Exploring New Media in the Sahel

In 2015, Equal Access, the media partner on USAID’s Peace Through Development II (PDev II) project, undertook a new media survey to evaluate the relevance of new media interventions in Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger. A total of 1,500 surveys, 500 per country, were conducted in local languages in the ‘capital cities’ of each province of project intervention zones. Due to the urban nature of the survey, the results summarized below have an urban bias, and are not necessarily representative of rural areas where network strength and media penetration may vary. Nonetheless, results demonstrate that new media holds tremendous potential for development initiatives targeting urban audiences in the Sahel.

**MOBILE**

Mobile users regularly use SMS:

- Niger: 89%
- Burkina Faso: 78%
- Chad: 77%

89% own a mobile phone

An additional 8% have access to a mobile phone through a family member

**INTERNET**

- 44% of Chadians have internet access
- 40% of Nigeriens have internet access
- 30% of Burkinabe have internet access

38% of respondents have access to the internet

66% of users access the web via smartphone on a daily basis

- Youth under 35 are more likely than adults to have internet access (51% vs. 24%)
- Men have more access than women (50% vs. 24%)
- Youth users are more likely than adult users to access the web through mobile phones (91% vs. 76%)

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

85% of Internet Users use some form of social media

- Facebook - 92%
- WhatsApp - 33% (58% in Niger)
- YouTube - 22%
- Twitter - 21%

Of those on social media, 75% visit networks weekly, and 50% of users access social media on a daily basis

**RADIO and TELEVISION**

- More than 2/3 of respondents listen to radio on a weekly basis
- Just under 2/3 of respondents watch television on a weekly basis

49% of internet users familiar with PDev II are interested in interacting with project radio programs via social media

On a daily basis, women are more likely than men to watch TV (52% vs. 46%) and less likely than men to listen to the radio (47% vs. 58%)