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SEARCH
FOR **COMMON**
GROUND

CONFLICT SCAN

June 2022

Tanzania

Introduction

Tanzania is one of the most stable countries in East Africa. However, it faces important political, religious, and social challenges, including the marginalisation of youth and women, and high levels of poverty. Politics, criminality, and land use are viewed as the major sources of local conflicts in Tanzania. Moreover, across many regions, localised conflicts lead to regular outbreaks of violence, destruction of property, and a general sense of insecurity. The project areas, Mtwara and Tandahimba districts, are located in the south of Tanzania, bordering Mozambique, and have seen increasing attacks linked to violent extremism and radicalization. In both districts, major sources of conflicts are land conflict, violent extremism, family-based conflicts and gender-based violence.¹ The violent extremism threat was first spoken about publicly by President Samia Suluhu in November 2021, when she congratulated the army for defending villagers in Mtwara against an attack by a terrorist from Cabo Delgado. On the same day, the Chief of the Defence Forces insisted that citizens living along the border should feel safe, as the army is working to ensure their safety and security. In another important development, the judicial case against opposition leader Freeman Mbowe (Chadema party) was suddenly closed in March 2022 by the Director of Public Prosecution. Right after, the President met with Mr. Mbowe, and opposition parties then started supporting some government decisions.

Data collection and analysis

Data for the fourth conflict scan report for Tanzania was gathered from 29 November to 10 December 2021, in Mtwara Urban and Tandahimba districts. This report was prepared by the Search for Common Ground (Search) Tanzania team, with support from Search's COVID-19 Response Programming Team and Institutional Learning Team. For more information on the data collection methodology and tools used by Search for Common Ground for this research, click [here](#). This report is part of a series of regular conflict scans aimed at providing quick and actionable answers to a set of specific questions. There have been three reports previously for Tanzania, which can be found [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).



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1. Conflict scan report "Sources of conflict in Mtwara and Tandahimba", December 2021.



Update: COVID-19 Measures and Impact on Conflict

Over the past months, there have been several steps which have signalled a real fight against the pandemic. The first batch of COVID-19 vaccines arrived in Tanzania in July 2021, through the COVAX facility. Frontline health workers, elderly, and people with comorbidities were among the priority groups.² Notable political changes also happened in this period, with four reshuffles of ministers. In January 2022, the Minister of Health Doroth Gwajima was appointed to the Gender and Social Welfare Ministry and Umyy Mwalimu took over as Health Minister. She was the Health Minister in March 2020 - during Magufuli's Presidency - when COVID-19 was first announced in Tanzania and her fight against misinformation was very notable at that time, she used to update the nation on COVID-19 statistics and trends. After a long pauze, the MoH website is now again updated on a weekly basis. As of 21 February 2022, there are 33,594 confirmed cases and 796 deaths, and approximately 2.8% of the total population are fully vaccinated.³ Mtwara region, one of our target regions, had a huge vaccine roll out and became among the leading regions out of all 31 regions.⁴

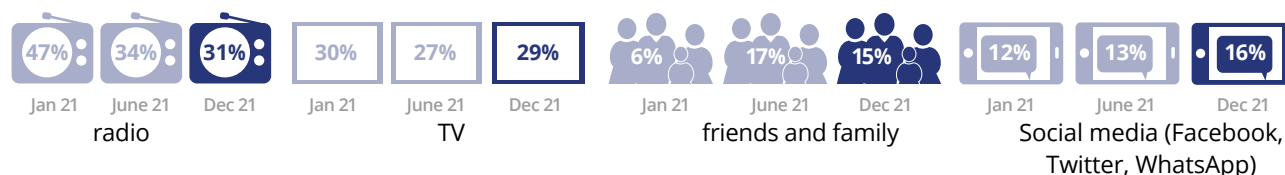
Currently in Tanzania, there are no serious preventive measures in place, other than insisting on getting vaccinated and taking precaution by wearing masks and sanitising hands.

	Schools open
	Teleworking not mandatory
	Borders/airports open
	All services/sectors open
	Mask wearing not mandatory

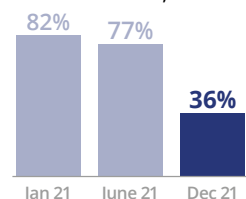
COVID-19's Impact on Social Cohesion & Trust

Amid a newly reopened media landscape, trust in COVID-19 information increased, and as a consequence informal information-sharing declined

The top trusted media channels to obtain information about COVID-19 are:



Search partnered with two radio stations to disseminate accurate information related to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵ In December, **36% of both Tandahimba and Mtwara respondents listened to our "Baki Salama" radio programmes**, down from 77% in June 2021.⁶

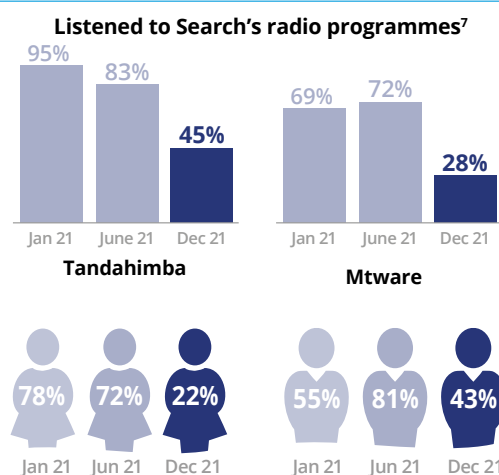


There are two factors that contributed to the dramatic decline:

- an external contextual factor where we see from our data that radio as trusted source for COVID-19 information recorded a dramatic decline since early 2021 (from 47% down to 31%)
- based on our listenership survey, we found our programmes are broadcasted only once a week during an inconvenient time for most listeners. We expect to achieve higher reach levels as our social media campaign started at the end of January 2022.

Listenership rate is much lower in Mtwara than Tandahimba, because the competition with many national and international radio stations in Mtwara town centre is high, and there is a variety of information sources. While Tandahimba region is predominant with Muslim population who prefer to listen to religious programs aired at specific radio stations.

Men have higher listenership than women in both districts, as these are relatively traditional areas where women mostly focus on their household role, and men listen more to current affairs issues on the radio. Moreover, the programme on Newala FM is aired from 7 pm to 7:45 pm when most women are normally preparing dinner for the household, whereas men at this time normally return from work and rest while waiting for dinner.



2. Unicef, "The first COVID-19 vaccines have arrived in Tanzania", July 2021.

3. WHO, "COVID-19 Portal" February 2022.

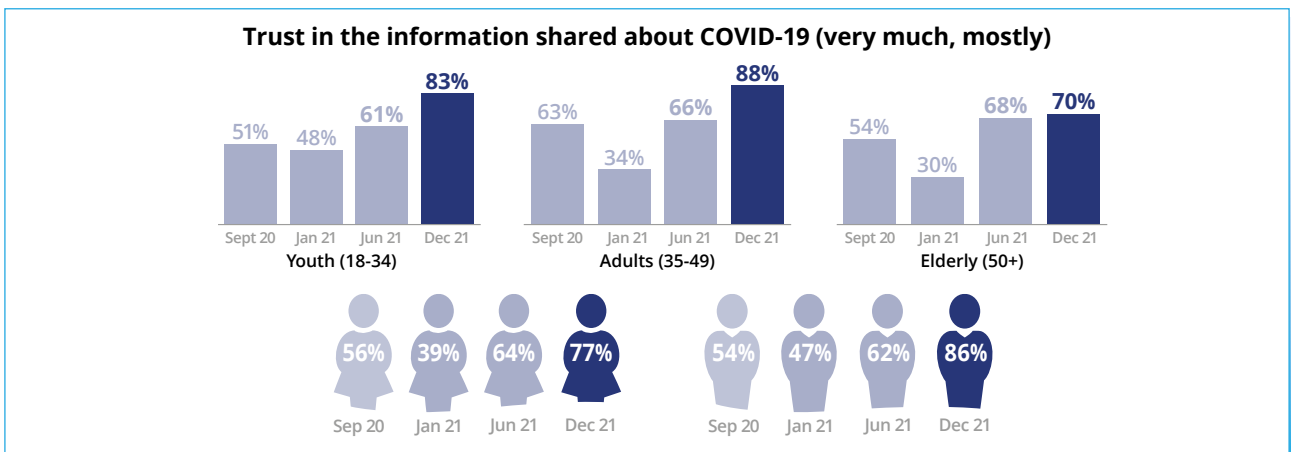
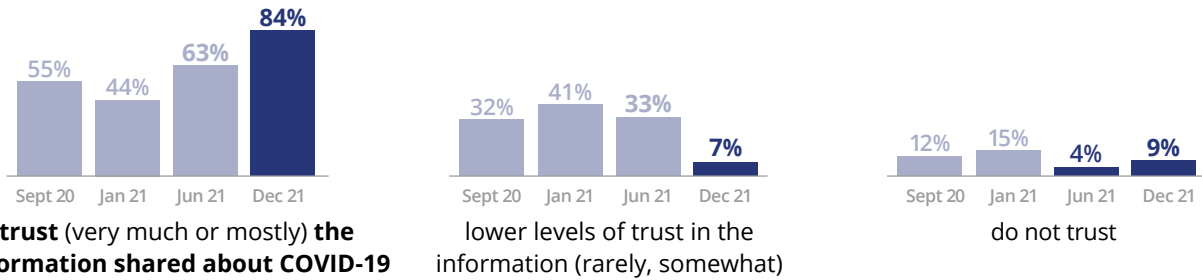
4. National news in Swahili, "Mtwara region leading in Vaccine response".

5. Newala FM in Tandahimba and Pride FM in Mtwara both broadcasted Baki Salama from May 2021 to Feb 2022.

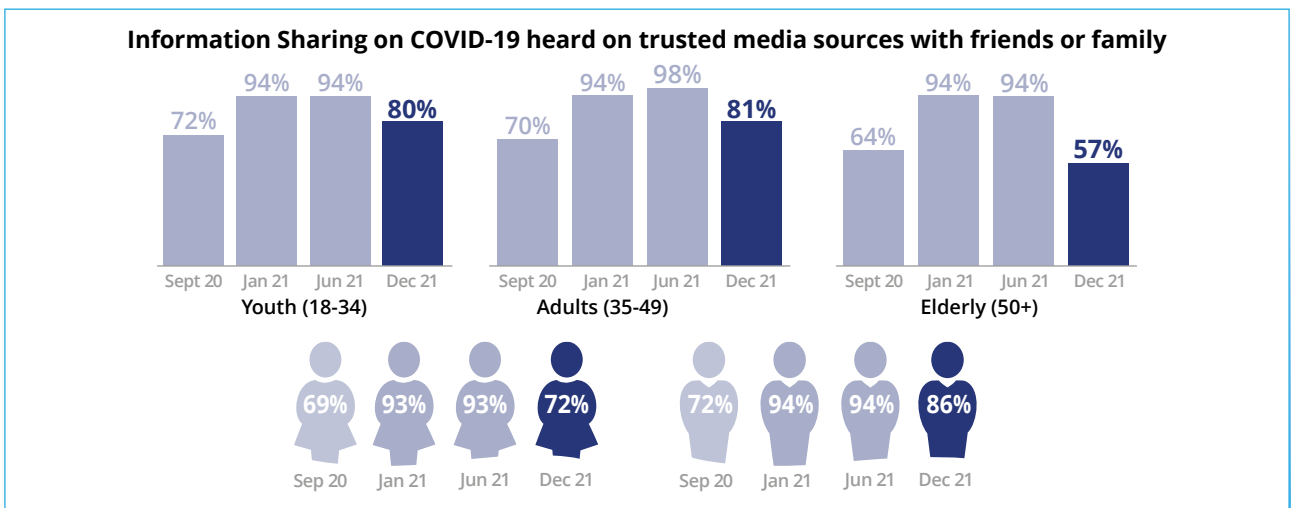
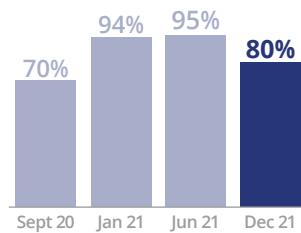
6. This is aligned with the level observed in our regular listenership survey in September 2021.

7. In the last round of data collection (Dec 21), this question was specifically about listening to our radio programmes, whereas before, the question was asked about listenership to our partner radio stations, as broadcasting had not started back then.

Despite having lower listnership rates, trust levels have increased considerably, and increased trust is observed among all demographic groups. Increased levels of trust are likely due to the government’s efforts to improve access to information and prioritise the pandemic response, and to media actors being able to report more freely on the pandemic situation in the country. We can expect trust levels in COVID-19 information to increase further as more radio programmes are aired.

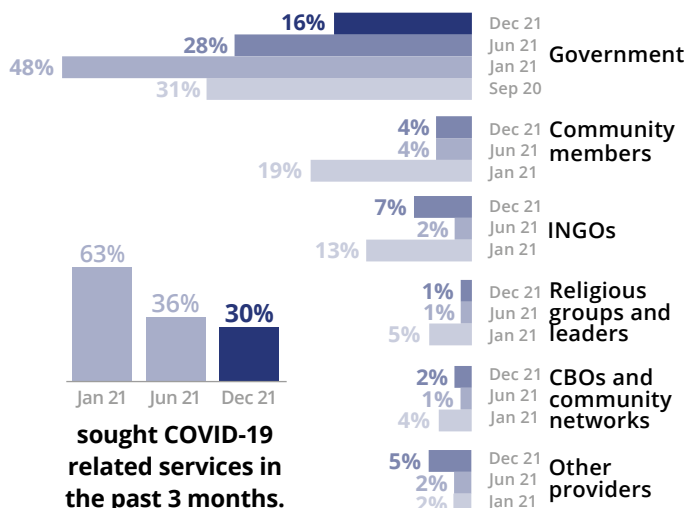


With the recent opening of the media space, citizen’s access to accurate information has increased, and we see this reflected in a decrease in the level of informal information-sharing. This decline is clear across all dividing and demographic groups, with the most notable decreases across women and elderly groups. At the same time, since early 2021 there has been an increase in family and friends as a source of obtaining COVID-19 related information. Some FGD participants mentioned that they get COVID-19 information from specific people around them who have accessed official channels. This could mean that people are accessing official information indirectly through key community informants, as not everyone may have the same level of access to formal communication channels.

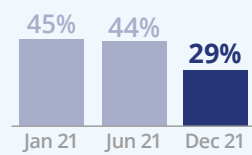


Satisfaction and trust in the COVID-19 response has increased, in both governmental and non-governmental providers

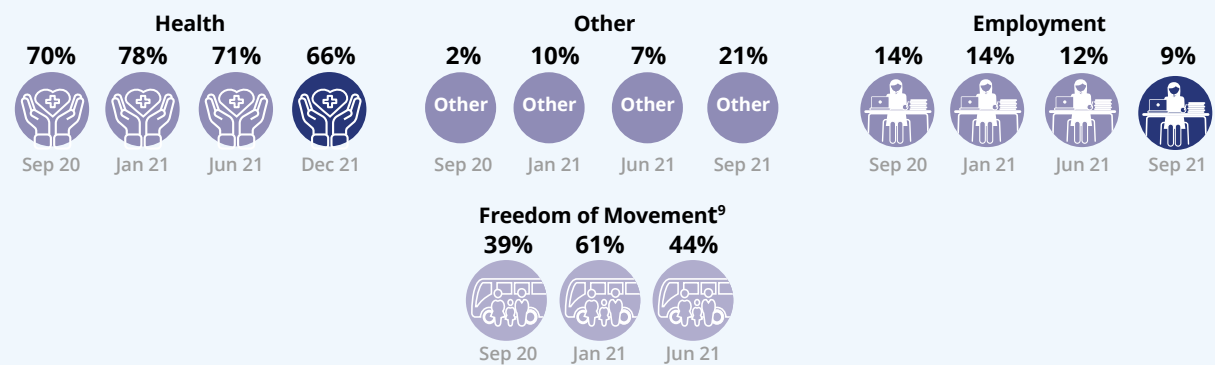
The percentage of respondents who sought COVID-19 related services in the past three months continues to decrease. This can be partially explained by an uptick in economic development (see below), and perhaps by the new transparency in the government's communication about COVID-19 and their increased efforts to fight the pandemic. Governmental and community initiatives against the pandemic have raised awareness and reduced tensions in the community.



This decrease in requesting services aligns with the decrease in respondents who have lost their main income source since the start of the pandemic, with now only **29% of respondents (or a member of their household) reporting a full or partial loss of the main source of income during the pandemic**. Many of those who had lost their employment have since resumed their economic activities.⁸

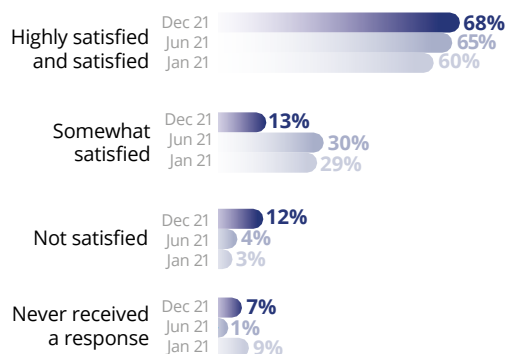


Health services remain the top requested services, followed by "other services", mainly information on COVID-19 related issues and vaccine services.

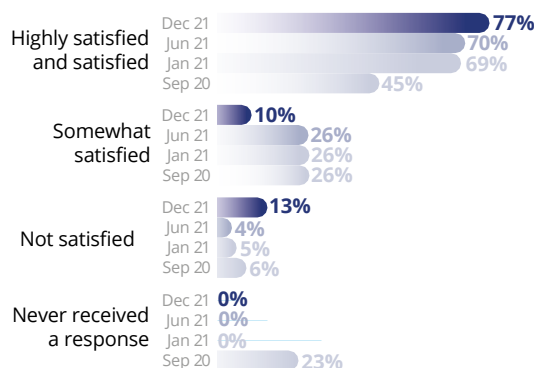


The government remains the number one service provider for most people. And on another positive note, **the level of satisfaction with the services provided continues to increase**, from all service providers combined, and from the government in particular. This is observed across all demographic groups. Moreover, 0% of respondents report not getting any answer from their government, which is the lowest reported among our six study countries.¹⁰

Overall Satisfaction from all service providers combined



Overall Satisfaction with Government Services



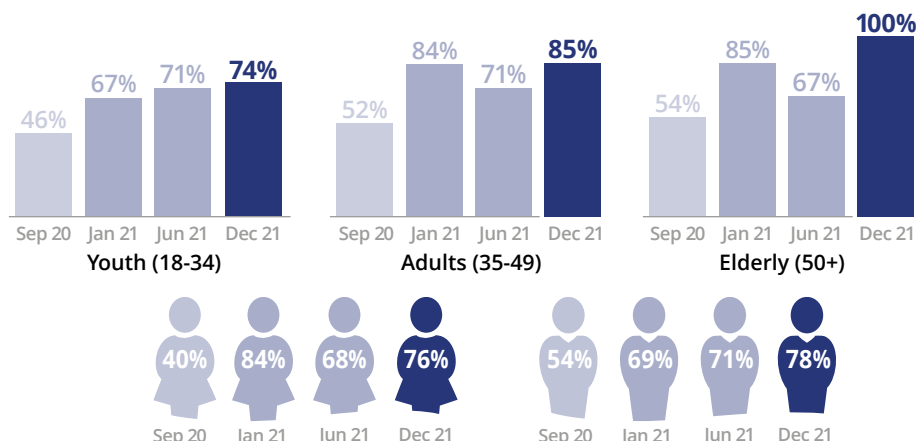
8. FGDs held from 1 to 7 Dec 2021.

9 This type of COVID-19 related service was not included in the fourth round of data collection.

10 As a reminder, the other countries are Kenya, Nigeria, Palestine, Uganda, and Yemen.

Elderly respondents have the highest level of satisfaction with the government services (100%). This is attributed to the good quality of the provision of health services, particularly on vaccines as they were prioritised for this.

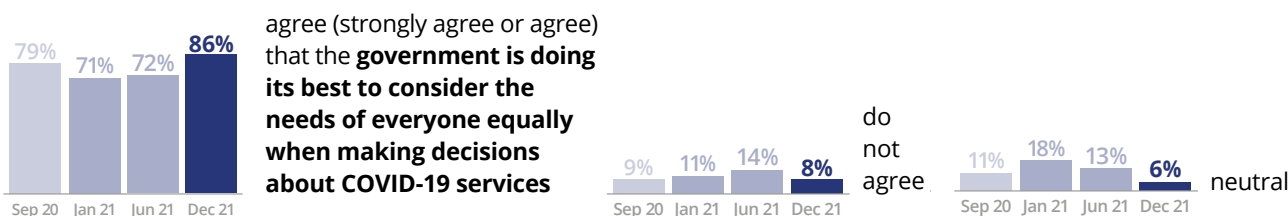
Satisfaction levels (highly satisfied, satisfied) with governmental services



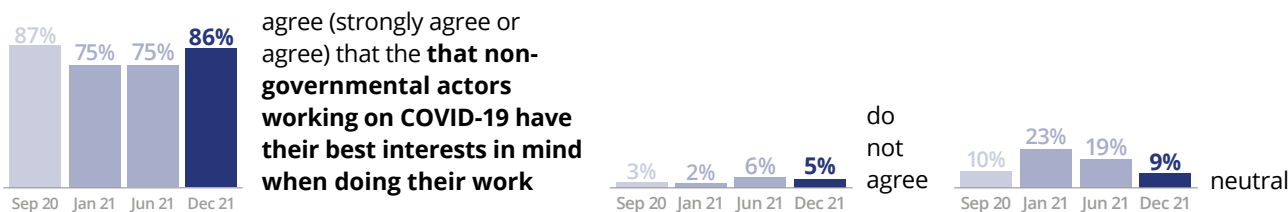
Also **trust in the government increased**, as 86% of respondents **agree that the government is doing its best to consider the needs of everyone equally when making decisions about COVID 19 services**. Many factors contributed to this increase:

- (i) the decision to share official COVID-19 statistics was appreciated by the communities,
- (ii) making the vaccines voluntary and not compulsory, and
- (iii) provision of advice and awareness-raising on COVID-19 related issues in public places and through the media (e.g. government PSAs on TV and radio).¹¹

Still, some respondents are disgruntled about compulsory mask-wearing when masks are not provided freely. Also, contradicting statements by some government officials raise concerns among many respondents (e.g. the former Health Minister sent conflicting messages about COVID-19 vaccination).



Overall, 86% of respondents agree (strongly agree or agree) that non-governmental actors working on COVID-19 have their best interests in mind when doing their work which is also an increase from the previous round. The free provision of PPE materials associated with many awareness raising initiatives may have contributed to this increase.¹²



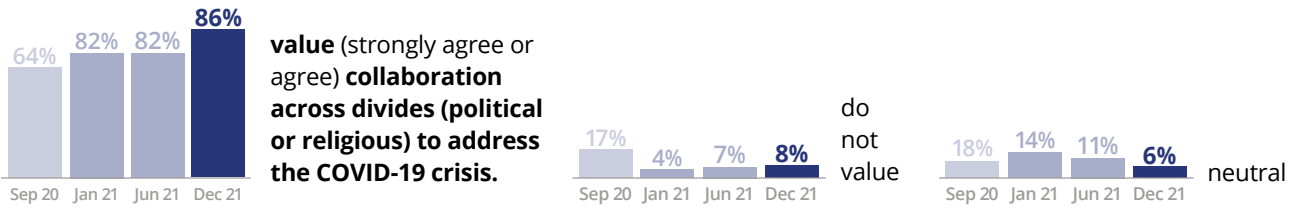
Horizontal cohesion is rising in our target regions in Tanzania, especially among women

Looking at the data we have for the period September 2020 to December 2021, we see a clear **overall improvement in horizontal cohesion indicators in Tanzania**, which may be reflective of the change in the political context and/or the pandemic may have provided a common cause for people to rally around. The two subjective indicators ("value collaboration" and "feelings of safety"), which are based on respondents' perceptions, show significant increases since the start of the pandemic, and the objective indicator ("actual interactions") is back at pre-pandemic levels (after an increase in early 2021, most likely due to an electoral period). Increases in horizontal cohesion indicators are observed among all demographic groups, but especially so for women.

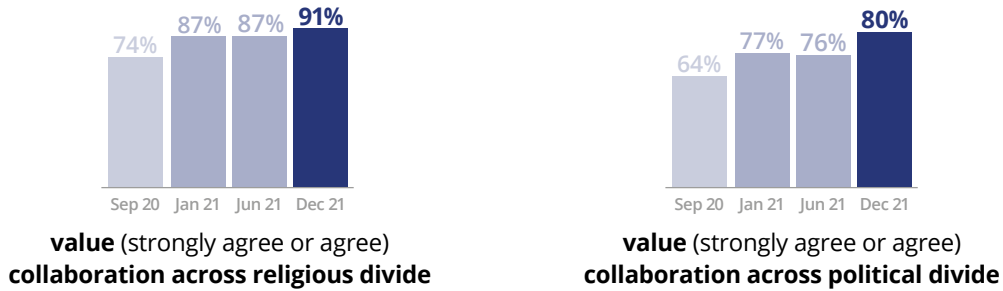
11. FGDs held from 1 to 7 Dec 2021.

12. FGDs held from 1 to 7 Dec 2021.

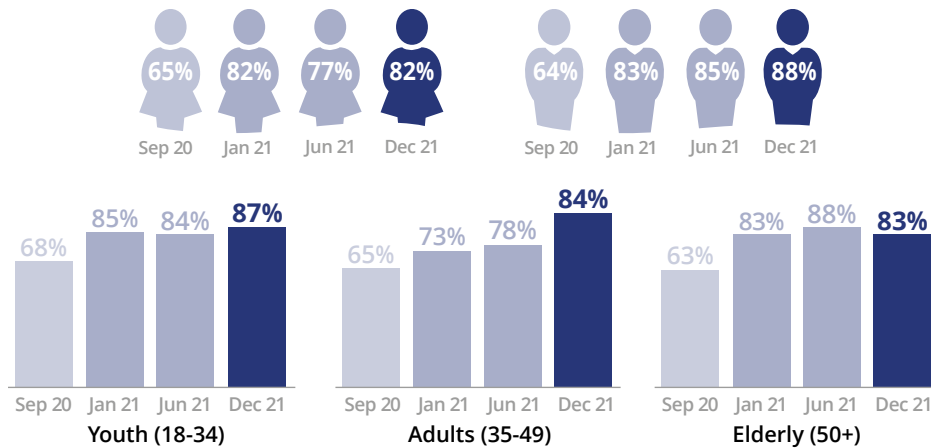
Value for collaboration continues to increase over time, and on average, **86% of respondents now see the value of collaboration across dividing lines (political or religious) to address the COVID-19 crisis (strongly agree or agree)**, 8% do not see value in such collaboration, and 6% are neutral.



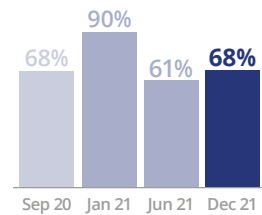
Despite relatively high rates across both dividing lines, more respondents value collaboration across religious than across political divides, consistent with the previous records.



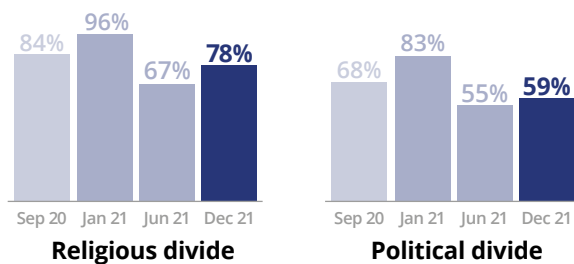
All demographic groups noted increases in valuing collaboration, except the elderly. It is unclear why that is the case.



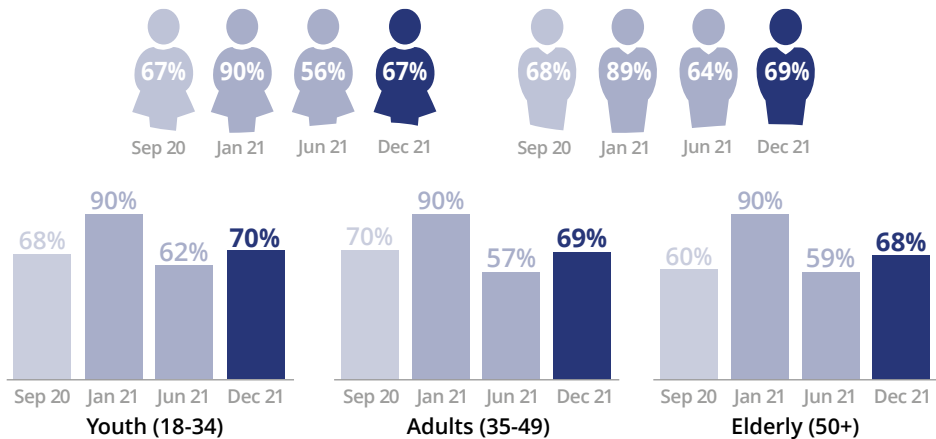
Overall, 68% of respondents reported interacting with someone from another group (religious or political) over the past three months, whether in person or remotely, now standing back at the same level as in September 2020.



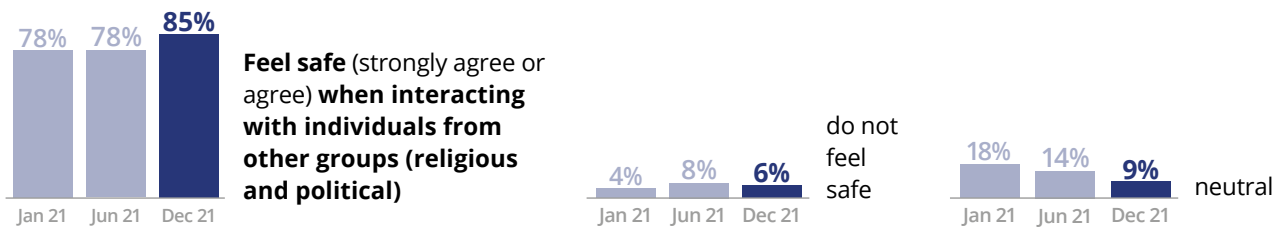
Interaction across religious divides increased significantly from the previous round, and thus remains higher than across political divides.



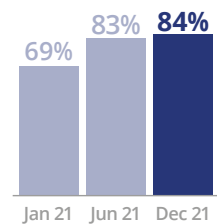
All demographic groups demonstrated increased interaction across divides (religious or political), but the increase is particularly notable for women, although men also saw a slight increase. This could be attributed to the increasing number of community initiatives (including by Search) that aim to empower women groups and enhance their inter-community interactions.



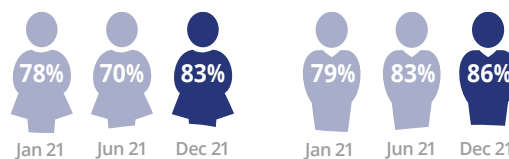
On average, 85% of respondents report feeling safe when interacting with individuals from other groups (religious and political), only 6% do not feel safe, and 7% have neutral reactions.



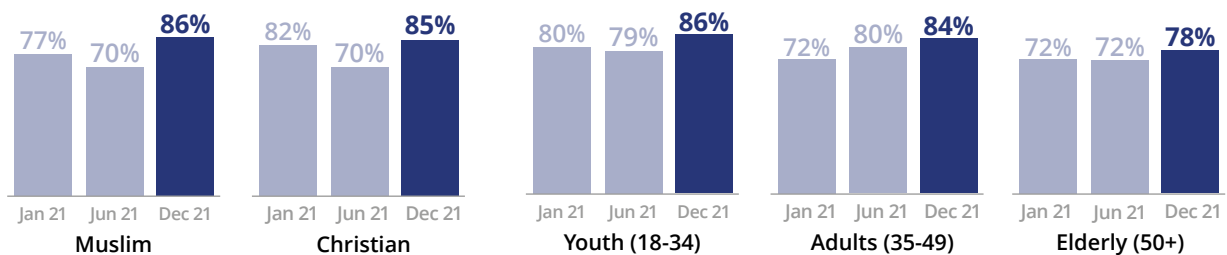
The increase in the overall level of feeling safe is driven by the increase of feeling safe when interacting across **political divides**. Citizens across political divides are facing the same problems: COVID-19, violent extremism and radicalisation. These common concerns resulted in higher levels in all horizontal cohesion indicators.



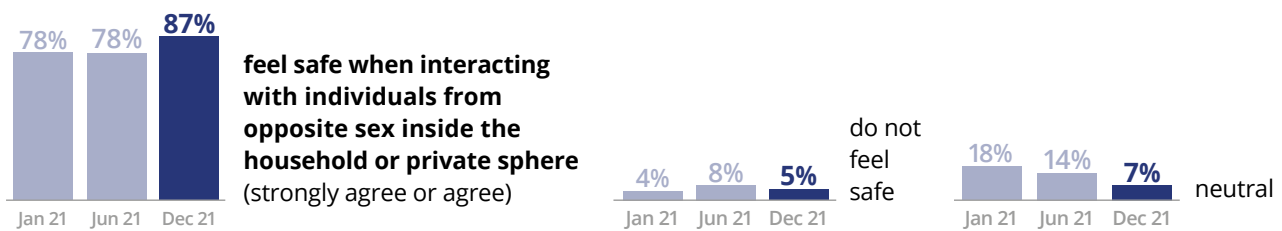
Though men's level is still higher than women's, this round a **significant increase was observed in women's feelings of safety when interacting across divides**. As explained above, this may be a result of the increasing number of community initiatives targeting women (including by Search).



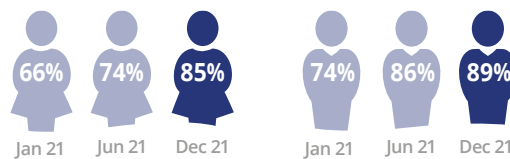
Both religious groups reported significant increases in feeling safe when interacting across divides.



Also, feelings of safety when interacting across genders increased, and now 87% of respondents report feeling safe interacting with individuals from opposite sex inside the household or private sphere, while 5% do not feel safe, and 7% feel neutral.



Men feel safer than women when interacting across gender divides. However, feelings of safety increased among both groups compared to the previous report.



Recommendations

- Using a mixed media approach is critical to reaching diverse population groups with different needs.** Our data shows that the most trusted sources of information on COVID-19 remain TV and radio, while social media carries lower trust among respondents. There are however important shifts taking place in people's media use, with trust in radio as a reliable source of information on COVID-19 decreasing significantly between January and December 2021 (from 47% down to 31%), and trust levels in social media slightly increasing during the same period (from 12% up to 16%). In some of the rural areas we target, social media penetration remains low however, so it is important that responders continue relaying credible information through local radio stations but in engaging formats and with topics that address different group's main concerns and questions around the pandemic. For younger, urban populations, social media platforms can be very effective for running awareness campaigns on COVID-19, especially by working with trusted digital influencers who already have large followings.
- Response providers should leverage growing trust in the pandemic response to increase spreading of accurate COVID-19 related information.** This round, trust in COVID-19 information shared through our media programmes increased significantly from 63% to 84%. Moreover, the government changed its way of communicating about the pandemic, and this clearly increased trust in the government, from 72% in June 2021 up to 86% in December 2021. It is worth noting that people are seeking out official information more frequently; 21% of respondents requested "other COVID-19 services" in the past period, and the majority of them sought information on COVID-19 related issues and vaccine services. Trust in non-governmental responders also increased from 75% to 86%. And family & friends are increasingly being trusted as a source for COVID-19 information (from 6% in January 2021 to 16% in December 2021). At the same time however, the level of sharing COVID-19 related information decreased from 95% in June 2021 to 80% in December 2021. Pandemic responders should adopt more participatory communication strategies to leverage these increased levels of trust by encouraging people to share accurate information about the pandemic with people around them (family, community, colleagues, etc.).
- Response providers should strengthen community initiatives targeting women as these can contribute to improved overall social cohesion levels.** Programmes aimed at empowering women and increasing their safety help improve horizontal cohesion within and across divided communities. Over the past reporting period, women's interaction across divides significantly increased to 67%, up from 56% in June 2021. The increase among women is the key driver of the overall increase in interaction across divides (from 61% in June 2021 to 68% in December 2021). We've also observed a significant increase in the percentage of women who feel safe when interacting across divides from 70% in June 2021 to 83% in December 2021. The increasing number of community initiatives (including by Search) that aim to empower women and enhance their inter-community interactions could be a contributing factor to these positive developments.