

# communication and infrastructure



# connect or disconnect



## Introduction

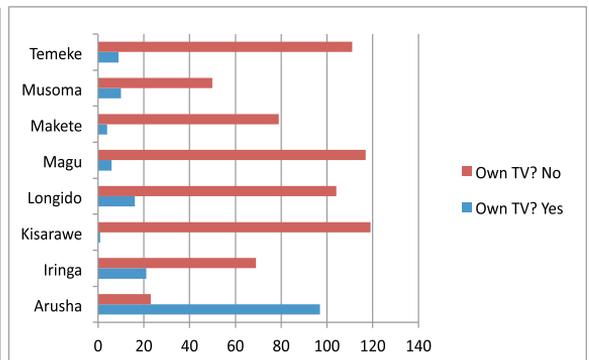
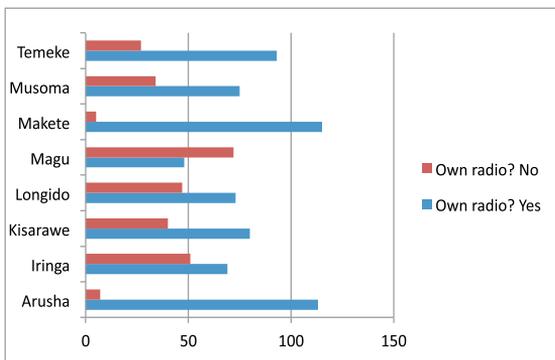
The communication revolution throughout the world has been powered by young people transforming their lives and boosting the economy. It could also be the key to improved educational and livelihood opportunities for young people in Tanzania but that depends on the extent to which they are accessing and utilising different media and new forms of communication. Access in turn depends on the nature of the infrastructure, roads, transport and electricity. Without adequate development in these fields, many young people will not be able to develop and utilise their abundant creativity but will remain restricted to the same subsistence livelihoods of their parents in spite of all the revolutionary changes taking place around the world.

The major problem facing large numbers of young people is access to media and other forms of communication. Many still do not even know what the internet is.

## Finding One: Access to media is by no means universal

The radio remains the most widely available media even though many still do not own one.

## Ownership and utilisation of radio and television



Although 69% of respondents own a radio, nearly one third do not. While more than three quarters of respondents owned radios in three of the districts, Makete (96%), Arusha (94%), and Temeke (78%), the same was true of less than one third of respondents in Magu.

Far fewer owned a television. Apart from Arusha (80%) only nine percent owned televisions, the majority of whom came from Iringa, Longido town and Musoma. Low ownership was partly because of



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If you want to know how well services are working, ask those who use them. Since the rights and needs of young people are often not prioritized in relation to these services, TAMASHA in partnership with Twaweza, trained young people to carry out a survey on a selection of socio-economic services from a youth perspective in 2010. The data and information in this brief is the result of a survey carried out in 32 villages from 8 districts of Tanzania Mainland. The districts covered in the exercise were Arusha Urban, Iringa Urban, Kisarawe, Longido, Magu, Makete, Musoma Rural and Temeke.

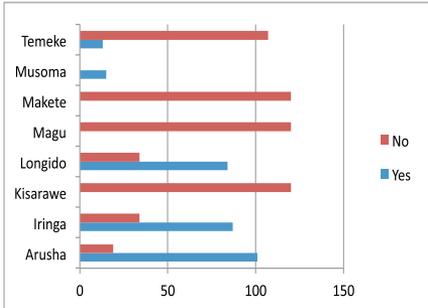
the cost but above all because of the lack of electricity, considering that three quarters of respondents did not have electricity. Arusha was the only district where the majority had electricity, hence the high number owning televisions.

Of those who owned radios, the majority (59%) use them to listen to the news/get information from stations with national coverage, rather than local FM stations.

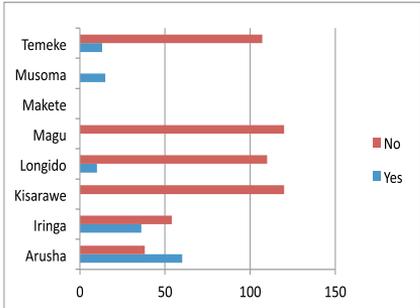
**Access to newspapers**

Access to newspapers was also low.

**Do you buy newspapers?**



**Do they arrive on time?**



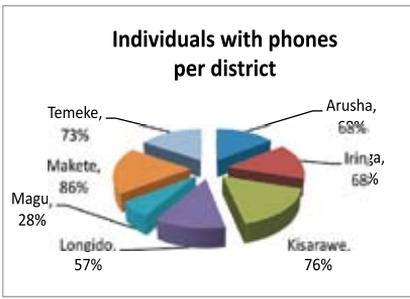
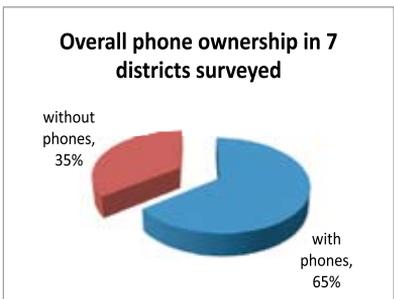
The majority (60%) do not buy newspapers, mainly because they are unavailable or do not arrive on time (64%). Longido, Arusha and Iringa were the only three districts where large numbers bought newspapers.

Given the poor quality of the secondary schools surveyed, these media have a vital role to play, but if people do not have access to them, they cannot play that role.

**Finding Two: Interactive communication is increasing**

**Phones**

Mobile phones have transformed communication in the country and ownership of phones continues to increase.

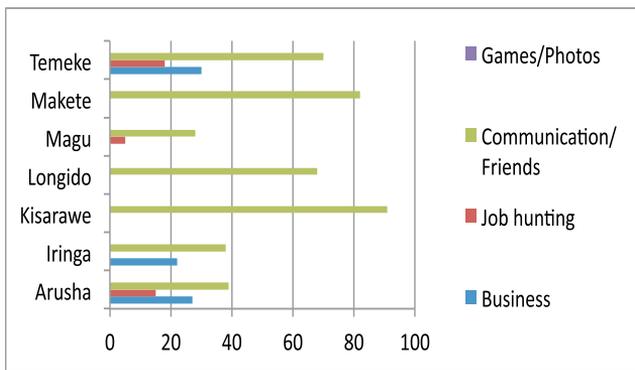


*'Everything and everyone is available inside the household.'*  
Oltepesi,  
~Longido

More respondents own phones (65%) than radios. However, Magu District, as with radio ownership, has the lowest ownership of phones (28%), the only district with less than 50% ownership. Access to phone networks was in general good with all districts reporting access to at least two networks.

Phones have contributed greatly to better two way communication and are used for a variety of purposes.

## Use of phone



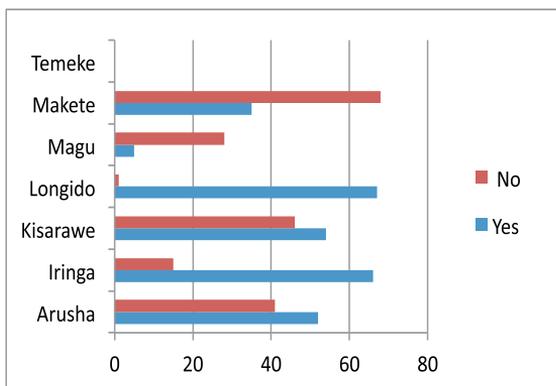
*'A mobile phone is like a second wife.'*  
~Oltepesi

*'Phones have improved our lives because we can now phone or text instead of having to go in person.'*  
~Musoma

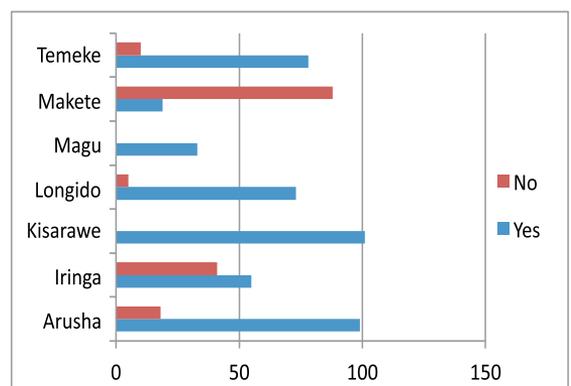
- **Interpersonal communication:** The majority of respondents (63%) used the phone for communication with family and friends.
- **Business communication:** A quarter of respondents (25%) used the phone for business purposes.
- **Substitute for travel:** Phones to some extent reduce effects of poor roads and transport as people can make a call whereas previously they had to travel to talk to person.

Yet phones are also expensive.

## Can you afford the costs?



## Has it improved life?



In popular belief, second wives are beautiful, charming, even addictive, but expensive. You spend more on your second wife than your first one, which is why in Longido they compared mobile phones to second wives. The great majority (73%) said phones had improved their lives and a majority also said they could afford the cost, but they recognised that it was a cost. In Makete, which has the highest ownership of mobile phones (82%), said that phones had not improved their lives, largely because the majority also said that they could not afford the cost. By contrast, in Magu, which has the lowest ownership of phones, the majority said they could not afford the phones but all the respondents with phones felt that they had improved their lives.

Some of the reasons given for not appreciating mobile phones to the fullest were:

- **Charging the phone:** For many this was a serious problem for reasons of distance and cost. Some have to travel up to 10 kilometres to charge their phones and it costs between 200 and 500 shillings, depending on the scarcity of the charging service.

*'Phones are of no use to us because it is expensive to recharge them and to buy the vouchers.'*  
~Iringa

*'The costs of a phone are not a big problem as everyone uses it according to what they can afford. If you have no credit left, you just don't phone or you beep. The problem is electricity. You have to pay someone with a generator or solar power 300 shillings to charge your phone.'* ~Temeke



**Poor networks together with the lack of electricity:**

This problem was mainly noted in Kisarawe.

*'Some networks are very difficult to access which means that your battery runs down very fast while you are trying to connect. We have to recharge for 300 shillings. Just think how much money that is for a month. Even if you don't buy many vouchers, you still pay more for the phone.'* ~Kisarawe

**Internet**

Internet use is still fairly small but is beginning to expand.

**Electricity is a constraint:** Internet use is severely restricted by lack of electricity.

Where there is electricity, internet use is growing and becoming a part of life, but most places have no electricity. With the exception of six people in other districts, the only users of the Internet were in Iringa (Jangwani) and Arusha. In Arusha (the only district with abundant electricity) 76% of respondents use the internet.

*'It is only for the educated'.  
~Longido*

**Frequency of use:** Eighty three percent of those who use the internet say they use it frequently and 16% use it weekly. This is despite the relatively high cost (between 800 and 1,200 shillings an hour in the internet cafes).

*'We don't know what it means or its purpose. There is no one to teach us'.  
~Longido*

**Young people:** Youth, especially young men (young women said they had no time because of their home duties) are the primary users of the internet. Many have internet on their phones and others use an internet cafe at 500 shillings for half an hour. The majority accepted this as a fair price.

**Purpose:** The most common reasons for using the internet include interpersonal communication (36%), business (28%), and education (25%). A few (10%) also job hunt on line.

This is therefore a service which is important to its users. It will become even more so once it becomes more accessible and its value is known. However, it is not accessible for the majority of young people and therefore not valued.

Where the internet is not available or used, the main reasons given were:

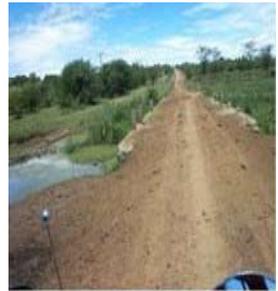
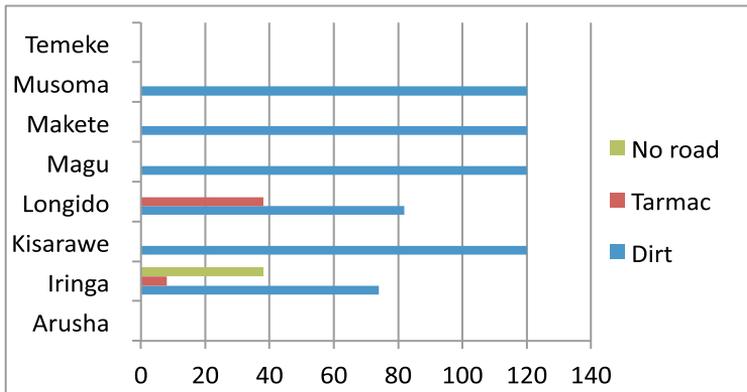
- Lack of electricity (Temeke, Kisarawe, Iringa, Magu)
- Their phones do not have internet access (Kisarawe)
- The need to recharge the battery frequently, which is not easy because of lack of electricity (Kisarawe, Iringa)
- The cost of using internet on the phone (Kisarawe, Iringa)
- The high cost of internet cafes (Musoma, Arusha).
- Unavailability and distance to internet cafes (Longido, Magu, Makete). For example, from Iniho to Makete Town is eight kilometres.

**Finding Three: Poor roads impede communication and social service provision**

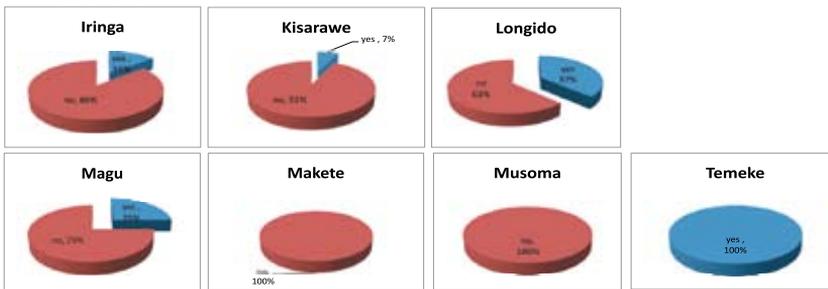
Roads and transport are key to facilitate people's development. Unfortunately, if you leave aside the trunk roads, the current state of regional and districts is still very poor.

## Roads

### Respondents opinions on the condition of the roads



### All weather?



In the survey, only 13% of respondents live on or near all weather roads. The vast majority of respondents still depend on dirt roads, while in Iringa 32% of respondents said they had no road at all. Only Longido had a reasonably high percentage of tarmac and all weather roads, because the main highway to Kenya passes close to some of the villages in the survey.

### Finding Four: The nature of the roads determines to a large extent the type of transport available.

- **Cost:** Even before the recent rise in bus fares, the cost of travel was high. The worse the road, the higher the cost.
  - o While the Temeke communities are either on or close to tarmac roads so travellers rarely have to spend more than 1,000 shillings, in Oltepesi and Eworendeke (Longido), there are no passenger vehicles. Residents have to hire motorbikes which cost up to 12,000 shillings depending on the distance of the sub village from Namanga.
  - o The shortage of public transport enables bus owners to raise the fares, or demand fares for the full journey of the bus when people are only going from one village to another (Kisarawe).
- **Availability:** Many vehicle owners are not prepared to risk their vehicles on poor roads.
  - o For Kimokouwa (Longido), there are only three old unreliable vehicles, which means that people waste a lot of time waiting for transport.
  - o In Masaki (Kisarawe), they can wait for two hours until the bus is full.

*“The fare changes according to distance and the season of the year, as well as the nature of the road.”*  
~Arusha

*“The roads to Mikwambe and Kibada only have a few vehicles because the owners are afraid of damaging them.”*  
~Temeke

A kind of vicious circle exists, as the fewer the vehicles, the more the bus owners and other transporters can charge higher fares, or cause inconvenience in other ways.

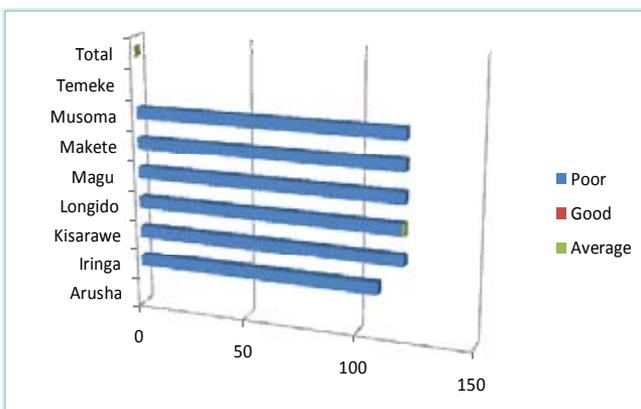


- **The rise of the motorbike:** Seventy one percent of respondents said that they use motorbikes, far more than those who mentioned buses (54%) and bicycles (45%). They seem to have penetrated everywhere and are one of the coveted livelihoods of young people, although there are already too many for the existing market.
- **Inequalities:** As with water, there can be large differences even within one district.
  - o **Arusha:** In Kijenge, there is plenty of transport and the distance to the bus stops is small because there are all weather roads while in the next door wards of Azimio and Tindigani, the roads are impassable during the rainy season. Residents have to walk long distances to get public transport or even motorbikes.
  - o **Makete:** In Iniho and Mwakauta, transport increased after the road was upgraded. Instead of having to depend on Land Rovers, they now have mini buses and the fare has gone down, whereas in Ivalalila and Luvulunge, there is no public transport which means they have to take motor bikes, which are expensive. Many respondents still use lorries for transport.
- **Impact:** These are not trivial issues. For those communities at the mercy of poor roads and transport:
  - o There are fewer goods in the shops, at a higher price.
  - o Access to social services is restricted. The rainy season is often the time when more people get sick, but then they face greater difficulty in getting to the health centre. In Magu and Mwakauta some walk up to 20 kilometres.
  - o Incentives for development are reduced because of the difficulties of accessing inputs and markets
  - o Newspapers and other sources of information are unavailable.

**Finding Five: Students continue to be mistreated on public transport**

Transport of students is a specific issue which needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Students and other respondents in the survey were almost unanimous in the belief that students are getting a raw deal on public transport. Resolving the standoff between private bus owners and the government was one of the issues given highest priority in recommendations on how to improve education.

**Transport of students**



*'When two elephants fight it is the grass that suffers.'*

*'Buses do not take more than one or two students at a time.'*  
~Iringa



*'We pay half fare, but that means we have to wait for all the adults to get on first, which means that we often have to wait a long time.'*

*~Arusha*

The explanation of the problem was stated by a bus conductor:

*'Whatever the case, I cannot let a student into a mini bus because they bring a loss by paying only 100 shillings.'*

*Jangwani.  
~Iringa*



The result of this permanent standoff between government regulatory authorities and bus owners is that the students are the ones who suffer.

- They have to wake up earlier and earlier to get to school on time (and are punished if they are late).
- They often have to stand for hours at the bus stops
- In the evening, they often arrive home very late, for which they can be punished.
- Many live in remote areas where walking alone at night is dangerous.
- Not surprisingly, some of them are tempted to use force, or to be seduced in order to arrive at school or home in the evening earlier.
- In Temeke students even have to get lifts from lorries.
- It is probable that the situation has gotten worse with the recent rise in bus fares which has increased the differential between student fares and those of everyone else.

Yet despite this standoff for all these years, nothing has been done to resolve the crisis which affects students so much. Different authorities make pronouncements from time to time, and threaten action, but nothing substantive happens. Above all, the government is not sitting down with bus owners to find a solution.

### Conclusion

The basic infrastructure of communication seriously affects all forms of social services. Even in the most developed countries, not every community has a school and a health centre. However, good roads and transport make it possible for everyone to access social services without difficulty, or loss of many hours. Of particular concern for youth in Tanzania is the issue of transport by bus for students. Until the standoff between government and private bus operators is settled, students will continue to suffer serious consequences.

Unfortunately, as shown by the survey, the country's infrastructure leaves much to be desired. Off the trunk roads, transport is intermittent, dependent on the weather and costly, thereby restricting movement and development activities. Private operators wait for the infrastructure to improve before they are ready to move in.

The situation is largely the same for forms of communication. As a result of the competition between private operators, the mobile phone network in Tanzania is almost ubiquitous and the majority own phones. Yet the use of phones is severely limited by lack of access to electricity to charge them. The spread of television and the internet is also limited for the same reason. This severely restricts educational and livelihood opportunities for young people.

It would therefore seem to be in the best interest of television and mobile phone networks to invest in the improvement of infrastructure in order to expand their markets, for example through constructing solar charging centres (which could also have a television). No examples

were given of this happening. Private investors expand their own networks and customers but still wait for the infrastructure to catch up.

### **What young people can do**

Young people are the first to adopt and use technologies. Large numbers of them have limited access to meaningful livelihoods but with a little training and support, they could use technologies effectively in their communities.

- Peer educators have been very effective in many places. With a little further training they could monitor health services, or different health issues including malnutrition (growth monitoring), water sources, bed net distribution, etc., and communicate the results through mobile phones. They could also monitor rights abuses against fellow young people.
- Where youth centres exist (and one of the recommendations of this survey is that every community should have its own youth centre), the centres could be equipped with solar panels and become a centre for charging phones and even viewing television.
- Bodaboda (motorcycle taxis) are obviously answering a need in the transport sector. It has therefore become a major livelihood for young people but because of limited training and supervision, large numbers of these drivers have been involved in accidents and many now have a permanent disabilities. A proper training programme needs to be set up to ensure that they can provide this service safely.