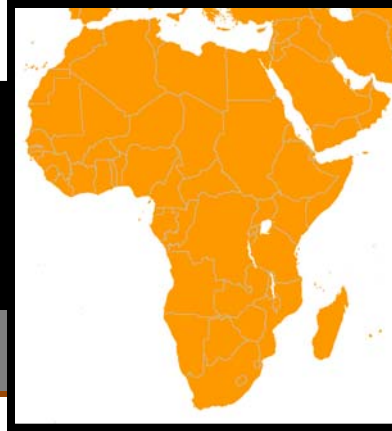


# AudienceScapes

## Africa Development Research Brief



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*As part of the AudienceScapes project, in August, 2009 InterMedia carried out nationally-representative communication and media surveys in Kenya and Ghana.*

*One issue of great concern is how to communicate about health issues through conduits that audiences will trust and believe—ideally, enough to adopt healthy behaviors. In both countries, broadcast media rank at the top of trusted sources for health information.*

## Communicating About HIV/AIDS: Where Information is Flowing

March 2010

**In Ghana and Kenya, campaigns to educate people about HIV/AIDS seem to be reaching their intended audiences. The 2009 AudienceScapes surveys in these countries suggest that information about this serious disease is readily accessible to most people—particularly on the radio.**

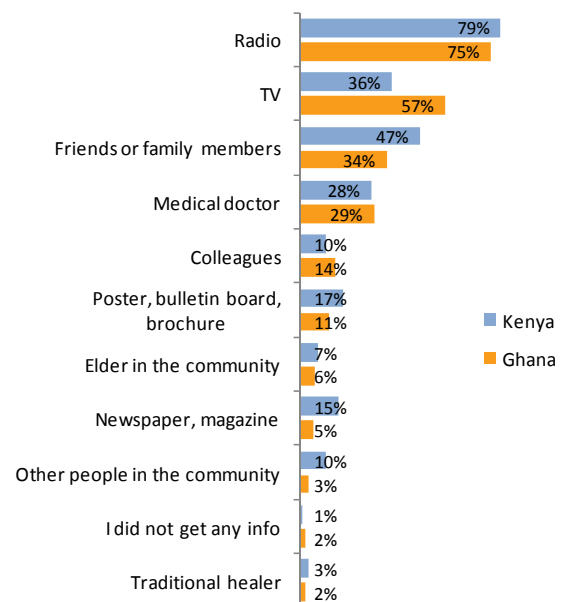
Around three fourths of respondents in each survey said they have heard an HIV/AIDS message on the radio (see Chart 1). Television was a source of HIV/AIDS information for 57 percent of adult Ghanaians surveyed but only 36 percent of Kenyans.

**Word-of-mouth sources also play a leading role in delivering information about the disease.** In Kenya, more people said they have heard information about HIV/AIDS from friends or family than from TV.

**However, medical doctors apparently reached less than one third of adults in either country with information about HIV/AIDS. Posters, bulletin boards, and brochures—frequent staples of public health awareness campaigns in developed countries—had even smaller reaches.**

### Chart 1: HIV/AIDS Information Sources

% of respondents who got information about HIV/AIDS from each source



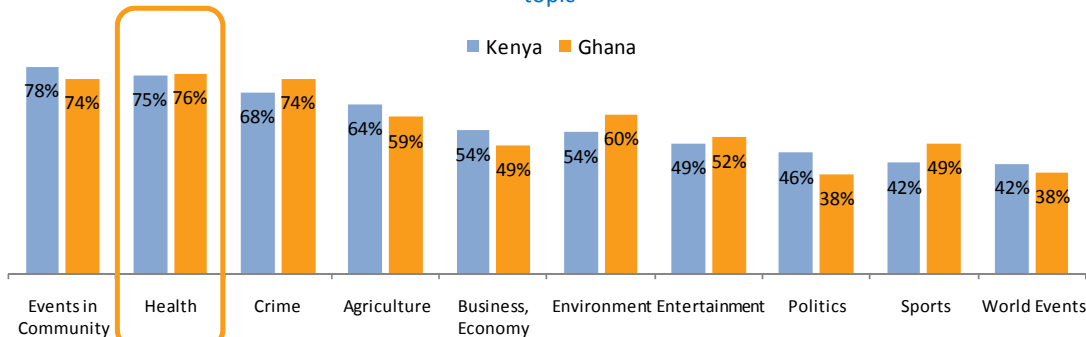
AudienceScapes National Surveys of adults (15+), July 2009. Ghana N=2051, Kenya N=2000.

## What About Impact?

While adults in both countries have plenty of HIV/AIDS information available to them in the media and elsewhere, this doesn't necessarily mean that people are paying attention to it. Health development organizations and government health agencies also need to know if people pay heed to what they hear and thus potentially may act on it. The AudienceScapes data offer some guidance on finding effective ways to deliver HIV/AIDS information.

### Chart 2: Health Grabs Audience Attention

% of respondents who said they pay "a great deal of attention" to news about each topic



AudienceScapes National Surveys of adults (15+), July 2009. Ghana N=2051, Kenya N=2000.

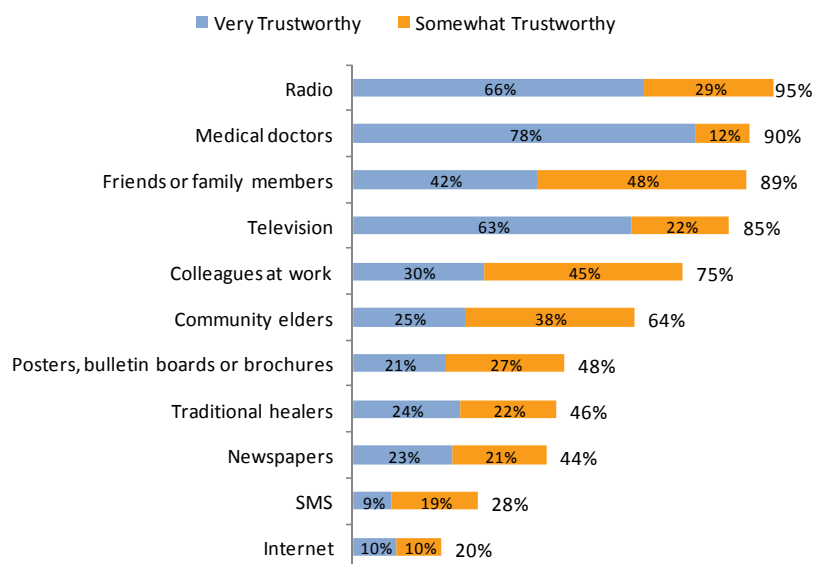
Broadly speaking, both national surveys show that news items about health topics in general are attracting people's attention in the traditional media (radio, TV and print - see Chart 2). This suggests that that HIV/AIDS information is not falling on deaf ears.

Trust also plays a key role in whether people will accept information from a given source. In Ghana, at least, broadcast media rank at the top of trusted sources for health information (see Chart 3). Medical doctors were considered "very trustworthy" by the largest share of respondents, but as noted above, their reach is limited. Notably, very few respondents considered health information delivered by new media—internet or SMS on a mobile phone—to be trustworthy. This is largely because people are not receiving health information via new media; the majority of respondents simply answered "Don't Know."

In Kenya, the results were also encouraging for HIV/AIDS information on the airwaves: the health information provided by radio and TV was judged to be trustworthy by the vast majority of survey respondents (see Chart 4).

### Chart 3: Trusted Sources of Health Information, Ghana

% of respondents who said the information about health issues provided by each source is...

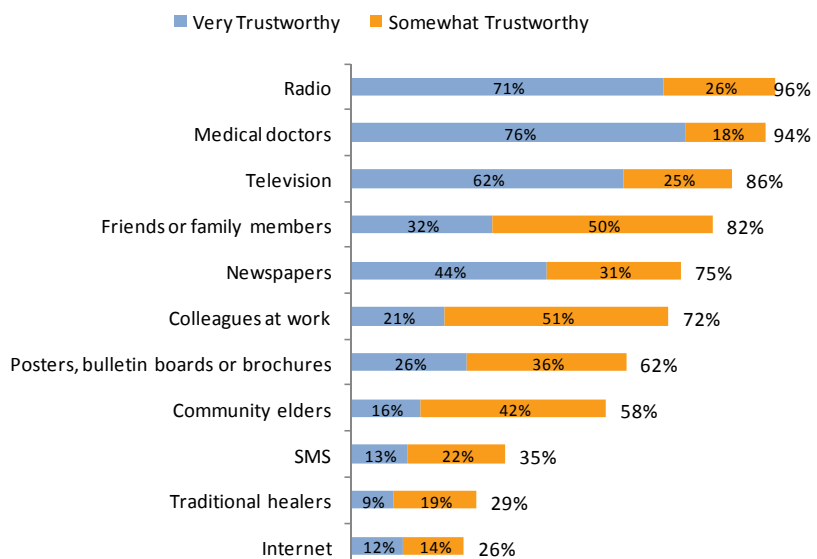


AudienceScapes National Survey of Ghana, July 2009. N=2051 adults (15+).

The survey results suggest that while HIV/AIDS information is widely available through the mass media, there is still room for improving the flow of information. In particular, the survey revealed an opportunity for expanding the reach of one of the most trusted sources of health information—medical doctors. Whether by putting doctors’ voices on the air or by investing resources in expanding outreach by doctors, the development community may be able to enhance the impact of HIV/AIDS communication by ensuring that the most trusted sources reach a wider audience.

## Chart 4: Trusted Sources of Health Information, Kenya

% of respondents who said the information about health issues provided by each source is...



AudienceScapes National Survey of Kenya, July 2009. N=20

The AudienceScapes project ([www.audiencescapes.org](http://www.audiencescapes.org)) is aimed at bridging knowledge gaps about media preferences, personal communication habits and the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in Africa and in other developing regions. It is also a tool for identifying needs in media, communication technologies, development information and development policy.

The project’s name refers to the benefits for development organizations of understanding the changing communication preferences and needs of their ‘audiences’—the target populations and policymakers whom they are trying to support. Launched in April 2009 with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation\*, AudienceScapes comprises four main elements:

- **National quantitative surveys** looking at (1) the general population’s access to and use of media, access to and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and word-of-mouth communication habits; and (2) how these factors affect people’s acquisition of knowledge about key development topics. Pilot projects are taking place in Ghana, Kenya and Zambia.
- **In-Depth Interviews with policymakers** to find out how they gather, assess, share and disseminate critical information related to development topics, and find out how global development partners can play a constructive role in this process. The interviews were begun in the same three African countries.
- **The AudienceScapes website** which provides access to the program’s analytical reports as well as the quantitative survey data. The website also has detailed “Country Communication Profiles” of several countries in

multiple developing regions, plus other resources for development practitioners working in communication, media development, technology development and policy dialogue.

- **Custom Research and Analysis** for organizations and companies in need of reports catering to their specific research needs.

For more information, contact us at [audiencescapes@intermedia.org](mailto:audiencescapes@intermedia.org).

**InterMedia** ([www.intermedia.org](http://www.intermedia.org)) is a nonprofit research, evaluation and consulting company with expertise in media, communications and development. We creatively equip clients to understand audiences, design projects, target communications and gauge project impact in developing and transitional societies worldwide.

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*\*The findings and conclusions of the AudienceScapes research project are those of InterMedia and do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.*