

Overall Report

**Catching the voice of the *Born-free generation* of Namibia
through mobile phones**

October 23rd – November 30th, 2009

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1. INTRODUCTION

UNICEF pursues participation of children and young people as one of the indispensable pillars under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which Republic of Namibia has committed itself to, in order to ensure their well-being and the development of the environment that surrounds them. Based on the Millennium Development Goals that provide crucial indicators for the development, the voice and opinions raised by young Namibians themselves not only contribute to better formulate the national policy adequate to up-to date priorities, but also assesses the success and hindrances in achieving national development goals. Parliament of Namibia seeks the input of the public, and especially the youths' voice, to reflect their opinion in the democratic process within its legislative and executive roles. One way for the youth to exercise their voice is by voting in elections. About 130,000 youths, whom President Pohamba called the "born-free generation without the experience of brutal Apartheid oppression", voted for the first time in 2009.

In order to specifically gather the opinions of this "born free" generation in Namibia, UNICEF, in partnership with the Southern Africa Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) and the Namibia Institute for Democracy (NID) initiated a pilot project aimed at enhancing civic participation of the born-free generation in the democratic process through making their expectations and priorities for development known to elected leaders, thereby strengthening the link between the part of the electorate voting for the first time and the elected authorities. In view of the popularity of mobile phones amongst the youth, which provide great opportunities for young people to contribute their voices and opinions about what they see as important in their lives today as active participants and citizens of Namibia, a mobile based platform was set up to gather opinions of the youth on a range of matters affecting them. The program had the following specific objectives:

- To improve accountability and democracy in decision making process by reflecting the opinions of the youth on social issues.
- To monitor and evaluate a mobile phone based platform to understand pros and contras of the electronic-participation process.
- To involve young people to participate in opinion polls encouraging public debate on social issues.
- To collect ideas from young people to influence the national policy development based on Millennium Development Goals.
- To inform Parliament on the opinions of youth on national policies and social issues.

These objectives were pursued through the establishment and maintenance of an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to capture the youth's expectations from political leaders and priorities for socio-political development, to analyze data such obtained and share it with elected leaders in an ongoing basis. Five topical youth specific issues, broadly categorized according to National Development Policies and the Millennium Development Goals, were identified according to which IVR content was programmed:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| • Child Protection | 23 rd – 30 th October 2009 |
| • Education | 31 st October – 6 th November 2009 |
| • HIV/AIDS | 7 th – 13 th November 2009 |
| • Your health | 14 th – 21 st November 2009 |

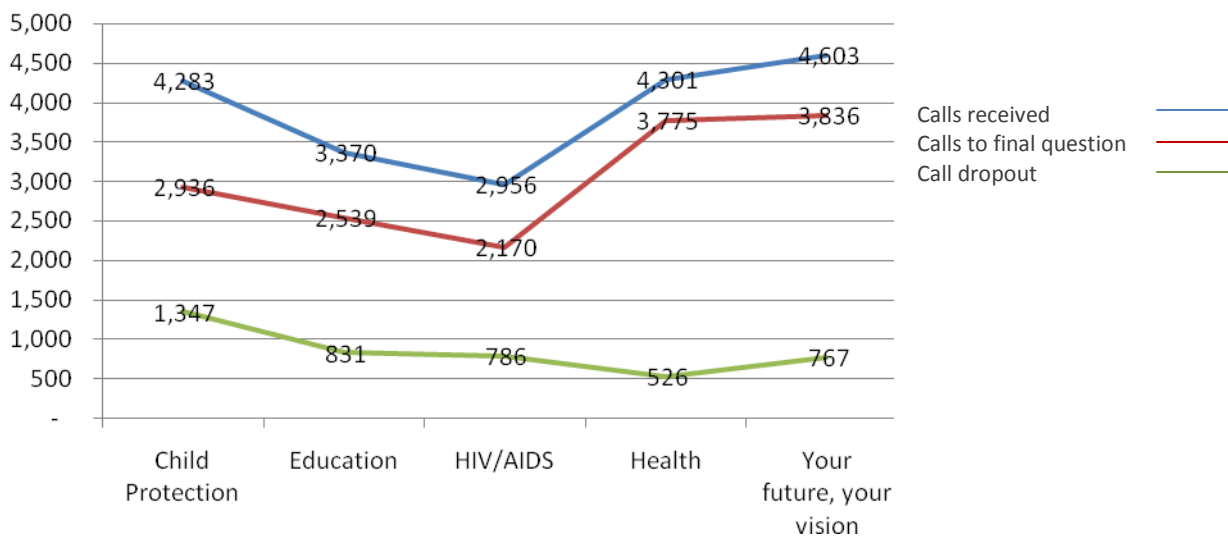
- Your future, your vision 22nd – 30th November 2009

The technical expertise for this project was made possible by the IT expertise from **Text To Change** – a Ugandan organization that has made significant contributions in using mobile phone technology for development projects.

2. PARTICIPATION

Overall, a total number of 19,513 calls were received over the five-week period during which the program was conducted. Of these callers, a total of 14,684 (75%) made it to the last round of questions, while one-quarter of all callers (4,829) dropped out sometime during their call.

Chart 1: Total number of callers



The topic of the last week, *Your future, Your vision*, received the highest number of calls, followed by the topic of *Health*. The drop-out rate steadily decreased during the course of the project, from a high of 31% in the first week to about 16% during the last, which may indicate that callers were getting more accustomed to the IVR project.

As this was a first project of its kind in Namibia, the relatively high level of participation is impressive. This may indicate that the target audience is eager to participate in public issues. Furthermore, the primary mode of communication used in this project, mobile phones, is well suited to the target audience. The project was also well advertised and received a lot of media attention.

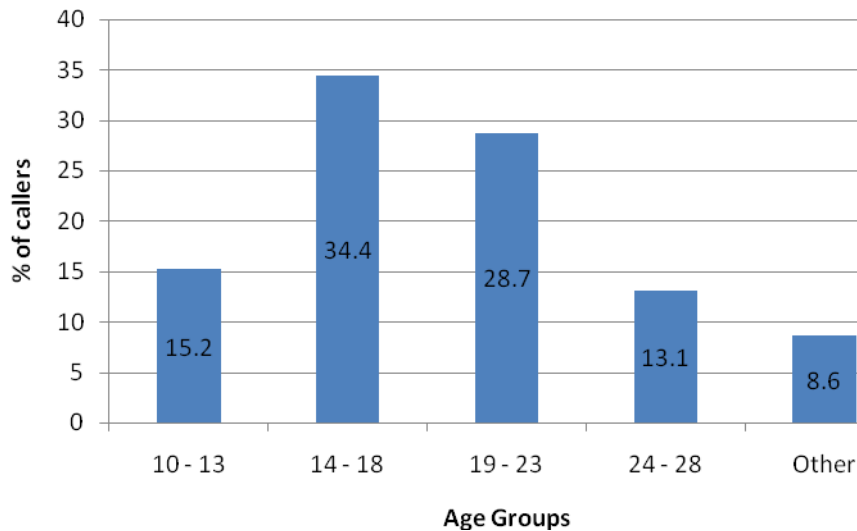
Of all calls received, 55% came from female callers, while 45% came from male callers.

It was unfortunately not possible to determine rural vs. urban participation, or the regional origin of callers. However, a proxy in this regard could be the languages that callers preferred during their calls. Callers were provided with three choices of languages that they could have their call processed in. Over the total program period, the majority of callers (52.5%) chose the Oshiwambo language, while 44.9%

chose English. Only 2.6% of all callers chose Afrikaans as language medium. The high number of callers who preferred the Oshiwambo language may indicate a need to be addressed in a language of choice apart from English. The relatively high drop out rate of callers (25%) may in part be due to language difficulties of non-Oshiwambo speaking callers with the English language. Hence, it would probably be fruitful to include all local languages in future projects of this kind, which could widen the scope of similar programs and could also provide interesting analyses segregated by language.

The largest segment of callers (34.4%) came from the 14 – 18 age group, followed by the 19 – 23 age group with 28.7%. Together these age groups represented almost two third (63.1%) of all callers, which indicates that this project targeted its primary target audience rather well. Only 8.6% of all callers were not from one of the designated age groups.

Chart 2: Callers by age group



An analysis of calls received per topic is as follows:

3. CHILD PROTECTION

This topic was chosen as subject for the first week as, while the saying is that “children are the future”, it is clear that children are also the “present”. The future depends on their healthy development today. They are the most vulnerable, the most resilient and the most precious in society. In African society, as in many cultures around the world, children are a gift and a means for parents to secure their own futures. In traditional African societies, children are to be protected and supported, and assisted to reach their full potential.

Despite these ideals, however, children are often subject to abuse, exploitation and violence from those who are meant to protect them: the state, their families, their teachers and their employers. Instead of being treated like a gift, some children are treated like a burden to be abused, kicked around and silenced.

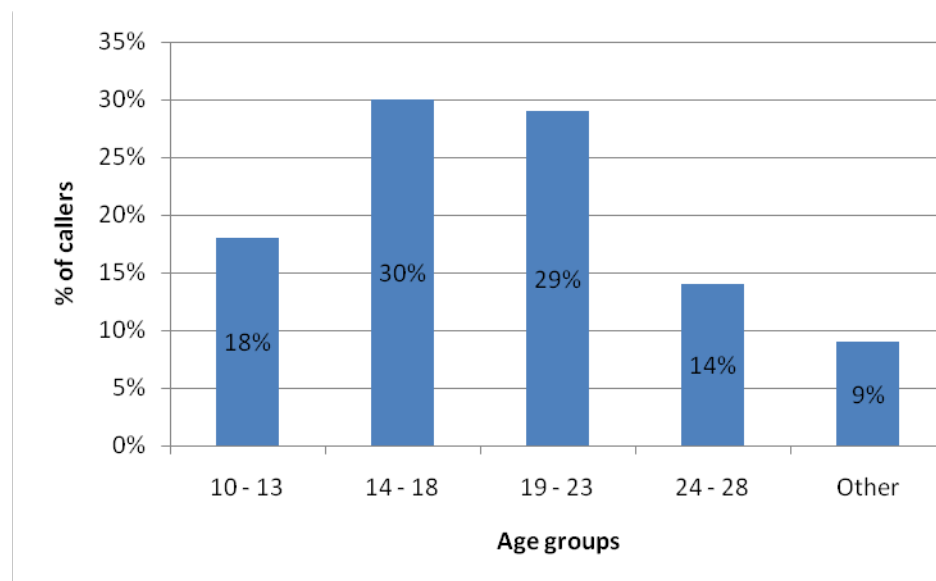
Therefore, callers were requested to provide information on issues that they feel are important in order to ensure a comfortable and safe life for all young people in Namibia.

A total of 4,283 calls were received. Of these, about two thirds (2,936 callers) made it to the last round of questions where callers were requested to select an option that would best provide a way to either protect young people from physical and verbal violence, reduce alcohol and drug abuse, protect young people from violence, support orphans and vulnerable children or ensuring that every child is registered at birth as means to ensuring a comfortable and safe life for all young people in Namibia. The 1,347 callers that were lost possibly hung up prematurely or did not respond in time, which led to the connection to be severed.

Of all callers, 59% were male and 41% female. Language preference was highest for Oshiwambo with 56,6% of all callers, while 39,6% of all callers indicating English as the language of their choice. Only 3,8% of callers selected the option for Afrikaans.

Most callers were from the age group 14 to 18, as well as 19 to 23 years, combined totaling just under 60% of all callers. Segregation of callers according to age groups was as follows:

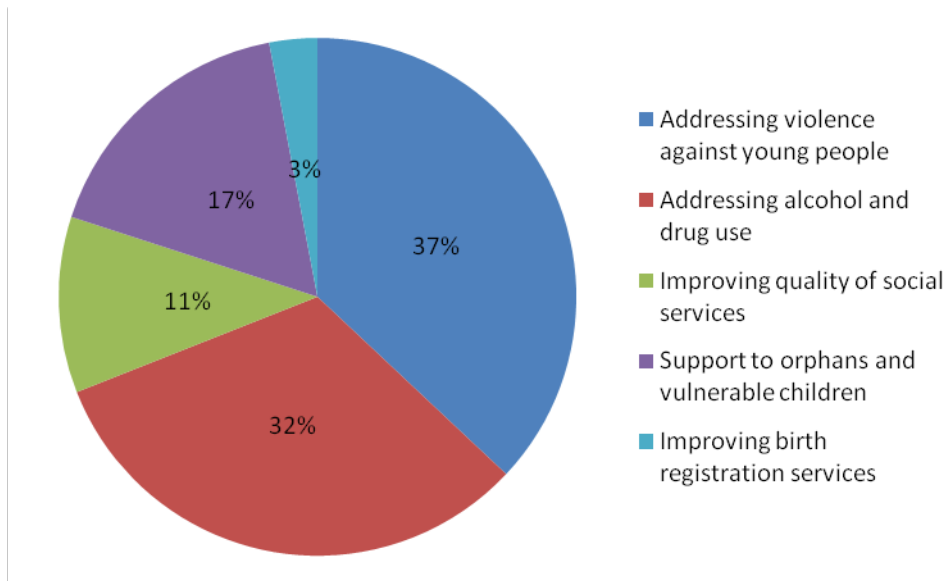
Chart 3: Callers by age group



3.1 Most important measures to ensure a comfortable and safe life for all young people in Namibia

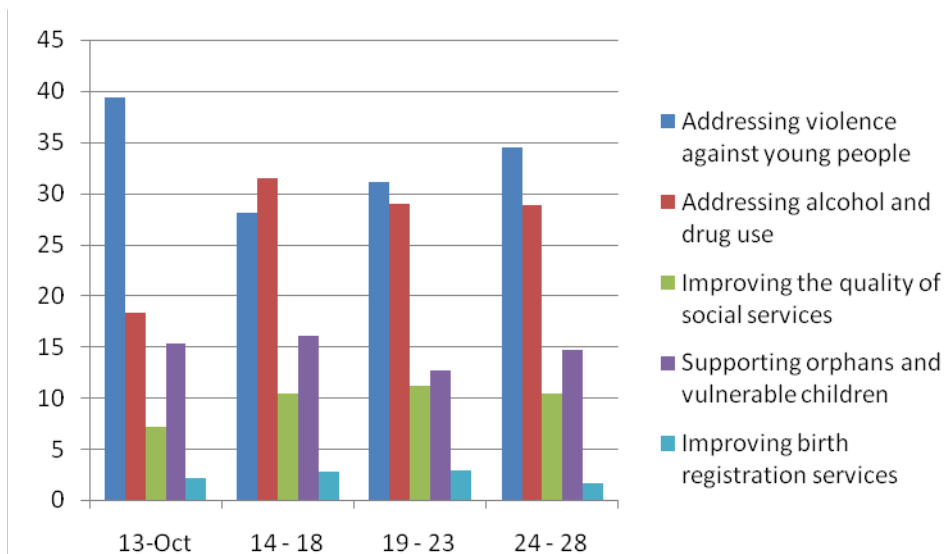
Callers were asked to identify the most important measures to ensure a comfortable and safe life for all young people in Namibia. Addressing violence against young people was highest on callers' agenda, with 37% of all callers choosing this option. Option 2, addressing alcohol and drug abuse was also deemed important; together these two options were chosen by almost 70% of all callers. Improving birth registration services to ensure that every child is registered at birth were only considered by 3% of callers as being important.

Chart 4: Most important measures to ensure a comfortable and safe life for all young people in Namibia



Segregated by age group, the percentage of callers identifying one of the above measures as most important was as follows:

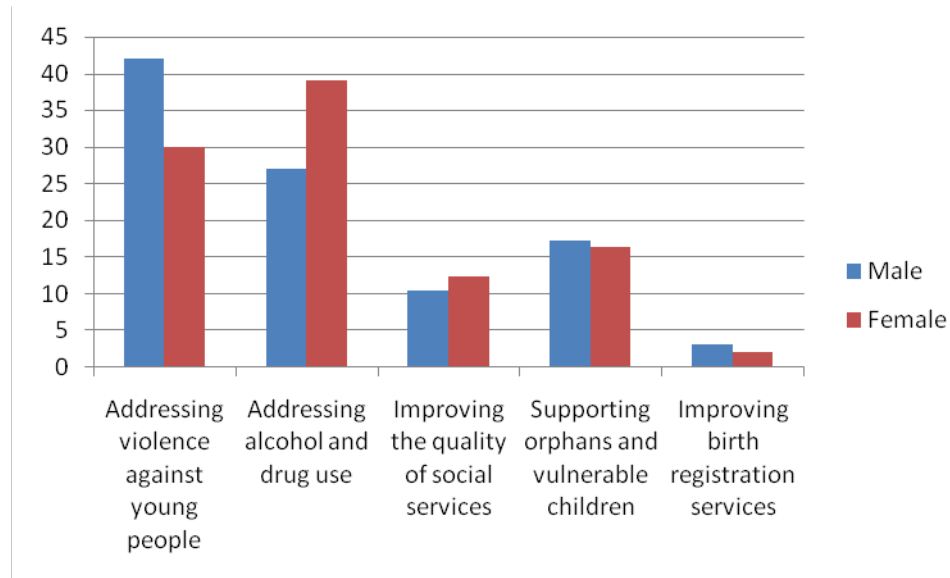
Chart 5: Most important issues for callers segregated by age group (%)



Almost 40% of 10 to 13 year olds therefore felt most strongly about addressing violence against young people.

Addressing violence against young people was highest on the list of concerns for male callers, while female callers mostly felt that alcohol and drug use should be addressed. Improving birth registration services was prioritised lowest by callers from both genders.

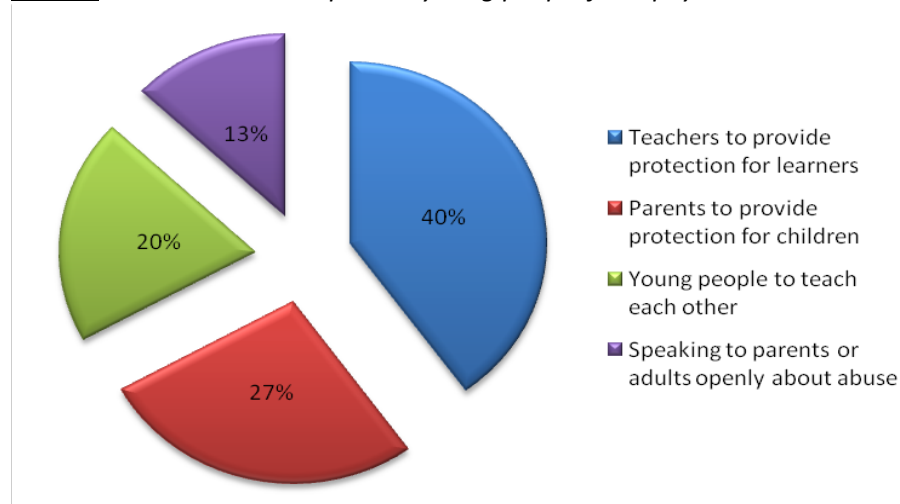
Chart 6: Most important issues for callers segregated by gender (%)



3.2 Measures to best protect young people from physical and verbal violence

Of the 1,103 callers who felt that it was most important to address violence against young people in Namibia, the majority felt that teachers should provide protection for learners as best means to protect young people from physical and verbal violence. This may indicate that teachers are being seen as trustworthy confidants who may offer protection from violence. Only 13% of callers felt that the best protection would be to speak openly to parents or adults about abuse.

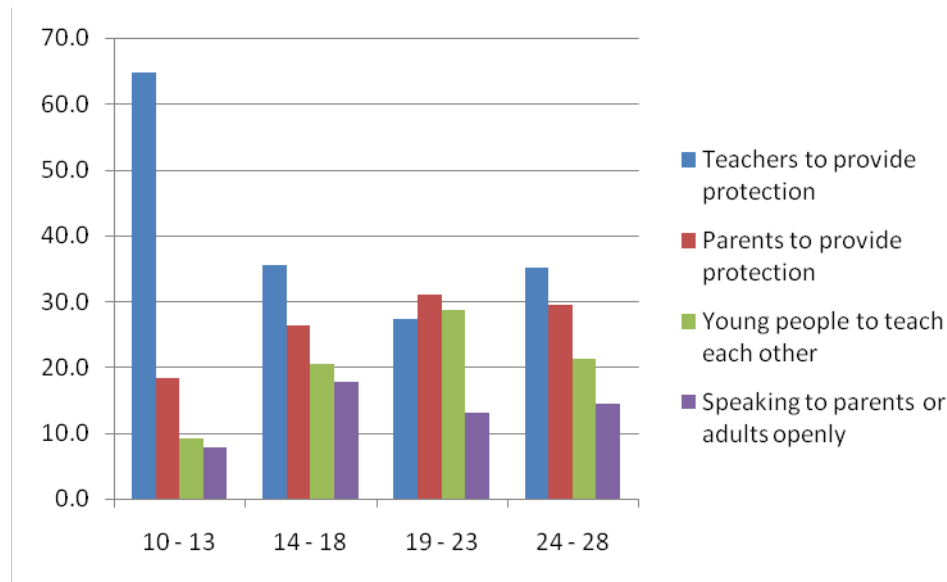
Chart 7: Measures to best protect young people from physical and verbal violence



72 callers requested to listen to the question and options again.

10 to 13 year old felt the strongest that teachers have an important role to play to protect learners from violence. Speaking to parents or adults openly about child abuse was indicated as the least effective way to protect people from physical and verbal violence across all age groups.

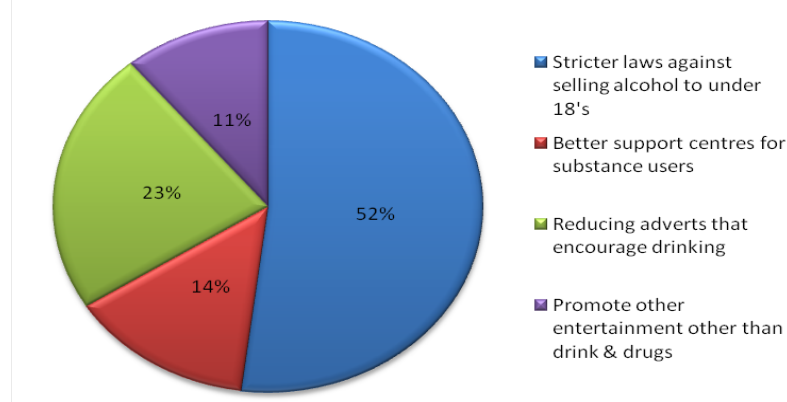
Chart 8: Measures to best protect young people from physical and verbal violence segregated by age group (%)



3.3 Measures to reduce drug and alcohol abuse

A total of 941 callers felt that addressing alcohol and drug abuse is most important in ensuring a comfortable and safe life for all young people in Namibia. Of these, more than half (52%) indicated that they want stricter laws against selling alcohol to anyone younger than 18 years, while 23% felt that adverts that encourage drinking should be reduced.

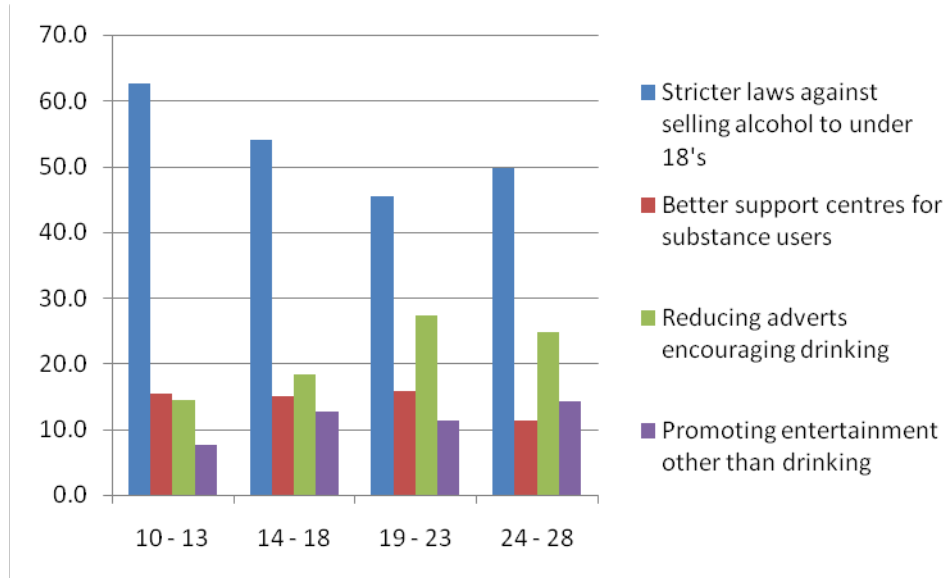
Chart 9: Measures to reduce drug and alcohol abuse



152 callers requested to listen to the options again.

It was especially the 10 to 13 year olds that favoured stricter laws against selling alcohol to under 18's. Responses over all age groupings were, however, relatively consistent.

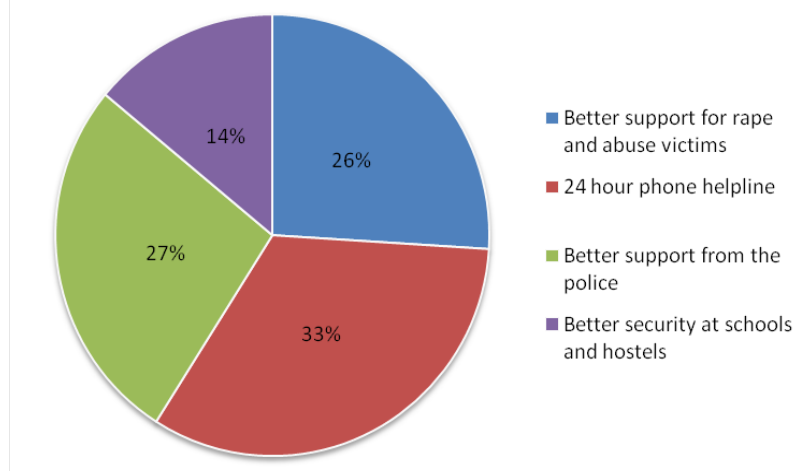
Chart 10: Measures to reduce drug and alcohol abuse segregated by age group (%)



3.4 Most important systems of protection from violence

The differences in opinion for the 315 callers who felt that improving the quality of services as means to ensure a comfortable and safe life for all young people in Namibia were relatively evenly spread with the largest portion of callers feeling that a phone hpline reachable 24 hours a day, 7 days a week would provide the most important system to protect themselves from violence.

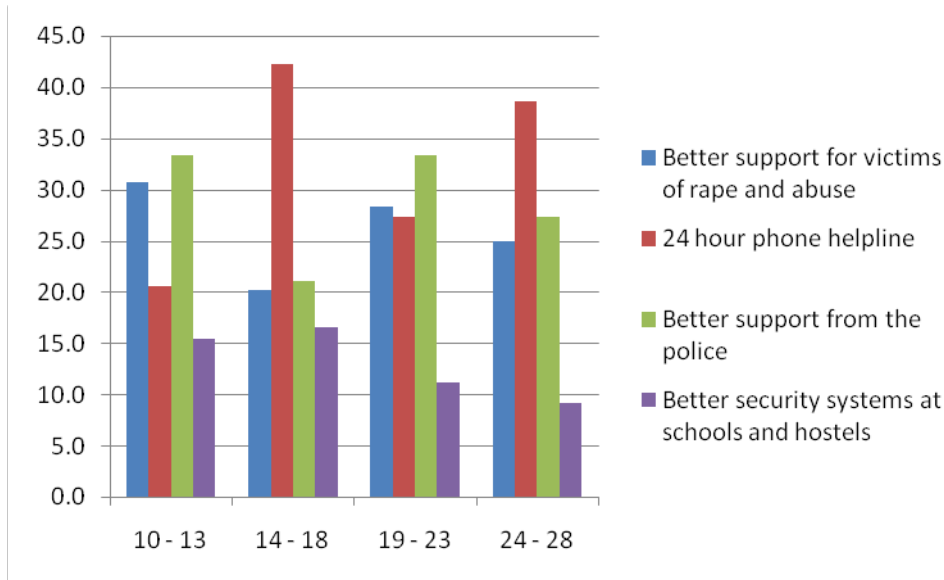
Chart 11: Most important systems of protection from violence



73 callers requested a repeat of the options.

Callers seemed to be satisfied with security systems at schools and hostels. One third of 10 to 13 year olds felt that they need better support from the police, while the idea of a phone helpline that is active 24 hours a day, 7 days a week resonate specifically with 14 to 18 year olds and 24 to 28 year olds.

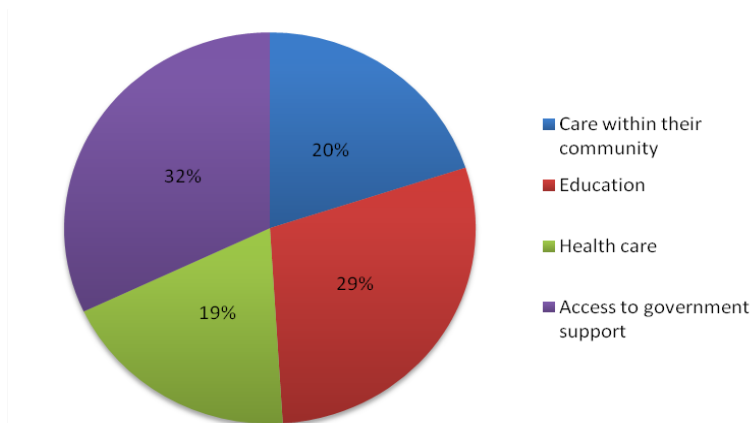
Chart 12: Most important systems of protection from violence segregated by age group (%)



3.5 Measures most needed to support orphans and vulnerable children

504 callers felt that supporting orphans and vulnerable children would ensure a comfortable and safe life for all young people in Namibia. Of these, almost one third (32%) felt that orphans and vulnerable children should receive more government support.

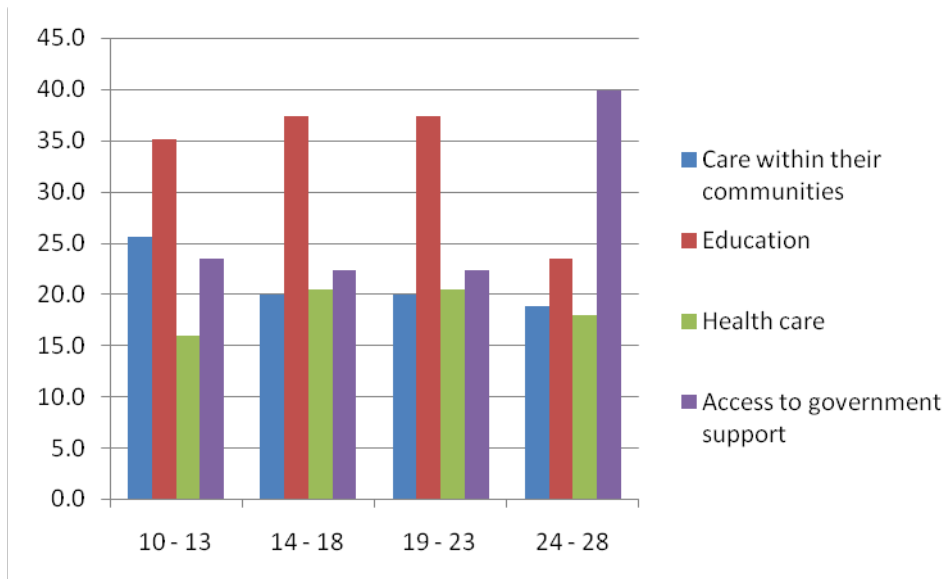
Chart 13: Measures most needed to support orphans and vulnerable children



88 callers requested a repeat of the options.

Especially 24 to 28 year olds felt that orphans and vulnerable children should get more government support, while better health care is relatively low on all age groups' agenda. Education, however, features relatively prominently across all age groups.

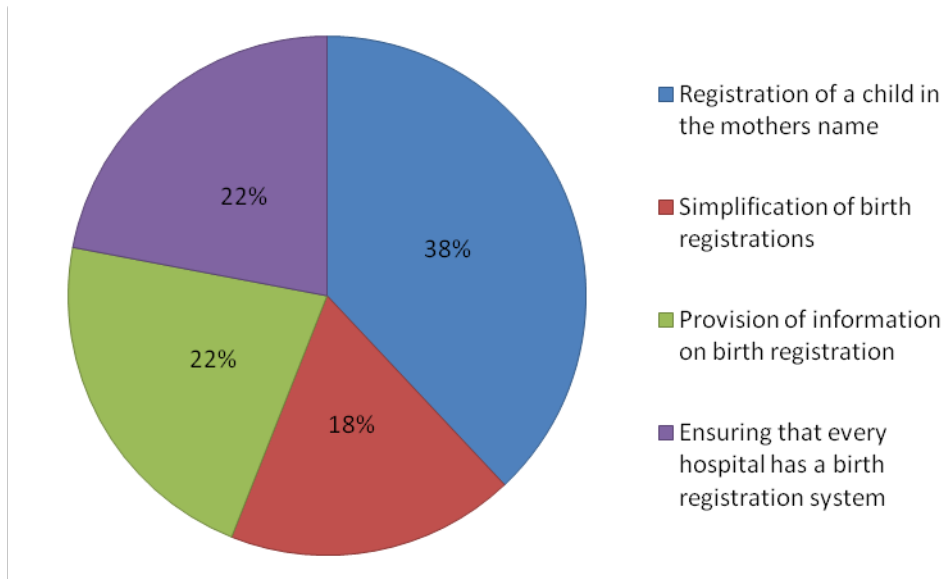
Chart 14: Measures most needed to support orphans and vulnerable children segregated by age group (%)



3.6 Priorities in ensuring that every child is registered at birth

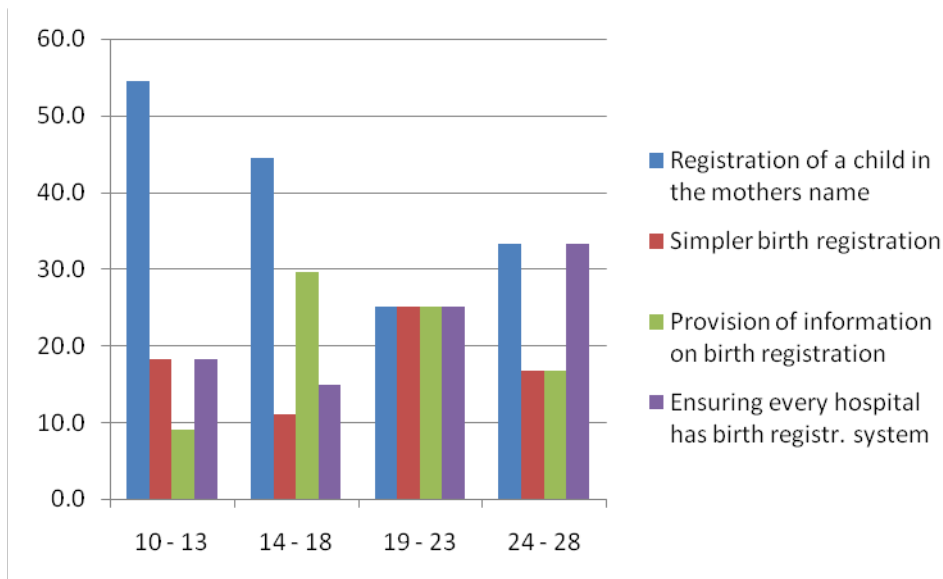
Only 73 callers felt that improving birth registration services, to ensure that every child is registered at birth, could contribute to ensure a comfortable and safe life for all young people in Namibia. Of these, 38% felt that a child should be allowed to be registered in his/her mothers name if the father is absent.

Chart 15: Priorities in ensuring that every child is registered at birth



The registration of a child in the mothers name in the absence of a father featured prominently across all age groups.

Chart 16: Priorities in ensuring that every child is registered at birth segregated by age group (%)



4. EDUCATION

The United Nations in 1948 declared that education is a basic human right. Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states:

“Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.”

Achieving universal primary education is also part of the UN’s Millennium Goals (UNDP 2003). Target 3 states:

“Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.”

In Namibia, during the time of apartheid the education system was essentially focused on the white minority. With Independence in 1990, the Government of the Republic of Namibia introduced far-reaching reforms in order to eliminate these disparities, allocating annually up to 28% of the government budget to the education sector.

Despite legislation making primary education compulsory, the enrolment rate in Namibian schools is only 82 %, with some regional and gender differences. In addition, there is the problem of drop-out at all levels in all regions. In each grade the drop-out rate varies between 10 % and 1 %. There is an especially high drop-out rate in grades 1, 5 and 10. Thus, even though Namibia manages to keep up a high level of children starting in school, it has a problem with school leavers.

As much as the Namibian Government is committed to improve access to and quality of basic education and despite all previous efforts and above mentioned successes, the education system is still showing serious weaknesses regarding coverage and provision of education, and in particular with respect to the quality of education. The quality of teaching and the performance of learners is still unsatisfactory, especially in urban and rural poverty areas. It is estimated that at the end of grade 6 only 25% of learners have acquired sufficient competencies in the learning areas of English and Mathematics. Only 40% of all learners pass grade 7 without repeating a year. On average 13 school years are needed to pass the final examinations for grade 10. At the overall national level, only 25,9 % of learners reached the minimum level of mastery in reading literacy and a meagre 7,6 % reached the desirable level. Almost 40% of the teachers do not have senior secondary school qualifications, and 28% of those teach without formal pedagogical qualifications¹.

Since Independence, Namibia introduced various measures to decentralise the provision and delivery of education services. The process of public sector reform as well as to introduce strategies to improve the quality of education planning and management are still ongoing and at times very tedious. However, in the context of the decentralisation of public services the education sector as the largest public sector is having a leading role. In terms of the Namibian Government’s Decentralisation Policy, recruitment and transfer of teachers as well as timely and adequate budget planning and administration will be decentralised to the 13 Regional Councils.

Presently, the Ministry of Education is implementing a holistic and comprehensive strategy for the education sector, the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). As a reform programme for the next 15 years, the ETSIP is aligning the entire education system towards the needs of the 21st century and Namibia's VISION 2030.

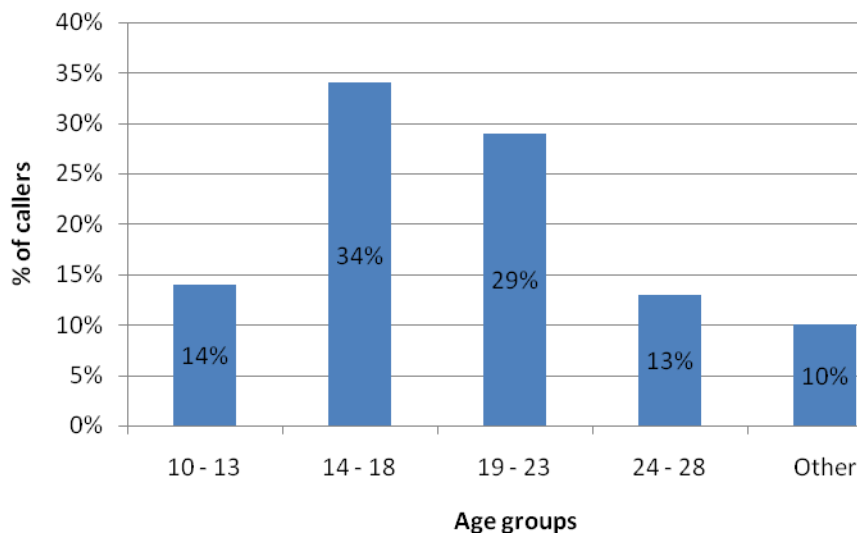
The topic of education was thus chosen in view to receive an indication of the youth's perception of education provision and their view on what is needed to improve learning and education in Namibia. It is hoped that data obtained may feed into the design of future strategies for the education sector.

A total of 3,370 calls were received. Of these, three quarters (2,539 callers) made it to the last round of questions where callers were requested to select an option that would best provide a way to improve learning in Namibia through improving the quality of education, having a better school environment, improving the quality of teaching or addressing learner drop out. The 831 callers that were lost possibly hung up prematurely or did not respond in time, which lead to the connection to be severed. The dropout percentage of this week (25%) was reduced from the previous week, where it was still at about 33%, which may indicate that there were many repeat callers who understand and are now more comfortable with interacting with the IVR system.

Of all callers, 61% were female and 39% male. The majority of callers, 53,2%, indicated Oshiwambo as the language of their choice. 44,5% of all callers preferred English, while 2,3% of callers selected the option for Afrikaans.

Most callers were from the age group 14 to 18, as well as 19 to 23 years, combined totaling almost two thirds of all callers. Segregation of callers according to age groups was largely the same as in the previous week and was as follows:

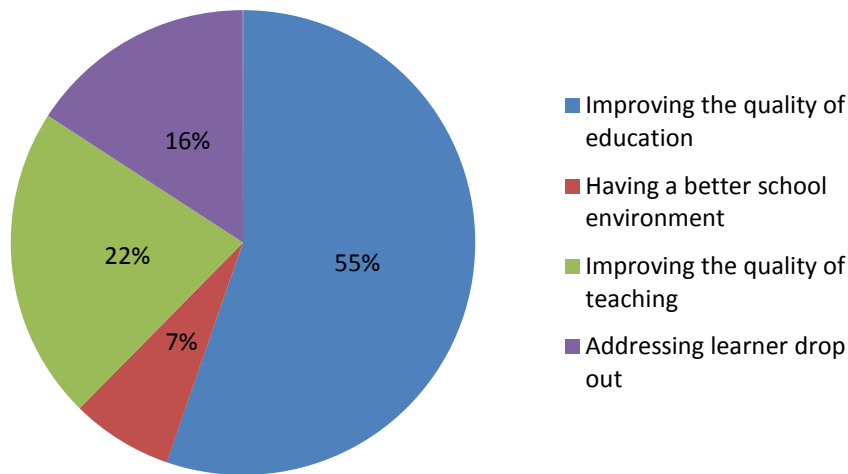
Chart 17: Callers by age group



4.1 Most important measures for improving learning in Namibia

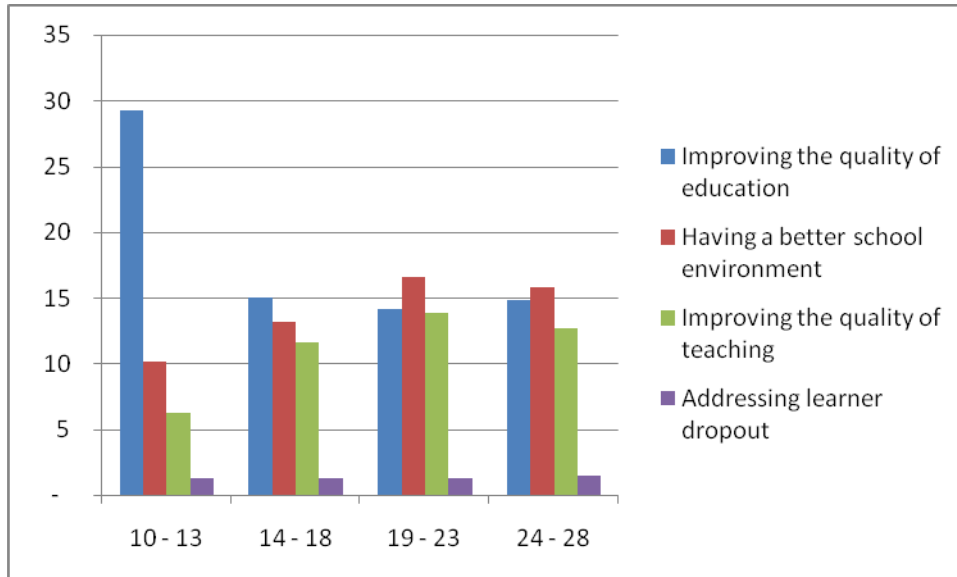
Callers were asked to identify the most important measures for improving learning in Namibia. The absolute majority of callers (55%) felt that improving the quality of education would be the most important measure for improving learning, with a further 22% of callers indicating that quality of teaching should be improved. Addressing learner drop out was considered by 16% of all callers as being important, while having a better school environment was only identified by 7% of all callers as a solution.

Chart 18: Most important measures for improving learning in Namibia



Segregated by age group, the percentage of callers identifying one of the above measures as most important was as follows:

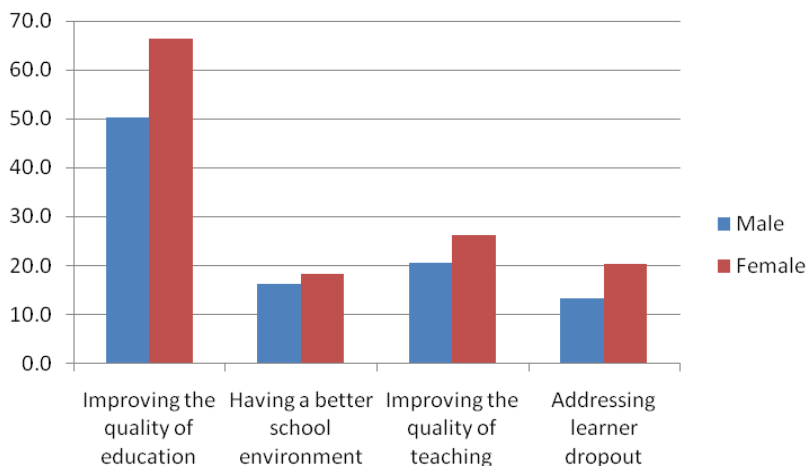
Chart 19: Most important measures for callers segregated by age group (%)



Improving the quality of education was thus considered most important by 10 to 18 year olds, while in the older age categories having a better school environment was considered most important. Addressing learner dropout was lowest on the rate of importance amongst all age groups.

There was no difference in preferences in terms of importance of the four options between male and female callers, callers from both genders indicating that quality of education is the most important for improving learning in Namibia. Having a better school environment scored lowest on female caller agendas, while addressing learner drop outs scored lowest on male agendas.

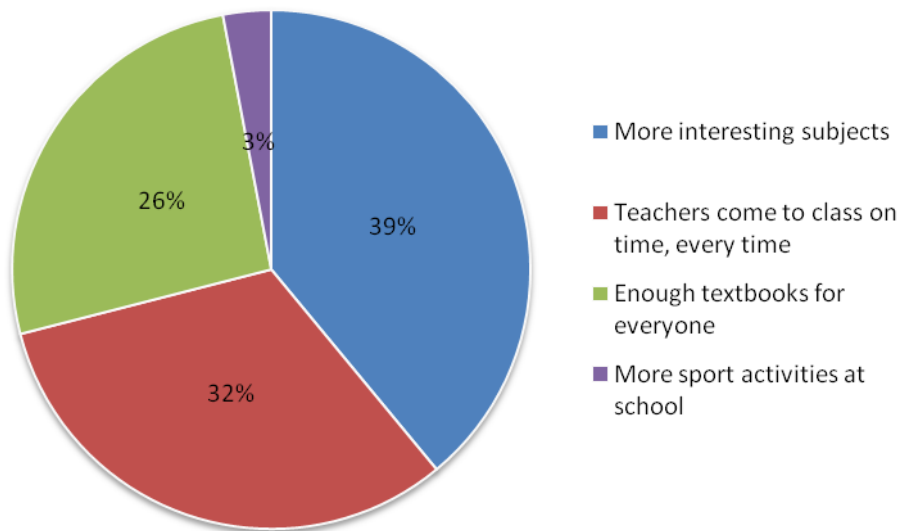
Chart 20: Most important measures for callers segregated by gender (%)



4.2 Measures to improve the quality of education

Of the 1,405 callers who felt that it was most important to improve the quality of education in Namibia, 39% of callers felt that more interesting subjects should be presented in schools, whereas the punctuality of teachers was identified as important by just under one third of all callers. Only about a quarter of callers felt that enough textbooks for everyone should improve quality of education, while more sport at schools hardly featured in responses.

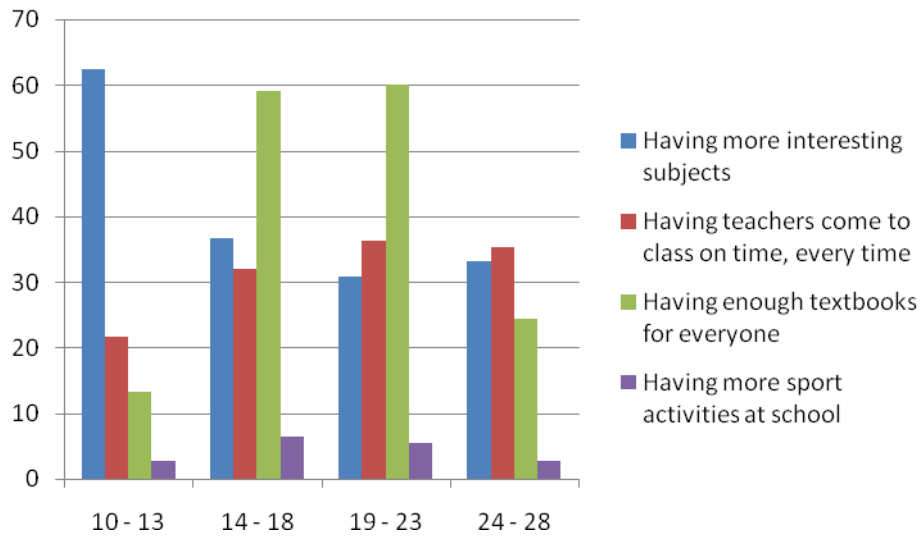
Chart 21: Measures to improve the quality of education



295 callers requested to listen to the question and options again, which may indicate a problem of understanding in the way the questions were posed.

10 to 13 year old felt the strongest that more interesting subjects should be taught in schools as means to improve the quality of education, while having enough textbooks for everyone featured highest on the agenda of 14 to 23 year olds. Its only the 24 to 28 year olds who rated the punctuality of teachers as most important measure to improve quality education.

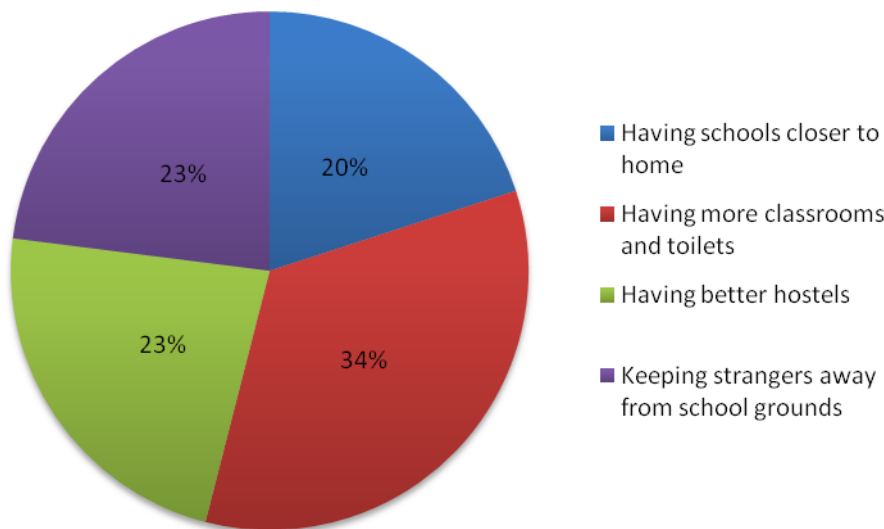
Chart 22: Measures to improve the quality of education segregated by age group (%)



4.3 Measures to improve the school environment

A total of 179 callers felt that improving the school environment is most important in improving learning in Namibia. Opinions on measures to improve the school environment were relatively even, with the largest category of callers feeling that having more classrooms and toilets would solve the problem.

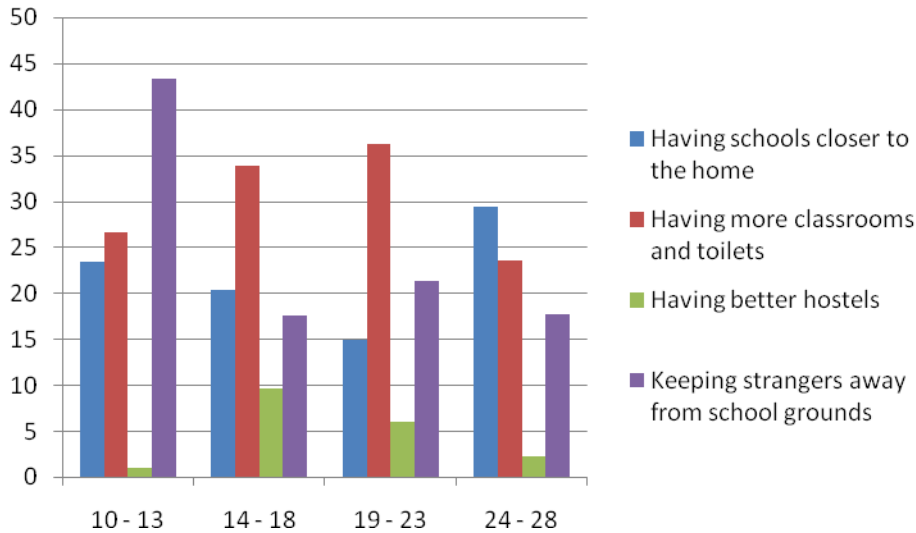
Chart 23: Measures to improve the school environment



A total of 293 callers requested to listen to the options again. This is quite significant, as it indicates that more than 100% of all callers requested a repeat of the options.

Keeping strangers away from school grounds seems to be an important issue for 10 to 13 year olds, with 44% of all callers from this age group identifying this issue as most important to improve the school environment. Callers in the age bracket 14 to 23 indicated that having more classrooms and toilets would improve the situation. Having better hostels featured low among all age brackets.

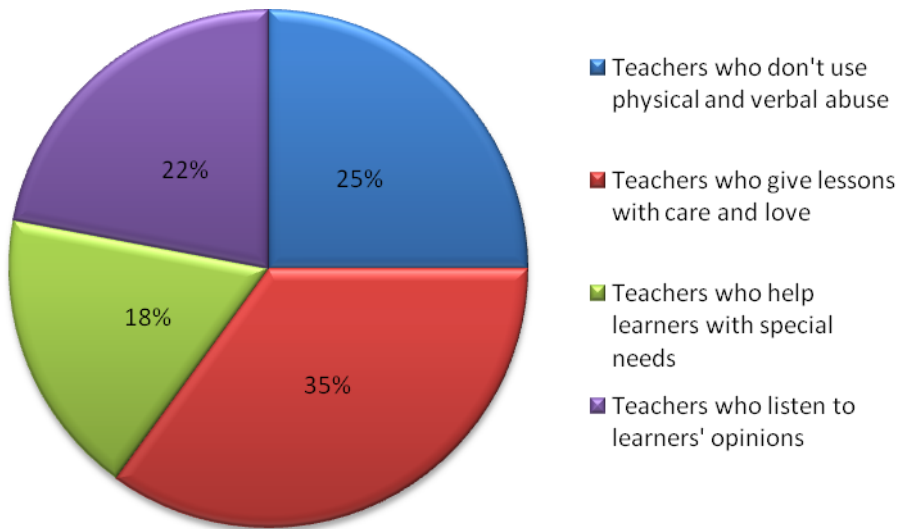
Chart 24: Measures to improve the school environment segregated by age group (%)



4.4 Measures to improve the quality of teaching

Of the 553 callers who felt that improving the quality of teaching as means to improve learning in Namibia, the largest group felt that teachers who give lessons with care and love are mostly appreciated, whereas assistance for learners with special needs featured as least important.

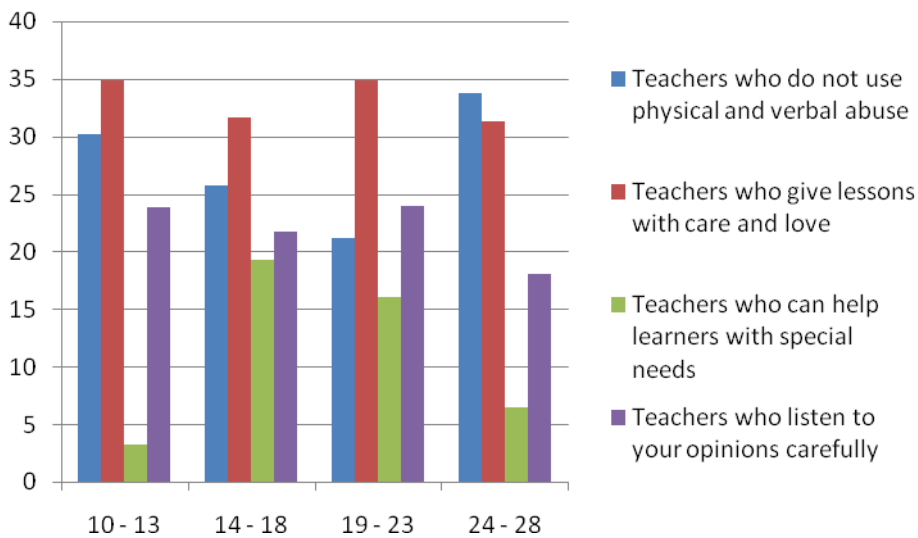
Chart 25: Most important measures to improve the quality of teaching



121 callers requested a repeat of the options.

Teachers who give lessons with care and love was scored as highest priority to improve the quality of teaching amongst almost all age groups, while teachers helping learners with special needs scored lowest.

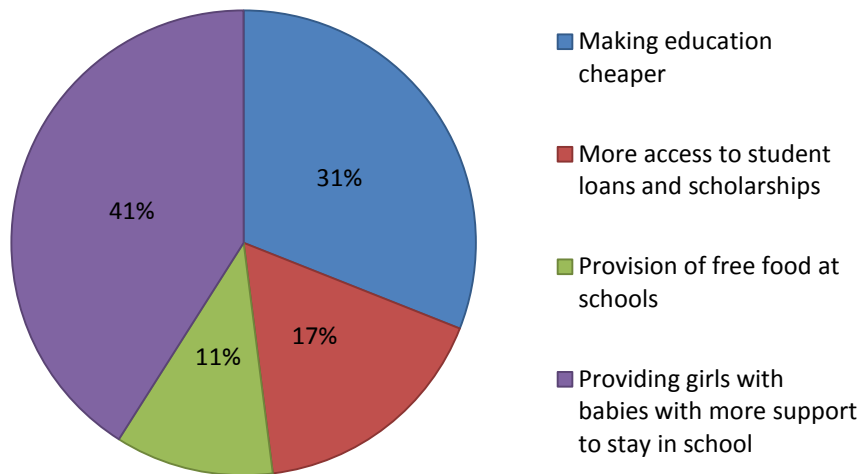
Chart 26: Most important measures to improve the quality of teaching segregated by age group (%)



4.5 Measures most needed to prevent learner drop out

402 callers felt that addressing the problem of learner drop out would be the most important way to improve learning in Namibia. Of these, 41% felt that more support should be provided to girls with babies to remain at school, while 31% of callers felt that making education cheaper would solve the problem.

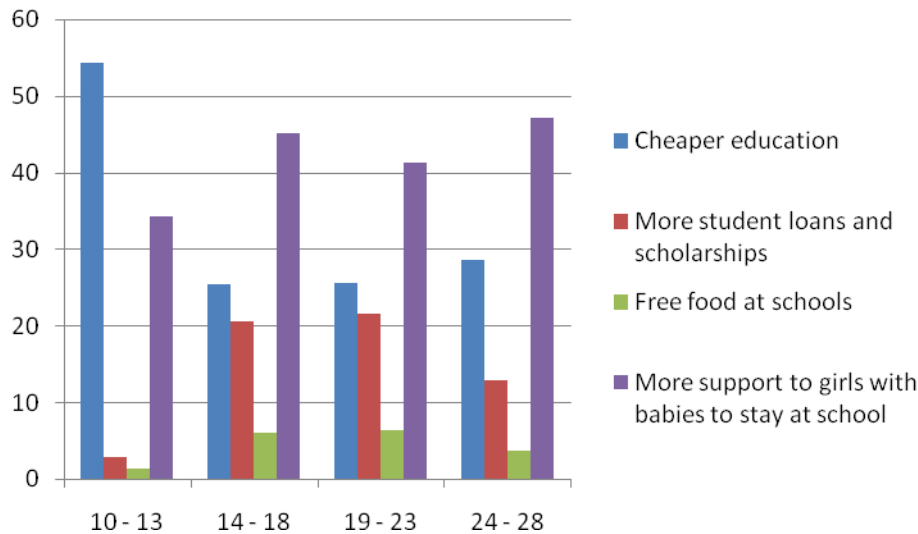
Chart 27: Measures most needed to prevent learner drop out



81 callers requested a repeat of the options.

10 to 13 year olds specifically felt that cheaper education would prevent learner drop out. Support to girls with babies to stay at school featured prominently across all age groups, while it was generally not felt that free food at schools would contribute to the prevention of learner drop out at schools.

Chart 28: Measures most needed to prevent learner drop out segregated by age group (%)



5. HIV/AIDS

In 1990, Namibia gained independence, experiencing a successful transition from authoritarian to democratic rule. The young democracy is among the countries worst hit by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The United Nations (UN) recognises that the pandemic challenges both social and economic development in Namibia. The pandemic constitutes the key obstacle to Namibia achieving its Millennium Development Goals, which, as such, might undermine the realisation of Vision 2030, the Namibian long-term development framework.

Namibia has an HIV prevalence rate of 19.6 percent of adults in the age segment 15 to 49 and shows signs of HIV epidemic stabilization. The primary mode of transmission is through sexual contact and mother-to-child transmission. Data compiled by the Ministry of Health and Social Services show that AIDS became the leading cause of death in Namibia in 1996. There is great variation in HIV prevalence rates from region to region in Namibia. Infection rates also differ by gender, with UNAIDS estimating that women account for 58 percent of all HIV infections. Other at-risk populations include migrant workers, people in prostitution, street children, and long distance drivers.

Namibia is the second most sparsely populated country in the world. Providing comprehensive HIV/AIDS services to the mostly rural population requires a fully decentralized, community- based approach with strong policies and leadership from the central level. Insufficient numbers of skilled technical personnel and limited managerial capacity at all levels exacerbate the challenges of decentralization, and access to services remains limited for those living in sparsely populated areas. As the country with one of the highest levels of income disparity in the world, poverty poses a major challenge. The United Nations reports that the poorest 20 percent of Namibia's population earns only 1.4 percent of the national income versus the richest 20 percent of the population that earns 78.7 percent of the national income. Household food security and access to services are limited for the vast majority of the population. There

is a considerable need for expansion of health services in particular, including community- and home-based care programs, HIV testing and counseling services, and support for orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs). Trucking, shipping, mining and fishing industries generate labor migration that is contributing to the spread of the epidemic.

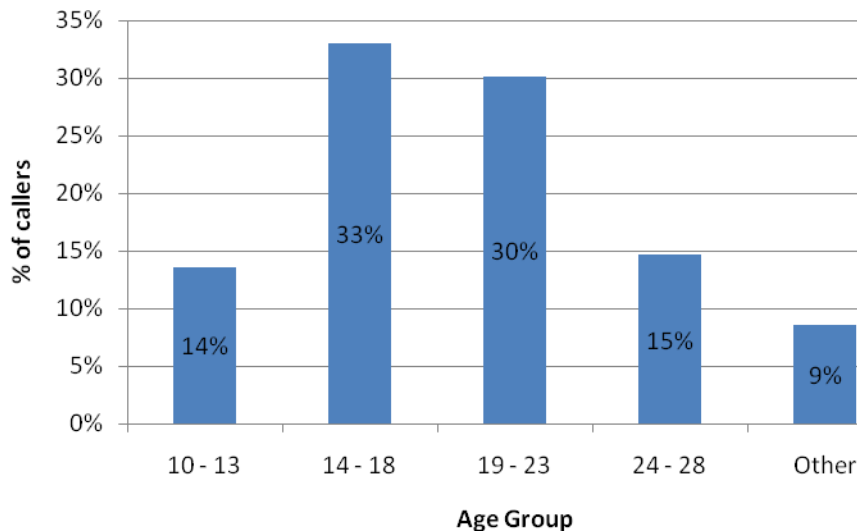
The topic of HIV/AIDS was thus chosen in view to receive an indication of the youth's opinion on what needs to be done to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia.

A total of 2,956 calls were received. Of these, a total of 2,170 callers made it to the last round of questions where callers were requested to select an option that would best provide a way to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia through finding a better approach to prevention, better leadership, better care and support for PLWHAs, better information dissemination about HIV/AIDS and improved testing and counseling.

Of all callers, 58% were female and 42% male. The majority of callers, 52,4%, indicated Oshiwambo as the language of their choice. 44,8% of all callers preferred English, while 2,8% of callers selected the option for Afrikaans.

One-third of all callers were from the age group 14 to 18, and another 30% from the age group 19 to 23 years, with the lowest (9%) from the "other" category. Segregation of callers according to age groups was, however, largely the same as in the previous weeks and is as follows:

Chart 29: Callers by age group

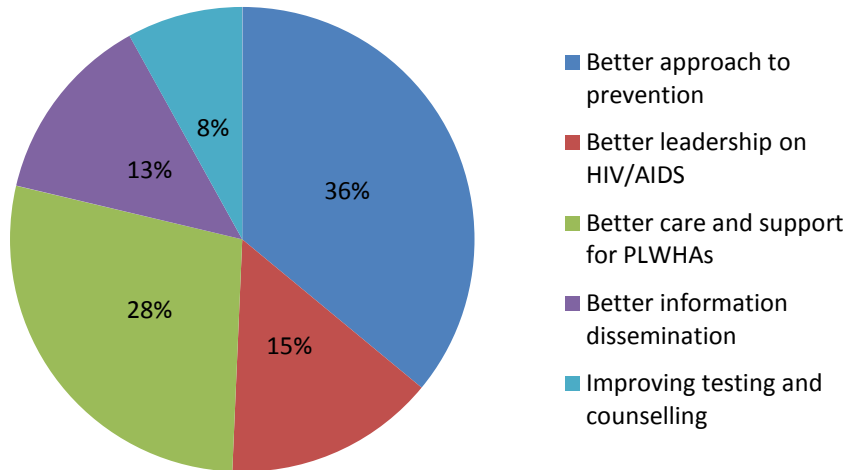


5.1 Most important measures to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia

Callers were asked to identify the most important measures to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia. Most callers (36%) felt that a better approach to prevention would be most needed today to combat HIV/AIDS

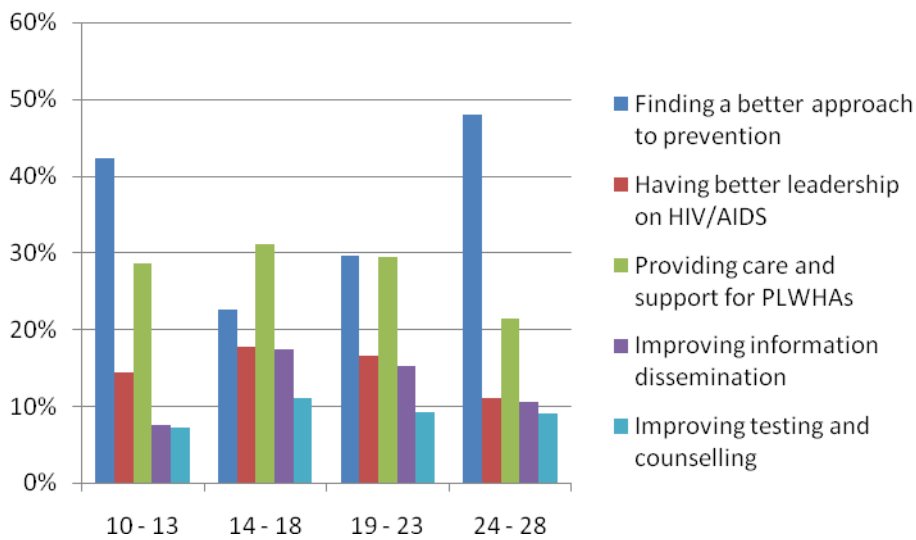
in Namibia. Better care and support for persons living with HIV/AIDS and better leadership on HIV/AIDS were also considered as important. 35% of callers requested a repeat of the options provided.

Chart 30: Most important measures to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia



Segregated by age group, the percentage of callers identifying one of the above measures as most important is as follows:

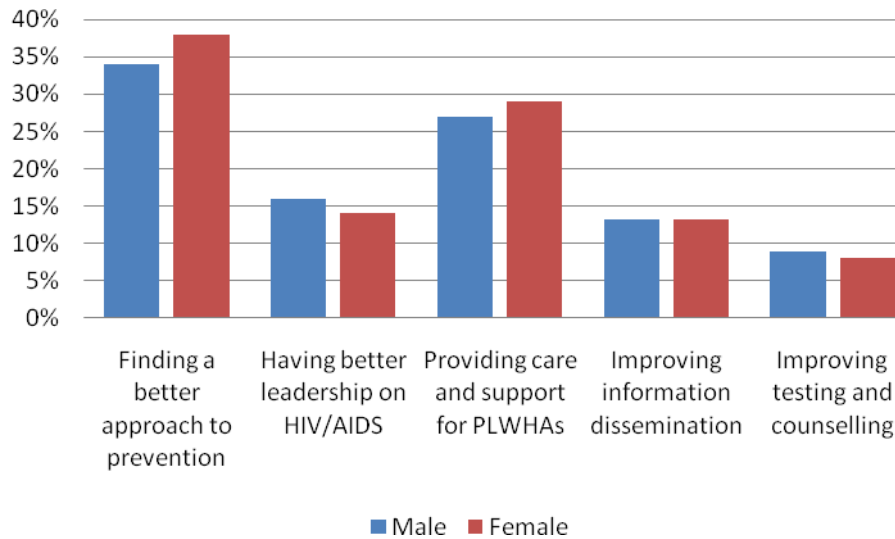
Chart 31: Most important measures to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia segregated by age group (%)



It was especially the youngest and oldest age categories that felt that finding a better approach to prevention would be an important measure to combat HIV/AIDS. Providing care and support to persons living with HIV/AIDS featured prominently in the 14 to 23 year age group. Improving testing and counselling scored lowest across all age categories.

There was no significant difference in preferences in terms of importance of the five options between male and female callers.

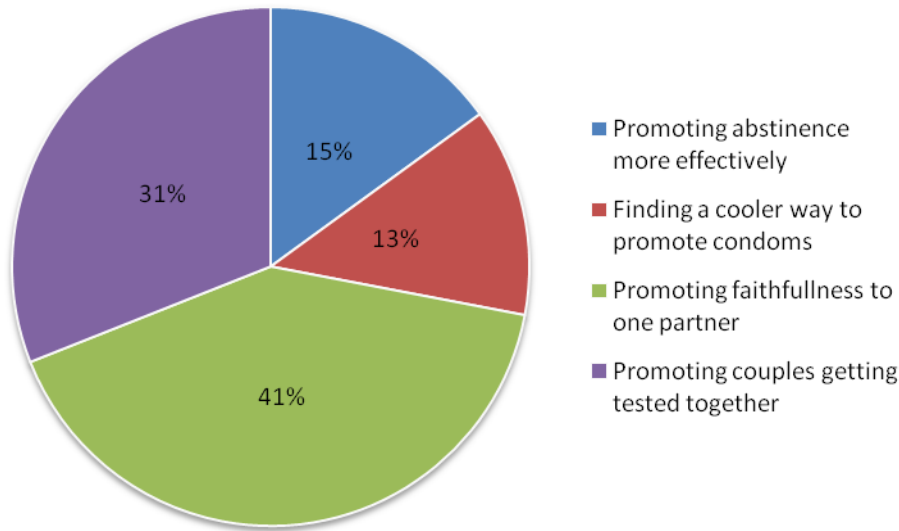
Chart 32: Most important measures to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia segregated by gender (%)



5.2 Finding a better approach to prevention

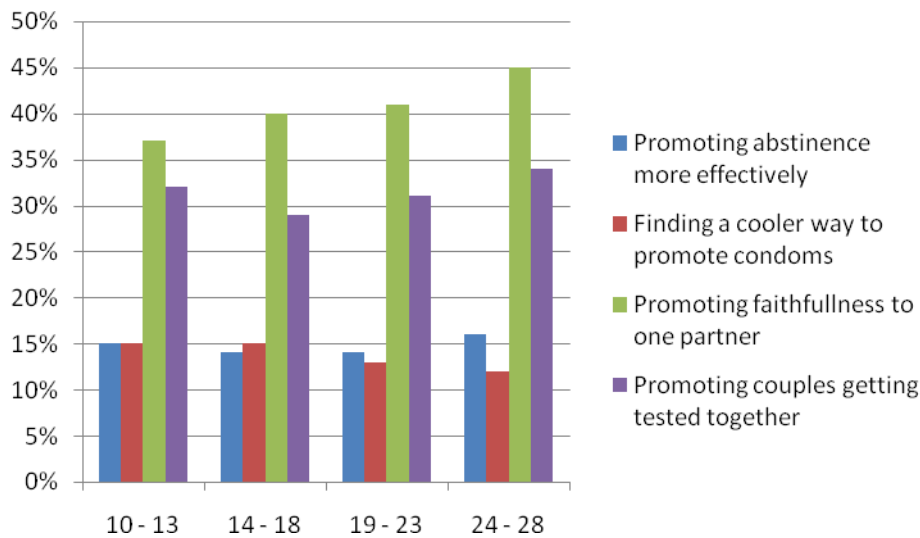
A total of 781 callers felt that finding a better approach to prevention would be the most important measure to tackle HIV/AIDS in Namibia. 41% of callers felt that this could be best achieved through the promotion of faithfulness to one partner, while finding a cooler way to promote condoms featured lowest in importance.

Chart 33: Options for better approaches to the prevention of HIV/AIDS



Choices with regard to the options on how the prevention of HIV/AIDS could be better approached were pretty uniform across all age groups.

Chart 34: Options for better approaches to the prevention of HIV/AIDS, segregated by age



5.3 Type of leader that would be inspirational to tackle the issue of HIV/AIDS

Of the 368 callers who felt that it was most important to have better leadership on the HIV/AIDS issue by having more inspirational leadership, callers indicated that they especially looked towards young

celebrities and community leaders to provide inspirational leadership, while only 4% of all callers felt that traditional leaders could fulfill this role.

Chart 35: Type of leader that would be inspirational to tackle the issue of HIV/AIDS

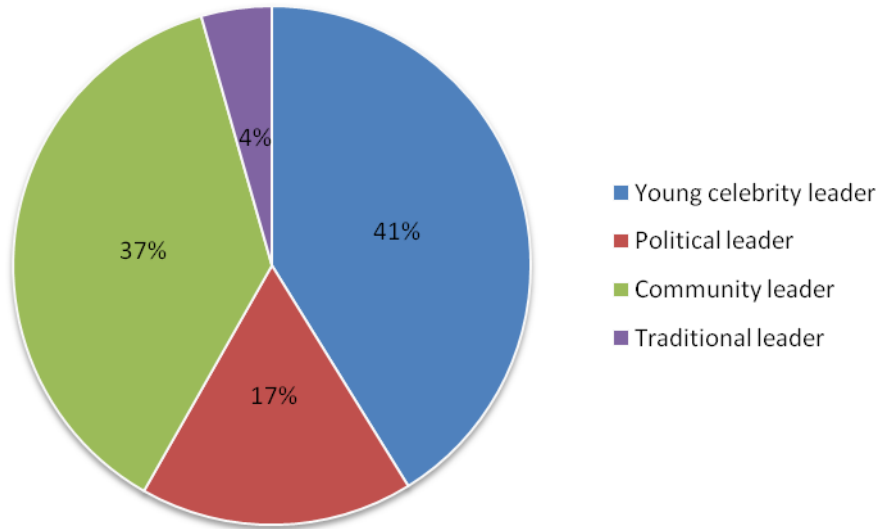
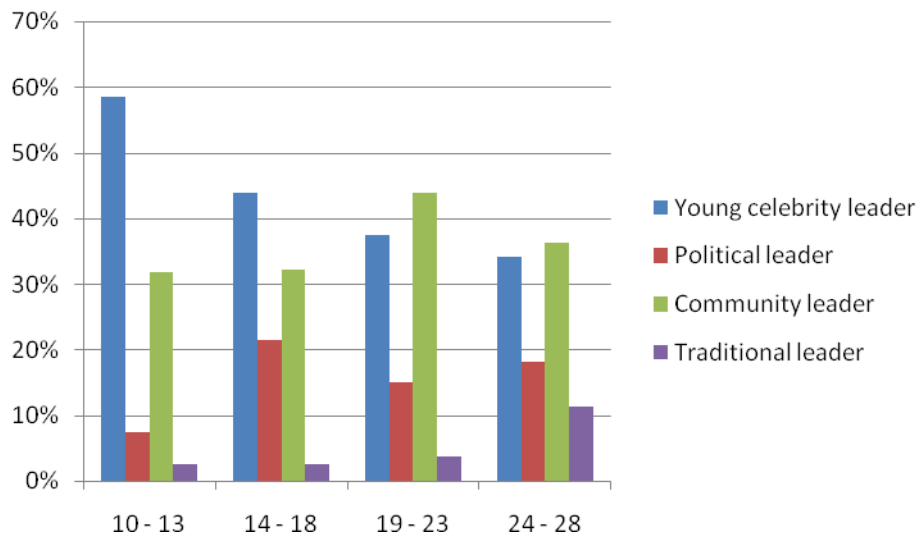


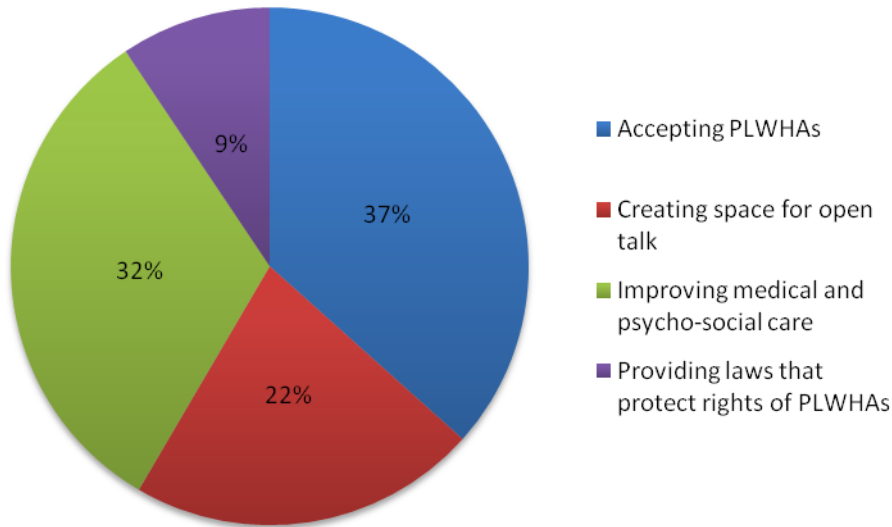
Chart 36: Type of leader that would be inspirational to tackle the issue of HIV/AIDS segregated by age group (%)



5.4 Provision of care and support to PLWHAs

A total of 628 callers felt that providing care and support to persons living with HIV/AIDS would be the best way to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia. The best ways to achieve better care and support as identified by callers are to accept PLWHAs and to improve medical and psycho-social care.

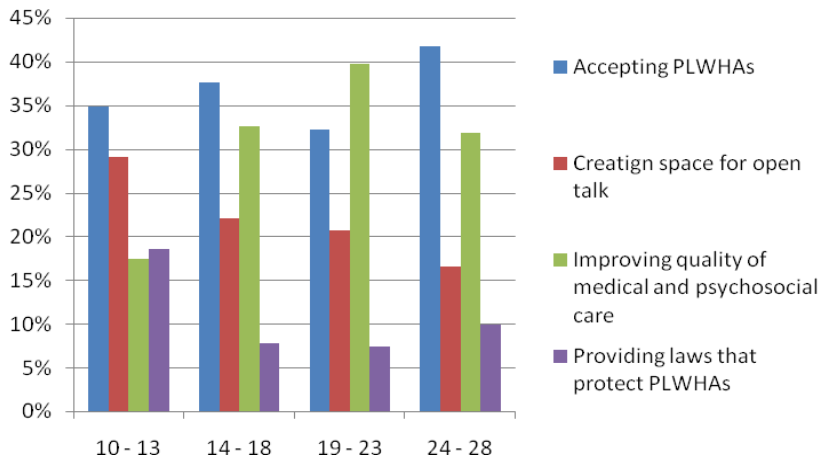
Chart 37: Provision of care and support to PLWHAs



A total of 112 callers requested to listen to the options again.

Accepting people living with HIV/AIDS was the most important issue identified by callers from all age groups, while improving the quality of medical and psycho-social care also featured prominently.

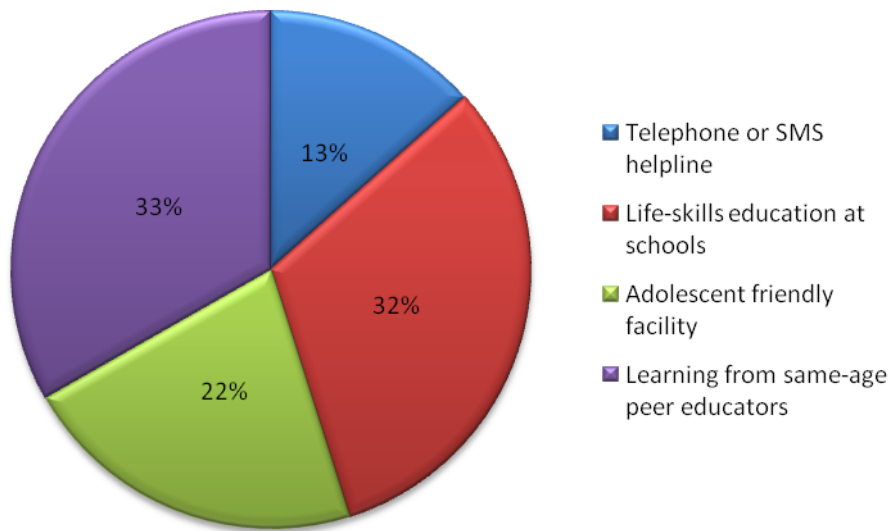
Chart 38: Provision of care and support to PLWHAs segregated by age group (%)



5.5 Measures to improve information dissemination

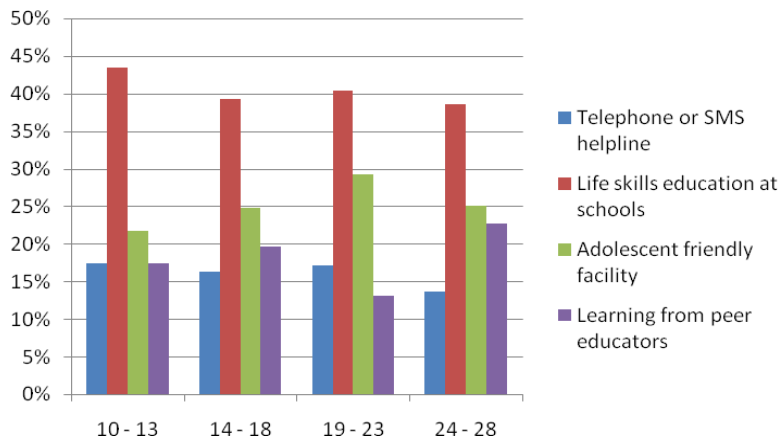
Of the 388 callers who felt that improving information dissemination as means to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia, up-to-date life skills education in schools and learning from same-age peer educators were regarded as the most important ways of such information dissemination. Telephone or SMS helplines were considered relatively low as means of information dissemination.

Chart 39: Measures to improve information dissemination



Having up to date life skills education at schools was scored as the best way to provide and disseminate information on HIV/AIDS amongst all age groups.

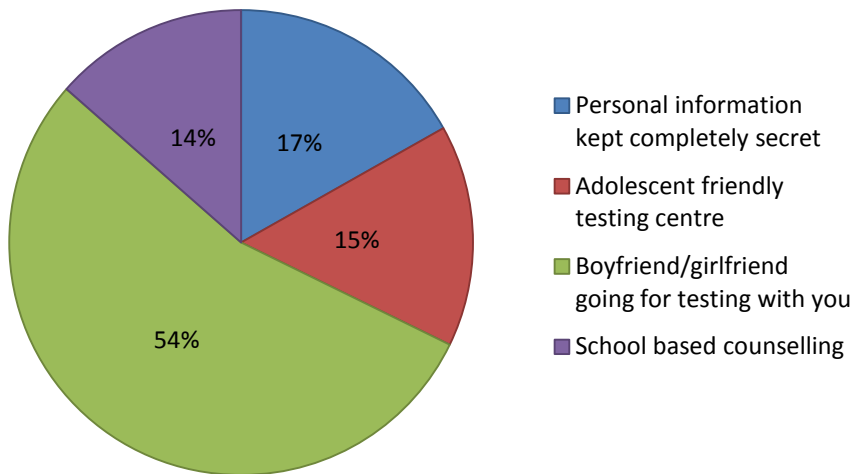
Chart 40: Measures to improve information dissemination segregated by age group (%)



5.6 Matters regarded as important when going for testing and counseling

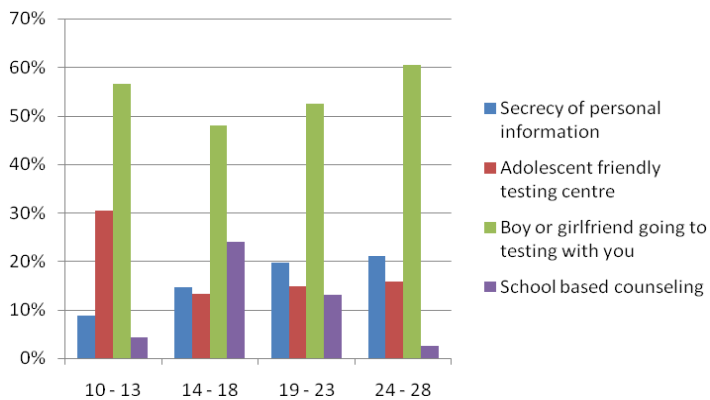
214 callers felt that improving testing and counseling would be the most important way to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia. The absolute majority of these (54%) considered it most important that their boyfriend or girlfriend goes for testing with them. The remainder of callers were relatively evenly spread amongst the other three options.

Chart 41: Matters regarded as important when going for testing and counseling



Callers across all age groups felt strongly that it was most important for them that their partners goes with them for HIV/AIDS testing.

Chart 42: Matters regarded as important when going for testing and counseling segregated by age group (%)



6. HEALTH

In 2007, Namibia's estimated tuberculosis (TB) incidence rate of 767 cases per 100,000 population was the fourth highest in Africa, and more than twice the African regional average. The TB prevalence of 532 cases per 100,000 population and TB mortality of 102 cases per 100,000 population are also above average for the region. About 67 percent of newly registered TB patients are HIV positive. The case notification rate has averaged around 736 cases per 100,000 population for the last five years, nearly eight times higher than the rate in 1996 (and 10 times higher than the global average), an increase fueled by the spread of HIV/AIDS. Namibia's HIV prevalence is quite high (about 20%) and this high prevalence poses serious problems for the successful treatment of TB. Multidrug-resistant (MDR) TB is prevalent in 1.6 percent of new cases. Extensively-drug resistant (XDR) TB has also been found in Namibia. Since 1996, Namibia has sustained DOTS (the internationally recommended strategy for TB control), achieving a case detection rate above the global target of 84 percent. The DOTS treatment success rate continues to improve, but at 76 percent, it is still below the global target of 85 percent.

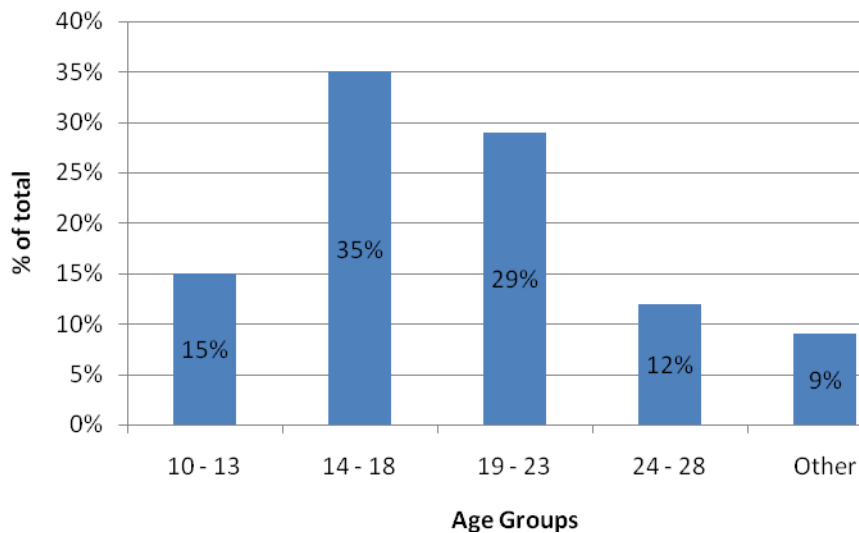
The topic of Health was thus chosen in view to receive an indication of the youth's opinion on what needs to be done to improve health care and the overall health situation in Namibia.

A total of 4,301 calls were received. Of these, a total of 3,775 callers made it to the last round of questions where callers were requested to select an option that would best enable Namibians to lead a healthy life through the improvement of the health system and its services, the improvement of HIV/AIDS responses in the health system, the improvement of the quality of hospitals and clinics and the tackling of teenage pregnancies. The dropout percentage of this week (12%) is low compared to the previous weeks, which may indicate that callers are becoming more conversant with the IVR system.

Of all callers, 61% were female and 39% male. Most callers (49,3%) came from the Oshiwambo speaking group, while 47,6% of all callers preferred English. Only 3,1% of callers selected the option for Afrikaans.

Just more than one-third of all callers (35%) were from the age group 14 to 18, and another 29% from the age group 19 to 23 years, with the lowest (9%) again from the "other" category. Segregation of callers according to age groups was, however, largely the same as in the previous weeks and is as follows:

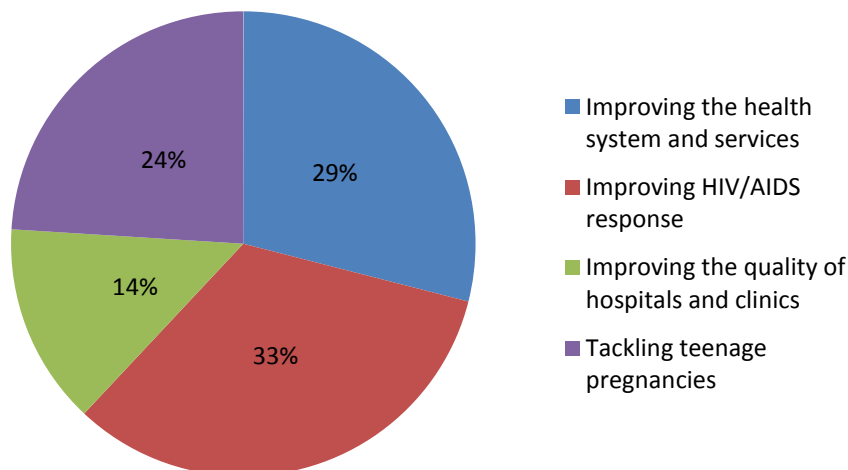
Chart 43: Callers by age group



6.1 Most important measures to enable Namibians to lead a healthy life

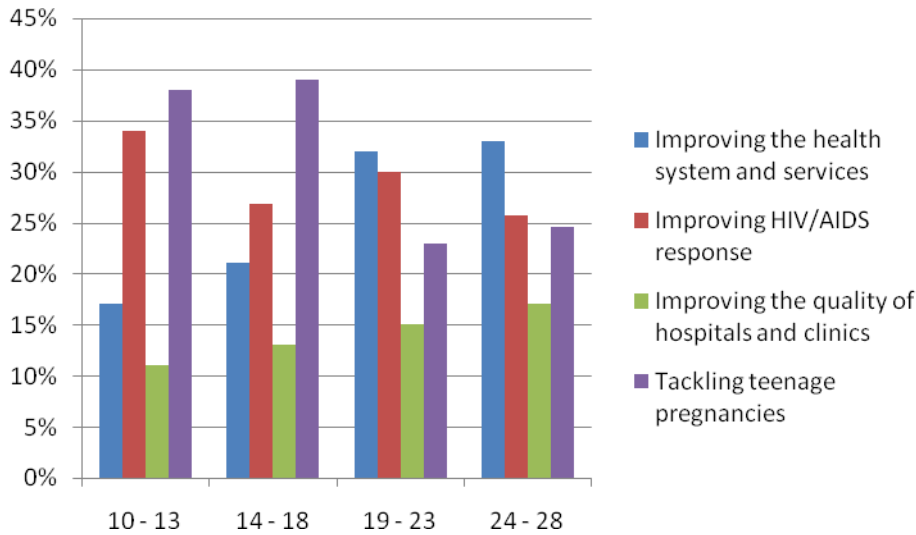
Callers were asked to identify the most important measures which may be taken to ensure that Namibians generally are able to lead a healthy life. One third of callers felt that improving the HIV/AIDS response in the health system would be most important in this regard. Improving the health system and its services generally was identified by 29% of callers as a priority, while tackling teenage pregnancies was identified by a quarter of all callers as a priority. The improvement of the quality of hospitals and clinics scored lowest in terms of importance. 22% of callers requested a repeat of the options provided.

Chart 44: Most important measures to enable Namibians to lead a healthy life



Segregated by age group, the percentage of callers identifying one of the above measures as most important is as follows:

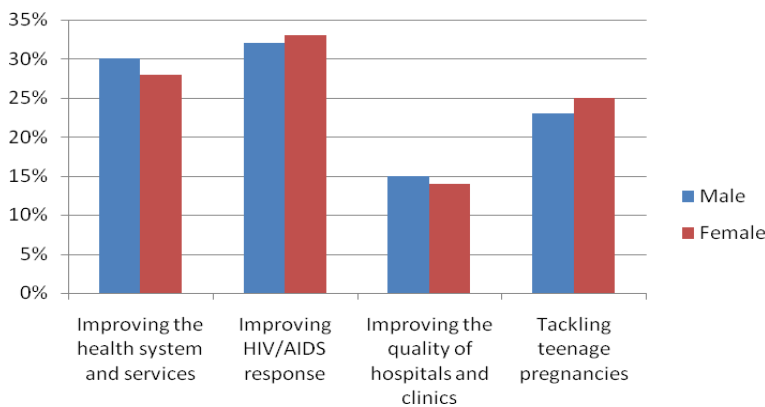
Chart 45: Most important measures to enable Namibians to lead a healthy life segregated by age group (%)



Tackling teenage pregnancies was highest on the agenda in the younger age brackets (10 – 18 years), while improving the health system and services was considered most important in the older categories (19 – 23 years). Improving the HIV/AIDS response also featured high in importance across all age groups.

There was no significant difference in preferences in terms of importance of the four options between male and female callers.

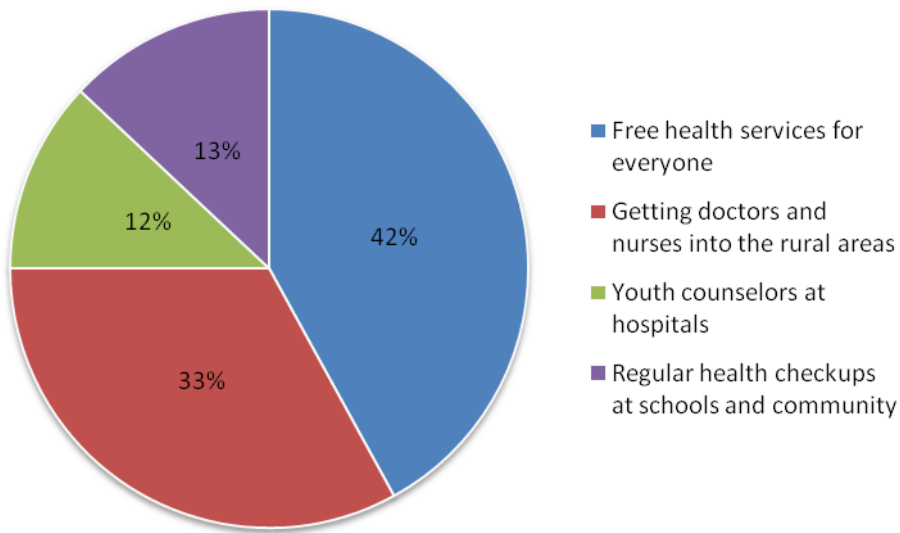
Chart 46: Most important measures to enable Namibians to lead a healthy life segregated by gender (%)



6.2 Improving the health system and its services

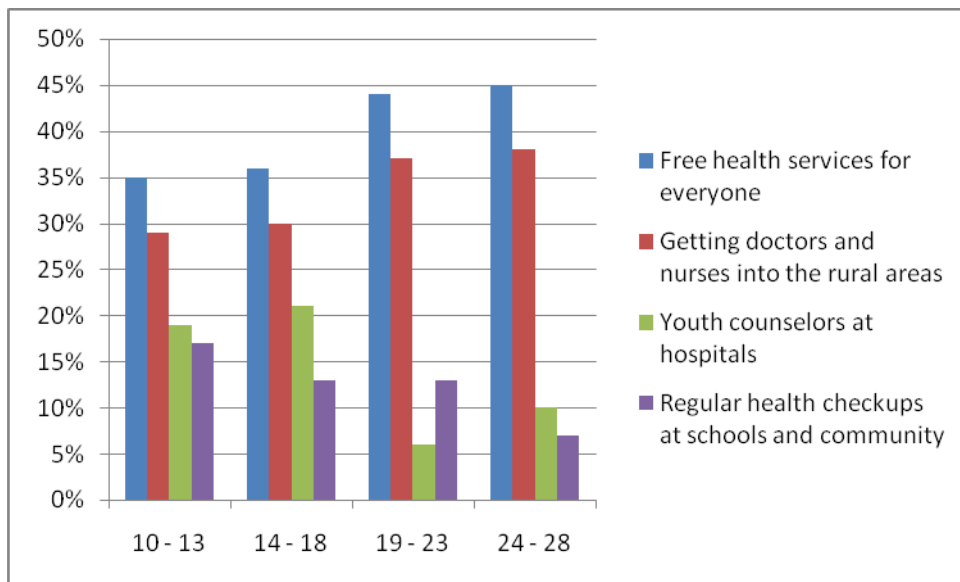
Of the 1,094 callers who felt that it was most important to improve the health system and its services, 42% of callers felt that the provision of free health services for everyone would improve the health system, while one third felt that more doctors and nurses are needed in the rural areas.

Chart 47: Improving the health system and its services



31% of callers requested to listen to the question and options again.

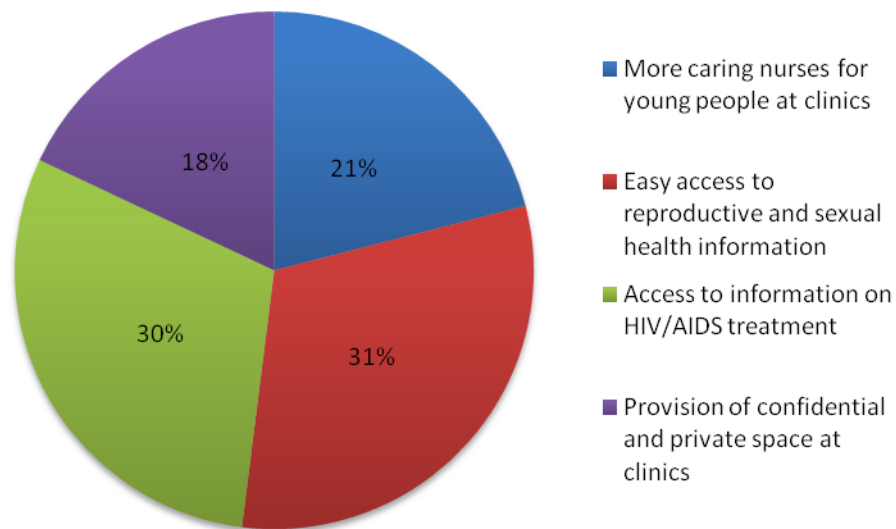
Chart 48: Improving the health system and its services segregated by age group (%)



6.3 Improving HIV/AIDS responses in the health system

A total of 1,245 callers felt that improving HIV/AIDS responses in the health system would be the best way to enable Namibians to lead a healthy life. This, in the opinion of callers, could best be achieved by providing easy access to reproductive and sexual health information and access to information on HIV/AIDS treatment.

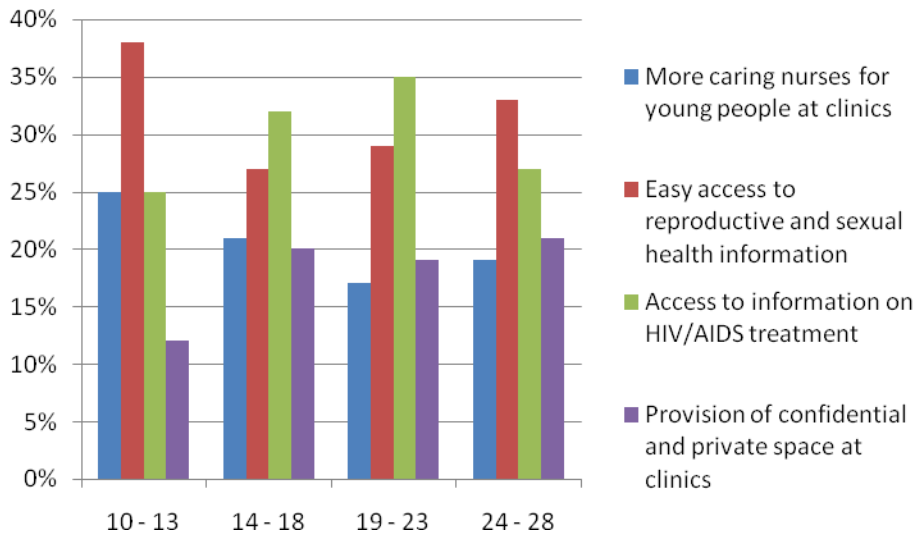
Chart 49: Improving HIV/AIDS responses in the health system



28% of callers requested to listen to the options again.

Access to information, both on reproduction and sexual health as well as on HIV/AIDS treatment featured highest on the list of importance in all age groups, while callers seem to be satisfied with the current provision of confidential and private space at clinics.

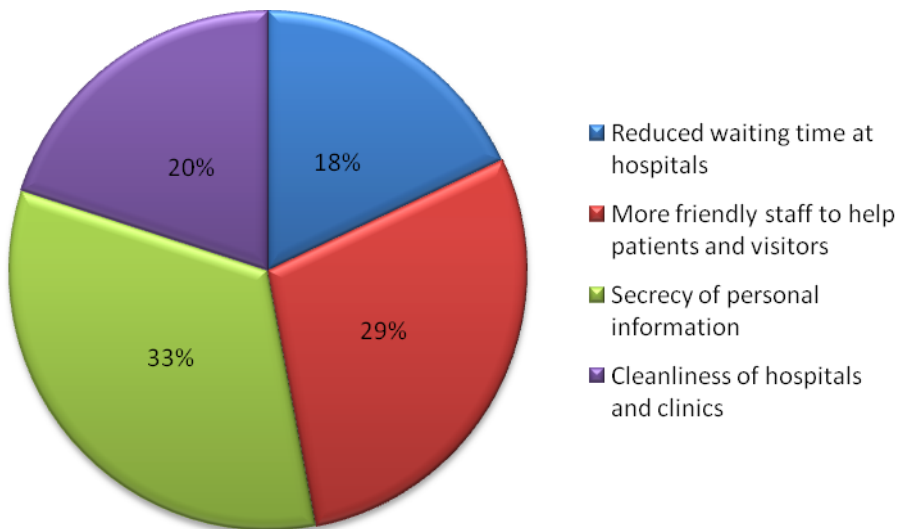
Chart 50: Improving HIV/AIDS responses in the health system segregated by age group (%)



6.4 Measures to improve the quality of hospitals and clinics

Of the 528 callers who felt that improving the quality of hospitals and clinics was most important to ensure that Namibians can lead a healthy life, the secrecy of personal information was regarded most important. Reduced waiting time at hospitals was regarded as least important.

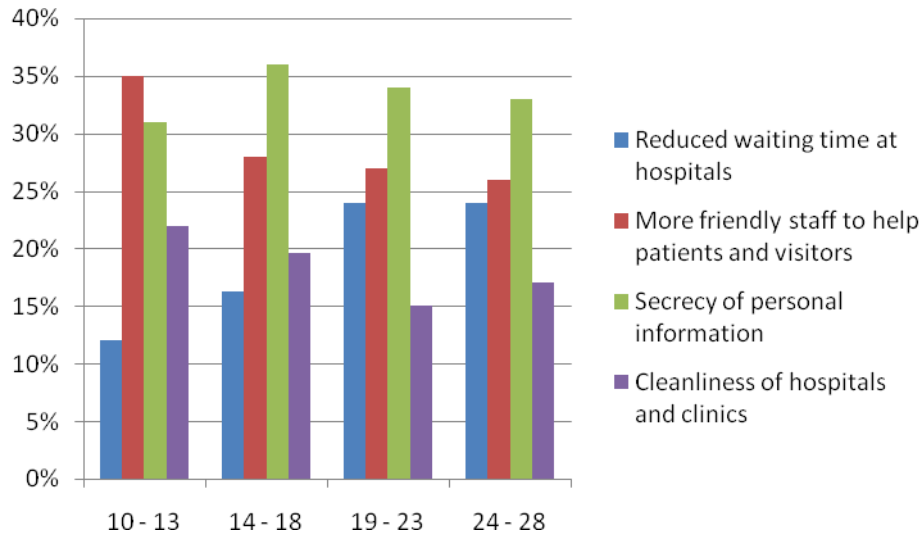
Chart 51: Measures to improve the quality of hospitals and clinics



27% of callers requested a repeat of the options.

Secrecy of personal information was scored as the most important aspect of improving the quality of hospitals and clinics, except in the youngest age group (10 – 13 years) where callers felt that having more friendly staff to help patients and visitors was most important.

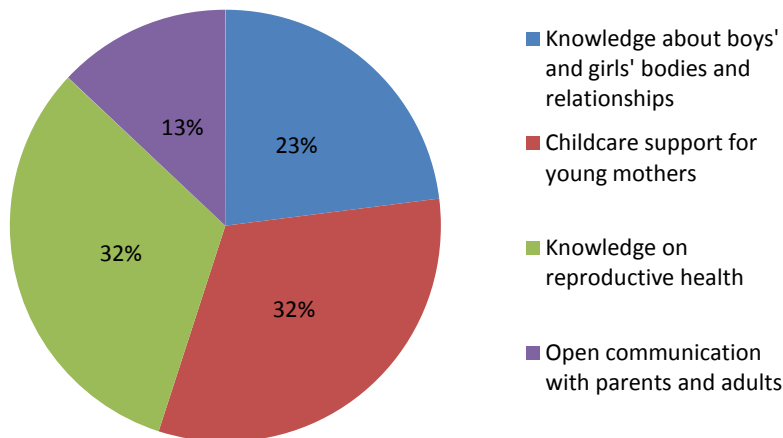
Chart 52: Measures to improve the quality of hospitals and clinics segregated by age group (%)



6.5 The best way to address teenage pregnancies

906 callers felt that addressing teenage pregnancies would be the most important way to ensure that Namibians can lead a healthy lifestyle. Childcare support to young mothers and having correct knowledge on reproductive health were considered the most important ways to address teenage pregnancies, while open communication with parents and adults was considered least important of the options provided.

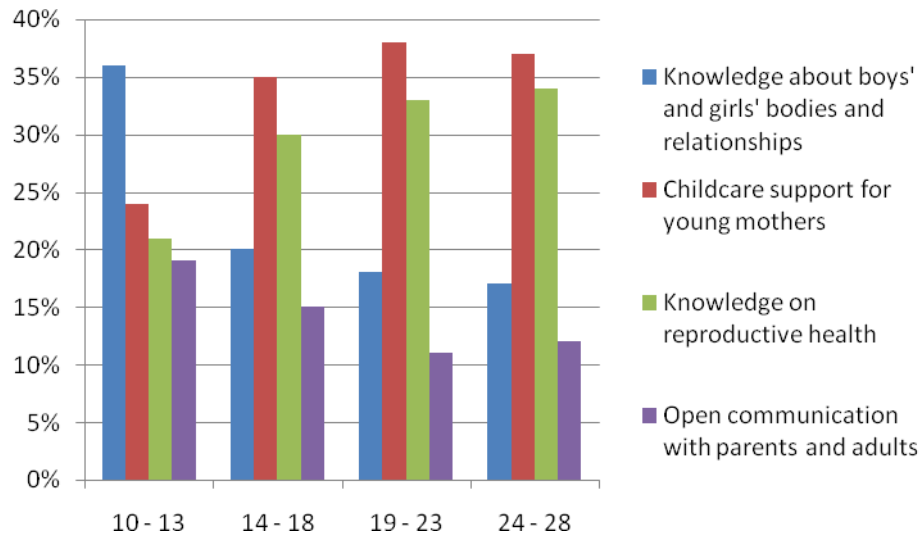
Chart 53: The best ways to address teenage pregnancies



A quarter of all callers requested a repeat of the options.

Childcare support for young mothers featured prominently as most important to address the issue of teenage pregnancies, except in the 10 to 13 age group where the majority of callers felt that knowledge about boys' and girls' bodies and relationships was most important.

Chart 54: The best ways to address teenage pregnancies segregated by age group (%)



7. YOUR FUTURE, YOUR VISION

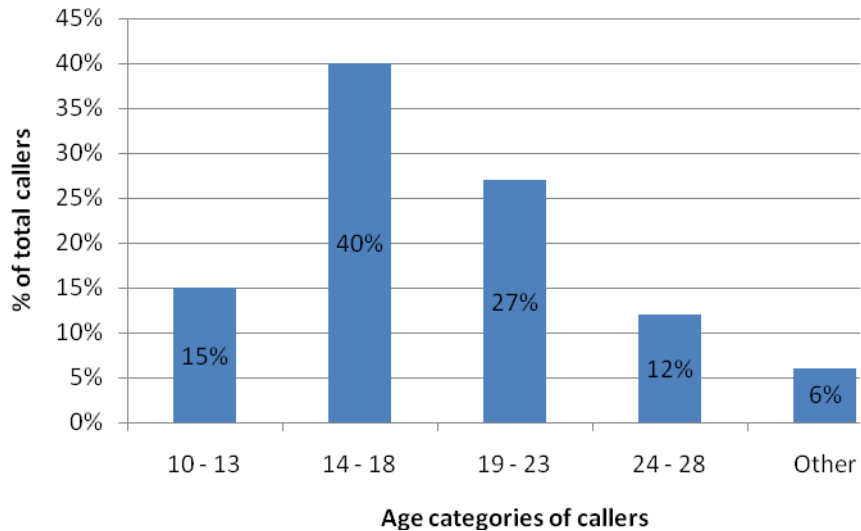
The last topic of this project centered around how the young generation of Namibia feel about the future of Namibia and what would lead to a satisfying future for them as young persons. Specifically, callers could indicate whether basic opportunities for a healthy life would provide them with a satisfying future, or whether this could be achieved through finding employment, through caring for their community environment or through getting their opinions heard.

Participation during this last week of the project was quite high, a total of 4,603 calls were received. Of these, a total of 3,836 callers made it to the last round of questions where callers were requested to select an option that would lead to a satisfying future for them as young persons through having basic opportunities for a healthy life, finding employment, caring for their community environment or getting their options heard. The dropout percentage of this week again was rather low at 16% as compared to the earlier weeks, which may indicate that callers were becoming more conversant with the IVR system.

The gender spread this week was more even as compared to all other weeks, with 52% of all callers being female and 48% being male. Once again, most callers (51%) came from the Oshiwambo speaking group, while 48% of all callers preferred English. Only about 1% of callers selected the option for Afrikaans.

Most callers (40%) were from the age group 14 to 18, and another 27% from the age group 19 to 23 years, with the lowest (6%) again from the “other” category.

Chart 55: Callers by age group

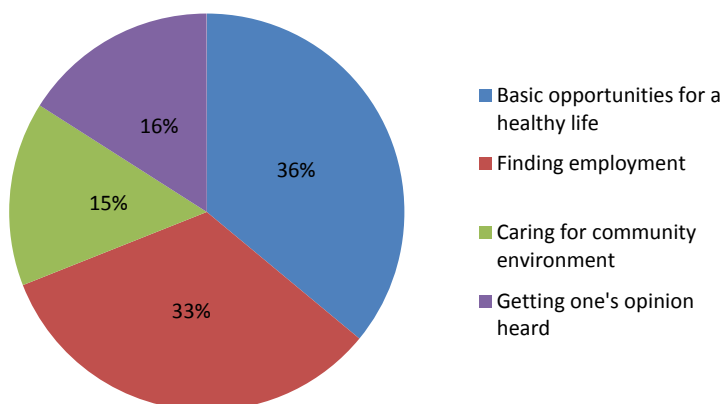


7.1 Most important issue that would lead to a satisfying future as a young person

Callers were asked to identify the most important issue that would, in their opinion, lead to a satisfying future. Having basic opportunities for a healthy life was regarded by most callers (36%) as the most important issue that would secure a satisfying future, while finding employment followed a close second at 33%.

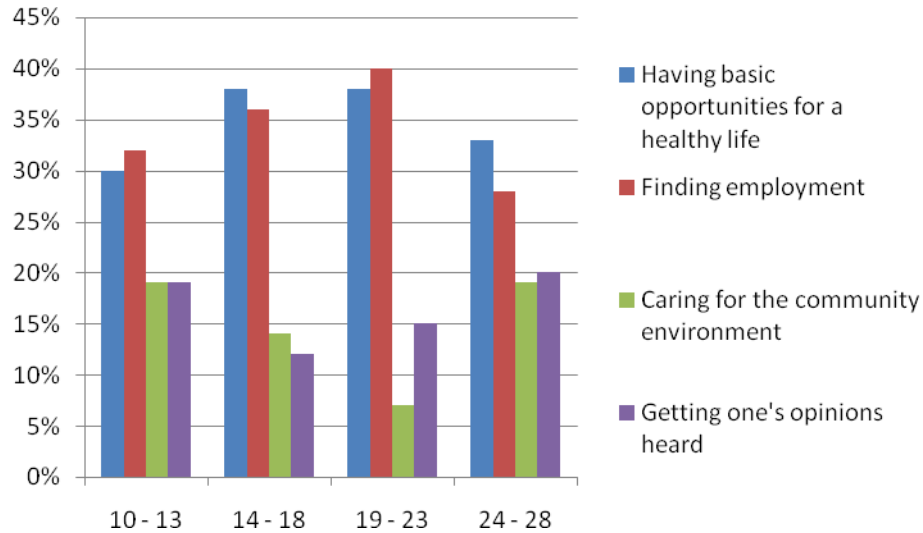
724 of callers requested a repeat of the options provided.

Chart 56: Most important issue that would lead to a satisfying future as a young person



Segregated by age group, the percentage of callers identifying one of the above measures as most important is as follows:

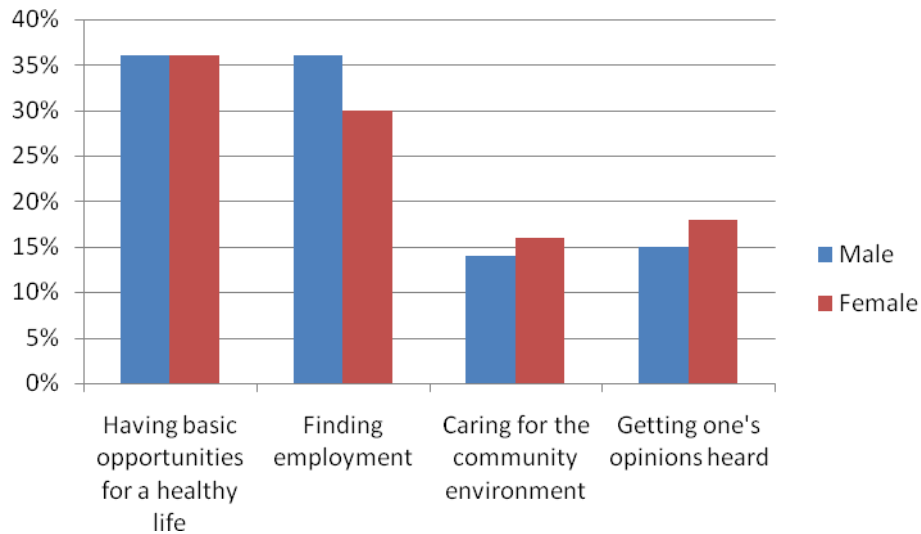
Chart 57: Most important issue that would lead to a satisfying future as a young person segregated by age group (%)



Finding employment was highest on 19 to 23 year olds' agenda, while having basic opportunities for a healthy life also featured prominently. Caring for the community environment featured low in importance across all age groups.

There was no significant difference in preferences in terms of importance of the four options between male and female callers, finding employment was, however, slightly higher on male callers' agenda.

Chart 58: Most important issue that would lead to a satisfying future as a young person segregated by gender (%)



8. PRIZEWINNERS

In order to provide an incentive for people to participate, two Nokia 5130 Xpress Music mobile phones were given as prizes to two callers selected randomly. The winners over the five-week period were:

Joanna Shikongo
Age: 12
Omulunga Street, Erf 903, Hakahana
Windhoek
Tel. 081 340 2481

Juanita Jossob
Age: 18
PO Box 1397
Keetmanshoop
Tel. 081 421 6214

Emmarentia Hoffmann
Age: 19
PO Box 1173
Oranjemund
Tel. 081 466 4001

Cecilia Shikololo
Age: 23
Gladiola Street
Khomasdal, Windhoek
Tel. 081 379 8074

Paulus Naukushu
Age: 16
N28 Okawi Street
Okuryangava
Windhoek
Tel. 081 472 4344

Johannes Nampweya
Age: 29
PO Box 68
Lüderitz
Tel. 081 314 4362

Ngamona Haukongo
 Age: 17
 PO Box 30
 Engela
 Ohangwena
 Tel. 081 433 3672

Julien Swartbooi
 Age: 23
 Katutura
 Windhoek
 Tel. 081 480 4462

George Ewinbildni
 Age: 19
 PO Box 646
 Arandis
 Tel. 081 465 9544

Isabella van Wyk
 Age: 22
 PO Box 292
 Gobabis
 Tel. 081 455 6507

9. CONCLUSION

The IVR system has several advantages. IVR systems have the advantage of making callers feel like they're being attended to, even if it's just by a machine. Another advantage is that IVR systems don't sleep, don't take lunch breaks and don't go on vacations. An IVR system can be available 24 hours a day to field questions. The greatest disadvantage of IVR systems is that many people simply dislike talking to machines. Older adults may have a hard time following telephone menus and lengthy instructions. Younger callers may get frustrated with the slowness of multiple phone menus.

In this case, the use of an IVR system for the purpose of the aims and objectives of the overall project can be regarded as a big success. Feedback received from the general public by the NID indicate that people knew about the project, were excited about it and were highly motivated to take part, which may, in part, explain the relatively high participation figures. It has therefore been proven through this pilot project that the IVR methodology used can be used fruitfully to gather the public's opinion on issues. Even though the focus during this project was on the youth, the high level of interest amongst the general public indicates that a similar methodology could fruitfully be used to gauge opinions of the public across all age cohorts. For the NID's purpose, the IVR system could as such be implemented with great success in any program aimed at increasing the interaction between elected leaders and the electorate.

The main problems experienced during this project were of a technical nature, which, due to the fact that it was the first time in Namibia that a project of this nature was implemented, can be regarded as normal. Problems were experienced with technical support by local service provider Telecom and the installation of lines with suitable data capacity. Towards the end, a software programming problem led to the mixing up of data. As the IT backup was located in Uganda, it would possibly make sense to either train a local IT resource person in the programming of the software, or to source appropriate local IT capacity for the development of a tailored Internet/Voice response system to be used locally. However, NID personnel involved in this project have also become more knowledgeable in the technical requirements of an IVR system of this nature and can, should a similar project be conducted in future, be better prepared to assist on the technical level.

The drop-out rate of callers, although receding over the duration of the overall project, could, in future, possibly further be reduced through the pre-testing of all questions and sub-questions during focus

groups. Such pre-testing can also ensure that there is not too much information, that menus are not too long and that the voice prompts are easy to understand. As stated earlier in this report, the inclusion of further local languages could possibly ensure wider participation and a reduced drop-out rate, as callers may not always have been able to follow the English language through to the final questions. This might also provide an indication of the geographical spread of callers. The provision of incentives was important. An idea to possibly even further increase participation would be to conduct formal handovers of prizes and depicting the photos of prizewinners as part of the advertisements in the local print media.

The NID could specifically make use of IVR technology in its ongoing program aimed at increasing the interaction between the public and elected leaders represented in Parliament. On policy issues of public concern, an IVR system can fruitfully be used to gather the opinions of the public on such issues and to forward data such obtained to MPs and other relevant stakeholders for consideration in the law making process. The opinion of the public on a range of other topics could also be gathered through an IVR system. For example, as part of the NID's *Zero Tolerance for Corruption Campaign*, the public's opinions on various issues relating to corruption in Namibia can be sought. This in turn may also assist to design and develop appropriate strategies for the combating of corruption.

We wish to thank UNICEF for choosing the NID as partner from civil society in the conduct of this project. Our appreciation goes specifically to UNICEF staff involved in this project, were cooperation was fruitful, professional and cordial at all times.