

**COVID-19 VACCINE  
ADVOCACY TRAINING  
FOR NURSING  
STUDENTS  
IN  
WEST NILE - UGANDA**

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*Uganda Nurses and Midwives Union - West Nile.*

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# OVERALL GOAL

To increase the COVID-19 vaccine up-take to at-least 90% of all children aged 10 years and above in the West Nile Region through peer-to-peer awareness creation.

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this training, you should be able

to:

- Explain the facts about COVID-19
- Demonstrate effective and individualized communications about covid-19 vaccination
- Outline the justifications for the vaccination of children

# FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

- This is an infectious respiratory disease caused by Corona Virus.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) first learned about this virus from the first cases in Wuhan city in China on the 31<sup>st</sup>/December/2019 and hence the name COVID-19.
- Mode of spread is through droplets.
- Symptoms may include fever, constantly high temperature beyond 37 degrees Celsius, cough, chest pain, and difficulty in breathing, general body weakness, loss of appetite, taste and smell and/or red eyes.

# PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Prevention is by observing the SoPs to the dot including:

- Wear your face mask properly, covering your nose and mouth at all times while in public.
- Maintain a distance of at least 2 meters (6 feet) between yourself and another person and avoid hand shaking and hugging.
- Regularly wash your hands with soap and running water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid public gatherings and crowds.
- Get vaccinated when your turn comes.
- All countries have resorted to Vaccination as a reliable means of offering protection against COVID-19.

# COVID-19 VACCINE

- A COVID-19 vaccine is a vaccine intended to provide acquired immunity against severe disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
- COVID-19 vaccines are all designed to teach the body's immune system to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19.
- There are several vaccines that have undergone clinical trials to determine their effectiveness and safety for human use.
- Those vaccines that have been approved for use on the African continent are listed in the next slide.

# VACCINES Emergency Use Listing (EUL)

- AstraZeneca vaccine
- Pfizer Vaccine
- Moderna Vaccine
- Sinopharm Vaccine
- Johnson & Johnson Vaccine
- Sinovac-CoronaVac

# VACCINE DOSAGE

It is important to note that each type of vaccine has its own schedule for one to be fully vaccinated. It is as follows:

- AstraZeneca Vaccine: Each individual must receive two doses given at 12 weeks apart.
- Pfizer Vaccine: Each individual must receive two doses given 4 weeks apart.
- Moderna Vaccine: Each individual must receive two doses given 4 weeks apart.
- Johnson & Johnson: It is a single dose vaccine.
- Sinopharm: Each individual must receive two doses given 4 weeks apart
- Sinovac: Each individual must receive two doses given 4 weeks apart.

# THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNICATION

- Communication entails: Expression; Interpretation; and Reaction, to messages.

It is the art and technique of using words and visuals effectively to share information or ideas through print and electronic media and interpersonally.

- ***Interpersonal communication*** (IPC) – a process by which two or more people share information, ideas, and feelings. It includes verbal and non-verbal interaction.
- ***Empathy*** – the ability to understand and share the feelings of another
- Empathy helps us to treat people with respect and kindness, regardless of their background, social position or attitude. This helps you as a communicator to respond to the clients' questions and concerns about the topic of discussion.

Showing empathy makes clients more likely to feel comfortable raising questions or concerns.

## Techniques for effective communication

- **Before session:** Set aside time to give personal attention
- **On arrival:** Welcome warmly and praise for coming
- **In session:** Encourage expression of ideas and feelings
- **In session:** Listen actively to show interest and respect
- **In session:** Acknowledge concerns with empathy
- **In session:** Ask questions to check understanding
- **End of session:** Summarize and request commitment to vaccinate

# **Communication about Covid-19 vaccination**

## **Purpose of communication in the context of COVID:**

- Generating demand for the COVID-19 vaccine and encouraging uptake of vaccines by eligible population.
- Building trust and confidence in vaccination advocacy.
- Addressing public concerns regarding vaccine hesitancy and mistrust.
- Encouraging people to continue behaviors to prevent COVID-19 infection, even after vaccination.
- IPC is more persuasive for addressing a strongly held practice, attitude or belief by the health providers.

# Key points when communicating about COVID-19 vaccine

Health workers play important roles in building community trust about the COVID-19 vaccine. Hence, a health worker must:

- Have correct and up to date information on the vaccines
- Use empathy. Put yourself in students' position to better understand and respond to their challenges and fears about COVID-19 vaccines.
- Demonstrate caring and respect to students to foster trust and increase uptake of COVID-19 vaccines.
- Tailor your communication approaches and messages to target groups and levels of demand for COVID-19 vaccine.

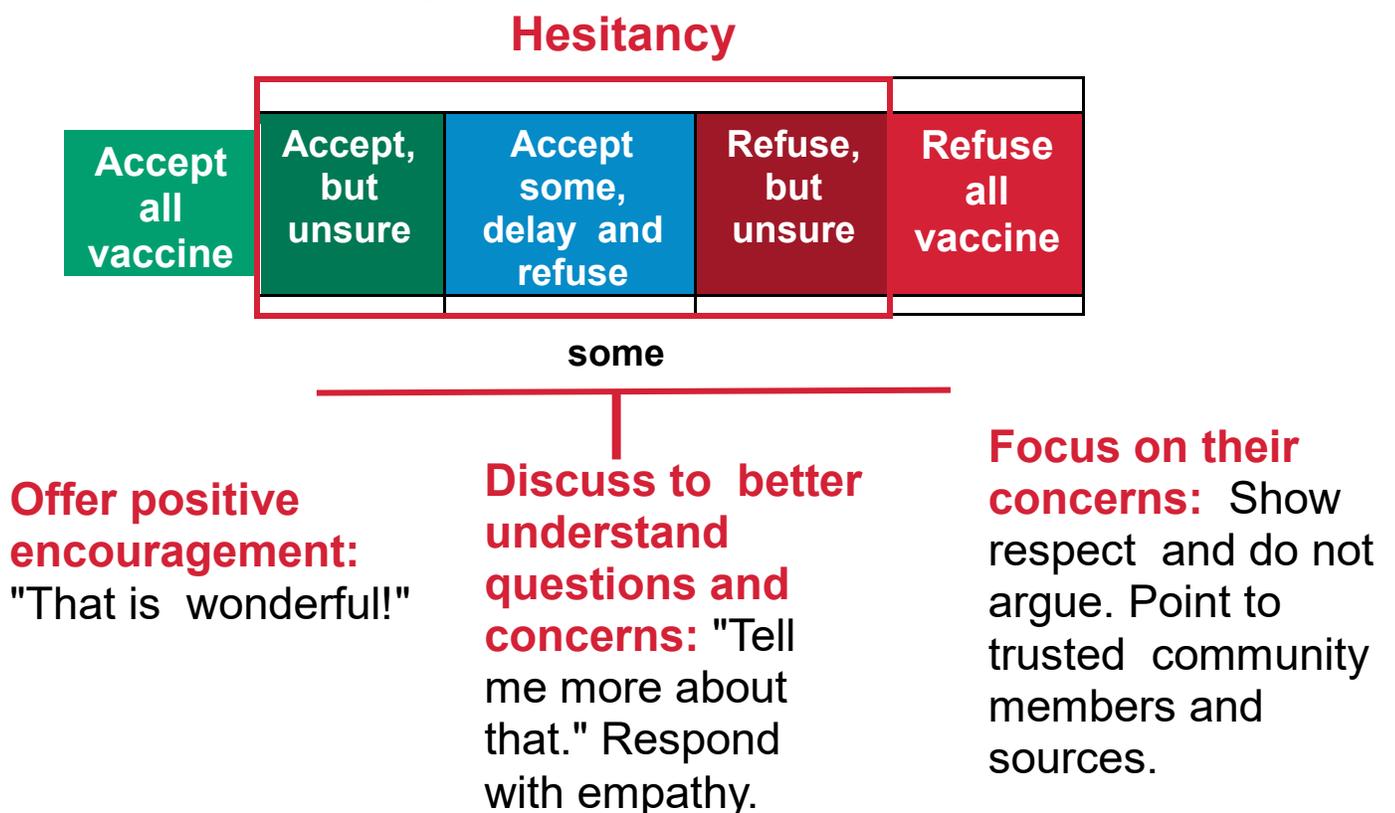
# Understanding and responding to vaccine hesitancy

What is **vaccine hesitancy** and what should I do?

For additional information: see

<https://ipc.unicef.org>

. Communicating about Vaccine Safety: Guidelines to help health workers communicate with parents, caregivers, and patients. Washington, D.C.: Pan American Health Organization; 2020. License: CC BYNC-SA 3.0 IGO.

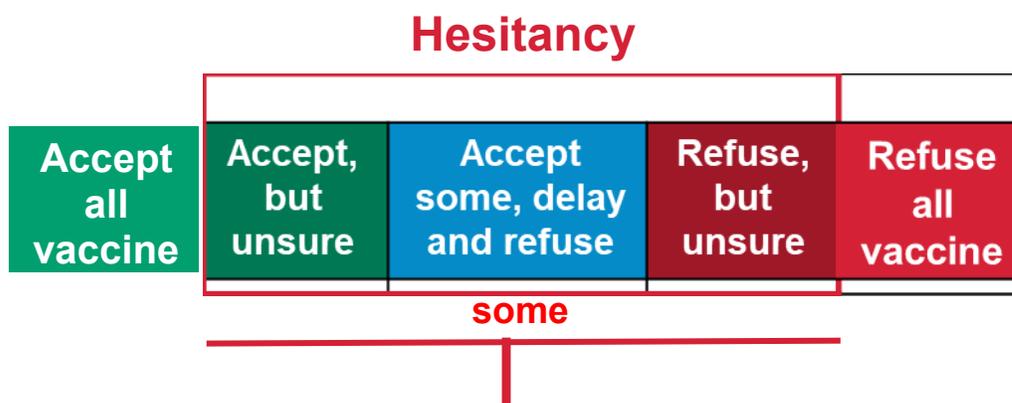


# Meaning of vaccine hesitancy

- Vaccine hesitancy refers to delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccination despite availability of vaccination services (WHO).
- There are many factors that influence people's decision to vaccinate, including:
  - Attitude of vaccinators
  - Perceptions of what society and our environment expect us to do
  - Perceptions of what others do
  - Norms, customs and barriers to vaccination access
  - The need to devote resources, time or effort to getting vaccinated,
  - The existence of administrative barriers, e.g. opening hours of the vaccination center.

# Understanding and responding to vaccine hesitancy...2

Examples of “how to respond” to hesitancy with empathy:

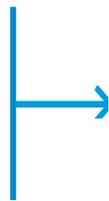


**Offer positive encouragement:**  
"That is wonderful!"

**Discuss to better understand questions and concerns:** "Tell me more about that." Respond with empathy.

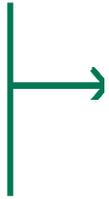
**Focus on their concerns:** Show respect and do not argue. Point to trusted community members and sources.

"I know  
vaccinating will  
help me, but I  
am afraid of  
side-effects."



Health worker: "I understand that  
you want to make the best choice  
for yourself. What side-effects are  
you concerned about?"

"I am not sure  
what to do. My  
community leader  
objects to  
vaccines."



Health worker: "I can see you are  
questioning vaccines. How do others  
you know deal with vaccination?  
What are your concerns?"

"I read rumours  
about COVID-19  
vaccine online. I  
do not know what  
to believe."



Health worker: "Social media and  
websites can spread false  
information. You can get the latest on  
COVID-19 vaccine from the source I  
trust at [xxx@xxx.com](mailto:xxx@xxx.com). I am also here  
to answer your questions."

# Communication Approaches

## CASE SCENARIO: 1

### Potential for vaccine acceptance

Sarah is a 38-year-old woman at the health facility for her infant's well- baby care visit. Naki has diabetes and is overweight. She does not ask about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Naki always brings her baby for health visits and accepts routine vaccines.

*Is Naki eligible as a member of a priority group?  
What would you say to Naki?*

# If eligible for COVID-19 vaccine:

- Use a presumptive approach: assume they will accept the COVID-19 vaccine.
  - State that they will receive the vaccine today.
  - Share key messages about the COVID-19 vaccine, benefits, common side-effects, care and follow-up.
  - If you receive consent and there are no questions or concerns, proceed with vaccination.
  - If there are questions or concerns, listen and respond with empathy. Use medical evidence or stories to convey the safety, effectiveness and need for the vaccine.
  - Always be respectful when talking to people

# Communication Approaches

## CASE SCENARIO: 2

### Hesitant due to misinformation

Janat is a 25-year-old female who arrives at the health facility for a family planning visit. She works as a Nurse in a high-risk area but has not received a COVID-19 vaccine. When asked, Yumi says, "I read it can cause health problems. Is that true?"

Should I trust the vaccine?"

*Is Yumi eligible as a member of a priority group? What would you say to Yumi?*

## **If eligible for COVID-19 vaccine:**

1. Use a participatory approach: identify and address misinformation/rumors; help them to understand the importance/need for vaccination.
2. Ask questions to discover misinformation. Share facts and stories to debunk myths and respond to concerns.
3. Acknowledge risks and benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine. Ask about vaccine perceptions and preferences; listen and respond with empathy.
4. If you receive consent and there are no questions or concerns, proceed with vaccination.
5. If a person remains hesitant, be respectful and provide information to take home; encourage considering vaccination.
6. Always avoid forcing anyone to get vaccinated.

# Communication Approaches

## CASE SCENARIO: 3

### Not part of a priority group

Maria is a healthy 28-year-old female who brings her infant for a wellness check. She says that while she is at the health facility, she would like to have a COVID-19 vaccine.

*Why is Maria not eligible for COVID-19 vaccine?*

*What would you say to Maria?*

### If not eligible for the vaccine:

- Recognize and appreciate interest in keeping self and family healthy.
- Explain that the current guidelines do not indicate that they should get a COVID-19 vaccine at this time.
- Advise her on COVID-19 prevention measures.
- If available, provide information on when the vaccine will be available to non-priority groups.

# JUSTIFICATION FOR CHILDREN'S VACCINATION

- Implementation of COVID-19 SOPs is still a challenge in school e.g., socio-distancing.
- Schools are prone to high transmissibility hence hotspots for clustering
- Suboptimal school surveillance.
- Vaccination of learners was one of the key strategies highlighted for safe opening of schools.
- Vaccination is the most realistic public health intervention to avoid disruptions in schools.
- Above all, vaccination of children greatly contributes to herd immunity.



