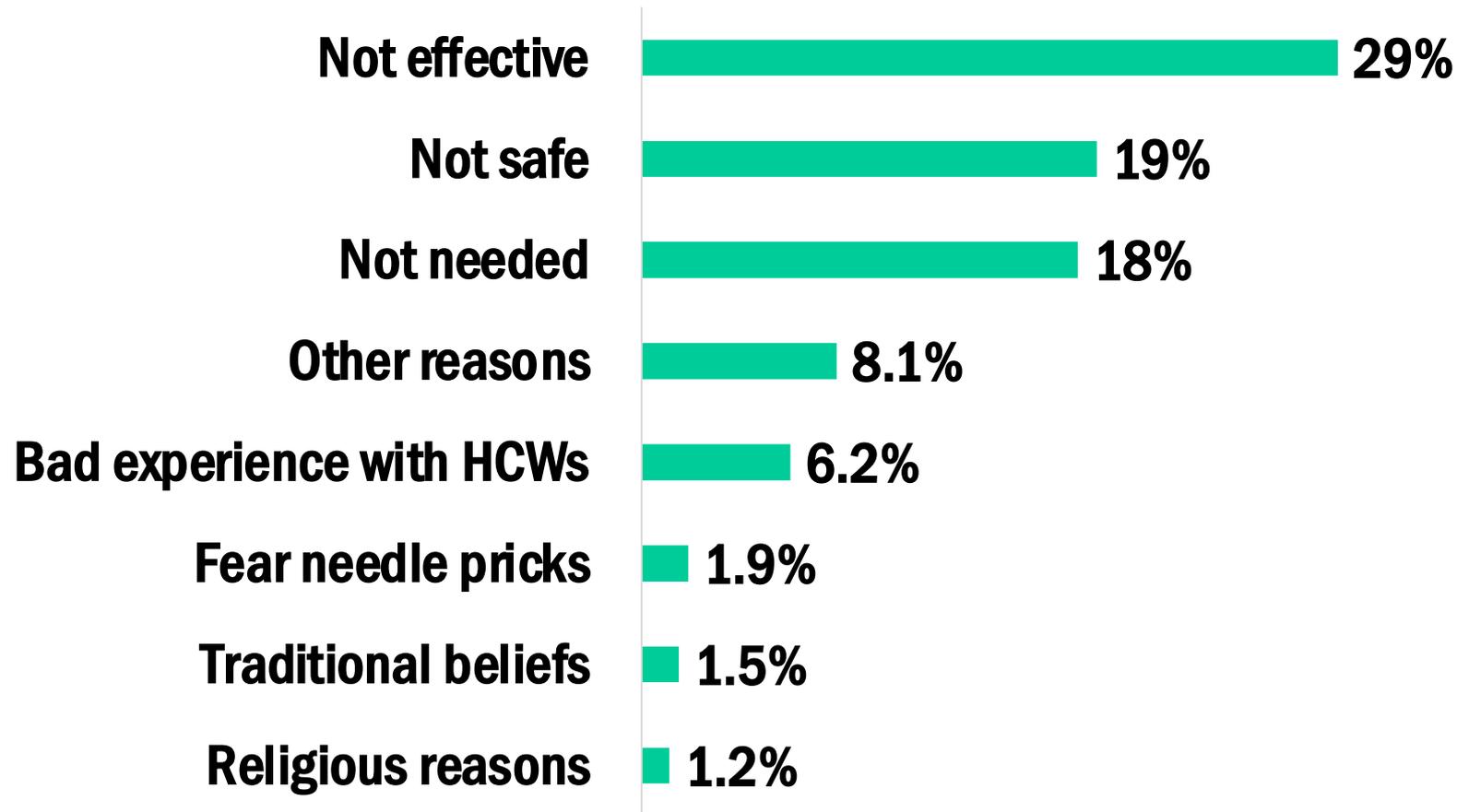
Belief that COVID-19 vaccine causes serious health complications ranks highest (n=951)



Majority of respondents were willing to take COVID-19 vaccine (n=1,728)



Concern about vaccine effectiveness was biggest reason for hesitancy



Better uptake of the vaccine could be obtained by leaders taking vaccine first

“....I think the best way to make all people get vaccinated against COVID-19 is by our leaders taking the vaccine first...”

– Participant in Kampala

Factors associated with lower interest in taking the vaccine

Factor	*aOR (95% CI)
Informed on vaccine safety (vs not)	0.19 (0.07- 0.53)
Urban (vs rural)	0.06 (0.01- 0.37)

** Adjusted for sex, age, having general vaccine knowledge, trust vaccine advice from HCWs, having enough info on vaccine Safety, heard about bad reaction to vaccine, feeling HCWs cares about the best for children, experienced AEFI, preferred Vaccination site, trust manufacture to produce safe COVID-19 vaccine, trust manufacture to produce effective COVID-19 vaccine, previous personal experience with HCWs, presence of anti-vaccination groups and feeling of vaccines safe within self.*

Implications for National Disease Response

- Demystify myths and negative information about COVID-19 vaccine
- Use radio and televisions to give enough information on:
 - Safety of vaccine
 - Effectiveness of the vaccine
- Enhance focus in urban areas
- Local and national leaders should be asked to take up vaccine first

Acknowledgements

- **Ministry of Health, Uganda**
- **US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
- **Local governments of Kampala, Sheema, Rwampara and Kazo**
- **Makerere University School of Public Health**

