Focus on the Film and Audiovisual industry in Africa:
Structural reforms and digital transitions for diversity
Introduction

- Objectives of the study
- A new global awareness of the potential of the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI)
- Definition of the terms “film and audiovisual industry”
- Covid-19: a major factor accelerating the pace of the digital transformation
- Methodology: multi-stakeholder engagement and various research methods

SECTOR ECONOMIC POTENTIAL:

$58B are generated annually by the CCI in Africa & ME

$5B are generated annually by the African film & AV sector

$20B and 20M jobs: the industry’s potential in Africa

CONSULTATION PROCESS:

32 countries do not collect official film data

43 countries incl. 36 governments responded to the questionnaire

100+ stakeholders were interviewed
Part 1. Panafrican trends shaping the future of the continent’s film & audiovisual sector
1. A slow but encouraging formalization of the sector

- The lack of enabling policies is the most crucial impediment to growth
- A main challenge is the absence of effective and reliable data collection
- Government support remains low to non-existent
- Practitioners remain very vulnerable to economic shocks
- But there are signs of formalization across the continent

55% of countries have a Film Policy
44% have a Film Commission
28% of countries have at least one co-production treaty with another country
35% offer any kind of financial support to filmmakers
2. The digital revolution

- Affordable, lightweight digital film equipment gave African filmmakers the means of production
- E-learning solutions have emerged
- Monetization is now possible on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok
- The growth of VOD and the arrival of Netflix
- A need to invest strategically and harmonize legislation

80% of Africans are mobile subscribers

5% of Africa’s GDP already comes from the digital economy

Africa’s leading VOD operators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Regions of operation</th>
<th>Number of subscribers</th>
<th>Notable original local content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Netflix</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>Queen Sono, Blood &amp; Water, Oloture, Citation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showmax</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Anglophone Africa</td>
<td>688,000</td>
<td>Tali’s Baby Diary, Blood Psalms, Big Brother Naija, Crime &amp; Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IrokoTV</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Anglophone Africa, Francophone Africa through Iroko+</td>
<td>331,000</td>
<td>Jenifa’s Diary, Husbands of Lagos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>None yet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Cinemas: adapt or die

- Africa is the most underserved continent, and few cinema chains have a regional footprint.
- The cinema business model remains challenging.
- Independent initiatives aim to develop cinema culture but are not scalable.
- Most countries report a decline in attendance.
- Bright spots include increased French investment in West Africa and a dynamic Ethiopian market.
- Nigeria appears as the main outlier, with a 200% increase in cinema screens since 2005.

### Africa’s largest cinema markets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of screens</th>
<th>Population coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>1 screen per 88,325 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>1 screen per 843,881 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>1 screen per 882,677 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1 screen per 1,25M people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1 screen per 473,636 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Number of cinema screens per region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of screens</th>
<th>Population coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>44,111</td>
<td>1 screen per 7,503 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>75,581</td>
<td>1 screen per 19,043 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>1 screen per 426,875 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1,594</td>
<td>1 screen per 815,558 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. The complex liberalization of the audiovisual sector

- From 10 commercial operators in 1985 to 1,000+ private TV stations today
- Challenges to the Digital Switchover (DSO)
- The last closed-off markets are liberalizing: Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe
- But Free-to-Air (FTA) broadcasting business models remain unproven
- And the expected boom in content production has not happened
- Overall, a complex ecosystem with contradictory regulations in need of reform

### Africa’s leading Pay TV Operators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Regions of operation</th>
<th>Number of subscribers</th>
<th>Local content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multichoice</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Anglophone Africa</td>
<td>20.1M</td>
<td>59,000 hours of local content library 28 local channels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Dstv, GoTV)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lusophone Africa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StarTimes</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Anglophone Africa</td>
<td>7.81M</td>
<td>Several local channels in vernacular languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lusophone Africa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Francophone Africa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal+</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Francophone Africa and Ethiopia</td>
<td>6M</td>
<td>4,000 hours of local content library 32 local channels incl. 9 channels in Amharic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. The beginning of a long-awaited boom in production

- The massive, inspirational success of Nollywood
- A TV series boom in Côte d’Ivoire and Senegal driven by local FTA players
- Increased investment from Multichoice and Canal+
- African directors are attracting the interest of Hollywood
- A risk of creative brain drain

57% of countries report an increase in the number of productions

$1.5M in Box Office revenue generated by *The Wedding Party* in Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Nb of films/year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Nb of films/year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Africa’s new partners: the United-States and China

- Traditionally, foreign support has come in the shape of European subsidies promoting the diversity of cultures without expectation of profitability.

- But new players such as United-States and China are taking a new, commercial approach.

- Netflix is the first US VOD platform to launch in Africa, but eventually all will follow.

- The Black Lives Matter movement gives context to new Hollywood partnerships with African creators (Disney, Sony Pictures, AMC, etc).

- China is also investing in film (Huahua), music (Boomplay), and media (StarTimes).

- In the future African content will carry potential for financial returns.

6.3M: the expected number of Netflix subscribers in 2026

3.1M: the expected number of Disney+ subscribers in 2026

$1M: size of the film fund raised by Nigerian studio FilmOne from Huahua (China) and Empire (South Africa)

$500M: size of the Afreximbank facility to support the Creative Industries.
7. The education challenge

- The continent suffers from a major gap in film education infrastructure

- Few specialized programs exist, and most are obsolete or too focused on filmmaking theory vs technical aspects

- This education gap limits both filmmakers’ ability to tackle creatively ambitious projects and the industry’s growth potential

- The animation sector deserves special attention for its ability to create a new service industry leading to a large number of jobs

- A plethora of private training programs exist but are not truly scalable

- The education sector is ripe for large-scale intervention, which could take the shape of public-private partnerships (PPP)

**LEADING PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS:**
- Institut Supérieur De l’Image et du Son (ISIS), Burkina Faso
- National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI), Ghana
- National Film Institute (NFI) of Jos, Nigeria
- Institut Spécialisé du Cinéma et de l’Audiovisuel (ISCA) and Institut Supérieur des Métiers de l'Audiovisuel et du Cinéma (ISMAC), Morocco

**LEADING PRIVATE INITIATIVES:**
- Kourtrajme School and Yennenga Center, Dakar
- Multichoice Talent Factory in 13 countries
- EbonyLife Creative Academy, Nigeria
- Realness Institute, South Africa
- E-learning solutions LAFAAC and Trace Academia
- 3DNetInfo (Tunisia), ADMI (Kenya) and Triggerfish Academy (SA) for animation
- Ouaga Film Lab (Burkina Faso), Sud Ecriture (Tunisia), One Fine Day Film Workshop (Kenya)
8. Intellectual property and the piracy curse

• The illegal exploitation of intellectual property impacts the entire industry from foreign distributors to local creators

• The inability to capture value from the film and audiovisual sector is a major deterrent for investors

• Legal frameworks exist but need to be updated and improved

• Implementation and enforcement are bigger issues

• All stakeholders from the consumers, to regulators, to law enforcement and even filmmakers lack awareness on copyright

• Technology is a double-edged sword: it can both facilitate piracy and help curb it through legitimate online distribution platforms

2/3 of countries estimate the amount of revenue lost because of piracy to at least 50%

72% of countries have Copyright/Intellectual Property regulations

65% of countries have at least one Collective Management Organization (CMO)
9. Persisting challenges in gender equality and freedom of expression

- Gender inequality persist in the film and audiovisual industries across the continent

- Morocco, Tunisia, Nigeria, Kenya and Senegal lead when it comes to female representation on screen and behind the camera

- Initiatives to support the inclusion of women exist but lack resources

- Freedom of expression has made little progress, with 87% of countries reporting some sort of limitation

- Censorship is perceived by regulators as a necessary measure to protect populations and societies from threats to cultural values or national security

SHARE OF WOMEN IN THE FILM & AV SECTOR:

100% of Lusophone countries estimate it at less than 10%

81% of Francophone countries also estimate it at less than 10%

55% of Anglophone countries estimate it at less than 20%

Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal, The Gambia, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe estimate it at at least 30%
10. Safeguarding Africa’s film and audiovisual archives

- Due to political instability or extreme climate, many early documents never enjoyed proper storage in their home countries and have already been lost.

- Only 8 African countries have national film archives.

- Surviving elements on celluloid for historic African films are found in the West, and not available to audiences in Africa.

- A Common Cultural Development Policy was adopted in 2013 by West African Francophone nations.

- But preservation initiatives (Digital Capital project, African Film Library, African Film Heritage Project) have suffered from implementation challenges.

- Mass digitization will improve preservation efforts, but the continent still lacks trained professional archivists.

**AFRICAN NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVES:**

- Centre Algérien de la Cinématographie, Algiers (Algeria)
- National Film Archives, Cairo (Egypt)
- Centre Cinématographique Marocain, Rabat and Cinémathèque de Tanger (Morocco)
- Centre National du Cinéma et de l’Image, Tunis (Tunisia)
- National Film, Video and Sound Archives, Pretoria, (South Africa)
- National Film Video and Sound Archive, Jos (Nigeria)
- National Institute of Cultural and Creative Industries, Maputo (Mozambique)
- Cinémathèque Africaine, Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)
11. AfTCA and the hope for more panafrikan collaboration

- On 1 January 2021, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) became reality

- The first stage will remove 90% of tariffs within the next 10 years, but the impact on the film and audiovisual sector will be limited

- The hope that it will lead to more co-productions is unfounded

- The second stage will create a single, unified jurisdiction for the administration of IP rights in Africa and could be significant

- A powerful, indirect impact will be the facilitation of continent-wide communications infrastructure projects

- Overall it is a strong positive indicator of African nations’ desire to foster new modes of collaboration and to spread best practices across the continent

**AfCFTA IN NUMBERS:**

- 52 African signatory countries
- 1.3B Africans in the same market
- $3T combined GDP
Part 2. Strategic Development & Growth Models
1. The “Nollywood” Model: commercial, homegrown, thriving

**Characteristics:**

- Low-cost, speedy mode of production that requires ingenuity, resourcefulness and stamina
- Privately-funded
- Business model based on volume
- Effective distribution networks are key in a context of rampant piracy
- Homegrown style of storytelling that resonates deeply with Nigerian and African audiences

**Ideal country profile:**

- Large local markets with relatively homogenous culture, ex: Tanzania, DRC, Ethiopia
- Or smaller markets but ability to tap into diaspora audience, ex: Rwanda

**Recommendations:**

- Remove admin and fiscal barriers to allow private initiative to thrive
- Invest in internet infrastructure, implement local broadcast quotes, work with social media and mobile operators to create conditions for monetization
- Support pool of local stars
2. The “Auteur” Model: rich cultures, diverse voices

**Characteristics:**

- Non-commercial, focused on the promotion of a diversity of voices, cultures and points-of-view
- Funded by European subsidies through co-productions often involving multiple countries
- A key focus on education, training and talent development
- Produces prestige films that are creatively ambitious, socially-driven but do not appeal to local audiences
- Typical distribution journey involves a festival run and international sales

**Ideal country profile:**

- Lacks local market to support a commercial film and audiovisual sector
- Ability to navigate complex grant application processes to access European funding

**Recommendations:**

- Focus on building relationships with funding partners through co-production treaties and networking at major film markets
- Invest in artistic education and skills development programs for writers, directors and producers
- Ensure filmmakers do not feel threatened when tackling topics challenging social norms
3. The “Service” Model: servicing the global market

**Characteristics:**

- Development of a local industry specifically structured to provide production and post-production services to international projects
- Potentially very lucrative model
- Solid transport, hospitality and film infrastructure, including film studios
- Diversity of natural shooting locations
- Co-production treaties and tax rebates
- Pool of well-trained technical professionals
- Applicable to the animation sector as well

**Ideal country profile:**

- Good infrastructure, pleasant temperate climate, beautiful diverse scenery
- English as an official or widely-spoken language

**Recommendations:**

- Invest time and resources to develop attractive tax rebate scheme and negotiate co-production treaties
- Invest in film infrastructure and equipment, incl. film studios and post-production facilities
- Invest in solid technical training programs able to churn out a sufficient number of graduates in each discipline
4. The “Festival” Model: soft power and the law of attraction

**Characteristics:**

- Centers on the promotion segment of the value chain
- Establish country as a major supporter of cinema or television through the organization of a notable, international event
- Choice of a niche theme or angle on which to take decisive leadership is key
- Leverages the allure of cinema to attract the spotlight on a country or region and build soft power
- Can create a virtuous circle leading to increased local production, government support, and development of education opportunities

**Ideal country profile:**

- Clear choice of niche that does not compete with other events in terms of theme or calendar
- Modern conference center, good quality accommodation, and ease of travel to the location

**Recommendations:**

- Avail public funding to support the sustainable organization of the event over the long-term
- Ensure proper handling of the event’s logistics to offer guests a professional experience
- Opportunities exist to take leadership over genres such as TV series, Animation/Gaming, and Documentaries
5. The starter-pack toolbox

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional &amp; Regulatory Framework:</th>
<th>Funding sources and mechanisms:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- A national film &amp; audiovisual policy or strategic orientation document defining development objectives and listing priority actions</td>
<td>- Basic production incentives in accordance with each country’s economic situation, such as tax holidays and tax rebates for production companies, lower tariffs on equipment imports, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- An updated Intellectual Property law or regulation, and an implementation framework including a film/audiovisual CMO</td>
<td>- Film Fund financed by the revenue collected from foreign crews’ expenses, broadcasters’ license fees and other existing sources such as taxes on viewing devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A dedicated government or parastatal body, with proven sector leadership, to act as coordinating entity for all industry stakeholders</td>
<td>Education and Training:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Facilitated access to online training tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- At least one hands-on training program, possibly outsourced from an independent organization already operating regionally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you

Division of Digital Business Solutions

(DBS)

Name and title
UNESCO
Email