



## Audience Research:

### “Understanding media habits and preferences of Samoans”

This research aimed to understand current data on the Samoa media landscape and audiences. It also explored ways in which media and communication can be used to engage and support Samoans.

November 2025

Organised by



Supported by:



British High Commission Apia



UK International  
Development  
Partnership | Progress | Prosperity

# The Pacific Media Strengthening Project

The research presented here is part of a broader three-year initiative by BBC Media Action to **strengthen the capacity of media and communication practitioners in Samoa**. The project aims to **support the development of high-quality, accurate, and inclusive public interest media that serves all communities**, especially those currently underserved.

This work is funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

## Supported by audience research

This report outlines the findings of a programme of research conducted to inform the project and its stakeholders about the media landscape in Samoa, and to set a baseline for the media strengthening activities being carried out as part of this project.

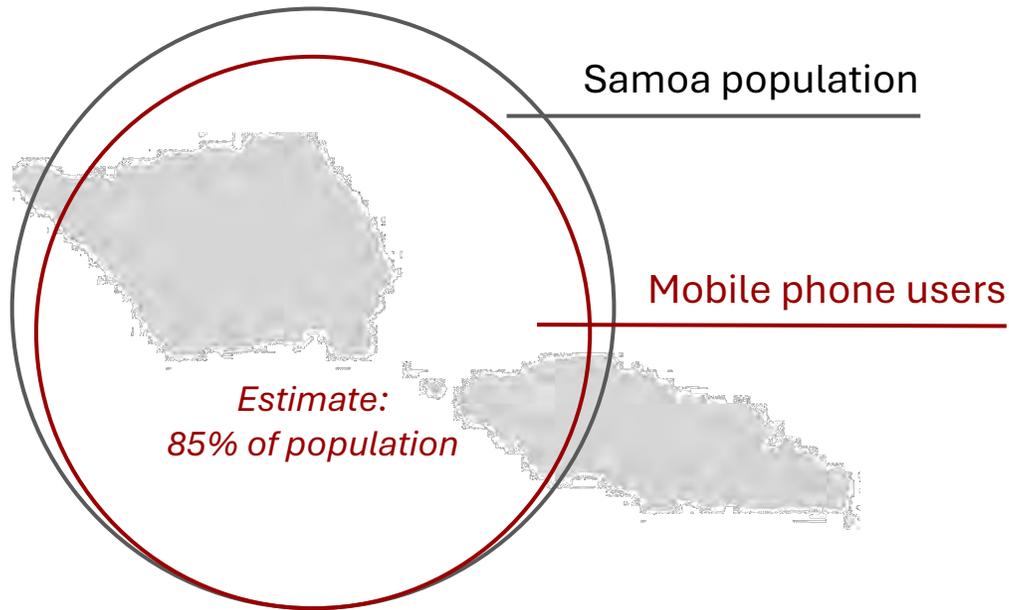
BBC Media Action partnered with Tebutt and Tautua Arts Limited to conduct the data collection across Samoa.



# Survey Population

A large, busy outdoor market scene under a covered structure. Many people are walking, shopping, and interacting. The scene is filled with various items, including tables, chairs, and people in different clothing. The overall atmosphere is one of a bustling community gathering.

# Survey Population and Research Method: Quantitative



As of early 2025, Samoa had around 185,000 active cellular mobile connections, representing 84.6% of the country's population. It's important to note, however, that many of these connections may be limited to voice and SMS services, without necessarily providing internet access. ([DIGITAL 2025: SAMOA](#))

Quantitative research was carried out by telephone with 1,068 adults (aged 18+). As such, all survey participants had access to a phone, either at home or elsewhere.

Therefore, the % findings presented in this report represent the media habits and preferences of a subset of the Samoa's population – that is **adults who have access to a mobile phone**.

*Findings should not be considered representative of the total population of Samoa*

## NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

Although other data collection methods were considered for this research, the costs and logistics of face-to-face interviewing were not feasible in the scope of this study and were unlikely to be able to reach significantly more people in such geographic contexts due to the travel required.

Quotas were applied so that the number and profile of respondents reflects known population characteristics by criteria such as gender, age, and location.

Qualitative research was carried out to provide balance by including views from a wider population (please see next page).

# Survey Population and Research Method: Qualitative

A qualitative research methodology was used to complement the nationwide survey and offer deeper insights into participants' media consumption habits, preferences, and the influence of misinformation. **Ten focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted across two main islands, Upolu and Savai'i.**

The discussions were held across these two areas, intentionally selected for their demographic and geographic diversity.

Participants included **women and men** including Fa'afafine and Fa'afatama **aged 18+**, classified into younger and older groups.

The sample sought to include a varied cross-section of the population in these islands, including those from marginalised communities and those with lower media access, in order to provide a richer perspective.

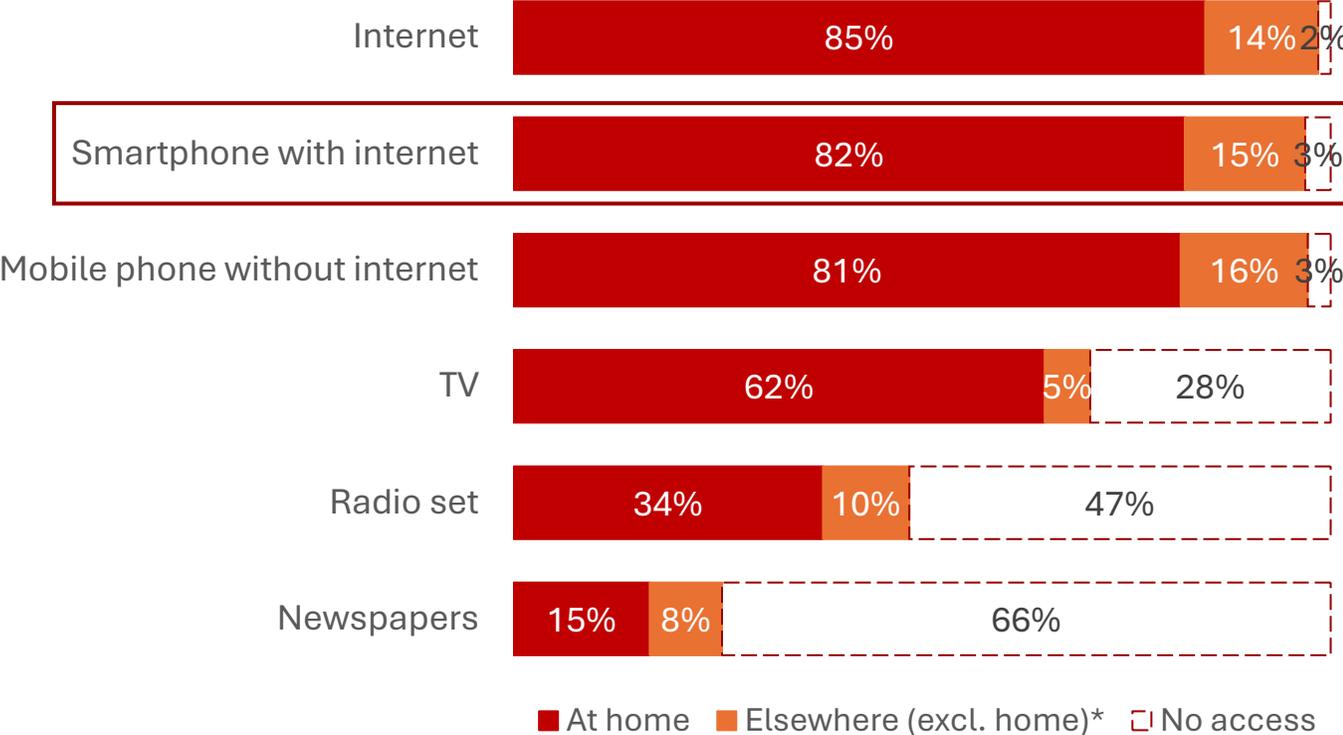


# Media Consumption Overall



# Media access is dominated by internet, particularly via smartphones, although connectivity is not consistently available

Access to Media Overall



\*While multiple responses were permitted for the question (i.e. access both at home and elsewhere), this chart presents responses as a single response – i.e., access at home, elsewhere only, or no access

Internet access, particularly via smartphones, is fairly widespread in Samoa, with home ownership (rather than public or shared) quite common. However, non-internet enabled phones are reported to be in use by many where connectivity is limited.

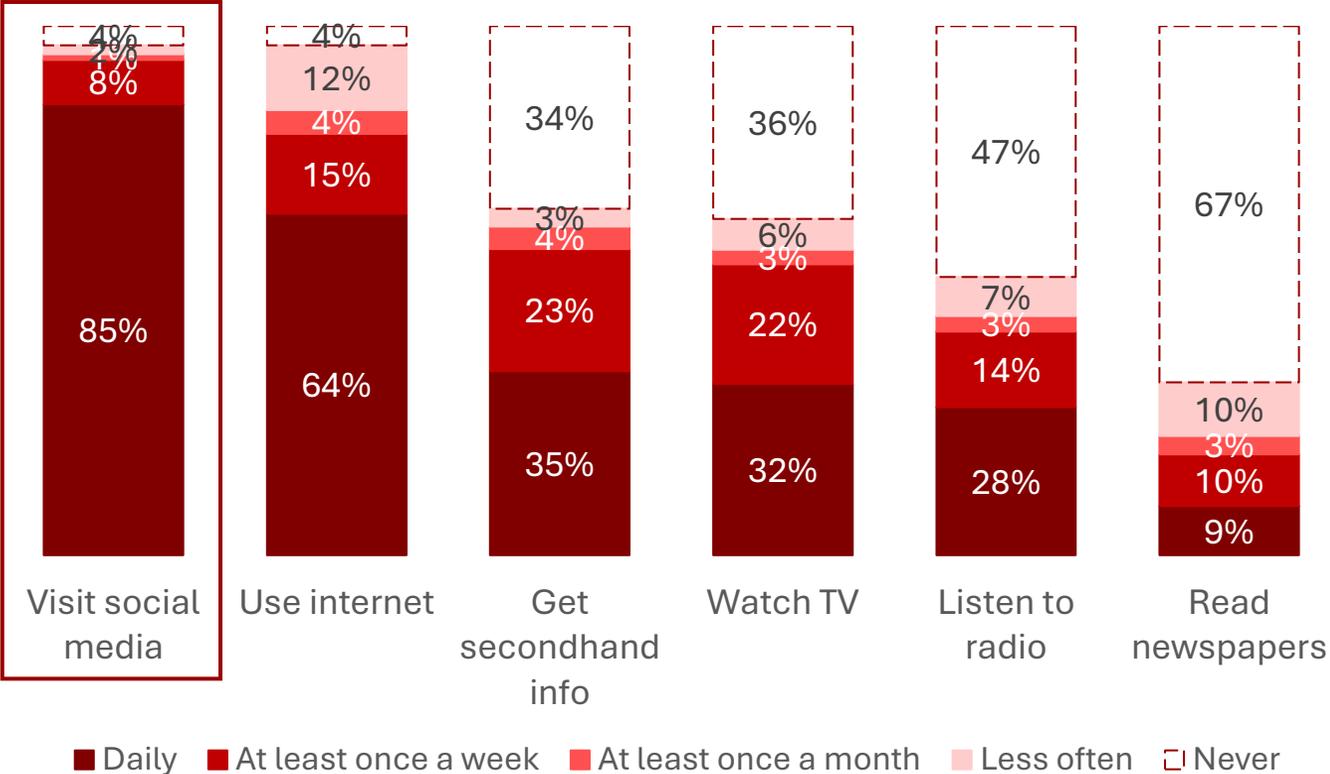
Radio sets and newspapers are comparatively less well-available, and content from these platforms, as well as TV, are becoming increasingly accessible via online sources.

“ Sometimes 5G doesn’t work on phones, so it depends on the type of phone, and not everyone has access to this. So sometimes this affects people who are in villages that have limited coverage. 5G is better for those places. So, I think it’s not fair, because it’s very expensive. – Woman, 18-35, Urban Upolu

Q: And do you have access to these media devices in your home or elsewhere? Base: n=1,068

# Use of social media is a popular pastime, and secondhand sources also play a role in people’s information consumption habits

Frequency of Media Use Overall



\* Chart excludes DK and REF responses

Use of traditional media is limited in frequency, reflecting relatively low or no ‘direct’ access to devices. Yet daily use of social media is comparatively common, and audiences express concern about the social impacts of excessive use of phones in their families, communities.

More than a third of people in Samoa rely on second hand information on a daily basis, and this can take various forms (to be explored in a later section). Immediate social circles play a significant role in daily information consumption.

“ We only have one phone we use, so if I want to know anything, I go to my friends, or I’ll go down to the school and ask there if I want to get the information I seek.   
 – Woman, 18-35, Rural Upolu

Q: How frequently do you do the following, if at all? Base: n=1,068

# The lines between traditional and digital media are blurring, with audiences increasingly accessing TV and radio content online

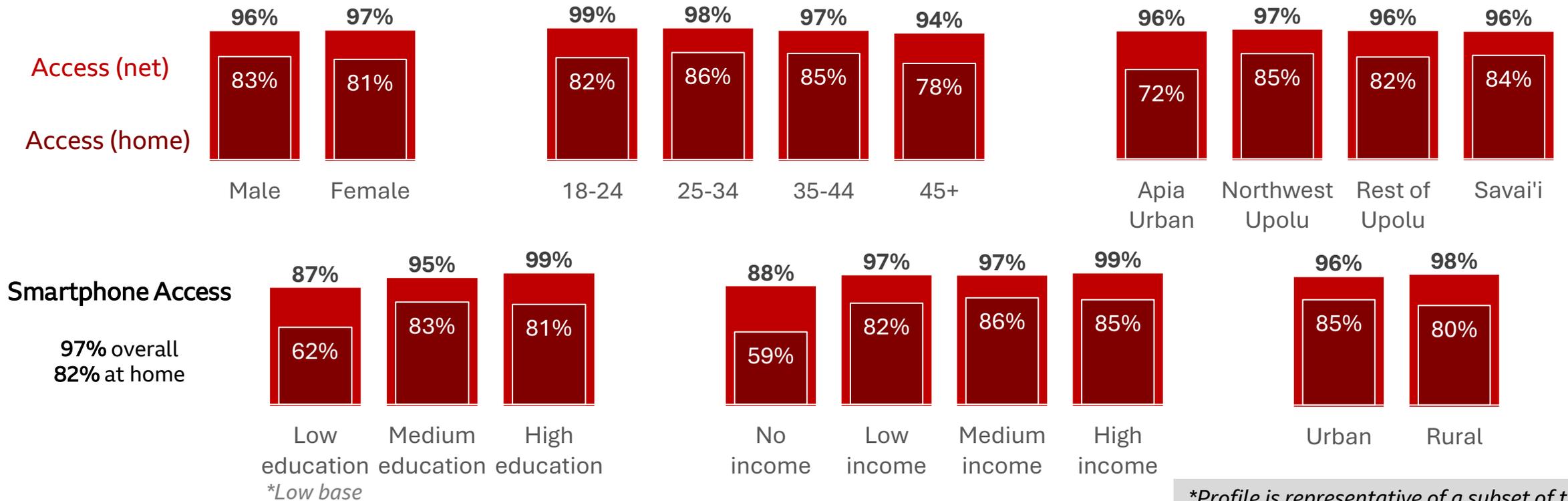


A photograph of three young people, two women and one man, standing in front of a bright yellow wall. They are all looking at a smartphone held by the woman in the middle. The woman on the left is wearing a bright yellow headscarf and a patterned t-shirt. The woman in the middle is wearing a grey t-shirt and shorts. The man on the right is wearing a grey t-shirt and patterned shorts. The background shows a window with a metal grille and a white water dispenser on the wall. The overall scene suggests a community setting where technology is being shared.

# Smartphones, the Internet and Social Media

# Smartphone access is commonly found among a cross-section of Samoans, but often as secondary access for lower income, lower educated householders

97% of Samoa mobile users report having access to a smartphone (82% have access at home). Age, education and income have the most significant bearing on access to smartphones. Those with a higher level of education, a high income, who are younger are significantly more likely to have access to a smartphone. Those aged over 45, with a low level of education and low income are significantly less likely to have access to a smartphone.

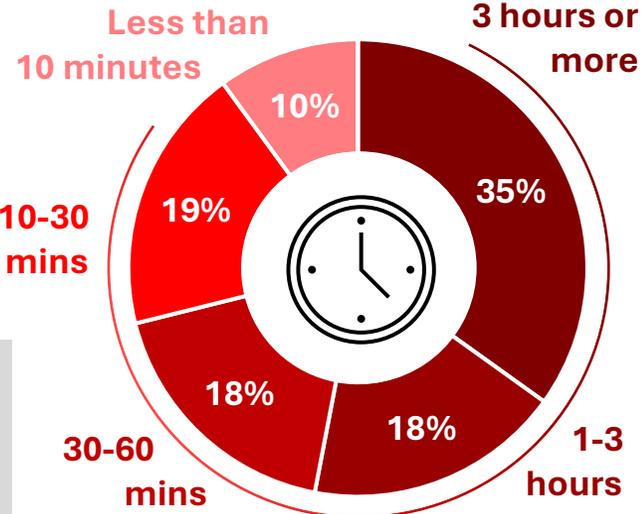


*\*Profile is representative of a subset of the Samoa population – those who have access to a mobile*

Q: And do you have access to these media devices in your home or elsewhere? Smartphone with internet Base: n=1,068

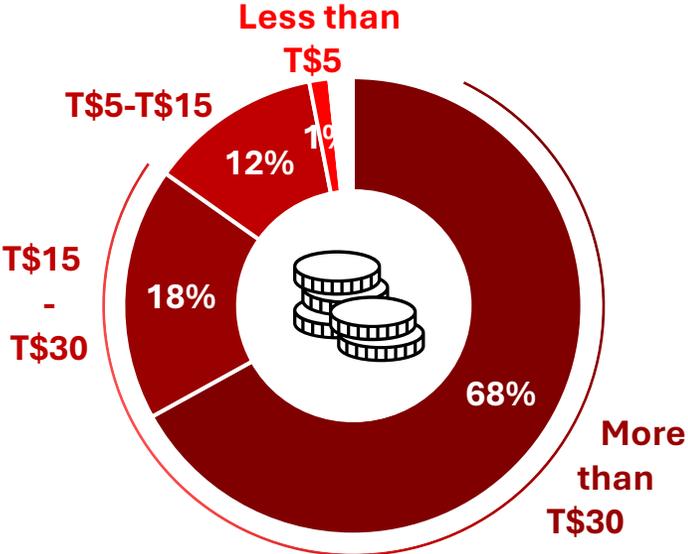
# Those who have access to a mobile phone use it heavily, topping up with data when funds allow

Time Spent on Mobile Phone (in average day)



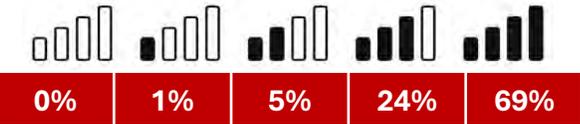
Younger people with high education and income are more likely to spend more time on their mobile phone

Monthly Spend on Mobile Phone (Samoan Tala)



Men are more likely to spend more money on their mobile phones than women

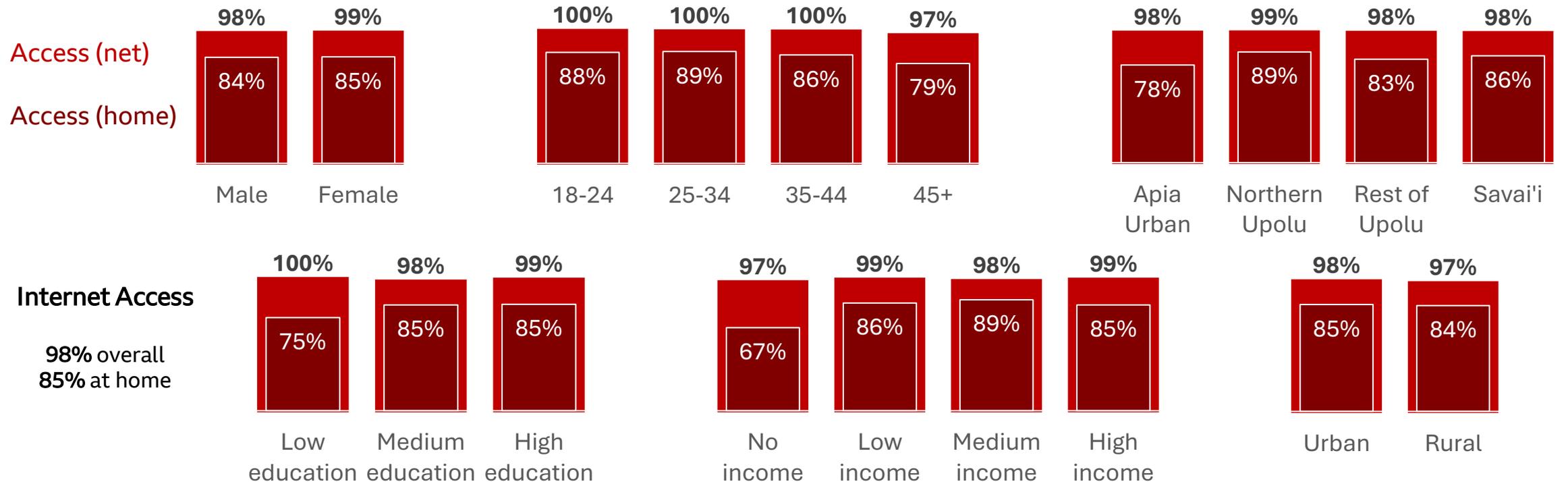
Network coverage at home



Q. How much time do you spend on a mobile phone on a normal day? Base: n=1,061 (respondents who have access to a mobile phone or smartphone)  
 Q. On average, how much do you spend on your mobile phone per month? Base: n=1,061 (respondents who have access to a mobile phone or smartphone)  
 Q. How many network bars do you have on your phone where you live? Base: n=1,061 (respondents who have access to a mobile phone or smartphone)

# At least some internet access is available to most groups, although those without a consistent income are more likely to rely on out-of-home access

98% of Samoa mobile users report having access to the internet via any device (85% report access at home). While gender is not a significant factor associated with access to the internet, age, income, and education are. Mobile users aged over 45 years, and those with a low level of education and with no income are significantly less likely to have access to the internet at home. Access to the internet is closely aligned with access to a smartphone, suggesting that the majority of internet access is via smartphones in Samoa.



98% overall  
85% at home

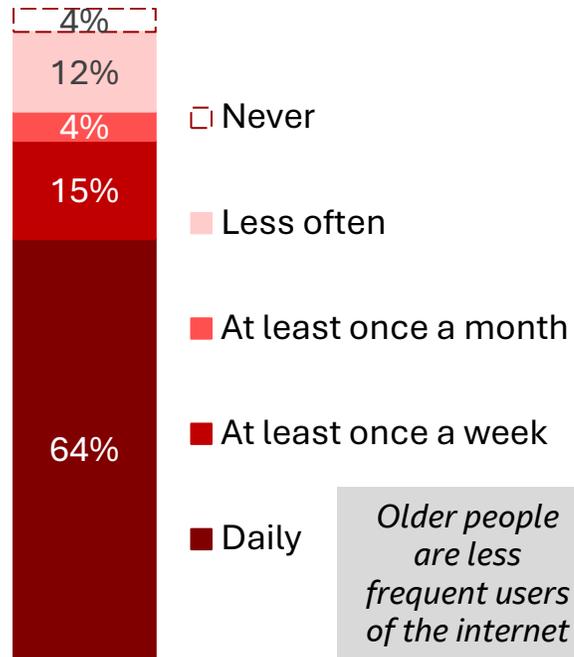
\*Low base

\*Profile is representative of a subset of the Samoa population – those who have access to a mobile

Q: And do you have access to these media devices in your home or elsewhere? Internet Base: n=1,068

# Social media is the primary driver for going online, with Facebook the most popular platform among users

## Frequency of Internet Use



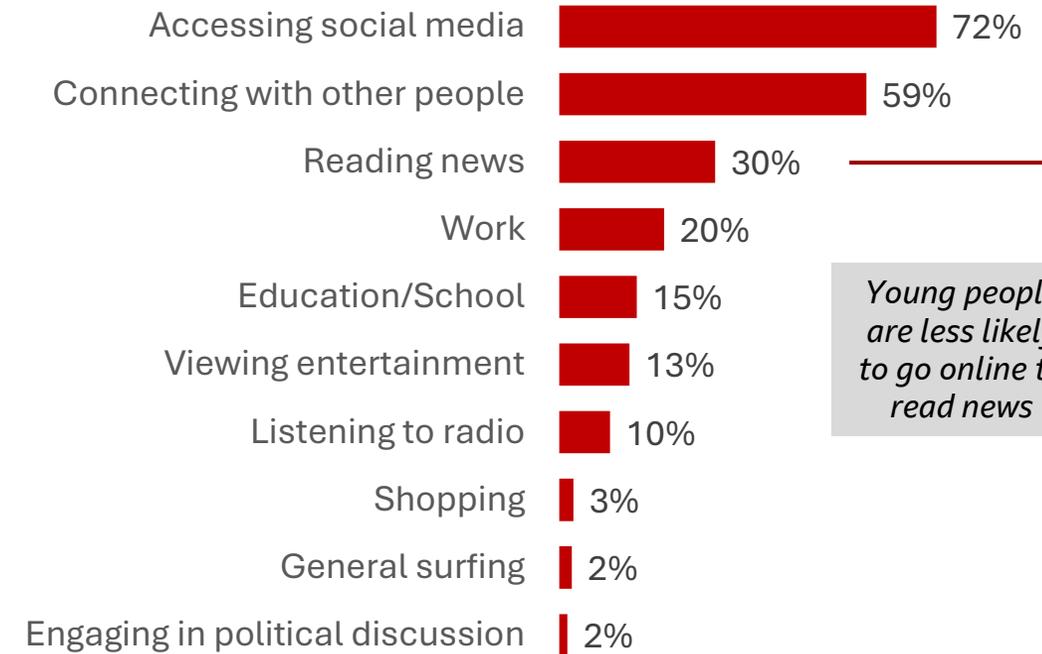
*Older people are less frequent users of the internet*

## Use of Platforms in Past Month

Facebook	96%
Facebook Messenger	91%
YouTube	56%
TikTok	39%
Instagram	35%
WhatsApp	24%
Snapchat	7%
Telegram	2%
Viber	2%
X (formerly known as Twitter)	1%

*Youth aged 18-34 with higher education are more likely to use YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp & TikTok*

## Reasons for Going Online



*Young people are less likely to go online to read news*

\*Chart excludes DK and REF responses

\*Chart excludes DK and REF responses

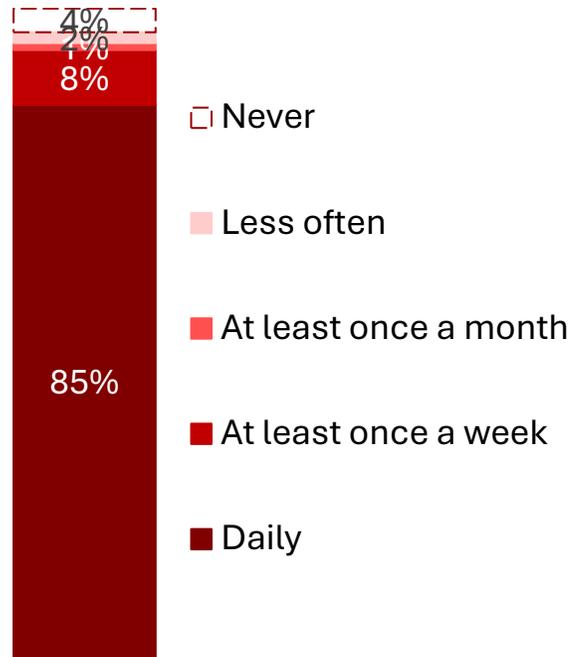
Q: How frequently do you do the following, if at all? Use the Internet (including WhatsApp, Telegram) Base: n=1,068

Q: Which of the following social media or messaging apps have you used in the last month, if any? Base: n= 1029 (users of social media or internet)

Q: What do you use Internet for? Base: n= 952 (users of social media or internet)

# Although over two-fifths of users consume content without reacting, many are liking others' posts and sharing their own

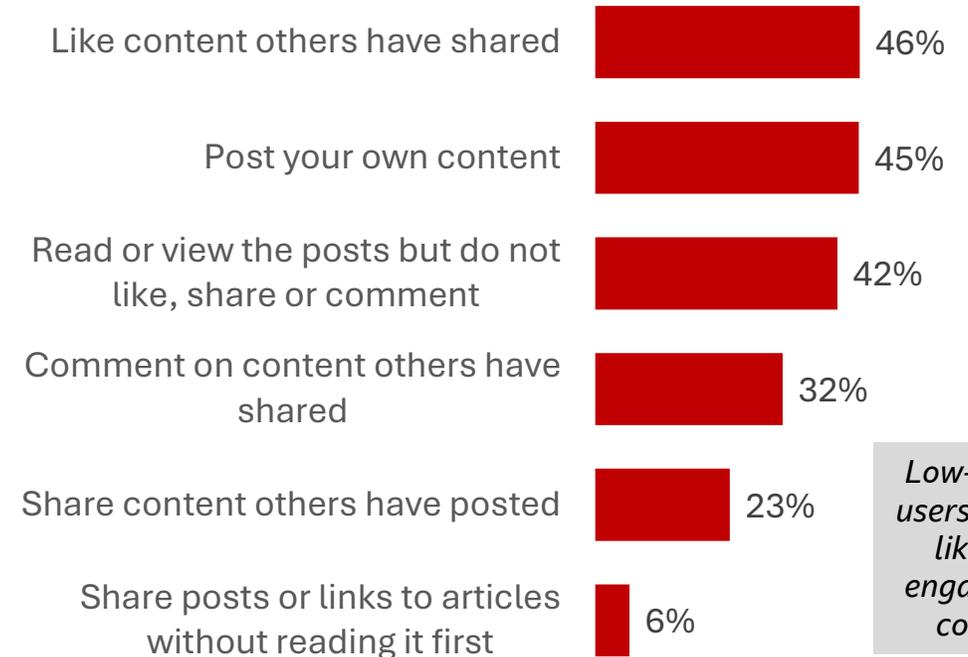
## Frequency of Social Media Use



All that TikTok AI stuff, it sounds really professional, when they come up with ... what's the latest thing they talk about? ... I guess it's the algorithms as well, and what they're giving you, and it's AI stories and news, and it sounds so real, and some parts are true, but then other parts are a bit funny [not true].

– Woman, 35-54, Urban Upolu

## Typical Behaviours on Social Media



Low-income users are less likely to engage with content

\*Chart excludes DK and REF responses

\*Chart excludes DK and REF responses

Q: How frequently do you do the following, if at all? visit social media pages like Facebook, Instagram, etc. Base: n=1,068

Q: Which of the following do you tend to do on social media or messaging apps? Base: n= 1029 (users of social media or internet)

# Although mobile phones offer a window for news from around the world, many users are connecting to others through calls and SMS

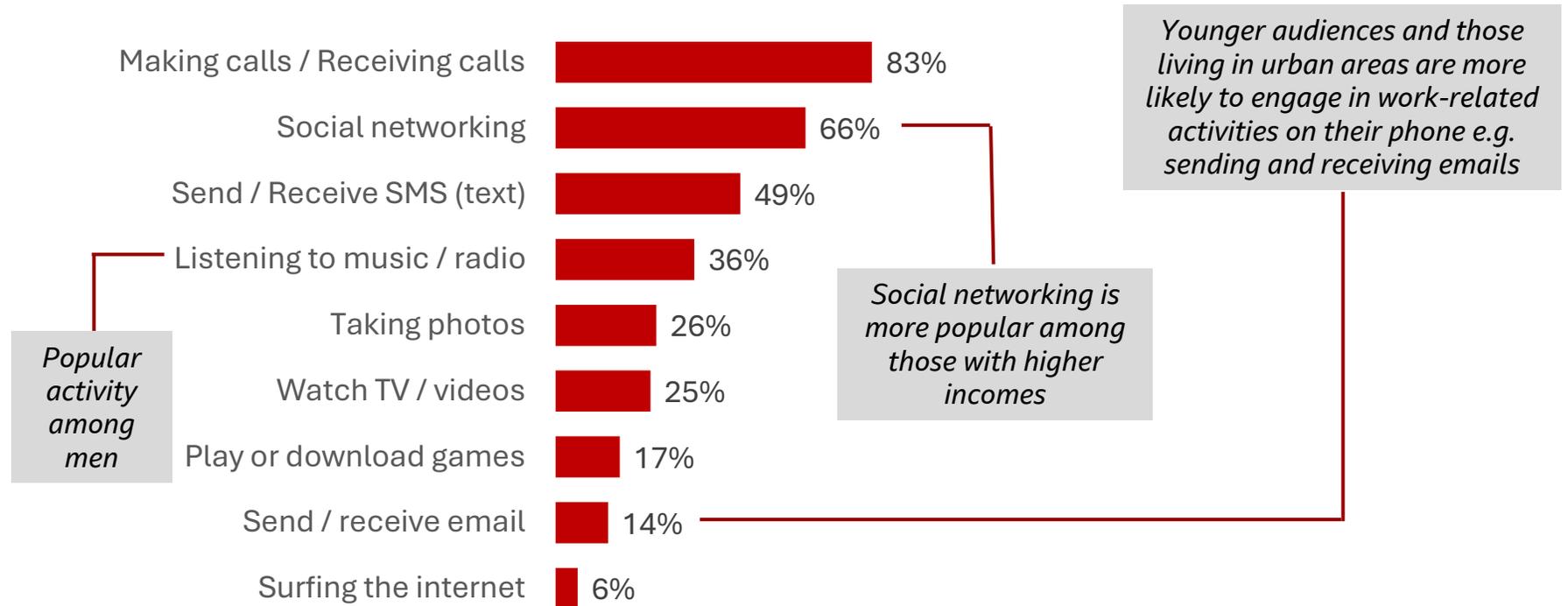
Mobile phones are a primary tool for media consumption due to their **convenience and quick accessibility**. This ease of use makes them a popular choice even for older audiences. However, for some users, mobile phone use was **limited by the cost of data**.



I mainly use it to check Facebook news [from] all over the world and the Pacific Islands.

– Man, 35-54, Urban Savai'i

## Main Reasons for Using a Mobile Phone



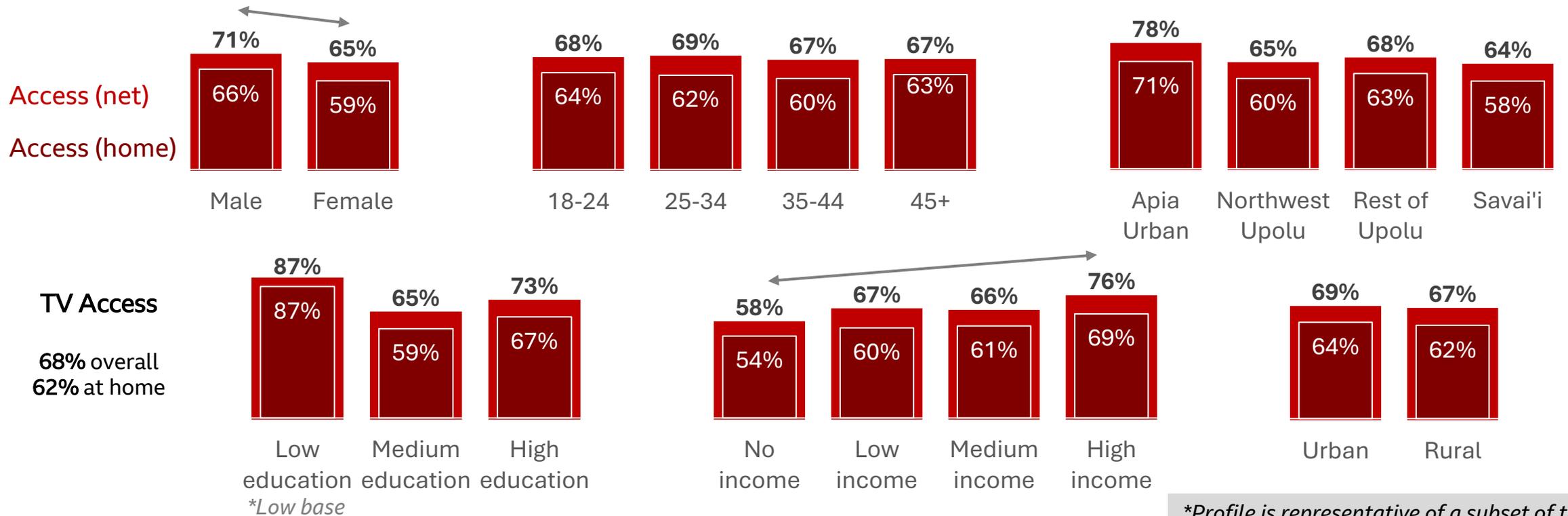
\*Chart excludes DK and REF and responses <5%

Q. What are the main reasons that you use a mobile phone? Base: n=1061 (respondents who have access to a mobile phone or smartphone)

# Television

# TV access increases with income, and is more likely to be available to those in urban Apia

Two thirds of Samoan mobile users (68%) report having access to a television (62% report access at home). Television access is available within and outside of respondents' homes. There is little difference across key demographics, with the exception that people in Apia urban area are more likely to have access to television compared to those from other districts.



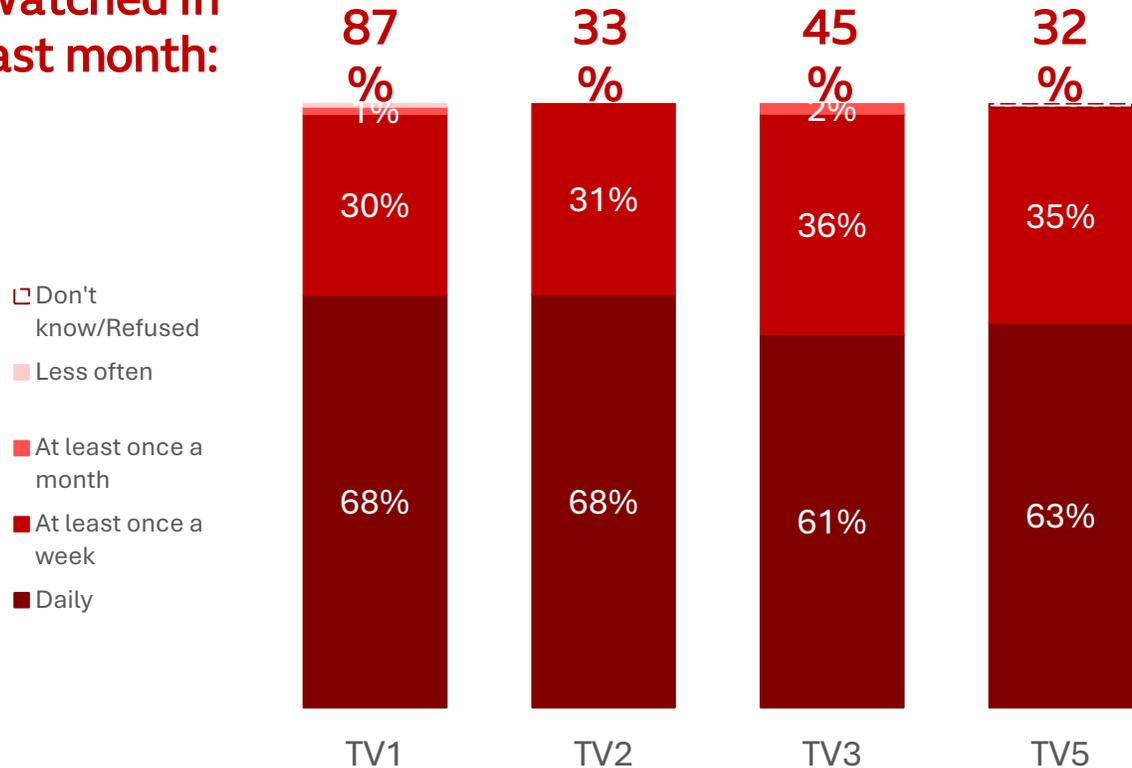
*\*Profile is representative of a subset of the Samoa population – those who have access to a mobile*

Q: And do you have access to these media devices in your home or elsewhere? Television Base: n=1,068

# TV1-3 are the most watched channels, used by around two-thirds of all who have watched TV in the last month

Frequency of Watching TV Channels (among viewers)

Watched in past month:



“

There is a difference between news broadcast on Talafou news and what's on Facebook. Talafou, they are well known, and they also have people here on the ground who are capturing / filming the news so it's real, but on Facebook you can't trust the sources, because too many bring lies .

– Man, 18-34, Rural Savai'i

“

Lots of broadcasts or news comes first on TV1, and it only hits the other channels later. It's like TV1 has reliable information first.

– Woman, 18-34, Urban Upolu

Q: How frequently do you do watch...? Base: TV1 n=584, TV3 n=303, TV2 n=224, TV5=219

# TV viewing peaks in the evening hours, in some areas as a communal activity where few households have their own access

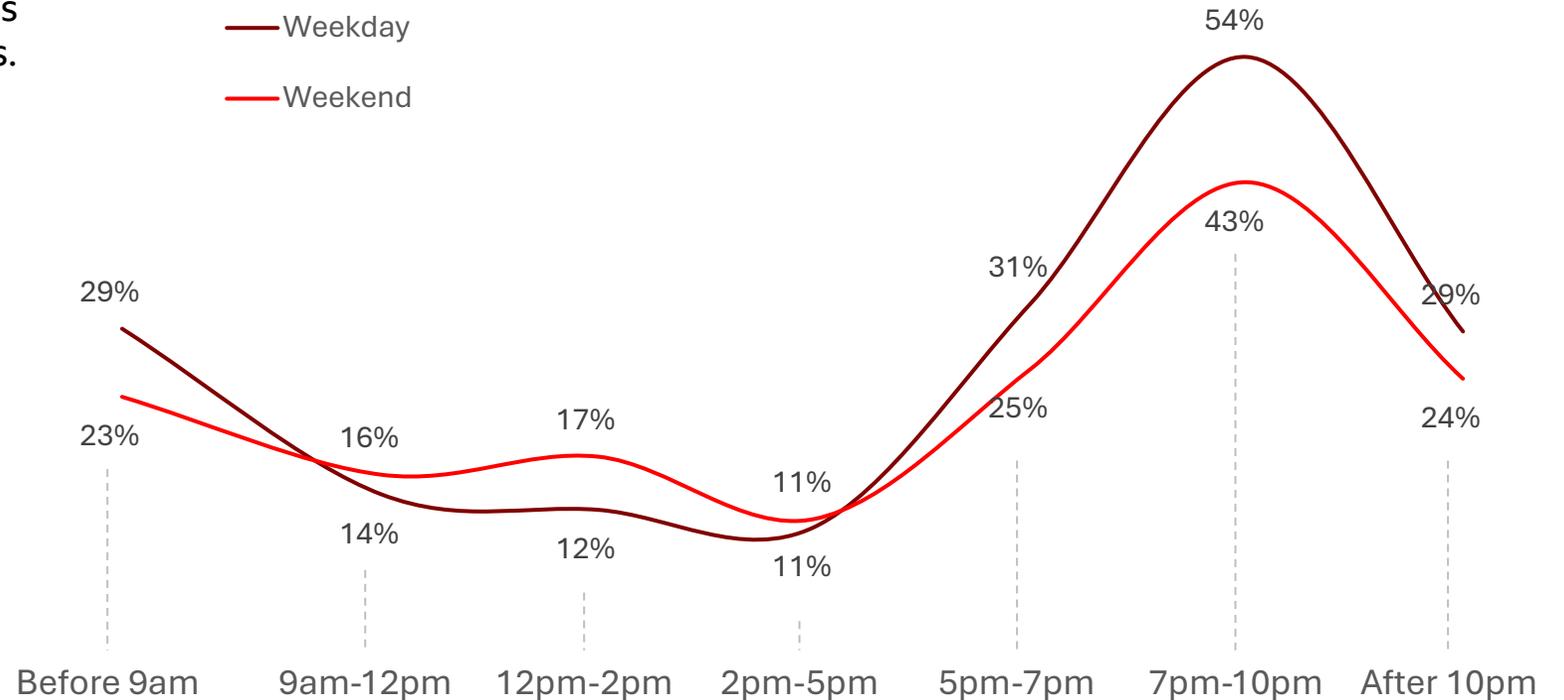
TV is a valued platform to most Samoans, respected as a reliable source of information. In some (often rural) communities, there may be just one household with a TV set and neighbours gather to watch it. TV content is also consumed by audiences via online devices.



A lot of news I receive I get from TV. I turn it on in the morning until night, but the thing is, there are so many different news. And different channels like TV1 will have news, and then TV2 will have the same story, but they report it differently.... We watch TV from morning until night.

– Woman, 18-34, Urban Upolu

### TV Viewing by Daypart



Q: At what times do you usually watch TV during the week (Monday to Friday)? Base: n=674

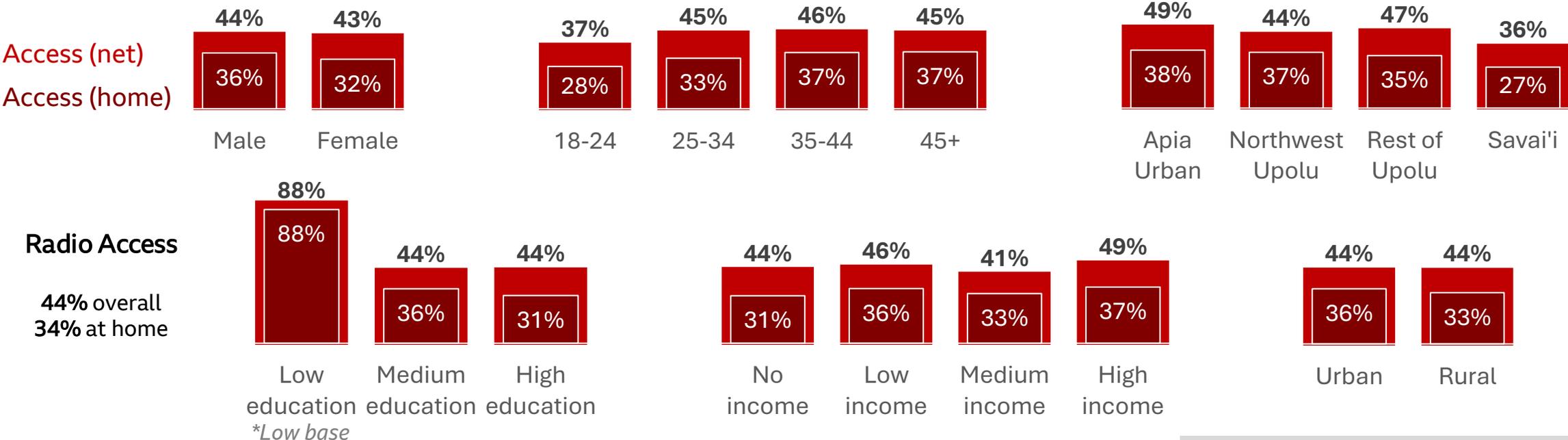
Q: And how about on the weekend (Saturday and Sunday)? Base: n=674

A man with grey hair, wearing a light yellow polo shirt, is sitting at a fruit stall. He is leaning forward with his chin resting on his hand, looking thoughtfully to the right. In front of him are several pineapples and a cardboard box filled with green and yellow citrus fruits. The stall is decorated with colorful patterned fabrics hanging from the ceiling. The background shows shelves stocked with various goods. The word "Radio" is overlaid in white text on the man's face.

# Radio

# Nearly half report access to radio, with younger users less likely to say they have access

Listenership to radio in Samoa is limited. Four in ten Samoa mobile users (44%) report having access to a radio set (one third report access at home). Radio access is present both within and outside of respondents' homes. Like television, those with low education are significantly more likely to have access to a radio set at all (either at home or elsewhere).



*\*Profile is representative of a subset of the Samoa population – those who have access to a mobile*

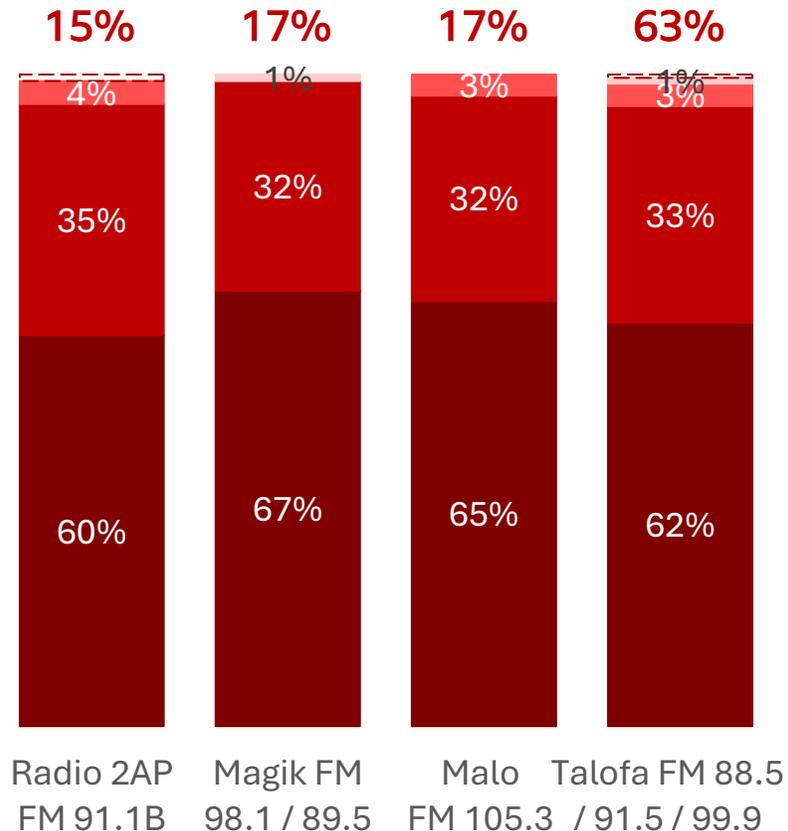
Q: And do you have access to these media devices in your home or elsewhere? Radio Base: n=1,068

# A number of radio stations are popular, with radio as a platform seen as largely credible

Frequency of Listening to Radio Stations (among listeners)

Listened in past month:

- Don't know/Refused
- Less often
- At least once a month
- At least once a week
- Daily



Radio, particularly Radio Samoa is often cited as a trusted source among listeners, alongside TV, due to its perceived credibility, coverage of local news, and consistency with information reported on television.

A few are less trusting of Radio Samoa because of corrections to its bulletins.



We choose Radio Samoa, because they cover everything in Samoa. Because you know their audience is for people in New Zealand... or everywhere really, outside of Samoa, so they make sure they cover a lot.

– Woman, 36-54, Urban Upolu

Q: How frequently do you do listen to...? Base: Magik FM n=96, Malo FM n=93, Talofa FM n=349, Radio 2AP n=85

# Unlike TV viewing, radio consumption is highest in the morning, often before work or heard during travel to workplaces

Listening to radio via mobile, particularly through Facebook, is common, although with radio less commonly heard in public spaces, peak listening hours are earlier in the morning.



I listen to news and catch information on the radio every morning on the phone. My parents listen to the radio too.

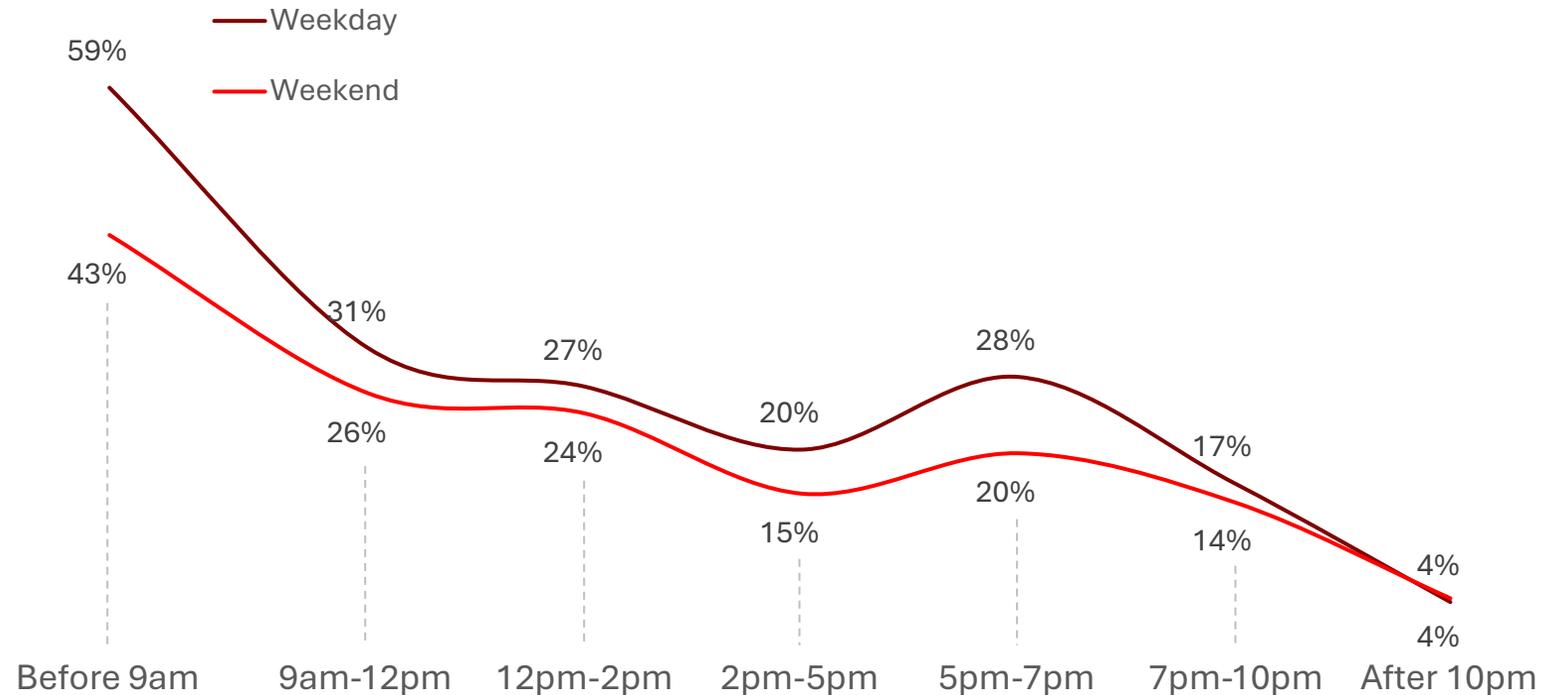
– Man, 18-34, Rural Savai'i



When I'm in the car, I listen to radio, and they update on all sorts of stuff.

– Woman, 35-54, Urban Upolu

### Radio Listening by Daypart



Q: At what times do you usually listen to the radio during the week (Monday to Friday)? Base: n=577

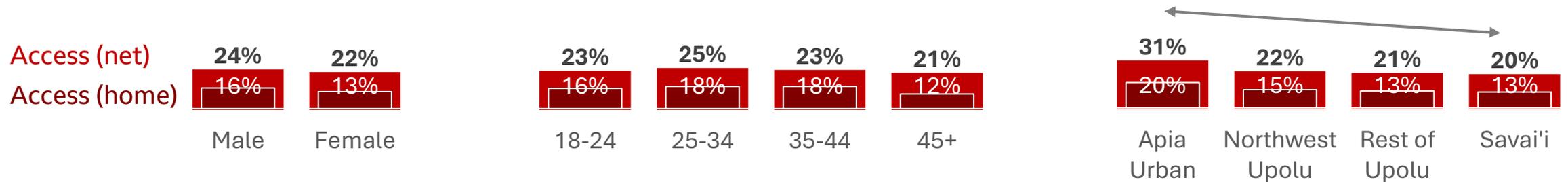
Q: And how about on the weekend (Saturday and Sunday)? Base: n=577



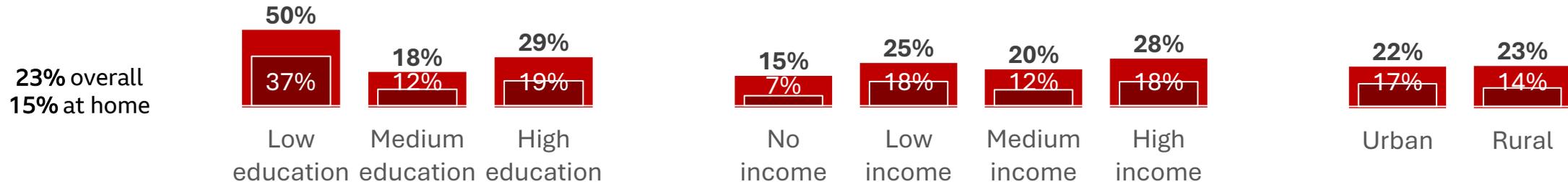
# Newspapers

# Newspaper access is low compared to other media, and much more likely to be available to urban audiences in Apia

Overall access to print newspapers is low, with fewer than a quarter (23%) of Samoan mobile users reporting access. Notably, just 15% have newspapers available at home, suggesting that contact with print newspapers is often via public or shared spaces such as workplaces, shops, and cafés. Overall access is significantly better among respondents living in urban Apia and for those with a higher level of education.



## Newspaper Access

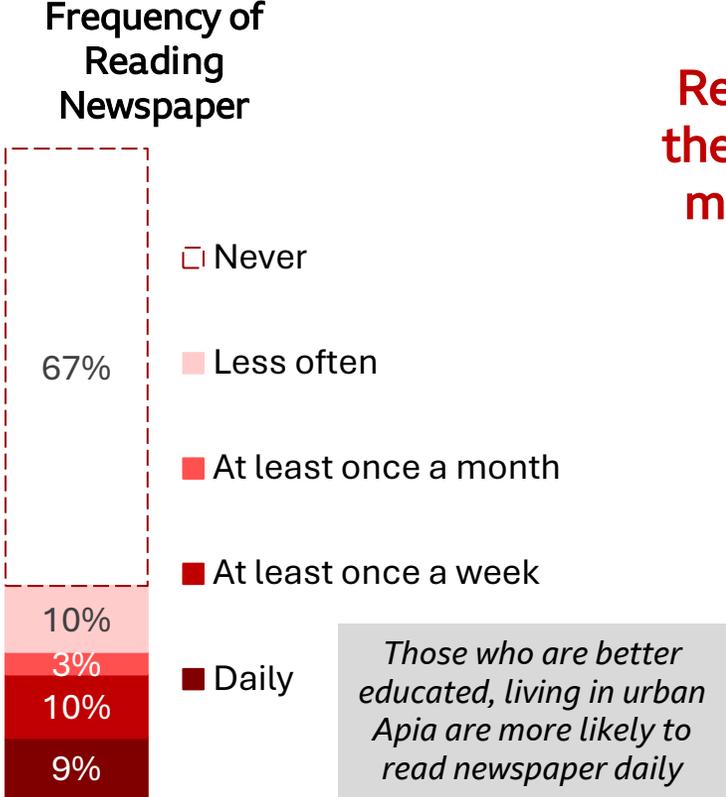


\*Low base

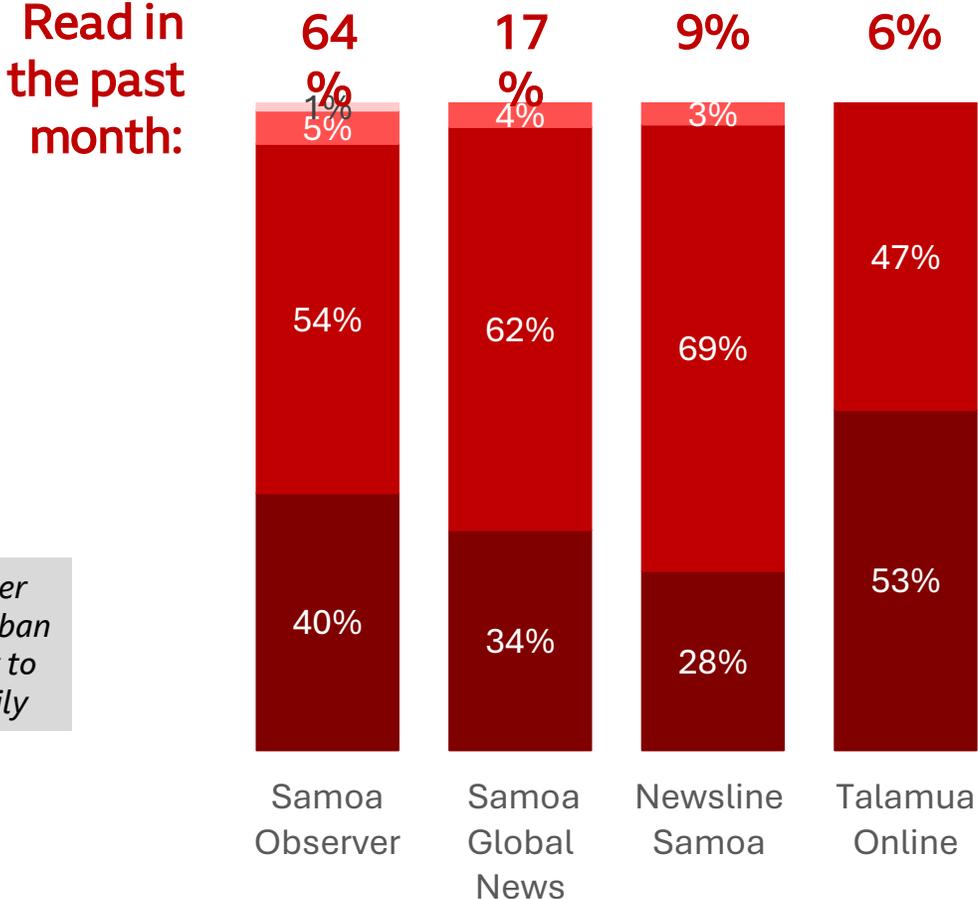
\*Profile is representative of a subset of the Samoa population – those who have access to a mobile

Q: And do you have access to these media in your home or elsewhere? Newspapers Base: n=1,068

# Consumption of newspapers is low, with more turning to digital news sources



**Frequency of Reading Newspapers (among readers)**



Newspapers are largely regarded as a credible source of information, although some rural respondents noted that print newspapers are less readily available in local shops in recent years.

The Samoa Observer is one of the more widely read news providers, both in print format and via its Facebook page. However, some audiences believe it to be a source of false information, with some accusing the outlet of wrongdoing, such as engaging in the active spread of 'fake news' and misrepresentation of some of its sources.

\*Chart excludes DK and REF responses

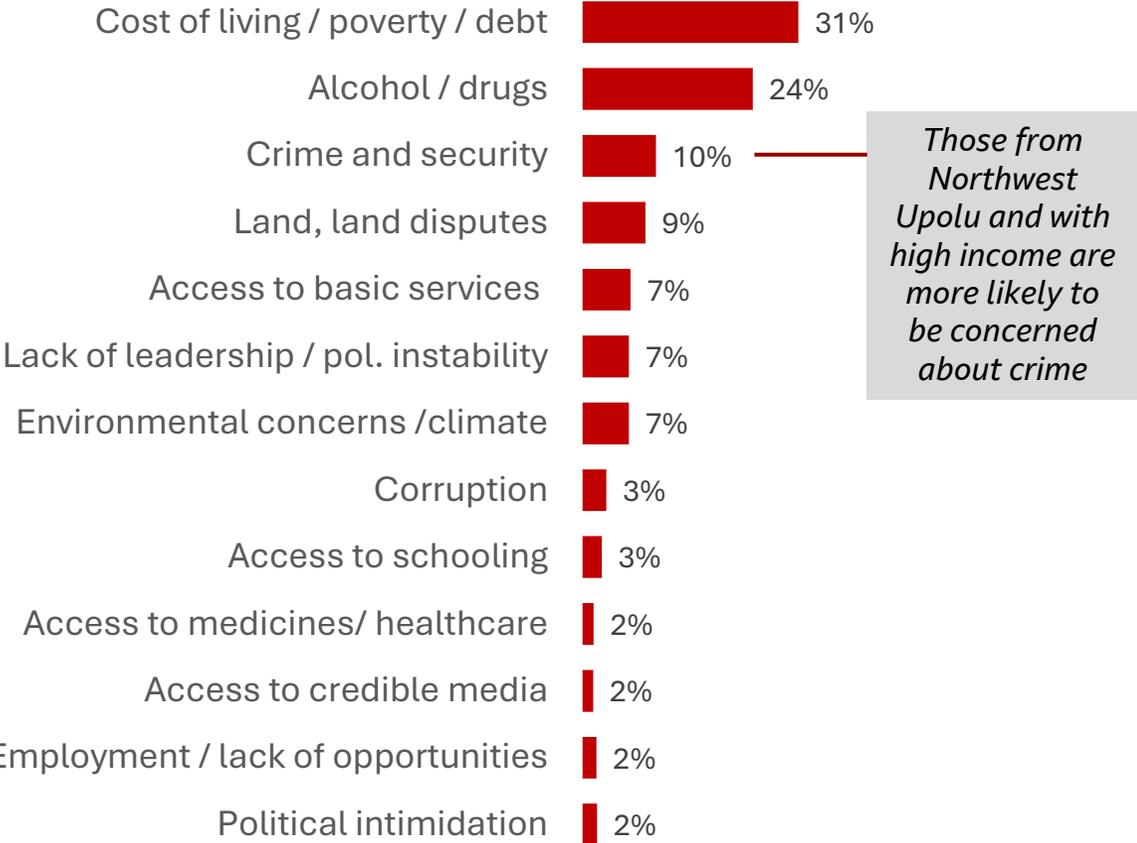
Q: How frequently do you do the following, if at all? Read newspapers Base: n=1,068  
 Q: How frequently do you read...? Base: Samoa Observer n=252, Samoa Global News n=53, Newsline Samoa n=29, Talamua Online n=19



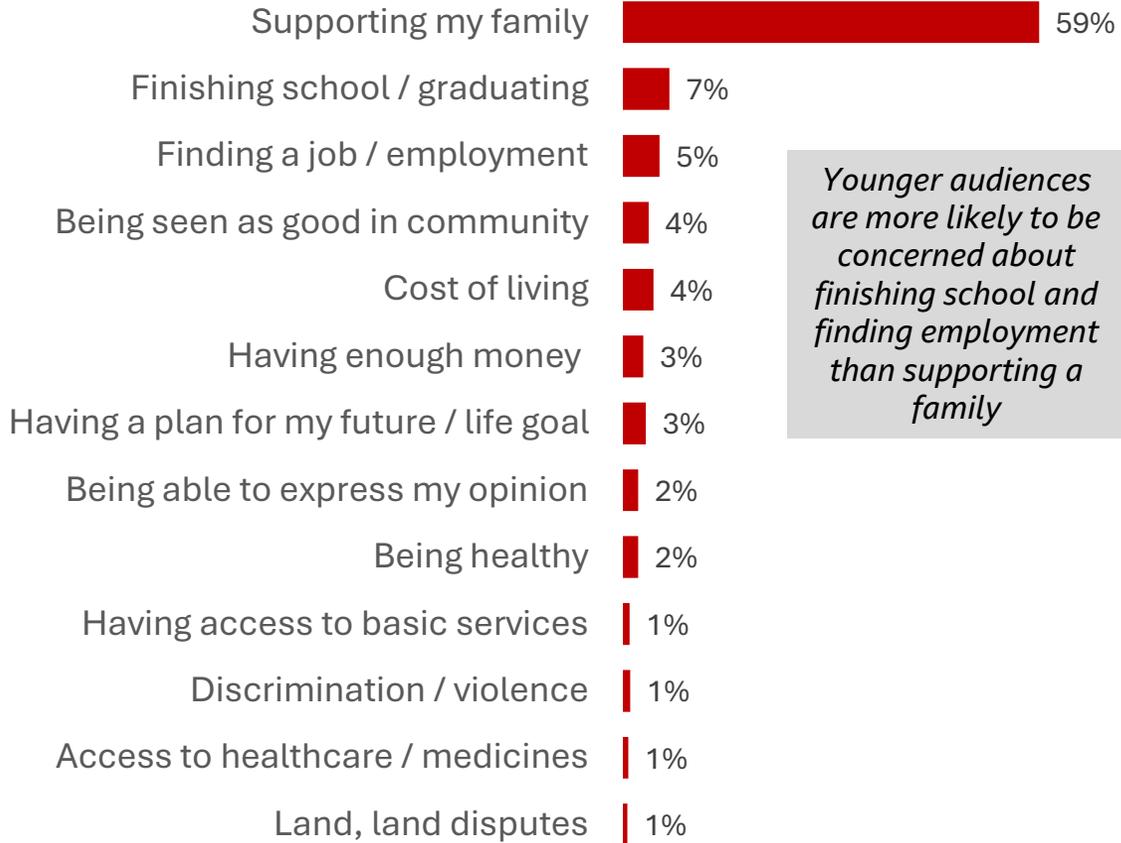
# Accessing news and information

# Economic concerns dominate among the issues that Samoans worry about, with crime and anti-social behaviour also seen as community issues

## Main Challenges in Local Area



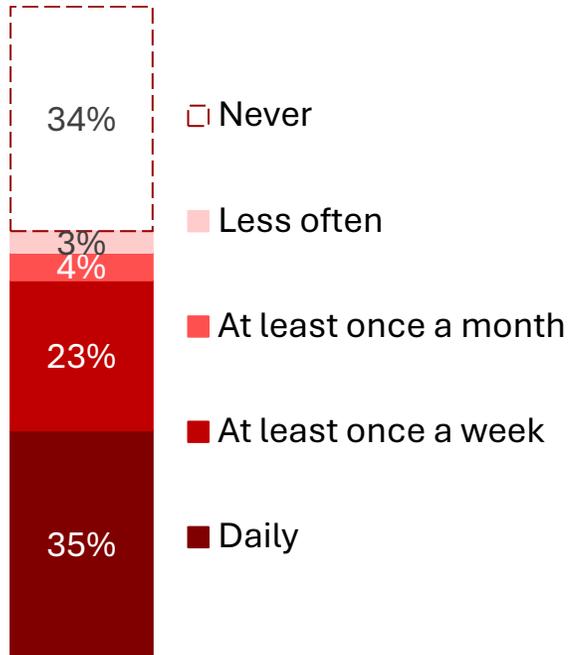
## Main Challenges Personally



Q. What do you think is your biggest challenge currently? Base: n=1,068  
 Q. And for you, what are the main issues/challenges facing your local area? Base: n=1,068

# Word-of-mouth information is seen as part of the Samoan cultural fabric, with many turning to others for news

## Frequency of Getting Second Hand Info



*Daily exposure to second hand information is more likely to occur among those with low income, while younger audiences rely more on formal sources of information*

\*Chart excludes DK and REF responses



If you can't get news and information from the telephone, especially if you are wanting specific news, then you just walk to your neighbour, and talk to people.

– Woman, 18-34, Rural Apia



...Samoans always do that, if you can't get information from media sources, then you go and ask people face to face, or to your girlfriends, or to other families, that's another way to collect information, and people are seeking different opinions, not just one source. You use your feet to collect the information.

– Woman, 18-34, Rural Apia

Q. How frequently do you do the following, if at all? Get second hand info Base: n=1,068

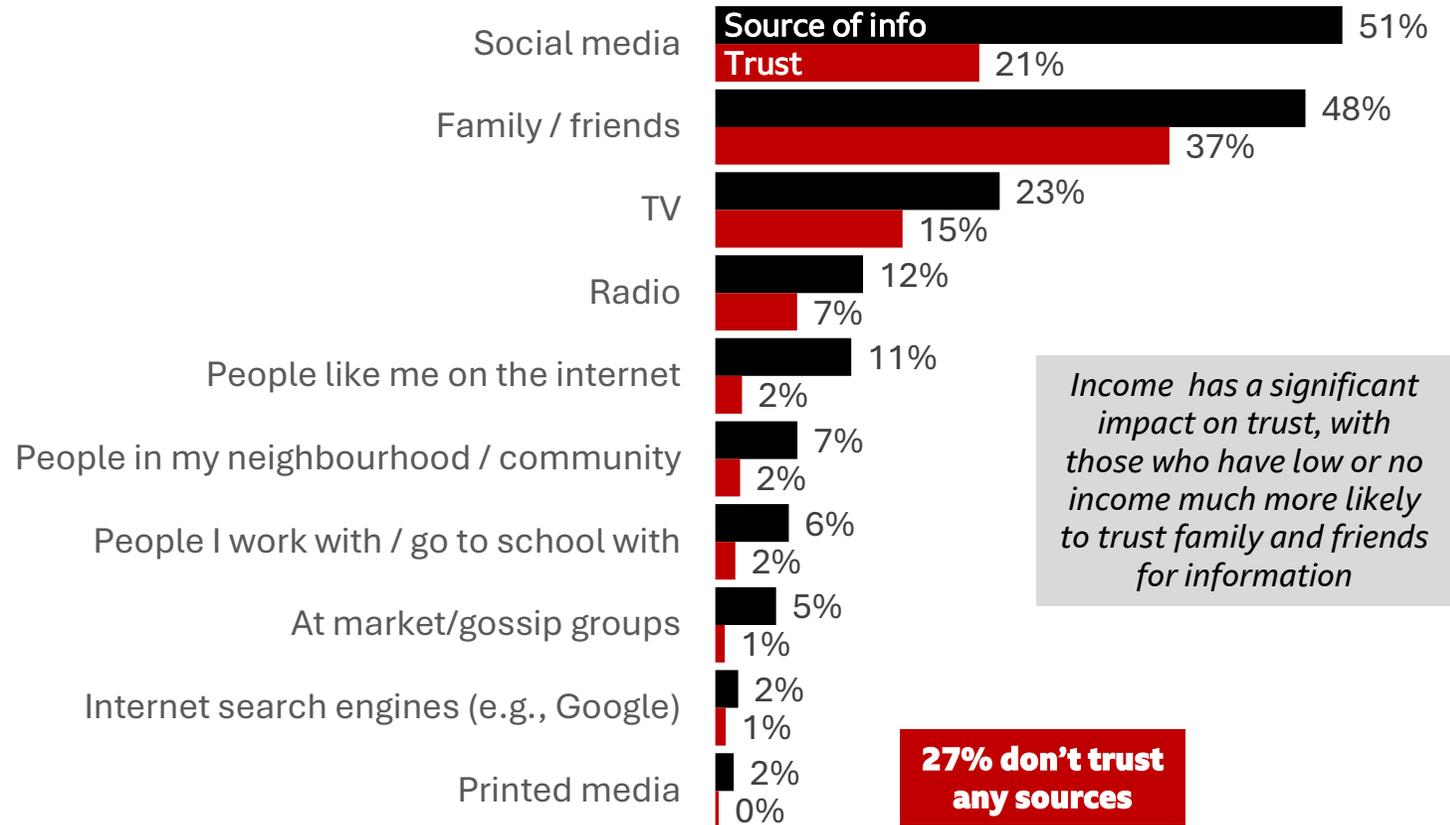
# Although social media and word-of-mouth are frequently consulted for news, they are not always trusted, especially compared to TV and radio



The reason I trust TV1 [is] because there are lots of news broadcasts, but I think TV1 is telling the correct thing that happened, especially when they do lives [live broadcasts]. An example is parliament, what's happened on that day and also court cases, they are broadcast live sometimes on TV1, so I trust that they [are] broadcasting the truth, because Radio Samoa will also share the same explanations so therefore it's being verified there too, and then people who were present at the event, they also have the same story, so that's why I trust TV1 more.

– Woman, 18-34, Rural Upolu

Source of, and Trust in, Information Sources



Q. Where or who do you usually go to find information about the issues? Base: n=1,068

Q. Among the sources you have mentioned, which ones do you trust? Base: n=1047 (respondents who mention a source)

# Samoans mostly feel reasonably well-catered to by information, content to seek out news proactively where needed

With Samoa's fairly healthy mobile penetration, audiences in most locations have access to phones as a minimum. The main limiting factor is the cost of data and running out of credit.

With social circles also playing an important role in people's information sharing habits, the majority of audiences feel they can access news fairly well.

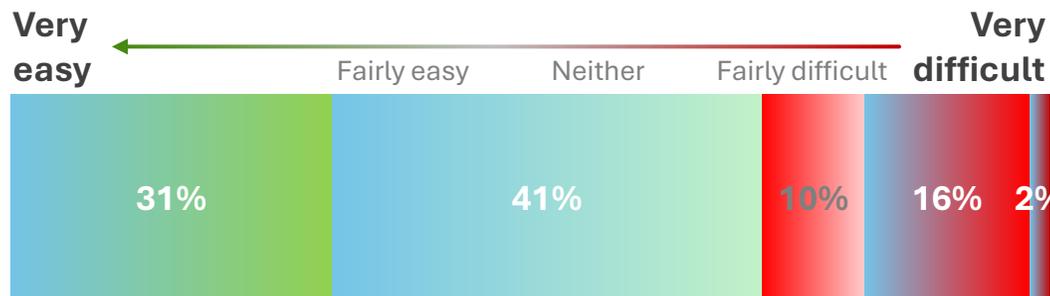
## Availability of News and Information in Preferred Language



*Those with low income are less likely to receive information in their preferred language*

## Perceived Ease of Finding Information

*People from urban Apia are more likely to find it easy to find information*



With the majority of news delivered in Samoan or Samoan and English, most people feel the media caters quite well to their information needs as far as language is concerned. However, with so much of the radio news delivered in both Samoan and English, some people feel that this medium is targeted more towards the diaspora audiences.

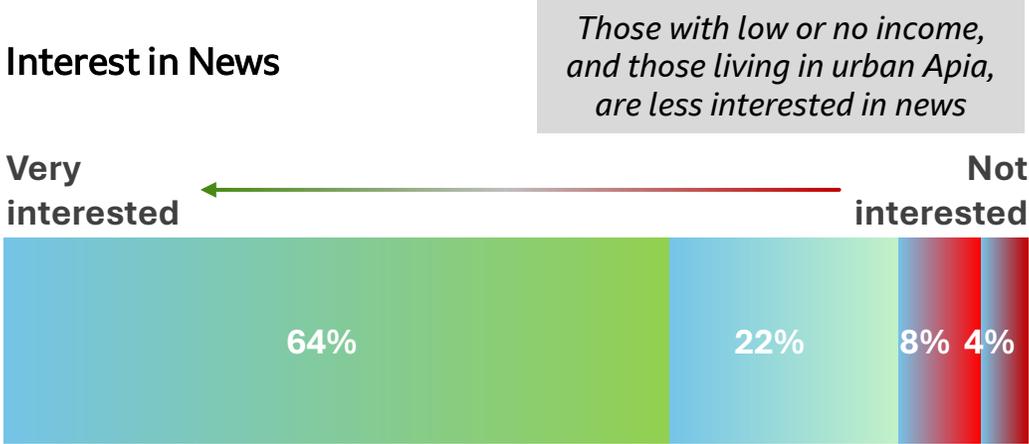
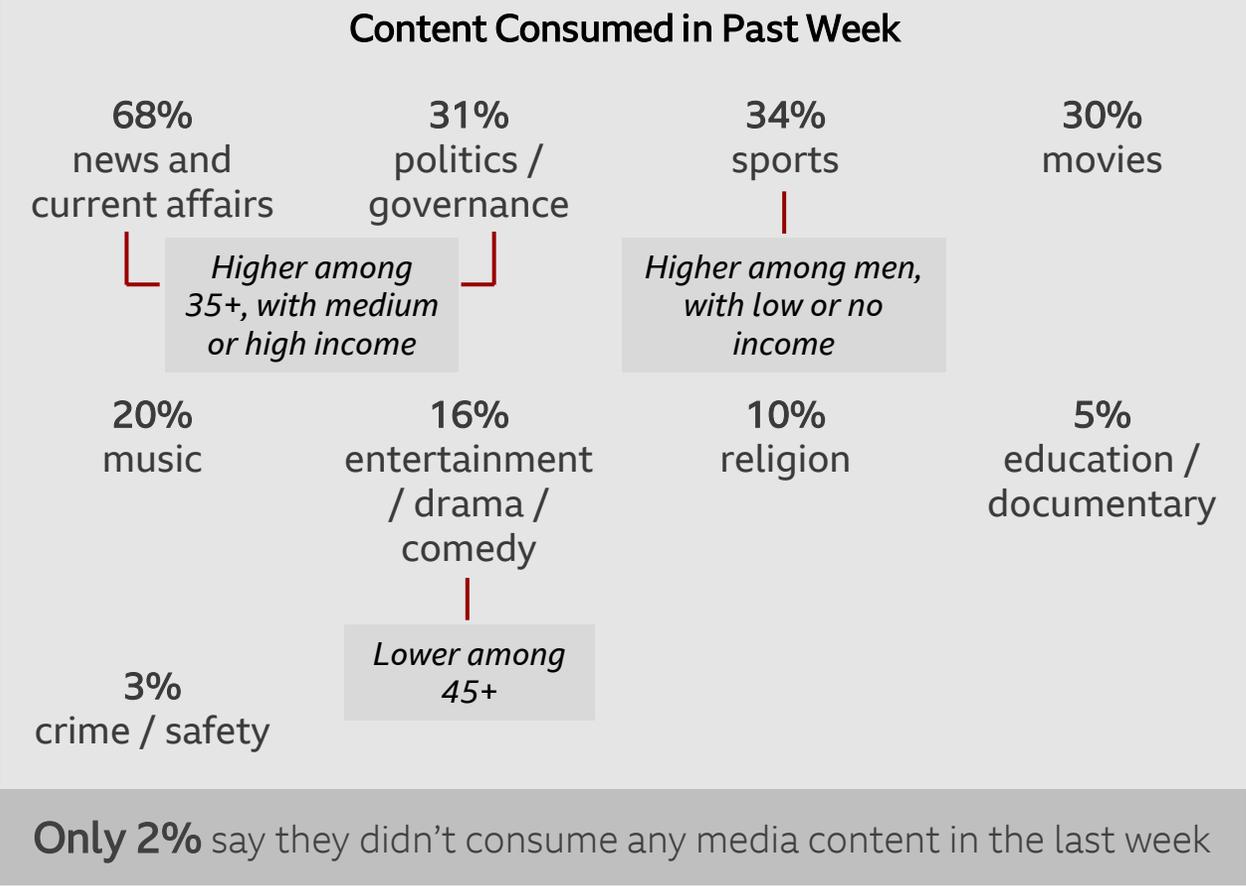
Q. How easy or difficult is it for you to find information about issues that matter to you? Base: n=1,068

Q. Do you get news and information from the media in your preferred language? Base: n=1,060 (media users)

A woman with short grey hair, wearing a blue top with a yellow and white pattern, is being interviewed. Two men are facing her; one on the left is holding a smartphone on a gimbal, and one on the right is holding a professional video camera. They are outdoors in front of a building with a corrugated metal roof. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and greenery.

# Media Content Perceptions and Preferences

# Consumption of news and current affairs is popular and most express a strong interest in it



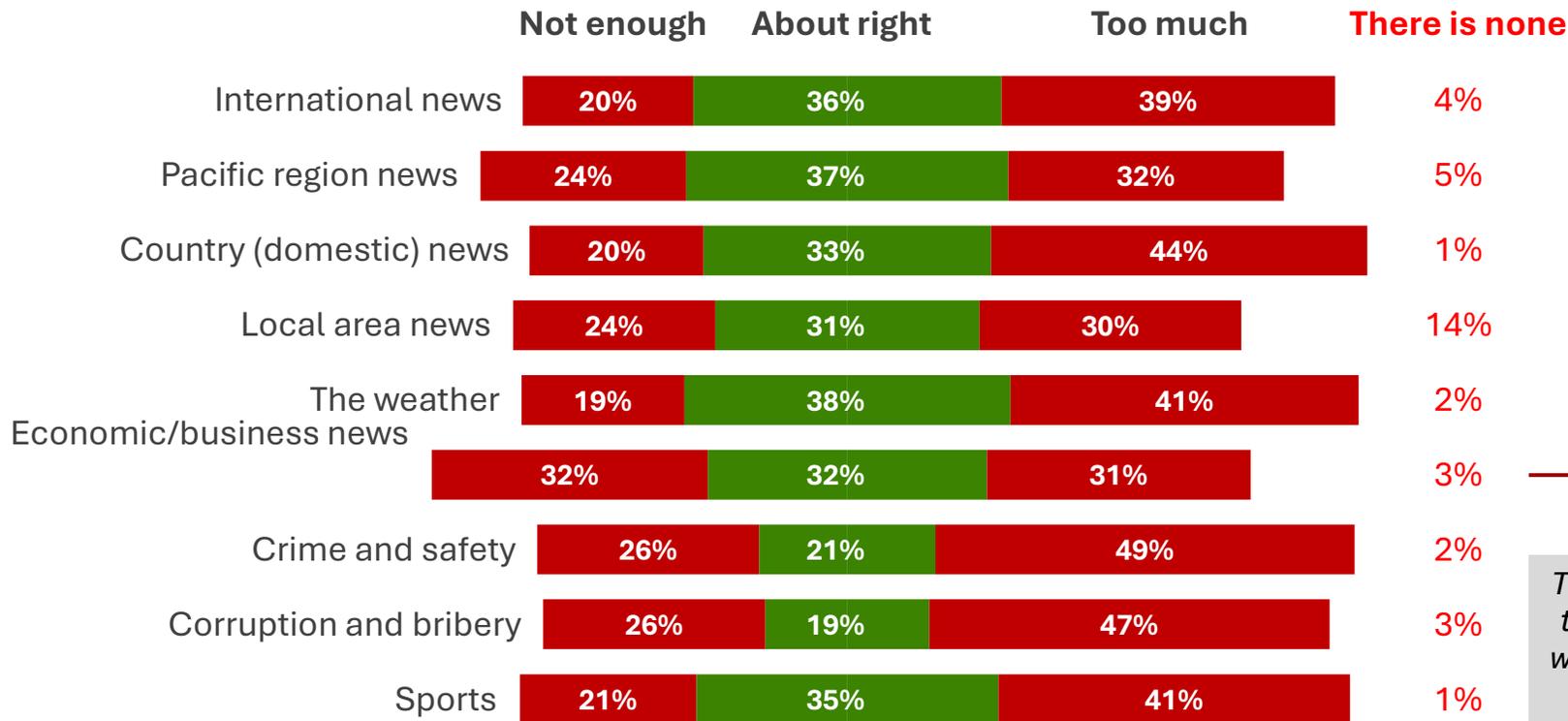
News engagement across Samoa is shaped by local concerns, cultural relevance, and access to information.

Although there is wide interest in a range of topics and types of content, audiences want the media to highlight social challenges, as well as celebrate Samoan culture.

Q. Thinking about the last week, what type of programmes or content have you listened to/read/or watched? Base: n=1,068  
 Q. How interested are you in news? Base: n=1,068

# Audiences tend to feel there is too much news around crime and safety, and corruption and bribery

## Perception of the Adequacy of News and Current Affairs Content



My main topics would be around education for our small children who are not in school, and their parents are forcing them to be child vendors. I would be spotlighting this as an issue we need to address and strongly encourage people to make education a priority, so that their children grow and have the learning and skills to get good jobs to help them in the future.

– Man, 18-34, Urban Savai'i

*Those with low or no income tend to believe there is too much economic news in the media, while those with moderate to higher income tend to feel there is not enough*

Q. Thinking generally about the news and current affairs available in the country, do you think that there is too much, about the right amount, not enough, or no media coverage about...? Base: n=1060 (media users)

# Perception of the Adequacy of News and Current Affairs Content by Key Demographics

**Added slide following the request in the event.**

Perceived levels of 'too much' economic/business news and sports are lower among those living in the rest of Upolu while corruption and bribery is higher among those living in northwest Upolu. *There no statistically significant difference by gender, age groups and density (urban & rural).*

	Too much	Breakdown by demographic for those who reported 'Too much'.											
		Gender		Age group				Density		Region			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45 +	Rural	Urban	Apia Urban Area	Northwest Upolu	Rest of Upolu	Savai'i
International news	39%	39%	39%	35%	42%	40%	38%	40%	38%	44%	42%	34%	35%
Pacific region news	32%	33%	31%	32%	33%	36%	30%	32%	32%	40%	33%	27%	29%
Country (domestic) news	44%	43%	45%	49%	42%	47%	41%	43%	45%	52%	45%	38%	40%
Local area news	30%	30%	31%	35%	32%	30%	27%	32%	29%	37%	31%	24%	30%
The weather	41%	40%	41%	38%	40%	44%	40%	41%	40%	46%	44%	34%	37%
Economic/business news	31%	30%	32%	31%	31%	33%	30%	31%	31%	35%	32%	22%	33%
Crime and safety	49%	48%	50%	47%	53%	53%	45%	51%	45%	53%	52%	44%	45%
Corruption and bribery	47%	47%	46%	45%	50%	50%	44%	49%	43%	41%	54%	40%	45%
Sports	41%	41%	41%	44%	42%	45%	37%	41%	40%	45%	45%	32%	40%

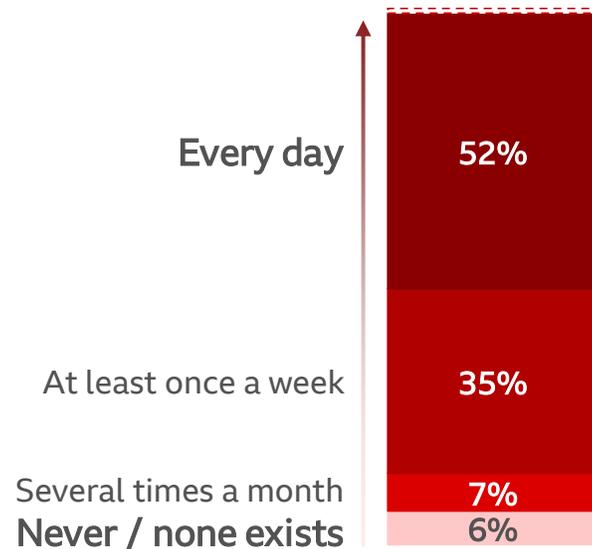
Q. Thinking generally about the news and current affairs available in the country, do you think that there is too much, about the right amount, not enough, or no media coverage about...? Base: n=1060 (media users)



# Experiencing Mis and Disinformation

# Over half of Samoans believe they encounter misinformation on a daily basis, likely driven by frequent use of social media

## Perceived Frequency of Exposure to False or Misleading Information



*Those who express strong confidence in their own ability to identify false information are most likely to believe they encounter it daily, while those lacking confidence are most likely to believe they never do or none exists*

While audiences report enjoying entertainment content on platforms like Facebook and TikTok, they do not trust them due to the prevalence of second-hand and fabricated information. This contrasts sharply with the kind of information they feel they receive from trusted television news sources, such as Talafou.

**Participants express concern about a range of false information spreading within the community.**

Political disinformation is seen as a major issue, along with misinformation concerning the health and safety of women and children, and false reports of death.

People identified several sources as instigators of **this false information, including politicians, government officials, journalists, and the general public.** Conflicting stories found both online and in the community limit the public's trust in information.



Information that has to do with someone passing (death) we should share, but gossip and secrets, we don't. When people are searching for information or news about someone via gossip, we use humour to divert. Within our Fa'afafine group, we know when it's not good to share, it's like an internal code. And we may discuss amongst ourselves first before we share.

– Fa'afafine, 18-34, Urban Savai'i

Q. How frequently do you come across information that you think is false or misleading? Base: n=1,068

# Although some audiences claim to engage in verification behaviour, methods are not always reliable, and many are unsure how to do so

People verify information they receive in various ways, depending on their access to different media; **however, there are those who do nothing at all.** Where verification occurs, such as to check a reported death or accident, people try to approach the source of the news or call friends and relatives who they think might know more, e.g. those living in the area.

Some people suggest that they would turn to an alternative source like the police, online search engines (e.g., Google), or other media streams for verification. **Facebook comments are also used to gauge the truthfulness of shared information.**

Women from rural Savai'i indicated having less knowledge about how to check if a piece of news or information is true or false. Instead, **they would simply stop sharing the information or wait for the correct details to emerge.**

“

There are lots of people in Samoa who create bad news and get paid for it. They create fake pages to cause disruption. ... I just go straight to Talafou, to verify anything that I don't trust, like what's happening in politics. People are taking information from both and creating a lot of posts about their campaigns, whether they are fake or not. God will sort it out.

– Woman, 35-54, Rural Savai'i

“

It's hard for me to trust anyone in Samoa, you know from the Government side, because they're very, either HRPP or FAST and they've got very specific motives where they give out information, that's why we always turn to Radio Samoa.

– Woman, 18-34, Urban Upolu

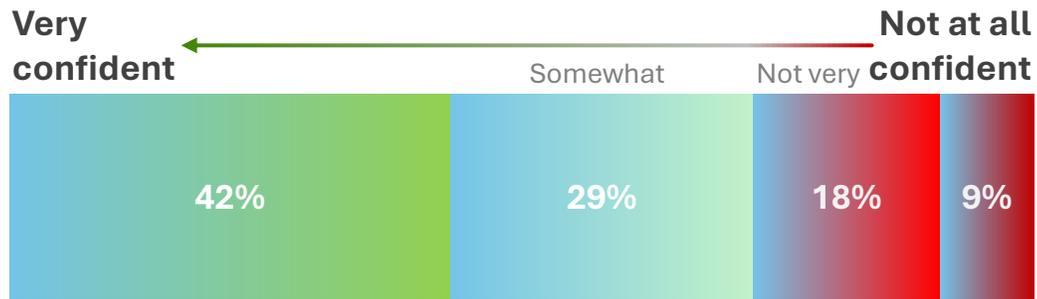
“

God will give the answer ... all of it, there will be a time where God will reveal the truth 100%.

– Man, 18-34, Rural Savai'i

# Although online sources are often blamed for bringing false information, many audiences are confident they could spot it

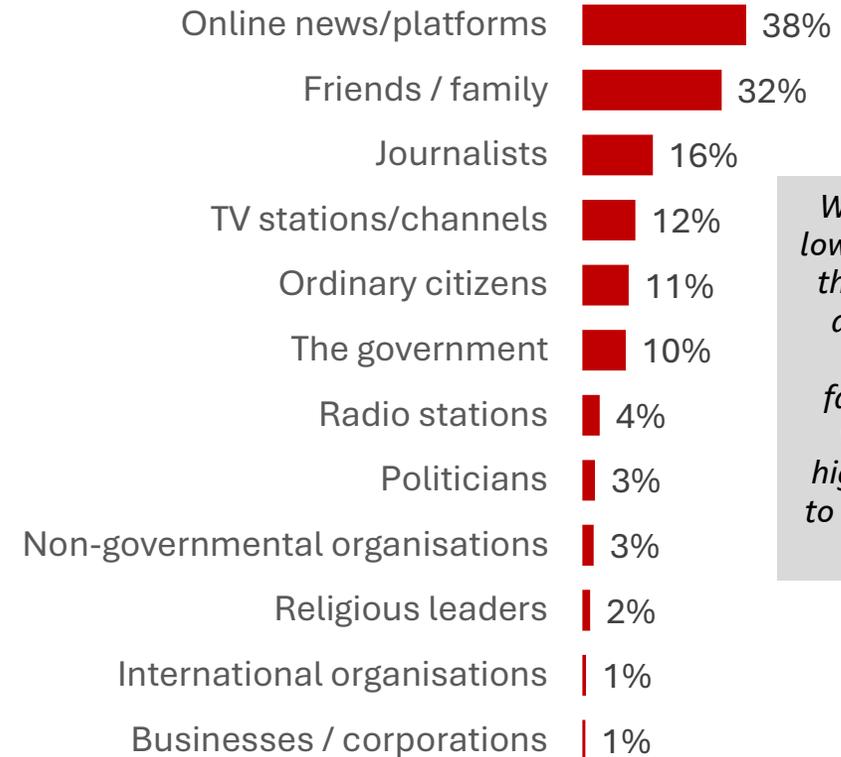
## Claimed Confidence in Own Ability to Identify False Information



My answer is no [false information cannot harm someone]. The reason? There are different kinds of people, and different mentality. ... I'm not interested in believing everything that people say.

– Man, 18-34, Rura; Savai'i

## Perceived Sources of False or Misleading Information



*Women, those with low or no income, and those in urban Apia are more likely to attribute this to family and friends, while those with higher incomes tend to blame online news platforms*

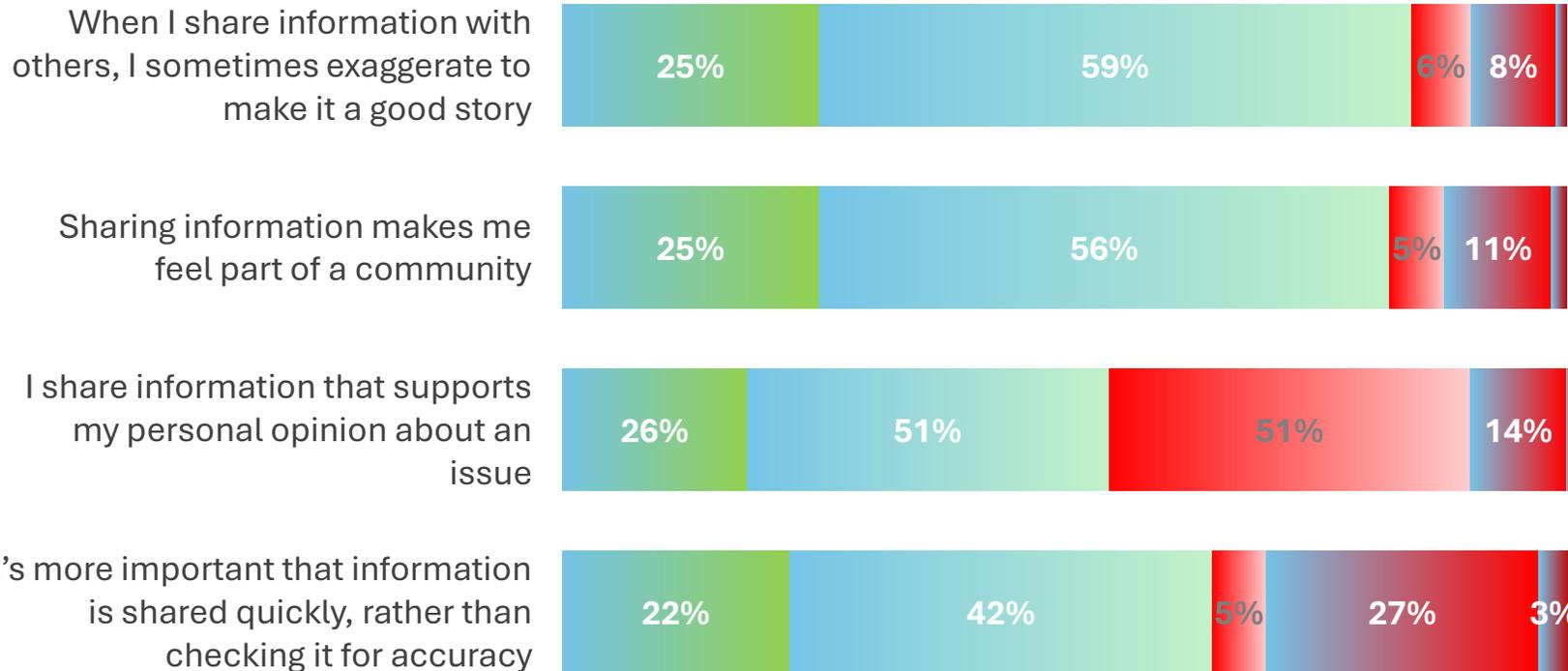
Q. How confident are you in your ability to identify false or misleading information? Base: n=1,068

Q. Which types of people or organisations do you think are most responsible for creating and disseminating false or misleading information? Base: n=1,068

# Attitudes to information-sharing demonstrate poor practices, with a majority emphasising speed over efforts to check accuracy

Perceptions of Information Sharing

Strongly agree ← Agree Neither Disagree → Strongly disagree



Those who lack confidence in their ability to identify false information are also the ones who are most likely to value speed over accuracy when sharing information. Men are more likely than women to say that information-sharing makes them feel part of the community, and that they tend to exaggerate for effect when they do so.



if I get any news, I sit with it to see if it's correct, and whether to share it, but I share first with my husband, and often he's already received the news too, coz nowadays the men seem to get lots of information and talk sometimes quicker than us women!

– Woman, 35-54, Rural Upolu

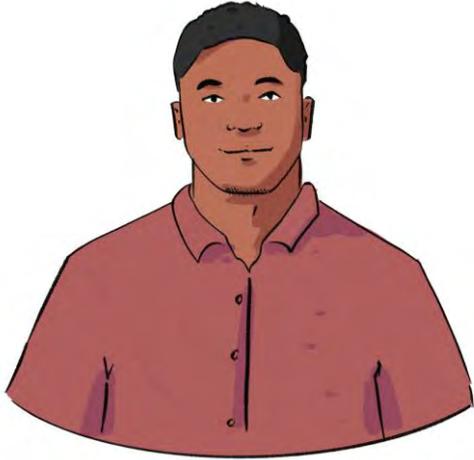
High income earners are more likely to disagree

Q. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements ...? Base: n=1,068

# Audience Profiles

*Please note that audience profiles are developed based on reported data to help visualise the findings and for easier comprehension of the findings.*

# Young urban man: Aolani



## ***Irregular income from work and always anxious about covering expenses for the family***

Aolani is a hardworking construction worker living in Apia with his mother and three sisters. His income is irregular and there are times when he has to go without work between projects. This uncertainty often causes him to worry about covering his family's expenses. His main goal is to secure a regular job to better support his family.

## ***Becoming active social media user, especially Facebook***

A few years ago, he received a mobile phone from his brother working overseas as a gift. Since then, he has mainly used it for making calls with friends and using social media – particularly Facebook, which has become a big part of his daily routine. He enjoys social media for its speed and convenience and allowing him to access both news and entertainment in one place. Checking Facebook for news updates is the first thing he does every morning after waking up.

Age 26

Occupation **Construction worker**

Marital status **Single**

Educated to **Secondary**

Location **Apia**

Aolani also loves watching movies and sports like rugby on his phone and often watches them during his work breaks. After dinner, he returns to Facebook and stays online until his battery goes flat or he uses up his data. Apart from social media, he also gets news updates from his church friends. Sometimes, they meet up and discuss the information they've seen online.

## ***Trusts friends more than social media due to concerns about false information***

Although Aolani gets most of his news and updates from social media, he worries about false information, which he believes he sees on social media frequently. And yet, while he knows he should verify information before sharing it, he rarely does so. He tends to share posts that reflects his opinions and sometimes admits to exaggerating stories to make them more interesting or entertaining for others.



# Older rural woman: Sosefina



Age	60
Occupation	Homemaker
Marital status	Married
Educated to	Primary
Location	Savai'i

## ***Unemployed but often occupied with chores and church related activities***

Sosefina is a mother of four who lives in a village in Savai'i. Her husband, a retired fisherman, stays at home with her. Most of her days are caught up with household chores and church-related activities. Their children work overseas as seasonal workers, and the couple relies on the remittances they send. With the rising cost of living, she carefully manages the remittance money to make sure it covers the family's needs.

## ***Uses husband's phone for making calls and accessing social media but enjoys listening to radio***

She uses her husband's mobile phone to communicate with her children abroad. Occasionally, she watches content her husband shows her on Facebook, but she doesn't enjoy spending much time on the platform due to high data costs and a lot of content she sees as irrelevant gossip. Most of the time, she keeps the radio playing in the background while doing chores. She enjoys listening to music and religious programmes on radio.

As she has started experiencing some health issues, she is interested in accessing information about health, but she finds it difficult to get it. Although she sometimes receives news or information from different sources such as radio, social media (occasionally), family and friends, she tends to trust her immediate family and pastor the most because she believes their information is usually accurate.

## ***Loves sharing information with others and sometimes risks unknowingly spreading false news or information***

Sosefina enjoys sharing information with others at bingo clubs. When she hears something from people living in another place or sees it on social media, she shares it with her neighbours and friends in the community, especially with those who do not have access to media devices. She wants others to hear what she hears as they are living in the same community. She admits that she has sometimes shared false information without realising it was untrue.



# Appendix – Methodology

# Research Design

The research was designed as a nationally representative quantitative study using telephone interviews, supported by a smaller number of in-depth qualitative interviews and focus groups with audiences who are less likely to be able to be reached by the telephone.

The quantitative study was carried out with 1,068 people over the telephone. Although other methods were considered, the costs and logistics of face-to-face research were not feasible in the scope of this study and were unlikely to be able to reach significantly more people in such geographic contexts due to the travel required. The telephone survey method was expected to provide a good cross-section of the population by using a method known as Random Digit Dialling – a technique that allows anyone with access to a phone to have an equal chance of being included in the research. The research also employed an approach that asked those who are not the primary phone owner or user to participate, given the understanding that households often share phones - and thereby seeking to be even more inclusive.

Quotas were also be applied so that the number and profile of respondents reflects known population characteristics by criteria such as gender, age, and location.

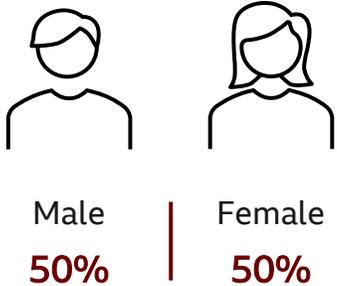
The qualitative interviews were also designed to include the voices of marginalised groups, and aimed to include much more remote respondents from hard-to-reach islands and geographies.



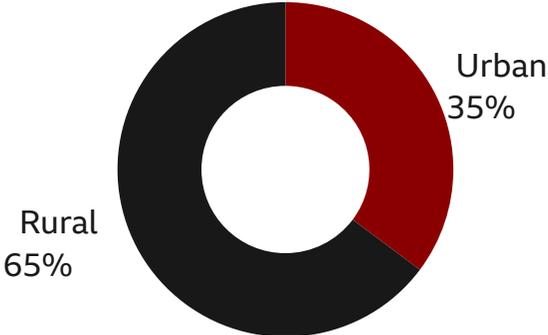
# Profile of Quantitative Survey Respondents

**Total Sample n=1,068 mobile phone users**

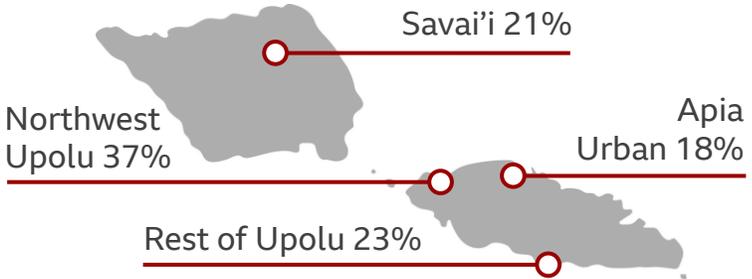
## Gender



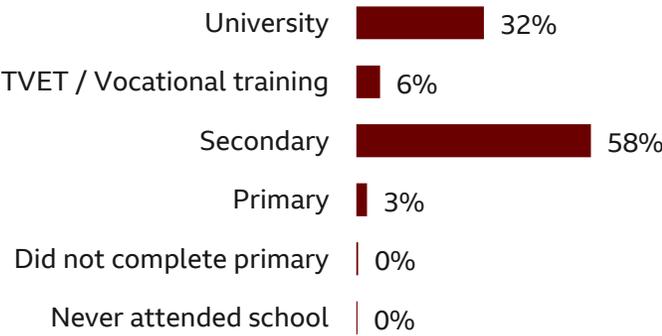
## Density



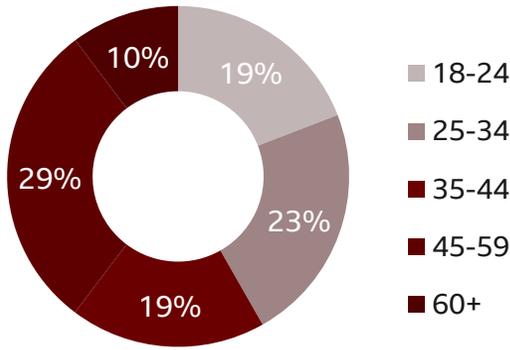
## Region



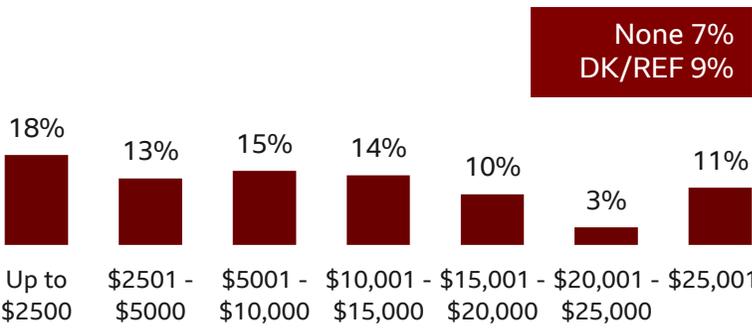
## Education Level



## Age Group



## Income



# Access to Briefing Paper

**Please kindly scan the QR code or access through the link below:**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/publications-and-resources/research/briefings/pacific-islands/understanding-audiences-pacific-islands-2025/>





## Audience Research:

### “Understanding media habits and preferences of Samoans”

This research aimed to understand current data on the Samoa media landscape and audiences. It also explored ways in which media and communication can be used to engage and support Samoans.

November 2025

Organized by



Supported by:



British High Commission Apia



UK International  
Development  
Partnership | Progress | Prosperity