

## Background

### Introduction

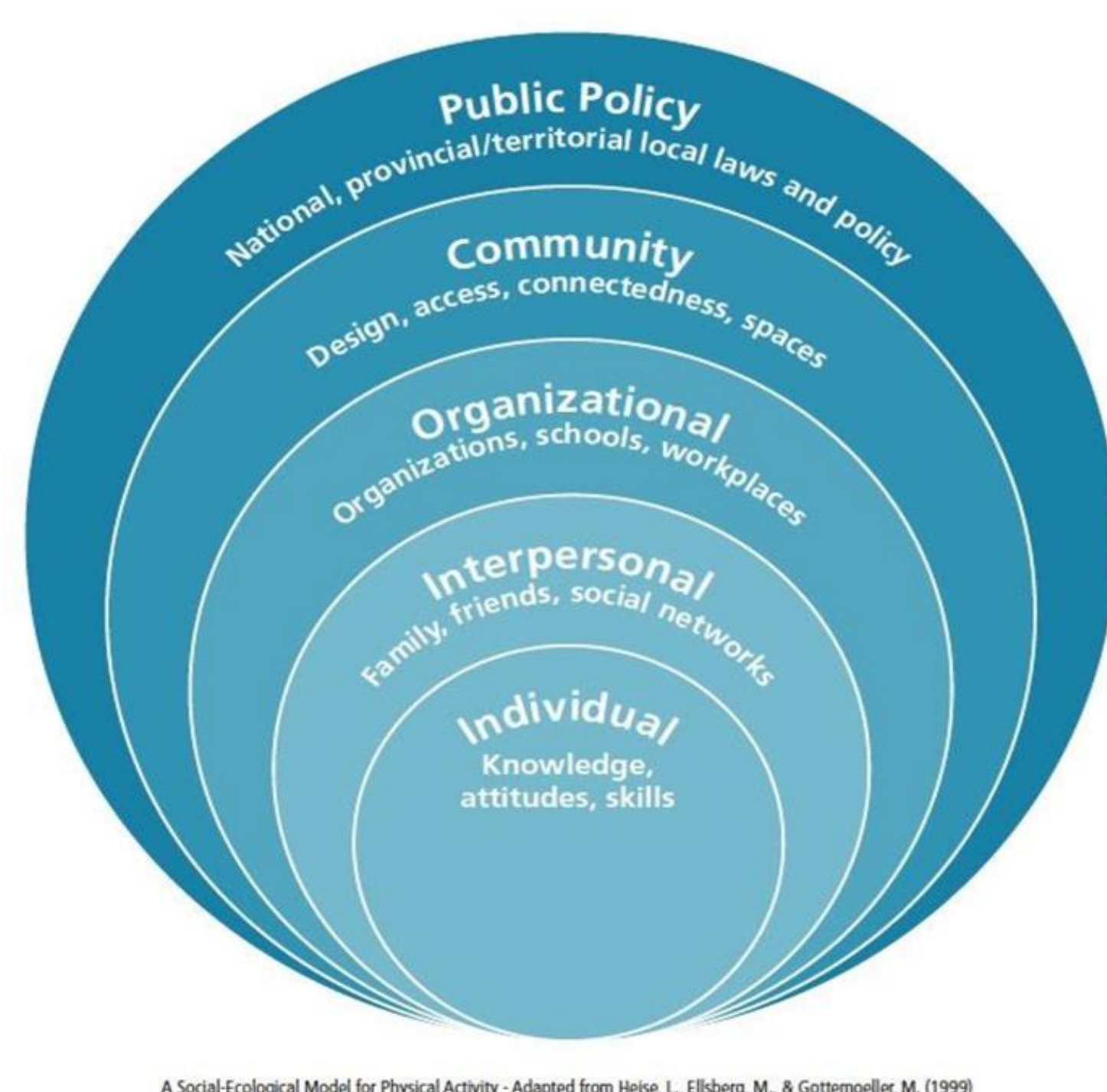
- ❖ Effective communication is critical for behavior change, public health preparedness and community resilience in epidemic-prone contexts.
- ❖ Lassa Fever (LF) remains endemic in Bauchi State, highlighting the need for targeted Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) strategies.
- ❖ This study evaluated the performance of communication channels and trust dynamics in Lassa Fever (LF) RCCE interventions between 2021 to 2023.
- ❖ Understanding which information sources communities trust—and which channels they prefer—is essential to designing effective prevention programs.

### Objectives

- ❖ To examine the performance of communication channels, trust levels, and preferences for LF-related information
- ❖ To explore how preferred communication channels and trust levels influence community knowledge and preventive behaviors.

## Methods

### Theoretical model: Socio-Ecological model (SEM)



**Study design:** Quasi-experimental

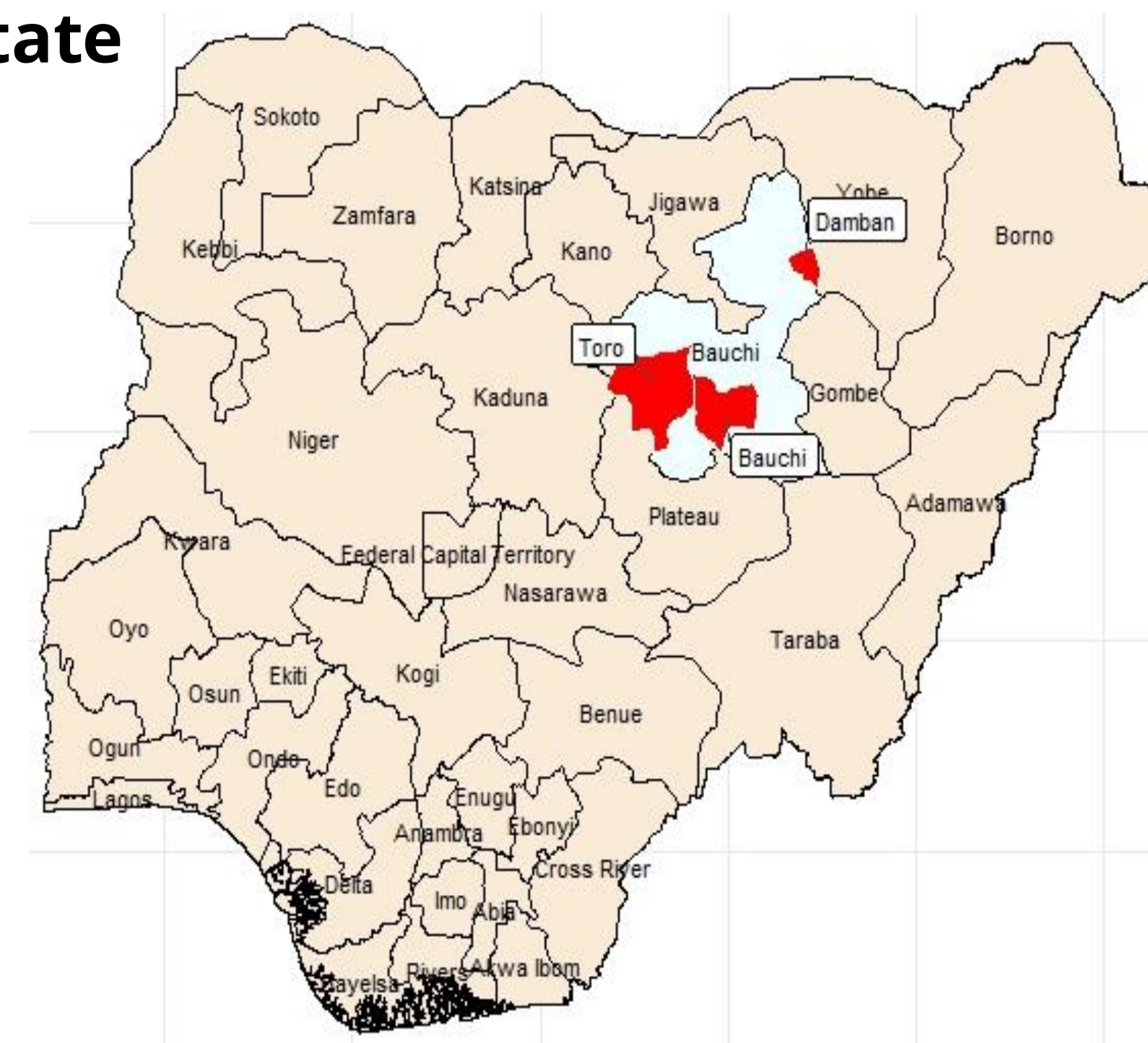
**Study Setting:** Two intervention LGAs (Bauchi, Toro), One control LGA (Dambam)

**Participants:** Multistage sampling technique of 1,544 adults

**Data collection:** Structured household interviews on LF information exposure, trust, and preferences

**Data analysis:** Stata, v17- Descriptive & comparative analysis of channel of exposure, trust levels, and association with knowledge/behavior outcomes

### Study location: Map of Nigeria showing studied LGAs in Bauchi state



## Results

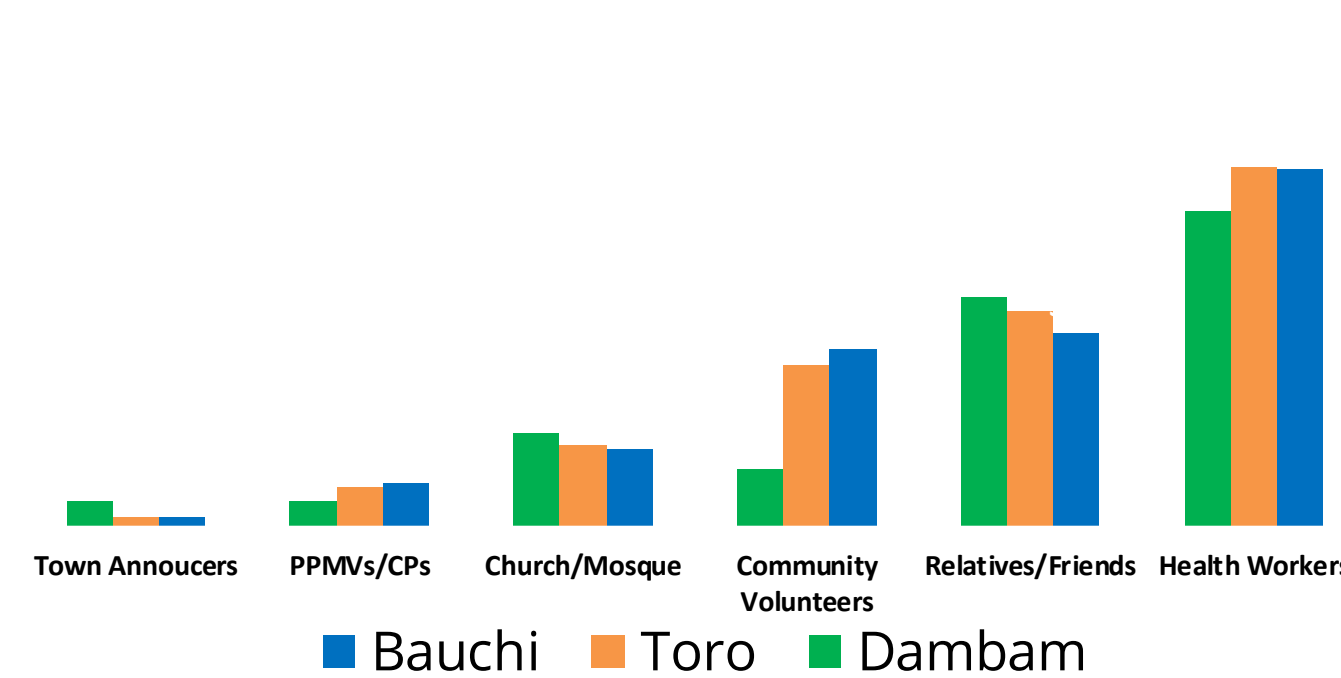
### Demographics

- ❑ Equal sex distribution of female and male respondents across the three LGAs.
- ❑ Islam was the dominant religion of and more than two-thirds were rural residents across the LGAs.

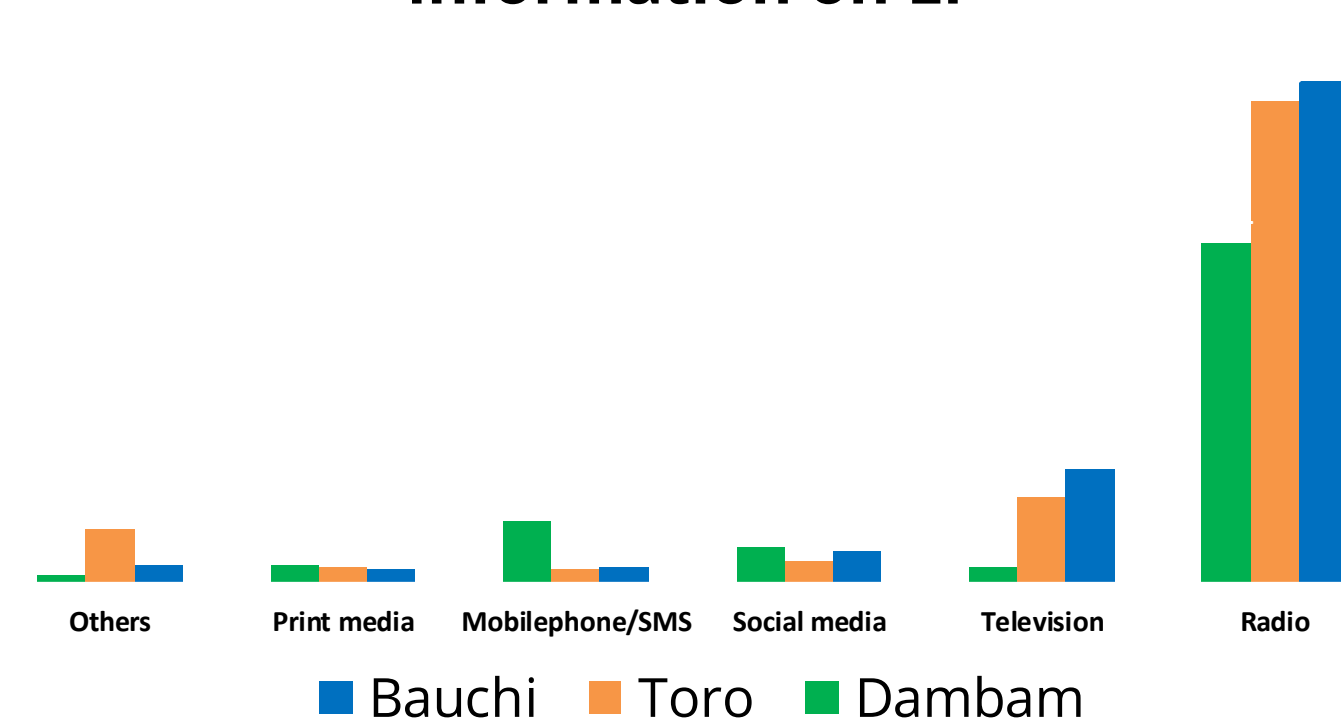
### Communication

- ❑ Healthcare workers and radio were the most trusted sources and channels of information respectively across all LGAs
- ❑ The most effective (most preferred and most trusted) communication source and channel were relatives/friends and radio respectively.
- ❑ The most trusted source for accurate information on health were health/medical professionals.
- ❑ Respondents preferred receiving information from multiple reinforcing sources, especially those embedded in social and religious structures and fluent in local languages.

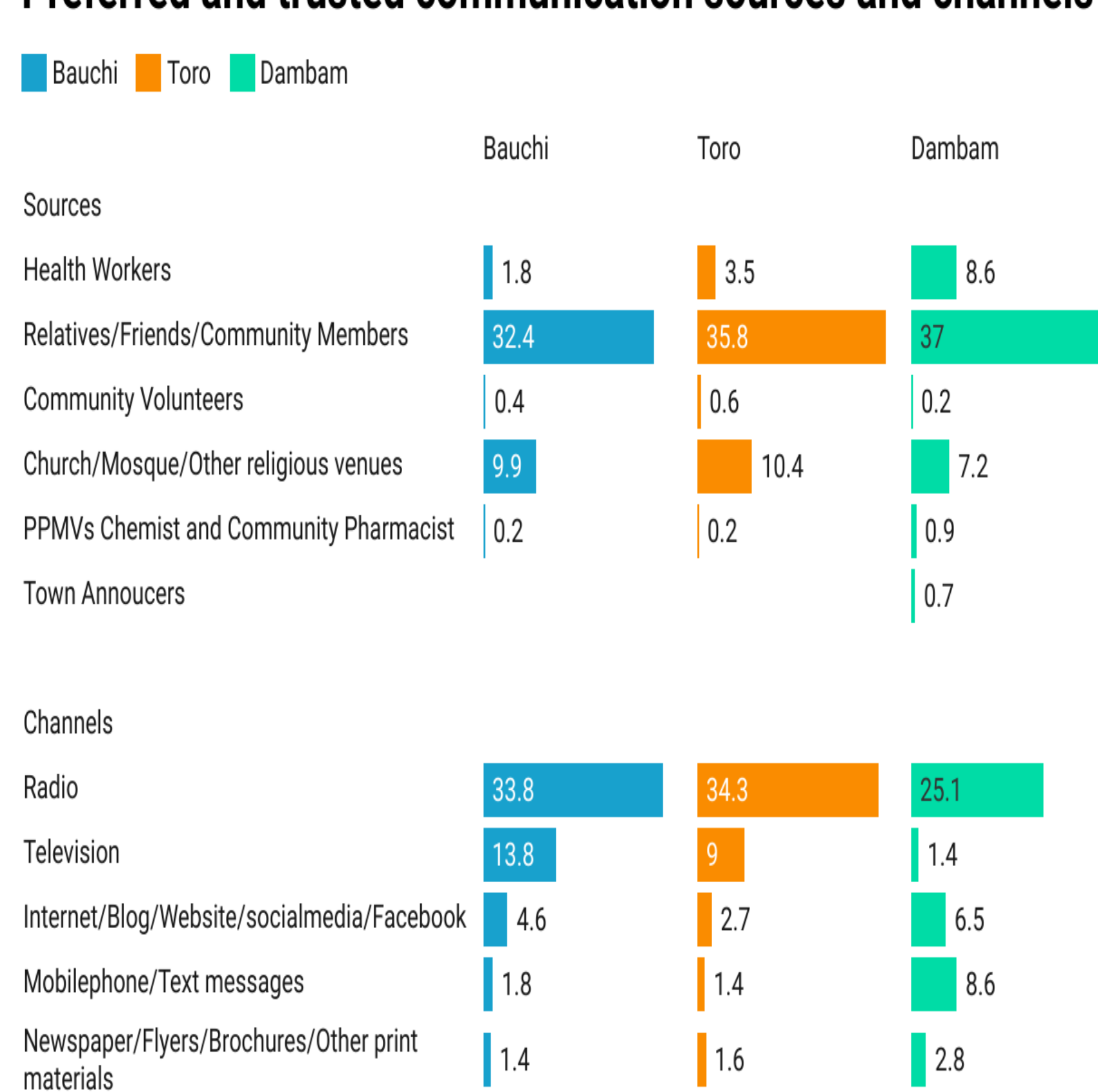
### Most Trusted Sources of Information on LF



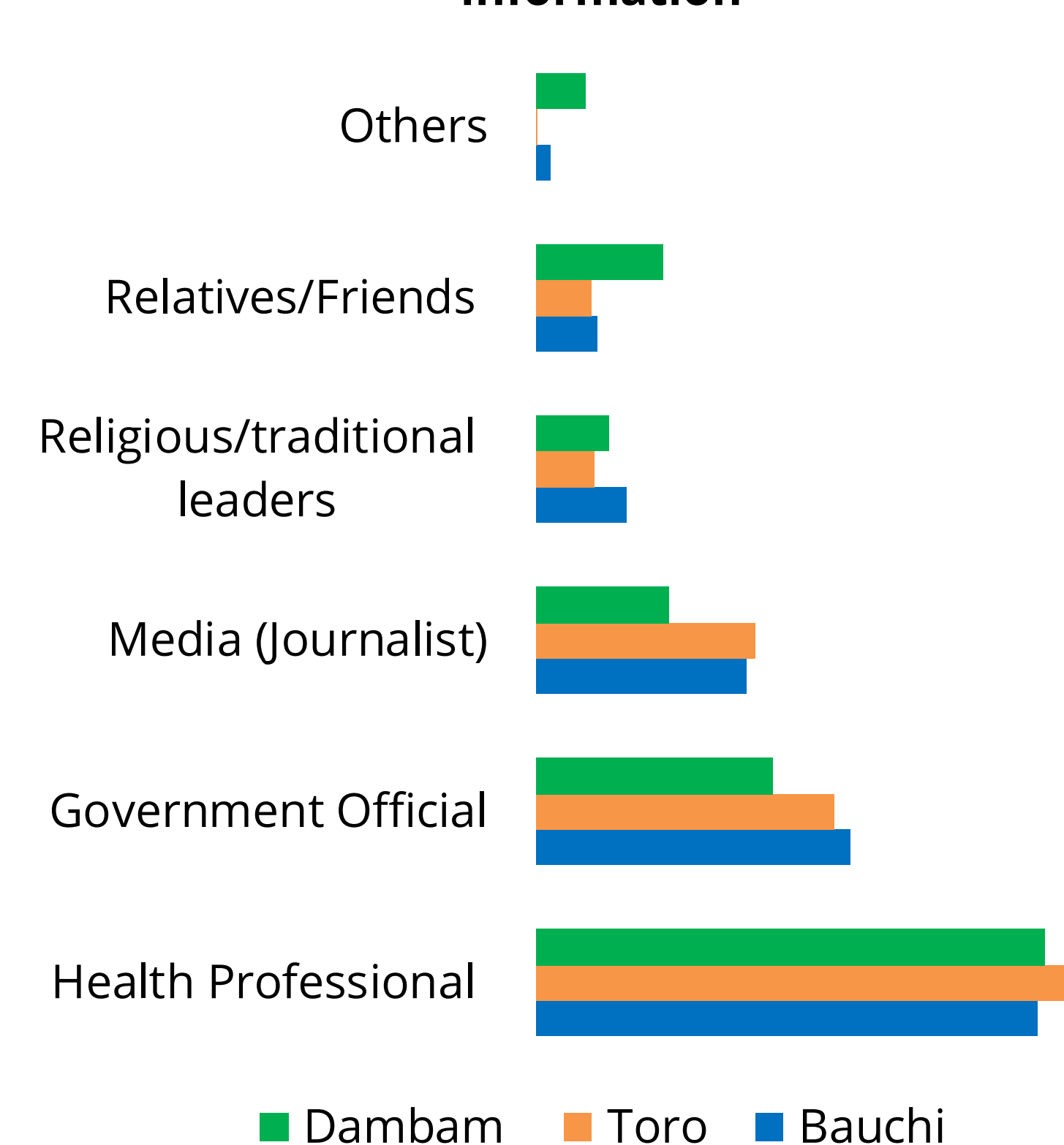
### Most Trusted channels of information on LF



### Preferred and trusted communication sources and channels



### Trusted Sources for accurate Health information



## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusion

- ❖ Culturally relevant sources such as CVs, HCWs, and religious or community leaders should be embedded within RCCE strategies to enhance impact.
- ❖ Community-based communication channels should be expanded alongside mass media to ensure broader population reach.
- ❖ The use of local languages is essential for improving comprehension and strengthening cultural resonance of health messages.
- ❖ Trusted messengers require continuous training and resources to remain effective and credible sources of information.

### Recommendation

- Adopt multichannel communication strategies that integrate mass media with trusted community-based messengers to enhance trust, health literacy, and the uptake of protective behaviors.
- Embed trusted communication actors within RCCE frameworks to strengthen epidemic preparedness and foster community resilience.

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