HOW COVID-19 HAS AFFECTED RESEARCH & POLLING IN AFRICA

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Overview

THE CORONA VIRUS COVID19 PANDEMIC IN AFRICA
COVID 19 GLOBAL STATS

CONFIRMED 3.76M
RECOVERED 1.25M
DEATHS 264K

COVID 19 AFRICA

CONFIRMED 51,698
RECOVERED 17,590
DEATHS 2,011

AFRICA MITIGATION

AFRICAN COUNTRIES THAT HAVE IMPOSED SOME MEASURES 46 OF 54
TOTAL LOCKDOWN 11
ON A REGIONAL LEVEL, SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA SEEMS TO HAVE RESPONDED MORE QUICKLY AND DECISIVELY THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD.
IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MARKET & SOCIAL RESEARCH IN AFRICA
Since Mid March 2020, it has not been business as usual in most African countries where governments have implemented stringent measures to curb the spread of COVID 19. The requirement for strict adherence to social distancing, restricted movement and wearing of masks and other hygiene measures has meant that most research/polling agencies work from home.

Furthermore, data collection which is predominantly done through face to face household interviews has generally been stopped or reduced in most countries.

- Social Distancing
  - In the short term, all face to face research engagements have been either postponed or cancelled.

- Curfews and Lockdowns
  - Have hindered people’s mobility as they are not able to get around freely.

- Wearing of Masks and other Hygiene Measures
  - Thought to be cumbersome by many.
IS FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWING STILL FEASIBLE IN AFRICA WITH COVID?

“Face to face interviewing is not possible anymore. People are frightened of other people. We were used to news going viral, now humans are going viral...”

WHERE RESTRICTIONS ARE LOSE AND FIELDWORK IS POSSIBLE RESEARCH/POLLING AGENCIES MUST MAKE THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS

1. ETHICAL: HOW TO GUARANTEE SAFELY OF ENUMERATORS & RESPONDENTS
2. PRAGMATIC: HOW TO ENSURE BUSINESS CONTINUITY WITHOUT ABILITY TO COLLECT DATA

AT LEAST NOT AT THE MOMENT
THE DIGITAL MEETING PLACE: OUR NEW NORMAL
Market analysts seem to agree that Africa is the rising star in the telco industry. GSMA predicts that 80% of the 1.1 Billion people in Sub-Saharan Africa will have a mobile device by 2020. A major reason for this trend is the growing popularity of OTT services and mobile banking.

Majorities across sub-Saharan Africa own a mobile phone; basic phones are most common type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>A smartphone</th>
<th>A basic phone</th>
<th>No phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Share of population without access to electricity 2012, %

- <25
- 25-49
- 50-75
- >75

Mobile-phone penetration

Selected countries, 2016, %

Sources: IEA; GSMA
We have replaced face to face interviewing mainly with online surveys, pre-recruiting people and sending them links. The drawback is that most respondents need assistance to go through the questionnaire and they are regularly screened out because of misunderstanding questions...
THE PROS & CONS OF CONDUCTING POLLS IN THE DIGITAL MEETING SPACE

**PROS**
- Cost Effective
- Speed & Efficiency
- Data Quality
- Visibility & Tracking
- Convenience
- Economies of Scale

**CONS**
- Limited Access to Internet
- Internet/Digital Media Illiteracy
- Limitations on Questionnaire Length & Type
- PYSCHO – Social State of Respondents Limits Research Topics
- Likely Drop Out Rate Higher
- Social Class Limitations

The COVID_19 Pandemic provides pollsters with an opportunity to find innovative cost effective and reliable ways to conduct polls.
“We need to find solutions to overcome these obstacles but we need not to forget that behind the digital and the technology, there’s the human on both sides. The use of the best technology ever won’t replace the need for the experienced researcher who has the ability to set up the right approach, with the right questionnaires, …. to deliver insightful analysis. And on the other side, we need to find a way to overcome the technology bias as human behaves behind a monitor differently from the way they do in real life.”