

## **Kenya – Media Landscape Report**

### **November 2018**

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BBC Media Action has created this media landscape report about Kenya to support the IFRC & Kenya Red Cross in their *Community Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness Program (CP3)*, funded by USAID.

BBC Media Action’s nationally representative survey conducted across Kenya in late 2015 provides the main source of information for this report. Other key sources are listed in the appendix at the end of the report.

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## 1. Media Landscape

### Kenya's media sector is considered developed and vibrant

Kenya's media landscape is seen as diverse, sophisticated and well-financed. The radio sector is thriving – with over 100 radio stations, many broadcasting in a variety of local languages. In 2015, the switchover to digital terrestrial television transmission has also considerably increased the number of TV stations [1]. The rapid growth of mobile phones is also seen to have been responsible for Kenya having one of highest internet penetration rates in Africa [2].

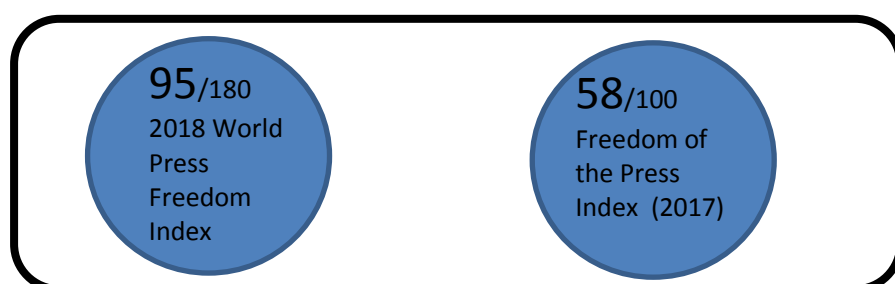
Kenya's dynamic media landscape means engaging broad audiences can be difficult in a competitive market. Reaching more marginalised or targeted groups requires consideration of different levels of media access, which this report explores in more detail.

### A partly free press

Whilst Kenya's leading media outlets are generally outspoken critics of politicians and government, and are pluralistic and rigorous, the relationship between the officialdom and the media has been strained.

Reporters Without Borders ranked Kenya 96 out of 180 countries surveyed in its 2018 World Press Freedom Index, a drop from 71 in 2013 when Uhuru Kenyatta became President. The report highlighted that "Kenya has seen a slow erosion of media freedom in recent years". It explains that the political situation and security concerns from al-Shabab have been used since 2016 for restricting the freedom to inform [3].

Journalists and media houses have often faced libel and defamation cases where the burden of proof lay with the accused and many have paid large fines as a result. Threats and attacks, mainly from police and government officials, have also been carried out against media professionals because of negative coverage of President Uhuru Kenyatta's party, or covering opposition events. The report highlighted that four commercial TV channels were shut down at the start of 2018 for defying the president's ban on live coverage of opposition leader Raila Odinga's mock inauguration as president. Freedom House's Freedom of the Press Index 2017 gave Kenya a score of 58 out of 100, meaning that its press is considered 'partly free' [4].



### Local language media was criticised during the 2007 election for inciting fear and hate

One of the lowest points in the history of the Kenyan media sector was the 2007 general election. A number of commentators cited the media as having a role in what became a national crisis – a role that was described as both positive and negative.

While the mainstream commercial media was credited with helping to secure a record electoral turnout in the elections and effectively monitoring the electoral process, it was also blamed for being overly partisan in its coverage of the lead up to the elections, lacking reflective debate and analysis. However, it was the role of local language media that was most criticised: vernacular

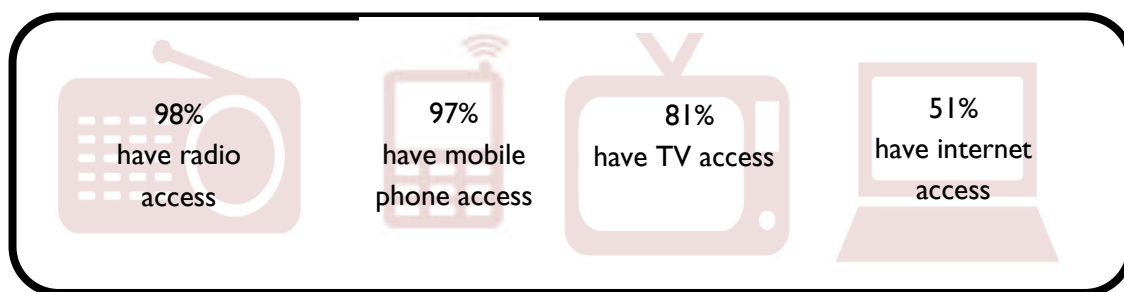
stations, which are hugely popular in Kenya, appeared to take positions against particular ethnic communities, spreading prejudice and using ethnic stereotypes to incite fear and hate. Notably, however, local language stations were also credited with playing an important role in calming tension and promoting dialogue in the aftermath of the conflict.

## 2. Media access

### Nearly all Kenyans have access to some form of media

In 2015, BBC Media Action’s nationally representative survey found that nearly all Kenya’s adult population have access to radio (98%) and a mobile phone (97%). Access to TV is also high (81%) and over half the adult population have access to the internet (51%).

Figure 1: Media Access among Kenya’s adult population



(Figures includes access at home or elsewhere)

Base=3,003 Note: figures exclude those who answered ‘don’t know’ and those who did not answer

### Radio – the best medium to reach rural areas

The majority of Kenya’s population live in rural areas 63% compared to 37% urban. Access to radio is very high for both these populations, with 95% of rural and 94% of urban respondents having access to a **radio in the home**. Whereas the split is much higher for TV - 67% of urban respondents have access to a **TV in the home** compared to 40% of rural respondents.

### Males have more access to media

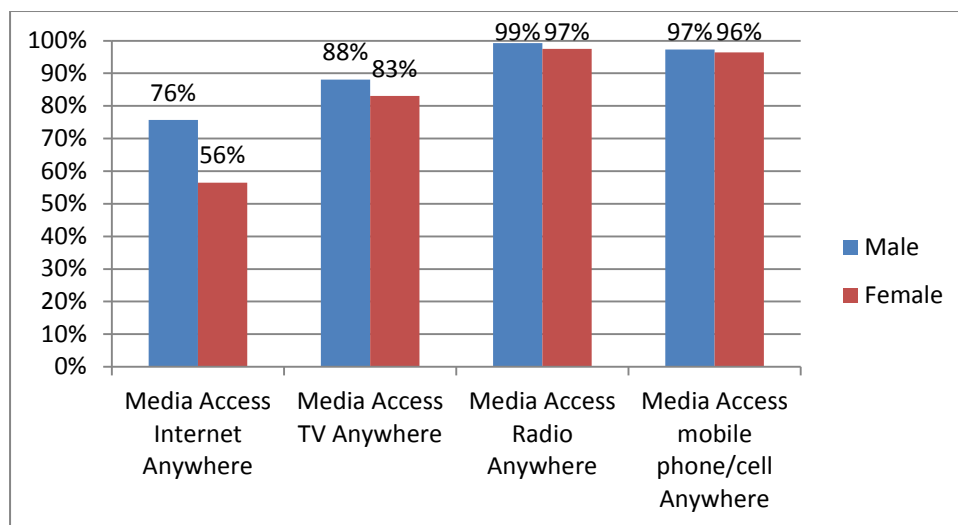
There are differences between age and gender when it comes to media access. Males tend to have greater access to all forms of media, but this is especially pronounced in terms of access to the internet and TV, showing that radio is a good medium to reach both sexes.

Access to platform	Male	Female	Difference between access in percentage points
Internet	62%	41%	21%
TV	87%	76%	11%
Radio	97%	92%	5%
Mobile Phone	98%	96%	2%

Base=3,003

### Young males have higher access to media platforms

The following chart shows access to media for 15-24 year olds by gender. It shows that young males have greater access to media, principally the internet, compared to females.



Base: 15-24 year olds: 1081

### Internet access decreases with age

As is the case across the world, the older you are the less likely you will have access to the internet. 66% of 15-24 year olds have access to the internet compared to just 13% of over 65 year olds.

#### Media Access Internet (anywhere)

15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65+
66%	57%	45%	34%	15%	13%

Base=3,003

### In the CP3 pilot areas, radio access is universal

In 2015, radio access and mobile phone penetration continues to be high in West Pokot, Narok, and Bomet. In Narok and Bomet there is slightly higher access to TV compared to the national population, but there is lower access to the internet.

#### Figures : Media Access among Kenya's adult population in selected pilot areas

Media Platform	West Pokot	Narok	Bomet	Total Sample
Radio	100%	100%	98%	97%
Mobile	98%	96%	96%	97%
TV	60%	87%	85%	81%
Internet	30%	40%	25%	51%

(This includes access at home or elsewhere)

Base= West Pokot n=50, Narok n=45, Bomet n=47

### 3. How frequently people access different media platforms

Nearly all Kenyan adults use their mobile phone or TV every week, and around seven in ten people use the radio or internet every week.

**Figure 3: Frequency in access media platforms**

Platform	EVERY WEEK	AT LEAST TWICE A MONTH	AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH	LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH
Mobile Phone	94%	3%	1%	1%
TV	93%	5%	2%	1%
Radio	72%	11%	9%	6%
Internet	70%	12%	9%	5%
Newspapers	44%	22%	18%	12%

The Afrobarometer report in 2016, found that 70% of respondents get their news from the radio every day, whereas only 33% get their news from television every day [5].

### 4. Radio Usage

#### The radio sector in Kenya is flourishing

Kenya has over 100 radio stations. Maps showing coverage of FM transmitters in Kenya can be found here: <http://ng.fmscan.org/net3.php?r=f&m=m&itu=KEN>

Leading national stations include Radio Citizen and Kiss FM both commercial stations. The state-owned KBC radio has two national radio services, one in Swahili, called KBC Radio Taifa, and the other in English.

GeoPoll Media Measurement service '[Kenya Q3 2017 Radio & TV Audience Ratings Report](#)' looked at the top radio stations at the national level in Kenya. It looked at the audience share of the market\*\*. Its survey found that Radio Citizen had the highest share of listeners (15%) followed by Radio Maisha (12%), and Jambo (8%). [6]

Geopoll reported that the high share of 36% for *other* stations not within the top 10 shows the large number of radio stations in Kenya, which broadcast across the country at a regional level.

Kenya Radio Audience Share - Q3 2017

Station	Share
Radio Citizen	15%
Radio Maisha	12%
Jambo	8%
Kiss FM	7%
Classic 105	6%
Milele FM	5%
Inooro	3%
Kameme	3%
Ramogi FM	3%
Radio Taifa	2%
Others	36%

**\*\*Share** is the proportion listening Station X, out of all those listening at that time. This is equal to the proportion watching a station during a given time divided by the total number listening at that time.

Description of top three radio stations:

- **Citizen FM** – a national FM radio station that broadcasts mainly in Kiswahili, and has emerged as the most popular radio station nationwide. Its target audience is “the common man”. It has transmitters in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Nyeri, Meru, Chuka, Eldoret, Garissa, Kitui, Wundanyi, Kisii, Webuye, Machakos, Malindi and Namanga <http://radiocitizen.co.ke>[1]
- **Radio Maisha** is a Swahili language FM radio station with transmitters in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Nyeri and Meru <http://www.radiomaisha.co.ke/> [1]
- **Jambo FM** – Kenya’s only radio station dedicated entirely to sport, launched in 2009. The station has transmitters in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Nyahururu, Nyeri, Eldoret, Webuye, Meru, Malindi, Garissa, Voi, Lamu, Narok and Maralal [1]

BBC Media Action worked with a series of regional and local radio partners throughout the country for its DFID Global Grant project in 2015. The endline survey measured the radio partners available in the respondents’ local area and asked which stations they had listened to in the last 12 months. Of the list asked, the top three radio stations that were most listened to in the last 12 months were KBC Radio Taifa (68%), Radio Maisha (59%) and BBC Swahili Service (28%).

#### Radio stations available in your area listened to in the last 12 months

Station	%
KBC Radio Taifa	68%
Radio Maisha	59%
BBC Swahili Service	28%
Radio Mambo	23%
Ghetto Radio	15%
Mayienga FM	13%
Pwani FM	11%
Mbaitu FM	10%
Star FM	9%
Baraka FM	9%
Ghetto FM	8%
Kitwek FM	8%
Pamoja FM	7%
KBC Eastern	5%

It should be noted that the BBC Media Action survey only included partner radio stations in the survey and so Citizen radio was not included in the above list.

#### Pilot Areas - KBC Radio Taifa and Radio Maisha are popular radio stations

KBC Radio Taifa and Radio Maisha were the most commonly mentioned radio stations listened to in the last 12 months in the CP3 pilot areas. KBC Kitwek FM was also mentioned by most respondents in Bomet.

### **Vernacular-language radio stations**

There are also vernacular language radio stations who target the country's six largest ethnic communities. These include Kikuyus (central), Luos (west), Luhyas (west), Kalenjins (central-west), Kambas (southeast) and Kisiis (southwest).

These are popular providing an outlet for their local language, normally one that they speak at home and contrasts with Swahili and English, the most common language used outside the house – in schools and across the media. For example - Royal Media Service (RMS) stations RMS operates 11 vernacular stations, the largest such network in Kenya.

There are also several radio stations that broadcast in widely spoken African tribal languages, such as Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Kalenjin, Kamba, Meru and Somali. Many tribal language stations are very influential in the rural areas where these languages are widely spoken as a mother tongue.

KBC operates radio services in several local languages:

- Coro FM in the Kikuyu language, for Nairobi and central Kenya.
- Ingo FM in Luhya, for western Kenya.
- Iftiin FM in Somali for Nairobi. It is also relayed on AM for northeastern Kenya, which is dominated by Somali speakers.
- \*Kitwek FM in the Kalenjin language: transmits from Nairobi to the central-western Rift Valley region.
- \*\*Mayienga FM transmits from Kisumu to western Kenya in the Luo language.
- Minto FM in the Kisii language for the southwestern region of Kisii and its environs.
- Mwago FM in the Meru language for central Kenya.
- Mwatu FM in Kamba for areas to the east and southeast of Nairobi.
- Nosim FM in the Maasai language for the southwestern region of Narok

Kenya Media Guide, BBC Monitoring (25 January 2016) Report (online) available from:

<https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/login>

\*BBC Media Action partnered with Kitwek FM who are also part of the large public service broadcasting organisation Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC).

\*\*BBC Media Action also partnered with Mayienga FM.

## **5. TV Usage**

### **Television**

The GeoPoll Media Measurement service '[Kenya Q3 2017 Radio & TV Audience Ratings Report](#)' looked at the top TV stations at the national level in Kenya. They found that Citizen TV had the highest share of 28% of viewers followed by KTN at 14%, then NTV at 11% in the share of viewers.

## Kenya TV Audience Share - Q3 2017

TV Station	Share
Citizen	28%
KTN	14%
NTV	11%
KTN News	11%
K24	6%
KBC	4%
Kiss TV	3%
Inooro TV	3%
Kwese Free Sports (KFS)	2%
Zee World	2%
Other	16%

**\*\*Share** is the proportion watching Station X, out of all those watching at that time. This is equal to the proportion watching a station during a given time divided by the total number watching at that time.

The migration to digital terrestrial television transmission in 2015, considerably increased the number of TV stations, and changed Kenya's TV landscape. President Kenyatta reported in 2015 the number of TV stations increased from 14 in 2013 to 55 in 2015. [1]

Description of largest broadcasters:

- Citizen TV ([citizentv.co.ke](http://citizentv.co.ke)) Kenya's leading station in terms of audiences and advertising revenues
- Kenya Television Network (KTN) ([standardmedia.co.ke/ktn/ktnlive](http://standardmedia.co.ke/ktn/ktnlive))
- NTV ([ntv.co.ke](http://ntv.co.ke)) is owned by NMG. BBC Monitoring report in 2016 reports that it mainly targets a middle to upper class audience. [1]

State TV:

- Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) Channel 1 is reported to lag behind its privately-owned rivals in audience size. [1]

### Vernacular-language TV channels

Digital migration has meant the growth of TV channels broadcasting in local languages. However, it has reported the stations vary in terms of small budgets and mixed quality. The BBC Monitoring reports highlights that these channels are expected to be popular during election times with their respective audiences. Audiences will more likely to be in urban areas with access to electricity. [1]

Example vernacular channels:

- Nijata TV broadcasts in Kiku
- Lake Victoria TV (LVTV) broadcasts in Luo
- Baite TV broadcasts in Meru and Swahili



## 6. Languages spoken

The two main languages used in the media are English, the official language of government, and Kiswahili, the national language which is spoken by nearly everyone [7].

*The following extract is taken from the Infoasaid's Kenya Media and telecoms landscape guide, November 2010*

There are dozens of private radio and TV stations. They broadcast mostly in English and Kiswahili. Some also broadcast in tribal languages.

**Kiswahili is the best language for aid agencies** to use when targeting broadcasts and public service messages at broad sectors of Kenya's 39 million population. The language is understood by nearly everyone at all levels of society.

However, broadcasts in tribal languages may be more effective at targeting people of the same ethnic group in defined rural areas. Rural populations are generally less well educated than their urban counterparts and are less fluent in Kiswahili and English. Key messages also resonate more deeply when communicated in the audience's mother tongue.

The report can be accessed online: [Media and telecoms landscape guide](#). [7]

### BBC Media Action's survey in 2015 showed that most people speak Kiswahili and English in Kenya

- 84% of respondents said they find it easy to read a paper written in Kiswahili
- 71% of respondents said they find it easy to read a paper written in English

**Table: Comprehension on how easy it is to read a paper written in Kiswahili or English**

Language	Easy	Difficult	Do not read at all
Kiswahili	84%	13%	3%
English	71%	25%	4%
Any other language?	38%	45%	17%

### Pilot areas – Kiswahili is the best language to broadcast for the three pilot areas

The below table shows that Kiswahili would be the best language to use for broadcasting in the pilot areas of West Pokot, Narok, Baomet.

**Table: How easy is it for you to read a paper written in...? (% of people who Answered 'Easy')**

Language	West Pokot	Narok	Bomet	Average Total Sample
Kiswahili	92%	80%	79%	84%
English	64%	70%	60%	71%
Any other language?	28%	46%	60%	38%

Base= West Pokot n=50, Narok n=45, Bomet n=47

The nationally representative survey by [Afrobarameter report](#), compiled by the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) in 2016, also looked at vernacular languages. [5]

The survey found that

- 17% considered the Kikuyu language their mother tongue language or language of origin.
- 15% considered the Luhya language their mother tongue language or language of origin

Which Kenyan language is your mother tongue or language of origin?

Language	%
Kikuyu	17%
Luhya	15%
Kamba	12%
Luo	11%
Kalenjin	10%
Meru/Embu	8%
Kisii	6%
Somali	5%
Mijjikenya	4%

What is the primary language you speak in your home now?

Language	%
Swahili	29%
Kikuyu	11%
Kamba	9%
Luhya	8%
Kalenjin	8%
Luo	7%
Meru/Embu	6%
Somali	5%
Kisii	4%

## 7. How people use information?

**Radio and television are the main sources of information for political issues and current affairs.**

Media platforms are mentioned more often as a source of information for political issues and current affairs, than friends, family and people in their neighbourhood. Only a small proportion of respondents mentioned influential people (like local elders, government officials and religious leaders) as a main source of information for political issues and current affairs.

**Table: Main sources of information for political issues and current affair**

Source	%
Radio	79%
Television	59%
Newspaper/magazine	28%
Friends	24%
Internet (e.g. social media sites)	18%
Family	15%
People in my local neighbourhood	12%
Mobile phone – SMS text service	6%
Local influencers/ neighbourhood elders	3%
Government officials	3%
Religious leaders	3%

Base: 3003

Radio also is a main source of information for political issues and current affairs in the CP3 pilot areas. Respondents in these are more likely to mention radio as a source of information compared to the population average.

Source	West Pokot	Narok	Bomet	Population average
Radio	90%	91%	90%	79%
Television	46%	51%	27%	59%
Newspaper/magazine	26%	29%	26%	28%
Friends	32%	18%	10%	24%
Family	12%	13%	9%	15%
Internet (e.g. social media sites)	8%	9%	11%	18%

Base: 3003

### Radio is reported as a main source of information for political issues and current affairs across demographics.

For example, those that report *radio* as a main source of information for political issues and current affairs are as follows;

- Almost equal proportion of males (80%) compared to females (78%) reported radio
- Similarly, 78% of young people (15-24 years) and 78% of older (over 65 year olds) reported radio.
- A slightly higher portion of rural respondents (82%), compared to urban (73%) reported radio

However, differences exist across demographic groups for other sources of information on political issues and current affairs. Findings highlight again that urban, young males are more likely to report newspapers, television and the internet as sources of information on political issues and current affairs, compared to other groups.

For example for respondents who report television as a source of information on political issues and current affairs:

- 65% of males compared to 54% of females, report television as a source of information for political issues and current affairs
- 71% of urban respondents, compared to 52% of rural respondents
- 66% of 15-24 year olds, compared to 21% of over 65 year olds.

**Table: Main sources of information for political issues and current affairs by gender**

Source	Male	Female	Difference between male and female
Newspaper/magazine	35%	20%	15%
Television	65%	54%	11%
Internet (e.g. social media sites)	24%	13%	11%
Family	12%	17%	4%
People in my local neighbourhood	10%	13%	3%
Radio	80%	78%	2%
Friends	24%	23%	1%
Mobile phone – SMS text service	6%	5%	1%

Base: 3003

**Table: Main sources of information for political issues and current affairs by urban/rural**

Source	Urban	Rural	Difference between urban/rural
Television	71%	52%	19%
Internet (e.g. social media sites)	24%	15%	9%
Radio	73%	82%	9%
Newspaper/magazine	31%	26%	6%
Family	12%	16%	5%
Friends	21%	25%	3%

Base: 3003

**Table: Main sources of information for political issues and current affairs by age groups**

Source	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65+
Radio	78%	79%	78%	83%	82%	78%
Television	66%	63%	60%	53%	37%	24%
Newspaper/magazine	31%	29%	26%	24%	20%	15%
Internet (e.g. social media sites)	29%	21%	11%	6%	0%	3%
Friends	24%	22%	25%	25%	22%	24%
Family	14%	12%	17%	18%	10%	21%

Base: 3003

## 8. Trust in media

**Radio and television are thought to be more trusted than the internet as sources of information for political issues and current affairs.**

Radio and TV were the most mentioned trusted sources of information for political issues and current affairs, compared to newspapers or the internet.

Most respondents' also mentioned religious leaders as a trusted source of information for political and current affairs.

- 89% of respondents said they trusted radio 'a lot' or 'a bit'
- 85% of respondents said they trusted television 'a lot' or 'a bit'
- 45% of respondents said they trust the internet (social media) 'a lot' or 'a bit'

Source	Trust 'A lot'	Trust 'A bit'	Total
Radio	44%	45%	89%
Television	40%	45%	85%
Religious leaders	38%	46%	84%
Newspaper/magazine	29%	47%	77%
Friends and family	25%	54%	79%
Local chiefs or village elders	23%	52%	75%
Government officials	20%	48%	68%
Internet (e.g. social media sites)	16%	30%	45%

Base 3003

The Freedom on the Net 2018 report, scored Kenya 32/100, suggesting it is 'partly free' (0 most free and 100 is least free). The report may highlight why trust is substantially lower for the internet than other forms of media with the following extracts as examples:

- Online manipulation and disinformation tactics on social media proliferated during the 2017 elections season, including coordinated pro-government bloggers who effectively manipulated conversations on Twitter and Facebook.
- The 2017 elections period saw multiple hacking attempts of the election commission's website
- A number of news websites were registered with legitimate-sounding names to disseminate false news, such as CNN Channel 1 (cnnchannel1.com),<sup>48</sup> undermining the quality of information available online. Full report: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2018/kenya> [8]

Males and females had similar levels of trust in radio for information for political and current affairs issues. However, females were less likely to trust the internet compared to males.

- 45% of males compared to 43% of females trust radio 'a lot' for information for political and current affairs issues.
- 20% of males compared to 12% of females trust the internet 'a lot' for information on political and current affair issues.

**Table: “How much do you trust these sources for information on political issues and current affairs?” by gender**

Trust 'A lot'	Male	Female	Difference between male & female
Radio	45%	43%	1%
Television	41%	39%	2%
Newspaper/magazine	31%	28%	4%
Internet (e.g. social media sites)	20%	12%	8%

People living in rural areas were more likely to trust Local chiefs or village elders, religious leaders, government officials and the radio, compared to urban respondents who were more likely to trust the TV and internet.

**Table: “How much do you trust these sources for information on political issues and current affairs?” by urban/rural**

Trust 'A lot'	Urban	Rural	Urban & Rural difference	Is difference significant?
Local chiefs or village elders	17%	26%	8%*	Yes
Religious leaders	33%	40%	8%	Yes
Government officials	15%	23%	7%	Yes
Radio	42%	45%	3%	No
Friends and family	23%	26%	3%	Yes
Television	42%	39%	3%	Yes
Internet (e.g. social media sites)	18%	15%	3%	Yes
Newspaper/magazine	30%	29%	1%	Yes

### Trust in sources differs amongst age groups

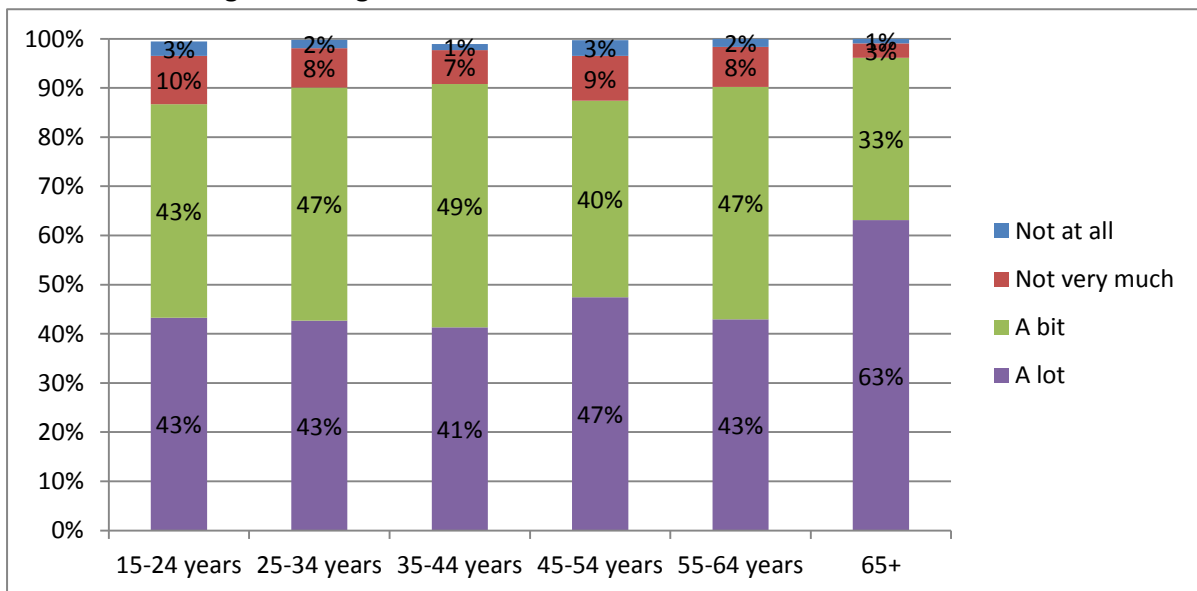
Older people trusted radio, religious and local chiefs for information on political issues and current affairs more than young people. Young people were more likely to trust television and the internet than older people.

- 63% of over 65s trusted the radio 'a lot' compared to 43% of 15-24 year olds
- 51% of over 65s trusted religious leaders 'a lot' compared to 36% of 15-24 year olds
- 44% of over 65s trusted Local Chiefs or villages elders 'a lot' compared to 20% of 15-24 years olds

Whereas

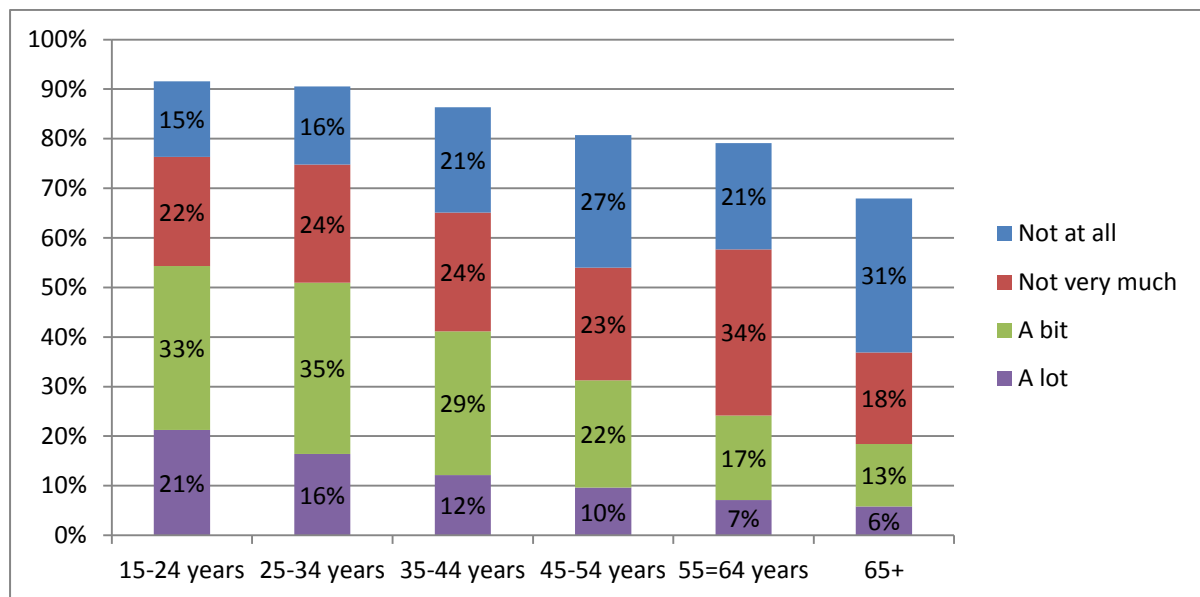
- 42% of 15-24 year olds trusted television a lot compared to 37% over 65 year olds
- 21% of 15-24 years olds trusted the internet (eg social media sites) compared to 6% of over 65 year olds

### Trust in radio is higher amongst the over 65's



Base=3,003

## Trust in the internet is higher amongst young people



Base=3,003

## 9. Case Study examples of how media has been used in Kenya

### Case Study 1: National Media: Sema Kenya, a debate programme

Funded by DFID, under the Global Grant project, BBC Media Action produced three seasons of the weekly TV and radio programme Sema Kenya (Kenya Speaks). Sema Kenya featured a moderated discussion between a live panel of officials and an audience of 'ordinary' Kenyans and was designed to enable individuals, communities and governments to be better informed and more engaged in tackling governance challenges. Alongside this, BBC Media Action delivered a mentoring programme, initially with six local radio stations, and later with the national broadcaster Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), which has the largest footprint in the country. Through this work, BBC Media Action aimed to strengthen the capacity of Kenya's media sector to produce governance programming that supported and mainstreamed the overall objectives of the project at both the local and national level.



### **Broadcast by an extensive network of broadcast partners that stretched across 47 counties in Kenya**

One of the main advantages of media and communications-based interventions is the level of scale that can be achieved through the broadcast media. In order to achieve the broadest reach possible, *Sema Kenya* was broadcast on national radio and TV platforms and via a network of local vernacular radio stations.

The programme was broadcast weekly in Swahili, with a total of 83 episodes produced over the lifetime of the project. The main national broadcast partner for season one was Kenya Television Network (KTN), with seasons two and three moving to KBC. All three seasons were also broadcast on BBC Swahili (radio), as well as a series of 23 regional and local radio partners throughout the country. More detail on each season's broadcast partners can be found in appendix 1. [9].

### **Audiences accessed the programme evenly across radio and TV**

In 2013, radio was the predominant platform by which people accessed *Sema Kenya*. By 2015, with the proportion of the audience accessing the programme via radio declining and TV increasing, the audience was split relatively evenly across radio and TV, with some limited access via online platforms. This is despite the increase in radio partnerships during the project and the change in broadcast partnership in 2014 to KBC which had a smaller market share than KTN.

### **The programme reached a peak audience of 5.7 million (22% of the adult population) in 2013**

The discussion programme reached an estimated 12.7 million people over three seasons, with a peak audience of 5.7 million in 2013 – the year of the general election.

Regular and sustained engagement can be difficult in a dynamic media sector like Kenya's, where competition for viewership or listenership is high and increasing. However, the show maintained a loyal audience throughout all three seasons, with around half of all those reached annually tuning in for at least every second episode.

### ***Sema Kenya* aimed to reach a broad cross-section of the Kenyan population, including traditionally marginalised groups.**

Reflecting the objective to create a national dialogue, throughout all seasons the live audience represented a diverse cross-section of the Kenyan population. Each episode's audience was recruited to include people from different ethnic communities, genders, ages and socioeconomic classes, as well as those with disabilities.

### **The *Sema Kenya* audience reflected the diversity of the population, including people from all regions, age groups and education and income levels.**

While a significant proportion of the overall audience was female (43% at endline in 2015), the programme was more successful at reaching and engaging a male audience – men made up 63% of the programmes regular audience (compared to 37% female). While overall *Sema Kenya* did not



reach Kenyans on the same scale as some other governance programmes on-air, it was more successful in reaching more traditionally politically marginalised groups (those with lower incomes and education levels) than its competitors. For example, in 2014 a higher proportion of *Sema Kenya's* overall audience was among the country's poorest: 21% of *Sema Kenya's* audience fell into the two lowest income categories.

### **Representative voice – hearing ‘people like me’ on *Sema Kenya***

Key objectives of the project related to increasing the diversity of views shared in a public forum and ensuring that discussion and debate of politics was inclusive of all Kenyans. The design of *Sema Kenya* specifically aimed to contribute to this through including a diverse live audience and panel to ensure that a multiplicity of voices and views were heard on key issues.

BBC Media Action's endline quantitative survey found that a majority (87%) of *Sema Kenya's* regular audience agreed that the show ‘featured people like [them] in its discussions and reports’ (including 25% who strongly agreed).

Moreover, feedback from audiences in qualitative research conducted in 2013 suggested seeing or hearing people like them in the programme inspired them to take action in their own lives:

*“When you watch the show you see somebody like me and you... and it kind of inspires you to want to be like this other person... it makes you ask yourself – ‘if this person is participating, why am I not participating?’ – because most of the time people don’t participate because they feel the political process is for the elites”.*

*Male, 15–24, Nairobi, qualitative study, 2013*

### **Role modelling inclusive dialogue and bridging divides**

Through its inclusive live audience, balanced panel and careful moderation, *Sema Kenya* aimed to role model cross-community debate, ensuring that all voices and contributions were respected and valued.

Qualitative research conducted in June 2013, a few months after the elections, found that audiences felt that a diversity of views were represented on *Sema Kenya* and that the programme showed people discussing issues in a peaceful and constructive way:

*“I learned from Sema Kenya that you don’t have to fear a leader, you can ask any question you like. Kenyans have a voice, Kenya is a beautiful country, and Kenyans can be peaceful... peaceful people aired their views without any friction”.*

*Female, 25–44, urban Mombasa, qualitative study, 2013*

For more information on this programme evaluation, please look here: [Strengthening accountability through media in Kenya \[8\]](#)

## Case Study 2: Local media: WASH media programming

### Supporting good sanitation and hygiene in Kenya through local media programming

In 2015, BBC Media Action partnered with the SWIFT Consortium to implement a two-year-long WASH project in Kenya that aimed to deliver sustainable access to safe water and sanitation and to encourage the adoption of basic hygiene practices in different contexts. It specifically focused on target populations in the ASALs region (in Turkana, Marsabit and Wajir counties in northern Kenya) and in the informal settlements of Nairobi (Kawangware, Korogocho and Majengo).

As part of the consortium, BBC Media Action supported seven local radio stations across these target regions to produce and broadcast engaging and locally relevant programmes and public service announcements (PSAs). The overall objectives were to: enhance community awareness of good sanitation and hygiene practices, promote the adoption of these practices, and facilitate dialogue between citizens, civil society and the government on issues related to WASH.

As part of the endline evaluation, in 2017 BBC Media Action conducted a quantitative household survey of 2,785 adults (those aged 15 and above) in the target regions of Kenya.

#### Key findings;

Overall, the WASH outputs **reached over 600,000 people** (55% of the adult population in the target regions). This was double the project's goal.

The radio programmes did **particularly well at reaching those in the ASALs counties with the lowest purchasing power and with no schooling**

Analysis that controlled for a number of other factors found that **listeners were more likely** than non-listeners to:

- **Know** the correct handwashing technique and be able to name important handwashing times
- **Be aware** that washing hands can prevent diarrhoea
- **Report** washing their hands at three or more critical times
- **Agree** that they would be **ashamed** if they did not wash their hands after using the toilet and be **disgusted** if others did the same

Listeners were also **more likely to** be able to **name** at least three ways to make water safer to drink and to **know** that disposal of excreta in, or near, a water source can make it unsafe to drink

The programmes also **helped to hold institutions to account around WASH:**

- **Listeners were more likely to agree that they have a role to play** in asking authorities for better services and infrastructure than non-listeners
- Over two-thirds of listeners said that **programmes played a role** in holding those responsible for WASH services to account (67%) and said they **increased discussion between communities and leaders** (71%)
- Two-fifths of listeners (39%) felt the programmes had helped **lead to improvements in WASH services and infrastructure** in their areas

*"I learned a lot from the programme; I am now aware of the importance of handwashing and how to clean water. This has really changed my life."*

*(Mother, 30-45, Wajir, midline, 2016)*

The findings suggest an important role for media communication in WASH interventions looking to ensure sustained behaviour change. BBC Media Action's WASH programmes were able to reach large numbers of people in the target intervention areas – often remote and rural locations where access to health services and/or information on WASH was scarce.

### **Example of how the programme was effective locally:**

#### **Case Study - Mr. Mohammed Abdulle, Wajir East Sub County, health officer.**

Mr Abdulle was interviewed as a case study for the WASH project in Wajir. He explained that when the county experienced the Cholera outbreak July 2014-2016, the County was faced with a serious challenge on how to mitigate and prevent the spread of cholera. Wajir Community radio, BBC Media Action's partner, created a WASH radio programme.

The weekly WASH talk show was broadcast every Tuesday at 7.30pm after the local news, and immediately after the 9.00pm news when most of the community listens to BBC Somali news. The programme was broadcast in two languages, Somali and Kiswahili which are popular/ common languages in Wajir.

The programme included a discussion, with the radio presenters posing questions to the panellist. PSAs and promotional messages would be played in between the discussions. There was also a questions and answers segment, where the panellists would respond to the questions from the radio audience.

The Ministry used the platform to inform the public on key issues around cholera, such as statistics of casualties, mode of transmission, prevention and general hygiene. The platform was also useful as it provided an avenue through which the health department engaged with the community and they were able to correct misinformation and myths that was rife during the outbreak.

In addition, the programme was able to get public officers to respond to the public's concerns on WASH issues raised in the call-in programmes. The programme also engaged other stakeholders such as the religious leaders, cholera survivors and the community.

He explains that it was difficult to convince the community that cholera is curable.

*“Cholera is known to sweep people, what kind of cholera is this? How can it be that a person who has cholera /diarrhoea goes to hospital for 2-3 days and then gets better?”* In response to this, Mr Abdulle says the radio programme was very useful to respond to these kind of questions from the public, more so, because the platform provided an opportunity through which survivors of cholera explained their experiences to the community directly and they could ask them questions and have the answers immediately.

## Appendix

[1] Kenya Media Guide, BBC Monitoring (25 January 2016) Report (online) available from: <https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/login>

[2] Internet World Stats Usage and Population Statistics, Internet Penetration in Africa December 31, 2017 <https://internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>

[3] Reporters Without Borders, 2018 World Press Freedom Index, Kenya Report (online) available from: <https://rsf.org/en/kenya>

[4] Freedom House (2017) *Freedom of the Press 2017: Kenya* [online]. Available from: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2017/kenya>

[5] Afrobarometer, Round 7 Survey in Kenya, 2016 compiled by: Institute for Development Studies (IDS) [http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Summary%20of%20results/ken\\_r7\\_s\\_or\\_eng.pdf](http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Summary%20of%20results/ken_r7_s_or_eng.pdf)

[6] GeoPoll Media Measurement service 2017 findings (online) available from: <https://knowledge.geopoll.com/kenya-media-measurement-kgmm-report-0-0>

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[8] Freedom on the Net 2018, Kenya (online) Available from: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2018/kenya>

[8] BBC Media Action, Kenya Country Report 2017, *Strengthening accountability through media in Kenya, Final Evaluation* (Published April 2017) Report (online) Available from: <http://dataportal.bbcmmediaaction.org/site/countries/kenya/>

[9] Broadcast partners for each season of Sema Kenya:

Broadcast partner	Season			Broadcast partner	Season		
	1	2	3		1	2	3
KTN	✓			Kenyatta University FM			✓
KBC		✓	✓	Moi University FM			✓
BBC WS Swahili	✓	✓	✓	Mbaitu FM			✓
Radio Maisha	✓	✓	✓	Sifa Garissa			✓
Pamoja FM	✓	✓	✓	Sifa Maata FM			✓
Radio Sahara	✓	✓	✓	Mwanedu FM			✓
Radio Mambo	✓	✓	✓	Baraka FM			✓
Coro FM	✓	✓	✓	Serian FM			✓
Kitwek FM	✓	✓	✓	Maata FM			✓
Pwani FM	✓	✓	✓	KBC Radio Taifa			✓
Star FM			✓	Mayienga FM			✓
Wajir Community Radio			✓				

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