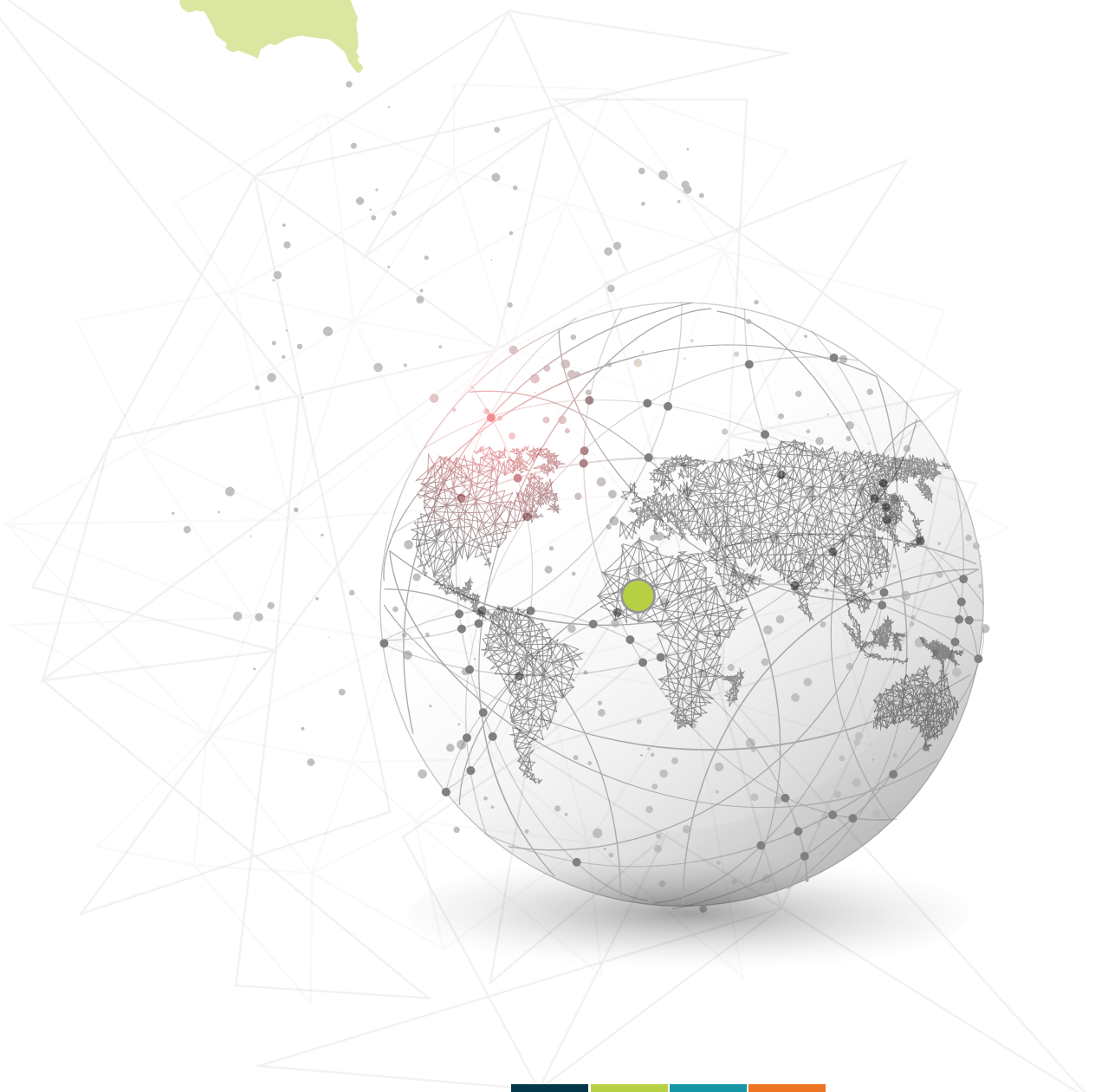




BURKINA FASO Media Landscape Guide

MARCH 2022





Preface

This guide is one of a series of Media Landscape Guides which map the media landscape in different countries. The guides have been produced by the CDAC Network in cooperation with DW Akademie and supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. This project is part of the global initiative “Transparency and media freedom - Crisis resilience in the pandemic”.

*CDAC Network would like to thank **Dr Lassané Yaméogo CNRST Burkina Faso**, the consultant who led the research for the Burkina Faso Media Landscape Guide in-country and **Sarah Routley and her HRI Ltd. team** for the methodology design and support to the finalisation of the guide. This work has been made possible with inputs from individuals and organisations working in media, government, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and CDAC Network partners who kindly agreed to provide valuable insights to the research.*

Take a look at all of CDAC’s Media Landscape Guides, available in multiple languages, here: <https://www.cdacnetwork.org/media-landscape-guides>

This Media Landscape Guide was written and edited between April and October 2021.

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SECTION I:

Introduction

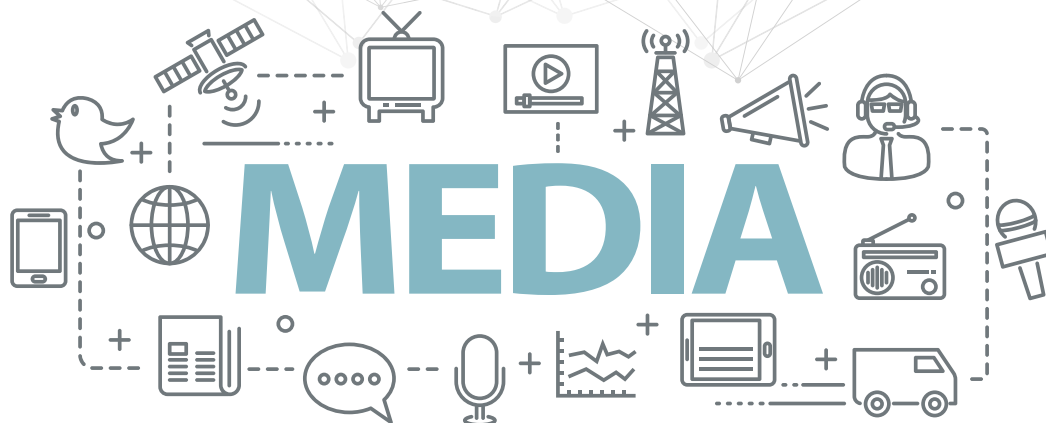
1.1 About The Guide

This Media Landscape Guide provides a snapshot of the media in Burkina Faso, including the audiences, the producers, the preferences of different groups in the community, the communications culture, and the languages associated with the media. It gives an insight into the role of media in development work, crisis preparedness, recent disasters, and the (at time of writing) ongoing COVID-19 response. The guide also gives an overview of each media sector including, digital and social media, radio, television, print and other traditional forms of mass communication.

It should be noted that with the constantly changing nature of the media landscape, this is not a comprehensive overview of all media outlets and platforms but rather a snapshot summary of those most relevant at the time of writing.

The guide has been written as an introduction to help organisations and individuals engage with media in their work. For example, it can be used by:

- » Community, development, and humanitarian organisations; government and local authorities; non-government organisations (NGOs) and UN relief agencies to work with the media on community engagement, communication, outreach, and messaging and mobilisation.
- » Development workers building societal resilience to disasters by working with media in disaster preparedness.
- » Relief workers using media to engage communities to work together in early recovery from crises.
- » Media outlets (including news outlets): to improve their communication and engagement with different groups, particularly during disasters.
- » Media Development Organisations: to inform advocacy and capacity-building work to improve people's access to quality information and further development goals through better outreach.



1.2 What Does The Guide Cover And Why It Is Needed

Without an understanding of how a society communicates, any communication efforts may struggle and potentially miss large numbers of those for which those efforts are intended. This can cause difficulties when attempting to work with the community in a development project; in an emergency, it could be even worse, as an incoming relief operation may not have time to carry out audience research before communicating vital information, without which communication may use the wrong channels and miss those who need it. However, by engaging media in a country, you are engaging vital partners who know the communications landscape of any given country well and have the means by which to effectively disseminate information.

The aim of this guide is to act as a starting point for communicators, indicating the most effective media to use to communicate with different demographics. Many existing resources for identifying media users and audiences in Burkina Faso are either out of date or limited in scope: this guide will help identify which media is operable at the time of writing and so help facilitate the communication of reliable, trusted and timely information, helping to make the media part of the solution in a humanitarian response.

1.3 Methodology

Research for the guide was carried out in-country and aided by an in-country reference group who provided guidance, expert advice, and quality assurance. Information and data were collected through a detailed desk review and interviews. Interviews were carried out with media organisations, media experts and academic researchers, government officials, media staff (including producers and journalists), humanitarian agencies, UN agencies, and NGOs.

1.4 Potential Role Of The Guide In Disaster Preparedness And Crisis Response

Effective, consistent, and timely communication is vital in humanitarian response and in building sustainable early recovery from crises. Communities, authorities, and responders must be kept informed of the situation of any disaster and planned response, and of any actions they need to take. Proactive communication to dispel rumours or misinformation is vital, as is the building of trust with audiences, which can be facilitated through developing mechanisms for two-way communication. The media can also play a proactive role in early warning which can influence population and response behaviour and potentially mitigate the effects of a disaster.

In aid responses and disaster preparedness it is important to know how best to use media to reach marginalised groups, with considerations of literacy levels and language preferences. It is also important to be aware of, and to address, any enhanced needs, risks, and information gaps. Good communication requires creative thinking, adapting communication tools, message formats. Working with existing media professionals can help to achieve this.

This guide is intended to help practitioners improve their communication, particularly during humanitarian responses – whether they work in the media or are using it to reach affected communities. The goal is for it to be used to improve communications, messaging and information dissemination and contribute to an effective response.

SECTION 2:

Overview Of The Communication Culture

THIS SECTION OUTLINES THE CURRENT MEDIA LANDSCAPE IN BURKINA FASO AND HOW IT CATERS TO DIFFERENT GROUPS. IT ALSO LOOKS AT THE MEDIA PREFERENCES AND ACCESS, AND THE BARRIERS PEOPLE FACE IN RECEIVING THE INFORMATION THEY NEED.

2.1 Media And Communications History

Before the appearance of modern forms of media, traditional communication mechanisms were used to convey official information from the governing authorities to their populations. In precolonial Africa, “the art of public speaking, of official and formal communication was well coded and the preserve of ‘professionals’, instilled with both the skills and the legitimacy to promulgate [it]: they were griots, traditional singers, storytellers, heads of casts, priests, patriarchs and sometimes also hunters or blacksmiths.” These professional speakers or orators made use of a varied types of narrative to convey messages: “family or dynastic panegyrics, public palaver, oral games, initiation stories, legends, myths.”²

Traditional forms of communication are still very important and exist alongside modern media. Traditional leaders are seen as trusted communicators. Singing, storytelling, dancing, drumming language, proverbs, horns and gongs are used in special moments of social communication. “For the Lobi (an ethnic group living in the southwest of Burkina Faso), dance is a fundamental act of social cohesion, which goes beyond entertainment during ceremonies”.³ Theatre, too, is a frequently used socio-traditional communication channel in Burkina Faso. It has the advantage of building messages based on the cultural experience of the populations and consequently attracts strong popular interest.

Like theatre, the town crier, who is also called a ‘community mobilisation agent’, plays a prominent role in the flow of information in the Burkinabe context. He is a local communication channel unto himself, using a loudspeaker in public spaces, and announcing major events such as vaccination campaigns, or food distributions for vulnerable people. Mosques, churches, the palaces of traditional leaders, markets and popular celebrations are the social spaces for interpersonal communication and the backdrop for the production and/or dissemination of official information. These popular gathering places should be seen as essential to public communication strategies and approaches.

During a disaster, where established socio-political or cultural order is disrupted, those in power use traditional communication channels as an indispensable part of their public communication strategy. In the case of communications on COVID-19, for example, the health minister was received in turn by the Moogho-Naaba, president of the Muslim community, the cardinal and the president of the Federation of churches and evangelical missions. The aim was for traditional and religious leaders to inform, educate and raise awareness among their respective communities, to encourage them to adopt health and safety measures and agree to COVID-19 vaccination. In the context of Burkina Faso, the institutions those leaders represent have strong credibility.

Like other French-speaking countries of sub-Saharan Africa, mass media in Burkina Faso is “the result of a transfer of both techniques and practices” from France and the French colonial system.⁴ The first form of modern media to appear in Burkina Faso was the printed press, of which the first (mimeographed) publications were created in the 1950s.⁵ This was followed by radio in 1959, television in 1963 and the internet, digital press and social media in the 2000s.

2.2 Today’s Media Landscape At A Glance


Despite the fact that the current media landscape involves a mixture of public and private ownership, the private sector’s involvement in the media landscape only began in the 1990s. This transition has resulted in the opening, demonopolisation, and liberalisation of the media sector as well as the involvement of private investment.

2 Marie-Soleil Frère, *Journalismes d’Afrique*, Bruxelles, De Boeck supérieur, 2016, p. 30.

3 Filippo Colnago, « La communication musicale comme élément d’identité culturelle chez les Lobi du Burkina Faso » *Infolio Editeur/Ateliers d’ethnomusicologie* N° 20, 2007, p.73.

4 André Jean Tudesq, *Journaux et radios en Afrique aux XIXe et XXe siècles*, Paris, Cret, 1998, p.18.

5 Lassané Yaméogo, « Les précurseurs de la presse écrite voltaïque (1947-1974). Itinéraires, rôles et trajectoires professionnelles », *Revue d’Histoire Contemporaine de l’Afrique*, n° 1, 2021, pp. 84.



The private sector is now the largest provider of all types of media in Burkina Faso. In the capital Ouagadougou, several new private press groups have recently been created, contributing further to the diversification of the media and contents on offer. These groups are: Savane Media, which owns Savane FM and Savane Television, the Omega Media group, which includes Omega FM and Omega TV, the Édifice group, comprising Ouaga FM and the LCA television channel, and the Tam-Tam press group, comprising Wat Radio and 3TV.

The most recent list of media by the Burkina Faso media regulatory group Conseil Supérieur de la Communication (CSC), is below, though as this has not been updated since 2015 it does not reflect the expansion in online media.⁶

- » 164 radio stations [public and private] including 154 stations in operation, seven non-functional and three starting up in 2015.⁷ These include 135 private radio stations, comprising 40 faith-based stations, 51 community radio stations, 40 commercial and four international stations. There are 29 public radio stations, comprising 18 communal, four institutional and seven public sector stations.
- » 29 television channels including 26 private channels, comprising six faith-based stations, one community, 18 commercial and one international; plus, three public television channels.
- » 51 print publications including 48 private print publications comprising six daily, seven weekly, fourteen fortnightly, twenty monthly and one bimonthly; plus, three public print publications, comprising one daily, one weekly and one monthly
- » 54 private online publications.

PRESS FREEDOM A bill granting the right of access to public information and administrative documents (bill n°051-2015/CNT) was passed in 2015, but no order has yet been published for its implementation. Consequently, journalists have difficulty accessing certain public information; this is a particular issue for investigative journalists. In 2019, the penal code was revised, resulting in tighter controls over reporting and the spreading of false information. The changes have been seen as hampering the right of individuals to exercise and enjoy freedom of expression, particularly regarding state-sensitive information. Critical or objective coverage of the conduct of security operations can now lead to heavy fines. These restrictions have been criticised by media organisations, who claim they are a sign of media censorship and muzzling.

The Burkina Journalists Association notes that the harassment of journalists increased in 2020 with six cases logged of reporters being attacked or subjected to intimidation. A convention signed in 2009 to improve the living and working conditions of journalists is rarely implemented and many journalists are poorly paid.

Despite these challenges, Burkina Faso is one of the countries in the West African sub-region with the most liberal press legislation. In the 2021 Reporters without Borders (RSF) ranking, it was placed 37th out of 180 countries at the global level, 5th in Africa for press freedom.⁸ They describe it as having ‘dynamic, professional and diverse media’ and as being ‘one of Africa’s success stories.’

MEDIA AND INTERNET ACCESS The Internet penetration rate is high in the main urban centres in Burkina Faso, such as Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, whereas rural areas tend to be more digitally isolated. In both urban and rural areas there is unstable and poor-quality broadband, and high access costs. According to the Ministry of Data, in 2018 only 42.3% of households had access to electricity (74.7% of urban households and 32.2% of rural households).⁹ These factors hinder the greater use of information and communications technology in the economic and social life of many people in Burkina Faso.

6 <http://www.csc.bf/m-372-statistiques-tele.html>

7 Radio FASO FM, Radio Bassimiyam (Centre region) and La voix du Sahel (Sahel region). See also Unicef, Etude des radios au Burkina Faso : typologies, audience et perspectives, 2018, p.29. https://www.communication.gov.bf/fileadmin/user_upload/storages/fichier/rapport_final_etude_des_radios_du_bf.pdf

8 RSF's 2021 World Press Freedom Index (I is the freest), is published annually. The Index measures the level of freedom available to the media. It provides information about advances and declines in respect for media freedom in 180 countries, and is used by the World Bank to evaluate a country's respect for the rule of law.

9 https://www.insd.bf/contenu/enquetes_recensements/ERI-ESI/Burkina-ERI-ESI-RapportFinal.pdf

Data from dataportel.com shows as of January 2021.¹⁰

- » Burkina Faso has a population of 21.20 million with a 50/50 gender split.
- » Urban dwellers make up 30.9% of the population, while 69.1% live in rural areas.
- » Internet penetration stands at 25.7% and there are 5.46 million internet users in the country (19% increase from 2020).
- » Two million people use social media, equivalent to 9.4% of the total population.

There were 21.52 million mobile device connections in the country, equivalent to 101.5% of the total population, or just over more than one per person. See table I on communications infrastructure.

Table I: Communication Infrastructure at a glance from ITU data 2020.¹¹

Service	Fixed-line telephone	Mobile cellular	Mobile broadband	Broadband-fixed
Number of connections	75,039	22,117,218	10,903,709	13,979
Per 100 inhabitants	N/A	106	52	N/A

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations specialised agency for information and communication technologies noted in 2020 in Burkina Faso that mobile cellular coverage was 92%. In 2019 ITU found the population covered by at least 3G mobile network was 48%, and by at least 4G mobile network was 27%. 3G (and by implication 4G) data networks are not used significantly outside of large cities and towns where people are unlikely to own or use smartphones.¹² Many people use their phones to listen to local radio. In 2018, mobile phone ownership was measured at 57.3% for men and 53.2% for women in urban areas versus 32.9% for men and 22.4% for women in rural areas. The level of internet access was 27.4% for men and 16% for women in urban areas versus 1.2% for men and 0.5% for women in rural areas.¹³

Fixed Internet in Burkina is stagnating due to its poor quality along with the advent of broadband technology (3G and 4G) mobile networks. Mobile subscribers are distributed among the three network operators Orange, ONATEL and Telecel. During the third quarter of 2020, the total number of mobile network subscribers that connected to the Internet grew by 18.15%.¹⁴

Access to different types of telecommunications equipment varies. According to a study published in 2019¹⁵, 97% of Burkinabè have access to a cell phone, while 35% have access to a computer and 20%

to a tablet, accessible both at work and at home. Connections via mobile phones are the most common way to access the internet; 77% of people surveyed use their mobile phone to connect to Internet versus 22% for ADSL and 0.90% for VSAT. ADSL access is provided by the network operator ONATEL; it is primarily aimed at the professional sphere and is frequently used by companies in the country's large cities.

INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA According to research carried out in 2019,¹⁶ the most popular social media platforms are Facebook and WhatsApp. Of 1224 people surveyed, only 11% use online social networks. Of those that do, Facebook was the most popular social network, used by 42.60%, followed by WhatsApp, used by 33.20%. The least used social networks are Viber, used by 6.80% of social media users, YouTube used by 5.60%, Instagram used by 5%, Twitter used by 3.20%, Snapchat used by 1.40% and LinkedIn used by 1.20%.

TELEVISION Television is becoming more widespread, thanks to the arrival of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) and improved access to electricity, but it is still the preserve of city dwellers and the wealthy. Data shows that 8.9% of Burkinabe own a television but no radio and 33.8% own both a radio and TV. There are higher levels of radio ownership in rural households than urban areas and more men own radio sets than women. Table 2 summarises the data: 17

10 <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-burkina-faso?rq=Burkina>

NB Due to some users owning more than one device, statistics may not equate to unique individuals

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

12 <https://www.cdacnetwork.org/case-studies/burkina-faso-english>

13 https://www.insd.bf/contenu/enquetes_recensements/autres_enquetes/RAPPORT%20ENQUETE%20SIGI.pdf

14 <http://www.arcep.bf/download/observatoire/observatoire-internet/2020-3eme-trimestre-donnees-du-marche-national-de-IE28099internet-et-des-locations-de-capacites.pdf>

15 http://www.iscom-bf.net/IMG/pdf/etude_sur_l_expansion_des_tic_au_burkina_faso_iscom_1efaso.net_obaas.pdf

16 http://www.iscom-bf.net/IMG/pdf/etude_sur_l_expansion_des_tic_au_burkina_faso_iscom_1efaso.net_obaas.pdf

17 Zongo Sylvie, Kibora Ludovic, Paré Cyriaque, Yaméogo Lassané, Dayamba Francis et Zeba Mohamadi, Médias et Santé Sexuelle et Reproductive/Planification familiale au

Table 2: Possession of a radio and/or TV set according to place of residence and gender

	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Has only a radio set	22.9%	23.7%	45.6%	61.5%	37.8%
Has only a TV set	17.8%	11.6%	3.4%	1.7%	8.9%
Has both radio and TV sets	41.1%	53.8%	17.3%	21.2%	33.8%
Has neither radio nor television	18.2%	10.8%	33.8%	15.6%	19.5%

RADIO Radio is considered to be the most popular and developed media and constitutes the main source of information for people in Burkina Faso. It is also said to be the most “Africanised”¹⁸ and the only media to which many rural populations have easy access.¹⁹ This is backed up by data collected by DW Akademie from 2018-2019, which found radio to be the most frequently used source of information for 73.5% of the population, ahead of television (68.3%). The Internet is becoming increasingly important with 42.6% citing it as the information source they use most frequently, but it still lags far behind the more traditional media. The printed press plays only a marginal role in information provision (8.9%).²⁰

A 2018 study reported that 41.7% of those surveyed owned a personal radio set and at least 42% listened to the household’s radio. About 10.9% listened to the radio on their mobile phone. Only 0.4% reported listening to the radio on the internet.²¹

Radio is popular in the country’s main cities; Ouagadougou, Bobo-Dioulasso and Ouahigouya. An audience study by Kantar in 2021 for Fondation Hirondelle found that in these cities, 93% of people own a radio. It also found that 79% of these city dwellers tend to listen on a radio set, 59% on a mobile phone with an FM receiver, 97% listen at home, 2% in transport and 42% at the office.²²

Radio ownership varies according to marital status, place of residence, age, education level and gender. Radio also tends to be more popular with married couples, and with adults rather than young or elderly people. There is a correlation between being less educated and owning a radio. The data is summarised in table 3;²³

Table 3: Radio ownership by marital status, place of residence, age, educational level and gender

	Marital status		Place of residence		Age			Education level		Gender	
	Single	Married	Urban	Rural	Young	Adults	Elderly	Educated	Uneducated	Male	Female
Radio set in household	12.1%	84.2%	22.1%	77.9%	14.1%	73.8%	12.1%	23%	73%	29.7%	70.3%
Personal radio set	13.3%	84.4%	18.2%	81.8%	27.6%	65.5%	6.9%	34.7%	65.3%	77.7%	22.3%

PRINT To a large extent access to print media is determined by literacy levels and languages spoken. The French language press is aimed at a mainly urban educated elite that represents only 25% of the population.²⁴ Even when newspapers are published in national languages, they do not reach the majority of Burkinabe, since the literacy rate among adults over 15 is only 39.3%. Lower levels of education are seen in women than men. Statistics from 2018 showed that 87.4% of women over the age of 25 have little or no education compared to 77.4% of men.²⁵

Burkina Faso : Analyse des messages et de leur impact sur le comportement des populations, Rapport final, OOAS, 2021.

18 André-Jean Tudesq, « La radio, premier média africain », Géopolitique africaine, n° 12, 2003, pp. 73-92.

19 Zongo Sylvie, Kibora Ludovic, Paré Cyriaque, Yaméogo Lassané, Dayamba Francis et Zeba Mohamadi, 2021, op.cit.

20 <https://www.dw.com/en/critical-but-disconnected-media-and-information-literacy-amongst-burkina-fasos-youth/a-55273184>

21 https://www.communication.gov.bf/fileadmin/user_upload/storages/fichier/rapport_final_etude_des_radios_du_bf.pdf

22 Study by Kantar for Fondation Hirondelle in 2021, data from power point slides <https://www.hirondelle.org/fr/notre-actualite/1436-audiences-des-programmes-hirondelle-l-information-fiable-et-les-medias-de-confiance-plebiscites-face-a-la-crise>

23 https://www.communication.gov.bf/fileadmin/user_upload/storages/fichier/rapport_final_etude_des_radios_du_bf.pdf

24 Moussa Bougma, Dynamique des langues locales et de la langue française au Burkina Faso : un éclairage à travers les recensements généraux de la population (1985, 1996 et 2006). Rapport de recherche de l’ODSEF, Observatoire démographique et statistique de l’espace francophone, Québec, Université Laval, 2010.

25 https://www.insd.bf/contenu/pub_periodiques/Livret_genre/Livret%20genre_2019.pdf

2.3 Language And Dialects In The Media

In the 1950s, the concept of “development journalism” emerged in sub-Saharan Africa. The theory placed great importance on the media speaking to populations in their native languages. At the time, the population was predominantly illiterate and did not speak French, the language of the colonising powers. It was in this context that “the majority of [national] languages were introduced, for evangelisation and essentially in radio programmes”, with the aim of “spreading advice on health, public hygiene, the protection of the environment, education and vaccination for children, etc.” Radio Haute Volta was created in 1959, the year before the country gained independence. This was followed, in 1969, by the creation of rural radio stations. “The use of national languages in radio programmes continued to spread. Three languages, Mooré, Jula, and Fulfuldé, were represented in local radio from 1959, followed by Gourounsi in 1960, Lobi, Bobo and Sénoufo in 1961 and Bissa and Samo in 1962. During this period, only three languages were used in television broadcasting until 1983. In the printed press, there were 23 national language publications.²⁶ A 1994 study by the association of national language newspaper publishers and promoters showed the growth and decline of national language newspapers in this period, with more than sixty national language publications since the 1960s, but with more than half of those having ceased publication by the time of the survey.²⁷

There are 60 national languages spoken in Burkina Faso.²⁸ Fourteen of these languages are spoken by 90.11% of the population and 45 are spoken by the remaining 9.89%. The most widely spoken are Mooré, Fulfuldé and Goulmancema as shown in table 4.²⁹

Table 4: The most widely spoken languages

Languages	Mooré	Fulfuldé	Goulmancema	Bissa	Dagara	Jula	Lyélé	San	Bobo	Bwamu
% of population	51.9%	9.66%	5.72%	3.56%	3.08%	2.62%	2.41%	2.23%	2.24%	2.13%

Mooré, Fulfuldé and Jula are considered the main national languages and are spoken by 70% of the population.³⁰ These are the languages into which official documents are translated when there is a need to make them available to non-French speakers (75% of Burkinabe). They are also the local languages commonly spoken in the civil service. The other national languages are often excluded from larger forums, due to their limited geographical spread.³¹ French, is spoken by 25% of the population of Burkina Faso.³² In the two largest cities of the country Ouagadougou, the political capital, and Bobo-Dioulasso (the economic capital between 1996-2006), the most widely spoken languages were Mooré (more than 70% of speakers) and Dioula (60%).

It is important to note that many national languages have several variants or dialects according to geographical areas. These dialects make it difficult to achieve a consensual linguistic transcription. The same word is sometimes transcribed differently in books, which can lead to differences in understanding of the same text. The three main languages spoken in each of the 13 administrative regions of Burkina Faso are summarised in table 5;³³

26 Serge Théophile Balima, « Médias et langues nationales au Burkina Faso », Recherches en communication No. 24, 2004, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/288193935.pdf>

27 Féridjou Emilie Georgette Sanon-Ouattara, La traduction dans les médias au Burkina Faso: Enjeux et Perspectives, 2015 <https://www.openstarts.units.it/handle/10077/11211>

28 Norbert Nikiema, « Évolution de la question de l'utilisation des langues nationales dans le système éducatif au Burkina Faso », *Berichte des sonderforschungsbereichs 268*, V.7, 1996, pp. 187-201.

29 Alkassoum Maïga, Abou Napon et Zakaria Soré « Pour un ancrage sociologique de l'alphabétisation. Analyse des besoins langagiers des populations burkinabè », *Revue Internationale d'Éducation - S È V R E S*, n°70, 2015, pp. 65-75

30 Abou Napon, « La problématique de l'introduction des langues nationales dans l'enseignement primaire au Burkina Faso », *Revue Électronique Sud Langues*, n° 2, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, 2003, pp. 145-156.

31 Moussa Bougma, *Dynamique des différentes langues en présence au Burkina Faso : les changements démo-linguistiques opérés au sein de la population burkinabè* (Actes du XVIIe Colloque international de l'AIDELF), 2014.

32 Moussa Bougma, *Dynamique des langues locales et de la langue française au Burkina Faso : un éclairage à travers les recensements généraux de la population (1985, 1996 et 2006)*, 2010, op.cit.

33 Alkassoum Maïga, Abou Napon et Zakaria Soré, « Pour un ancrage sociologique de l'alphabétisation. Analyse des besoins langagiers des populations burkinabè », 2015, op.cit., p.71.

Table 5: The three main languages spoken in the regions
(the percentages are not in relation to the overall population but in relation to the responses by region)

Region	Language 1	Language 2	Language 3
Boucle du Mouhoun	Bwamu (100%)	San (44%)	Marka (35.1%)
Cascades	Cerma (100%)	Dioula (22,6%)	Mooré (9,2%)
Centre-Est	Koussassi (100%)	Yana (95%)	Bissa (39,7%)
Centre	Mooré (95,7%)	Dioula (56%)	Fulfuldé (6,3%)
Centre-Ouest	Nuni (63,2%)	Mooré (76,9%)	Lyélé (59,4 %)
Centre-Nord	Maransé (87,5%)	Fulfuldé (12,2%)	-
Centre-Sud	Nankana (100 %)	Kassena (90,5%)	Bissa (50,7%)
Est	Gulmacema (54 %)	Fulfuldé (10,7%)	Mooré (8,6%)
Hauts-Bassins	Bobo (100%)	Dioula (100%)	Siamou (63%)
Nord	Mooré (90,7%)	Fulduldé (9,3%)	-
Plateau-Central	Mooré (95,2%)	Zangouéré (12,5%)	-
Sahel	Sonrai (100%)	Zarma (100%)	Koronfé (95,2%)
Sud-Ouest	Lobiri (97,2%)	Birifor (93,1%)	Dagara (65%)

BROADCAST LANGUAGES All radio and television stations in Burkina Faso use French and national languages, though there is limited data showing the different languages that are used in radio, television, print and digital press. Besides the official language of French and national languages, English and Arabic are also used marginally in radio and television.

The 25 most spoken languages in Burkina Faso are used by the media (especially radio and television) to varying degrees. These are: Bwamu, San, Marka, Cerma, Dioula, Mooré, Koussassi, Yana, Bissa, Fulfuldé, Nuni, Lyélé, Maransé, Nankana, Kassena, Goulmancema, Bobo, Siamou, Zangouéré, Sonraï, Zarma, Koronfé, Lobiri, Birifor and Dagara.

Public television, which covers the entire country, broadcasts in 12 languages: “Mooré, Fulfuldé, Jula, Bissa, Goulmancéma, Dagara, Lobiri, San, Lyélé, Dafing, Bwamu and Bobo”. Public radio broadcasts in the same 12 languages, and three others: Samo, Senufo and Lobi.³⁴ In the private sector, the radio and television stations based in the capital Ouagadougou broadcast mainly in Mooré, Dioula and Fulfuldé, the three main national languages of the country.

Table 6 shows the correlation between the first language spoken and the preferred primary broadcasting language of listeners. The correlation between the first language spoken and the primary broadcasting language is relatively balanced when it comes to Mooré, Goulmancema, Dagara, Gourounsi, Fulfuldé, Bissa, Bobo and Bwamu.³⁵

Table 6: Ratio between the first language spoken and the first broadcasting language

Language	First language spoken	First broadcasting language
Mooré	40.9%	38.1%
Dioula	19.5%	6.5%
French	11,7%	41,6%
Goulmancema	9,7%	9,1%
Gourounsi	39%	3,2%
Dagara	1,9%	0,6%
Fulfuldé	6,5%	4,5%
Bobo	0,6%	0%
Bissa	1,9%	1,3%
Bwamu	0,6%	0%
Other languages	2,6%	1,3%

It is important to note that there is a significant gap between the proportion of people speaking Dioula as a first language

³⁴ Lassané Yaméogo, Interactions des médias publics avec les champs politique et socioéconomique au Burkina Faso : facteurs, d'influence, identités et pratiques professionnelles, Thèse de doctorat, Université libre de Bruxelles, 2016, p.243).

³⁵ https://www.communication.gov.bf/fileadmin/user_upload/storages/fichier/rapport_final_etude_des_radios_du_bf.pdf

(19.5%) and the number of radio stations which broadcast primarily in that language (6.5%). This discrepancy can be explained by the cosmopolitan nature of the large urban centres where most of the radio stations are based.

While French is the first language of only 11.7% of people, although it is used as the main broadcasting language. A study (table 6) covering 98% of radio stations in Burkina Faso found the languages most used by radio stations are French (41.6%) and Mooré (31.8%).³⁶ This suggests that radio stations are frequently addressing populations in languages that they may not understand.

Table 7: Distribution of the main radio broadcasting languages from survey data 2017

Radio broadcasting languages	Dioula	Dagara	Gulmacema	French	Mooré	Fulfuldé	Bobo	Bissa	Bwamu	Gourounsi	Others	Total
Percentage	6.5%	0.6%	9.1%	41.6%	31.8%	4.5%	0%	1.3%	0%	3.2%	1.3%	100%

In a ranking of radio stations by province shows that those that also broadcast in local languages have the largest audience in their respective localities. A study found that 69% of respondents prefer to listen to radio in one of the national languages, versus 31% who choose French. This preference is more pronounced in rural areas where over 80% of the population regularly follow media programmes in the dominant national languages of the area.³⁷ Overall up to 40 languages are not represented in radio broadcasting in Burkina Faso. This means speakers of these minority or marginalised languages are excluded from broadcasts and information programming unless they speak another language. According to one study, 3.2% of the population do not listen to the radio because they do not understand the broadcasting languages.³⁸ A testimony of an inhabitant of the Sud-Ouest region illustrates the problem in relation to understanding information about Sexual and Reproductive Health “...what percentage of the population understands French? For example, to talk about Sexual and Reproductive Health issues, well, I have never heard anybody speak about it in Jan, in my language.”³⁹

The language barrier is even more pronounced when it comes to the printed press. Only 1% of newspapers are published in national languages with almost all others published in French.^{40 41}

2.4 Barriers To Media Access

Barriers to accessing media are diverse and vary according to the type of media. The main barriers to accessing print media is illiteracy and language. The French language press is aimed at a mainly urban educated elite that represents only 25% of the population.⁴² Newspapers published in national languages do not reach most Burkinabe. The literacy rate among adults over 15 is 39.3% and 87.4% of women over the age of 25 have little or no education (data from 2018) along with 77.4% of men.⁴³ Another barrier is the cost, which some readers consider to be expensive; dailies sell for 300 FCFA per issue and periodicals for 1000 FCFA. With the advent of the Internet and the rapid rise of online and social media, sales of printed newspapers are declining.

Another barrier is the cost of media equipment, both for consumers and providers. For consumers, many Burkinabe still do not own a radio and/or TV set, though this number is declining and there is a big difference between rural and urban areas. Access to television is more challenging than radio due to the very high costs of TV set and the inconsistency and geographic scarcity of mains electricity. Each province in Burkina Faso has at least one radio station with a coverage radius of sometimes up to 100 kilometres. While with the main reason stated for not listening to the radio is the lack of a radio set, research shows that 3.9% of the population say that they do not listen to the radio because they are out of signal range. The reasons that some people are unable to listen to the radio, is shown in the graph Figure 1:⁴⁴

36 https://www.communication.gov.bf/fileadmin/user_upload/storages/fichier/rapport_final_etude_des_radios_du_bf.pdf

37 Zongo Sylvie, Kibora Ludovic, Paré Cyriaque, Yaméogo Lassané, Dayamba Francis et Zeba Mohamadi, Médias et Santé Sexuelle et Reproductive/Planification familiale au Burkina Faso : Analyse des messages et de leur impact sur le comportement des populations, Rapport final, OOAS, 2021

38 https://www.communication.gov.bf/fileadmin/user_upload/storages/fichier/rapport_final_etude_des_radios_du_bf.pdf

39 Zongo et al., 2021, Op.cit., p.61

40 <http://aepjln.org/>

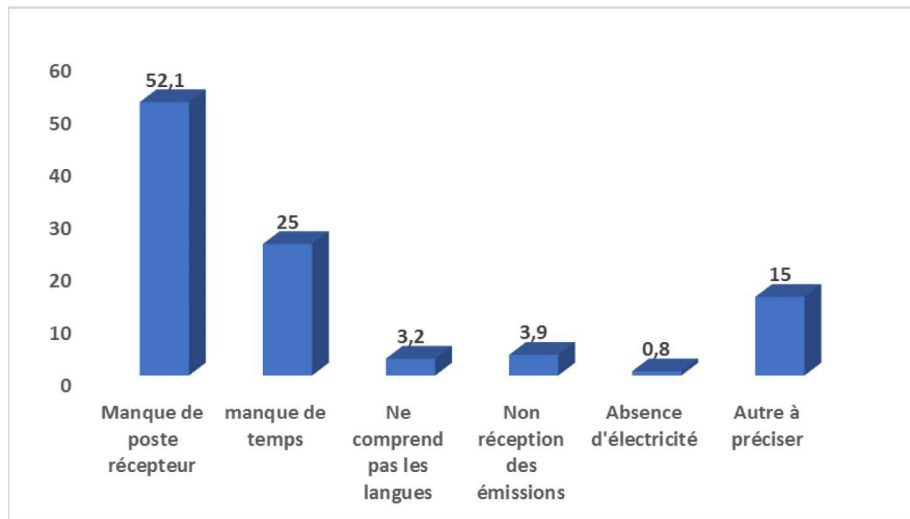
41 See link for newspapers in national language <http://aepjln.org/>

42 Bougma Moussa, Dynamique des langues locales et de la langue française au Burkina Faso : un éclairage à travers les recensements généraux de la population (1985, 1996 et 2006), op.cit., 2010.

43 Institut national de la statistique et de la démographie (INSD), Femmes et Hommes au Burkina Faso en 2018, juin 2020, op.cit., p.56-57

44 https://www.communication.gov.bf/fileadmin/user_upload/storages/fichier/rapport_final_etude_des_radios_du_bf.pdf

Figure 1: Reasons for not listening to the radio



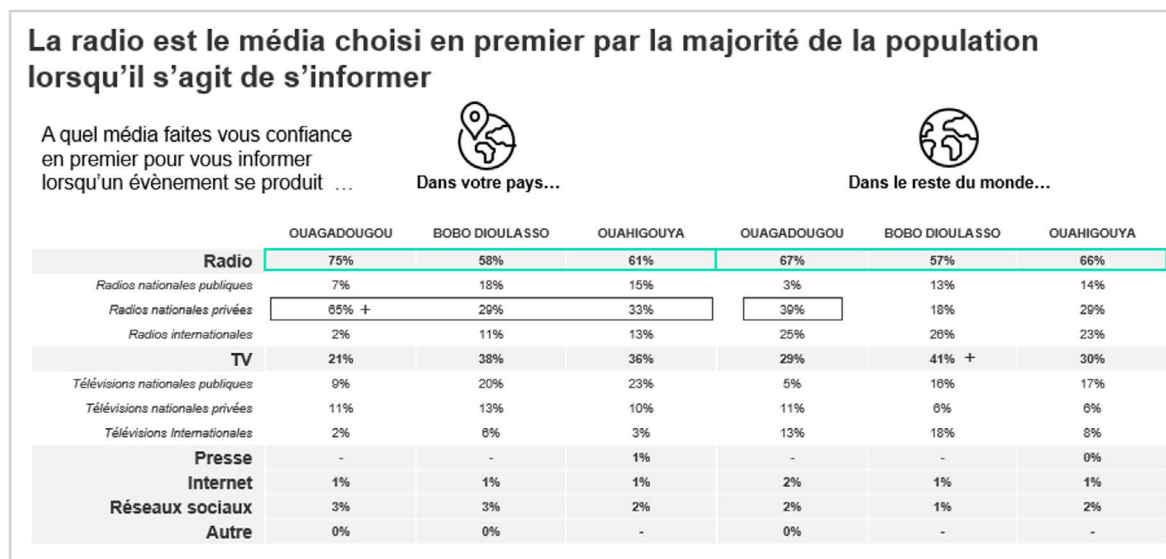
52.1	25	3.2	3.9	0.8	15
No radio set	No time	Do not understand the languages	Cannot receive the programmes	No electricity	Other unspecified

The High Council for Communications does not oblige TV channels to make their programmes accessible to people with visual or hearing impairments, despite one of their remits being to ensure equal access to the media, News programmes are neither subtitled nor translated into sign language, this potentially excludes 1.2 million people, or 5% of the population.⁴⁵

2.5 Media Preferences And Trusted Media

In the survey in 2021 by KANTAR Institute and Fondation Hirondelle⁴⁶ radio was ranked as the media people were most likely to turn to in the main cities for information in the wake of an important event. The study also found that the population trust private radio and television stations more than public ones, as illustrated in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Ranking of media in order of reliability



The findings from survey looking at the level of trust in different media by IDPs regarding information on COVID-19⁴⁷

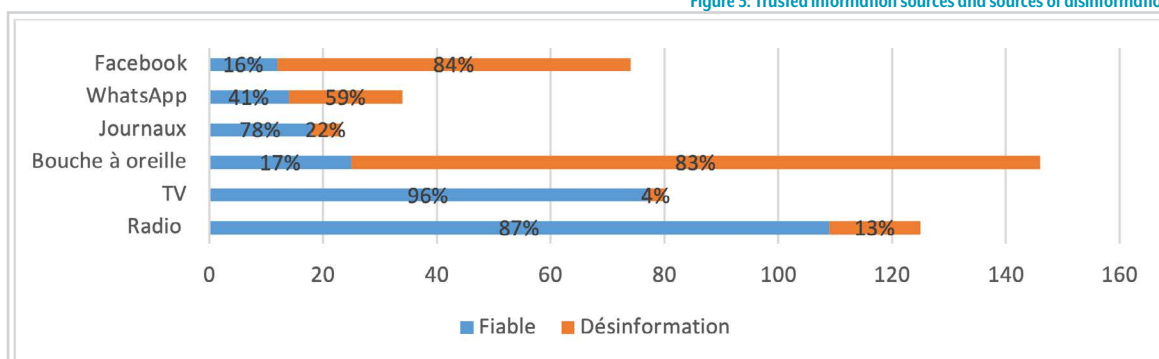
45 The 2006 General Population and Housing Census

46 Kantar, Étude d'audience des programmes de la Fondation Hirondelle (data from Powerpoint), 2021.

47 Lassané Yaméogo and Emma Heywood, Médias, Covid-19 et Personnes déplacées internes au Burkina Faso [Media, Covid-19 and IDPs in Burkina Faso], Rapport, 2021.

suggest that traditional media such as radio, television and newspapers are the most trusted sources of information. Radio and television were trusted by 87% and 96% of those surveyed and were seen as sources of disinformation for only 13% and 4%. Conversely, disinformation was associated with both word of mouth and social media. Word of mouth, Facebook and WhatsApp were trusted least, and were seen as sources of disinformation with Facebook seen as a source of disinformation by 84% of those surveyed. Figure 3 summarises the results of this study:

Figure 3: Trusted information sources and sources of disinformation



An earlier survey of 3,481 individuals aged 15 and over in Ouagadougou, Bobo-Dioulasso, Ouahigouya, Pabré and Dandé carried out by KANTAR TNS and Fondation Hirondelle in 2016, found that, 79% of the population aged 15 and over listen to the radio each day and the average daily listening time per person was 141 minutes. It also found that television was watched by 81% of the population aged 15 and over each day, with an average daily viewing time of 139 minutes. Radio was widely listened to especially in rural areas with 3hrs 16mins of daily listening on average in Pabré and Dandé vs 2hrs 20min in Ouagadougou. Television was watched less in rural areas - 66% watched daily in Pabré/ Dandé vs. 80% in Ouagadougou.⁴⁸ According to DMI data 45% of women and 67% of men state that they listen to radio at least once a week.⁴⁹

When it comes to young people, television at the time of writing has a slight lead on radio in terms of popularity. A study by D W Akademie indicates that television (58.2%) and radio (57.4%) are the most widely used media on a weekly basis among Burkinabe young people aged 15 to 25. Internet use is less commonly used (32.2%), while reading print media, such as newspapers and magazines, is unpopular (2.5%). About two-thirds of urban youth (75.1%) and half of rural youth (50.5%) watch television on a weekly basis. More urban young people own a television set than rural young people (81.2% versus 48.0%). Smartphone ownership is lower among women than men (32.9% compared to 48%). Women were also found to access online media less frequently on a weekly basis, (20.6% compared to 37.7%).⁵⁰

Only 5% of women and 10% of men read a newspaper at least once a week.⁵¹ Overall, readership remains low throughout the country and is generally confined to the main urban centres (DMI, 2016). This is due to the high illiteracy rate in the country. The three most widely read daily newspapers at the time of writing are L'Observateur Paalga, Sidwaya, and Le Pays.⁵²

2.6 Two-Way Communication With Communities

Two-way communication allows people to raise their concerns, ask questions and receive responses, clarifications, and answers. This is important in building understanding and trust, especially in an emergency. In radio broadcasting, interactive shows and talk shows are opportunities for two-way communication, including between authorities and the population, providing an opportunity to inform and talk and listen to each other, to understand each other, and to share common visions and expectations.

48 Kantar Burkina Faso (data from Powerpoint), 2016

49 DMI, Analyse du paysage médiatique pour la campagne régionale diffusée à travers les médias régionaux dans les six pays SWEDD : Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritanie, Niger et Tchad, 2016.

50 DW Akademie, Éducation aux médias et à l'information: Rapport pays Burkina Faso, 2020

51 Enquête démographique et de santé (EDS), 2010

52 Institut national de la statistique et de la démographie (INSD), Etude d'audience des médias les provinces du Houët et du Kadiogo, 2013.



A study looking at radio in Burkina Faso as a tool for dialogue between governance actors, shows citizens are able better able to understand issues because of interactive radio broadcasts. In one example the Department for Social Action was able to explain some of the challenges they face in response to requests for goods. This led to an increase in trust and a better understanding of the department's limitations amongst listeners. Health workers too gained a better understanding of problems around how patients are received, consequently staff were reassigned, and staffing was increased in some municipal departments.⁵³

Burkina's public television launched a programme Dialogue citoyen [Citizens' dialogue]⁵⁴ which allows for a direct and frank exchange between governors and the governed on public policies and governance. The aim of the programme is to stimulate dialogue between political figures (heads of state, ministers, etc) and citizens during a question-and-answer session. The programme is produced with the financial support of the NGO Diakonia.

The emergence of online social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube has opened the door to new types of public communication. These platforms have "enabled the redefining of social relationships and the broadening of fields of expression, discussion and debate". They have facilitated communication between different groups and between leaders and the public and enable political scrutiny, allowing "the distance between governors and the governed to be breached". They can be used to exert influence on people at the top, "sometimes leading to an equalisation of social relationships". Consequently, social networks are able to function as an alternative forum for a democratic debate between governors and the governed. "In this electronic arena, the principles of formal discussion and hierarchical social relations disappear in favour of egalitarian exchanges between citizens".⁵⁵

One example of the impact of social media on policy is that of Facebook users directly addressing the minister of Foreign Affairs, Alpha Barry, in 2019, over the decision by the government to build a hospital, financed by China, in the Kua forest. When the minister posted about the decision on Facebook it immediately sparked a wave of reactions. More than 2,000 comments, mostly from environmentalists, were published. The government eventually abandoned the plan and a less controversial site was found.

53 Bakouan Florent Yipéni 2010, Les radios locales: un outil de dialogue entre acteurs de la gouvernance, Capitalisation n°2

54 <https://www.presimetre.bf/fr/dialogue/emission>

55 Lassané Yaméogo, Activisme en ligne et transformations sociopolitiques au Burkina Faso, Communication, vol. 37/2 2020, <http://journals.openedition.org/communication/13232>

SECTION 3:

The Media In Disaster Response With A Focus On COVID-19

BURKINA FASO FACES A COMPLEX HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AS A RESULT OF CLIMATE CHANGE, VIOLENCE, CONFLICT, CHRONIC FOOD INSECURITY AND COVID-19.

3.1 Media In Disaster Response Overview

Burkina Faso continues to be severely affected by food insecurity and malnutrition, widespread drought and flooding and conflict and violence. This unstable situation has displaced a large number of people. A verification operation led by the National Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation (CONASUR) identified 1,407,685 internally displaced persons (IDPs) as of 30 September 2021⁵⁶ who live in temporary reception sites, organised camps, and in ad hoc shelters in empty buildings or on unused land; some are also with host families in provincial capitals. In addition, Islamist armed groups have increasingly affected the Sahel, Nord, Centre-Nord, Est, and Boucle du Mouhoun regions, with the regions bordering Mali and across to the Niger border also being impacted by conflict.

The humanitarian situation has been further exacerbated by COVID-19. The government is considered to have acted quickly in response to COVID-19, closing airports and borders, imposing curfews and travel bans, and closing schools. Mitigations such as social distancing, mask wearing and hand washing can be challenging for IDPs, those living in crowded conditions and communities facing water shortages. A Ground Truths Solutions (GTS) survey in 2021 on perceptions of communication around COVID-19 found that 63% of people said they wanted more information on 'how to protect myself from the virus,' 43% wanted more information on how to identify symptoms and 23% said that they needed better access to reliable information. They found women felt less informed than men and people living in Namentenga province felt less informed than residents of Bam and Sanmatenga.⁵⁷

A challenge when communicating during disasters is that populations living in areas of insecurity can be hard to reach, especially if they are very mobile. IDPs cannot be considered as a homogenous group, as each sub-demographic within will have different communication preferences and habits. To help coordinate communication in an emergency the Community Engagement and Accountability Working Group (CEAWG), was founded in March 2020 to ensure collective interagency participation around communication with communities. Its remit is to listen to feedback and to adapt humanitarian programmes to be more responsive. It is at time of writing chaired by OCHA and supported by UNICEF.

3.2 The Role Of The Media In Disaster Response

The media historically has played a vital role in communication in disaster situations. Radio has been found to bolster resilience in the face of social upheaval or natural disasters.⁵⁸ Radio and TV played a key role during the 2009 floods which affected Ouagadougou and many other towns. Television stations such as RTB Télé, Canal 3 and radio stations such as Savane FM, switched to special programming, providing up-to-the-minute information to the authorities on the seriousness of the disaster and urging the population to observe the utmost caution.⁵⁹ The media assisted by continuously providing information about people in difficulty and by alerting emergency services so that victims could receive care quickly. Even in 2009, with online social media and citizen journalism still in its infancy, during these floods many citizens were able to participate in a community communication effort by using their mobile phones to alert the media to the situation on the ground.


COVID-19 The media was at the centre of the public communication strategy on COVID-19 in Burkina Faso. From March 2020, a communication framework was established between the health authorities and journalists. All the

56 <https://reliefweb.int/report/burkina-faso/burkina-faso-unhcr-operational-update-september-october-2021>

57 https://groundtruthsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GTS-BF-COVID-19-Bulletin_EN.pdf

58 Laban Ogallo, Radio et catastrophes naturelles en Afrique, ICT Update, 2003.

59 <https://lefaso.net/spip.php?article33793>



data regarding the number of people tested, number of positive cases, number of deaths, number of people who had recovered, number of people being treated per town was centralised in a daily SitRep bulletin, by the Centre for Health Emergency Response.⁶⁰ Information was also communicated to journalists through press conferences, first daily, then weekly. This framework remained the only official channel through which the media of all types (radio, television, print and online) had access to health information.

Journalists were hampered in the first months of the crisis as curfew restrictions prohibited travel and they had to rely on authorities for information at the start of the pandemic. Additionally, people were reluctant to agree to interviews due to fears of contracting COVID-19 as they considered journalists more likely to have the disease due to their perceived frequent contact with the public.

Despite considerable risks and obstacles, Burkinaabe journalists continued to inform the population about the development of the pandemic. The media adapted to the new context swiftly, going digital to overcome the challenges. One Canal 3 television Journalist said: “during the toughest moments of the COVID-19 crisis, many journalists were still able to work thanks to digital technology. Conferences were held and articles were sent online, all thanks to the Internet”. Travel restrictions meant adaptations in ways of working as one radio Burkina editor explained: “The editor had to prepare the content and send it to the WhatsApp group so that the news anchor could prepare.” These changes look as though they are here to stay as a journalist at Savane FM radio observed: “The switch to digital media resulted in a digital media boom, even those who have continued with a paper format now rely on websites because it’s more practical and more accessible to populations”

A senior staff member from burkina24.com: *“We organised initiatives to fight the disease by raising awareness among the population. Through our different broadcasting channels, we got people to understand that the disease did exist and was a danger to the public and we got them to observe safety measures. We had to create a lot of visual aids and we wrote and circulated articles to inform the population.”*

Different groups found different ways for getting information. Research by Ground Truth Solutions during COVID-19 noted that in answer to the question ‘what is your main channel for information on how to protect yourself from COVID-19?’, radio had the highest response with 93%, with face to face at 61% and television with 35%.⁶¹ Age may play a factor on preferences as UNICEF’s Report on young people’s perceptions in Burkina Faso found 51% said they receive information about COVID-19 from television, with only 26% for radio, 16% on social networks, and just 5% relying on word of mouth and 3% from parents.⁶² Another study by Fondation Hirondelles looking at IDPs saw that they mostly relied on radio, television, and newspapers (92%) for the information and community communication (family and neighbours) following that (73%).⁶³


Social media has played an important communications role during the pandemic. Broadcasters and newspapers have created more widespread impact by amplifying their programming through their Facebook pages and Twitter accounts. Digital media has raised awareness of the importance of observing preventative measures by producing and relaying content in various formats. Some digital media have worked on fact-checking to help enable sceptical populations to escape the conspiracy theories that can be found on social media. E-influencers and citizen journalists have been among the key communications actors; raising awareness by producing teaching and educational content themselves or by relaying awareness messages which were originally published or broadcast by the news media. Their contribution has helped diversify the communications channels through which information on COVID-19 has been received and has likely reached audiences that would have been missed by traditional media.

60 Centre de Réponse aux Urgences Sanitaires (CORUS) - the organisation in charge of managing the pandemic.

61 https://groundtruthsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GTS-BF-COVID-19-Bulletin_EN.pdf

62 <https://burkinafaso.ureport.in/opinion/4142/>

63 Fondation Hirondelle, Study on internally displaced persons’ access to information and on level of information and awareness of the COVID-19 virus, June 2020



Bassératou Kindo, a citizen journalist, has consistently been producing and disseminating health information regarding COVID-19. By both relaying journalists' publications and publishing her own posts, she actively participated in the fight against the pandemic.

FACEBOOK POST: 31 MAY

[#Covid19BF](#) 2 June 2021 – start of the vaccination campaign

The target population of this first phase is health professionals, clinically vulnerable people (those suffering from high blood pressure, diabetes, kidney disease...) and those wanting to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca.”

Television played an important role in COVID-19 communications by combating the high levels of controversy and denial that were paralysing the fight against the virus. The pandemic was plagued by conspiracy theories, fake news and rumours and the images that television presented, showing the reality of the virus (including images of sick people in hospital), helped to clear the doubt and scepticism that had formed in the minds of some.

Radio contributed to raising awareness about COVID-19 through a variety of programming, including news bulletins, interactive programmes, debates, round tables, micro-programmes and magazines. Some NGOs used radio to enhance their response to the pandemic. One example is DW Akademie, working with PT Réseau d'Initiatives de Journalistes (RIJ) to support 12 community radio stations to produce a monthly interactive 45-minute programme on COVID-19. Also, Fondation Hironnelle distributed solar-powered radios and sound systems to IDPs in Kaya and Pissila in northern Burkina Faso and broadcast health messages via its Studio Yafa64 programmes. According to Fondation Hironnelle research, listening to the programmes contributed to positive behavioural changes and improved levels of information in the community. Listeners changed their behaviour (83%), changed their minds (81%), shared information (77%), engaged in a discussion/debate (76%), got involved or become more active in community life (72%), and contacted Studio Yafa (48%).⁶⁵

The print media has shared information throughout the pandemic and played a part in holding authority figures to account. For example, it reported on public figures not observing safety measures during the November 2020 election campaign, as well as reporting on candidates who did not observe Covid safety measures during political rallies and in their personal lives. Investigations were also published exposing the opaque management of the health crisis by the government.⁶⁶

THE ROLE OF ART AND TRADITIONAL FORMS OF COMMUNICATION Art and more traditional forms of communication have played a role in fighting the spread of COVID-19. Several Burkinabe musicians have become involved in awareness-raising through songs and shows. These include the rapper Smarty, who released the single Monsieur Corona, plus Dicko Fils, Habibou Sawadogo and Nourat. A group of 15 artists also launched an awareness campaign through an awareness song. The title “Stop coronavirus in Burkina Faso”, is sung in French, Dioula and Bôbô. One of the members of the collective, Diafodé Kaba Diakité, explains: *“Musicians don't have a lot of financial or material resources to contribute to a struggle. They only have their voices. That's why, with the coronavirus situation, we produced a song in 48 hours to help raise awareness among populations about observing the rules laid out by the authorities to stop the virus from gaining ground in our country.”*⁶⁷ Comedy⁶⁸ and theatre, have also played a role. Comedians have raised awareness of the virus through parodies, sketches and videos. Traditional and religious leaders (imams, pastors, and priests), have been key players, becoming spokespersons for COVID-19 response teams. Consequently Mosques, churches, and markets have become important places for relaying health information.

64 Studio Yafa is a radio, video and multimedia production studio

65 Kantor, Étude d'audience des programmes de la Fondation Hironnelle (data from Powerpoint), 2021.

66 *Courrier Confidentiel* n° 202, 25 April 2020.

67 <https://www.aib.media/2020/03/25/lutte-contre-le-coronavirus-15-artistes-burkinabe-donnent-de-la-voix/>

68 https://www.bf.undp.org/content/burkina_faso/fr/home/presscenter/articles/2020/Grand_ouest_humour.html



PHOTO: OCHA/IVO BRANDAU

DISINFORMATION AND MISINFORMATION Fighting disinformation has been one of the key responses of the media towards the pandemic. Fondation Hirondelle with Studio Yafa created special programming during the pandemic for all its 37 community radio partners to assist vulnerable populations, internally displaced people, women, young people and people living with disabilities with accurate information. Its radio stations work in national languages (Dioula, Fulfulde, Goulmancéma and Mooré) and in French. A COVID-19 Editorial hub, composed of senior journalists and a health specialist, has supported the newsrooms by fact-checking, producing content and providing tailored advice. Four key radio programmes were produced: “Parlons coronavirus” (Let’s talk about coronavirus) aired five times a week, “Covid-19 Info” aired three times a week, “Covid Reem” aired once a week and “Fact checking” aired once a week, this programme presented by a Fasocheck journalist, aims to debunk fake news about COVID-19 circulating in social discourse and on social media.

Fasocheck is an editorial initiative created in 2018 and is supported by Burkinabe journalists and bloggers who have been trained by the Deutsche Welle Akademie.⁶⁹ Its main mission is the practice and promotion of fact-checking in Burkina Faso.⁷⁰ The media organisation held training sessions and devoted many fact-checking articles to the pandemic. These helped people to distinguish between true information and the fake news that is constantly circulating and flooding the Web.

The pure play website lefaso.net also played a role in fact checking during the pandemic. They took fake news items and analysed them to highlight how misleading they were. These included more than one fake story about miracle cures for COVID-19 which could be made at home. One example in the online media’s publications was a viral rumour on social networks, claiming that a ‘home-made cure for Covid’ had been validated by the WHO; the site responded by saying ‘This is false information, because neither the UN Health Agency nor any serious news site mentions it’.⁷¹

69 State of Press Freedom Report 2018: Burkina Faso scores 2.68 out of 4! – CNP-NZ (cnpnz-zongo.org)

70 <https://odil.org/initiatives/fasocheck/reco0tUDdmt0nRled>

71 <https://lefaso.net/spip.php?article100258>

SECTION 4:

Individual Media Overview

THIS SECTION PROVIDES A CONCISE OVERVIEW OF EACH OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDIA IN BURKINA FASO: DIGITAL MEDIA PLATFORMS, SOCIAL MEDIA, TELEVISION, RADIO, PRINT AND TRADITIONAL FORMS OF COMMUNICATION. IT DOES NOT AIM TO GIVE AN EXHAUSTIVE REVIEW INSTEAD IT FOCUSES ON THE MAIN MEDIA PROVIDERS FOR EACH CATEGORY, USING THE AVAILABLE DATA AND STUDIES.

4.1 Digital Media Platforms

There is an array of online media in Burkina Faso. The Burkina Faso Conseil Supérieur de la Communication (CSC) currently lists 20 online media, and describes two types of online media:⁷²

- » 'traditional media which have a website'. Where the information published on the website is a repurposed version of the content that is also available on their original medium.
- » 'electronic media, all of whose content is online'. There are no specific provisions governing the creation of online media. Internet sites are created freely, however online media must, after their creation, report their existence to the CSC.

Almost all news media (radio, television, printed press) have integrated digital media. In almost all media companies, there are two editorial offices: a traditional editorial office and a web editorial office. For example, the daily newspapers L'Observateur Paalga (private) and Sidwaya (public), both have autonomous web newsrooms, even if these sometimes reproduce the content from the print editions.

There are no recent studies on the audience of news websites with the most recent carried out in 2016 by Alexa.com, a global web traffic analysis site. That study ranked the digital-only site lefaso.net as the most popular site in Burkina. At the time, it registered 50,000 visitors per day, 37,000 subscribers to its daily newsletter and an average 500 comments per day on its discussion forum.⁷³ Listed below are a sample of the most popular current digital sites in Burkina Faso, French is the main language used on all of these sites:

- » www.lefaso.net
- » www.ouaga24.com
- » www.zoodomail.com
- » www.burkina24.com
- » www.faso-actu.net
- » www.kaceto.net
- » www.libreinfo.net
- » www.faso7.com
- » www.gulmu.info

The most popular mixed media content providers, that is with print and online versions are:

- » www.lobservateur.bf
- » www.sidwaya.info
- » <https://lepays.bf>
- » www.omegamedias.info
- » www.rtb.bf
- » www.watfm.live

⁷² <http://www.csc.bf/m-228-presse-en-ligne.html>

⁷³ <https://lefaso.net/spip.php?article73272>

In a 2019 survey,⁷⁴ 67% of the people surveyed spend at least 2 hours a day on the Internet, either surfing social networks (43%), looking for information (30%), or keeping up with current affairs (15.6%). According to a study of cities dwellers, 38% of Internet users go online every week and 53% do occasionally. The most common activities carried out each week by Internet users are instant messaging (80%), consulting social networks (73%) and downloading audio files (36%).⁷⁵

4.2 Social Media Platforms

Statistics from Statcounter from November 2021 listed the most used social media networks as Facebook with 95.09% of social media users, Pinterest at 2.47%, with other social media services having 1% or fewer users (Twitter 1%, YouTube 0.93%, Instagram 0.21%, VKontakte 0.14%).⁷⁶ Data from napoleoncat for November 2021 shows there are 2,291,600 Facebook users, equivalent to 10.4% of the population, the majority of users are male making up 70.3%, and the largest user group by age were people between 25 to 34 (836,000). There are 2,088,400 using FB Messenger, 188 400 Instagram users, and 245,700 LinkedIn users.⁷⁷

Popular Facebook groups in Burkina Faso at the time of writing include;

- » Crossfire with 316,200 members
- » RED PEN movement with 62,100 members
- » Political debate with 616,700 members
- » Ouaga Traffic with 31,700 members
- » The Voice of Change with 13,700 members
- » Enough with 43,600 members
- » The Var Burkina with 165,500 members

The most popular e-influencers and citizen journalists are:

- » Naïm TOURE followed by 144,609 people
- » Yacouba Ladjji BAM followed by 54,335 people
- » Aminata RACHOW followed by 128,180 people
- » SMARTY (Page) followed by 377,616 people

People in Burkina Faso use social media for a variety of reasons; young people have been found to use it to find out more about their concerns and values, as well as a space for free expression, to inform themselves and rally citizen action. They use social media to try and influence public policies in areas regarding democracy, equity and social justice, and to bypass perceived censorship on other media. encourage individual and collective awareness for a virtuous and transparent management of public goods.⁷⁸ The downside of social networks are the opportunities for cyber-violence, cyber-stalking, and cyber-crime.

4.3 Television Stations

Unlike radio stations which are well established across the country, television stations are primarily based in the capital Ouagadougou. In the capital 87% of the population watch television daily for around 3 hours 12 minutes. National TV stations account for 53% of audience share versus 47% for international and Pan-African stations.⁷⁹ The main public television stations are RTB/Télé, RTB2 and Télévision du Parlement (LTP). All television channels use French and various national languages, though there is no data breaking down the percentage of the languages used in these media.

74 http://www.iscom-bf.net/IMG/pdf/etude_sur_l_expansion_des_tic_au_burkina_faso_iscom_lefaso.net_obaas.pdf

75 Kantar, Étude d'audience des programmes de la Fondation Hironnelle (data from Powerpoint), 2021.

76 <https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/burkina-faso>

77 https://napoleoncat.com/stats/social-media-users-in-burkina_faso/2021/10/

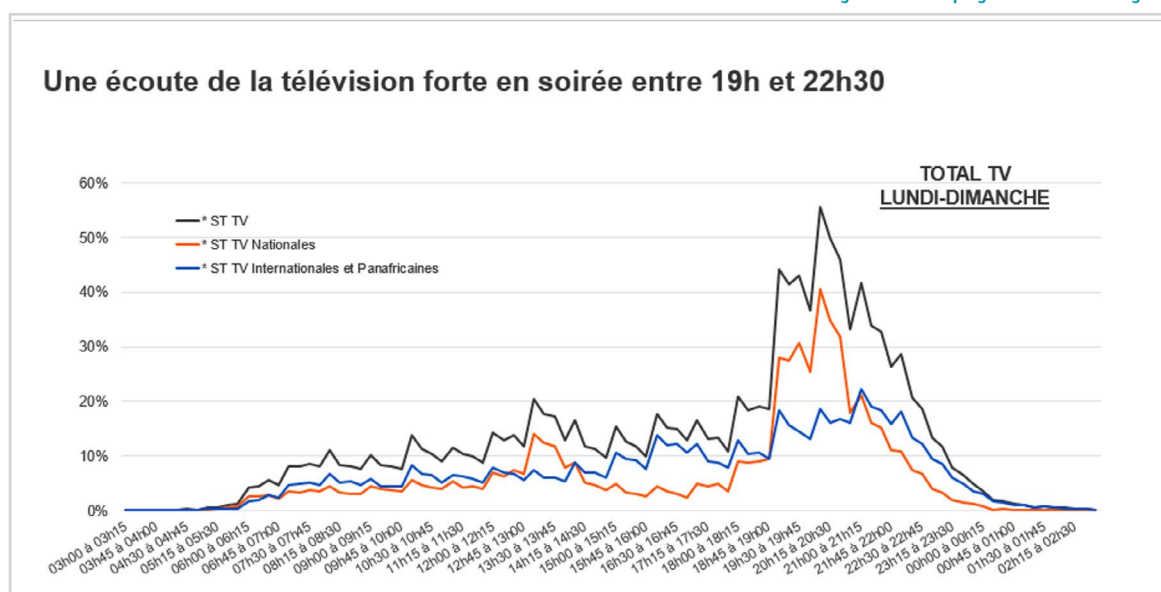
78 Lassané Yaméogo, « Médias, cyberviolence et cyberharcèlement au Burkina : typologie, pratiques et représentations », in Rapport sur l'état de la liberté de la presse 2019 au Burkina Faso, Ouagadougou CNP-NZ, 2020

79 Kantar, Étude d'audience des programmes de la Fondation Hironnelle (data from Powerpoint), 2021.

At the time of writing the top five most-watched television stations based on their audience share (ratio between audience of channel and total audience) in the Burkina capital are BFI (18%), TNB (13%), Novelas TV (9.8%), Canal+ Sport (5.8%) and A+/A+ Ivoire (5.6%).⁸⁰

A 2021 study of city dwellers in Burkina Faso found television came second to radio as the media which most people trusted to inform them when an event occurred. For those who have access, television is watched by 86% of those aged 15 and over, who spend an average of 3 hrs 37 mins per day watching it. Most households pay to receive television channels with 64% of households that are equipped with a TV set saying they subscribe to a pay TV offer. These populations watch television at least once a week at home (89%), at friends' homes (24%), in restaurants and bars (13%) and other places (13%). Television viewership starts from around 5.15am, progressing throughout the day to reach its peak between 6:45 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. The news programmes at 8 p.m. are the most watched of the day as illustrated in Figure 4.⁸¹

Figure 4: 24-hour progression of the viewing rate



High viewing numbers in the evening between 7 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

4.4 Radio Channels

All radio stations use French and national languages, but there are no official statistics on the percentage of languages used. Every region and province has at least one local radio station. Larger radio stations in the capital have partnerships with regional stations and news content is syndicated.⁸² A 2021 study of city dwellers in Burkina Faso found radio to be the media which most people surveyed turned to first to inform them when an event occurred and for general information. National radio stations were shown to have a 92% audience share compared to 8% for international radio stations. Audiences of Ouagadougou-based radio stations are as follows over 15 years of age are listed in figure 5.⁸³

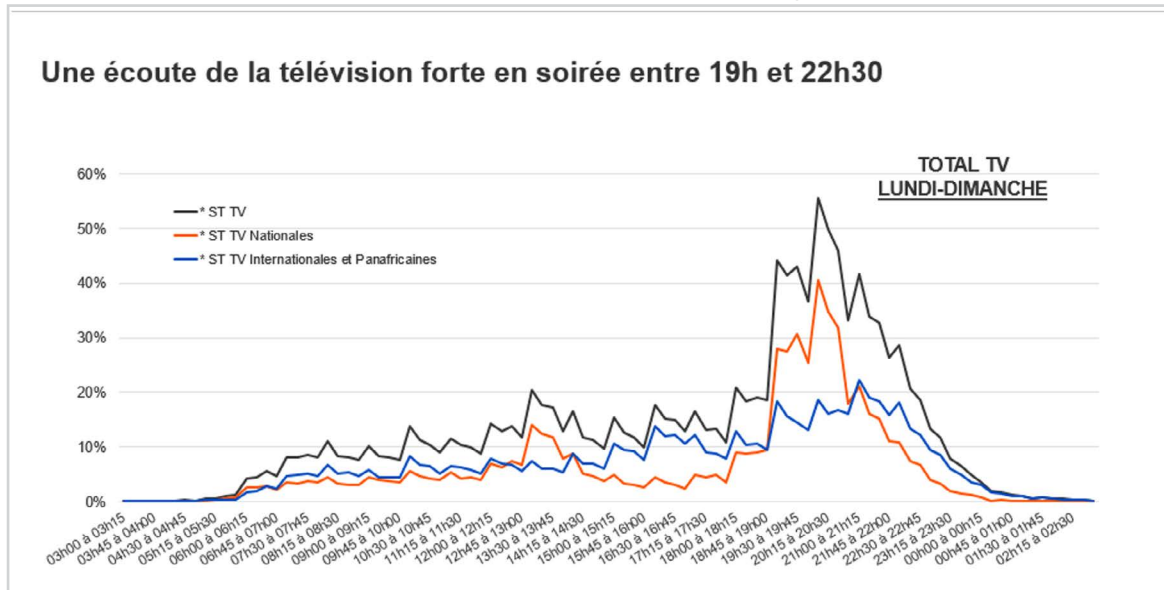
80 Kantar, Africascope, data from power point, 2018

81 Kantar, Étude d'audience des programmes de la Fondation Hironnelle (data from Powerpoint), 2021.

82 <http://www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-and-resources/i/20200217221516-frj5k>

83 Kantar, Étude d'audience des programmes de la Fondation Hironnelle (data from Powerpoint), 2021.

Figure 5: Ranking of Ouagadougou radios by audience share



A 2018 study of the 45 provinces of the 13 administrative regions of Burkina showed that 83.7% of the population get their information from the radio. Of these listeners, 41.7% use a personal radio and at least 42% listen on a household radio. Almost 10.9% listen to the radio via their mobile phone and only 0.4% listen via the internet. The most popular radio stations by audience share in each region are as follows;⁸⁴

- » Boucle-du-Mouhoun region
- » Provinces of Mouhoun: Radio Salaki (45.5%);
- » Nayala Province: Radio Salaki (41.7%);
- » Balés Province: Radio la voix des Balés (53.3%);
- » Banwa Province: Radio Lotamu (76%);
- » Sourou Province: Radio the voice of Sourou (50%);
- » Kossi Province: Radio Kantigiya (66.7%).

Cascades region

- » Comoé Province: Radio Munyu (40.1%);
- » Léraba province: Radio Munyu (57.1%).

Centre region

- » Kadiogo Province: Radio Savane FM (31%) and Radio Omega (19.9%).

Centre-Est region

- » Boulgou Province: Radio Pag-la-Yiri (30%);
- » Koulpelgo Province: Radio Pognéré (35.1%);
- » Kouritenga Province: Radio Integration (Zekoula FM) (86.7%).

Centre-Nord region

- » Bam Province: Radio La Voix des Lacs (45.6%);
- » Namentenga Province: Radio Nayiné (72.1%);
- » Sanmatenga Province: Radio Manegda (34.4%).

⁸⁴ https://www.communication.gov.bf/fileadmin/user_upload/storages/fichier/rapport_final_etude_des_radios_du_bf.pdf

Centre-Ouest region

- » Boulkiemdé Province: Radio Palabre (47%);
- » Sanguié Province: Radio La Voix du Sanguié (49.1%);
- » Sissili Province: Radio Notre Dame de la Réconciliation (22.7%);
- » Ziro Province: Radio Loudon (66.7%).

Centre-Sud region

- » Bazèga Province: Sud FM (32.1%);
- » Nahouri Province: Radio Goulou (43.9%) and National Radio (43.9%);
- » Zoundweogo Province: National radio (20.9%).

Est region

- » Gourma Province: Radio Tin Tua (52.8%);
- » Komondjari Province: RTB2 Fada (24.2%) and Radio Gayéri (23.1%);
- » Kompienga Province: Radio Développement (52.4%);
- » Topoa Province: Radio Buayaba (77%);
- » Gnagna Province: Radio Djawoapo (28.5%) and Radio Manupugisa (25%).

Hauts-Bassins region

- » Houët Province: RTB2 Hauts-Bassins (46.8%);
- » Kenedougou Province: RTB2 Hauts-Bassins (51.1%);
- » Tuy Province: Radio Evangile Développement (50%).

Nord region

- » Lorum Province: Radio La Voix du Paysan (48.6%);
- » Passoré Province: Radio FM Femmes et Développement communautaire (25.6%);
- » Yatenga Province: Radio La Voix du Paysan (33.7%);
- » Zoundoma Province: Radio Evangile Développement (41.4%).

Plateau Central region

- » Ganzourgou Province: Radio Laafi (32.3%);
- » Kourweogo Province: Radio Dounia FM (69%);
- » Oubritenga Province: Radio Bassy FM (75.8%).

Sahel region

- » Oudalan Province: Radio Walde EJEF (37.2%);
- » Séno Province: RTB2 Sahel (75%);
- » Soum Province: Radio Lutte contre la désertification (RLCD) (52.3%);
- » Yaga Province: Radio Dandé yaali (100%).

Sud-Ouest region

- » Bougouriba Province: Radio Unitas (43.8%);
- » Loba Province: Radio Argoutar (39.1%) and Radio Manivelle (37%);
- » Nounbiel Province: RTB2 Sud-Ouest (61.1%);
- » Poni Province: RTB2 Sud-Ouest (57.8%).

Research⁸⁵ carried out by Fondation Hirondelle showed that News and music shows are the most popular in the three main cities of Burkina Faso. A summary of results in in Figure 6:

Figure 6: Most popular shows in the three main cities of Burkina Faso

		Ouagadougou	Bobo Dioulasso	Ouahigouya
News	90%	92	85	83
Music	89%	90	86	85
Health and medicine	85%	90	74	73
Education, family, couples	83%	89	70	70
Comedy	79%	82	72	75
Series	71%	69	75	72
Film	71%	71	71	72
Culture (arts, literature, theatre)	66%	72	52	51
Social issues	65%	68	59	59
The environment, nature	65%	67	61	69
Cooking	63%	66	55	55
Economics, finance, business	62%	64	58	57
Homes and decorating	62%	66	53	52
Fashion, beauty	62%	65	54	53
Sport	60%	64	51	59
Ecology, protecting the environment	58%	57	60	62
Weather	54%	54	56	46
Science and technology	54%	55	49	54
Celebrity interviews and news	45%	47	40	50
Games, tests, quizzes	35%	41	20	32

The most popular programme types (based on the percentage of interviewees who express a preference for the themes broadcast by the radio) are as follows: health (74%), Agriculture (69.3%), Sanitation and hygiene (57.1%), Girls' education (55.4%), Governance (53.9%), FGM (excision) (47%), Children's rights (43.1%), Child labour (43.2%), Child marriage (41.9%), and other unspecified (7.2%).

Radio listeners say their reasons for listening are;

- » Radio meets my information needs 48.1%;
- » Radio contributes to my personal development 22.1%;
- » Radio contributes to strengthening my knowledge 17.5%;
- » Radio contributes to my education 10.5%.

Nationwide, 58.2% of the population listen to the radio every day, 29% listen quite often and 12.8% listen occasionally. The preferred days for listening are Sundays (80.87%), Saturdays (77.67%) and Mondays (75.07%). Regarding the preferred listening slots, 79% listen between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m., 65.8% between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. and 22.4% after 10 p.m.⁸⁶ Research shows The peak listening times in the main cities is generally between 6 a.m. and 8:30 am, when workers are getting ready or on their way to work. The lowest levels overall were between 17.30 and 23.30.⁸⁷ However there are differences, for example the peak listening time among IDPs is marginally higher in the evening (51.9% at 7-11 p.m.), than the morning (47.6%).⁸⁸

85 Kantar, Étude d'audience des programmes de la Fondation Hirondelle, 2021.

86 https://www.communication.gov.bf/fileadmin/user_upload/storages/fichier/rapport_final_etude_des_radios_du_bf.pdf

87 Kantar, Étude d'audience des programmes de la Fondation Hirondelle, 2021.

88 Baguinébié Bazongo et Elise Beurel, Étude sur l'accès à l'information des personnes déplacées internes et sur le niveau d'information et de conscience du virus COVID-19, 2020.

4.5 Print Media

The 2021 study of city dwellers in Burkina Faso found the print press to be the media which people trusted least to inform them when an event occurred.⁸⁹ The popularity of the Internet and the rise of online and social media has led to the decline of sales of printed newspapers. Of all the newspapers the longest established still have the greatest readership. L'Observateur Paalga ranks first in terms of readership. It is followed (in order of popularity) by Sidwaya, Le Pays, Courrier Confidentiel and Le Quotidien (ADM and Variante Groupe, 2020).⁹⁰ Despite only a quarter of Burkinabe reading fluently in French, most newspapers are published in French, hence their readership is limited mainly to those in elite positions.⁹¹ The main print media titles are:

Daily

- » L'Observateur Paalga <http://www.lobservateur.bf/>
- » Sidwaya <https://www.sidwaya.info/>
- » Le Pays <http://lepays.bf/>
- » Le Quotidien <http://www.lequotidienbf.com/>
- » Aujourd'hui au Faso <http://aujourd8.net/>
- » L'Express du Faso <http://aujourd8.net/>

The Weeklies

- » L'Economiste du FASO <http://leconomistedufaso.bf/>
- » La Lettre du Faso <http://www.lalettredufaso.com/>
- » Sidwaya sport <https://www.sidwaya.info/sport>

Bimonthly

- » L'Eveil-Education <https://www.facebook.com/LEveil-Education-1614799588605767>
- » L'Evènement <http://www.evenement-bf.net/>
- » Le Reporter <http://www.reporterbf.net/>
- » Courrier confidentiel <http://www.courrierconfidentiel.net>
- » L'Oeil du Faso <http://www.rythmeculturel.home.blog/>

Monthly

- » FasoAmazone <http://www.fasoamazone.net/>
- » Carrefour Africain <https://www.sidwaya.info/carrefour>
- » Votre santé <http://votresante.lepays.bf/>
- » Albouchra Infos <https://www.facebook.com/Albouchra-Infos-105176210985372>

L'Association des Editeurs et Publicateurs de Journaux en Langues Nationales provide details of national language newspapers, their languages, features and numbers printed pas summarised below,⁹²

- » Laabaali is published in Gulmancema, 3500 copies monthly
- » Bängr nooma in Mooré
- » Buudayembre in Mooré
- » Sísala Labááre in Sissala
- » Venegda in Mooré
- » Yamnekda in Mooré

⁸⁹ Kantor, Étude d'audience des programmes de la Fondation Hirondelle, 2021.

⁹⁰ <https://lefaso.net/spip.php?article99044>

⁹¹ International Media Support, De la crise à la transition : les médias au Burkina Faso, April 2015

⁹² <http://aepjin.org/>

- » Hakilifalen in Dioula
- » Luu nwen in Nuni
- » Sá-jálá in nuni
- » Sõore in Mooré
- » Koaadb kibare in Mooré
- » Manegdbzanga in Mooré
- » Pagb koeese in Mooré
- » Togs-y AIDS in Mooré
- » Jigiya in Dioula
- » Hoodere Saahel in Fulfuldé

TRADITIONAL FORMS OF COMMUNICATION Traditional communication systems/channels of communication are still very popular for conveying information, attracting a large audience, especially in times of crisis. They can sometimes be more effective than the mass media as they are able to foster community engagement. In a country where orality is deeply rooted and illiteracy common, the modern media is sometimes not the most appropriate way to reach certain targets and face to face interaction can have better results. The Ground Truth study on IDPs and COVID-19 in Burkina Faso⁹³ illustrates, a preference for receiving information on available humanitarian assistance through a community leader (51% of households in the Centre-Nord).

Figure 7: preferred channels for receiving humanitarian information

How do you prefer to receive information from humanitarian actors?

- » Telephone (160) 40%
- » Radio (160) 40%
- » Community meetings (147) 37%

Note: these percentages represent the most frequent responses to the question. Respondents having sometimes given several answers, the sum of the percentages is not 100%.

There are several traditional forms of social communication in Burkina Faso, which are generally used in communication campaigns targeting behaviour changes. These include:

- » Performing arts (theatre, music and dance)
- » Town crier: a community worker who spreads news throughout the community through a loudspeaker
- » Songwriters
- » Village Development Council (VDC): members of the community representing the village territorial authority. The Village Development Council is the link between local authorities and the population
- » Relay hubs (noyaux relais): these are village committees generally created by local radio stations or other organisations carrying out awareness-raising activities. They are chosen for their influence in the community and their ability to rally the population for outreach activities
- » Traditional leaders, religious leaders and Customary Chiefs. These figures are custodians of moral values and guarantors of the safeguarding of tradition or religious principles. Traditional and religious leaders are influential personalities and are respected in their community. They often intervene in the public arena to facilitate, advise, raise awareness, gain support and even mediate in the event of socio-political upheavals.
- » Humanitarian and development agencies often work through community volunteers, outreach workers and ‘community committees’ to strengthen communication with communities. According to the CDAC Situational Analysis for Burkina Faso⁹⁴ these figures or groups can include:

93 https://groundtruthsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/GTS_BF_RI_Report_FR_Jan2021.pdf

94 <http://www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-and-resources/i/20200217221516-frj5k>



- » Government representatives present at the field level. 'Action Sociale' are well known and recognised by the community, and have a presence in every municipality. The Health Ministry (supported by the WHO) also have an established network of registered community health workers, who live in the communities.
- » Community leaders, men or women, who are trusted by the wider community. They are often more literate and may have a connection with government or humanitarian staff.
- » Field workers at project sites who interact regularly with and are well known to affected communities.

4.7 Media training opportunities

There are opportunities for journalism training in Burkina Faso, although they are concentrated in Ouagadougou, the capital. The very first professional journalism school, the Institute of Information and Communication Sciences and Techniques (ISTIC), was created in 1974. The Pan-African Institute for the Study and Research on Media, Information and Communication (IPERMIC) at Joseph Ki-Zerbo University is the only public higher education institute offering bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees in journalism and communication. In 2022, a professional training course in journalism and communication entitled "Certificate in Journalism, Communication and Conflict" will be launched at Thomas Sankara University. In the private higher education sector, the Higher Institute of Communication and Multimedia (ISCOM), the Shalom Private Polytechnic Institute, the Aube Nouvelle University and the Free University of Burkina all offer training in journalism and communication.

Professional media organisations occasionally offer short-term training (usually 2 to 3 days) to journalists. This is the case with the Center National de Presse Norbert Zongo (CNP-NZ), the Association of Journalists of Burkina (AJB) and the Network of Journalists' Initiatives (RIJ). Certain NGOs also offer short training courses, including the United Nations Program, United Nations for Development (UNDP) and the Belgian Development Agency (ENABEL).



This guide is one of a series of Media Landscape Guides which map the media landscape in different countries. The guides have been produced by the CDAC Network in cooperation with DW Akademie and supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. This project is part of the global initiative "Transparency and media freedom - Crisis resilience in the pandemic".



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