

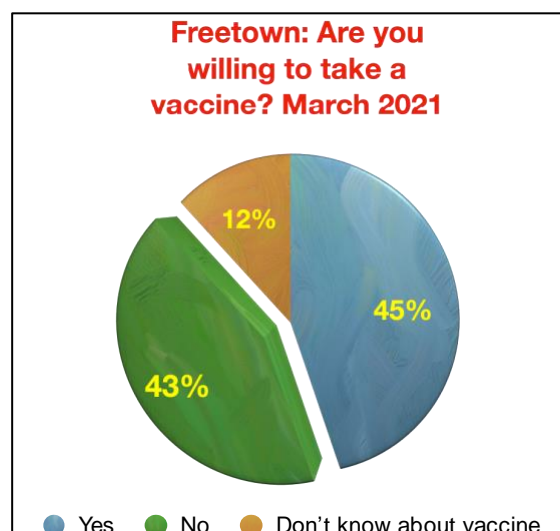
7th March 2021

Less than half of residents of Freetown are willing to take a COVID vaccine while 36% are afraid to take imported doses from China.

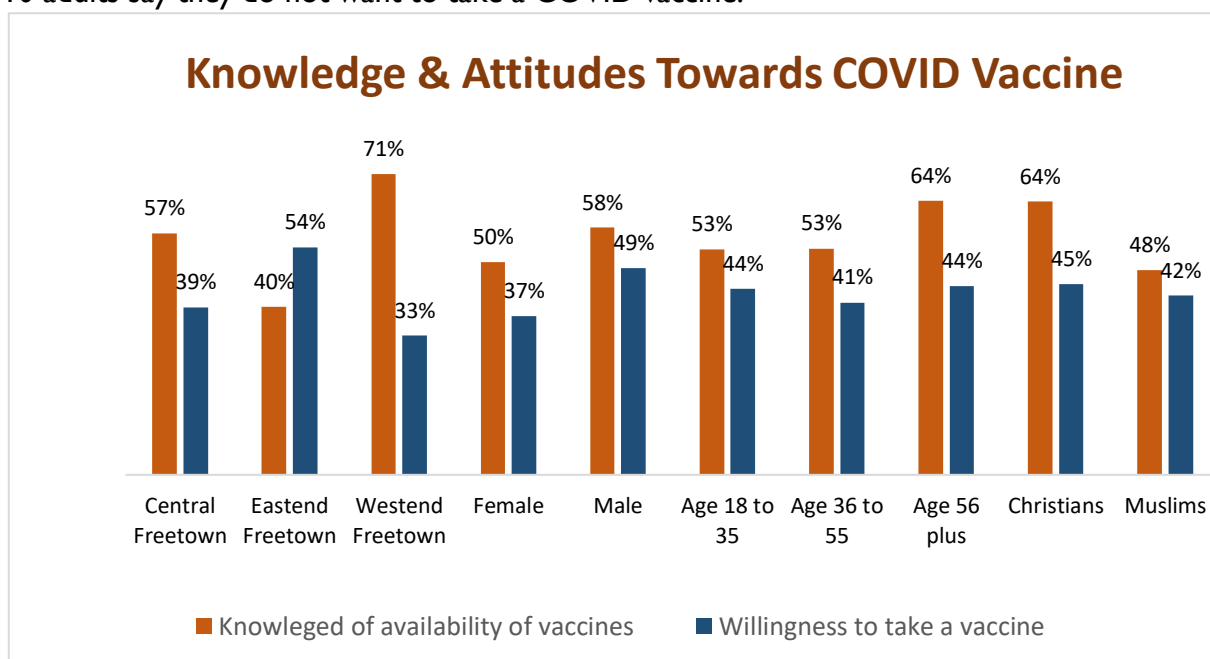
With nearly 300,000 doses of COVID vaccines now available in Freetown, the epicenter for COVID infections in Sierra Leone, a SierraPoll survey conducted between 3rd and 5th March reveals that only 43% of the city's residents are willing to take a COVID vaccine.

QUESTIONS	YES
Do you know if there is COVID vaccine in Freetown?	54.1%
Are you willing to take a vaccine?	43.0%

Vaccine awareness is higher among: men (58.1%) than women (50%); West-end residents (71%) than East-end (54%); Christians (64%) than Muslims (48%); and among older residents (above 56+yrs, 64%) than younger (18 to 35yrs, 53%).



In spite of high vaccine awareness in the West-end, fewer people there (33%) are willing to take the shots compared to East-end (54%) and Central Freetown (39%). Women (37.3%) are less willing than men (48.6%) to take the vaccine, while ruling party supporters (55.7%) are more willing to vaccinate compared to supporters of other parties. Overall, nearly 5 in 10 adults say they do not want to take a COVID vaccine.



Fear of vaccine side effects (44.9%) is the top reason for vaccine refusal. Second, over a third (35.7%) of respondents said they would not take the vaccine because they did not have COVID, conflating vaccination with cure. Third, nearly one year into the outbreak, one in four (24.9%) respondents still believe COVID is a hoax, and would refuse to take the vaccine for this reason.

TOP REASONS FOR VACCINE REFUSAL/ HESITANCE	
Afraid of the side effects	44.9%
I don't need it/I am not sick	35.7%
COVID is a hoax	24.9%
Lack of sufficient information	12.4%
They are just trying to experiment	8.9%
Not a serious threat in Sierra Leone	8.0%
Refused	3.6%
Against my religion	1.3%

Country	Most preferred country vaccines	Least preferred country vaccines
China	7.3%	36.4%
Nigeria	0.4%	10.5%
USA	38.0%	5.9%
India	5.7%	3.8%
UK	14.9%	2.0%
Russia	0.0%	1.6%
Senegal	0.6%	1.2%

If a vaccine was mandated, more respondents said they would prefer US-made vaccines (38%) compared to those from the UK (14.9%) and China (7.3%). Respondents were least likely to want vaccines from China (36.4%) or Nigeria (10.5%).

Respondents were asked what could help convince them to take vaccines. The president taking the vaccine was seen as most influential (28.1%) followed by family members (15.3%) and medical personnel (12.5%). Opposition leaders can also contribute to vaccination efforts.

WHAT WILL CONVINCE YOU TO TAKE A VACCINE?	
If my president takes it	28.1%
If a family member takes it	15.3%
My doctor/nurse	12.5%
Other specify	5.6%
If my MP takes it	5.2%
If my religious leader takes	1.0%

VOTING PATTERNS AND WILLINGNESS TO TAKE A VACCINE			
Party choice in 2018	Don't know/ maybe	I won't take the vaccine	I will get vaccinated
APC	7.1%	53.9%	38.3%
SLPP	9.0%	35.2%	55.7%
NGC	11.8%	47.1%	41.2%
Other parties	0.0%	33.3%	58.4%
I did not vote	19.0%	41.4%	39.7%
Grand Total	11.9%	44.6%	43.0%

Note: Sample size is 504; 50/50 male/female split. Margin of error is 4% with 95% confidence interval. Randomisation of respondent selection was done using a three stage process: a) random selection of 62 communities; b) random-walk for selection of 8 households per community; c) machine-based random selection of one respondent per household.