



# Understanding and Amplifying the use of IoGT and U-Report among Adolescents and Young People in Eastern and Southern Africa

Participatory research conducted by ThinkPlace for UNICEF ESARO between June and September 2022

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# Acronyms

**AI:** Artificial Intelligence

**AGYW:** Adolescent Girls and Young Women

**AY:** Adolescents (15-19 Years Old) and Youth (15-24 Years Old)

**CO:** (UNICEF) Country Office

**CSOs:** Civil Society Organisations

**CSR:** Corporate Social Responsibility

**ESAR:** Eastern and Southern Africa Region

**ESARO:** Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office

**GEBEM:** Girls and Boys Education Movement

**GBV:** Gender-Based Violence

**HCD:** Human-Centered Design

**HQ:** (UNICEF) Headquarters

**IoT:** Internet of Good Things

**IRB:** Institutional Review Board

**KM:** Knowledge Management

**MHM:** Menstrual Hygiene Management

**MHPSS:** Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services

**MNOs:** Mobile Network Operators

**NGOs:** Non-governmental Organizations

**RO:** (UNICEF) Regional Office

**SAR:** South Asia Region

**SBC:** Social Behaviour Change

**SRH:** Sexual and Reproductive health

**ToR:** Terms of Reference

**TVET:** Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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Nairobi, December 2022

# Executive

# Summary

## Purpose and Audience of this Document

This report outlines the key insights, learnings and recommendations gained through a participatory research around the Internet of Good Things (IoGT) and U-Report platforms implemented by ThinkPlace for the UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) between June and September 2022. It is intended primarily for all key stakeholders at UNICEF who will help to scale-up the platforms further. This includes the UNICEF IoGT and U-Report Focal Points at global, regional and at in the Country Offices (COs) in Eastern and Southern Africa Region (ESAR). Secondary audiences may include colleagues from other regions where UNICEF has launched IoGT or U-Report, as well as any other practitioners working to engage young people through digital platforms.

## The Approach

A mixed-methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative research was chosen to assess the engagement patterns of adolescents (10-19) and young people (20-24) on IoGT and U-Report. Additionally, the research sought to understand best practices for engaging adolescents and young people on IoGT and U-Report. A combination of surveys, interviews and workshops were conducted with a total of **138** platforms users: adolescents, young people, frontline workers, and caregivers in South Africa and Tanzania. Preliminary consultations were also conducted with **7** IoGT and U-Report focal points from UNICEF COs in ESAR to better understand how the platforms have been used to date, identify challenges and lessons from successful use cases. Additionally, we received **14** responses through a quantitative survey with UNICEF CO IoGT and U-Report focal points in ESAR. This was done to provide the regional team with a better sense of what IoGT and U-Report focal persons perceive as the greatest opportunities to enhance the engagement and promotion of IoGT and U-Report in their respective countries.

# Learnings at a glance

## UNICEF COs Learnings

This section highlights key learnings from consultations with loGT and U-Report focal points in ESAR. The learnings are a synthesis of findings from the consultations on current context, opportunities for integration between loGT and U-Report and support required to optimally utilize the two platforms.

- 1 For COs to use loGT to its full potential, they would benefit from more strategic and technical support to create use cases that align with programming. ([see p. 28](#))
- 2 Ownership from partner organisations is critical to scale the platforms in terms of content and reach. ([see p. 29](#))
- 3 Content is rarely pre-tested with the end users, yet there is an acknowledgement of a need to do so to generate rich and context-relevant user experience. ([see p. 30](#))
- 4 U-Report has been used in innovative and contextually relevant scenarios that greatly influenced programme design in some COs; however, knowledge and strategy sharing is limited within the region. ([see p. 31](#))
- 5 There is an interest in integrating loGT and U-Report, yet ideas on how to do so are yet to be explored more deeply. ([see p. 32](#))

# Learnings at a glance

## Attitudes and Behaviours Related to Technology

- 1 Adolescents tend to approach new digital platforms with curiosity and openness, whilst older young people approach them with more scepticism and hesitation. ([see p. 45](#))
- 2 Internet-enabled feature phones are more often used to access applications (e.g., WhatsApp, Facebook) rather than for general browsing purposes. ([see p. 45](#))
- 3 Young people understand the value of having access to unlimited information via the internet while acknowledging that it has certain drawbacks to finding relevant and digestible information. ([see p. 46](#))

## Content Design & Delivery

- 1 Adolescents and young people want to feel validated, reassured, respected and affirmed as they develop their identities. ([see p. 47](#))
- 2 Adolescents and young people want content that is relevant, simple, punchy, entertaining, and discrete. ([see p. 48](#))
- 3 The different mental models that adolescents and young people of different ages, genders and cultural backgrounds use to understand thematic content result in varying degrees of perceived relevance and importance. ([see p. 49](#))
- 4 The urgency with which information is sought out determines the effectiveness and appeal of the content format used for young people. ([see p. 50](#))

## Attitudes to Thematic Areas

- 1 Adolescents and young people are somewhat exposed to information on Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) through various channels; however, new gaps arise in their understanding of more nuanced themes within these topics. ([see p. 51](#))
- 2 Perceptions of mental health range on a spectrum from being viewed as a culturally irrelevant topic to an important societal challenge. ([see p. 52](#))
- 3 Learning to earning topics are considered a top priority across all demographics of young people that are out of school or engaged in higher education/learning. ([see p. 53](#))
- 4 Climate change is generally acknowledged as an important topic yet de-prioritised by young people due to other more compelling needs that are perceived as more immediate. ([see p. 54](#))
- 5 Caregivers would like to see content for adolescents and young people centred around safety and protection from exposure to risky and harmful behaviours. ([see p. 55](#))
- 6 There is some mismatch between what UNICEF COs have prioritized for adolescents and young people and what adolescents and young people are interested in. ([see p. 54](#))

# Learnings at a glance

## What we learnt about loGT

- 1 The value proposition for loGT content in South Africa and Tanzania was not yet captivating enough for most young people in the study to return to the website. ([see p. 57](#))
- 2 The adolescents and young people target audience where loGT can make a big difference is at the last digital mile and more needs to be done to improve access and relevance there. ([see p. 58](#))
- 3 Even for users who are not at the last digital mile, loGT has features, such as being low-data, and content that, if refined, can offer a competitive advantage compared to global platforms. ([see p. 59](#))

## What we learnt about U-Report

- 1 Personalisation, such as responses to individual questions, is a strong motivator for continued engagement. ([see p. 61](#))
- 2 Currently, there are no mechanisms to respond to evolving and varied interests among U-Reporters, which contributes to poll fatigue and reduced engagement. ([see p. 63](#))
- 3 Promotional activities through partners can be made more effective with more comprehensive training and responsive support. ([see p. 64](#))

# Strategic Recommendations for UNICEF Country Offices at a glance

## User-Centered Recommendations

- 1 Provide a clear onboarding experience for users that demonstrates the value of each platform and highlights how users can engage with them through trialability. ([see p. 68](#))
- 2 Build trust through creating visibility of platform usage among peer groups to leverage on social proof. ([see p. 69](#))
- 3 Provide an array of customization options on the platforms to foster agency and create a more personalised experience for different adolescents and young people segments. ([see p. 70](#))
- 4 Leverage localized content and opportunities to deliver more value and a sense of relatability. ([see p. 71](#))
- 5 Design for continued engagement beyond first-time adoption through rewards and recognition. ([see p. 72](#))
- 6 Create opportunities for users to feel and become invested in the platforms to foster an improved experience. ([see p. 74](#))
- 7 Intentionally co-design content that is relevant to adolescents and young people in a fun, entertaining, and provocative way to encourage information-seeking behaviour. ([see p. 75](#))
- 8 Explore additional use cases for IoGT and U-Report, linkage with each other and to other platforms. ([see p. 77](#))

## Operational Recommendations

- 1 Invest in optimising and marketing the platforms. ([see p. 78](#))
- 2 Conduct insightful co-design consultations and testing with adolescents and young people regularly. ([see p. 79](#))
- 3 Adopt a peer-led approach to knowledge management. ([see p. 80](#))
- 4 Co-create sustainable and scalable partnership models with partners. ([see p. 81](#))
- 5 Update the U-Report database regularly profiling active and inactive users to inform promotion and operation considerations. ([see p. 82](#))

# Understanding the Current State - IoGT in ESAR

The State of the Platforms

## **IoGT (Internet of Good Things)**

IoGT is a website-building platform that is used by UNICEF and its partners to quickly and easily deploy programming that bridges the digital divide. IoGT is designed to support users with lower literacy levels and limited experience with technology – particularly first-time Internet users who are often considered on other platforms. It has been used in programming content for adolescents and young people, parents and caregivers, frontline workers and service providers. The platform supports programmes by aiding dissemination of guidance on topics such as parenting, education, healthy practices and skills-building. Users can also be referred to access essential services when needed. IoGT is also a tool for two-way communication and engagement, offering a platform to build and maintain a dialogue with key populations, capture behavioural insights and offer training modules.

Currently in ESAR, IoGT is rolled out in 13 countries including eSwatini which launched the platform in 2022. In ESAR, IoGT has 10,983,191 users. As of 2022, the country with the highest number of users is South Africa (~1.6 million). User engagement data for each country site are provided in subsequent pages. As a website, IoGT can be customised to meet the needs of UNICEF COs and their programmes, and to support third-party content from like-minded implementing partners or government ministries. Each IoGT site is independently managed by their CO, which determines how to apply IoGT within their priority programming.

### **Content Creation**

The content creation process for IoGT typically begins with programme priorities and content needs. Content needs are assessed through surveys, interviews, and participatory methods; for example, UNICEF ESARO engaged a reference group of young people mobilised in collaboration with Y+, a network of young people living with HIV, to co-design the titles, content, and graphics for SRH & HIV content. A 2020 survey among IoGT users to inform COs of their audience's primary interests also indicated that adolescents and young people desired professional development and job-related resources.

### **Moving forward**

In 2022, the platform undergone a transition to IoGT 2.0, with all ESAR platforms now fully upgraded. V2.0 reimagines IoGT as a progressive web application that offers offline content access for smartphone users and enhanced feature support for site customization. This also includes a re-designed user interface with improved navigation, additional content, and a new set of illustrations.

Further content expansion and dissemination of IoGT was funded by UNICEF Office of Innovation in 2021-2022 with the aim to scale-up IoGT for Social and Behaviour Change in 17 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) and South Asia (SA) regions, building on the new resources enabled by IoGT V2.0 and scaling training, content, and engagement resources embedded within programme cycles to drive two-way user communication and data-driven programme decision making.

# Understanding the Current State - IoGT

The State of the Platforms

## IoGT (Internet of Good Things)

### CONT'D

The activities under the 2022 work plan to scale IoGT utilizing the set-aside grant were geared around five aims:

- Scale resources and co-create content on mental health and psychosocial support for and with adolescents and young people across IoGT sites.
- Increase awareness of IoGT among female users by reinforcing how IoGT is embedded in existing Adolescent Girls programming (SRH, HIV, GBV, MHM, etc.), promoting engagement of young girls through established networks and increasing opportunities for two-way communication.
- Scale updated climate content that leverages IoGT V2.0 new engagement features, in collaboration with U-Report and other youth engagement initiatives.
- Scale the use of IoGT to engage frontline workers through polls, training resources, and opportunities to amplify their voices and maintain open dialogue and support in at least four countries.
- Scale resources and co-create content on skills-building and career readiness for and with adolescents and young people across IoGT sites.



*A group of adolescent girls and boys from Johannesburg, South Africa, familiarizing themselves with IoGT (left) and performing a card sorting activity (top).*

# Current State

## ESAR IoGT Statistics as of September 2022

<u>Country</u>	<u>Angola</u>	<u>Burundi</u>	<u>Kenya</u>	<u>Madagascar</u>
Total Users (2020-2022)	196,137	74,011	272,135	86,977
Total Page Views (2020-2022)	327,211	74,675	768,788	333,604
Average visits per user**	1.67	1.01	2.83	3.84

<u>Country</u>	<u>Malawi</u>	<u>Mozambique</u>	<u>Rwanda</u>	<u>South Africa</u>
Total Users (2020-2022)	168,610	713,187	40,282	8,538,338
Total Page Views (2020-2022)	758,200	2,338,879	110,737	12,692,262
Average visits per user**	4.50	3.28	2.75	1.49

<u>Country</u>	<u>South Sudan</u>	<u>Tanzania</u>	<u>Zambia</u>	<u>Zimbabwe</u>
Total Users (2020-2022)	36,679	402,203	218,702	235,930
Total Page Views (2020-2022)	115,619	974,486	634,378	1,685,513
Average visits per user**	3.15	2.42	2.90	7.14

Total ESARO IoGT Users **10,983,191**

\*Data Source: UNICEF ESARO

\*\*Average visits per user calculated based on the assumption that each user visited the page the same amount of times

# Understanding the Current State – U-Report

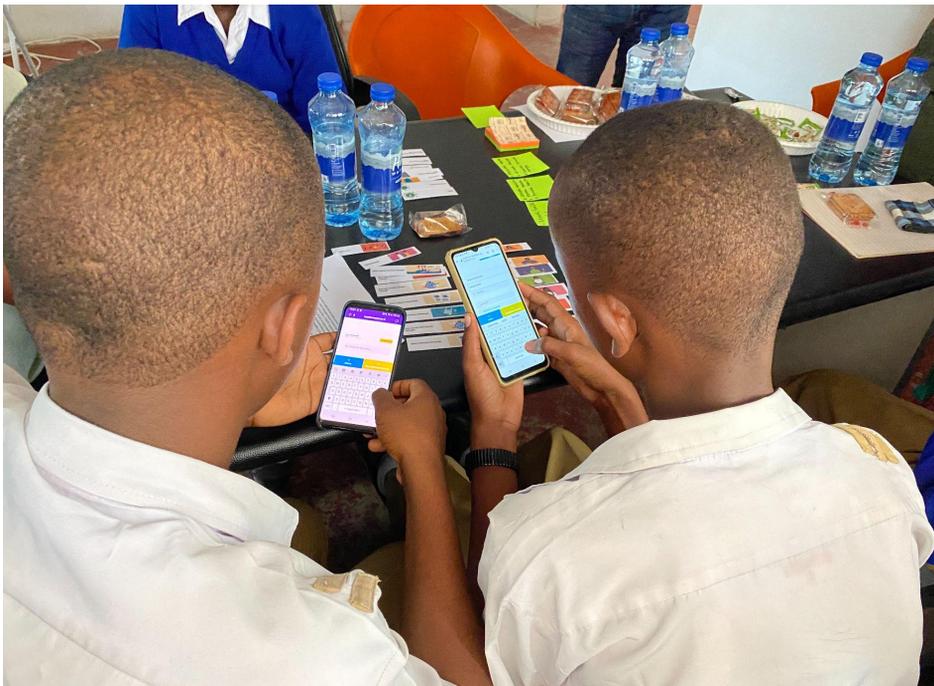
## The State of the Platforms

### U-Report

U-Report is a messaging and social accountability programme for adolescent, young people and community participation. The platform is designed to address any issue that affects children and young people by collecting their insights to improve policy and programmes, and by directly providing life-saving information to the most vulnerable in a timely way. Worldwide, there are over 26 million U-Report users (November 2022). U-Report is run in collaboration with government partners, UNICEF programmes, and local NGOs or CSOs. UNICEF COs and partners use it to share information, raise awareness, and collect insights on specific areas that impact the most vulnerable – including child protection, health, education and emergency response. Responses received are analysed in real-time, mapped and displayed on a public dashboard. U-Report aims to engage adolescents/young people and provide a safe space for them to raise their voices and concerns.

U-Report is run by COs, with different operational models currently being implemented in ESA region. There are a number of promising use cases emerging for U-Report, including, but not limited to:

- Providing information, promoting referrals to services and supporting skills development;
- Content creation for U-Report that is linked to specific initiatives;
- Linking U-Report to SBC measurement (e.g. obtaining insights on successful referrals, change in perceptions, self-efficacy, etc.);
- Using U-Report as an entry point for loGT for promotion, sending suggestions, and engaging with content.



*A pair of adolescent boys from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, interact with the platforms after a card sorting activity during a focus group discussion.*

## Current State

### ESAR U-Report Statistics as of October 2022

Country	Angola	Botswana	Burundi	Eswatini
Total U-Reporters	89,206	22,897	151,219	29,022
Average response rate to polls	62.9%	77.7%	34.9%	43.5%

Country	Lesotho	Kenya	Madagascar	Malawi
Total U-Reporters	6,276	106,141	10,579	255,214
Average response rate to polls	44.8%	95.3%	88.7%	63.7%

Country	Mozambique	South Africa	Tanzania	Uganda
Total U-Reporters	465,709	115,622	237,689	551,741
Average response rate to polls	62.7%	58.5%	35.6%	13.9%

Country	Zambia	Zimbabwe	Total	% of Total
Total U-Reporters	239,870	262,810	2,543,995	61.44% are male 38.56% are female
Average response rate to polls	22.1%	54.2%		43.41% are adolescents and young people (10 - 24 years old)

# Usage metrics and modalities

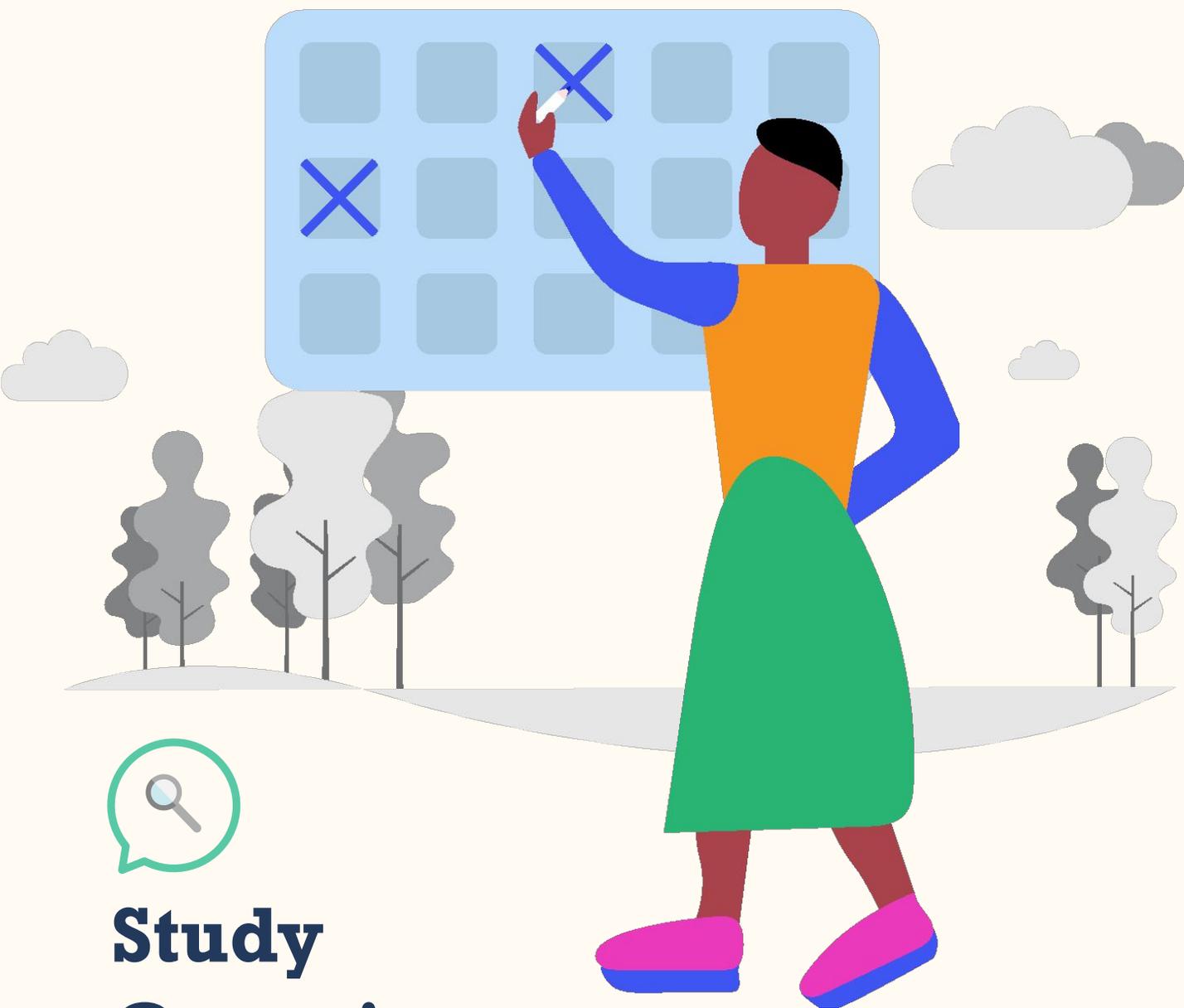
Data in the following table was obtained from UNICEF ESARO.

	<u>Tanzania</u>	<u>South Africa</u>
<b>IoT usage modalities</b>	<p>Between 2020-2022, 402,203 people accessed IoT with an average of 1.54 page views per user.</p> <p>Between 2020 and 2022, the number of feature phone users in Tanzania was 28% of the overall number of users.</p>	<p>Between 2020-2022, 8,538,338 people accessed IoT with an average of 1.15 page views per user.</p> <p>Between 2020 and 2022, the number of feature phone IoT users in South Africa was 2% of the overall number of users.</p>
<b>U-Report usage modalities</b>	<p>By October 2022, the total number of U-Reporters was 237,689.</p> <p>U-Report is mainly accessed through SMS though there is growing interest in using it on WhatsApp too.</p>	<p>By October 2022, the total number of U-Reporters was 115,622.</p> <p>U-Report is accessed through WhatsApp and Facebook Channels.</p>
<b>Mobile Phone Access &amp; Internet Connectivity (based on in-field HCD research)</b>	<p>There is a greater penetration of smartphone use among urban youth in Dar es Salaam as compared to Unguja. Adolescents are not allowed to own phones especially those who are in school but in most cases they have access through family members and friends.</p> <p>Data is expensive in Tanzania and therefore a number of young people reported owning 2-3 sim cards which gives them flexibility to buy data from the more affordable mobile network provider.</p>	<p>Smartphone penetration in South Africa is very high. Youth have access to mobile phones from a very young age - some that the researchers spoke to owned phones from as early as 8 years old. Most explained that the main reason for their ownership was to be able to stay in regular contact with their parents.</p> <p>High Data Costs: South Africa's data prices remain very expensive in comparison with other African countries, with an average of 50 rand (2.79 USD) for 2GB of data.</p>

## General IoT Access Modalities for Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa and Zambia

Most participants (69%) access IoT at home, 13% at school, 6% at work and 12% when on the move. About 30% reported that they access the site more than once a week, while 35% said they accessed only once. The top-three reasons that stops them from using IoT were having a mobile plan without enough data (30%), lack of a stable internet connection (23%) and the fact that no one in the user's social circle uses the platform (20%).

\* Data source: IoT Intercept Survey



# Study Overview

The following section presents the key research questions, overview of activities, and study sample.

# 1. Research Questions

The following key questions were derived from the Terms of Reference and the intent workshop that brought together stakeholders from UNICEF Headquarters, ESARO, and the South African and Tanzanian COs involved in the field research activities:

## 1.1 CO-related Research Questions

- What is the most effective operational model for loGT and U-Report in different national contexts and programmes? What can we learn about how to maximise loGT and U-Report for programming in the future?
- Who are the strategic partners that the COs frequently engage both for loGT and U-Report?
- What are the best practices (related to types of content, frequency of engagement, etc.) derived from COs' learnings of user patterns on current versions of both platforms, and how can they be applied to specific themes?
- To what extent do loGT and U-Report help COs understand and meet the needs of their audiences?
- To what extent is content produced by regional and global offices used/localised by COs, or otherwise?
- What are the content needs for the U-Report and loGT managers?

## 1.2 User-related Research Questions

### Engagement patterns of adolescent and young people users of loGT and U-Report

- Are loGT and/or U-Report platforms meeting their intended objectives in the context of engaging adolescent users, collecting young people's views to advance advocacy and change policy/programme; promoting services demand; conducting social and behaviour change?
- To what degree does loGT and/or U-Report facilitate adolescent/young people engagement and expression? Do loGT and U-Report meet the needs of young people, provide tangible information that can be acted upon, and/or facilitate linkages to services which are then used?
- How do adolescents and young people assess the loGT and/or U-Report platforms in terms of access and functionalities? What modified or new functions would they suggest as useful and more engaging? What factors influence their decision to continue using the platform(s), change the frequency and intensity of use, style of engagement with the platform(s) and/or their peers?

# Research Questions

## CONT'D

- Is UNICEF reaching people affected by the digital divide through promotional efforts at the last digital mile?
- What are the best practices for engaging adolescents and young people on both platforms?
- What is a useful way to segment the audience in ESAR that may be different to other regions?
- How do different target groups access both platforms?
- What are the aspirations of young people?

### Evidence of impact

- How do adolescents and young people assess the content presented on the loGT and U-Report sites? What modified or new content can be developed to respond better to current needs and interests of young people? What is the perception and use of different sections of the site (e.g. Q&A, quizzes, surveys, etc.)?
- To what degree does loGT facilitate other stakeholder (frontline workers, caregivers) engagement?
- What evidence is there in terms of change in knowledge, beliefs or attitudes?
- To what extent are the platforms likely to contribute to long-term and sustainable positive contribution of adolescents and young people towards social and behaviour change?
- What needs to be done differently to increase and sustain engagement of loGT and U-Report users, particularly adolescents?

## 2. Research Activities

This research protocol was ethically reviewed and approved by the Heath Media Lab inc. for UNICEF ESARO in August 2022. A mixed-methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative testing was applied. Insights from the qualitative research provided the “why” to give context to the quantitative insights “the what” provided by analytics tools. Qualitative testing provided more detailed information on the content and platform experience, while quantitative testing revealed behavioural data on how and when users engage with IoGT and U-Report. The two approaches ran in parallel.

Category	CO Consultations	Participants	User Research	Participants
Qualitative	Virtual Interviews (Two weeks)	7	In-field HCD participatory research in South Africa and Tanzania (one week per country)	138
Quantitative	Survey (Google Form)	14	Intercept survey on the IoGT platform (two months) - full report <a href="#">here</a>	1,036

### 2.1 UNICEF Country Offices Consultation Activities

Activity	Description
Survey	A Google Forms survey was deployed to UNICEF ESAR CO staff involved on IoGT and/or U-Report to understand their familiarity, usage, and experiences with the platforms, as well as programmatic priorities and content needs that received <b>14 responses</b> . It predominantly consisted of statements and multiple-choice questions, with a few open-ended questions to suggest ideas for additional features and future programming for each of the platforms.
Virtual Consultations	<b>7 remote interviews</b> were conducted over zoom to dig deeper into the experiences that CO staff have had with using the platforms. Themes such as operational support, platform promotion, content creation and testing, partnerships, and innovative use cases, among others, were explored.

### 2.2 IoGT User Survey

Activity	Description
Intercept Survey	A survey was deployed on all active IoGT V2.0 sites for all platform users. The survey consisted of a series of closed-ended questions capturing user demographics (age, language, work status, rural/urban, gender), access (frequency of access, access modalities), experience (enjoyment, ease of navigation, usefulness, barriers to use, type of activity on the site) and feedback on content including topics of interest. One open ended question asked users to express any unmet information needs and resources they would be interested in seeing on the site.

A total of **1,036 participants** responded to the survey, of which seventy-five percent were users on the South African site, six percent from Kenya, three percent from Madagascar, six percent from Rwanda and ten percent from Zambia.

## 2.3 In-field Human Centred Design (HCD) User Research Tools

ThinkPlace conducted qualitative participatory research consisting of in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions in South Africa and Tanzania. To accompany these interactions, ThinkPlace developed participatory qualitative tools to create interactive activities with participants that would uncover information that is hard to capture using traditional interview methods. For this rapid assessment, ThinkPlace designers created and deployed the following data collection tools. The recruitment of the 138 research participants was done through UNICEF COs and partners.

Tool	Description
<b>Card Sorting: Information Architecture</b>	Participants were presented with printed individual section titles from the loGT global site and asked to group them in a way that makes the most logical sense to them and give a name to the group. This was done to inform recommendations on the potential categories and subcategories of the loGT site.
<b>Gallery Walk</b>	Participants were presented with screenshots of various websites that provide similar content to the loGT site, such as Love Matters, Springster, CyberRwanda, etc., and asked to vote for features and sections that appealed to them with stickers. This was to understand what appeals to them in terms of user experience, content formats, tone, language, and visuals.
<b>User Testing Scenarios</b>	Participants interacted with loGT and U-Report platforms to complete pre-defined tasks in order to capture their feedback, actions, behaviours, and/or spoken-aloud thoughts. This would aid in understanding the ease of navigation and emotional journeys as users navigated through the loGT and U-Report platforms.
<b>User Labs: Co-Design</b>	Participants were presented with printed screens from various sites that provide similar content to one available on loGT site. From this activity, participants were tasked to highlight which sections of the site they resonated with more and to sketch ideas website for young people. This activity provided better overview of what the participants liked in other websites and less of developing their own ideal site.
<b>Phone use mapping</b>	Participants used a template that outlines the hours of the day and time spent on their phones. Using tags corresponding to either entertainment (e.g. TikTok, music), communication (emails, calls) or lifestyle (e.g. health related, news, etc), they highlighted their habits, preferences, and contexts of use with digital platforms. This helped to identify moments where loGT and U-Report can fit into their daily lives.
<b>Community Debates</b>	Focus group discussions adopted 'debate' formats, where participants were divided into groups and argued for or against a topic related to thematic areas (SRH, Mental Health, or Climate Change), or phone usage, ownership and access. This helped the research team understand the acceptability and varied perspectives on the topics mentioned above.

## 2.4 Selection Criteria for in-field HCD research

The user research aimed to speak to adolescents, young people, caregivers, and frontline staff with the following characteristics:

### What we looked for

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**A range of familiarity for both loGT and U-Report**

**Varied levels of access to smartphones and feature phones**

**A range of educational backgrounds (in-school, out-of-school, primary level, lower and upper secondary level and tertiary institutions)**

**A range of employment contexts (employed in formal/informal sector, self-employed/entrepreneurs)**

### What we found

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For loGT, a majority of the participants got to know about loGT through pre-exposure activities. For U-Report we interacted with existing, new and past U-Report users.

A majority of the young people we interacted with had smartphones. For those who had feature phones, none of them were using it to access the internet.

Across South Africa and Tanzania, we interacted with a mixture of primary school, secondary school and tertiary institutions participants.

A majority of the young people were in self-employment or unemployed. A majority of the adolescents were in school or in transition from one level of education to another. Caregivers were split between formal employment and self-employment while the frontline staff were all formally employed.

### 3. Study Limitations

The following limitations of the study were identified:

**1. UNICEF CO Consultations skewed towards U-Report**

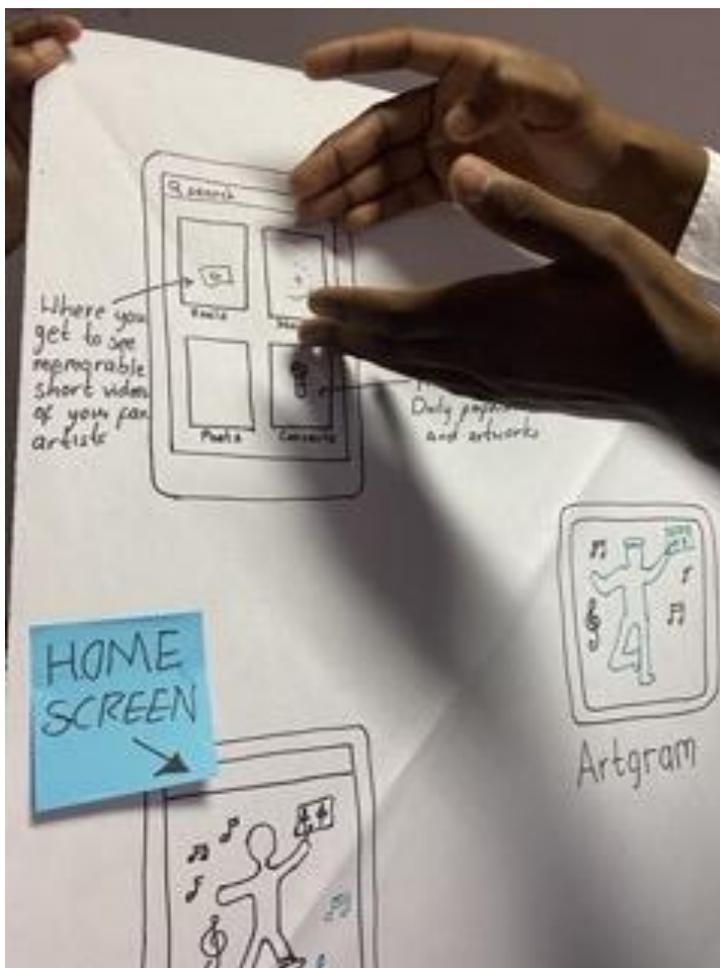
For a majority of COs, loGT was in a transitional (roll-out of loGT 2.0) and reorganization period at the time of the HCD Research. Therefore, the interviews the researchers had were mostly with individuals familiar with U-Report; while they could speak to a few themes related to loGT, there was not much detailed information on the platform.

**2. No users with existing familiarity with loGT**

For both South Africa and Tanzania, the researchers did not interact with any users that had been exposed to loGT before the study as the two countries had just transitioned to loGT V2.0. Pre-exposure activities conducted a few days before the HCD research might therefore not comprehensively cover the loGT experience for users.

**3. Lack of feature phone users that had internet connectivity**

There were no participants who had the feature phone with internet accessibility, which made it difficult to assess the experience and usability of loGT on it.



*An adolescent from Pretoria, South Africa, presents a fantasy phone app that his group developed to deal with adolescent challenges.*

## 4. Participant Numbers - In-field HCD research

### 4.1 Tanzania

<b>Profile</b>	<b>Dar es Salaam</b>	<b>Unguja Island (Zanzibar)</b>
Adolescents (15-19) <i>Male</i>	2	4
Adolescents (15-19) <i>Female</i>	2	4
Young People (20-24) <i>Male</i>	7	5
Young People (20-24) <i>Female</i>	18	7
Caregivers <i>Male</i>	0	3
Caregivers <i>Female</i>	4	3
Healthcare Workers <i>Male</i>	1	0
Healthcare Workers <i>Female</i>	1	0
Teachers <i>Male</i>	1	1
Teachers <i>Female</i>	1	0
	<b>37</b>	<b>27</b>

#### Partners

Bridge for Change (Dar es Salaam)

Ministry of Youth (Zanzibar)



## 4.1 South Africa

Profile	South Africa
Adolescents (15-19) <i>Male</i>	15
Adolescents (15-19) <i>Female</i>	13
Young People (20-24) <i>Male</i>	12
Young People (20-24) <i>Female</i>	17
Caregivers <i>Male</i>	6
Caregivers <i>Female</i>	7
Healthcare Workers <i>Female</i>	4

### Partners

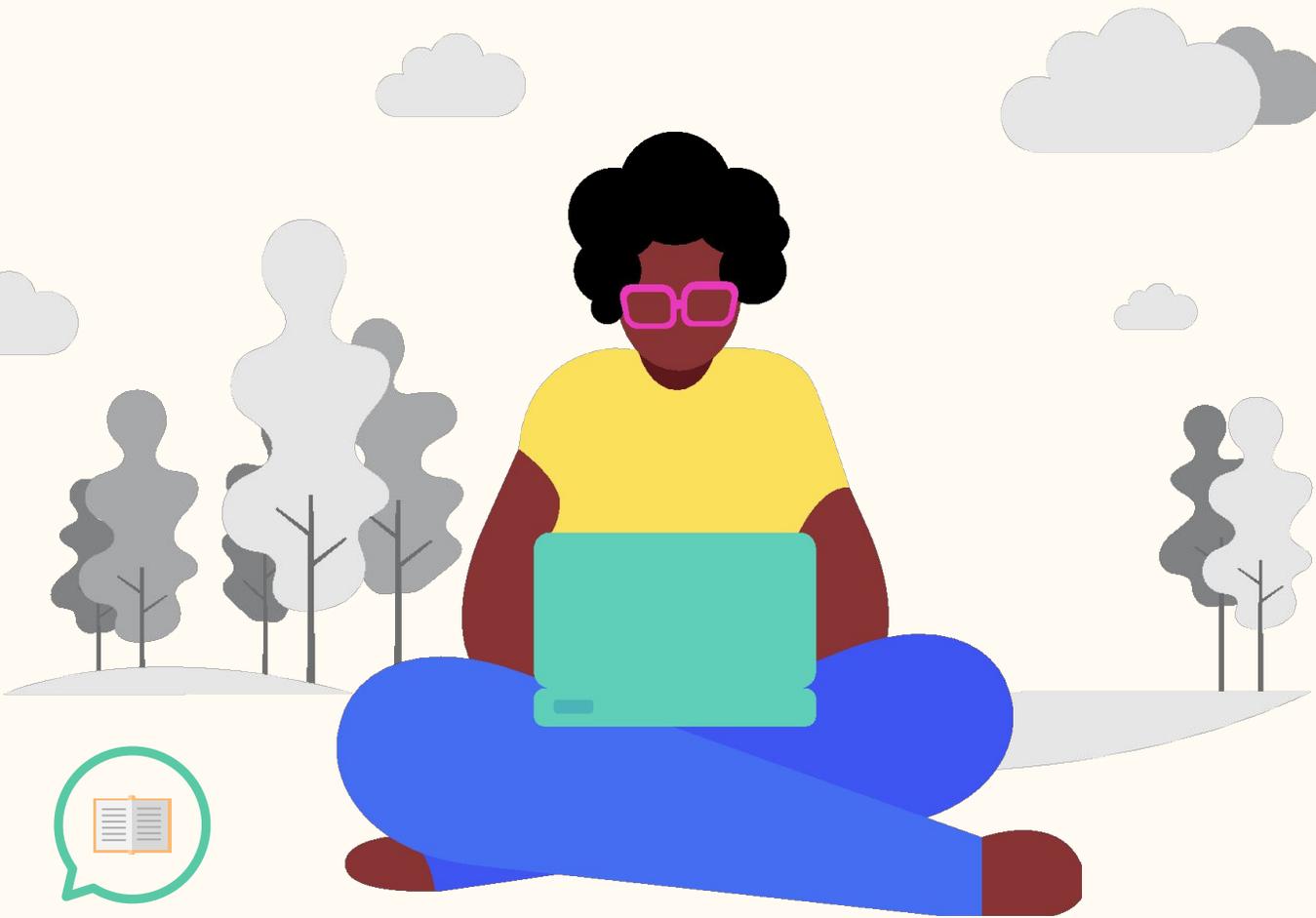
- UNICEF Youth Volunteers
- GEM BEM (The Girls and Boys Education Movement)
- RLabs
- AlexFM
- Klipspruit West Family Center
- Love Life Y Center
- Girl Guides Association South Africa



## 5. Biases - in-field HCD research

The researchers experienced some respondents' biases and adopted the following corresponding mitigation measures:

Bias	Description
<b>Sampling bias</b>	<p>Due to the timelines for preparation and delivery of the work and to the type of fieldwork authorisations granted, the sample of participants from the caregivers group mostly included teachers and parents who were enthusiastic guardians, fully engaged with their children's lives. Therefore, our sample was composed primarily of "positive deviants". The researchers did not speak with any stakeholder that was seemingly disengaged from education. The location of our interviews contributed to a self-selecting bias among parents. The fact that the in-field HCD researchers conducted interviews with participants at a location outside of their usual routes (e.g., parents, adolescents and young people were brought to a central location) as opposed to their own homes for example, automatically implies that the parents the researchers spoke to have some degree of interaction with the school. The following biases are sub-categories within sampling bias, that were applicable to the other participant groups, i.e., AY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Voluntary response bias</i>: consists of people who choose to respond to a general appeal, often have strong opinions about an issue.</li><li>• <i>Undercoverage</i>: when groups in the population are left out of in the process of choosing a sample, for example participants from rural areas or those not associated with partners.</li><li>• <i>Nonresponse</i>: when an individual chosen from the sample can't be contacted or refuses to respond, such as those who did not respond to the intercept survey.</li></ul> <p><i>Mitigation: Being aware of sampling bias is a helpful tactic to remind ourselves not to interpret participants' experiences as the norm. We often elicited participants' opinions about other parents who may have different parenting styles from their own, and different attitudes to their children's presence online. While asking for information from secondary sources is not ideal, it does provide clues about possible perceptions from the negative side of the spectrum.</i></p>
<b>Hawthorne Effect</b>	<p>Like in any study, despite putting measures in place to mitigate inevitable power dynamics during research-based interactions (mentioned below) research participants know that they can be judged – both by researchers as well as by fellow participants during focus groups – according to their responses, and therefore tend to provide answers that will make them be perceived in a more positive light. This is called the Hawthorne effect.</p> <p><i>Mitigation: Key measures aimed to mitigate the Hawthorne effect by neutralising power dynamics between researchers and participants. Interviews and interactive activities were conducted in a private setting. Participants were reassured about their anonymity, confidentiality, their freedom to refuse to answer any questions and to ask questions about the nature of the study. ThinkPlace also emphasised that the aim was to learn from participants' experiences, not to judge them. Asking participants to advise on real life scenarios was a tactic to make the conversation feel more neutral rather than personal, as a way of making participants more comfortable to share opinions they would have otherwise kept for themselves.</i></p>



# UNICEF Country Office

## Learnings

The following section presents the main learnings from the CO Consultations

# Participant Responses

## Survey Responses

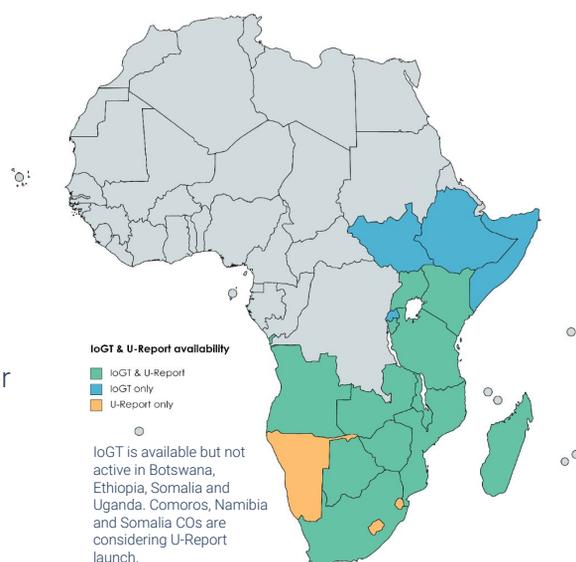
Country	Role	IoGT Year of Launch	U-Report Year of Launch
Burundi	National Consultant/U-Report & IoGT	2017*	2013
Kenya	IoGT content focal point & U-Report Manager	2018	2021
Lesotho	U-Report Manager	N/A	2020
Madagascar	UNV - Youth Engagement National Specialist	2018	2021
Malawi	Documentation and Knowledge Management Officer	2018	2017
Mozambique	U-Report and IoGT focal point	2015	2015
Rwanda	Digital Comms Officer	2017*	N/A
South Africa	IoGT Focal person	Nov 2022	2018
Tanzania	Jointly manage U-Report Innovation Officer, Digital Communications and Data Consultant, IoGT Consultant	2018	2016
Uganda	SBC Specialist	N/A	2011
Zambia	Digital Youth Engagement Officer	2017	2012
Zimbabwe	SBC Officer (Social Analytics), Communication Officer (Digital)	2020	2012

\*Based on traffic

## Virtual Consultations

Country	Role
Botswana	U-Report Intern and SBC officer
Lesotho	U-Report Manager
Madagascar	U-Report & IoGT Focal Person
Rwanda	SBC Officer
Tanzania	Innovation Officer; U-Report Coordinator
Uganda	U-Report Manager
Zambia	HIV Manager

## IoGT and U-Report presence in ESAR



## **1. For COs to use IoGT to its full potential, they would benefit from more strategic and technical support to create use cases that align with programme priorities.**

### **IoGT is underutilised among COs**

IoGT is fairly new to some of the COs, with seven years being the longest that a CO has had IoGT as a platform. However, some COs have made very little use of it to date. While IoGT has primarily been utilised by COs to disseminate COVID-19 information, content from other thematic areas appears to have been uploaded in a less strategic manner, resulting in a flow with reduced cohesion. From the spike in the number of pageviews across countries between 2020 and 2021, one that is likely attributable to COVID-19, there is evidence for true potential for buy-in from UNICEF programme sections. 42% of respondents to the survey conducted with IoGT focal points indicated 'Lack of support from programme colleagues to design thematic content' as a justification for why IoGT is not fully utilised by sections.

### **U-Report has been successfully integrated into many CO programming activities**

U-Report is well integrated into CO programming with 91% of respondents indicating that their COs use U-Report daily, weekly or monthly. In some instances, the programme teams have reached out to U-Report focal points to run polls to gather opinions of young people that relate to their section priorities. On rating the usefulness of U-Report, 55% of respondents gave a score between 9-10.

Despite dedicated funding for IoGT in various COs (mobilised by ESARO in 2021 through the Set Aside grant), the lack of financial resources was highlighted as a major barrier to optimal utilisation of both IoGT and U-Report. 42% of respondents indicated lack of funding as the biggest barrier to using IoGT. An even greater number of respondents (70%) indicated the same for U-Report. Other barriers to the optimal utilisation of IoGT from the survey, but to a lesser extent, included: dedicated HR, technical expertise and convenience. This is likely due to the following reasons:

- COs have not been able to mobilise the funding to hire dedicated human resources to exclusively handle the platforms (or one of them), and;
- COs have not been able to channel the funds into specific activities in collaboration with the sections that haven't so far been convinced about the utility of IoGT.

In order for UNICEF programme sections to fully appreciate the added value of the platforms, especially IoGT, there is a need to refine its value proposition for sections followed by activities to map out opportunities to complement programme work owned by program teams and U-Report and IoGT focal persons.

## 2. Ownership from partner organisations is critical to scaling the platforms in terms of content and reach

### Partners can play a greater role in owning the promotion and scale-up of the platforms

Partners play a crucial role in the promotion of U-Report and loGT platforms through the following engagements:

- **Mobile Network Operators (MNOs):** In addition to zero-rating the platforms for free access, MNOs have the financial resources and technological infrastructure to support large-scale community initiatives through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goals and commitment to transform communities through contributions to the sustainable development goals.
- **Youth development partner organisations:** These partners, such as the ones engaged in the participatory research (Children's Radio Foundation (CRF) in South Africa, and Bridge for Change in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania), have direct connections to end users as well as existing pre-approved content that could complement UNICEF's content strategy.

Currently, a majority of these partnerships are still perceived as driven by UNICEF and therefore partners' participation is still highly dependent on availability of UNICEF financial resources which creates a significant risk to sustainability. For example, partners can be included in management and content creation for loGT that is aligned with their own objectives, those which are simultaneously aligned with UNICEF's programming.

**"To achieve greater impact, we need to have more zero-dollar [in-kind] partnerships within our CO as that will help us scale in a sustainable way."**

– Madagascar CO

### COs that leveraged government support had more success and visibility of their platforms

Across the different ESAR COs, governments play a crucial role in content development, approval, and dissemination to various audiences. For instance, In Zanzibar, the Ministry of Youth has supported the promotion of U-Report in multiple districts through active participation in steering committees composed of young people and ministry members. In addition, some government platforms have a higher following rate among young people than local NGOs. In Botswana, the CO recorded a higher response rate for polls promoted through government media platforms that have a higher following than those promoted via local NGOs. Depending on how well the government understands the platforms and their utility, they can either act as an enabler or a barrier to expanding the reach at various regional levels.

**"Tanzania has a different approach - we are looking at it [loGT] as an open source platform where we're working with other partners, e.g. AMREF, Girl Effect, etc. who generate content. Tapping into that allows us to reach more people. We foresee that in the months to follow, the platform can be scaled even more."**

– Tanzania CO

### 3. Content is rarely pre-tested with the end users, yet there is an acknowledgement of a need to do so to generate rich and context-relevant content

Both platforms have content approval processes with internal and external stakeholders to varying degrees. In most cases, however, the content is uploaded directly without pre-testing with end users, despite the global and regional guidelines. Pre-testing provides an opportunity to confirm that the content format is desirable and easy to comprehend for young people, and is particularly important when COs adjust content produced by the regional office or HQ, or when they develop their own content. While the voice of young people is usually incorporated, where polls run to inform the content development process, it would be necessary to go through a complete cycle of co-creation, testing and iterating the content to assess the ease of consumption among young people.

With U-Report, despite this being a global requirement, only few ESAR countries have an active steering committee comprised by young people, partners and government staff that decide which content should be promoted. This presents an excellent opportunity to co-develop or pre-test U-Report content. However, steering committee regular meetings have proved hard to maintain in line with the content development cycles.

Countries like Zambia have conducted U-Report Bootcamps, which bring together groups of 30-40 young people to share feedback on content developed and gather input on whether or not they have sought services after receiving prompts on the platforms. Such innovative approaches have been essential in unpacking contextual nuances and developing responsive programs.

“Sometimes we hold U-Report Bootcamps to generate feedback on issues such as response time and content feedback. This one brought together about 40 people, and we have another one coming up with about 30 participants. It will also bring mobile network providers to address connectivity issues.”

– Zambia CO



*A group of young people from Zanzibar participate in a user labs session, examining user interfaces for various websites that focus on SRH.*

#### **4. U-Report has been used in innovative and contextually relevant scenarios that greatly influenced programme design in some ESAR COs; however, knowledge and lessons learned sharing is limited within the region.**

Despite regional and global efforts to promote knowledge sharing (e.g., through global and regional calls used to showcase exciting and successful use cases), there are opportunities to rethink knowledge management and sharing approaches for greater effectiveness. Consultations with COs revealed some gaps in the shared knowledge of specific activities and continuous iteration related to the usage of both loGT and U-Report.

Platform focal points appear to associate and identify more with their respective COs than with the broader community of platforms across the region, compared to other UNICEF initiatives. Additionally, discontinuity can arise during staff transitions and handovers. It is likely that these factors can contribute to a lack of synchronicity and momentum in envisioning the future of the platforms and collaborative efforts to realise this.

“In Uganda [during COVID-19], U-Report was used to follow up with teachers to ensure that they weren’t taken off the payroll due to changes with administrators.”

– Uganda CO

“Papo Kwa Papo is a quarterly U-Report initiative in Tanzania that allows adolescents and young people to ask questions and receive immediate feedback from a network of trained counsellors in SRH and HIV. Every quarter, the adolescents and young people are informed on the radio that it will be available for a week.”

– Tanzania CO

“We used U-Report to understand the acceptability of COVID-19 vaccine and it turns out that there was a lot of trust amongst the healthcare system and workers. We would have otherwise taken the route of working with celebrities to address issues of trust instead of with health workers.”

– Botswana CO

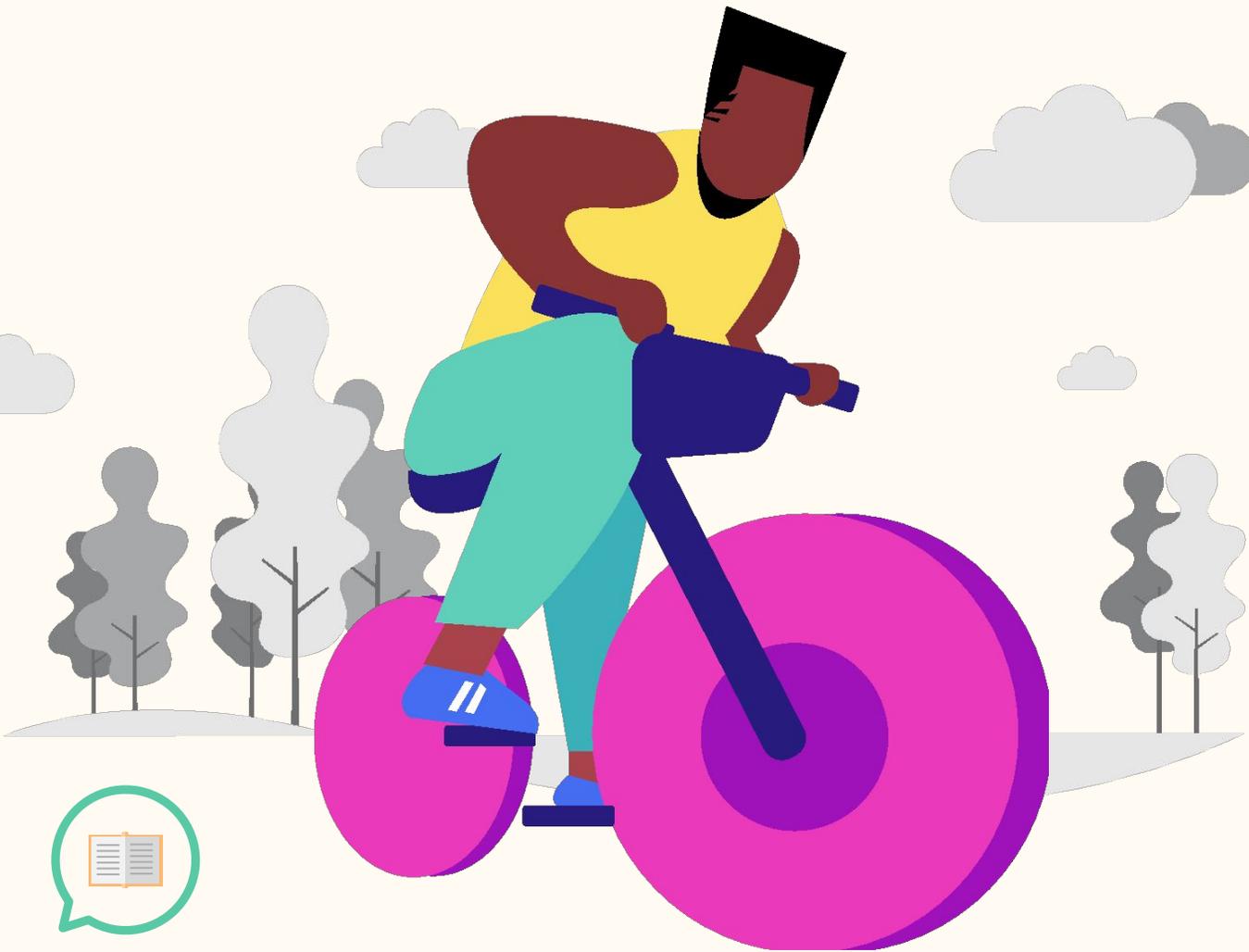
## 5. There is an interest in integrating IoGT and U-Report, yet ideas on how to do so are yet to be explored more deeply.

Making IoGT and U-Report complementary is a key area of interest for most COs. They would like this to happen not just for a dual promotion of the platforms, but as a way to maximize the value obtained from available resources. There is therefore a need to support and actualize ideas highlighted in the UNICEF concept note produced by HQ that outlines the integration of the two platforms. Over 80% of respondents indicated that they would like to create synergies between IoGT and U-Report. Within IoGT for example, several COs have added a link to U-Report on their platforms. While this was aimed at promoting U-Report through IoGT, participants from our study were confused about U-Report as it was viewed as one of the sub-topics for IoGT.

Ideas on meaningfully integrating the two platforms need to be explored further beyond cross-promotional avenues. UNICEF HQ and the ROs, through developing a strong strategic alignment of these platforms, can drive more deliberate action in the COs for integration of U-Report and IoGT.



*A group of adolescent students from Unguja, Zanzibar, participate in a group discussion.*



# Personas & User Journeys

The following section presents fictional loGT and U-Report users (or personas) based on in-field research insights and corresponding users' journeys

## Personas

Personas are an essential design tool in building empathy with users – they humanise raw data and provide a visual, relatable, foundational framework for discussion and design. A persona is a model of a user developed after research that is used as a tool to understand their needs and feelings experienced in their different contexts. The development of personas does not aim at providing a comprehensive and representative overview of the communities, but rather they embody types of users in a way that is actionable to build tailored, user-centric solutions.

An example of a way COs can use personas is to add them as an extra consideration in content development and for promotional campaigns. This can also help COs with how specifically to present the content for different audiences, needs and personalities.

The following personas characterise six types of adolescents and young people that have different attitudes, behaviours related to technology and interests on different UNICEF's thematic areas that were derived from our research in South Africa and Tanzania. In the following slides, characteristics of each persona, their needs and design opportunities to enable continued engagement with the platforms are outlined.

**Exposure** as used as a descriptor for each persona refers to a combination of various factors – level of education, socioeconomic background, access to internet and internet-ready devices – that estimate how tech-savvy each persona may be.



**The Influencer**



**The Independent**



**The Seeker**



**The Self-Starter**



**The Worrier**



**The Naive**



Safiya

## The Influencer

### About

Safiya has just finished university. She has made use of several online opportunities from learning on websites such as YouTube and Google. She has a lot of pride in who she is and her journey to develop her own identity, even as she maintains strong ties to her culture, religion, and family. She is ambitious, and is not afraid of self-expression – she expresses herself through fashion, beauty and art. She is interested in turning her interests into income generating opportunities, and has used her skill in hair braiding to get enough money to buy herself a phone. Even with her hearing impairment, she has done a lot, but wishes that content online was more accessible.

### Needs

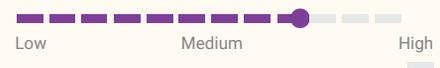
Wants to prove to others and to herself that she is capable and can be financially stable through her own work, and is looking for jobs to this end.

Looking for opportunities to empower others through her skills and knowledge.

**Age: 21 Years**

**Status: University Graduate**

### Exposure



### Design Opportunities

Affirmation | Information

- What local, real-life examples of jobs and empowerment strategies would Safiya relate to and gain tips from?
- How can Safiya use her skills in her community, and where can she showcase them?
- How can Safiya's online experience be made easier?



Rama

## The Independent

### About

Rama has just completed high school, and has been feeling the pressure to start on a journey of self-sufficiency, as he believes it no longer makes sense to ask his parents for provision. In the same way, he believes that those with mental challenges are 'crazy and weak', and believes in perseverance. He has already started doing odd jobs around the town, and is saving up to buy a phone with that money. When he is not with his family, he is with his friends, who he hears a lot from regarding relationships and job opportunities, and they enjoy playing soccer together often. Rama wants to learn skills, in school or elsewhere, that can directly translate into income.

### Needs

Wants to be self-sufficient and learn about job opportunities, and to keep up with his friends through a shared love of soccer.

**Age: 19 Years**

**Status: High School Graduate**

### Exposure



### Design Opportunities

Simplicity | Reflectivity

- How can Rama learn about mental health or other topics without feeling that it comes at the cost of appearing weak?
- Even if Rama doesn't have a mobile phone yet, or any other internet-ready device, how can he benefit from the platforms?



Tumi

## The Seeker

### About

Tumi is in high school, and has recently developed an interest in technologies like artificial intelligence (AI). While he knows about various social media platforms, this is not something he is interested in – his primary use of the internet is for looking up more about AI, and playing video games with friends. He is inherently curious, and love going to school to learn, but is frustrated by the lack of opportunities to learn more about his advanced interests. However, he has been exposed to a lot of information on SRH and mental health, and know where to find credible information. Tumi uses his elder sibling's phone whenever he needs to look up something.

**Age: 16 Years**

**Status: High School Student**

### Exposure



### Needs

Needs localised resources that speak to advanced interests that may not be readily accessible.

Needs exciting, new information on topics they are already familiar with (SRH and mental health).



### Design Opportunities

Provocation | Information

- How can Tumi's hunger for new interests be satisfied in his township?
- What new information can Tumi benefit from on SRH and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support services (MHPSS)?



Sibó

## The Self-Starter

### About

Sibó has been online for most of his life; he has had access to phones and the internet throughout his childhood, and into early adulthood. He has a high level of know-how that encompasses all aspects of the online experience, from internet safety to how to create own content online. Sibó, who has just graduated from university, makes money from designing websites for his friends as they search for a job. He has joined several job boards and even WhatsApp groups dedicated to posting job opportunities. Sibó is charting his own unique employment path as a young adult, and knows how to leverage the internet to research earning in non-traditional ways.

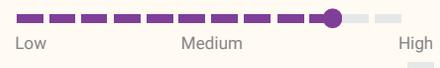
### Needs

Wants to stay on the cutting edge of developments in technology and how it can be used to access income or as a tool in income generation. Quick learner, needs content that will satisfy this.

**Age: 25 Years**

**Status: University Graduate**

**Exposure**



### Design Opportunities

Provocation | Relevancy

- How can Sibó be exposed to new and exciting challenges?
- How can Sibó use his extensive knowledge to help individuals like him, beyond friends and acquaintances?



Nombuso

## The Worrier

### About

Nombuso finished her matric two years ago, and is yet to join university. Lately, she has felt disillusioned and terrified of what the future holds for her, as money is a big concern. She faces pressure from her parents to be a good example to her siblings, and to get a job that would make their life in the township a little easier. She wants to chase her dreams of being a radio presenter, and is trying to find avenues to achieve this, even if it won't bring immediate income. She has mental health struggles, and has taught herself a lot about how to handle them through online forums, even if she'd appreciate more information on professional help near her.

### Needs

Looking for guidance and mentorship, needs a safe space to ask questions, wants to feel supported.

**Age: 22 Years**

**Status: High School Graduate**

### Exposure



### Design Opportunities

Validation | Reassurance

- How can Nombuso be reassured?
- What steps can Nombuso take to circumnavigate the personal challenges at this stage of life – career and parental pressure?
- What relatable stories can Nombuso benefit from – who can she speak to in her township?



Farah

## The Naïve

### About

Farah is in high school, and is suddenly exposed to a deluge of new things to think about—career paths, relationships, body changes—to name a few. Farah does not want to approach her parents to ask any questions about these topics, because she feels that she will be misunderstood. As she doesn't have a phone of her own, she relies on offline sources for information; however, whenever she can access information either through her parents' or friends' phones, she is not sure where to start looking, and thus is prone to being misinformed. Farah looks forward to life orientation classes at school, where she receives instruction on general life skills, especially as concerns her stage of life.

### Needs

Curious about sex, but doesn't know who to turn to.

Eager to learn more about herself as a person, who she is and what she would like to do with her life.

**Age: 14 Years**

**Status: High School Student**

### Exposure



### Design Opportunities

Credibility | Discretion

- How can Farah receive credible SRH information while maintaining her privacy?
- How can Farah's friends influence each other with factual knowledge?

## User Journeys

User journeys are illustrated here to show the diverse range of experiences and reactions that different personas have with the platforms, at each broad stage of engagement. The user journeys that follow are based on the current versions of South Africa and Tanzania IoT and U-Report, and the feedback received, shown here in select quotes, was gathered through user testing, individual interviews and focus group discussions.

Each stage of engagement includes four key reactions, and the persona most likely to express that sentiment.

The quotes have been summarized in a single word that connotes an emotion/feeling, that have been colour-coded as followed:

### Interested

**Green** represents a positive emotion/feeling, and reflects on well delivered material on either platform.

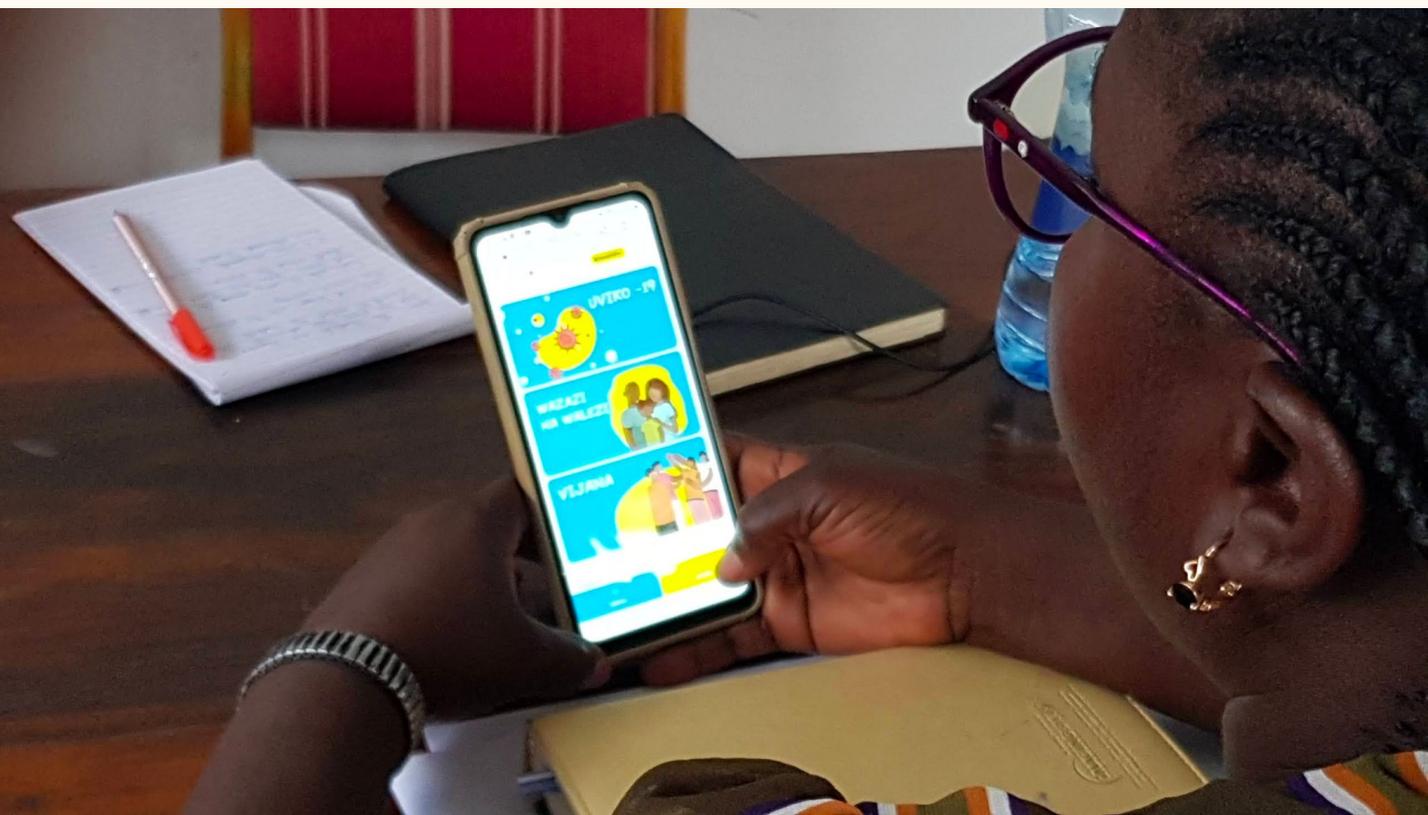
### Indifferent

**Yellow** represents a somewhat neutral emotion/feeling, and speaks to moments that can quickly be converted into either positive or negative response.

### Disappointed

**Orange** represents a negative emotion/feeling, and highlights points that could require more work to maintain the user's engagement.

These user journeys are not intended to be a detailed depiction of each users movement through the platforms, but instead provide a high-level snapshot of touchpoints that would be important to consider together with the recommendations.



## IoGT

1

## Home Page

"Mambo Mazuri - it made me think that I would find 'good things' like opportunities but the first thing I see is Covid-19."

- The Self-Starter



Disappointed

"I like the pictures. They are bright and colourful."

- The Naive



Interested

"It's interesting, I'm clicking more and more."

- The Influencer



Curious

"Why COVID? It brings a negative feeling. I already know enough about it."

- The Conservative



Disinterested

2

## General Exploration

"I tried to search for something but it didn't work"

- The Seeker



Frustrated

"What happens if I open an account? Will I see something different?"

- The Influencer



Uncertain

"I would appreciate content on how mental breakdowns show up."

- The Worrier



Unsatisfied

"It's understandable and clear, I can follow the sections easily, but some real pictures would be nice too."

- The Self-Starter



Content

3

## Reading through Select Topics

[On Climate Change]  
"What is 'Mabadiliko ya tabia nchi'? It sounds like changing economic times."

- The Self-Starter



Puzzled

"This is a lot of reading - we don't like going through long paragraphs. I prefer short videos."

- The Naive



Drained

"Some of the Swahili words used were quite difficult to understand - the language was very formal"

- The Conservative



Puzzled

On Internet Safety:  
"More people need to know about this and things like phishing"

- The Seeker



Assured

## U-Report

1

### Enrolment

"Oh finally! A platform where I can ask questions and talk about my preoccupations. I like that it's on WhatsApp - and it's pretty easy and straightforward."

- The Self-Starter



Excited

"Saving the number was quite easy but I don't really know what this is about.. 'Report' sounds so formal."

- The Naive



Confused

"I have limited access to the internet. I prefer SMS because I rarely have bundles to respond to the messages on WhatsApp."

- The Conservative



Indifferent

"This seems like an interesting platform for young people like me."

- The influencer



Curious

2

### Receiving polls and quizzes

"They should give options about different polls so that you can choose one you're interested in."

- The Self-Starter



Indifferent

"These questions are great. I now understand what this is about."

- The Worrier



Curious

"The more you are clicking A or B you are going deeper and there is no way to exit the poll. It's like they are forcing me to finish and I don't know how many questions there are left."

- The Seeker



Frustrated

"This is fun and insightful. I will tell my friends and my followers about it."

- The Influencer



Hooked

3

### Continued Engagement

"Some topics make sense to me, others don't so I respond when I feel like doing so. I wish I could find jobs here."

- The Self-Starter



Indifferent

"This is a good way to spend my free time as I can learn something new."

- The Naive



Interested

"I don't know if they will come back to me. I don't know the next step. I'm not receiving any feedback."

- The Seeker



Uncertain

"I have become the U-Report ambassador in my area. I help enroll more young people."

- The Influencer

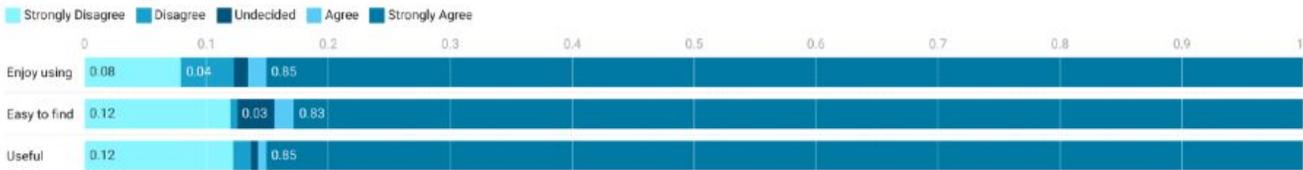


Assured

## Segmentation of IoT users based on their experience with the platform

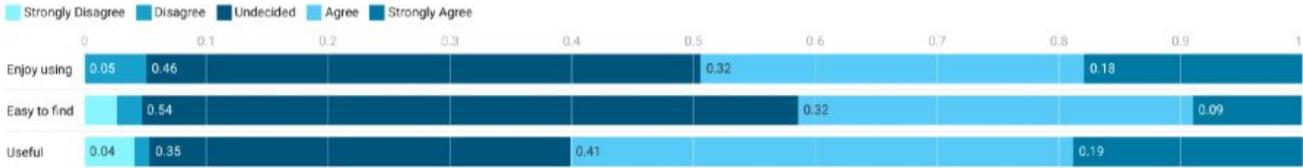
A cluster analysis identified segments of users based on their experience with the platform, collected through the IoT Intercept Survey launched by UNICEF in September 2022. The 1,036 respondents that participated in the survey have been clustered into 4 groups.

Segment 1 (60% of total respondents) includes users who have a highly positive experience with the platform at all levels (enjoyment, ease, and usefulness). Segment 2 (16%) user experience trends towards positive with some challenges on all three areas. Users in segment 3 (11%) strongly enjoy the platform, but don't find it useful, and think it's challenging to navigate and find information they need on the site. Segment 4 (13%) reports a negative experience on all the three areas. For the most part, segments identified do not differ based on demographic variables such as age, gender or location. Segment 4 included a significantly higher percentage of people under 20 years of age, and segment 3 a significantly higher percentage of people who are unemployed. The similarity of segments in terms of age, gender, location, and work status shows that the segments identify orientations by users not captured by these basic indicators and have value in and of themselves, making them a viable focus for recommendations and potential intervention.



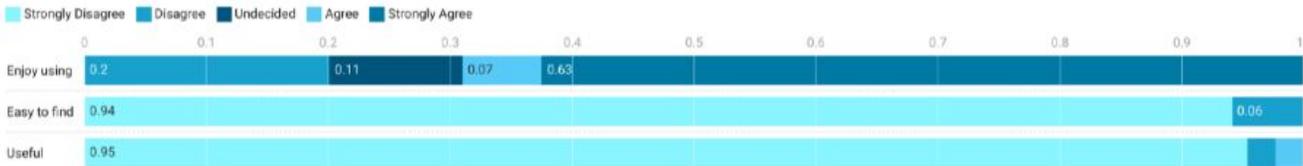
Source: IoT ESARO UX • Created with Datawrapper

### Segment 1 user experience (n=617)



Source: IoT ESARO UX • Created with Datawrapper

### Segment 2 user experience (n=170)



Source: IoT ESARO UX • Created with Datawrapper

### Segment 3 user experience (n=112)



Source: IoT ESARO UX • Created with Datawrapper

### Segment 4 user experience (n=137)



# User-Centered Learnings

The following section presents the main learnings gathered from the in-person HCD participatory research in South Africa and Tanzania

## 1. Adolescents tend to approach new platforms with curiosity and openness, whilst older young people approach them with more scepticism and hesitation

While adolescent participants between 15-19 years old were more curious about the offerings of the platforms, older young people between 20-24 years old with little to no exposure to loGT and U-Report were less interested in the platforms, unsure of how useful or necessary the information would be for them. This is because they have had exposure to thematic topics through other forums such as school, place of worship and other programmes for adolescents and young people, and thus the information becomes repetitive and redundant, especially if the presentation resembles what they have been exposed to. For instance, South Africa's loGT site has developed catchy titles for some of its content, for example, *tips on managing period pain*, which was preferred over titles like *menstrual hygiene*, which may appear more textbook-like. However, for other demographics such as those that include low-literacy users, this might not be the case as they might not have had previous exposure to the topics.

Additionally, the young people spoken to were more likely to meet polls and surveys with a sense of scepticism, questioning why they were asked to provide information upon entering the loGT site or when going through polls. On the other hand, adolescents appeared to be more open to filling in surveys and engaging with them.

"Try to shock me. I want to learn something. Real stories are the ones that motivate us."

Adolescent Girl, South Africa

"I don't follow everyone, I follow those who make sense."

Young Woman, South Africa

"Why are they already asking me to fill in a survey?"

Young Man, South Africa

## 2. Internet-enabled feature phones are more often used to access applications (e.g., WhatsApp, Facebook) rather than for general browsing purposes

### Accessing the internet through feature phones has a lot of friction

While more advanced feature phones can be used for certain apps and general browsing, those with smartphones mentioned that the lengthy process required to activate internet access on feature phones is enough to prevent users from even making use of them. Smartphone users were in agreement, however, that for those who do social media apps like Whatsapp and Facebook are used more frequently than general browsing due to a smoother experience based on the app versions made specifically for those kinds of feature phones.

### The future is 'smart' and adolescents and young people are enabling it

Despite most adolescents do not own smartphones in Tanzania (according to study participants), they are catalysts of internet usage among parents as the adolescents and young people are more digital savvy and hence called upon to support their parents and resolve any challenges related to using smartphones. Parents in the study reported that their children between the 15-24 age bracket download mobile applications for them and promote the consumption of information or entertainment content on platforms such as TikTok and YouTube. In this, we predict an avenue of greater access to digital media for adolescents and young people here – catalyzed by the adoption of smartphones amongst parents.

As more adolescents get exposed to smartphones, they are also seeking means to own them, even when this means doing it behind their parents' backs to put up with peer pressure. Some opt for income-generating activities to source for funds to buy smartphones. The dream and aspiration of a majority of young people is to use smartphones over feature phones.

### 3. Adolescents and Young people understand the value of having access to unlimited information via the internet while acknowledging that it has certain drawbacks to finding relevant and digestible information

From our study, adolescent users of Google in Tanzania who mostly tend toward the 14 - 18 year old age bracket, searching for information can sometimes be overwhelming due to the overabundance of information presented to them, making it difficult to select relevant and useful content. Participants in the study of all ages who use social media platforms have found them to be distracting, to the extent of not being able to access what it is they were seeking out. Even then, from the completely tech savvy to those who have never used Google, young people have learnt to circumvent authority, financial barriers and data challenges to access academic knowledge, entertainment and entrepreneurship tips online, amongst other things. In South Africa, our study participants across all ages were very familiar with both Google and social media. There was a small but significant group of adolescents in Johannesburg who preferred not to use social media due to the potential safety risks it presents.

In Dar es Salaam, most of the participants were aware of Google, and have been sent there by their teachers to search for learning material on the platform. However, in Unguja, which is a less urban context than Dar es Salaam, some of the students participants were not familiar with Google and what it offers. Even then, many adolescents and young people have phones, both smartphones and feature phones, that they use to communicate with their friends and family and for entertainment. Smartphones are mainly used for entertainment, edutainment, and communication. On the other hand, feature phones (both internet enabled and non-internet enabled) are used primarily for communication. Owning two or three phones was common especially in Tanzania where young people would switch between different mobile networks in search for favourable data rates.

"Google is a god...you can ask anything and get an answer."

Young Man, South Africa

## 1. Adolescents and Young People want to feel validated, reassured, respected, and affirmed as they develop their own identities.

At this stage of young people's lives, they reported dealing with several confusing thoughts and emotions, many of which are new, especially as they make the transition into adulthood. While normal, it has often felt to them that they are alone, or at fault somehow, for feeling the way they do. However, study participants mentioned that they have been equipped with the tools and knowledge to address these uncertainties, and recognize that aside from older, more experienced trusted persons, they can also learn from their peers. Especially with the ease of connecting digitally, several young people in the study had found ways to support one another on online platforms; sharing experiences of challenges and how they are overcome whether through direct posts or through communicating about them via comments is one way that young people gain reassurance that they are not alone in their problems. Youth want to feel validated, to be recognised and affirmed by their peers. As they make the transition into adulthood, they want to be informed and have the skills and information necessary to make their own choices.

In Dar es Salaam, the young women participating in the study spoke of how they had already developed a strong sense of identity. They wanted to be perceived as independent and self-sustaining without the need to rely on others, and have already formed strong bonds within their friend groups that offer unlimited support in person and online. Content should reflect this sense of identity and agency that young girls want to have. Still in Tanzania, the boys we interviewed tended to bond with peers over playing sports, and hinged their identity on these interactions.

In Johannesburg, when asked to speak about who they were, girls identified themselves through qualities that described who they are (e.g. I am kind hearted), whereas boys identified themselves by what they do (e.g. I make art, I play football).

### There is a desire to shift perceptions and tackle myths and misconceptions around various topics to create a more inclusive society

In Tanzania, it was pointed out that in addition to myths surrounding COVID-19, there are also myths associated with topics around Sexual and Reproductive Health, Mental Health, and even Climate Change. This suggests that beyond COVID-19, there is a large amount of content that can be shared with users to address myths and misconceptions around these topics based on their cultural and linguistic contexts. There are already standards in place for the development of SRH myth-busting content outlined in UNICEF's Rumour Management Guide, and similar principles can be applied to other topics.

In South Africa, adolescents were especially sensitive to issues affecting people and fellow students with disabilities. There was the recognition that content online was not always friendly for those with hearing and seeing impairments, and were interested in how students with disabilities could use online sites.



*A group of adolescent girls from Johannesburg presenting their app to elevate the voices of people with disabilities*

**"We have to make sure we see each other as real people."**

Adolescent Girl, Johannesburg

## 2. Adolescents and Young People want content that is relevant, simple, punchy, entertaining, and discreet

Because of their quick learning and adjustment to short-form content through platforms such as TikTok, the young people we spoke to during the study were more inclined to appreciate simply depicted content that is brief and punchy. They also would like material that they can easily share with their friends, such as short videos that are entertaining and relevant. As Africans, sometimes the content they find online was not perceived as useful for them. They have found, through reading comments in various online forums such as TikTok and YouTube, what several of their peers are going through, and how they dealt with their challenges. Young people appreciate content that values their privacy and is discreet, especially when they don't feel comfortable enough to confide in their parents or other guardians.

"Our generation is not about reading."

Young Man, Tanzania

"No bombastic words!"

Young Woman, South Africa

"I like to watch short, fun videos that I can share with my friends."

Adolescent Boy, South Africa

### User Experience in Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa and Zambia

Most users (61%) strongly agree that they enjoy using the site, while 20% disagree or strongly disagree. Fifty-one percent strongly agree that the information is easy to find, while 21% strongly disagree. About 55% strongly believe that the information on the site is useful, while 20% strongly disagree. These results are consistent across countries, with the exception of Madagascar which did not report any respondents in the "strongly disagree" category on enjoyment, ease of navigation and usefulness.

\* Data source: Intercept Survey



A group of young women from Dar es Salaam voting for sections they liked on other websites that are similar to the loGT site

### 3. The different mental models that adolescents and young people of different ages, gender and cultural backgrounds use to understand thematic content result in varying degrees of perceived relevance and importance

#### Mental Models

Topics on loGT were thought about differently by adolescents and young people. For example, adolescents (15-19) from Alexandra in Johannesburg grouped topics on learning to earning and gave it the title 'technology', explaining that technology was needed to perform many of these activities (starting a business, creating a resume, etc.). Similarly, while for some young women topics on SRH were grouped as Sexual and Reproductive Health, a group of boys from Tanzania arranged SRH topics under 'disease'. While there needs to be strict attention paid to an approved information architecture standard, this presents an opportunity to explore multiple and alternative entry points to accessing information on loGT through information architecture, navigation, and more extensive content delivery tags.

**Regardless of gendered and individual interests ranging from self-discovery to entertainment, there is a strong preference for having peers to connect with and learn from**

In Tanzania, young men and women were found to have different views regarding the content they preferred to consume on the internet. In general, the young women spoken to used various applications and websites to learn new skills and to learn about themselves. For example, YouTube was used to learn new cooking recipes, and Pinterest was used for beauty and creative inspiration. On the other hand, young men primarily used the internet for entertainment purposes, keeping up with the latest sports updates.

Both young men and women, however, seemed to have an equal amount of interest in using the internet to look for content related to new job opportunities and entrepreneurship. In the same way, they expressed the desire to learn from others throughout these journeys of self-discovery and self-sufficiency. Young people are at the cusp of several transitions – mental, professional, and identity – and are always in search of guidance and mentorship from others with whom they identify, even if it has become increasingly challenging for them to find trusted individuals who will volunteer their time and expertise freely. For young men, entertainment, especially as relates to playing and/or watching sports, gives them the opportunity to work together and create positive bonds with their teammates.



*A card sorting activity with adolescent boys and girls from Alexandra, Johannesburg*

**"If we deal with our issues individually, nothing will happen."**

Young Man, South Africa

**"[On the internet] I can share my things with fellow youth and share potential opportunities, I can educate my community."**

Young Man, Tanzania

**"These days, people need to get something before they can help you."**

Young Man, South Africa

#### 4. The urgency with which information is sought out determines the effectiveness and appeal of the content format crafted for young people

Young men and women had varied preferences in the content formats they preferred to consume. Storytelling and comics were popular among both boys and girls, however, it was pointed out that such formats are not ideal if a user wants to get information very quickly, if they need advice or are panicking. An advice section with statements such as, 'I had sex without a condom', from another site, was popular among young people. This suggests that loGT can incorporate varied content formats but intentionally design for content that is likely to be accessed with urgency vs content that can be created to be consumed at a more leisurely pace.

#### The intention behind information seeking (exploring vs searching) impacts the interaction decisions that adolescents and young people make on the platforms

Depending on the instructions provided during user testing, there were observable differences in the ways that they navigated through the loGT Tanzania and South Africa websites. When asked to look for articles in a particular subject matter, participants' first instinct was to click on the search button to look for content, while others navigated the site by clicking through the sections and articles when asked to simply explore. This suggests that users will interact differently with the site, depending on whether they are searching for particular content or simply exploring.

Relatable content formats such as how to support friends to seek mental health support are perceived as practical and useful but not easy to find on the platform. For instance, a young person is more likely to search for "how to support a friend seeking for mental health help" than "mental health".



**“When we are looking for information, we don’t want to hear a lot of stories.”**

Dar es Salaam, Adolescent

*Two adolescent boys exploring Mtandao Mambo Mazuri, the loGT Tanzania site*

## **1. Adolescents and Young People are somewhat exposed to information on SRH through various channels; however, new gaps arise in their understanding of more nuanced themes within these topics.**

Over the years, there have been several efforts that span the private and public sectors that aim to improve adolescents and young people's knowledge of HIV and SRH particularly in urban and peri-urban settings, ranging from school syllabus that openly speak about SRH, to programmes that promote safe sex practices amongst young people; examples of these are [SheConquers](#) and [MyPrep](#) in South Africa. Because of this, most young people in the study reported that they are already well aware of topics such as menstruation and the dangers of unprotected sex. This breeds a reluctance to engage with SRH content on IoT, even if it was the new package available on IoT v2.0, due to their over-familiarity with these titles and the likelihood of redundancy of the information presented.

From an interview with a nurse who works at a SRH youth centre in Johannesburg, we learnt that more and more students are visiting these clinics which they learn about via their schools. She also spoke about her trust in the above-mentioned websites: [SheConquers](#) and [MyPrep](#), that direct adolescents and young people to local SRH services further across the country, which shows that localised content on SRH could be useful.

### **Despite an abundance of information, conflicting attitudes arise from evolving cultural trends and norms that remain unaddressed**

While young people are exposed to several credible sources of information, there is a mismatch between past and current norms of what constitutes acceptable behaviour in society. This in turn can lead to a clash with caregivers where the young people want to stay 'trendy' while the caregivers want them to observe certain norms such as how to dress.



### **3. ‘Learning to Earning’ topics are a top priority across all demographics of young people that are out of school or engaged in higher education or learning.**

Regardless of gender or education level, entrepreneurship and skills-building are considered a top priority among those research participants who were in university or had just graduated. In both countries, the youth are already aware of the high unemployment rates which points them to securing entrepreneurial opportunities as it offers more certainty for the future. In Tanzania, a majority of the young girls we interacted with had side hustles such as selling clothes, accessories, make-up products and spices on Instagram. A few of the boys on the other hand were engaged in betting activities and casual jobs to fend for themselves. Also in Tanzania, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) courses such as welding and electrical engineering are perceived to be more lucrative as they easily translate into income generating opportunities. Additionally, YouTube tutorials on hair and beauty, coding and cooking are also highly preferred. IoGT could take on a curatorial role here, one that eases the burden on young people to find material relevant to their contexts, giving a platform to other young people in their countries who have succeeded in starting their own businesses to share their experiences and recommending resources that could provide further insight on matters such as tax, business registration, and so on.

In South Africa, young people also expressed a need for good guidance and mentorship on how to navigate artistic and unconventional career paths which are amplified by the digital era. Many young people felt that there was a scarcity of mentors willing to nurture their skills without wanting something in return that would place their entrepreneurial dreams at great risk.

“I would like to know how to run a business and how to market a product.”

Young Man, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

### **4. Climate change is generally acknowledged as an important topic yet de-prioritised for needs that are perceived as more immediate.**

Adolescents and young people have varied understandings of what climate change is and are yet to understand how climate change might directly or indirectly affect their lives and/or livelihoods. In Dar es Salaam, young people were interested in agriculture, either in their studies, or as a business. For example, one young woman was involved in selling spices. These individuals were not aware of what impact climate change might have on their agricultural ventures, however, knowing this would make them likely to pay attention to climate change. There was also the idea that climate change was all about weather – that there was perhaps not much for them to learn since they already knew all about the weather, anyway. There is a clear gap in how information on climate change is presented, and thus, how youth audiences respond to climate information.

Adolescents and young people are still likely to make decisions that prioritise their immediate needs, such as accepting an income generating job, even if it has a detrimental effect on the environment. This suggests that climate-related content may need to be presented indirectly, by linking it in ways that speak to their pressing concerns and aspirations due to their present bias.

“I would like to be interested in climate change because it’s everyone’s concern. It’s important to take action. We are all from the same planet. I am not deep inside it [climate change action] but I would like to be. This is part of the reason I’m a UNICEF volunteer. I don’t know which action I should take.”

## 5. Caregivers would like to see content for Adolescents and Young People centred around safety and protection from exposure to harmful behaviours.

The following topics were referenced as areas that would greatly benefit caregivers if they could obtain more knowledge on:

### In Tanzania:

- How to use the internet productively and safely.
- How to support adolescent girls to navigate dilemmas related to sexual and reproductive health. For instance, one parent was worried that her daughter might have gotten an abortion without her knowledge.
- Addressing fears that are associated with early exposure to the internet such as exposure to explicit content.

### In South Africa:

- How to protect children from sexual relationships and assault from strangers on the internet.
- How to avoid human trafficking.
- How to protect adolescent girls from risks such as sexual violence in the community.
- How to support young people who are addicted to drugs especially where rehabilitation has failed to correct their drug behaviours.
- How to speak to young people dealing with mental health issues.

“I am always stressed about my children [girls], I am not going to lie. Our environment is bad.”

Mother, South Africa

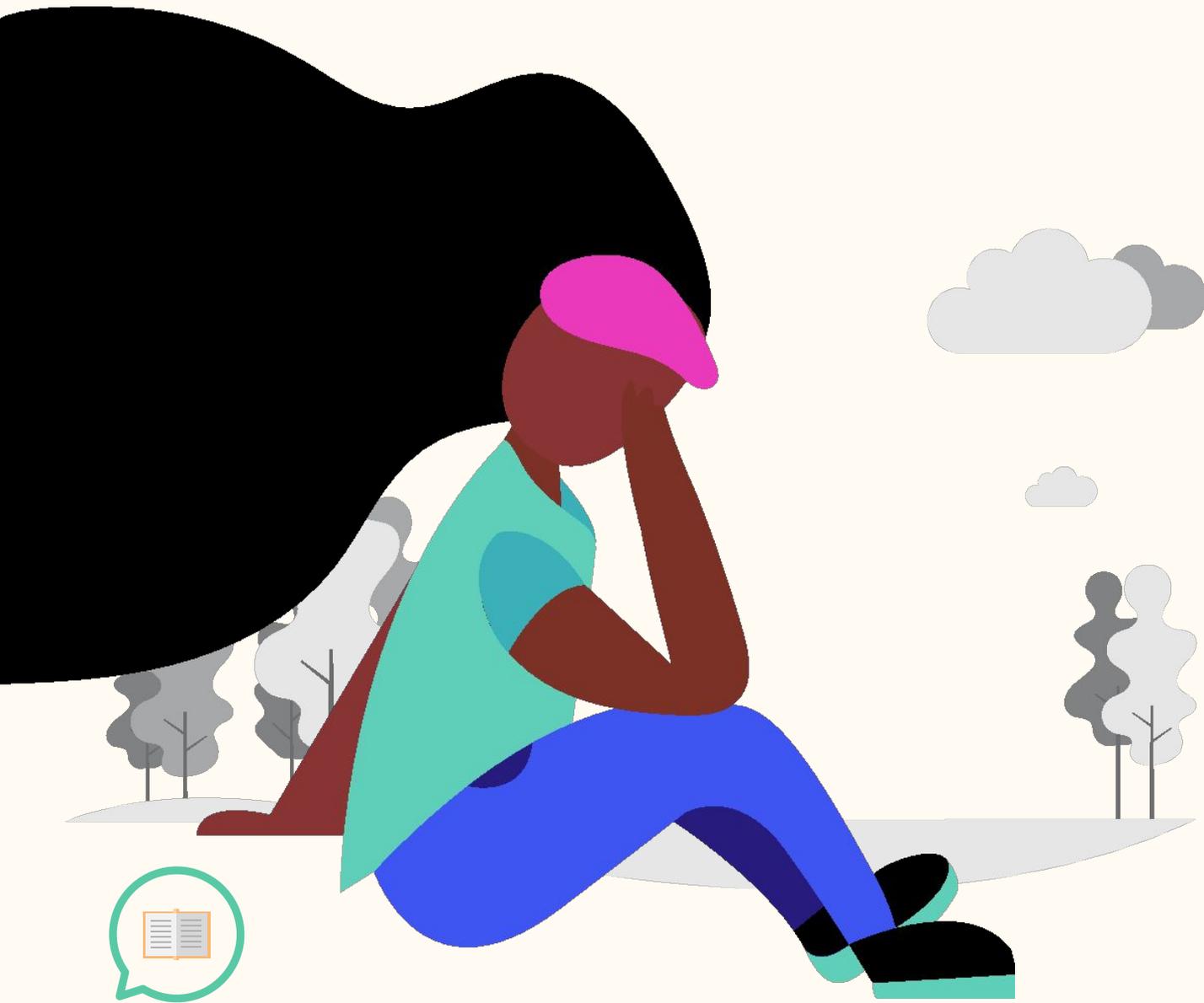
## 6. There is some mismatch between what COs have prioritized for Adolescents and Young People compared to what they are interested in.

While COs and caregivers that participated in the research prioritized internet safety and climate change, they were not reported as key priority topics for adolescents and young people in the study. However, all the groups were aligned on career advice, mental health and sex and relationships as thematic topics that youth audiences need to build knowledge on. Notably, securing income-generating opportunities whether through entrepreneurship or formal jobs was a top priority for young people in both South Africa and Tanzania.

### Topics of interest for loGT users in Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa and Zambia

Only 6% of users said that topics are not relevant to them. Topics that generate most interest are skills-building and employability (19%), sexual health (19%), mental health (17%), parenting (14%) and climate (13%). Other topics that users would be interested in learning more about on loGT included education and school resources such as books, entertainment, and personal financial advice.

\*Data source: loGT Intercept Survey, 2022



# Platform Learnings

The following section presents the learnings gathered about the experiences with both the South Africa and Tanzania IoGT and U-Report Platform Experiences

## 1. The value proposition for IoGT content in Tanzania and South Africa was not yet captivating enough for most young people in the study to return to the website.

### Jack of all trades, and master of none

By seeking to reach multiple profiles, the current value proposition for IoGT speaks to a general audience which might contribute to fewer young people wanting to engage with the site due to a diluted experience. For example, young, educated people with smartphones may experience the content to be too basic. On the other hand, those with less exposure in terms of both education and access to the internet may be unfamiliar with the terms SRH and Mental Health. For parents, topics related to enhancing communication with adolescents and support young people who are using drugs were mentioned as an area of interest.

Young people also have diverse interests and needs depending on their stage in life. The limited range of content on the current IoGT CO sites increases the risk that certain young people accessing the site for the first time will feel that the site does not speak to their needs and interests. For example, some young men who noticed that the content on the landing page of the IoGT South Africa site includes a COVID-19 Information Centre and a Girls' Zone felt that the site lacked relevance for them. This can lead to a missed opportunity to provide a strong and lasting first impression to keep users coming back to the site.

### COVID-19 content is not 'breaking news' anymore

COVID-19 content which is the main landing page content across IoGT platforms in both South Africa and Tanzania was perceived to be 'stale' due to the saturation of COVID-19 awareness creation at global and national levels. While this came out majorly as a first impression of the website and not necessarily an objective feedback of the overall perception of the detailed content itself, COVID-19 information was seen as too cliché. Most young people wish to see content that feels unique to their issues. For girls, for example, breast and cervical cancer was mentioned as a topic of greater interest.



"People share stories on social media and you find, wow, this story relates to mine."

Adolescent Girl, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania

"Why isn't there a 'Boy Zone'?"

Adolescent Boy, South Africa

## 2. The adolescent and young people target audience where IoGT can make a big difference is at the last digital mile and more needs to be done to improve access and relevance there.

In both Dar es Salaam and Johannesburg, young people with more access to the internet were more likely to access the IoGT platform, although they already had other trusted sources of information where they obtained similar information. Other trusted platforms include apps like Instagram and TikTok, where there is a breadth of content that is easily searchable and can be followed via a hashtag, or through directly following the content creator involved. These young people mentioned that they are wary of potential misinformation on these platforms, even if self-selected sources still pose a risk to unverifiable or deliberately misleading information.

However, there is still a gap where content is not tailored to the specific context of adolescents and young people in these locations. Similarly, in Johannesburg, while young people expressed a deep understanding of mental health and its importance, there was not enough knowledge of where, within their community or city, that they could look to for on-the-ground advice and counselling.

Following this, the young people who are also most likely to have a chance to access IoGT, or the kinds of information present therein, have developed advanced needs as relates to the kind of digital tool that they would benefit from. Adolescents from Johannesburg, when asked to create a fantasy app that addressed the issues that they currently have challenges with, had ideas that spoke to expansion and inclusion of all young people. For example, they created an app that would connect artists of all kinds with their audience. There was also an app that was created to ensure that young people with disabilities would engage with content in a format that is comfortable for them; autistic youth with sensitivities to loud noises, for example, would have an adjusted level of sound for any loud online content. The sentiment of accessibility was also echoed by the UNICEF Rwanda CO, noting that for young people with seeing impairments, IoGT could not be easily engaged with.

There is also a larger issue at play here – for young people (or guardians, or healthcare workers) in areas where poverty prevents them from buying expensive data or phones that can access the internet, they are already doubly disadvantaged.

A promotion strategy to target more those who can adopt IoGT as a prioritized trustworthy tool, based on the information presently there, is to finely segment potential users based on their needs, experiences and demographics.

**“I need to be online 24/7 because of my emails, work and entertainment...Basically, I’m always with my phone.”**

Young woman, Zanzibar

**“Everything happens on the net.”**

Young woman, Johannesburg

**“There are people who don’t have phones but would need the information.”**

Young man, Zanzibar

### **3. Even for users who are not at the last digital mile, IoGT has features, such as being low-data, and content that if refined, can offer a competitive advantage compared to global platforms.**

#### **Getting advice that is culturally and linguistically relevant is not easy to find**

In Tanzania, having content in their local language, Kiswahili, was especially appreciated on the IoGT site. While many have access to a breadth of information on the internet, a lot of the information there may not be tailored for the cultural and linguistic nuances that are relevant for them, and they may not benefit from that content in its entirety. For example, unfamiliar technical vocabulary as relates to SRH and MHPSS content is not easily understood by young people.

However, it is important to remember that, during the content localisation process, some topics and important terms may be lost in translation. In Tanzania, for example, Mabadiliko ya tabia nchi (climate change) was interpreted by a few young people as general economic changes affecting their country. The title of the website, 'mtandao wa mambo mazuri' was also confusing for some, as they associated the phrase 'mambo mazuri' with features like job opportunities and information on entrepreneurship, and not with COVID-19 as featured prominently on the landing page.

#### **Being a 'low-data' site is a compelling value proposition for young people**

Young people who have limited access to the internet (majorly due to data cost) were very captivated by the fact that IoGT has low-data consumption. In Tanzania, several people were familiar with Facebook Lite which also has low-data consumption but was least popular among the participant groups due to the reduced flexibility and fewer features. In South Africa on the other hand, Facebook Lite was considered by participants to be a thing of the past and not supported by iPhones which are trendy and that many young people aspire to owning. Even if participants reported that data costs were inordinately high in South Africa, the status amongst their peers that owning an iPhone provides is a significant consideration.



### Helpful and informative sections with varied content formats, combined with features that enable knowledge sharing amongst peers, were appreciated by the youth

While some research participants felt that the IoGT sites lacked relevance for them, others, namely adolescent girls, found some articles to be helpful and informative. For example, on the SA IoGT site, the article on 'Tips for managing period pain' was popular among adolescent girls and some young women. They highlighted that it contained simple tips they didn't know before that could be easily actioned. While some young women from Johannesburg felt that information on menstrual health and hygiene on the SA site was nothing new for them, some acknowledged that this information could be helpful for other girls and women that they knew. Another adolescent girl from Soweto Township in Johannesburg browsing through the site explained that she did not know that receiving messages about winning money are likely to be scams. This demonstrates that IoGT was able to provide adolescents with the value of added knowledge that can help them avoid potentially dangerous or uncomfortable situations even during brief interactions with the site.

Additionally, the article on cyberbullying on the SA IoGT site was popular across all adolescents and young people inquired. Despite the article being at the bottom of the 'Internet Safety' section, many users navigated here and began watching the video. They also appreciated that the video was downloadable so that they could share it with their friends. This suggests that the addition of more downloadable audio-visual resources on the site can capture users' attention and enable them to share these with their peers, especially for those with increased connectivity.

### Adolescents and young people would like to see more interactive features incorporated into the site

After experiencing the IoGT site, youth participants identified the following features that, if incorporated, would keep them more interested in returning to the site:

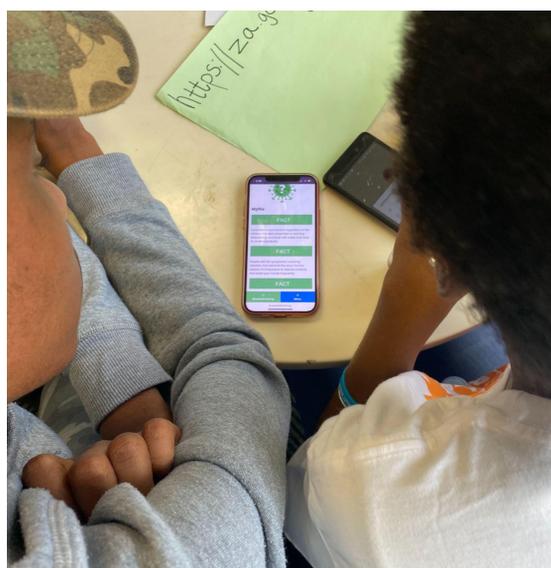
- *A chatbot* was attractive due to the ability to ask personalised questions through a chatbot on the IoGT site, but shared concerns about the privacy of the information they shared. Integration possibilities with a live U-Report chatbot, for example, through Facebook Messenger, can be explored to achieve this.
- *Quizzes and games on the homepage*: regularly updated and simple quizzes and games would make the site more fun and exciting to interact with.

*On tips for managing period pain:*  
"These are things I didn't know - it's actually helping. I learnt that you can just take a walk and it will help"

Adolescent Girl, South Africa

"This was interesting. I think I'll come back and show my friends to show that I'm smart."

Adolescent Boy, South Africa



## 1. Personalisation, such as responses to personal questions, is a strong motivator for continued engagement

Quick responses to personal questions is a strong motivator to engage with U-Report (e.g. Papo kwa Papo days)

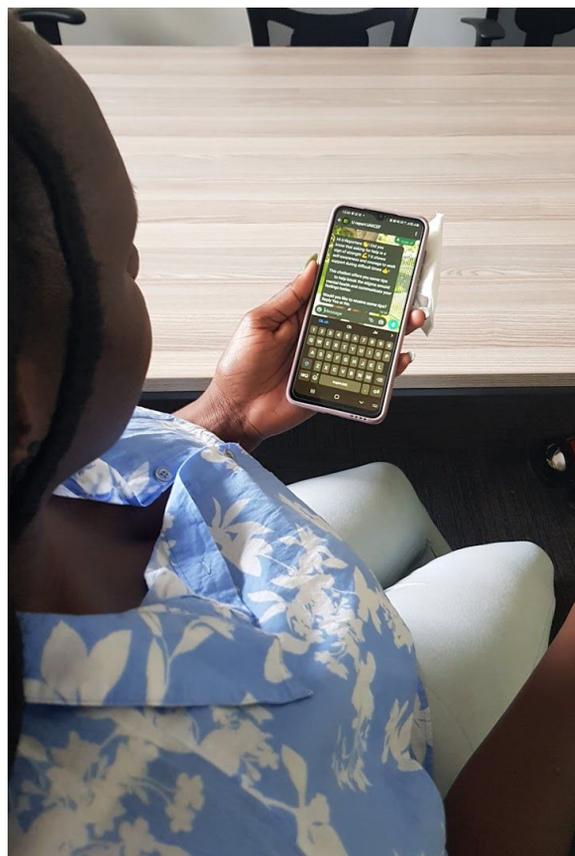
In Tanzania, both young people and mothers who are U-Reporters mentioned a sense of fulfilment from a two-way interaction with U-Report. Papo Kwa Papo is a quarterly U-Report initiative in Tanzania that allows adolescents and young people to ask questions and receive immediate feedback from a network of trained counsellors in SRH and HIV. Every quarter, the adolescents and young people receive reminders through radio and other channels on the type of expert that will be present for the papo kwa papo day. Having a chance to ask questions to an expert was a strong motivator to keep engaging with U-Report. Reminders sent out a few days in advance to the Papo kwa Papo days were a good nudge for the 'live' interaction with experts.

Young people and caregivers would like to see a broader topic coverage to include experts such as lawyers, the police to understand the legal aspects that affect their everyday lives. In Tanzania, most young people prefer to use SMS-based U-Report to avoid data costs associated with using WhatsApp.

**U-Reporters require fewer incentives that appeal to extrinsic motivation to respond to polls that bring up topics that they already care about and have strong views on.**

In Tanzania, participation in the polls has a direct correlation with whether or not a person is interested in the topic. For instance, one parent who was on U-Report for over one year mentioned that she is very selective on the thematic polls that she participates in. For topics she thought were relevant to young people, she would ignore the polls and would actively engage with topics that were relatable to her.

Where one poll is sent to different profiles of U-Reporters, a number of them may make a similar decision while another group may disconnect in case they consistently see a topic that they are not interested in.



**"It makes me feel like I'm valued, and I know where to speak."**

Young Woman, Zanzibar, Tanzania

**"For mental health content I usually google, but I only find 30% of what I want. The other 70% I need is how to overcome my particular situation. If they can talk about mental health in my language, it would also be better."**

Young Woman, Zanzibar, Tanzania

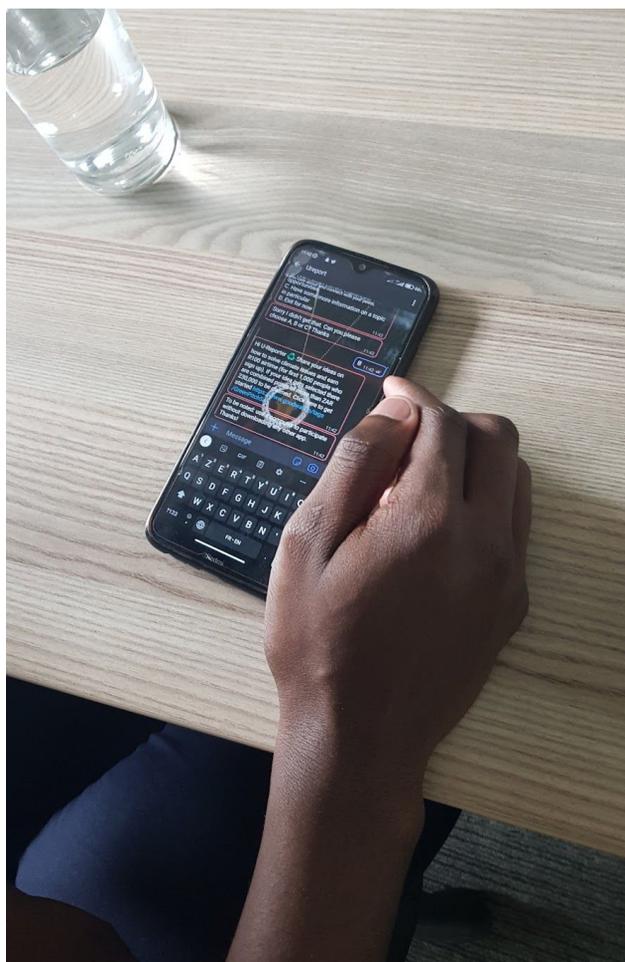
**"I would like to ask personal questions from a human, not a bot. I want U-Report to be that close friend of ours we will tell him things and he will give us nice feedback."**

Young Man, South Africa

## 1. Personalisation is a strong motivator for continued engagement (Cont'd)

**New U-Reporters are more interested in receiving information and opportunities that will benefit them than responding to polls.**

After registration on the South Africa U-Report platform, users are presented with 3 options: A) to complete the latest poll or quiz, B) to learn about new challenges and opportunities, and C) to get information about a particular topic. During user testing and observation, the majority of new U-Reporters clicked on either option B or C. This suggests that users are less likely to complete polls and quizzes unless they are pushed or nudged to do so, such as when push notification to a new poll/quiz has been released. Additionally, some users in both Tanzania and South Africa expressed a greater sense of suspicion towards polls and surveys compared to quizzes on U-Report. While they felt that they were giving information without any benefits to themselves with polls, quizzes allowed them to learn something new through immediate feedback on their answers. This highlights an important consideration to balance interactions that provide beneficial information to users compared to those that ask users to provide information.



*On how to talk to someone about mental health: "This is actually very nice. Sometimes you don't know what to say. They give options. It can make one stay longer [on the platform]."*

Young Woman, Johannesburg

*On selecting challenges and opportunities: "A link to a plastic challenge came up but I thought I would find job opportunities."*

Young Man, Johannesburg

*A young man from Johannesburg going through U-Report*

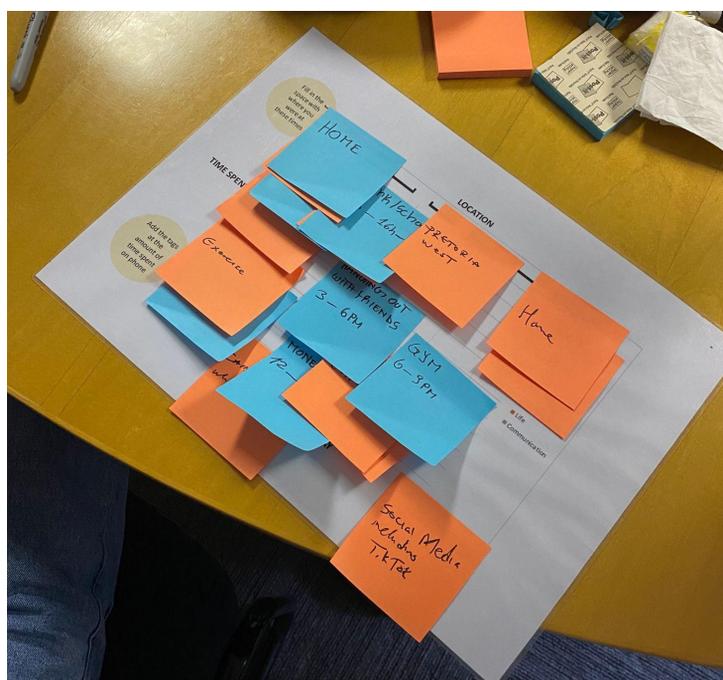
## 2. Currently, there are no mechanisms to respond to evolving and varied interests among U-Reporters, which contributes to poll fatigue and reduced engagement

The ageing of U-Reporters requires consideration for the platform to evolve and continue to be relevant to different user groups

Older U-Reporters (enrolled in 2017/2018) pointed to slowly losing a connection with U-Report as they matured. For instance, for a U-Reporter who enrolls while in university, several years later, their priorities shift to getting a job or starting a business and therefore they are less likely to see the value of continuing to engage with the platform.

### The excitement of being a U-Reporter drops over time with increasing poll fatigue

Poll fatigue is likely to be a common phenomenon for U-Reporters. Initial engagement levels are highly fueled by enrolment excitement and curiosity. However, as one takes more polls, this curiosity and excitement drive goes down and more U-Reporters evaluate what is in it for them by continuing to respond to the polls. Better visibility of how their opinions have shaped outcomes such as new policies or campaigns came up as one of the ways to maintain the momentum. Additionally, more opportunities for gamified, fun and interactive activities coupled with rewards such as airtime vouchers as recognition for continued participation were discussed as potential incentives to help maintain their momentum.



A phone use mapping/day in the life activity with young people from Johannesburg

"If one is desperately looking for a job and they keep receiving the U-Report messages, they may become irritated."

Former U-Reporter, Adult, Tanzania

### 3. Promotion activities through partners can be made more effective with more comprehensive training and responsive support.

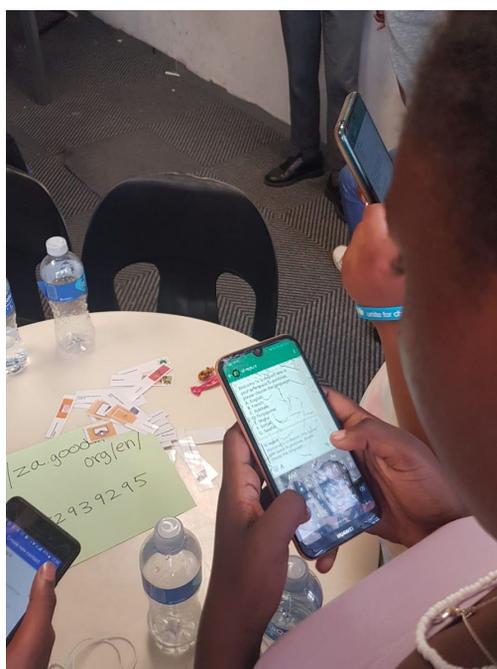
**Some partners do not feel well-trained to clearly articulate the value of U-Report to users and instruct them on how to use it**

As mentioned earlier, partners are critical to scaling the reach of the platforms. In many cases, they are the first point of contact with potential users as they are involved in recruiting U-Reporters and instructing them on how they can engage with the platform. Therefore, the first impressions on U-Report are largely determined by the ways in which partners promote it to their audiences.

Some partners, however, feel ill-equipped to clearly explain what U-Report is, why it would be beneficial for someone to use it, and what interaction features it can offer. As a result, some users may end up registering on the platform without having full awareness of the possibilities it can offer, and end up missing out on potentially valuable interactions. The uncertainty that users felt after registering on the platform also suggests that more can be done to onboard users and give a clear picture on what they can do with U-Report through the registration experience itself.

#### Technical glitches severely affect promotion activities for both partners and users

In South Africa, U-Report on Facebook messenger was seen to provide a better experience as compared to WhatsApp. U-Report on messenger was known to be faster in sending back responses than WhatsApp. This was later established to have been a technical glitch that happened during a specific period of time. For partners, technical glitches may have severe negative effects especially when they are not well communicated and when they don't have any control over the glitches. As a result, some of the Girl Guides reported feeling helpless when the young people they were trying to sign up kept on coming back to them and they had no answers on what was happening.



*An adolescent girl from Johannesburg going through a U-Report poll*

"I think we can have more training on what U-Report is, how to spread the word, why is it important, and how to use it."

Girl Guides board member, Johannesburg

"I'm still not sure what this is about...maybe I'm supposed to report an accident and they (UNICEF) will take action."

Young Man, Johannesburg



# Strategic Recommendations

On the following pages, strategic recommendations or opportunities for continued engagement of adolescents and young people on loGT and U-Report platforms are provided.

# The Pathway to Adoption

The Pathway to Adoption is grounded in the Everett Rogers’ Diffusion of Innovation theory which stipulates that the adoption of new products or behaviours does not happen simultaneously in a social system; rather it is a process whereby some people are more part of the innovation than others. The process begins with exploring opportunities to create social proof and advances to enable new users to interact with a product or service and later on converts them to advocates of the product or service among their peers. The 6-step process is highly iterative and seeks to eliminate barriers at each step while amplifying the drivers/enablers as outlined below:



This model provides a starting point to structuring how new and existing users interact and consume information on both loGT and U-Report and at which step they are most likely to derive value and therefore stay on the platform or drop off.

The six steps can be further explained as follows:

**Awareness** focuses on how users get to know about the platforms and their use. For the youth audience, awareness offers greater value when done in settings that create peer validation by making the usage of the new platform evident among peer groups. Most young people are driven by pressure to conform to the status quo and strive to fit in, and therefore promotional activities should take advantage of the in-group drivers.

**Comprehension and value** focus on users understanding how the platforms operate and the value they will derive from the platform. For both U-Report and loGT, this means drawing the value proposition in comparison to other competitive sites where young people access information or more generally spend a majority of their time.

**Trialability** focuses on making it easy for users to interact with the platforms, access information, or interact with key features such as the content sections for loGT and poll/quiz questions on U-Report. Trialability should aim to get the users “hooked in” for extended time on the platform and continued engagement.

## The Pathway to Adoption (Cont'd)

**Confirmation** aims at ensuring that users receive the value they hoped to get by signing up on the platforms. Confirmation is mostly gained over an extended period of time, and therefore continued engagement is a critical outcome of the user journey to ensure users engage with the two platforms long enough to derive the value of the platforms.

**Retention** aims at ensuring users continually engage with the content by responding to polls/quizzes for U-Report and reading articles and information pieces on loGT. Retention requires a continued interest in the content/topics and having users invested in the value they derive from being U-Reporters and on loGT.

**Advocacy** covers the continued recommendation of loGT and U-Report platforms to other young people/caregivers/adolescents by users themselves. In most countries, young people are both consumers and promoters of content created by other young people. This step would therefore aim at converting existing and new users of both platforms to promoters in their peer circles through popular social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, Tiktok, and Facebook.

## 1. Provide a clear onboarding experience for users onto each platform that demonstrates the value of each platform and highlights how users can engage with them through trialability.

Relevant Adoption Stages

Comprehension & Value

Trialability

Onboarding gives to users a sense of what they'll need to do in order to get what they expect from each of the platforms. Having a clear and simple onboarding process that helps users to understand the value of IoGT or U-Report will build confidence and trust and will lead to a greater likelihood that users will continue using the platforms. It is also critical that this initial onboarding addresses any uncertainty and confusion that users might initially have. Depending on the various onboarding techniques used, users can also be encouraged to test out certain features of the platform to immediately see what the platform can offer.

### IoGT

Emphasize the data-lite and/or data-free aspect of the platform on the banner of the landing page.

Include a brief description of the purpose, value, and target audience of the website in a banner at the top of the landing page, e.g. 'A platform for young people to access information and resources on...with little to no data costs'.

Include a link to an updated explainer video or a short website tour that explains what features are available to the user.

Include a FAQ section to respond to commonly asked questions about IoGT.

Clearly explain the benefits of signing up (once features associated with signing up have been further developed).

### U-Report

Provide an option to take a U-Report tour that encourages users to try out all options and features available on the platform.

Create a sense of anticipation by letting users know what can expect to receive from U-Report after registration e.g. upcoming polls and initiatives.

## 2. Build trust through creating visibility of platform usage among peer groups to leverage on social proof.

Relevant Adoption Stages

Comprehension & Value

Confirmation

### Responsiveness

For both IoGT and U-Report, an indication that UNICEF and partners are regularly and consistently responding to comments, queries, and concerns will enhance the credibility and trust in the platforms and signal that they can receive the same benefits if they choose to engage with them.

### Social Proof

Social proof refers to the tendency of human beings to follow the actions of others in an attempt to reflect correct behaviour for a given situation. Social proof can increase credibility and reduce decision-making uncertainty by showing to users that their peers are also interacting with the platforms.

#### IoGT

Display success stories and testimonials of how users have benefited from the website.

Include a 'like' feature on articles so that users can see the number of positive impressions.

If there is a decision at the CO level to leave the comments open, it is recommended to consistently respond to user questions and have active moderation.

#### U-Report

During poll campaigns, indicate how many people have responded to certain polls, quizzes and link the site where U-Reporters can access data on engagement and additional information on the topic areas as a way to increase engagement.

Have a balance between requesting information e.g. through polls vs providing information, counselling opportunities or engaging users through interactive quizzes that users find more valuable.

Leverage on in-person gatherings to register U-Reporters.

### 3. Provide an array of customization options on the platforms to foster agency and create a more personalised experience for different adolescents and young people segments.

Relevant Adoption Stages

Comprehension & Value

Confirmation

Choice, both in the content available and interaction options with the platforms, can ensure that young people with diverse needs and interests can find what they need and interact to the level that they are comfortable with.

#### IoGT

Use short feedback surveys to collect information on what topics youth and adults are interested in.

For COs that rolled out the user experience survey during the HCD research, derive insights to inform strategic focus for adolescents and young people.

Appeal to different user segments by providing and categorising content more intentionally. This can be done by redesigning the navigation experience or the information architecture of the site. For example, the 'Youth' category can be split into further sections in a way that recognises that adolescents and young people are in different life stages and are likely to have different interests.

Expandable menus with sub-categories to give users an idea of what is available when seeking information at a leisurely pace while optimizing the search button for users seeking information urgently.

At the end of each article, a series of thumbnails to a range of articles can be provided.

#### U-Report

Ask users what themes they are most interested in so that they can be filtered into groups and receive polls related to their preferences. This can reduce poll fatigue and increase completion rates. Periodically, U-Report can request them to update their preferences to capture their evolving interests with age.

Provide users with an overview of the number of questions they are expected to answer in a poll to create better clarity on the flow expected. Clarify options for exiting polls to avoid a potential dilemma from users when they are unable to complete a poll.

#### 4. Leverage localized content and opportunities to deliver more value and a sense of relatability.

Relevant Adoption Stages

Comprehension & Value

Confirmation

Rather than competing with global social media platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, and existing informational websites, both IoGT and U-Report can offer a competitive advantage by leveraging localised information, resources, and opportunities that youth can access around them in each country.

##### **IoGT**

Develop a marketplace of localised support, resources, events, and opportunities for youth to engage with depending on the city or region that they are in, for example, local mental health services, young entrepreneurs' products and services.

Include a directory of trusted partners that work with adolescents and young people and instructions on how to connect with them.

Create localised content that directly addresses myths and misconceptions around thematic content (SRH, Mental Health, Climate Change) by considering the cultural and linguistic contexts in each country with support from the HQ or ESARO's standard guidelines.

##### **U-Report**

Users can be filtered into groups depending on the region/city they are in and be sent information about upcoming initiatives, events, and opportunities into their areas.

U-Report can be promoted through local events such as sports matches.

As Papo kwa Papo is used in Tanzania to deal with SRH related matters, the initiative can be expanded to include local experts or public servants from other fields that young people can ask questions on.

## 5. Design for continued engagement beyond first-time adoption through rewards and recognition.

Relevant Adoption Stages

Comprehension & Value

Retention

First impressions of the IoGT site play a huge role in determining whether or not a user comes back to the area after the first visit. Features such as the landing page need to capture the user's attention and an interface that provokes them to navigate the different sections. Some users noted that the current landing page is too static to trigger repeat visits. It will be important to explore ways of adding compressed pictures and videos which will keep the platform data-light while appealing visually.

Efforts to drive new sign-ups on the IoGT site need to be coupled with engagement strategies that will keep users engaged for an extended duration but also trigger repeat visits for optimal impact. Continuous updating of the website is critical to ensure that the news on the site relates to current information. For instance, the COVID-19 section was singled out as 'old' news.

Reward system concepts can be used to address U-Reporters' polling fatigue. Although rewards can vary, they are almost always delivered in one of three different ways:

**Informational:** Informational rewards are images, articles, and content delivered to users through a feed. This content can either be small user-generated items or seemingly endless content-heavy sites. Regardless of the specifics of the content, informational rewards satiate a user's curiosity.

**Social:** Social rewards cater to three powerful emotions: vanity, self-worth, and validation. These can be likes, views, etc. on user-generated content. Opportunities for young people to develop social capital can also be generated.

**Gamification:** Scoring systems, achievements, and other game-like features in non-game apps by tracking user progress.

Even if a product uses all these delivery methods, the reward should always resonate on an emotional level with the user in order for it to be effective. The more powerful the emotion, the more successful the reward.

### IoGT

Some content sections can be converted into training modules, and users can be rewarded with certificates for completing modules.

Frequently update the website with new information to reduce predictability. With topics that can be easily summarized into 2-3 bullet points, develop social-media promotional materials to 'tease' users by giving them a taster of information within the titles of articles or when sharing articles on social media.

The content development strategy should cover the duration within which content is kept on the IoGT site with nuances for emergency and thematic related content. For emergency-related content, it will be important to take archive it after the emergency response, while the thematic topics content can be kept on the site.

## U-Report

Segment users to ensure that they receive targeted polls to which they feel more inclined to respond.

Make the polling experience less formal through the introduction of easy language and friendly interactions that break the monotony of a continuous stream of questions.

Develop growth paths for U-Reporters with regular recognition based on how regularly they respond or interact with U-Report.

Create templates that U-Reporters can add their photos to and share on social media as a form of recognition after taking part in a challenge or campaign.

Publish user-centred stories on social media that recognise successful contributions and interactions associated with U-Report.

Send a monthly participation report as a thank you. Providing continuous updates of how their responses are being used would also allow U-Reporters to see the value of what they have submitted.

Regularly communicate how U-Report engagement is influencing programme design.

People are motivated by progress, mastery, and control: Provide users with a sense of progress as they go through polls.

Appeal to both the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of U-Reporters when sharing polls and quizzes. Further research may be needed to understand which types of incentives will work better depending on the topic or the feature used (polls vs. quizzes).

Appeal to intrinsic motivation through messaging: use messaging that appeals to a users' identity or the value that will be created by engaging with U-Report features, such as learning something new, being able to help others with the new information gained, providing valuable opinions, or contributing to a collective goal.

Appeal to extrinsic motivation through rewards: tangible rewards, such as T-Shirts and Airtime, or gamification tactics can be used to increase engagement. U-Reporters who have shown consistent responses, likely to material that they are interested in, should be rewarded, perhaps through providing them with an opportunity to get more involved with the cause, even in person.

## 6. Create opportunities for users to feel and become invested in the platforms to foster an improved experience.

Relevant Adoption Stages

**Trialability**

**Retention**

According to the Hook Model, investment can come from asking the user to give some combination of time, data, or effort. This can include: responding to polls, surveys, and quizzes; building a profile; liking and commenting on articles; learning about new features, etc. It implies that the additional commitment will improve the experience the next time the user interacts with the platform. The more that IoGT and U-Report can respond to the investment users have made through their experience, the greater the likelihood that users will come back to the site.

### **IoGT**

An IoGT app can increase retention by providing additional convenience (offline content access), personalisation (building a profile), and engagement features (gamification and push notifications).

Expand the features that users have available to them after signing up. For example, users can get notified on email once new content is added.

### **U-Report**

U-Reporters would benefit from having the time they spend responding to polls translating into real-life opportunities, for example, getting an opportunity to visit programmes that have been strengthened by their responses, or a personalised appreciation from the program.

## **7. Intentionally design and present content that is relevant to adolescents and young people in a fun, entertaining, and provocative way to encourage information-seeking behaviour.**

Relevant Adoption Stages

**Trialability**

**Retention**

### **Avoid or de-prioritise content that reinforces a feeling of fatigue**

While information about COVID-19 may still be relevant and important, it can be de-prioritised in the visual real-estate of the home page and placed in a section that is less prominent. Content that is engaging for young people can be used to pull users in first before giving them the opportunity to explore other content.

### **Explore a range of content formats for different communication purposes**

Storytelling, audios, videos, and advice sections can be explored, depending on the types of information that they would like to communicate and how users prefer to access them. For example, SRH-related advice can be communicated through a section with short, bitesize, and actionable information, as users are likely to need quick answers. Other messages that may, for example, seek to change attitudes about certain topics, can be communicated through comics and storytelling that can be accessed at a more leisurely pace.

### **Use provocative titles, questions, and prompts to stimulate curiosity**

Questions and section titles can be designed in a way to encourage information-seeking behaviour by making the user want to learn more. This can be done by asking provoking questions, creating titles that may expose gaps in the user's knowledge about a particular topic, or communicating the main benefit of reading the article within the title. While being provocative, it's important to ensure that the titles are not misleading to readers.

### **Explore alternative entry points to accessing information**

The information architecture can be rethought in ways that may make users more likely to access certain types of information on topics that they may initially ignore. For example, rather than using the title 'mental health' to access related articles, users can click on section titles that describe various emotions (sad, angry, upset, etc.) that lead to further articles about wellbeing and mental health. Additionally, the navigation experience can be redesigned in a way that highlights more options available, e.g. through expandable menus, or the ability to scroll through a range of diverse topics. This can highlight what is available to the user and make it more likely that they will spot something of interest.

### **IoGT**

Use more provocative and catchy titles to draw users in, such as 'how to's', listicles ('10 things you need to know about X'). *Love Matters* is a website that provides multiple examples on content that uses provocative imagery and language, especially on topics related to sex and relationships.

Explore comics, audio-visual formats, and advice sections.

Explore expandable menus that display greater range of sub-topics available to the users.

### **U-Report**

Make messaging to participate in polls and quizzes more provocative. For example, rather than asking 'Would you like to participate in a poll on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Gender Based Violence (SRH/GBV)?', one of the questions within the poll can be added in the introduction to the poll to give users a taster of the questions to come, for example: "Can women living with HIV get pregnant and give birth safely? Answer this and more in our latest SRH/GBV quiz"

At the same time, the question posed may bias particular U-Reporters to answer the poll, based on their level of interest with the particular question used. Questions that could appeal to diverse profiles should be selected.

## 8. Explore the following additional use cases for IoGT and U-Report, linkages with each other and to other platforms

Relevant Adoption Stages

Comprehension & Value

Retention

Advocacy

This section highlights additional use cases for IoGT and U-Report based on learnings from the research process as well as ideas shared by adolescents and young people.

### Integration of IoGT and U-Report

- The IoGT site can display the results and data visualisations of the most recent U-Report polls to keep users updated on the opinions of young people in their country.
- Use U-Report to push links of new IoGT articles or sections, or at the end of a related poll.
- Use messaging that captures the value proposition of U-Report, such as 'Make your voice heard around the topics you care about' to lead users to the U-Report section on the IoGT site. This can be added as a banner on the IoGT home page.

#### IoGT

**Resource Marketplace:** Use IoGT as a directory for locally relevant resources (trusted youth organisations, mental health/SRH resources, etc.).

**Learning Modules for AY:** users can complete courses and receive certification on topics such as internet safety, life-skills and entrepreneurship.

**Integration with existing learning platforms:** Content from existing courses on YOMA and the Learning Passport can be adapted for or integrated with IoGT using the current training module feature for frontline health workers.

**Embedded tool in existing education spaces:** for example, tablets displaying the IoGT site can be fixed in school and community libraries or learning spaces in youth organisations.

#### U-Report

**Diverse counselling initiatives:** Adopt and expand the *Papo Kwa Papo* use case beyond SRH counselling to other fields with the appropriate professionals and specialists, such as, but not limited to, career readiness and entrepreneurship, legal advice and rights, mental health, and internet safety.

**Micro-learning:** In addition to polls and quizzes that may take a few minutes to complete, U-Report can deliver even shorter, bite-sized pieces of actionable information such as a regular 'tip of the week' or 'fact of the week'.

**Resource & Service Referrals:** A list of trusted resources or services, such as upskilling programmes and platforms, can be shared on a regular basis.

Both platforms can also be used as recruitment channels for engagement with UNICEF initiatives and programmes, such as volunteering and participation in research.

## Country Office Recommendations

This section highlights recommendations for key operational considerations of IoGT and U-Report. The ideas outlined touch on both internal and external facing efforts spearheaded by CO teams to ensure sustainability, iteration and scale up of platform use internally and externally.

### 1. Invest in the optimization and marketing of the platforms.

Relevant Adoption Stages

#### Awareness

#### Search Engine Optimization (SEO) with keywords that make IoGT sites appearing first on search results

It is essential to do a search engine optimization for IoGT sites in each country to increase the visibility among young people. Information contained on IoGT site is very relevant for young people who want reliable and accurate information on various topics such as mental health. Most young people with access to the internet search for quick and easy tips on everyday challenges on Google. The search is often framed as a “How to...” instead of a thematic title search such as mental health or sexual and reproductive health. Optimising the sites with keywords related to the thematic areas will likely result in more new visits and continued familiarity with the site.

#### Promote the platforms across UNICEF’s digital platforms

For internal and external audiences, IoGT and U-Report teams should market the platforms through easy-to-understand promotional materials and features of use cases for both platforms. This should consider the profiles of the target audiences, so that there is an overall alignment between the users’ needs and UNICEF’s programmatic goals. Showcasing scenarios of the two platforms’ usage and guiding resources on how the sections can leverage the platforms to reach different audiences will ensure more buy-in for the platforms.

#### IoGT

Optimise country-specific IoGT sites for SEO using keywords in articles. For example, an article on mental health can be optimized with key words such as #anxiety #depression #lonely #stress.

Promote IoGT across marketing channels for key dates of the year such as International Youth Day whose content is mainly targeted at adolescents and young people.

Employ a content push strategy where articles on IoGT are regularly shared on social media channels, for example, on a weekly basis.

#### U-Report

Periodically publish use cases for U-Report on UNICEF internal and external facing platforms.

Promote U-Report dashboard to reach wider audiences with feedback on what young people think on different topics or areas.

## 2. Conduct insightful co-design consultations and testing with adolescents and young people regularly.

Relevant Adoption Stages

Awareness

Retention

Advocacy

### In-person events

Structured periodic (annual or semi-annual) in-person engagements with young people should be a key priority for IoGT and U-Report focal points to gather feedback on both user and content experience. The majority of young people engaged through the research showed immense interest in in-person events as a pathway to building a more significant connection to the platform through networking with other young people. COs can conduct consultations with adolescents and young people in collaboration with partners who already host events (in-person and online) for young people. It will be essential to engage diverse audiences to mitigate the risks of receiving biased feedback from users who over time become very familiar with UNICEF's goals and objectives.

### Young people as co-creators of content

Young people who engage with content on both U-Report and IoGT can develop short videos that get featured on the social media sites of the platforms as well as on the site itself. Co-creation of content is another way to develop material that resonates. For example, seeing that the ESAR SRH package was co-developed with young people resulted in young women resonating with the content on menstruation as it provided information on ways of managing certain discomfort associated with menstruation such as pain and cramps. Content creation is an emerging trend among online audiences thanks to simple and easy to use platforms such as TikTok and Instagram that have templates for users. A majority of young people in Tanzania and South Africa cited creating their own content (short videos mostly) and cross-sharing it through social media platforms. For instance, when a user creates a TikTok video, it is also shared it on WhatsApp groups, WhatsApp status, Instagram and Facebook. Sharing content was majorly for entertainment or edutainment purposes. Co-creation initiatives should be done within the limitations of IoGT platform requirements to be a low-data site.

Competitive submissions on topics such as SRH coupled with recognition or rewarding mechanisms through items such as data vouchers, t-shirts and shoutouts on UNICEF platforms can be used as incentive mechanisms to motivate young people to co-create content.

#### IoGT

Conduct joint events for IoGT and U-Report.

Every year or twice a year, launch a challenge that requires young people to develop content in the form of short videos, essays and disruptive ideas to address certain global issues.

#### U-Report

Host annual or semi-annual activities with participatory activities such as challenges and competitions for young people to develop content.

Recognise the best contributors of U-Report at regional and district levels through in-person events.

### 3. Adopt a Peer-led approach to knowledge management.

Relevant Adoption Stages

Retention

Advocacy

#### Knowledge sharing activities that take a peer-led approach create greater ownership and buy-in of the process and the outcomes

We recommend that UNICEF CO focal points take a more lead role in designing what a meaningful knowledge management approach for both IoGT and U-Report platforms should entail, the desired format and frequency of the engagements. Often, CO teams are preoccupied with essential tasks related to executing what could be perceived as more urgent roles related to one or both platforms, such that when teams change, there is not enough documentation to ensure continuity. Knowledge management can be perceived as an added responsibility driven by regional and global teams. It will be crucial to rethink this approach and co-create a knowledge management approach anchored on peer-led learning principles with CO focal points taking a more lead role. A peer-led approach will build greater connection among different CO focal points, build trust and foster greater collaboration in enhancing the usefulness of the two platforms.

Through this approach, country teams can create contextually-relevant onboarding packs for new team members, align on expectations on how to adopt innovative approaches to create section buy-ins and foster open sharing of challenges.

#### Section Buy-in

With a refined value proposition for IoGT, programme teams will need to buy-in more to utilise the two platforms. Leveraging the peer-led learning approach to share lessons on effective approaches to working with different departments will drive greater adoption of the two platforms.

#### IoGT

UNICEF HQ & ESARO to facilitate co-creation sessions with CO IoGT focal points to develop a peer-led approach to knowledge management. The outcomes of these co-creation session should be owned at CO level.

Periodically develop human interest stories of users who have benefitted from the IoGT platform and use them to market to wider audiences.

#### U-Report

Facilitate feedback sessions with U-Report teams at COs to identify opportunities to adapt the existing knowledge sharing sessions.

Periodically develop human interest stories of successful use cases of U-Report and use them to market to wider audiences at both user and partner levels.

## 4. Co-create sustainable and scalable partnership models with partners.

Relevant Adoption Stages

Awareness

Retention

### Co-creating partnership models with partners

Partners' crucial role in scaling IoGT and U-Report is undisputed. Co-branding and co-promoting activities on both U-Report and IoGT have resulted in more significant results when signing up new users. Partnership models that result in value for both parties have a better chance of success than those in which one party stands to gain more than the other. Proactively co-creating and iterating partnership models is crucial to ensuring that the value proposition of the partnerships stays relevant. As partner organisations evolve, priorities change along with team composition, which is likely to significantly impact the outcomes from the partnerships. On an annual basis, IoGT and U-Report teams should bring together their partners to reflect on aspects that have worked well, areas for improvement and new opportunities to scale the platforms.

Partners can be involved in strategic decisions around platform use and opportunities to empower them.

### Easy to use onboarding and promotional materials for partners

Providing partner organisations with easy to use guides to support mobilization teams will be crucial in ensuring partners offer a seamless onboarding experience to new users. Additionally, partners need to feel empowered to answer questions from users on U-Report content. Partners ought to be part of the feedback loop with users and sharing the feedback with UNICEF teams.

#### IoGT

For COs that will be setting up new partnerships to launch/scale IoGT v2.0, we suggest facilitating a series of co-creation sessions to develop a shared value for users, for UNICEF and for partners coupled with periodic check-ins that will relook at the shared value proposition and whether or not it needs tweaks or refinement.

#### U-Report

For existing partnerships, there is a need to relook the shared value that was agreed upon versus what has been achieved thus far. In addition to this, it will be important to set systems and processes for periodic stocktake to reflect on achievements and new opportunities.

## 5. Update U-Report database regularly profiling active and inactive users to inform promotion and operation considerations.

Relevant Adoption Stages

Retention

Advocacy

Periodically reviewing, sorting, and updating the U-Report database is crucial to gathering accurate insights based on active U-Reporters that would also inform cost optimisation measures, as it is done by the Uganda CO. For example, dormant users can be separated from active users and different strategies employed to stimulate their engagement in response to their unique needs. Those who have been inactive for an extended period of time and/or aged out of the primary target audience can be removed to save operational costs.

### U-Report

Categorize U-Reporters into different user groups and employ different strategies to reach and engage them. For inactive users, conduct targeted activation attempts while for active users, offer positive reinforcement.



## Final Thoughts

In summary, for both loGT and U-Report, the recommendations aim to address the following 3 areas, namely *Platform Improvement*, *Demand Creation*, and *Sustainability*.

Platform Improvement refers to elements of user experience and content that can be made better; Demand Creation refers to the promotion of the platforms; and Sustainability refers to the efforts made by UNICEF HQ, ESARO and COs in ensuring that the platforms remain relevant and useful for those they are created to serve. While it is important to note that the three areas have overlaps, *Platform Improvement* efforts lay a strong foundation for *Demand Creation* and *Sustainability*. Recommendations should also not be thought of as strictly belonging to one area or another, but that contribute to the overall cycle of enhancement.

In each area, there are certain groups of actors involved: UNICEF HQ, ESARO and COs are responsible for technical support, platform improvement, and sustainability; partners from governments, civil society and private sector support the demand creation component while users are the ones whom efforts in these three areas are directed towards. Broadly speaking, the three areas and the three groups of actors need to remain well connected, coordinated and informed throughout the development of loGT and U-Report initiatives.

Adoption of learnings and recommendations from this report will be important across UNICEF HQ, ESARO and CO teams to amplify the usage of loGT and U-Report to optimize the benefits to users, ensure increased sustainability and increased reach.

