



Report

A mobile empowerment programme that connects young people all over the world to information that will change their lives and influence decisions

ISSUE

Young people live in a world of mass connectivity, which gives many a chance to express themselves but often little opportunity to be heard. Others less fortunate may not have internet connectivity so even have less chance, or in some cases no other chance to express themselves at all. Technology has become and will continue to be a driving force in the lives of adolescents and youth across the world where more than four billion¹ of us now have access to the internet and five billion of us have mobile phones.² Social media platforms

offer a public sphere in which to express and opinion but that comes with a risk of judgment, crowd-sourced humiliation or bullying with sometimes disastrous consequences and at the same time offers only limited options to youth groups, development agencies and governments to understand the driving forces of the sentiment of posts in detail, which is what is really required to inform decisions. Aside from traditional participatory methods young people still find themselves excluded from the development processes designed to improve their lives; recipients of aid rather

¹ wearesocial.com

² statista.com

than the shapers of their own development. To add another layer of complexity, as general information and news becomes more accessible through the use of technology, it is not always clear, specifically to young people, what information is accurate and can be trusted. The issue is one of digital citizenship, first access to it and then how to use it to improve ones life.

According to the Convention of the Rights of the Child, children, adolescents and young people have the right to express themselves, and the right to have their opinions considered. Young people can provide valuable information when reporting on what's happening in their communities, and with it help improve their own lives and that of their peers and families. Furthermore, the exclusion of young people or unintentional neglect of including them in the processes that impact their lives will ultimately lead to social unrest. Leaders ignore young people at society's peril.

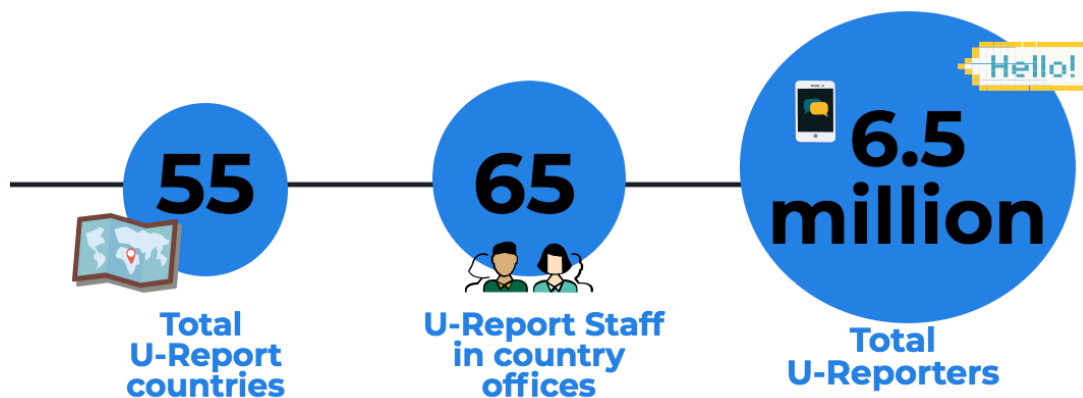
INNOVATIVE RESPONSE

U-Report is an open-source mobile messaging programme managed at the country level by UNICEF alongside youth and NGO partners. Launched in 2011 in Uganda with the Scouts, Girls Education Movement and a number of Faith Based Organisations it

is free to the user and in 2019 has a worldwide footprint in 55 countries. U-Report encourages participation through the very social media channels young people already use, plus SMS, in the safest way. It gives young people and their communities a voice on issues that matter to them. Collected as 'data' these voices are analysed in real-time and applied to informing development work and amplified to advocate and inform positive change through decision making. As well as collecting their views and feedback, information relevant to all UNICEF's Goal Areas is shared back with U-Reporters in an effort to improve or save young people's lives through access to accurate and engaging content. Data is mapped at the local level and compiled nationally. Results are displayed in a public website in aggregate for transparent and safe access by age, gender and location. U-Report is anonymous and completely transparent. U-Report has reached over 6.5 million users in 55 countries, with more countries scheduled to launch and a new U-Reporter joining every thirty seconds.

MODES OF ENGAGEMENT

At scale U-Report offers four distinct impact modalities to its users and partners to deliver impact.



I. Feedback: UNICEF country offices and partners at UN agencies, Governments and NGOs use U-Report polls to collect information directly from young people.

This information is used to help shape policies and programmes and provide feedback to U-Reporters. In addition to shaping the activities young people use U-Report to share their views and experiences in education, violence in and out of school, and other important issues they want to discuss and be heard on. Poll responses are analysed in real-time, mapped and displayed on a [public dashboard](#) at the local level, ensuring the feedback can be actioned by local and national governments.

II. Live Chats: Live chats offer U-Reporters one-on-one advice and services, and can act as a complaints mechanism. This is typically used for counseling, advice seeking or grievance reporting – particularly relevant here is the potential adaptation to specific themes such as protection from sexual exploitation, cholera prevention. The confidential reporting facility enables and empowers young people to speak out and report, ask questions and seek information they may otherwise be too embarrassed or afraid to seek.

III. Self-Skilling U-Report bots allow young people to navigate content and information on specific issues to self-educate. U-Report bots come with a personality, they are locally adaptable and relate to young people and communities to answer their questions intelligently and sensitively. It is a 'smart' approach to respond to queries via SMS and digital messengers on children's rights, disaster risk reduction, health care, immunizations, nutrition, access to safe water and sanitation services, basic education and protection.

U-Reporters leave the U-Report bot with new information that will improve or save their life. After using the cholera U-Report bot, even 6 months later young people in Sierra Leone were still 20% more likely to know the signs of cholera than before.

IV. Community Action U-Report is being used to mobilize thousands of young people physically to take on-ground action and contribute to positive change in the communities.

Evidence generated from the Monitoring and Evaluation pilot has shown:

- 70% of U-Reporters share topics with friends or family, expanding the reach and impact of our work beyond the phone.
- 76% U-Reporters [rated their experience](#) with U-Report as Fantastic or Good
- 82% of U-Reporters gained any new knowledge or awareness using U-Report
- 59% of U-Reporters are willing to recommend the project in their surroundings
- On average a governmental institution at the country level uses the feedback from young people via U-Report once per month. The respective metric for UN agencies is 0.8 times per month and 0.55 times per month for NGOs

A CLOSER LOOK: U-REPORT IN ACTION

In Côte d'Ivoire, U-Report is a movement of young people taking actions for positive change in their community.

In a moment of emergency, the U-Report platform served as a virtual friend offering

useful and life-saving information to keep U-Reporters and their families safe.

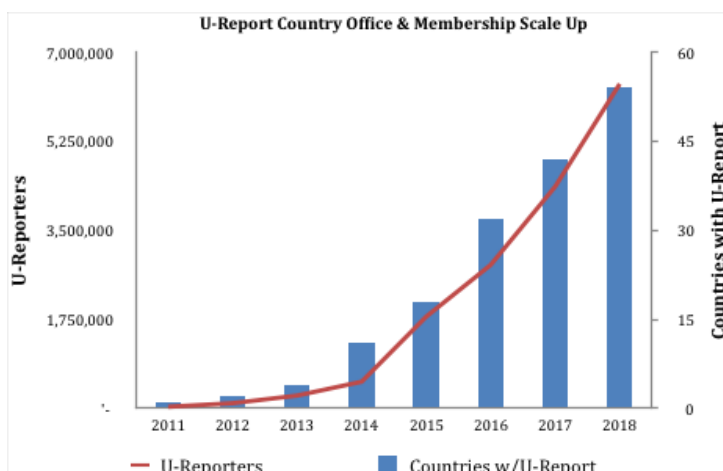
Information is then shared by young people to raise awareness and help others. In Côte d'Ivoire, there are more than 480,000 U-Reporters registered. They engage at different levels according to the community guidelines for being a U-Reporter (Some people participate in the bi-monthly survey, others take concrete actions for a positive change in their community).

Following the flooding disaster that hit Abidjan in June 2018, U-Reporters went out on the streets and assisted the affected families. They helped them clean up and save their remaining belongings, cleaned the clogged drains and sensitized people around them to do the same.

U-Report is a rallying point and information safe haven in an emergency context, when most young people need it most.

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- East Caribbean: With 5 days notice, 100,000 people in the path of Hurricanes Irma and Maria were warned and provided them with trusted preparedness advice. 25,000 were reached directly by U-Report, and 71,000 indirectly through U-Reporters sharing information either in person (47%) or via WhatsApp (34%). 8,000 unique questions about the hurricanes were answered in three languages.
- Mozambique: More than 130,000 adolescents were counseled and referred to health providers in Mozambique in 2018. U-Report provides information on a variety of issues, such as HIV/AIDS prevention, sexual and reproductive health, early marriage or violence against children daily. U-Reporters also provided their feedback



on their treatment at health centres which UNICEF shared with the Ministry of Health to amplify their voices and address their challenges.

- Liberia: Mobilizing more than 32,000 Liberian youth to take the lead in Ebola control and prevention by engaging daily on Ebola-related questions such as signs and symptoms, proper hand washing techniques, safe burial practices, and stigma around survivors.
- Global: Over 167,000 young girls expressed their opinions and received advice about menstruation hygiene management in 20 countries. Over 25,000 girl's questions about MHM have since been answered by volunteer organisations.
- Sierra Leone: During the floods of August 2017 UNICEF, in partnership with other UN agencies (WFP and RCs office) utilised the tool to improve delivery of cash transfers, to support the WASH response and warn 79,000 people how to protect themselves and treat cholera.

PATHWAY TO SCALE

U-Report has over 1 billion message exchanges with U-Reporters, receiving 140,000,000 messages: each one a voice. U-

Reporters are acting as both first responders to crises affecting them, and as community volunteers furthering the 2030 development agenda and improving outcomes for children.

The size of U-Report both in terms of beneficiaries involved and country offices utilising the platform has doubled in each of the last 3 years. The platform grows daily, with on average one person signing up to U-Report every 30 seconds but we could be reaching more. With an injection of funds directly supporting the Accelerator countries, UNICEF and our Gen U partners could reach 28 million young people by the end of 2020.

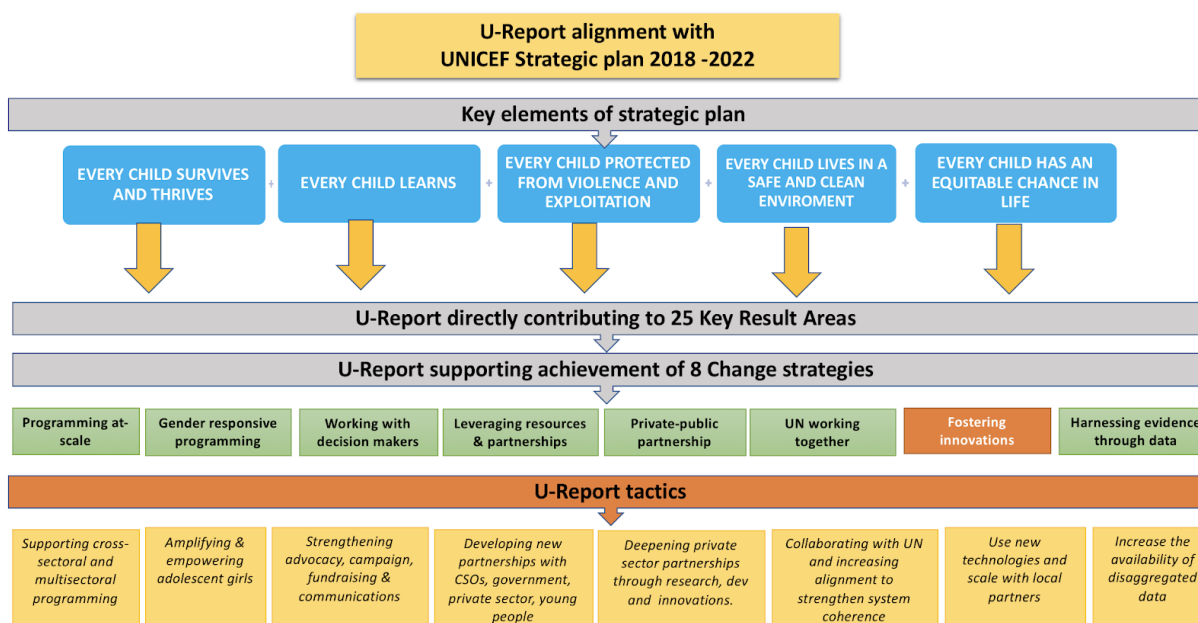
RESULTS FOR CHILDREN

According to the 2018 independent evaluation by Deloitte: ***“U-Report is a powerful tool that allows UNICEF to directly achieve its strategic priorities, mission, and mandate.”*** The current UNICEF Strategic plan 2018-2022 presents an extraordinary opportunity to transform the lives of adolescent, young people and communities. UNICEF strategic plan’s key results areas target the barriers that hold children and young people back, deny them the agency to

shape their destinies and prevent them from accessing critical services that can save their lives and help them fulfill their potential. The link between U-Report and UNICEF strategic plan’s result areas, change strategy enablers and outputs identify important steps in the causal chain between UNICEF’s activities and the final goals it hopes to achieve. As a tool adaptable to any country context U-Report is truly the most powerful cross-cutting tool UNICEF has at its disposal (Independent Evaluation, ISG, 2016).

U-Report supports most areas of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2022 as a “How” strategy where the U-Report theory of change applies with regards to data collection, adolescent and youth engagement and access to information across any programme area. In terms of specific targets U-Report uses the 8 tactics to support result areas, outputs and change strategies in UNICEF 2018-2022 strategic plan (box below).

U-Report globally supports and regularly contributes to the achievement of 25 key result areas (box below) and 8 outputs in the theory of change underpinning the strategic plan.



In addition to contributing to eight change strategy enablers, U-Report directly supports achievement of enabler #7 'Fostering innovations'. UNICEF's strategic plan clearly outlines the need for fostering innovation and pioneering the use of new technologies to help the children at greatest risk and in greatest need. There is a need to enhance the use of new technologies such as U-Report, to strengthen systems, improve service delivery and engage communities, citizens and civil society organizations in public decision-making. Evidenced by the level of scale, trust and value U-Reporters put in the system, with one U-Reporter joining every 30 seconds there is evidence of demand for the tool. With feedback from U-Reporters showing they both trust and share the information provided not only is it indicative of the value but also the impact beyond just those in the system to eventually adopt, adapt and scale up the tool across other countries.

U-Report uses the following tactics to support the strategic plan outputs by:

- Amplifying citizens voices by providing feedback, evidence and data
- Engaging and empowering youth organizations, NGO's and communities, especially those that are marginalized and those living in humanitarian conditions
- Community level engagement, partnerships
- Measuring awareness, attitudes and behavior change through monitoring, evaluation and research
- Making citizens voices count by inter-agency collaborations.

A key part of starting a U-Report programme in a country is the set-up, deployment and implementation process for a country office.

These are the key steps:

Step 1: Concepting, budgeting & strategizing

Step 2: Management Support

Step 3: Setting-up and deploying technology

Step 4: Launching & Scale up of U-Report

Step 5: Use U-Report voices to improve decision making / Provide info in return

Step 6: Repeat Step 4 & 5 to solve next youth, programme or partner challenge

Scale for U-Report is one of the key U-Report objectives and the methodologies used to scale U-Report in a country includes the following tactics:

Field recruitment and partnerships -

Partnering with global and local partners through MOUs is one of the most effective ways to recruit U-Reporters. Partnerships with youth led organizations and NGOs play an important role. Partners with high membership, good communication in place and enthusiasm for the programme are the best to work with.

Traditional Media Advertising -

Radio, print, television and internet have all been used by COs and UNICEF global to recruit U-Reporters. Radio in sub-Saharan Africa to reach youth in rural areas and online advertisements through Facebook can be powerful tools.

Digital media Advertising -

Ads on digital media channels, such as Facebook have proven to be one of the most successful recruitment methods and it is done through U-Report Campaign Centre.

Celebrity Endorsement –

David Beckham, Lily Singh, and Orlando Bloom have all supported U-Report.

Outreach -

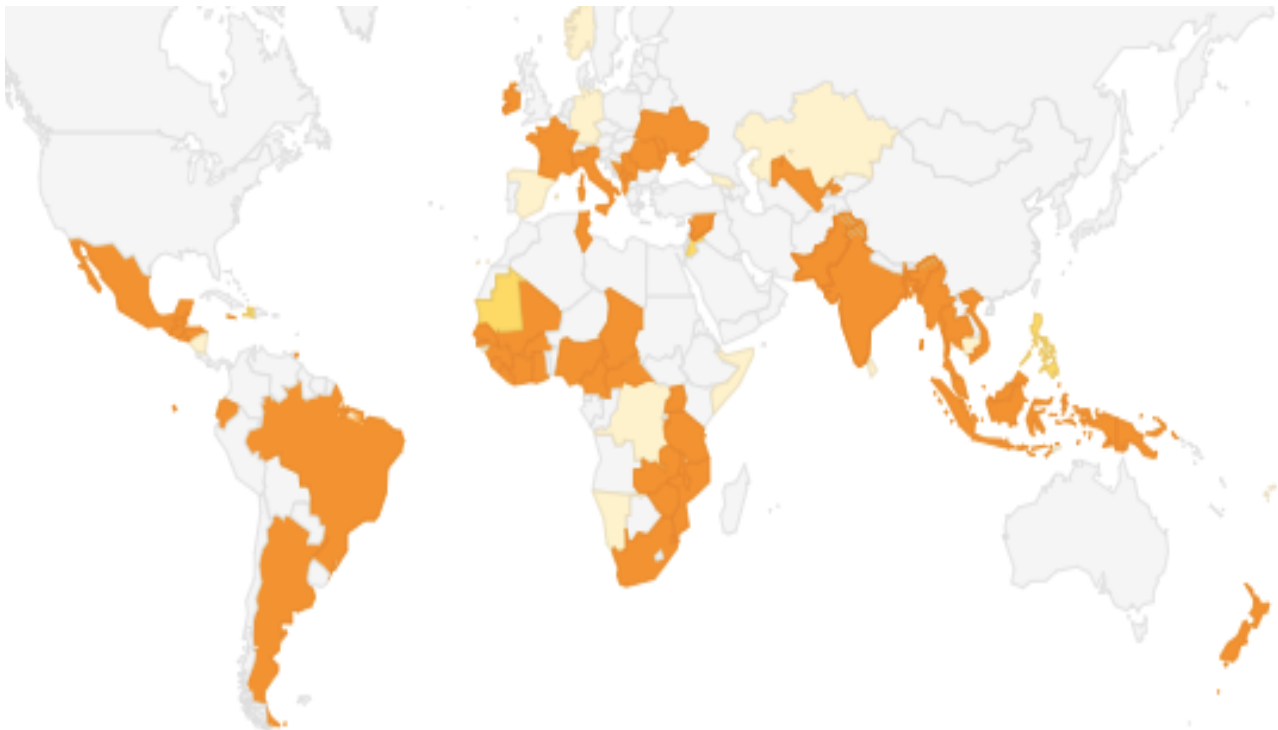
Word of Mouth, Videos, Utilizing Talent and Influencers, Personal networks.

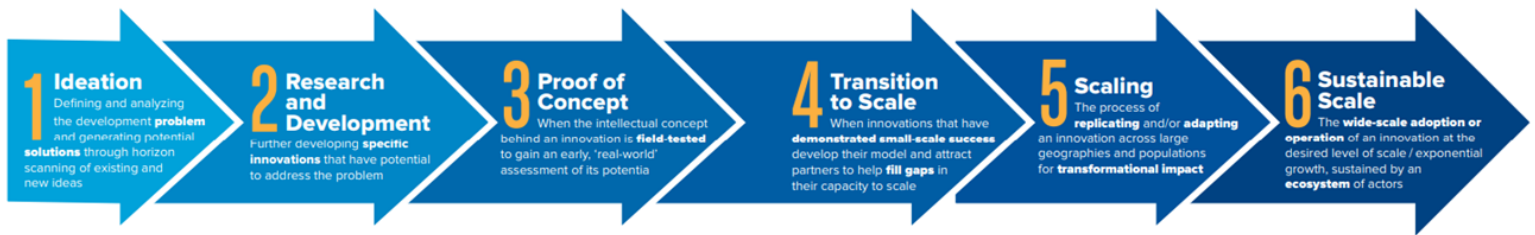
2019 Priorities

- Reach 28 million young people by December 2020
- Supporting UNICEF's Strategic Plan across adolescent, nutrition, hiv/aids, child protection, C4D and education areas.
- Improve utilisation in emergencies, currently at 50% as of 2018.
- Building partnerships in AI and tech that support the platform's evolution and value to young people
- Systematize throughout UNICEF as a tool for Accountability for Affected Populations
- Supporting Solutions and Ideas from Gen U
- Identifying funding sources for continued scale up
- New website launch.

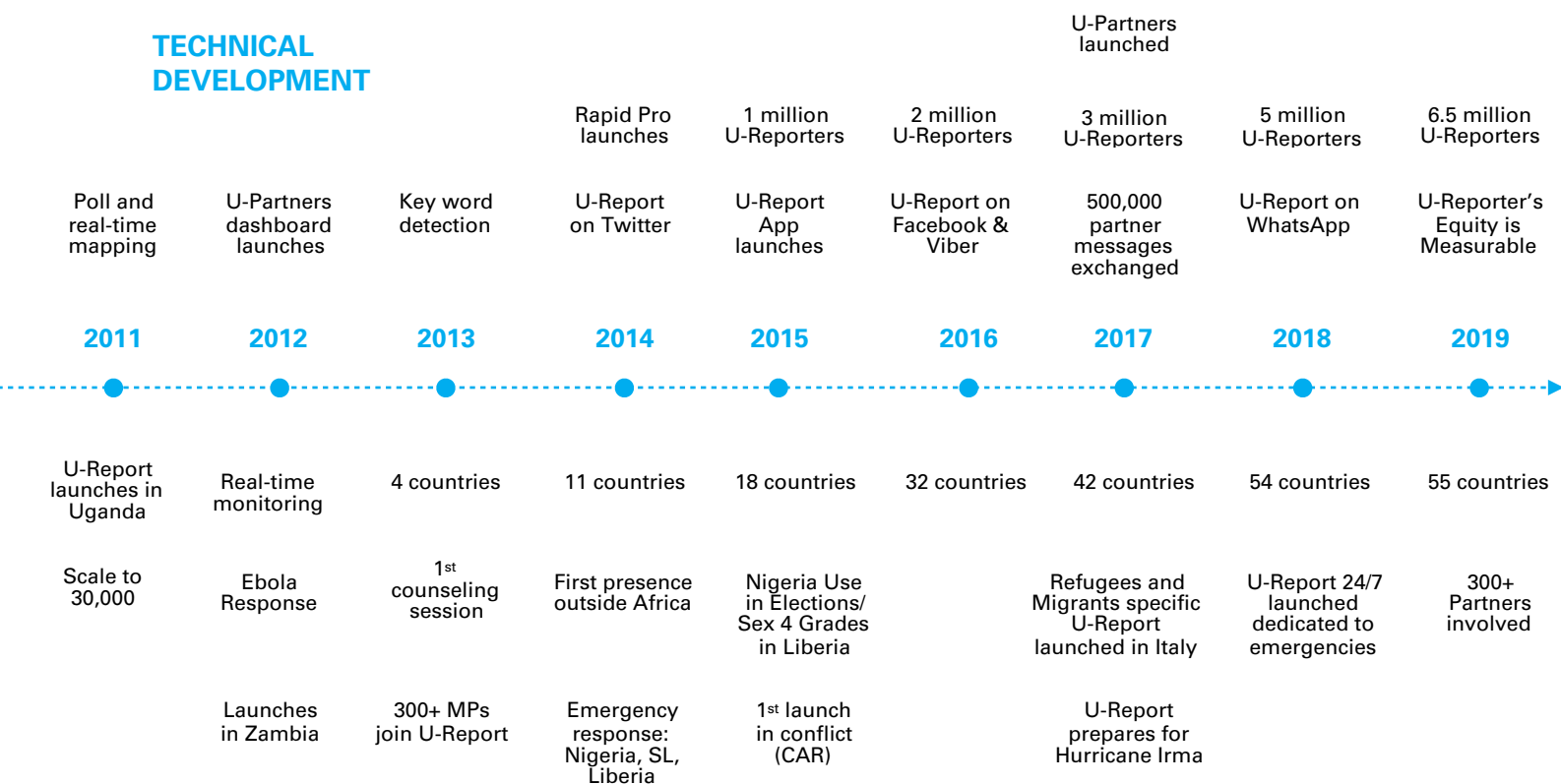
Deployments of U-Report

55 Active 4 Pipeline 14 Exploring





2010 - 2012	Uganda	2014	2015-2018
	2012-2013 - Zambia - Kosovo	- Adoption of Cloud Hosted RapidPro - Reduced costs - Centralised support in GIC - Lessons learned from other countries - Brand Established - Templated websites for quick set up - 7 Countries Have U-Report. - Platform developed for 1-1 conversations	- Introduction of digital channels including Facebook opens new markets - Open Source - Reduced Costs 50% via more Vendors offering service - Webinars and online training increase pick up - Coordination and support improved - Global strategy developed based on country inputs - 2 x positive Independent Evaluations - Donor support attracted - 1 million people first reach - U-Report size (country adoption and members) double every year for 3 years - Bots introduced and designed with COs. - 300 + Partners involved by Dec 2017 - Senior management support in HQ - New spin off products (24x7 and One The Move) cater to specific issues.



The above diagram makes use of the [International Development Innovation Alliance \(IDIA\) High-Level Architecture for Scaling Innovation](#), adopted by UNICEF among others.

FIND OUT MORE

<https://www.unicef.org/innovation/U-Report>

U-REPORT TEAM

U-Report is a solutions in the Scale portfolio of the Office of Innovation led by Tanya Accone, Senior Adviser on Innovation at Scale.



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