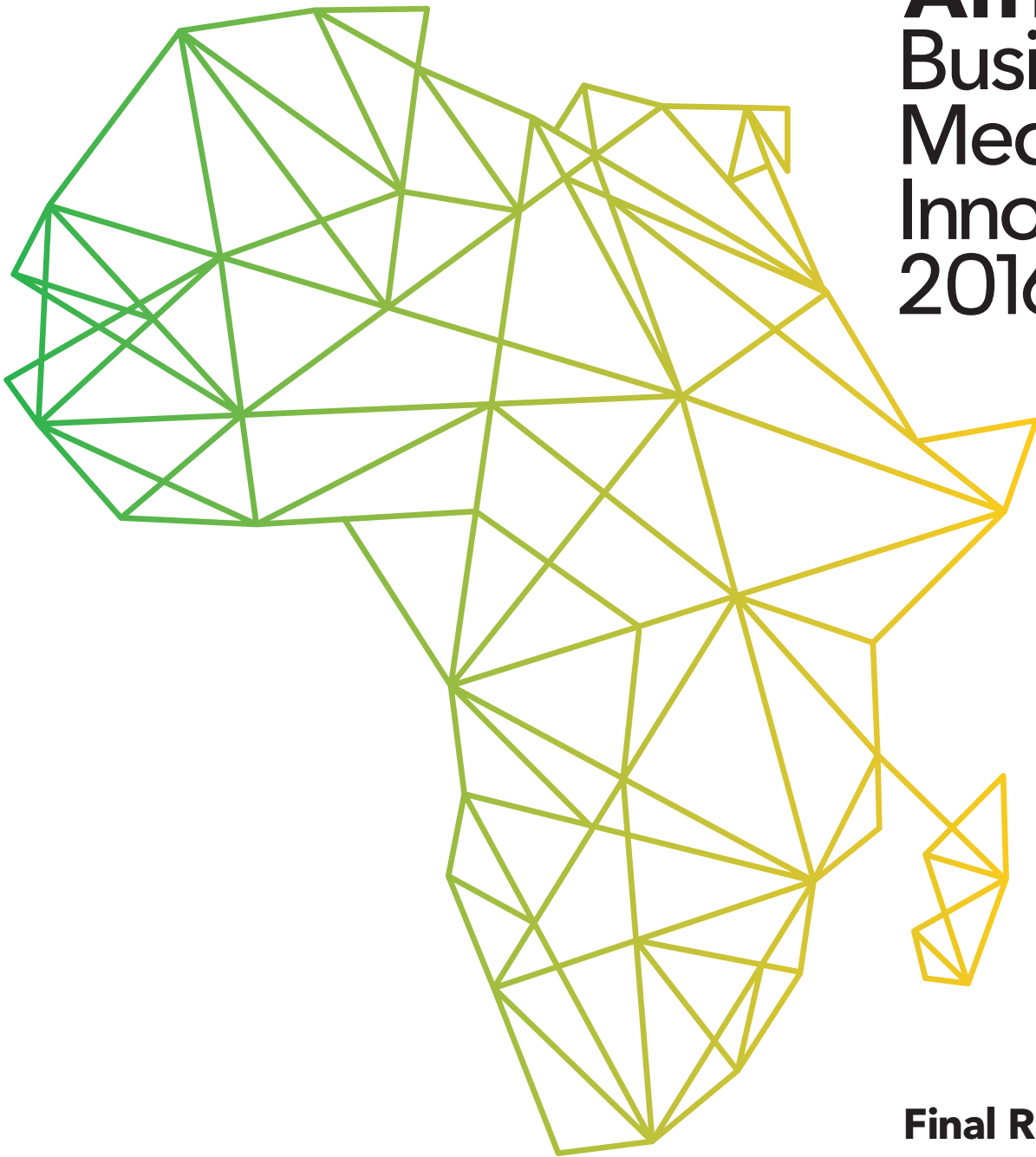


Bloomberg

**Africa
Business
Media
Innovators
2016**



Final Report

Introduction

On November 13-15, 2016, Justin Smith, CEO, Bloomberg Media, and Matt Winkler, Editor-in-Chief Emeritus, Bloomberg News, hosted the second annual Africa Business Media Innovators forum (ABMI), underwritten by Bloomberg Philanthropies, with support from the Ford Foundation.

The forum attracted 98 influential participants, including media owners, editors, industry professionals, investors, entrepreneurs, and development experts from 11 countries throughout Africa, as well as Europe and the United States.

This high-level community gathered at the Entumo Conference Centre at Enashipai, on Lake Naivasha, Kenya, to engage in a rigorous three-day exploration into the subject of public data, especially how data can drive improvements in journalism, media, business and markets across the continent.

Designed to promote free-flowing conversation between visionaries and practitioners from inside and outside the media sector, the forum featured onstage interviews, town halls and multimedia presentations. Participants discussed the challenges

and opportunities ahead for high-quality data collection, analysis, and dissemination on the continent, and the role of the media, government, civil society, business, and non-profit organizations in creating a more data-driven future. In addition, open studio-style working sessions allowed the community to meet in smaller groups and, with the help of expert facilitators, engage in deeper relationship-building and solutions-oriented collaboration. Networking breaks and evening activities, including barbecues and entertainment, allowed for more informal conversations and discussion among members of this highly international and experienced community.

This report is organized by the central themes of the forum: access to public and private data, analysis and applications of data, data dissemination through media and technology channels, business model innovation, and the future of data and development. It includes brief descriptions of the discussions revolving around these pillars as well as highlights from the networking and cultural experiences. Key takeaways and conclusions are summarized at the end.

Speakers and panelists



Yinka Adegoke
Africa Editor, Quartz



Dr. Solomon Assefa
Director,
IBM Research-Africa



Edward Boateng
Chairman, Global
Media Alliance Group



Nathalie Delapalme
Executive Director,
Research and Policy,
Mo Ibrahim Foundation



Sangu Delle
Founder and CEO
Golden Palm
Investments



Chinedu Echeruo
Founder, HopStop
and Gigameet



Rebecca Enonchong
Founder and CEO,
AppsTech



Catherine Gicheru
Country Lead,
Code for Kenya



Anne Githuku-Shongwe
Representative, South
Africa Multi-Country
Office, UN Women



Dr. Donald Kaberuka
Former President, African
Development Bank



Pali Lehohla
Statistician General,
South Africa



Tom Mshindi
COO and
Editor-in-Chief,
Nation Media Group



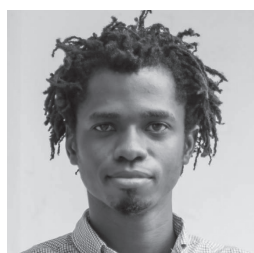
Joshua Mwaniki
Director of Operations
for Kenya, Andela



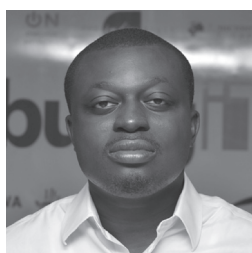
Nunu Ntshingila
Head of Africa,
Facebook



Rosemary Okello-Orlale
Program Officer for
Eastern Africa, Ford
Foundation



Bankole Oluwafemi
Founder and
Editor-in-Chief,
TechCabal.com



Oluseun Onigbinde
Co-Founder, BudgIT



Mark Bohlund
Africa and Middle East
Economist at Bloomberg
Intelligence



Shailesh Prakash
Chief Information Officer,
The Washington Post



Patrick Quarcio
CEO,
Radio Africa Group



Ola Rosling
President and Co-founder,
Gapminder



Shivani Siroya
CEO and Founder, Tala

Moderators



M. Scott Havens
Global Head of Digital,
Bloomberg Media



Toyosi Ogunsaye
Editor, Sunday Punch



Zain Verjee
Co-Founder and CEO,
aKoma Media

Facilitators



Ravi Chhatpar
Co-Founder and
Partner, Design Impact
Group, Dalberg



Claude Grunitzky
Chairman and
Editor-in-Chief,
TRUE Africa



Aubrey Hruby
Senior Fellow, the
Atlantic Council; Author,
The Next Africa

Bloomberg hosts



Justin Smith
CEO, Bloomberg
Media Group



Erana Stennett
Director, Bloomberg
Media Initiative Africa



Matt Winkler
Editor-in-Chief Emeritus,
Bloomberg News

What is “data”?

The potential for data to play a greater role in Africa’s development was the central animating theme of the forum with Bloomberg’s Editor-in-Chief Emeritus, Matt Winkler, providing the context by discussing his experiences launching one of the world’s first data-driven global media companies.

“When we started Bloomberg News in 1990, what excited me most was the tools available to provide systematic information to enable people to think about data,” he said. “We were real-time, we were 24/7. We wanted to be the first ones because we had data at our disposal. We wanted to be the most factual...we wanted to be the future and enable people to make wise decisions for tomorrow.”

Conditions in Kenya, Winkler noted, provide a clear example of how important it is to have good financial and economic data in order to understand the economic realities of Africa. Bloomberg data shows how Kenya stands out as having strong economic growth prospects despite a continent-wide economic contraction. Therefore, news about economic slowdowns in Africa provide an inaccurate view of the situation in Kenya. That the Kenyan Shilling is one of Africa’s strongest currencies, and that many companies that are publicly traded in Kenya are providing strong returns, are just two examples of the growth in and strength of Kenya’s economy that often go under-reported.

The power of visualization.

Ola Rosling is co-founder of Gapminder, a nonprofit based in Sweden that uses cutting-edge visualization software to improve global understanding of statistical data and trends. By presenting intricately designed yet easy to understand visualizations based on 40 years of data from Africa, Rosling demonstrated how well-sourced data can help users better understand key trends over time and the broader context of current events – and therefore have a positive impact on decisions made by governments, the private sector, and media.

New tools and applications that help disseminate, analyze and visualize data are becoming more easily available, he said, and will play an increasing role in allowing users to interpret complex datasets. Data-driven media is a key part of the solution, functioning both as intermediaries to help distill vital information as well as storytellers who ensure that accurate data reaches the right audiences at the right times.

Solving the problem of misinformation is urgent throughout the world, he said. “The alternative to data is myth.”



Image: Ola Rosling,
Co-Founder, Gapminder

Access to public and private data.

There is plenty of data on the continent, but some forum participants argued that there are also significant gaps in data, particularly in terms of foundational, up-to-date public data that provide clear information about people, markets, business, and trade. In some cases, governments may be unwilling or unable to release comprehensive datasets for fear of exposing corruption, losing public-sector authority, or simply because they do not have enough resources to properly collect, analyze and widely disseminate data.

During a “talk show style” panel discussion, Dr. Donald Kaberuka, former president of the African Development Bank, urged African governments and private sector leaders to release data that is relevant to the public. This would help mitigate the spreading of misinformation. “As a continent, we have no means of countering the notion that Africa is not growing,” he said. “This is because we do not have data to counter this.”

Dr. Kaberuka urged journalists to exercise their unique influence in shaping public opinion by asking hard questions of governments about data. “[The media] needs to find a way of mining the numbers and making sense of them. If the media looked at the data carefully and rigorously, then [media organizations] could pull out quite important information for investors and the public,” he said.

Part of the solution may lie in partnerships between public and private organizations that can share funding responsibility for collecting data and that would benefit equally from partnerships with media organizations to distribute quality data.

Pali Lehohla, who leads Statistics South Africa, an independent, tech-savvy public agency that analyzes and distributes data from every ministry in the government, explained that another solution lies in the ability of technology to enable “influence- and bias-free data gathering.” Lehohla argued that exploiting the potential of data and technology to create open platforms for public use of data are critical pathways toward improving access.

“Technology and statistics are integral for and to each other,” he said. “Technology is the twin sister of data.” With the advent of new technologies that can reach populations quickly, easily, and cheaply, he said, it will be possible to both improve the data that is already being gathered and gather the data that isn’t currently accessible.

Sangu Delle, an investor focused on high growth and impact-industry sectors in Africa, spoke about the importance of data, both to his own business and business generally, and lamented the lack of accurate data, both continent-wide and at the industry level. Delle illustrated a point about why having access to data is so important to investment. He recounted how an international confectioner had invested heavily in West Africa following a very attractive media story that gave figures about the population and the financial muscle of the region’s middle class. But the data wasn’t as granular or exact as it should have been; the result: the multinational was forced into an embarrassing retreat, and it eventually scaled down its operations in the region.

But where there are challenges, there are exciting opportunities. “As an investor, I see [collecting and distributing] data as a remarkable investment,” he said.



Image: Sangu Delle (Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Golden Palm Investments), Pali Leh (Statistician-General for Statistics, South Africa) Dr. Donald Kaberuka (Former President, African Development Bank) Matt Winkler (Editor-in-Chief Emeritus, Bloomberg News)



Image: Dr. Solomon Assefa
(Director, IBM Research–Africa)

The role of technology giants.

Large global technology companies operating on the continent, such as IBM and AppsTech, see “data chasms” – areas and sectors where access to data is limited or non-existent – as a huge opportunity to provide new products and services. Wealth is rising in Africa; both consumers and multinational companies who want to enter these emerging markets need reliable data. Today, big companies and startups alike are increasing their focus on data collection and analysis and then selling data to companies that need it.

In a session titled “Quantum Leaps”, which included speakers who represent some of the largest tech companies in the world, Rebecca Enonchong, founder and CEO of AppsTech, a leading global provider of enterprise application solutions, argued

that private sector entrepreneurs neither can nor should count on governments to drive the future of data. This proved a point of tension among some panelists and audience members who view governments as important to an overall solution and who have, actually, seen progress in this area.

Dr. Solomon Assefa, who heads IBM Research – Africa, noted that the landscape of data varies widely across the continent. In some countries, the public sector and other nongovernmental organizations are consistently providing useful data for private organizations to help grow their economies. Others, however, are sitting on data and often don’t have much capacity to unpack and analyze it or share it in useful ways.

That’s where companies like IBM come in. Because government datasets are often large and unstructured, they can be difficult to analyze and disseminate effectively. Big data and analytics tools developed by IBM and others can help, said Dr. Assefa, suggesting, in the same vein as Dr. Kaberuka, that private companies need to form partnerships with governments and better illustrate the value data can have for social innovation, public safety, and economic growth. Dr. Assefa cited the example of the healthcare industry, in which big data is being used to understand the landscape of medical care across the continent and more successfully deploy vaccines to patients who need them.

The ability of technology companies to promote data-driven solutions and innovation on the continent, especially over the long-term, is largely dependent on a pipeline of talent. Joshua Mwaniki, director of operations for Andela, a startup that is working to train computer programmers throughout Africa, said his company is focused on training students who can apply technology to reading and distributing data in useful ways. Mwaniki cited Kenya’s Open Data Portal, which contains accessible datasets from a variety of industry sectors, as a good example of how more data is becoming available for private use. Andela will help build the talent who can then analyze it and apply it, either inside large technology companies – or as independent data entrepreneurs.

Analysis and applications of data.

A growing number of technology entrepreneurs and data experts are working on the continent, focusing on uncovering both structured and unstructured datasets and translating them into information that will fuel greater transparency and economic growth in Africa.

In a segment titled "Spark Points," entrepreneurs at the forefront of the open-data revolution shared how they have used public data to create high-impact digital products that are improving lives in Africa and around the world.

Chinedu Echeruo, the founder of mapping software HopStop and a new company called GigaMeet that helps experts monetize their time, described how sharing data and information can improve everyday lives. Echeruo explained how new data-driven technologies often serve as extraordinary platforms for innovation. Consider Google and the GPS technology it uses. Without Google's Maps application and the technology on which it is based, companies like Uber would not exist.

"Within Africa we have tremendous sets of data collected by telecommunication firms, utility firms, e-commerce services, and municipal authorities," he said. "These organizations have troves of data which, if mined and analyzed correctly, can be of great use to other people to create solutions."

Shivani Siroya, founder and CEO of Tala, a company that is using mobile technology and social data to create personal financial profiles for underserved consumers around the world, said that she was driven by the need to offer simpler solutions to a segment of the population that was always left out of the financial system. "Our story shows that it is possible to offer simple solutions from complex sets of data," she said. "We have gone beyond traditional credit models to include social connectedness, geographic patterns, and other data points that help build a much richer picture of a potential financial capacity, and therefore offer simple solutions with great success."

Oluseun Onigbinde founded BudgIT, a digital platform in Nigeria that educates citizens about the Nigerian government's budget. Onigbinde sees himself as an "infomediary" who takes information from the treasury and translates it into products that average citizens can easily consume.



"The Nigerian budget this year was more than 1700 pages and written in turgid prose," he said. "Through social media we distribute infographics that can be viewed on the mobile phone concentrating on the main points. This allows our users to be better informed about the budget." The BudgIT website also allows people to see how the Nigerian budget will be allocated and compare which sectors receive money. "Before the budget was for banks and financial firms. We aim to make the budget relevant to everyone."

Catherine Gicheru runs the Kenya office of Code for Africa, which helps government shape and improve its public services. And, as a former journalist and editor, Gicheru is helping Kenyan media improve capacity for data-driven digital storytelling. Gicheru argues that there is much work to be done to make data accessible to everyday Africans. "Data is not granular enough," she explains. "Often we find that there is no data collected beyond the district level. I want to make data available for everyone, even my village." Her team also started Pesacheck, an online platform where citizens can calculate how many hours per day they need to work to pay off taxes. Gicheru says the new app has encouraged citizens to think more deeply about how governments spend tax money.

Bankole Oluwafemi founded TechCabal, a digital media company that covers technology in Nigeria. Oluwafemi says that applying data from mobile and digital channels made it possible for him to start a website that, in just a few months, became Nigeria's number one technology news source. "It's time that most media firms realize they are quasi-technology firms – and that this is a big advantage," he says. "The amount of data processed in our newsrooms is enormous. Unfortunately, most media firms don't realize that they can use technology in the same way as Facebook or Google use it – but the potential is there."

Images:

Bottom left: Bankole Oluwafemi (Founder and Editor-in-Chief, TechCabal.com) **Bottom right:** Oluseun Onigbinde (Co-founder, BudgIT), Shivani Siroya (CEO and Founder Tala) Catherine Gicheru (Country Lead, Code for Kenya)





Images:

Top: Shailesh Prakash (Chief Information Officer, The Washington Post), Edward Boateng (Chairman, Global Media Alliance Group), Nunu Ntshingila (Head of Africa, Facebook), Justin Smith (CEO, Bloomberg Media)

Center right: Dr. George Njenga (Dean, Strathmore Business School); Marceline Nyambala, (Executive Director, Association of Media Women in Kenya)

Bottom left: Rosemary Okello-Orlale (Program Officer, Office for Eastern Africa, Ford Foundation); Erana Stennett (Director, Bloomberg Media Initiative Africa)



Open Studio snapshots.

Exciting new applications of data emerging on the continent.



In Uganda

A new app that asks residents to vote on public policy issues showed that many Ugandans were in favor of allowing the use of boda bodas [motorcycle taxis]," said the app's creator. The results of the poll were subsequently published in newspapers and sparked important conversations about the benefits of motorcycles in Kampala, the nation's capital.



For the agricultural sector

New apps are distributing data on weather and good farming practices to allow better crop yields. "Data collected by meteorologists is now instantly available to all farmers in seconds. Farmers all over Africa now know when to prepare the field," said the app's creator.



In Kenya

The National Transport Safety Authority has made data about road accidents available to insurance companies. Insurers are now able to design more detailed risk profiles of drivers based on age, sex, type of vehicle and place of residence. As a journalist familiar with the trend explained, "This data will enable insurers to create better insurance products based on the profile of the driver rather than having one single rate apply to everyone."



Mobile phones are being used to provide better polling on sexual health matters. "You can poll people discreetly on mobile phones about potentially embarrassing issues like sexual health," explained a participant working for a related NGO. The NGO used the data from the poll to carry out targeted HIV Prevention campaigns for youth.



Image: Tom Mshindi (Chief Operating Officer and Group Editor-in-Chief, Nation Media Group), Patrick Quarcoo (CEO, Radio Africa Group) Yinka Adegoke (Africa Editor Quartz), Toyosi Ogunseye (Editor, Sunday Punch)

Data journalism and the future of African media.

When government, private institutions, and international development organizations in Africa collect meaningful data, media organizations can play a vital role in helping audiences access and understand it. Perhaps the most important topic of discussion at the forum was how to create thriving media companies and high-quality data journalism across the continent, so that newsrooms can better connect with data to tell the stories that matter most.

Newsrooms in Africa are adapting to digital innovation in much the same way that newsrooms are adapting to new tools and user preferences in markets around the world. As Tom Mshindi, Chief Operating Officer and Editor-in-Chief of the Nation Media Group, the largest independent media company in East and Central Africa, explained, data on digital platforms is providing greater insight into what consumers want to read. Much of the task, then, involves teaching teams how to respond to new data, as consumer patterns continue to evolve and change. Mshindi is optimistic about working with younger teams of journalists. "You begin to see the tremendous amount of possibilities that are out there for getting data-driven stories to the public."

Patrick Quarcoo, CEO of Radio Africa Group, a large media company with radio, television, and newspaper assets, said his company's mission is to use data to tell stories, use data to find stories,

and use data to connect with audiences. "You look at engagement-how long do people spend on a story? Do they read the first paragraph, the second paragraph, the third? You can track all of that right to the end. You can look at circulation. You can look at where [readers] are coming from. Employing data techniques will make attracting readers easier."

Yinka Adegoke, Africa Editor at Quartz, a digital business magazine, said that Quartz partners with private startups and young data companies to distribute original stories with a data angle. "There are some polling companies and consumer data companies, and others," he said. "It gives us unique and original stories, but there's almost a bigger cause: let's tell more stories with original data that gives more insight, particularly when it comes to the African consumer."

Adegoke cautioned against using traffic as the only metric to guide the news. "Just because your particular platform doesn't get readers for a particular story doesn't mean the story is irrelevant," he said. "If you only gauge the value of your work by traffic and readership, that's not journalism. That's just a content production outlet."

The panelists agreed that that technology companies can offer important lessons to media companies operating in Africa. In particular, Mshindi is inspired by the nimbleness and adaptability of the technology sector. Quarcoo said tech companies have taught him three things: "Platforms are important. Data is everything. Innovation by the minute is key." Adegoke agreed, adding that the types of flexible work cultures many technology companies enjoy are necessary to having a successful media outlet today.

Lessons from the data fields.

Mark Bohlund, the Africa and Middle East Economist at Bloomberg Intelligence, discussed ways public-sector data is collected and disseminated on the continent and how the private sector can better fill in the gaps. Here are some of the highlights.



Image: Mark Bohlund
Africa and Middle
East Economist at
Bloomberg Intelligence

The problem

Incomplete data can have real, far-reaching consequences for African countries. GDP per capita, for example, is a data point that has an effect on markets being eligible for beneficial trade agreements, advantageous concessional loan rates at development banks, etc.

The solution

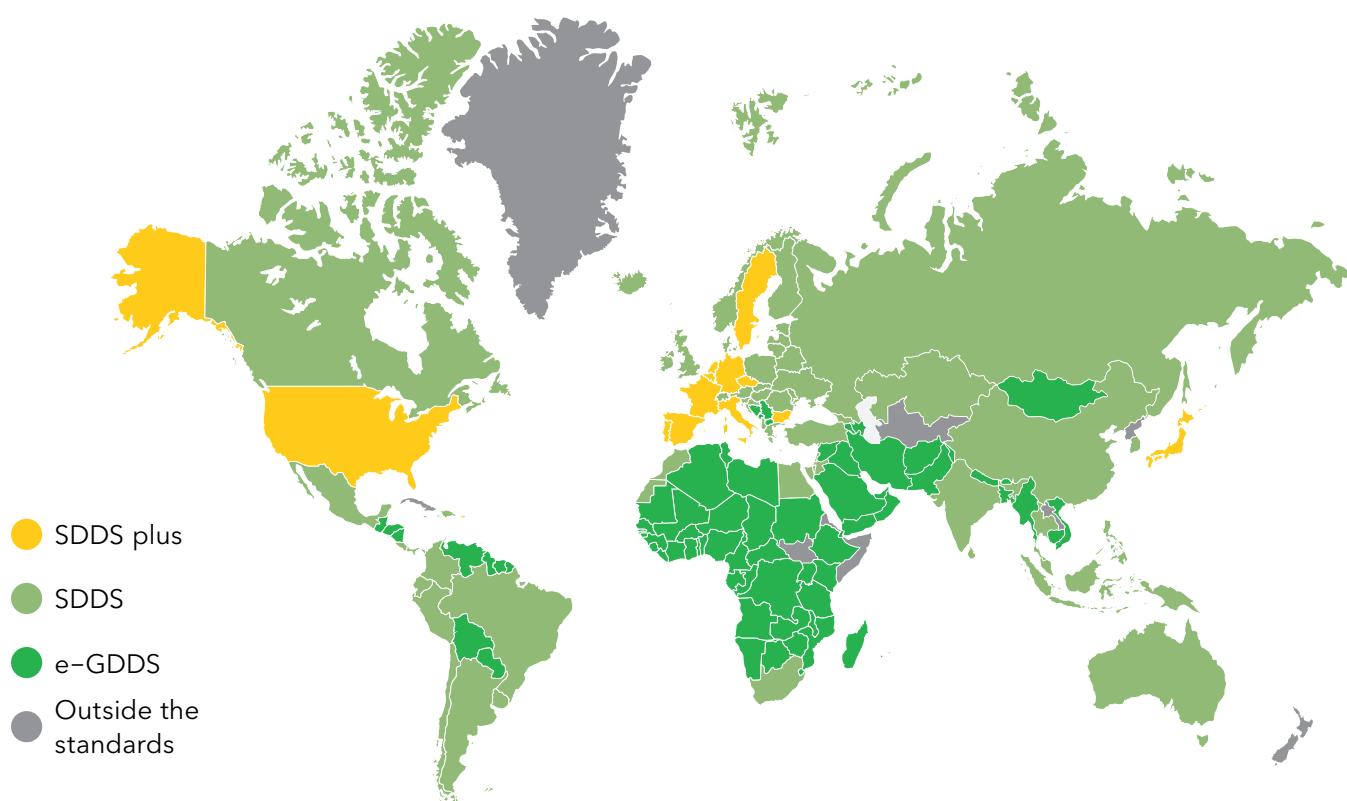
Many organizations in the private sector have the capacity to collect good data of their own. New tools, such as mobile phones, can provide troves of data that can help to check official data and fill in gaps. The next step is creating digital spaces where data from various private-sector sources can be aggregated and analyzed.

The role of media?

Media companies also have a particularly important role. They can publicize data, translate into an easily understandable format, and if when analyzing the data they find that the numbers do not add up, they can question and challenge it.

IMF standards

Looking at the map below, yellow countries use the highest standards (special data dissemination standards plus most modern standards). Light green (special data dissemination standards) are at the next best. Green (general data dissemination standards) is the lowest standard. Grey is completely outside of any standard.



Source: IMF

Monetization and business model innovation.

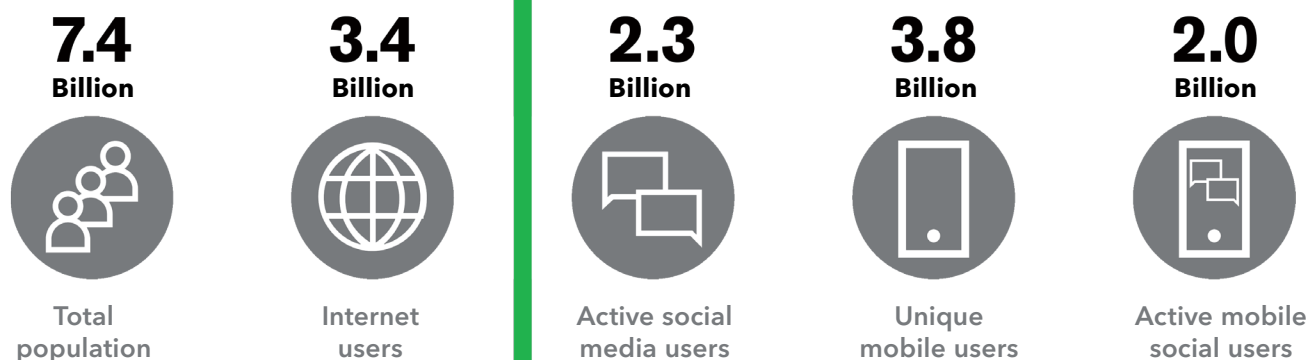
As news consumption habits change around the world and audiences can consume news, information, and entertainment from an infinite number of digital sources for free, media owners and journalists are adapting by becoming internet entrepreneurs and exploring new ways for using technology and data to tell powerful stories. As Bloomberg Media CEO Justin Smith noted in a special presentation, "A massive war for the future of media is happening now between traditional media brands and a new breed of media companies."

This is particularly true in Africa thanks to two recent tectonic changes to the industry: namely the mobile phone revolution, and the proliferation of social media platforms. Ultimately, the battle being waged comes down to data, said Smith, who added that social media platforms are winning because they have a data edge over traditional publishers.



Image: Nunu Ntshingila
(Head of Africa, Facebook)

Tectonic shifts are shaping media – and **social and mobile** are at the core.



Monetizing news content remains a challenge for marquee legacy news outlets, says Edward Boateng, Chairman, Global Media Alliance Group, which is responsible for importing brand-name media companies from the U.S. to Africa. "Production costs for high-quality TV, radio, and digital content remains high."

Platforms and content creators need each other, but Smith asserted that the terms set by social media platforms, which do not adequately reward media companies for their content, are accelerating the decline of quality journalism around the world. "[Social media] sends traffic and new audiences, but the terms they set are not equitable for [content] publishers," he said.

Smith noted that in the U.S., advertising revenue streams for traditional media are often larger than subscription revenue streams, and so the battle has moved to mobile digital advertising. He explained that, so far, Facebook and Google are capturing 85 cents of every dollar of advertising revenue spent online.

Nunu Ntshingila, Head of Facebook Africa, thinks social media platforms and content creators should have a symbiotic and mutually beneficial relationship. In fact, she said Facebook often helps new media organizations scale, by allowing them to share their content easily around the world.

Shailesh Prakash, Chief Information Officer of the Washington Post, the storied American newspaper now owned by Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos, said at least 80 percent of his audiences encounter their content on social media. "Audiences want the features and functionalities that they are familiar with on social media," he said. Will the current revenue share model between Facebook and legacy media brands adjust for the revenue imbalance? "Maybe," says Ntshingila, "The platform is always evolving."

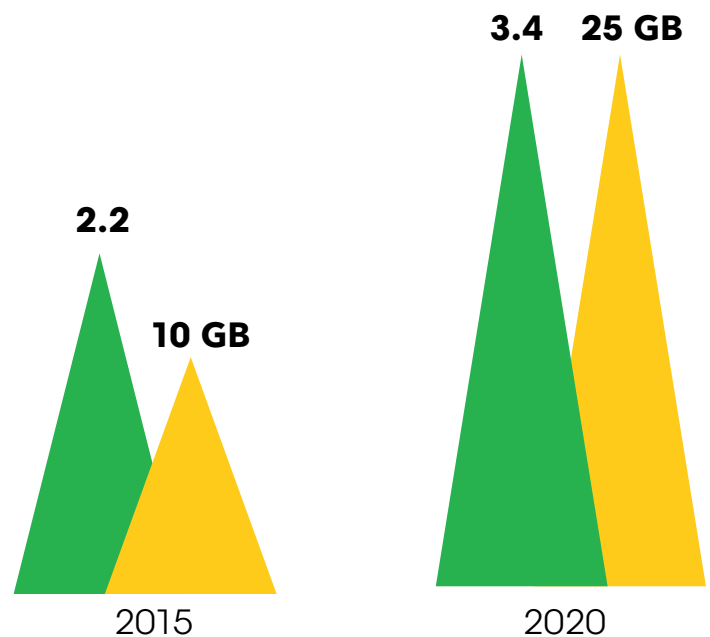
Africa is in a unique position to build thriving data-based media models by including data-capture features in their digital platforms and then using the data to create new products and pricing structures that respond to audience demand. Smith says media leaders need to "know your audience." This is a business strategy that seems obvious but it is a built-in feature of social media networks, which is giving them an advantage.

What is the best way forward for media leaders? One is to re-organize their companies around data. That requires a revolution in the type of talent that works in the newsroom and throughout the organization, and building capacity for news-reporting skills and business skills in fields such as finance and marketing. They also need to be mobile first. In Nigeria, for example, 99 percent of traffic on Facebook comes from mobile.



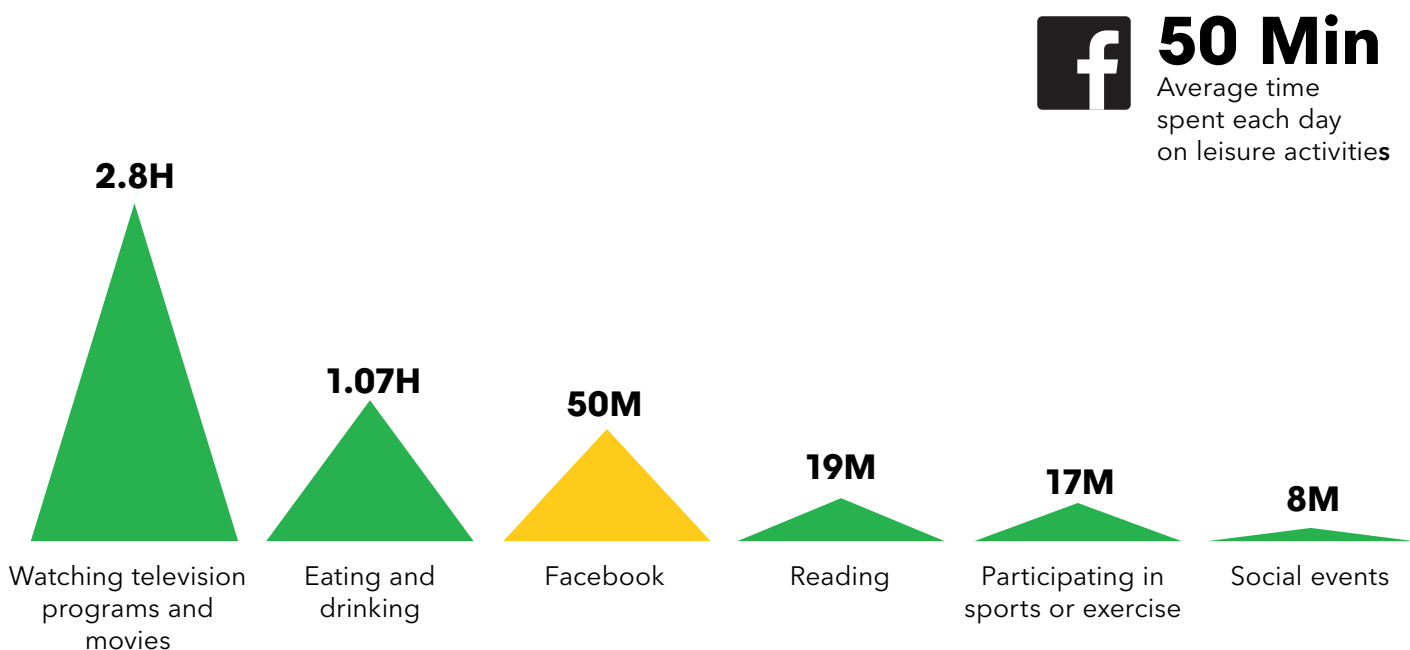
And in 2020, there will be **3x as many** connected devices as people in the world.

- Networked devices per person worldwide
- Internet traffic per person worldwide



Source: cisco visual networking index, 2015-2020

Platforms constructed around data **serve their users better.**



Source: facebook, 2016 bureau of labor statistics

Open studio snapshot.

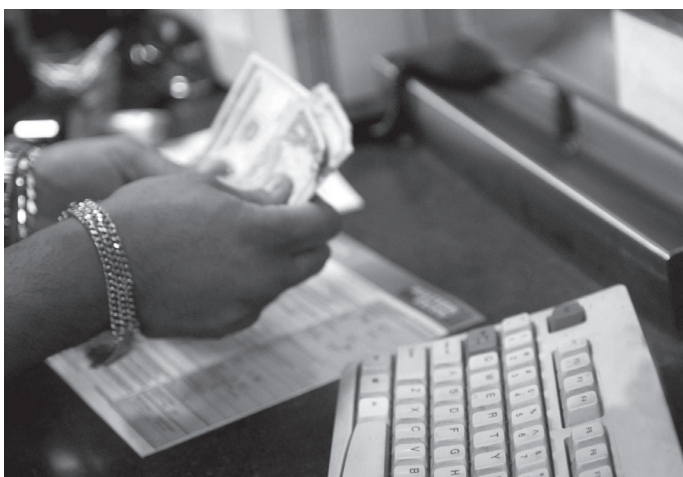
Simplicity and usability emerged as key themes when facilitators asked participants to think up new data-based business models in the open studio sessions.



A data analytics company that can study consumer and social media habits and feed the data to manufacturers and innovators to create clothing and products designed specifically for Africans.



A mobile app for migrants crossing the Mediterranean from Africa, that uses sim-card technology to verify their identities once they reach the welcoming country.



To solve the problem of expensive remittances encountered by Africans abroad, a new technology called M-Bit, would use digital currencies to reduce the cost of sending money across borders.



Image: Nathalie Delapalme (Executive Director, Research and Policy, Mo Ibrahim Foundation), Anne Githuku-Shongwe (Representative, South Africa Multi-Country Office, UN Women), Zain Verjee (Co-Founder and CEO, aKoma Media), Rosemary Okello-Orlale (Program Officer, Office for Eastern Africa, Ford Foundation)

Data and development.

Over the past 30 years, the development community has driven a data revolution in Africa by launching powerful data collection, analysis and distribution initiatives across the continent. As the exchange between development, social entrepreneurship, private investment and government becomes more vibrant and more complex, Bloomberg asked leaders of global foundations how far they've come – and how they view the next 30 years of data and development.

Nathalie Delapalme, the executive director of research and development at the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, which famously collects and analyzes data to help guide its Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership, said the private sector can neither start projects nor help implement any development-focused policies without meaningful data, which is mostly provided by governments. Some governments have come a very long way, she shared examples of the types of public data sets that some governments disseminated effectively. "But in others, we still see reluctance to share their data and this is affecting the meaningful work the private sector is trying to do."

Other panelists agreed that the transparent sharing of data between public, private and non-governmental agencies remains a problem. For example, Rosemary Okello-Orlale, program officer for Eastern Africa at the Ford Foundation, said that she continues to see a disconnect between governments and the private sector on how to share existing data and how to best use data for development. "The media is trying to use technology to improve various sectors of their economies," she said. "We need to build stronger

collaborations so that we can use data to guide better economic indicators and then assist in better decision making on the continent."

Anne Githuku-Shongwe, representative for the South Africa Multi-Country Office for UN Women, said that much of the problem lies not in the collection of quality data but in its distribution. "From government-run utility firms to municipalities and departments, the government has rich data sets, which, if shared with the private sector could be analyzed and used to uplift the various sectors of the economy. But we see reluctance as African governments feel that international agencies will use the data against them – to highlight inefficiencies or worse, contradict government objectives."

But Shongwe said that the private sector also needs to be more open. Telecommunications operators, which oversee mobile money platforms, were often unwilling to make their data public. "This is an ongoing struggle and the media has been only on the periphery - by highlighting the data access challenge. We need to see a paradigm shift from their reporting function to taking the lead in understanding the data."

Okello-Orlale concluded the discussion vigorously: "The use of data is critical to elevating the voices of poor and marginalized communities; helping connect poverty to governance and decision-making processes; and improving policies, programs, and mutual accountability across the continent. Data also helps donor organizations to get real time information on the impact of their investments and partnerships." The development community has come a long way but has a long way to go, she said. "But data will continue to be the game-changer in Africa."

Networking and cultural experiences.

The forum provided significant networking opportunities including meals, networking breaks, cocktail receptions, and a traditional Kenyan barbeque, as well as a curated engagement via open studio working session

The forum hosted a gala dinner featuring food service by students from the National Youth Service Training College in Gilgill and performance by renowned Kenyan singer-songwriter Suzanne Owiyo. Suppliers for the evening events were locally sourced in Naivasha, including food products from the Musaka and Morendat farms, and roses from the Naivasha Rose farms.

Forum participants were invited to take advantage of the natural beauty of Lake Naivasha, including boat trips to Crescent Island Sanctuary to see giraffes, zebras, wildebeests, waterbucks, impalas, and gazelles, as well as hippopotamuses in the lake.

To encourage business deals and new partnerships, the forum's operations staff helped to set up private meetings throughout the forum.



Top right: Suzanne Owiyo
Bottom left: Hospitality Staff (National Youth Service Training College, Gilgill, Kenya)



Top right: Drummer, Kasiva Jackline Mutua
Center left: Catherine Gicheru (Country Lead, Code for Kenya), John Kipchumbah (Co-Founder and Managing Director, Infonet), Pardon Makumbe (Co-Founder and CIO, CRE Venture Capital), La Keisha Landrum (Chief Operating Officer at Sahara Reporters Media Group), Joshua Mwaniki (Director of Operations, Andela) **Bottom right:** Sangu Delle (Founder and Chief Executive Officer Golden Palm Investments), Aubrey Hrubry (Fellow, Brookings Author, 'The Next Africa') Pardon Makumbe (Co-Founder and CIO, CRE Venture Capital)



At the end of the conference, facilitators from the open studio sessions provided quick takeaways from their experiences in the workshops.



Aubrey Hruby

A senior fellow at the Atlantic Council and the author of *The Next Africa*, said discussions she facilitated highlighted the need for working on new tools and applications that offer solutions for data crunching. "It is true that the tools exist but the platforms are still lacking. Africa now needs to start having a different conversation with technology innovators about what kind of platforms it needs to improve on the quality of the data it is churning out," she said.



Ravi Chhatpar

A co-founder and partner of the Design Impact Group at the development economics firm Dalberg, said that he was impressed by the discussions focused on how to modernize data collection methods. "It was really important that we had all these conversations around making data collection simple," he said. "What amazed me was that both the private and public sector agreed that we needed to simplify not only the access but also the collection of data." Creating the right incentive models, he added, is key to the future of data on the continent.



Claude Grunitzky

Chairman and editor-in-chief of TRUE Africa, a digital media platform focused on Africa and the African diaspora, said that conversations about the credibility of African government data were often two-sided. "To me, it seemed that most participants agreed that there isn't any absolute credibility in [most] government data, but this presents opportunities for either the private sector to come in and give out better data, or for more collaborations between these two," he said.

Key takeaways.

- The challenge of how to access, analyze, and dissemination reliable public data on the continent is an urgent one –it is a priority of many media organizations, governments, and international development organizations.
- The private and public sectors must work together to address gaps in data collection, analysis, distribution, and monetization, as well, as improve the amount of accurate information available on the continent to help guide policy decisions. Equally important, is the accessibility of this data to international investors to better guide their investment decisions.
- Improving data governance is a key priority for the continent's public sector. This forum provided an opportunity to exchange ideas on how to enhance standardization protocols, improve capacity to interpret data, and create incentives for greater dissemination of public data. Many suggested that statistical analysis software from the private sector can help to bolster public data systems.
- While significant tension exists between legacy media organizations and social media platforms in terms of revenue sharing, technology platforms are driving many of the new data-based business models; and new opportunities exist for media companies to partner for mutual benefit.
- Connectivity will be key to creating successful partnerships between platforms, content providers, and consumers of data, including investors and financial institutions. Future forum topics might include more robust discussion around financing and investment, technology and pan-African science, technology and innovation policies.

Key announcement.

At the conclusion of the forum, Justin Smith announced the launch of **Bloomberg.com/Africa** – a new home for African-based reporting on from Bloomberg Media.



About Bloomberg Africa Business Media Innovators 2016

Africa Business Media Innovators 2016 is a program of the Bloomberg Media Initiative Africa, a three-year program to build media capacity, convene international leaders and improve access to data in order to advance transparency, accountability and governance on the continent.

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