



Fidelman & Co.



QUESTION

Mass media access: Africa

INSIGHTS

- According to the research criteria and most recent census data, the percentage of households that could not be reached in a crisis are 2.3% (Egypt), 35.6% (Mali), 68.7% (Niger), 40.2% (Rwanda), 19.2% (South Africa), 1.3% (Tunisia), and 39.3% (Zimbabwe).
- The criteria for this request may benefit from additional census data that is readily available at ITU, such as the percentage of households with mobile and landline phones or the percentage of people that can access media at work or a friend's house. This data would add to the number of people that could be reached in a crisis.
- In general, challenges such as understanding other languages, reaching rural locations, lacking an electrical grid, or paying to have media access can all contribute to the household access problems in various African countries.

OVERVIEW

Introduction

While mass media access across Africa is [hard to quantify \(1\)](#), one of the more accurate ways to investigate TV, radio, and Internet access is via census data. According to the [most recent census data from 2014 to 2016 \(2\)](#) supplied by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the countries that have the most complete data in terms of media access are Egypt, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe. According to the research criteria, the percentage of households that could not be reached in a crisis are 2.3%, 35.6%, 68.7%, 40.2%, 19.2%, 1.3%, and 39.3%, respectively. These percentages would drop, however, if the calculation were to include factors such as cell phone or landline access or access to media at work or at a friend's house. This data can also be found for most countries in the census data from ITU. Overall, the access to media in Africa via TV, radio, and Internet is limited in comparison to the rest of the world, and though each country has its unique challenges. Below are my calculations, individual summaries of each country, and a total summary section.

The sections are sorted by country, as requested in the criteria.

Egypt

Egypt's 2017 estimate boasts approximately [97 million people \(5\)](#), but [2.3% \(2\)](#) of households may not be reached in a crisis due to media access issues with radio, TV, and Internet. [17.3% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a radio, [97.7% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a TV, and [46.1% \(2\)](#) have access to the Internet. The criteria state that assumptions can be made including households with a TV or the internet have enough money and enough electricity to access a radio. Thus, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis is 2.3%.

Additionally, households with landline and cellular phones make up [18.7% and 98% \(2\)](#) of all Egyptian households. Should this data be taken into account, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis drops to 2%.

According to the [World Factbook \(5\)](#), Egypt is the third most populous country in Africa, but 95% of its population is concentrated in only 5% of the country's land area. This area happens to be closest to the Nile River, as the rest of the country is arid desert. Natural hazards include droughts, floods, earthquakes, landslides, "khamsin" windstorms, and sandstorms, among others. A population boom of 46% in 10 years (1994 – 2014) caused stress on infrastructure, government resources, and natural resources. The urban

population is 43.3% and rising about 2% each year, and the population overall is very young; both of these facts indicate higher household media access percentages in the future.

Mali

Mali's 2017 estimate boasts approximately [18 million people \(5\)](#), but 35.6% of households may not be reached in a crisis due to media access issues with radio, TV, and Internet. [64.4% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a radio, [33.6% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a TV, and [8.9% \(2\)](#) have access to the Internet. The criteria state that assumptions can be made including households with a TV or the internet have enough money and enough electricity to access a radio. Thus, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis is 35.6%.

Additionally, households with landline and cellular phones make up [1.7% and 82.7% \(2\)](#) of all Malian households. Should this data be taken into account, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis drops to 17.3%.

According to the [World Factbook \(5\)](#), Mali is characterized by its sandy northern plains, southern savannas, and rugged, northeast hills. Malian culture has been rooted in most of the population's migratory lifestyle that coincides with the seasons. Rural Malians are driven to villages and towns during the dry season due to poverty, conflict, food insecurity, or drought. Natural hazards in the area include dust/haze during the dry season, droughts, and occasional flooding on the Niger River. The urban population is 41.4% and rising about 5% each year, and the population overall is very young; both of these facts indicate higher household media access percentages in the future. Additionally, Mali's population is set to double by the year 2035.

Niger

Niger's 2017 estimate boasts approximately [19 million people \(5\)](#), but 68.7% of households may not be reached in a crisis due to media access issues with radio, TV, and Internet. [31.3% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a radio, [11.4% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a TV, and only [0.6% \(2\)](#) have access to the Internet. The criteria state that assumptions can be made including households with a TV or the internet have enough money and enough electricity to access a radio. Thus, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis is 68.7%.

Additionally, households with landline and cellular phones make up [0.8% and 68.2% \(2\)](#) of all Nigerien households. Should this data be taken into account, the largest possible

percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis drops to 31.8%.

According to the [World Factbook \(5\)](#), Niger is almost entirely desert and sand dunes, though some plains and hills exist at the edges of the country. It is considered to be one of the hottest countries in the world. The majority of the population lives along the southern border, and the major natural disaster is droughts. The urban population is only at 19.3%, but it is rising about 5% each year.

Rwanda

Rwanda's 2017 estimate boasts approximately [12 million people \(5\)](#), but 40.2% of households may not be reached in a crisis due to media access issues with radio, TV, and Internet. [59.6% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a radio, [10.0% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a TV, and [9.3% \(2\)](#) have access to the Internet. The criteria state that assumptions can be made including households with a TV or the internet have enough money and enough electricity to access a radio. Thus, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis is 40.2%.

Unfortunately, landline and cellular phone use was not available as part of the most recent Rwandan census.

According to the [World Factbook \(5\)](#), Rwanda is mostly grassy hills and mountainous regions, with a distinct rainy season. It is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa, with most of the population along the Lake Kivu shore or in the central portion of the country. Natural hazards in the area include droughts and volcanic eruptions. Most of the population lives in a rural area.

South Africa

South Africa's 2017 estimate boasts approximately [55 million people \(5\)](#), but 19.2% of households may not be reached in a crisis due to media access issues with radio, TV, and Internet. [55.4% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a radio, [80.8% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a TV, and [55.9% \(2\)](#) have access to the Internet. The criteria state that assumptions can be made including households with a TV or the internet have enough money and enough electricity to access a radio. Thus, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis is 19.2%.

Additionally, households with landline and cellular phones make up [9.4% and 96.3% \(2\)](#) of all South African households. Should this data be taken into account, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis drops to

only 3.7%.

According to the [World Factbook \(5\)](#), South Africa is marked by sunny days and cool nights, with coastal plains leading to the ocean in the south and a hilly, plateau-marked central and northern regions. The population sticks mostly to the southern coast, and the eastern half has a higher population density than the western half. Natural hazards in the area include droughts and volcanic eruptions. Most of the population is younger and urban, with 65.8% of the population in a city environment. Notably, the rural areas are marked by the most poverty and least amount of opportunity for mass media access.

Tunisia

Tunisia's 2017 estimate boasts approximately [11 million people \(5\)](#), and only 1.3% of households may not be reached in a crisis due to media access issues with radio, TV, and Internet. [49.1% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a radio, [98.7% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a TV, and [30.7% \(2\)](#) have access to the Internet. The criteria state that assumptions can be made including households with a TV or the internet have enough money and enough electricity to access a radio. Thus, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis is 1.3%.

Additionally, households with landline and cellular phones make up [13.2% and 94.4% \(2\)](#) of all Tunisian households. Should this data be taken into account, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis would remain 1.3%.

According to the [World Factbook \(5\)](#), Tunisia encompasses mountains and coasts in the north, dry plains in the center, and desert in the south as the land becomes the Sahara Desert. As a result, the country's population is mostly in the northern portion of the country. Natural hazards in the area include floods, earthquakes and droughts. Tunisia's location in the central Mediterranean makes it a prime candidate for a flourishing commercial and corporate scenes, such as the oil industry along their continental shelf. Most of the population urban, with 67.3% of the population in a city environment.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's 2017 estimate boasts approximately [14 million people \(5\)](#), and roughly 39.3% of households may not be reached in a crisis due to media access issues with radio, TV, and Internet. [60.7% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a radio, [40.0% \(2\)](#) of households have access to a TV, and [33.2% \(2\)](#) have access to the Internet. The criteria state that assumptions can be made including households with a TV or the internet have enough money and enough electricity to access a radio. Thus, the largest possible percentage of

households that could have media access issues during a crisis is 39.3%.

Additionally, households with landline and cellular phones make up [3.4% and 88.5% \(2\)](#) of all Zimbabwean households. Should this data be taken into account, the largest possible percentage of households that could have media access issues during a crisis would decrease to 11.5%.

According to the [World Factbook \(5\)](#), Zimbabwe boasts the largest waterfall in the world: Victoria Falls. The country is mostly mountains in the east and plateau everywhere else. Natural hazards in the area include droughts and the rare flood or thunderstorm. Zimbabwe has two major cities: Harare and Bulawayo. Over time, generations of Zimbabweans have shifted from rural to urban life, with 32% of the population in cities and a 2.5% annual urbanization rate. The rest of the population is fairly evenly spread out throughout the country.

Continuing the Research

It was noted in the directions that only 5-7 country summaries would be necessary to fulfill this request. However, in order to get a better understanding of Africa's mass media data and electrical information, I have included a section of more detailed explanations of my sources.

In order to access all the data used in this response, [the ITU website \(2\)](#) proved invaluable. Once at the link provided, simply download the Excel version of the "Core indicators on access to and use of ICT by households and individuals" under the "COUNTRY ICT DATA (UNITL 2016)" heading. This spreadsheet will provide information for additional countries around the world, and [the metadata packet \(3\)](#) will provide more information on how the data was gathered and [improvements on the surveys \(4\)](#). Other insights about the availability of data, especially in the sub-Saharan region of Africa, can be gleaned from [a report by Balancing Act \(1\)](#), an African mass media company; this source also has an in-depth analysis of the country of Kenya similar to the ones included in this request. Additional data on the availability of electricity in each country can be taken from the [World Factbook \(5\)](#) under the "Energy" tab of each section; the "Population" tab additionally indicates other information about the people as requested in part of the criteria, such as homelessness or indigenous populations.

Conclusions

With such diversity in geography and populations, each country in Africa has its own unique advantages or disadvantages to obtaining media access for their households. With the criteria for this request, the percentage of households that could not be reached in a

crisis are 2.3% (Egypt), 35.6% (Mali), 68.7% (Niger), 40.2% (Rwanda), 19.2% (South Africa), 1.3% (Tunisia), and 39.3% (Zimbabwe), though it is advised that data such as landline and cellular phone access be included. Data can be accessed through ITU census summaries and other resources listed above.

SOURCES

1) Sub-Saharan African Media Landscape

<https://www.balancingact-africa.com/docs/reports/SSA-Media-Landscape.pdf>

2) ICT Download Page - Core Indicators Excel

<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>

3) ICT Metadata

https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/ind/D-IND-ITCMEAS-2014-PDF-E.pdf

4) ICT Metadata - 2016 Update

https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/ind/D-IND-ITCMEAS-2014-C1-PDF-E.pdf

5) The World Factbook - Central Intelligence Agency

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>