Mobile Communications in Zambia
A demand-side analysis based on the AudienceScapes Survey

Report Methodology and Organization

This report uses AudienceScapes data from a nationally representative survey of Zambia to focus on how people of various social groups access and use mobile communications. The report also showcases how the AudienceScapes survey data can help members of the development community to design and implement more effective programs in technological access, communications and information empowerment.

Methodology

The survey was conducted in April-May 2010 among Zambian adults age 15 and above. Using the 2000 Zambian National Census as the sampling frame and a stratified random sampling design, a nationally representative probability sample of 2,000 respondents was selected. The estimated margin of error is +/-2.2 percent with a 95 percent confidence interval. The survey was administered through face-to-face personal interviews; the data are weighted by location (rural versus urban) and by age groups.

The report is divided into six chapters

Chapter 1 A Rapidly Growing Mobile Communications Market: Summarizes mobile phone access, use, and activities by socioeconomic groups.

Chapter 2 SMS Use and Its Role as an Information Exchange Tool: Evaluates the prevalence of SMS as a tool for news and information, identifies who are the key groups who are using this tool and what demographic groups are most likely to be reachable via SMS.

Chapter 3 Mobile Use Patterns by Service Provider: Compares demographic profiles of the user bases of mobile network operators (MNOs) and the prevalence of multi-SIM card
ownership.

Chapter 4 Early Adopters vs. Recent Adopters: Determinants of Mobile Use Patterns: Explores whether mobile phone adoption in Zambia has reached the disadvantaged and whether there are significant use differences between early and recent adopters.

Chapter 5 Barriers to Phone Ownership and the Dynamics of Phone Sharing: Examines barriers to Zambians owning or using a mobile phone and why some Zambians have never used one. Compares the use patterns of mobile owners compared to mobile borrowers.

Chapter 6 Mobile Banking- Who is it Reaching? Profiles Zambia’s m-money users and considers whether these services have reached those most in need. Are Zambians using the service for more than just money transfers?
A Note About The Income Variable Used For This Report

AudienceScapes analysts define income levels based on a self-assessed qualitative measure. Respondents are asked: “Which of these answers reflect your family’s financial situation?” The available answers are: “We don't have enough money even for food” (identified as “Low-Income” respondents in this report, n=342); “We have enough money for food, but buying clothes is difficult” (Lower-Middle-Income, n=656); “We have enough money for food and clothes and can save a bit, but not enough to buy expensive goods such as a TV set or a refrigerator” (Upper-Middle-Income, n=521); “We can afford to buy certain expensive goods such as a TV set or a refrigerator”, or “We can afford to buy whatever we want” (combined as High-Income, n=409).

The AudienceScapes survey also includes a question asking respondents to state their average monthly monetary income, but the analysis team did not consider the responses to be sufficiently reliable for rigorous analysis. In general, monetary income questions confront two challenges: the uncertainty of some respondents about their income levels expressed in monetary terms alone, and the unwillingness of some respondents to divulge their monetary income levels. These issues create data distortions and risk misinforming users of the data.

Though the qualitative measures lack the specificity of monetary values, the former have the advantage of assessing respondents' incomes in the context of their own purchasing power. Even if respondents provide accurate figures on their monetary income, these do not reflect relative costs of living in different areas. For example, a rural inhabitant who earns $50 a month may have considerably more purchasing power than an urban dweller who earns the same amount; prices of goods in the rural setting may be cheaper (or more expensive) than in urban areas.