Final technical report

Understanding Digital Access and Use in the Global South

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1 Executive summary

1. *Understanding Digital Access and Use in the Global South,* subsequently rebranded as *AfterAccess* is a collaborative data collection project across Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is an effort to build an evidence base for digital policymaking for the Global South, through coordinated nationally representative surveys across the Global South, using common methodology and common research instruments.[1] The rationale for this is to fill the dearth of data on what level of access/ownership and use people of the Global South have, and identify the barriers and opportunities. Specifically, the project objectives were to:
    a. *Understand users: how is information/knowledge acquired and what role do ICTs play in that process? What are usage patterns of different demographics and what are the drivers of such patterns? What is the evolution of ICT use and the impact on consumer welfare? What is the effect of affordability in the context of real users, not national averages that mask inequalities?*
    b. *Understand non-users: what are the barriers to the access, use of, and full digital participation by citizens (as differentiated by various demographic characteristics) and enterprises?*
    c. *Influence policy: by taking the systematic and rigorous evidence into policy processes, thereby catalyzing policy change that is evidence based and enables positive socio-economic improvements through use of ICTs.*

2. This final technical report is submitted to IDRC by LIRNEasia, and covers the research conducted in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India and Pakistan (four of the six Asian countries included in the AfterAccess project), which is funded through this grant.

3. Toward achieving the objectives set out, data collection was conducted through face to face surveys of the 15-65 population in each country, with sample sizes of 2,000 each in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Cambodia and 5,000 in India.

4. Stratified random sampling to ensure national representation of the target group. The margin of error of the sample estimates are approximately +/-3% in each country, with a confidence level of 95%.

5. The study identified that mobile ownership among the 15-65 population of Bangladesh, Cambodia, India and Pakistan is low compared to much of the Latin American survey countries and slightly higher compared to the poorer African countries. Much of the mobile ownership that exists in these countries is limited to basic mobile devices, therefore offering a limited experience, and no or little internet for the majority. Large disparities between genders,

[1] With minor local adaptations

urban/rural, rich/poor, young/old etc. were seen in terms of mobile and smartphone ownership, as well as internet (including social media, ecommerce, egov services, etc.) were observed. For example, the gender gap in internet use was highest in Bangladesh, with women 62% less likely to use the internet than men. The lack of internet use was driven firstly by low smartphone ownership, and secondly by low levels of awareness or knowledge about the internet.

6. The key outputs of this project include a report of the data from *all* 23 survey countries (in Asia, Latin America and Africa; funded both by IDRC as well as SIDA and the Ford Foundation); country-themed dissemination at events organized for the four grant countries (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia); participation at numerous conferences and meetings; op-eds published in targeted media; inter alia.

7. The project has been recognized in multiple ways as a source of much-needed robust data on mobile and internet use in the survey countries under this grant and the Global South at large. One such example is the award of the #EQUALSinTech research award in 2018. LIRNEasia has used the data collected under this grant (and expects to continue to do so) in various ways and fora, if not in efforts to directly affect policy changes, but to shape the discourse and provide evidence for other key actors who are capable of affecting policy change.

8. A key change to the project scope in Asia was made, namely, the removal from scope of the proposed enterprise surveys (aimed at understanding the use of digital technologies among small and medium enterprises). This was ere removed from scope due to time and resource considerations. Given time constraints, it was deemed better use of resources to slightly increase the size of the samples (from the planned 1,500) of the main ICT access and usage survey (among the 15-65 population) to allow for second-level analysis (e.g., to enable us to analyze the data by gender * urban/rural) with a sufficient base of respondents.

2 The research problem

2.1 Backdrop

The Global South is undergoing rapid social and economic change as a result of the confluence of mobile and broadband technologies on the continent. There is mounting evidence that broadband directly contributes to job creation and stimulates economic growth. The improvements in the flows of information and the reduction in transaction costs not only improves the efficiency of business but enhances the well-being of those who are connected to the Internet. But there is also evidence of an increasing divide not only between those with access to such services and those without access, but between those who are connected with the means and skills to utilize the Internet optimally and those who are not. From a policy perspective this requires extending interventions to address inequality from those focused purely on supply-side investment and operator- based strategies to those focusing on demand side challenges, still of affordability, but also a range of others enabling or enhancing digital inclusion – education, income, e-skills of various kinds at various levels, content and language.

As we move from voice communication services to the global complex adaptive system which is the Internet, policy cannot only be understood as an infrastructural issue any longer. It can also not be siloed into a single policy sector. The cross-cutting nature of ICT in the economy and society with the public and private sectors together with the factors determining digital inequality lying outside of the traditional communications sector, imply that integrated and coordinated policy responses are required form the state. While access to affordable bandwidth will remain a key objective of any policy and a necessary condition for realizing the benefits of broadband Internet, it is by no means a sufficient condition for these benefits.

Identifying the best points for policy intervention from this perspective will require far better understanding of demand, or the absence of it; of users, citizens, entrepreneurs, and consumers in all their diversity; what or what not they are using their mobile devices to do; what they are prepared to pay for and what not; their use of social networking and other services; their response to zero-rated or pared down services or platforms, or commercial or technological innovations and regulatory changes; whether these stimulate take up and are a gateway to open Internet use or whether they are Internet ghettos for the poor; the reasons for people being offline; and what they are using the Internet for when they are. Moving ‘Beyond Access’ to better understand these challenges and to build an evidence base for demand side intervention is the primary purpose of this new round of data collection, indicator development, and analysis.

2.2 Rationale

Evidence-based policy formulation is a must among LDCs suffering from scarce public resources and major goals to achieve basic levels of wellbeing for its population. Most developing countries suffer from a severe shortage of basic ICT statistical data and analysis to inform policy and regulation. To achieve the SDGs regarding ICT

appropriation and use, and realize the potential of ICT to enhance development outcomes for the people, solid and appropriate data are needed.

National statistics offices and regulators generally do not collect the demand-side data needed to measure ICT access and use to determine current policy and regulatory outcomes and thereby identify points of policy intervention to meet public interest objectives. They are therefore unable to report to international and multilateral agencies (ITU, WB, etc.) for them to accurately reflect on the position of many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America in global indices. While the ITU collects supply-side (subscribers/pricing) statistics, which are also drawn on by the World Bank, OECD, WEF for comparative evidence-based telecommunications policy discussions, no organization collects corresponding demand-side (use/spending) statistics across Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia or Latin America.

CETIC in Brazil collects comprehensive demand-side indicators for Brazil and some parts of LatAm, but these remain at the descriptive and indicator level and are not modeled to identify deeper relationships and dynamics. For this reason, one can talk about service prices but not actual affordability of services, except in broad terms (estimating affordability by fraction of income – where the fraction considered affordable is extrapolated from OECD survey numbers). Similarly, service uptake statistics (Internet use, mobile subscriptions and non-use rates, etc.) are very dated, unreliable, unsystematic and extremely inaccurate. Without complementary data the story provided by the supply side is incomplete and falls short for solving policy problems within countries. This proposed research aims to move beyond the access issues that have been the focus of official supply and the few demand-side surveys done beyond limited national censuses to understanding the factors that are constraining or driving uptake of Internet services.

Over the last few years at a global level this gap has been filled by donor and privately funded ad hoc research, most of which fails to adhere to international statistical standards or those set through academic peer review. Much of the ‘evidence’ arising from these studies, which tends to use development discourse and focus on issues of inequality (whether gender, the poor, or the unskilled) and makes global, national or even very local claims, is seldom statistically sound, generally not rigorous, and in some cases sufficiently flawed as to be misinformation. Yet in the absence of national statistics data, and therefore sound international data, or alternative evidence these studies, often sponsored by industry association or multinational companies with deeply vested interests in the sector, become the only reference points for policymakers – a situation of concern for public interest outcomes.

2.3 Objectives

The overall objective of this project is to catalyze evidence-based policy change that enables the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America to improve their lives through the use of information and knowledge that is shared and accessed via ICT. It hopes to do so by enhancing the decision-making process related to development – especially the

development problems that can be solved/part solved by knowledge, information and technology.

In order to achieve this objective, it is necessary to:

- Understand users: how is information/knowledge acquired and what role do ICTs play in that process? What are usage patterns of different demographics and what are the drivers of such patterns? What is the evolution of ICT use and the impact on consumer welfare? What is the effect of affordability in the context of real users, not national averages that mask inequalities?
- Understand non-users: what are the barriers to the access, use of, and full digital participation by citizens (as differentiated by various demographic characteristics) and enterprises?
- Influence policy: by taking the systematic and rigorous evidence into policy processes, thereby catalyzing policy change that is evidence based and enables positive socio-economic improvements through use of ICTs.

The modalities of achieving the above-mentioned objectives are to:

- Collect a range of household, individual and informal enterprise[2] ICT indicators that not only meet the threshold compliant with the WSIS-initiated Partnership for Measuring ICT for Development by running nationally representative household and individual surveys but to gather a set of data in such a way that it will be possible, after modeling and analysis, to offer much greater insight into the demand-side barriers to digital equality and in this way provide far more comprehensive national and regional evidence bases to inform policy and regulation.
- Understand why the behaviors seen in household surveys are as they are, thereby shedding light on motivations through qualitative research protocols (focus groups, in- depth interviews, mini-ethnographical studies) These surveys and qualitative research will be conducted across Africa, Asia and Latin America in a way that avoids duplication of costs, efforts and proprietary research.

This project supported the collection of data in four of the Asian countries, namely: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Cambodia.

2.4 Changes in scope

The collection of data from informal enterprises was not pursued, due to cost limitations. As specified in the project proposal, this component would only be completed if funds permitted, once cost quotations for the same from potential vendors had been obtained in the competitive bidding process. As stated, '*In the case of LIRNEasia, the survey will be limited to household and individual ICT use, with the informal sector sample being added only if sufficiently cheap bidders are found at the stage of competitive procurement. However, at the time of budgeting for this proposal, multiple firms have indicated that only the household survey is possible given the available budget and specified sampling framework.*'

[2] No longer within scope; see Section 2.4

With the delays in starting fieldwork (as detailed in Section 4) considering the need to have cleaned datasets analyzed (at least at a high level) in time for the planned regional panel at IGF in December 2017, it was decided to not pursue the enterprise survey, but rather increase the household sample sizes in all countries. I.e., the time required to scale up the household survey was less than the time that would be required to implement another survey in parallel (due to time required for questionnaire finalization, translation, scripting, training, analysis, etc.). This
Not doing the enterprise survey enabled us to achieve larger sample sizes in all countries. That is, national sample sizes of at least 2,000 (which would allow for example, data disaggregation by urban-rural *and* gender simultaneously with defendable levels of accuracy), as well as a larger sample of 5,000 in India, allowing for more precise analyses. This also enabled us to have the data ready for the regional panel at IGF in December 2017, which would otherwise not have been possible because there were delays in starting the field work (See section 4).

3 Progress towards milestones

Objective 1:
Understand users: how is information/knowledge acquired and what role do ICTs play in that process? What are usage patterns of different demographics and what are the drivers of such patterns? What is the evolution of ICT use and the impact on consumer welfare? What is the effect of affordability in the context of real users, not national averages that mask inequalities?

Objective 2:
Understand non-users: what are the barriers to the access, use of, and full digital participation by citizens (as differentiated by various demographic characteristics) and enterprises?

(Since Objectives 1 and 2 are similar in nature and somewhat intertwined, the following write-up is a combined one for both objectives; how the research is being used and potential uptake will be discussed under Objective 3, which is the nature of the objective itself)

These two objectives have been achieved through the collection and analysis of nationally representative data of the 15-65 population of the target countries in Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia), as described in detail in Section 4.

Data on access to and/or ownership and use of mobile and internet technologies (see survey questionnaire in Annex 1) was collected, alongside other data (e.g., demographics, socioeconomic variables). Analysis of the data showed that in the four Asian countries surveyed under this grant have overall at a country level a certain level of ownership/access/use, large disparities exist. Many at the margins (e.g., women, the poor, less educated, the elderly, etc.) are falling behind in mobile ownership/use even more so on internet and other uses beyond voice, and also face larger barriers in terms of awareness, skill and affordability. These marginalized groups largely make up the populations of non-owners and non-users. They also appear to have formed different perceptions of how beneficial digital access is to their lives (See Annex 37 for

a written summary of the Grant country findings, as well as Annex 28 for the 23-country report and Annexures 38 and 39 for other analyses of the data).

These disparities have been highlighted at every point of research dissemination, to policymakers, industry, civil society and media (LIRNEasia's key audiences; See Section 5.4 for a list of events where the research has been disseminated). For example, LIRNEasia was invited by Point of View and the Internet Democracy Project to present the gender analysis of the data at the opening panel of *Imagining a Feminist Internet: Asia*. The purpose of this was to provide the global south context (using nationally representative indicators on gender gaps) for the conference participants before the various qualitative studies were presented at the two-day conference.

Standard LIRNEasia research practices with regards to survey ethics were adhered to, specifically:

1. Obtaining informed consent from all respondents (or guardians in the case of respondents below 18 years) to interview them, to photograph them, and to re-contact them if necessary, for quality control (the consent questions are given in the relevant consent section of the survey questionnaire given in Annex 1). Consent is entered on the survey device before the interview proceeds. Interviews are ended if either one of the household or individual respondents refuse to participate (or are unable to for some other reason) and a new household is drawn from the sample, so as not to affect the random nature of the sample (see Table 1 for refusal rates in each country).

Table 1: Summary of survey responses and refusals

Country	Total attempted interviews	Successful interviews	Unsuccessful interviews			Refusal rate %	Response rate %
			Total unsuccessful	Unsuccessful due to refusal (non-consent)	Unsuccessful due to other reasons		
India	6,227	5,069	1,158	78	1,080	1%	81%
Bangladesh	2,484	2,020	464	63	401	3%	81%
Pakistan	2,347	2,002	345	206	139	9%	85%
Cambodia	3,200	2,123	1,077	742	335	23%	66%

2. Respondents were also informed of their right to refuse to answer certain questions or to end the interview at any time.
3. Respondents were ensured of the confidential nature of their responses to the extent that their personal and contact information are not ever stored in the same databases, and are not retained by the fieldwork vendors beyond the contract period.
4. Quality checks (see Section 4.4-4.5) were performed with care on multiple levels to ensure that the data we report and bring to the policy process is accurate, and not falsified or biased to the extent possible.

Objective 3:
Influence policy: by taking the systematic and rigorous evidence into policy processes, thereby catalyzing policy change that is evidence based and enables positive socio-economic improvements through use of ICTs.

The research results have been widely disseminated in an effort to infuse the data into the policy process in several ways, namely through (See Section 5 for more details on each):

1. Country-level dissemination events with policymakers, industry, civil society, media and other stakeholders present, garnering significant media coverage to the findings, and some changes in policy-maker activities (See Section 5.1)
2. Publication (in print and digital) and circulation of a composite report Asian of findings (See Section 5.2)
3. Participation in numerous international conferences and meetings (See Section 5.4)
4. Opportunistic policy interventions and media work (See Section 5.6)
5. Dissemination through social media, including strategically timed campaigns (See Section 5.7)

One instance of policy 'influence' that we can identify has been seen in India. The 7 August 2018 presentation of the findings at the New Delhi dissemination event (where the Special Secretary of the Department of Telecom, Shri N Sivasailam was the chief guest and a panelist), and subsequent (and significant) media coverage highlighted large gender gaps in Indian mobile and Internet access (see Annex 24 for media coverage). Just nine days later, on 16 August 2018, it was announced in the media that the DoT had been ordered to attend a workshop on closing the gender gap (being organized by GSM Association).[3] This announcement indicates that gender has become a policy concern for the sector. What the downstream *impact* of this training, if at all, we are unable to say at this point.

In addition to the more 'direct' infusions, we have also used the data as backdrop for and to shape much of the discussion and debate that we participate in at events and meetings, where we try to influence the discourse among stakeholders and key actors. Much of this has been to highlight that much of Asia (and the Global South) is still struggling with basic access and getting people (especially those most marginalized) online, therefore while 4th industrial revolution policies (e.g., data protection, AI, digital ID, etc.) indeed needs to be inclusive, at the same time we need to worry about getting the marginalized online at a basic level in the first place.

[3] https://lirneasia.net/2018/08/indian-government-officials-instructed-to-attend-training-on-bridging-the-gender-gap-in-ict-access-and-use-following-lirneasia-dissemination-of-afteraccess-results-on-the-same/

In turn, AfterAccess has become recognized as a rich source of comparable data for 23 countries of the Global South, exemplified by the receipt of the #EQUALSinTech award for research. In September, 2018, the AfterAccess global project was awarded the 2018 EQUALS in Tech Award in the research category (https://www.equals.org/awards), in recognition of AfterAccess' contribution toward closing the gender gap through its rigorous research and advocacy. The EQUALS global partnership recognizes 'outstanding projects and initiatives around the world that are helping women and girls become #EQUALSinTech.' This year was the fifth edition of the annual award, but the first where a 'research' category has been opened up.[4] Five winners (across 5 categories) were chosen, from among 350 total applications.

A significant outcome of the current grant is that it also led to the expansion of the set of countries covered through other funders. For example, in the Asian region, Nepal has been added on through a grant from the Ford Foundation, and Sri Lanka through a grant from SIDA. These new countries have been conducted using the AfterAccess survey method and household questionnaire. The AfterAccess methodology has also enabled the inclusion of a survey ICT use by persons with disabilities in Nepal and Sri Lanka, as well as a survey of ICT use by medium sized enterprises in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka and Nepal surveys are complete and have been disseminated in Colombo and Katmandu respectively, alongside the survey data from all the available countries (including all four covered in this grant), as well as included in the composite Asian report (Annex 28). The Sri Lanka data has been used directly as evidence in LIRNEasia's drafting the country's national digital policy for the Ministry in charge.

It is evident that AfterAccess if filling the dearth of robust and comparable data for the Global South, as various organizations (e.g., UNCTAD, GSM Association[5]) and key influencers[6] use it in their own outputs and policy work, which get heavily cited and shared. For instance, the AfterAccess gender gap findings which were presented at the aforementioned *Imagining a Feminist Internet: Asia* conference was used in the conference declaration which will be circulated among policymakers and stakeholders.

In this regard, the survey data collected continues –beyond the lifetime of this grant– to provide a rich and robust evidence base for a range of policy-relevant topics on which LIRNEasia works (examples include the above-mentioned drafting of Sri Lanka's digital policy, as well as the use of data in other ways as detailed in Section 5.6), as well as other key influencers and actors in the digital policy space. LIRNEasia will continue to use the data for policy advocacy as appropriate.

[4] See https://lirneasia.net/2018/09/afteraccess-wins-equalsintech-2018-research-award/ for more information

[5] See: https://lirneasia.net/2019/03/the-gender-opportunity-usd840bn-possibly-more/

[6] For example a series of articles based on the AfterAccess findings written by a prominent tech policy writer in Sri Lanka, Nalaka Gunewardena

4 Methodology

4.1 Sampling

In order to follow the survey methodology chosen for the study (adopted from RIA's ICT access and usage survey methodology; Annex 7), national census enumerator area (EA) sample frames and access to EA maps were required. An EA usually consists of an area containing approximately 200 households, which allows for enumeration of the area within a single day. They are essentially sub-divisions of the lowest administrative units based on natural boundaries. EA areas are usually mapped at the time of census by the national statistical organization (NSO).

In all countries, the samples were designed to represent the country with the following degree of accuracy (Table 2).

Table 2: Sample sizes and characteristics

Country	Sample size	Urban	Rural	Design effect	MOE adjusted (+/-)	Urban MOE adjusted (+/-)	Rural MOE adjusted (+/-)
India	5,000	2,160	2,840	2	3%	4%	4%
Bangladesh	2,000	800	1,200	1.5	3%	5%	4%
Pakistan	2,000	800	1,200	1.5	3%	5%	4%
Cambodia	2,000	800	1,200	1.5	3%	5%	4%

As this is the first time that LIRNEasia has applied this method, this required approaching and negotiating with the four country NSOs through multiple channels and contacts. Most efforts during this stage were spent writing request letters, following them up with calls and emails, and awaiting replies. LIRNEasia had partial success only in Cambodia and Pakistan. As such, adjustments in the methodology had to be made in India and Bangladesh, as detailed below. Accordingly, the method of calculation of survey weights has been adjusted too (revised weighting method as given in Annexures 2 and 3).

4.1.1 Cambodia

The National Institute of Statistics (NIS) provided LIRNEasia with the national census sample frame of villages (larger than EAs) which was used for the 2014 Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS) survey. Stratified random sampling with probability proportionate to size (PPS) was applied to select 100 villages (40 urban and 60 rural) to enable a sample of 1000 (i.e., 20 households per location).

Since village size often exceeded 200, villages were sub-divided into segments of approximately 200 (rural) or 250 (urban) households based on natural boundaries (with the help of the local village chiefs). Random sampling was applied to select a segment to list and then survey.

Local maps were obtained or indicative ones were compiled with the help of the village chiefs during the listing stage to identify the segment boundaries.

4.1.2 Pakistan

In response to LIRNEasia's request letters and calls, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) indicated that national sample frames are not provided to any party outside of the government. They did however agree to provide a sample based on our method, with first stage sample weights, as well as access to EA maps of the selected EAs all for a fee, on the condition that we would not conduct the survey during the national census period (March-May 2017), to which LIRNEasia agreed. Delays were faced when a larger sample had to be drawn after the fieldwork tendering was completed; this was in light of the fact that we were able to expand the sample size once the fieldwork costs were known. Once PBS had drawn a sample of EAs as per the requirements, they provide letters to the regional PBS offices to provide the selected field vendor with local EA maps with which to conduct the local listing and fieldwork. Delays in obtaining the local enumerator area maps from the regional offices of the PBS were faced, leading to fieldwork delays, and in some cases, new sample locations had to be selected.

4.1.3 India

Multiple attempts to reach out to the Indian Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, some of the state-level statistics offices as well as Indian market research companies to ascertain the availability of EA data. Conflicting answers were received, which lengthened the process of obtaining a national sample frame. Ultimately it was ascertained that the datasets which were available on the Census India website were not EA-level (despite various parties insisting they were), but village-level and that EA-level data was not available publicly, even though EA maps could be purchased freely at the local level (though the procedure for this would take approximately 30 days). Therefore we decided to sample at the village-level and sub-divide villages in a similar manner to that being done in Cambodia. We went about downloading and merging 644 district-level data files to create a sample frame for Indian villages. Once verification of the numbers was done with the official census data, the sample design was finalized and the sample of wards and villages were drawn. Similar to the method developed for Cambodia, a segmentation method was used for large wards and villages to select a smaller segment for listing and fieldwork.

4.1.4 Bangladesh

At the time when the project began, village-level household and population for each of the 64 districts of Bangladesh was available publicly, in PDF form (based on a PDF-ed spreadsheets[7]). LIRNEasia converted and merged the PDF files, but there were issues with the data, with issues of double-counting. Whilst continuing to work on cleaning the data, LIRNEasia attempted to negotiate with the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) to gain access to the original spreadsheets in editable format. The negotiations continued for several months (through official channels as well as informal) with no success, however through continued efforts in parallel to the negotiation process, by July 2017 LIRNEasia was able to find a way to reconcile the discrepancies and finalize the village sample frame. The sampling was similarly done at the village level with segmentation of villages on the field.

[7] However it has since been removed.

4.2 Questionnaire design

Questionnaire design began in January 2017, with the core being jointly designed by DIRSI, LIRNEasia and RIA so that a common base set of questions be collected across all three regions. The global household survey was finalized in February 2017, and the global business (enterprise) questionnaire was finalized in March 2017; thereafter each region independently tailored it for their region. For reasons explained in Section 2.4, LIRNEasia decided to pursue only the household survey component of the study. The English language version of the household questionnaire developed for Asia is contained in Annex 1.

For each of the four Asian countries, LIRNEasia worked with the local fieldwork companies to localize the questionnaire, adding local relevant examples and terms, in addition to the translation into the relevant local languages in each country (See Annexures 9-22). LIRNEasia also had the local translations independently verified for the Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi translations.

4.2.1 Scripting, translation and piloting of questionnaire

Scripting of the questionnaire was done by fieldwork vendors in both English (to enable LIRNEasia staff to view and review the questionnaire interface) and the local languages. The questionnaire was translated into relevant local languages (up to 12 in India). As usual practice at LIRNEasia, except for the Khmer translation, the translations were independently reviewed by consultants hired by LIRNEasia, to ensure the nuances of the translations were conveyed and technical terms were correctly translated. The Khmer translation could not be reviewed due to a lack of a local consultant.

Questionnaires were piloted in all countries by the respective vendors, and then fine-tuned based on the feedback of field staff. Summary reports and notes for the pilot tests in are contained in Annexures 5, 6 and 8.

4.2.2 Preparation of database structure

LIRNEasia prepared the database structure for the final datasets based on the finalized household questionnaire, to ensure that all vendors prepare the final datasets in each country according to a common structure, with common question numbers and a unified system of response codes. This will ensure that in the analysis all four country datasets can be easily merged and jointly analyzed.

4.3 Fieldwork vendor selection

LIRNEasia issued two requests for proposals (RFPs) for the study, the first on July 6th for the Pakistan and Cambodia fieldwork, and the second on July 31st for the India and Bangladesh fieldwork. This was done as the Pakistan and Cambodia samples were ready first, so it made sense not to delay these two countries indefinitely by tying them together with the remaining two.

The RFP (Annexures 2 and 3) contained details on the study methodology as well as a pre-selected sample so that comparable costs could be obtained. A total of 17 proposals were received for the study.

Technical and Financial proposals were evaluated according to set criteria by a panel of three evaluators (two research managers and a senior research manager at LIRNEasia). Negotiations were entered into with the top performing bidders (according to the mark scheme) to finalize cost and sample details. Annex 4 summarizes the evaluations of the bids received as well as the costs quoted. The names of companies have been removed, however they can be provided to IDRC separately upon request.

Separate fieldwork vendors were selected for Pakistan and Cambodia, while a single one, with the capability of covering both countries was selected to conduct the research in India and Bangladesh.

Given the cost structures and the timelines, considering the need to have cleaned datasets analyzed (at least at a high level) in time for the planned regional panel at IGF, it was decided to not pursue the enterprise survey, but rather increase the household sample sizes in all countries. I.e., the time required to scale up the household survey was less than the time that would be required to implement another survey in parallel (due to time required for questionnaire finalization, translation, scripting, training, analysis, etc.).

4.3.1 Negotiation and finalization of contract details

Once vendors were selected, methodological details and adjustments based on local context were made, samples were re-drawn to expand the sample sizes, and contracts were negotiated. The contracts with the vendors (especially for India and Bangladesh) took time to negotiate due to disagreement on various key clauses. That in Pakistan took extra time to finalize due to the delay in finalizing the sample locations by PBS (see Section 4.1.2). However, given the tight deadline, most vendors commenced work on questionnaire finalization in parallel while the contracts were being negotiated.

4.4 Pre-field activities

4.4.1 Training of field staff

Training of field staff was conducted by respective field vendors in each country. The training for the listing of households and that for the actual conduct of the household survey were conducted separately in each country, as the listing would be conducted by separate field teams ahead of the main survey field teams. This was done to optimize on timelines.

Training involved both classroom-based training as well as mock-fieldwork and listing. LIRNEasia participated in all trainings, either in person (during the initial field visit) or via Skype.

4.4.2 Field visits (1)

First field visits have been made in all countries. The Pakistan and Bangladesh visits (in a single trip) were delayed due to delays faced in obtaining visas, with extra levels of permission being required in Pakistan.

The purpose of the field visit is to observe and review all field procedures before commencement of the main fieldwork (or at least during the very early stages). The final outcome of course depends on the country fieldwork schedule, how quickly visas can be obtained, and other logistics.

Ideally a visit is timed such that LIRNEasia can participate in the initial training activities, especially mock listing and fieldwork, as well as the real listing. Ensuring that the listing has been conducted correctly, and where sub-division of villages is to take place, that the sub-division and subsequent random selection of a segment is done correctly.

4.4.3 Listing

The purpose of the listing activity is twofold:

1. To generate a sample frame of households for that selected EA or village segment, such that 20 households can be randomly selected from that EA or village segment for the survey; and
2. To identify the total number of households in that EA or village segment in order to accurately calculate the probability of a household being selected in order to calculate survey weights, so that the survey results can be grossed up to the national level.

Listing was carried out electronically in all countries, with household GPS location data captured and recorded in the listing datasets to enable quality checks. In some countries, LIRNEasia has also been able to monitor listing teams in real time through access to the vendor's survey platforms, again for quality checking.

Listing of households (and survey) in Pakistan was delayed due to several factors (e.g., delays in getting census maps from local NSO offices; census maps not matching with reality; refusal to cooperate by local authorities and citizens; general increased levels of security and unrest). Delays in listing were faced in Bangladesh during heavy rains and floods in October 2017.

The listing datasets were provided to LIRNEasia for sample weight calculation.

4.5 Main survey fieldwork

4.5.1 Data collection

The main survey data collection has been completed in all countries. There were some difficulties, for example:

- An underrepresentation of males in the Cambodia sample; to deal with this problem, the sample had to be adjusted in the last EAs of the survey, to obtain higher levels of male respondents.
- Difficulties applying random selection procedure to non-conventional (large communal) households found in certain parts of Cambodia.
- Adverse weather conditions leading to delays and halting of fieldwork in Bangladesh in October and November 2017, and in Southern India in November 2017.
- Delays in receiving the sample locations maps from PBS (NSO) for the larger sample (see Section 4.1.2)
- Delays and difficulties in getting local cooperation from NSO offices (to provide census maps) as well as local authorities to conduct listing and survey in Pakistan. A generally higher level of unrest was seen in some parts of Pakistan during the fieldwork period, leading to severe delays.
- Official census maps not matching actual boundaries in EAs in Pakistan.

4.5.2 Back-end quality monitoring

During data collection, the datasets are being monitored at regular intervals (by the vendors as well as LIRNEasia), as well as virtual monitoring of fieldwork progress and locations via the respective survey platforms.

4.5.3 Field visits (2)

Since Cambodia is a new country for LIRNEasia, and the fieldwork was conducted earlier than the other countries, a second field visit was possible to check on the progress of the survey mid-course.

The purpose of the second fieldwork is to observe the fieldwork taking place mid-course. Fieldwork procedures and interviews in one-to-two locations are observed with the aid of a local interpreter. In an additional one-to-two completed locations, all surveys are back-checked, particularly to see if the correct household and individuals (both randomly selected) have been interviewed.

4.6 Data processing and analysis

4.6.1 Data cleaning and processing

The country datasets were been cleaned (initially by fieldwork vendors, and then additionally by LIRNEasia) and processed, household and individual weights have been calculated, and the individual country datasets have been merged into a master dataset (which also includes the dataset collected in Nepal and Sri Lanka using the AfterAccess questionnaire, conducted under a Ford Foundation grant and SIDA grant, as well as the African and LatAm AfterAccess survey datasets).

4.6.2 Analysis

Analysis of the dataset has been conducted, starting with that for the presentations and panels which LIRNEasia, RIA and DIRSI participated on at the 2017 Internet Governance Forum conference in December 2017. The data for Pakistan was not

included in the dissemination as data collection was still ongoing and the time of the conference.

Subsequently, data were analyzed along key themes for the country-level dissemination which was conducted from August-November 2018, as well as other dissemination activities (see Section 5).

ICT adoption models (similar to that by Chabossou et. al[8]) have been developed for the Asian survey countries, which will serve as a basis for further analysis. A series of 28 binary logistic regression models for mobile phone, smartphone, internet and social media adoption/use were constructed. Datasets from Sri Lanka and Nepal were analyzed parallel to the four-country data set. Annex 39 contains a preliminary overview of the models but has not yet been finalized. These models are currently being developed into a joint LIRNEasia-UNESCAP report.

The probability of experiencing online harassment was also analyzed similarly using binary logistic regression models and the results were presented at the CPRsouth 2018 conference, Maputo, September 2018. The CPRsouth policy brief is contained in Annex 38.[9] The models are currently being revised, to include the new survey countries (Sri Lanka and Nepal).

Other ongoing analysis includes the segmentation of respondents by their intensity of ICT use. A cluster analysis technique has been used to analyze the data and binary logistic regression model has been used to further analyze the characteristics of high and low users of ICT.

4.6.3 *Dissemination*

Please refer to section 5.

5 Project outputs and dissemination

This section summarizes the main outputs and dissemination activities[10] under the project to date.

5.1 Country-level dissemination (events and media work)

Country-specific dissemination events were held as described in Table 3. With the exception of Pakistan, the events were held in the country in question, following a similar format of a presentation of the data followed by a panel discussion. The panel participants included senior government officials, private sector actor such as CEOs of telecom firms, civil society leaders and journalists.

[8] Chabossou, A., Stork, C., Stork, M., & Zahonogo, Z. (2009). Mobile telephony access and usage in Africa. 3rd Annual Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development: 2009 Proceedings. Doha: Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Doha, Qatar.

[9] The presentation slides can be found at http://www.cprsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/CPRsouth2018_Amarasinghe.pdf

[10] In view of the specific project objectives, dissemination activities are seen as a key output under the Grant.

The event in Cambodia relied on deep assistance from a PR agency that was contracted, since it was the first foray LIRNEasia made into the country. In all the other three countries, while PR firms were hired for logistics, event handling, and post-event media-monitoring, LIRNEasia's own reputation and relationships were leveraged to get stakeholders to the event and the panels. The event in India was organized in collaboration with the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), with the keynote being given by the Special Secretary of the Department of Telecom (DoT), Shri N Sivasailam (see Annex 23 for event agenda). The event received much media coverage (see Annex 24 for the India-specific coverage which followed the event[11]).

The Bangladesh event was attended by Brig. Gen. Md. Mustafa Kamal the Director General (Engineering and Operations) of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, who joined (two) CEOs of two mobile operators, as well as another senior official from a third operator (see Annex 25 for event agenda).

The Cambodia event followed a similar format as in India and Bangladesh – research presentation followed by a multi-sectoral paned discussion. Among panel members were by H.E. Kan Chanmetta, Secretary of State to the Ministry of Posts and Telecom, regional lead of the InSTEDD iLab Southeast Asia, the Head of Regulatory and Corporate Affairs of Smart Axiata. The panel was moderated by a popular TV personality. The event agenda is contained in Annex 26.

The Pakistani dissemination event was held in Colombo, and was attended by several Pakistani journalists who cover the ICT sector (including the Associated Press, Dawn Pakistan, The News and other major print and online publications). The reason for holding the event in Colombo was that Pakistani officials (who were previously supportive of the research, and assisted with visa for LIRNEasia researchers and provided introductions to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics) were not keen in co-organizing a dissemination event for the findings. Coupled with the difficulties in obtaining visas for LIRNEasia staff to travel to the country without their assistance, it was decided to bring the reporters to Sri Lanka for the dissemination event. The event was effective in that much media coverage was received, leading to interactions with policymakers via the published media articles as well as an op-ed by LIRNEasia in response (Annex 27).

Media releases were developed for each country dissemination event, highlighting the key messages of policy relevance. The media releases are contained in Annexures 29-32.

Two country-specific dissemination events were held in Kathmandu and Colombo on October 2018 and May 2019 for disseminating the findings for Nepal and Sri Lanka survey results. These two countries were funded by the Ford Foundation and SIDA, respectively, but the IDRC grant country data (in Asia, Africa and Latin America) were

[11] Though Annex 33 contains a full media coverage report for the full project to date.

also presented alongside the Nepal and Sri Lanka data, and used as comparators and for context.

The up-to-date media coverage report for the project (including that received after the dissemination events) is contained in Annex 33.

Table 3: AfterAccess dissemination event details

Country	Location	Date	Attended by	Slides/event report
India	New Delhi	7-Aug-2018	Government, private sector, media, civil society	https://lirneasia.net/2018/08/afteraccess-ict-access-and-use-in-india-and-the-global-south-presentation/
Bangladesh	Dhaka	2-Oct-2018	Government, private sector, media, civil society	https://lirneasia.net/2018/10/afteraccess-findings-from-bangladesh-released-in-dhaka-today-event-report/
Cambodia	Phnom Penh	7-Nov-2018	Government, private sector, media, civil society	https://lirneasia.net/2018/11/afteraccess-ict-access-and-use-in-cambodia-and-the-global-south-presentation/
Pakistan	Colombo	5-Nov-2018	Media (Pakistani), Pakistani High Commission officials	https://lirneasia.net/2018/11/afteraccess-ict-access-and-use-in-pakistan-and-the-global-south-presentation/

5.2 Composite Asian report

LIRNEasia has developed a composite report for all the AfterAccess survey countries for which data was available at the time of publication. It contains brief thematic comparative write-ups of the data focusing mainly on the Asian data, but the data from all three regions are included in the tables and graphs.

The report has been printed and distributed at all the country dissemination events including Nepal and Sri Lanka events. The final version (Version 3) is also on LIRNEasia's website and has been shared widely in print and digitally. It is contained in Annex 28.

5.3 Global communications and planning

This was the first time that the three regions (Asia, Africa and LatAm) worked together as a Global South project. Therefore, a common communication strategy was developed at a planning meeting in Cape Town in January 2017. At the meeting, common messaging, even key words on twitter, a common twitter account and so on were developed. It was decided to 'brand' the research under the short name 'AfterAccess.' Themes and other activities were agreed upon for the dissemination and these were assigned to a region to take the lead on. It was agreed that each region would in its own region dissemination also include data from the other regions. A separate global communications budget was allocated to the project (separate from the country-level comms budgets).

Through subsequent interactions, common branding material was developed (including a logo, see Figure 1).

Figure 1: AfterAccess logo

5.4 International conferences and meetings

The AfterAccess data has been presented at over 20 international meetings and forums over the duration of the project, on topics ranging from the future of work, gender and ICTs, ICT affordability, digital rights, consumer rights, rural development While RIA and DIRSI have also used the Asian data in their own disseminations events, we used theirs and so on. RIA, DIRSI and LIRNEasia have also organized joint panels and sessions at major conferences such as IGF and RightCon to increase impact. Below are some of the key events where we (LIRNEasia) presented at:

1. RightsCon, Tunis, June 2019[12]
2. AfterAccess Sri Lanka findings dissemination event, Colombo, May 2019[13]
3. Imagine a Feminist Internet: South Asia, in Negombo, February 2019[14]
4. 16th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium, Geneva, December 2018[15]
5. Internet Governance Forum, Paris, November 2018
6. Nepal Internet Governance Forum 2018, November 2018[16]
7. DEF 2018 Digital Citizens Summit, New Delhi, November 2018
8. AfterAccess Pakistan findings dissemination event, Colombo, November 2018 [17]
9. AfterAccess Cambodia findings dissemination event, Phnom Penh, November 2018 [18]
10. International Conference on Rural Development (keynote), Bali, October 2018[19]

[12] https://lirneasia.net/2019/06/lirneasia-at-rightscon-2019/
[13] https://lirneasia.net/2019/05/afteraccess-ict-access-and-use-in-sri-lanka-and-the-global-south-presentation/
[14] https://lirneasia.net/2019/02/ict-access-and-use-by-women-in-the-global-south-presentation/
[15] https://lirneasia.net/2018/12/understanding-affordability-supply-and-demand-side-perspectives/
[16] https://lirneasia.net/2018/11/ict-access-and-use-by-persons-with-disabilities-in-nepal-presentation/
[17] https://lirneasia.net/2018/11/afteraccess-ict-access-and-use-in-pakistan-and-the-global-south-presentation/
[18] https://lirneasia.net/2018/11/afteraccess-ict-access-and-use-in-cambodia-and-the-global-south-presentation/
[19] https://lirneasia.net/2018/10/lirneasia-ceo-at-international-conference-on-ict-for-rural-development/

11. AfterAccess Bangladesh findings dissemination event, Dhaka, October 2018[20]
12. AfterAccess Nepal findings dissemination event, Katmandu, October 2018[21]
13. Gender Speaker Series, Ottawa, September 2018
14. CPRsouth 2018, Maputo, September 2018[22]
15. MLab 10th anniversary, Washington D.C., August 2018[23]
16. AfterAccess India findings dissemination event, New Delhi, August 2018[24]
17. GIZ's "Shaping a digital future for all: our voice, our data, our privacy" (keynote), Berlin, June 2018[25]
18. CPRlatam 2018 (opening panel), Varadero, June 2018[26]
19. UNCTAD Brainstorming meeting for the 2019 Information Economy Report, Geneva, May 2018
20. ICT-enabled Economic Growth, Innovation and Job Creation for Sustainable Development (ITU event) May 2018[27]
21. 2018 RightsCon (Panel on "Frontiers of feminist issues online understanding the tensions and opportunities at the intersection of innovation and digital rights and security), Toronto, May 2018
22. Second European Multidisciplinary Conference on Global Internet Governance Actors, Regulations, Transactions and Strategies , Cardiff, April 2018[28]
23. UNCATD Intergovernmental Group of Experts on eCommerce and the Digital Economy (panel presentation), Geneva, April 2018[29]
24. National Public Private Dialogue, Sri Lanka Consumer Affairs Authority, Colombo, March 2018[30]
25. Meeting with Facebook India, February 2018
26. Training workshop on Toolkit for World Bank toolkit on Engendering ICT, Washington DC, March 2018
27. International Governance Forum, Geneva, December 2017

The data will also be presented at the upcoming South Asia Telecommunication Regulator's Council (SATRC) Working Group meeting scheduled to take place in Colombo in July 2019 (rescheduled from April 2019).

5.5 Policy briefs/analyses

LIRNEasia tried to continue the momentum developed after the country dissemination events were completed by following this up with country-specific policy briefs. The purpose of this was to identify key policy issues (based on the key findings that came out of the data) and make recommendations as to what can be done on a

[20] https://lirneasia.net/2018/10/afteraccess-findings-from-bangladesh-released-in-dhaka-today-event-report/
[21] https://lirneasia.net/2018/10/afteraccess-findings-from-nepal-released-in-kathmandu-today/
[22] http://www.cprsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/CPR_Panel_2018_AfterAccess.pdf ; http://www.cprsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/CPRsouth2018_Amarasinghe.pdf
[23] https://lirneasia.net/2018/09/measuring-the-internet-and-meeting-vint-cerf/
[24] https://lirneasia.net/2018/08/afteraccess-ict-access-and-use-in-india-and-the-global-south-presentation/
[25] https://www.giz.de/en/aboutgiz/66003.html
[26] https://iep.org.pe/noticias/investigadores-del-iep-participan-en-conferencia-cpr-latam-2018/
[27] https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Membership/Pages/events/2018/PartnersSDGs/default.aspx
[28] https://lirneasia.net/2018/04/lirneasia-ceo-gig-arts-conference-cardiff-uk/
[29] https://lirneasia.net/2018/04/lirneasia-ceo-ige-unctad/
[30] https://lirneasia.net/2018/04/56980/

policy level to address them. The idea was that once the briefs had been finalized, they would be proactively shared with key policy contacts in the respective countries to get the topics on their agenda and further the matters.

In the process of developing the first two (for Pakistan and Bangladesh) we reached out to our policy fellows and other contacts in the respective countries. We were advised that without in-person meetings with the policymakers these would have little effect, since by this time, the interest among policymakers had waned. With no further funds to make separate trips for such meetings/events, the policy analyses were not used. They will instead be archived on the LIRNEasia website for future possible use (e.g., if and when any relevant policy windows arise).

5.6 Opportunistic policy interventions and media work

The vast amounts of data collected under the project are constantly being used to provide evidence into many policy-relevant debates which affect the Asia Pacific and their access to and use of ICTs. For example, the 17-country data on mobile, internet and social media use was used in the development of a toolkit for mainstreaming gender into World Bank ICT projects in late 2017; this toolkit will be widely used in the Bank's ICT division to ensure ICT projects that it conducts around the world become gender-sensitive.

Similarly, the survey findings on platform use for micro-work were used in panels and discussions on digital labor at the 2017 Internet Governance Forum, where policy recommendations for the same were discussed by experts and stakeholders. The findings were used by LIRNEasia CEO to illustrate that in Asia, the proportion of the populations using micro-work platforms is minimal, though for example, the largest number of registered micro-workers on some of the major global platforms originate from India. The results were quoted in other panels and discussions at the conference. The data has also been presented at an ITU and UNCTAD meetings where the future of work, ecommerce and the digital economy were topics of debate.

The data from the three regions is also the basis of a chapter in the recently published UN ICT Equals Research Group Inaugural report which will is expected to be widely used and referenced by key decision makers.

The social media use data was presented to Facebook India senior staff in March 2018 also.

The gender-disaggregated data have also been used in multiple presentations at the IGF, UNCTAD, RightsCon, GIZ meetings, ITU indicators symposium, etc., providing rigorous comparative data points as evidence on topics ranging from access, social media use, online harassment, online work, etc. See Section 5.4 for a full list.

AfterAccess survey data was also shared with GSMA to assist in their tracking of the gender gap in mobile access over time.

Following the Sri Lanka dissemination event, the data has been picked up by influential tech policy writer Nalaka Gunawardana, who has authored a series of articles based on the findings.[31]

Op-eds have also been published on topics ranging from methodology, to e-gov to the proposed Bangladesh mobile tax proposals. The Bangladesh AfterAccess data has also been used in a case study within a policy intervention in Myanmar discussing the proposed removal of price floors on data.

Similarly, the Sri Lanka [32] AfterAccess data has Drafting the country's national digital policy for Ministry of Digital Infrastructure and IT.

5.7 Dissemination across social media

LIRNEasia maintains an active social media presence for AfterAccess, for example running a gender campaign timed with International Women's Day (22 March) through a series of tweets containing key gender graphics based on the data. A similar set of tweets were published in time for following international days,

- International Day of Rural Women (15 October)
- Data Privacy Day (28 January)
- Safer Internet Day (5 February)
- Valentine's Day (14 February)
- International Women's Day (8 March)

Dissemination events and other presentations are live-tweeted, and LIRNEasia researchers regularly engage in related conversations. More details on social media reach are contained in Annex 34.

5.8 Capacity building

LIRNEasia has built capacity as a result of this project, both internally as well as externally. Internally, the research skills of our researchers have expanded in particular with regard to survey design and implementation. Given the requirement to adopt the more hands-on approach to sampling and sample design (as per the common global methodology), LIRNEasia project team members have been built in capacity on sampling, sample design, listing, as well as weighting and fieldwork quality control. The hands-on experience in sample design, including the tradeoffs (between time, cost, accuracy) involved in design decisions have been a valuable learning experience for project staff. The imposition of the global methodology has required LIRNEasia to take a more hands on approach to adapting the method and monitoring the implementation of the survey by fieldwork companies, which has also added a

[31] The first of which is available here: http://epaper.themorning.lk/Home/ShareArticle?OrgId=09ee74d8&imageview=1

[32] Though Sri Lanka was not funded under this grant, this grant enabled the funding of Sri Lanka via SIDA

new dimension to the skillset of researchers. This will greatly enhance the quality of future surveys conducted by LIRNEasia, in terms of accuracy and quality control. This has allowed us to continue to advocate for the adoption of rigorous methodology for demand side data collection among policymakers, private sector etc. This has also allowed us to provide more detailed critiques of other survey data sources. We have become increasingly associated with methodological rigor, exemplified by the invitation to review the GSM Association's gender research methodology toolkit published earlier this year. Although we provided a detailed review we increasingly are, and specifically enabled us to provide detailed review and substantive recommendations on tackling quantitative (as well as qualitative) research design, they were not incorporated in the final version – instead the subject matter was divorced from the scope of the toolkit.

Externally, in insisting that the randomness of the survey methodology is maintained at *every* level of selection in all countries (i.e., to ensure national representation by the data), we have pushed vendors beyond their usual methods and tools, pushing them to think creatively about tackling the practical problems in applying the survey method consistently.

6 Problems and challenges

There were some challenges implementing the project. The challenges related to data collection were mentioned in Section 4.

Getting the datasets in a common format was a challenge as LIRNEasia worked with three different vendors to collect the field data. This was overcome to an extent by providing a data template to the vendors to provide the data. However, the differences were still present in the datasets, as different companies have different in their procedures in-terms of data coding. The LIRNEasia team therefore had to spend considerable amounts of time cleaning, merging and preparing datasets for the analysis.

The original plan was to conduct the Pakistan dissemination event in Pakistan collaborating with Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA), as in the past. But when the data did not reflect Pakistan in a favorable way, we found that it was not possible to maintain positive relationships with the PTA and at the same time release the findings in the country. Therefore we resorted to inviting Pakistani reporters to Sri Lanka, where the data was presented to them.

7 Administrative reflections and recommendations

The fact that the three regions were able to write a single project proposal was very useful in that it helped with the application of common methodology and coordination. The fact that the funds were separately disbursed for each region made it easier for us to administer.

The significant communication budget provided was very useful in that it allowed the three regions to develop branding and put efforts toward targeted social media campaigns.

The problem of this project being relatively short-lived means that we have further activities which we would like to complete using the large amounts of data, but are unable to. For example, the policy activities mentioned in Section 5.5, whereby we are unable to travel to countries for interventions.

The fact that the EQUALS award was never really highlighted[33] in IDRCs regional newsletter was a bit disappointing for the project.

[33] Although issue #135 (January 2019) had an article *AfterAccess: Uncovering the gender gap* about the project and mentioned the award.