



ITU Regional Forum on Consumer Information, Protection and Rights for Africa 2017

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Background

- Three reports:
- Assessing consumer activity in the telecoms and Internet sector in Africa, Russell Southwood, Balancing Act for IDRC, 2006 with a survey of 30 African countries and three African country case studies (Kenya, Senegal and South Africa).
- Empowering Regulators to Protect Consumer Rights in the ICT Sector, Russell Southwood, Balancing Act and Charley Lewis, Link Centre for IDRC, 2009 with consumer research from Ethiopia, Zambia, Rwanda, Mauritius and Uganda.
- Africa's Media Deficit and Access to Knowledge, Russell Southwood, Balancing Act for fesmedia Africa, 2017



“The future is already here. It’s just not very evenly distributed.”

William Gibson



In future everything will be data

- Voice, Internet, Services
- The most popular app in Mali? Viber. One of the most popular apps in Kenya? What's App. 85% of SA smartphone users are on What's App.
- It takes Jumia several years to get 1m hybrid e-commerce customers in Nigeria. It takes Uber 6 months to get 100,000 customers in Kenya
- Mobile companies will turn into data content and services platforms. Do they run those things themselves or facilitate them? It needs a new business model.



Consumer Equity Challenges

- Many consumer issues but one key one: Internet-enabled devices vs basic phones vs no service
- Do I have data services and do I know how to use them?
- Do I understand the offers from operators?
- Are data services affordable enough for me?
- Do the networks work well enough for me to use 24/7?
- Are operators restricting the data services I can access?
- Are operators using my data without my knowledge or in unfair ways?

Consumer equity – Policy Context

- Article 19(2) of the Intl Covenant on Civil & Political Rights says freedom of expression includes the right to information:
- “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice”.
- The UN’s SDG Target 16.10 seeks to:”Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.”
- Information empowers citizens, makes them better informed and allows them to take part in the life of their country
- Media, “Public Sphere” and Open Data and Open Government

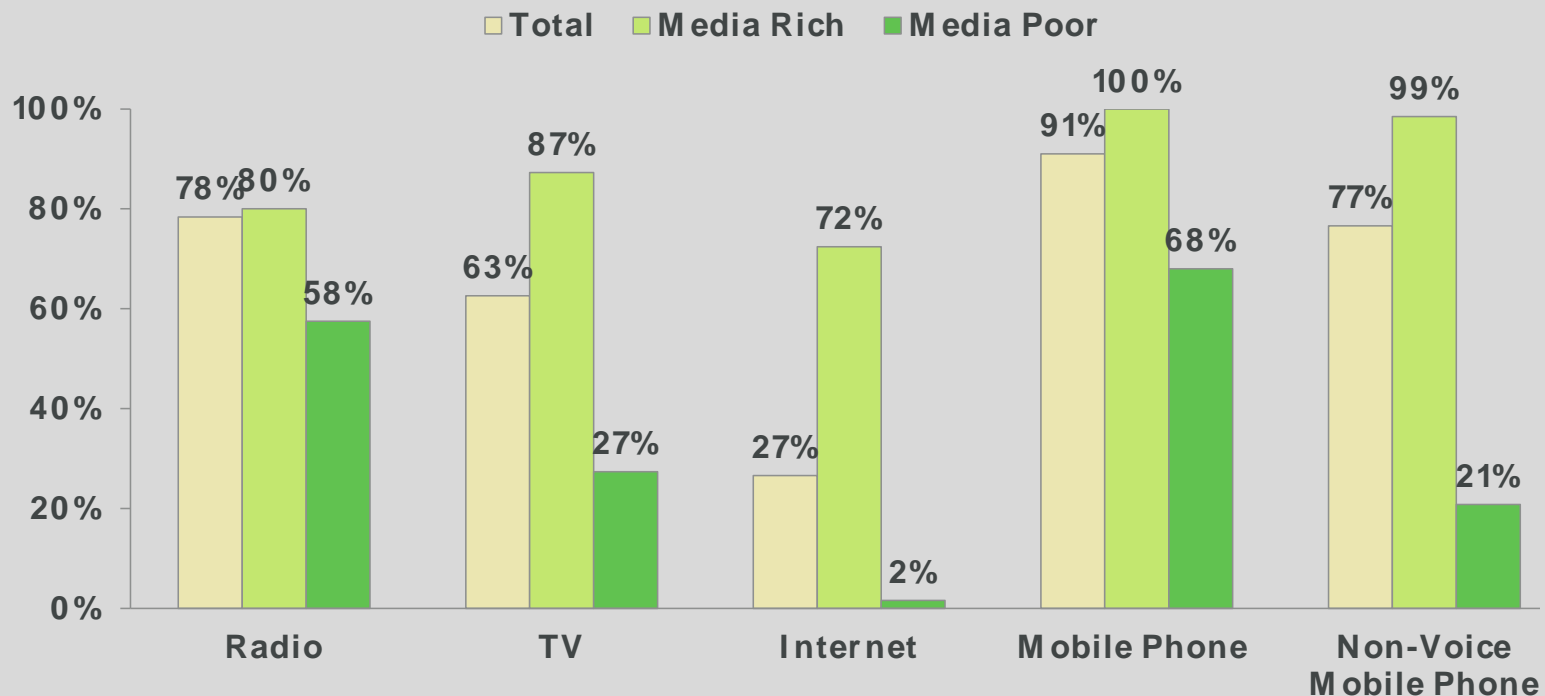
Media Rich vs Media Poor

Factors	Media Rich	Media Poor
Education	Secondary+	None/Primary
Age	Under 35	35+
Gender	Male	Female
Geographic location	Urban	Rural
Language	Understand all/most of key languages used by media	None of key languages used by media/Understand little

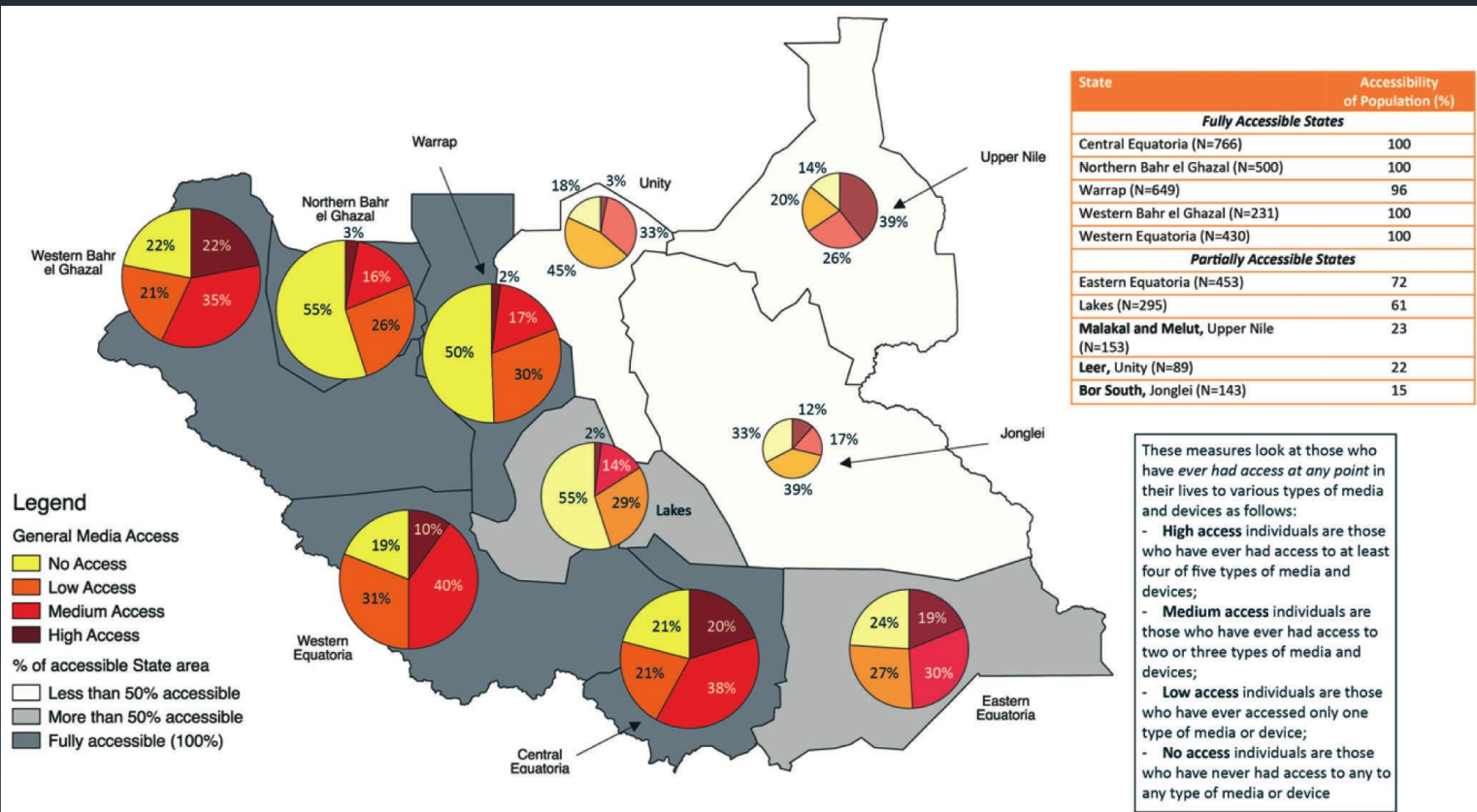
Definition: Media Deficit – No access to media or access to only one media

Africa's Information and Media Deficit – Example Nigeria

Apart from today, when did you last watch/listen to/use [platform]? (% of respondents using platform in the last 7 days)



Media Deficit – Example South Sudan



Falling into the cracks in data coverage – how a village close to the fibre and 45 minutes from Nairobi can't get data access

- Kathome, 55 kms SE of Nairobi, 800 mtrs from fibre can only get 2G data coverage. Nearest 3G county capital Machakos 26 kms away
- Population 5,000. Low income laborers and “fundis”
- Grow grains, keep cows and chickens.
- Two opportunities: Keep more chickens and sell to city and find work opportunities on the Internet (Safaricom start-up Link)
- Phoned operators several times. Helpful but nothing happens.
- John Kieti's home in Kathome vs home in Nairobi

What Telecoms Regulators can do

- National strategy to address the information deficit. Example: Kenya Vision 2030: Minimise vulnerabilities through information. Use people's right to information to maximise accountability
- Use Universal Service access funds. No more sitting on funds. A4AI 2017 Affordability Report: <http://a4ai.org/affordability-report/> Example: Bring together voice, data, media and electricity to the unconnected as per Mauritania
- Gender _ giving women and girls more equal access to Internet. Example: GSMA's Connected Women
- Lowering Cost of Data Access: Example: Free Wi-Fi in Botswana and #Datamustfall campaign in South Africa
- Help all media to provide for under-covered audiences and devising new content and service delivery models.



Thank You

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