

The background of the slide is a collage of various Nigerian currency notes. Visible are parts of a 1000 Naira note featuring a portrait of a man, a 200 Naira note with a portrait of a woman, and a 100 Naira note with a portrait of a man. The notes are layered and partially obscured by a large green rectangular area that contains the main text.

BCG

THE BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP

CICO Economics in Nigeria

Executive Deck

DECEMBER 2018



LAGOS
BUSINESS
SCHOOL

PAN-ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Overview of documents available



Overview & key highlights from the research

Role of CICO for financial inclusion



Sizing the CICO access challenge



Exploring potential interventions



Illustrative country deep-dives



Executive summary

While CICO economics are viable today in urban, peri-urban and rural "oases", we reach the limits to CICO viability as we enter the rural frontier

For providers, economics for an incremental agent point can be favorable in areas with sufficient transaction volume

- Most agents today are found in urban, peri-urban, or rural "oases", where breakeven points are ~5 txn/day
- However, economics challenged if providers choose to invest to improve customer demand / agent viability or enter frontier
- Because most recurring costs are borne by the agent, providers ultimately need to consider agent viability, given higher agent break-even point of ~27 txn/day ("if an agent is viable, a provider will be viable")

Agents similarly face favorable economics in some geographies, but are stressed to the point of unviability at the frontier

- At the frontier, agents expected to experience low transaction volumes below their breakeven points, while at the same time needing to deal with increased liquidity management costs (~13-50% above rural "oases" and >500% above an urban agent)

Existing agent model should be able to scale to reach 51% of Nigeria's adult population

- Based on % of Nigeria's population living in location with power, in 5km radius of cell tower, 45 min drive from bank/ATM, and in locations with "sufficient" economic activity (>3,000 adult population)

Further expansion would require intervention... digitization of G2P, agent subsidies, and float runners could have significant impact; however, stakeholder engagement and more robust intervention assessment required to answer open questions

- E.g., digitized G2P payments could have unintended consequence of increased liq. mgmt costs - intervention assessment will require forecasting net impact of any one intervention, how they interact with each other, and requirements to operationalize

Study aims to understand the economics of the mobile money agent channel plus key barriers to reach

Sustainable and Inclusive Digital Financial Services (SIDFS) at the **Lagos Business School (LBS)** works to further the case for financial inclusion, through focused research as well as active engagement with all stakeholders in the industry.

In 2018, LBS engaged the **Boston Consulting Group (BCG)** to support a deep dive to understand the economics of the leading CICO models - especially mobile money agents - and potential interventions to enhance economic viability and reach of these services to rural populations.

BCG's analysis leverages primary research across Nigeria, as well as findings from our global study



Mobile Money Providers across Nigeria (incl. banks, super agents, and 3rd party providers)

— 10+ —



Agent Research through in-depth interviews across Lagos and Kano (both urban and rural)

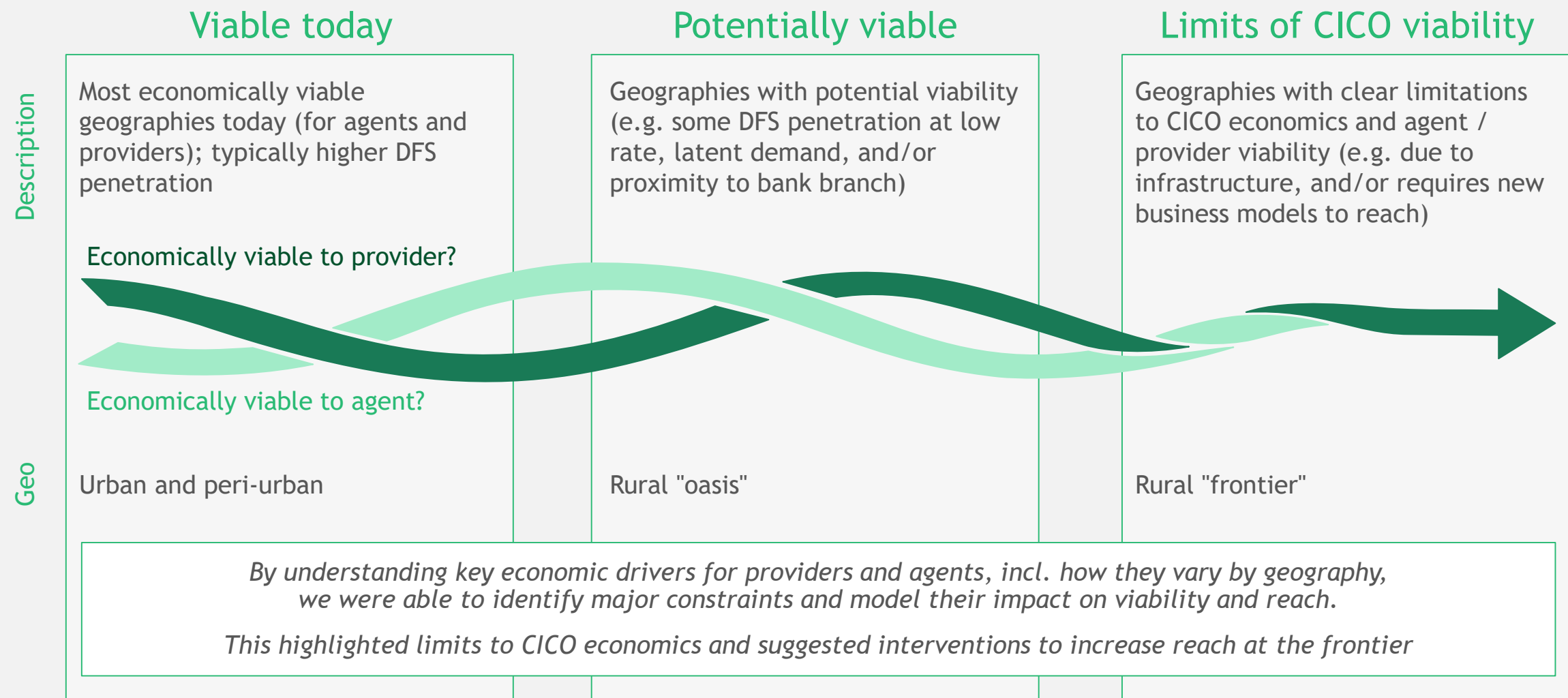
— 30 —



Global insights from similar studies in other focus countries (India, Bangladesh, Kenya, Tanzania)

— 4 —

CICO economics creates zones of viability



Detail: Most rural expansion to-date seen in "oases", expanding to the frontier involves additional challenges

Rural Oasis (potentially viable)

- Regions of **high economic activity** in an otherwise low economic "desert"; agents typically located near markets, village centers, busy streets
- **Moderate DFS penetration** - many customers have bank accounts and are familiar with DFS
- **30-100 transactions/day¹**
- **Some existing infrastructure** (e.g. bank presence, paved roads, power and mobile connectivity)
- **Covered in agent sample**; agents present in rural areas today are the ones who are able to make the business work; 85% of rural sample are profitable



Rural Frontier (limits to CICO economics)

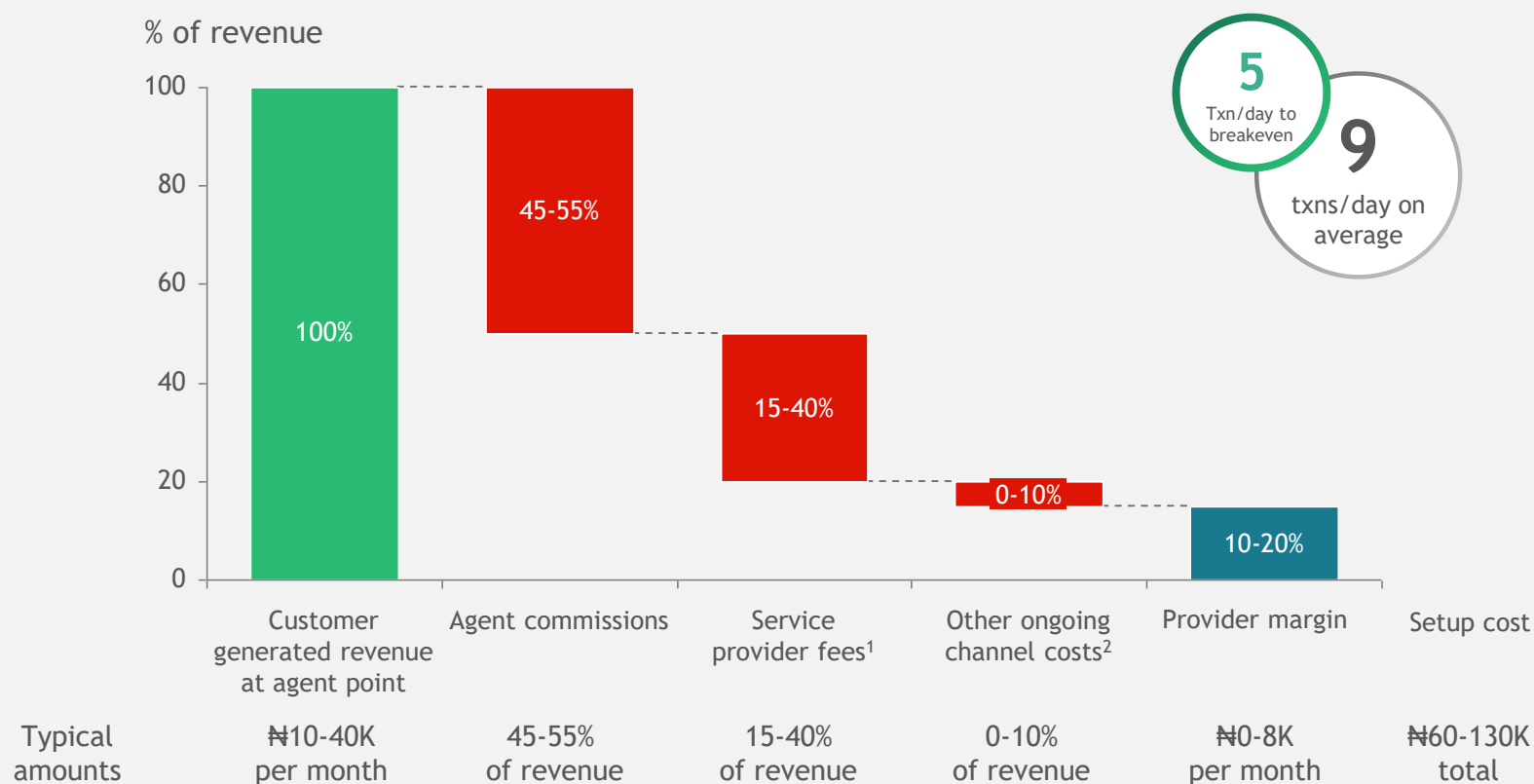
- Remote rural locations with **low population size and density**, and **lower economic activity**
- **Low DFS penetration** - few customers with bank accounts
- **<10 transactions/day²**
- **Limited existing infrastructure** (e.g. bank presence, paved roads, power and mobile connectivity)
- **Not covered by agent sample** (due to economic unviability)

1: Range taken from agent interviews

2: Range estimated from assumptions and triangulated with secondary research; see compendium for full details

For providers, agent point economics are favorable in areas with sufficient transactions / revenue...

Average recurring provider margin from single agent point



On average, slim but positive margins at each agent point

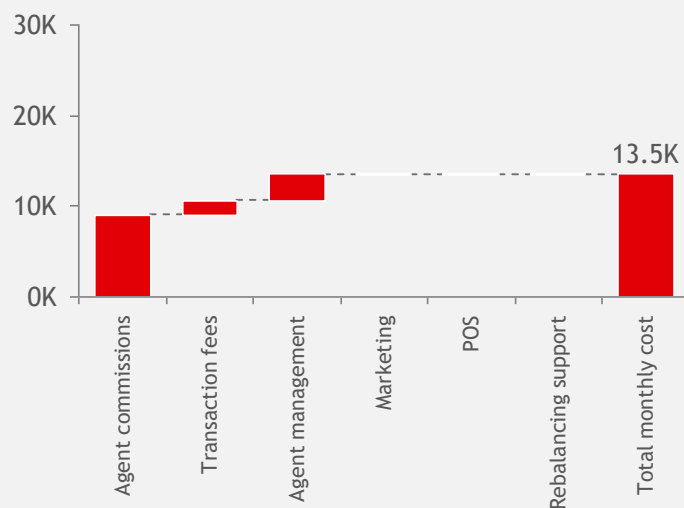
Note: does not include upfront capital investments or corporate overhead costs, as incremental agent point economics are the fundamental driver of network expansion

1: Includes any fees to NIBSS, Telcos, Banks, and Intermediaries; Higher range seen when intermediaries are used
2: Includes recurring costs of agent management, agent training, and marketing/branding at agent point; lower range seen when intermediaries are used
Source: Interviews with providers, 2018

...but cost position impacted (at least in short-term) if they invest in customer demand or agent viability

Minimize costs

Monthly recurring costs (thousand Naira)



Operational choices:

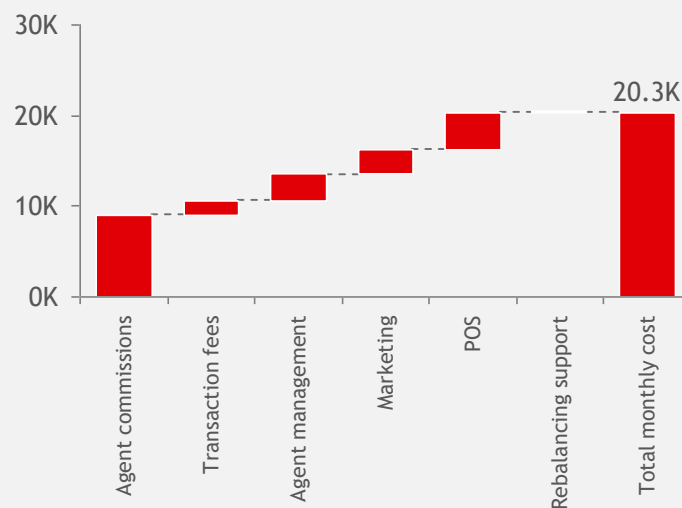
- Low agent commissions
- No ongoing marketing material
- No POS provided
- No liquidity management support

3

Txn/day to breakeven

Maximize customer demand

Monthly recurring costs (thousand Naira)



Operational choices:

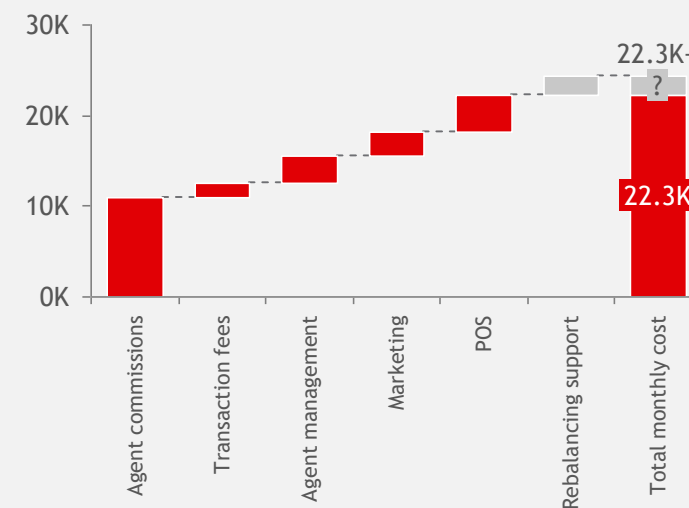
- + Ongoing marketing material provided
- + POS provided^{1,2}

9

Txn/day to breakeven

Maximize agent viability

Monthly recurring costs (thousand Naira)



Operational choices:

- + High agent commissions
- + Liquidity management support

11

Txn/day to breakeven

Providers must believe their investment will increase transaction volume 3-4x and ultimately improve overall ecosystem profitability

Note: Variable cost amounts calculated using average provider revenue per agent point (~20K per month); Incremental cost of operational choices estimated from provider interviews; Breakeven transactions calculated using average customer fee per CICO transaction (~80 NGN)

1: POS typically considered a setup cost for providers; for calculations on this slide, have assumed an amortization of POS value over 24 months

2: Some MMOs limit POS costs by only providing to top agents

...or if they move into the rural frontier

Low txn volumes



Higher set-up costs



Higher recurring costs

Overview:

Despite greater risk to agents, low transaction volume also impacts provider viability at frontier

Overview:

Providers require more time and resources to recruit and onboard new agents

Overview:

Fixed costs of agent network management and marketing can be higher in rural areas for providers

Direct impact:

Risk of negative margins on recurring monthly basis

Recruiting/onboarding:

"Although we have some data on the viability of rural locations, we always have to send a team to the field to verify things like latent demand, mobile coverage, and power connectivity"

- Bank in Nigeria

Agent network management:

Lower geographical concentration of agents means it takes more agent managers to support the same number of agents

Indirect impact:

Low agent viability leads to high agent churn

Marketing:

Low familiarity with national bank brands and digital financial services requires higher marketing spend to create demand



Provider economics are more challenged at an incremental agent point in the rural frontier

For providers to expand agent network into the frontier, they must believe that on a long-term basis these agent points will be profitable

Detail: Higher costs to support frontier agents raises breakeven points from 5 to 7 txn/day for providers

Cost to support each agent point expected to increase at the frontier...

...resulting in a higher breakeven threshold for providers

~50%
higher

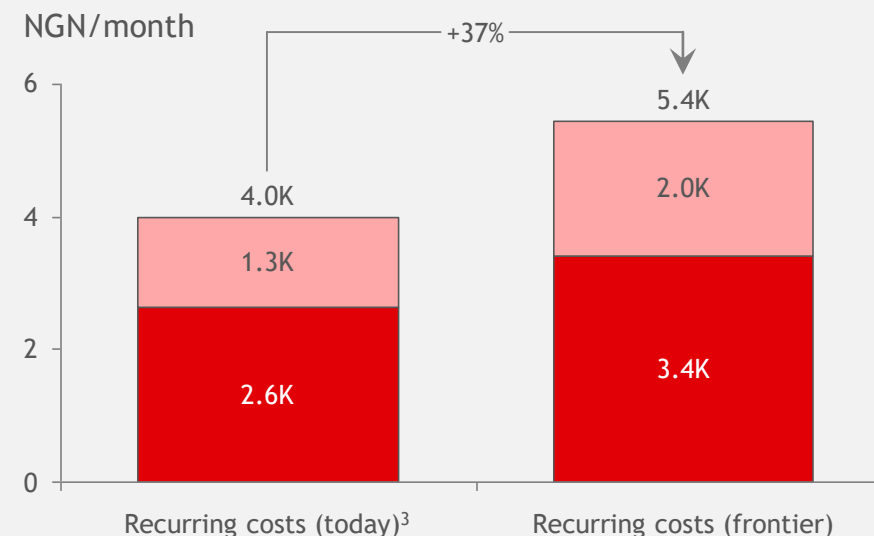
Higher marketing costs¹:

To offset lower brand awareness, lower DFS penetration

~30%
higher

Higher agent network management costs²:

Due to decreased ratio of agent managers to agents; managers can support less agents when distances increase



Breakeven
transactions

5 txn/day → +37% → 7 txn/day

Marketing Agent management

1: Based on qualitative input from providers in interviews; BCG Interviews, 2018

2: *ibid*

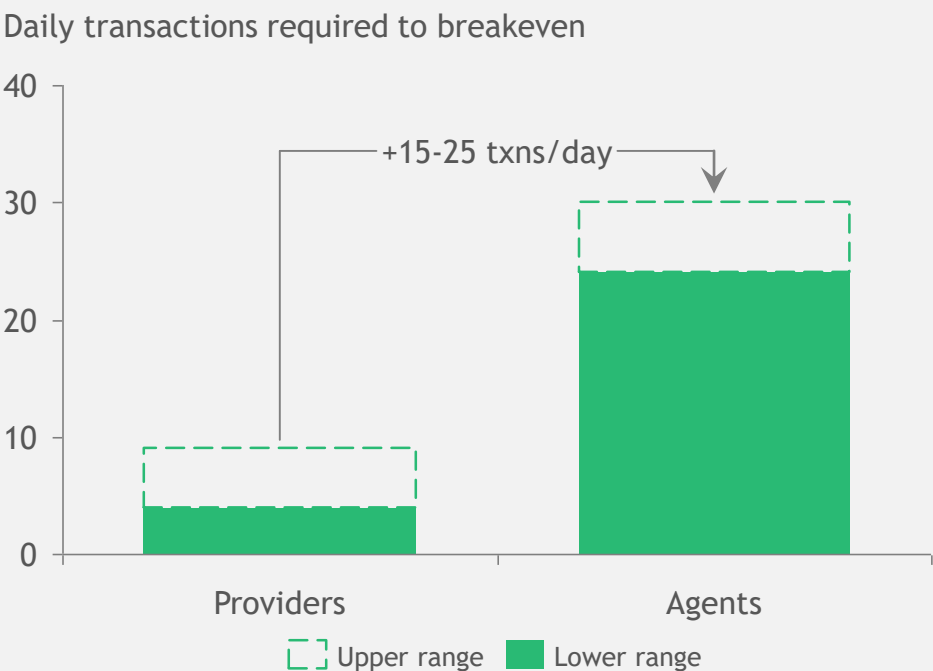
3: Average recurring cost based off of BCG provider interviews

Ultimately, providers must help solve for agent viability in order for agent network to stick

In most observed models, agents bear majority of startup and recurring costs...

	Provider	Agent
Startup costs		
• Recruiting	✓	
• Onboarding/training		Varies ¹
• Branding/marketing		Varies ¹
• Technology (mobile/POS device)		Varies ²
• Real estate (shop setup, security)		✓
• Cash/float capitalization		✓
Recurring costs		
• Training/monitoring	✓	
• Rent		✓
• Utilities		✓
• Internet/data		✓
• Fraud/theft		✓
• Utilities		✓
• Liquidity management		✓

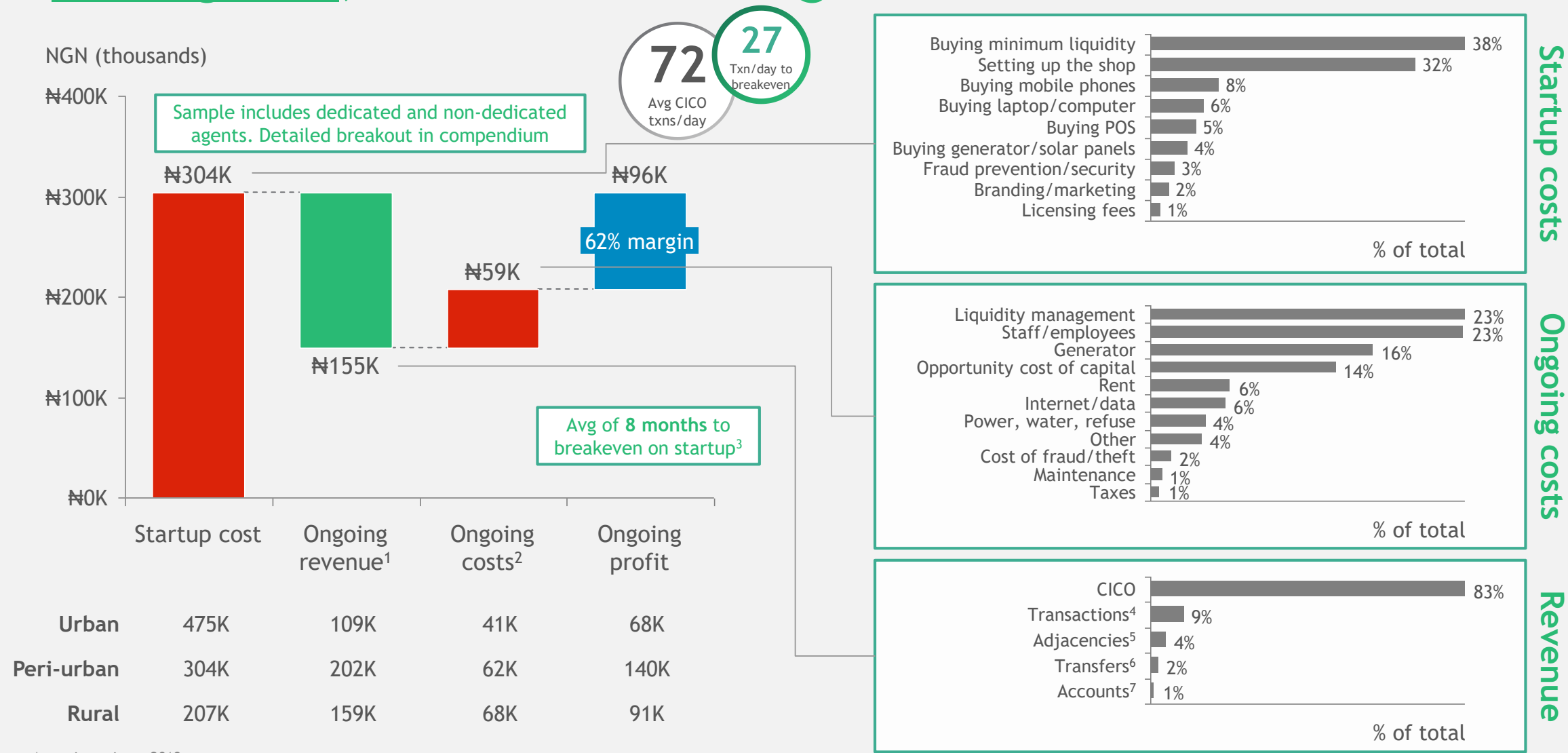
...as a result, average agent breakeven point is significantly higher than provider breakeven point



Understanding of CICO economics and agent expansion should therefore focus, as a starting point, on key drivers to agent viability

1. Some providers charge agents a licensing/setup fee that helps cover the cost of training, marketing materials
2. Some providers support cost of agent technology (typically POS device), however not representative of typical model
Source: Provider interviews, expert interviews, 2018

For agents, DFS is on average a viable business



Source: Agent interviews, 2018

1: Average revenue excludes extra fees (upcharges); 2: Average cost blends dedicated and non-dedicated agents (note: non-dedicated agent costs do not include rent, utilities, generator, or store maintenance); 3: Breakeven calculation assumes 6 month ramp-up to steady state revenue; 4: Bill payments; 5: SIM registrations, SIM replacements, and airtime; 6: P2P transfers (note: many agents did not distinguish between CICO transactions and transfers, which may contribute to the relatively low %); 7: Account openings

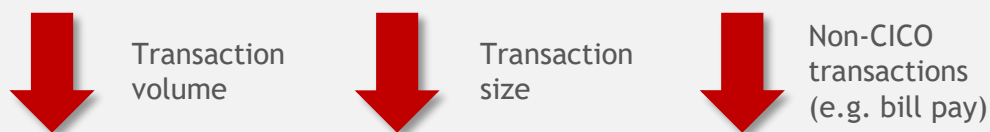
Several factors impact an individual agent's viability

	Particularly relevant at frontier				
	Agent business model	Power reliability	Transaction volumes	Financial infrastructure	
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-dedicated agents have lower marginal costs (-13% startup and -28% recurring), and breakeven two months faster As transaction volumes decrease, non-dedicated models are much more viable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unreliable connectivity to power grid is consistent across geographies (urban, peri-urban, and rural) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most recurring costs are fixed, so agent profitability highly dependent on txn volumes At the frontier, est. txn volume (<10/day) falls below expected breakeven threshold (~24/day) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liquidity management costs are higher for rural vs. urban agents Because of limited bank/ATM presence, liquidity management costs at the frontier expected to be ~13-50% higher than those at a rural oasis 	<h3>Cell infrastructure</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without cell infrastructure, agents are unable to operate No direct economic impact, but a necessary condition for agent viability and reach
Mitigating choices	N/A	<h3>Reliance on generator</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agents often cope by spending money on generators Generator fees cost agents an average of ₦12K per month (fuel and maintenance) 	<h3>Investing in POS</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite lower costs, no-POS agents take longer to breakeven due to lost revenue from cash outs (12 months vs. 3 months) <h3>Charging extra fees</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most agents charge extra fees (80% of agents in sample), providing a 20-25% lift on margins 	<h3>Reduced rebalancing freq.</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agents offset higher travel costs by taking fewer trips/month: urban/peri-urban (53) vs. rural (26) <h3>Alternate rebalancing points</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agents with limited access to financial infrastructure often cope by finding unofficial rebalancing points 	<h3>Fraud and theft</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agents currently do not appear to have high theft costs, but qualitative interviews suggest this may become a factor at the frontier, or as the CICO agent market matures

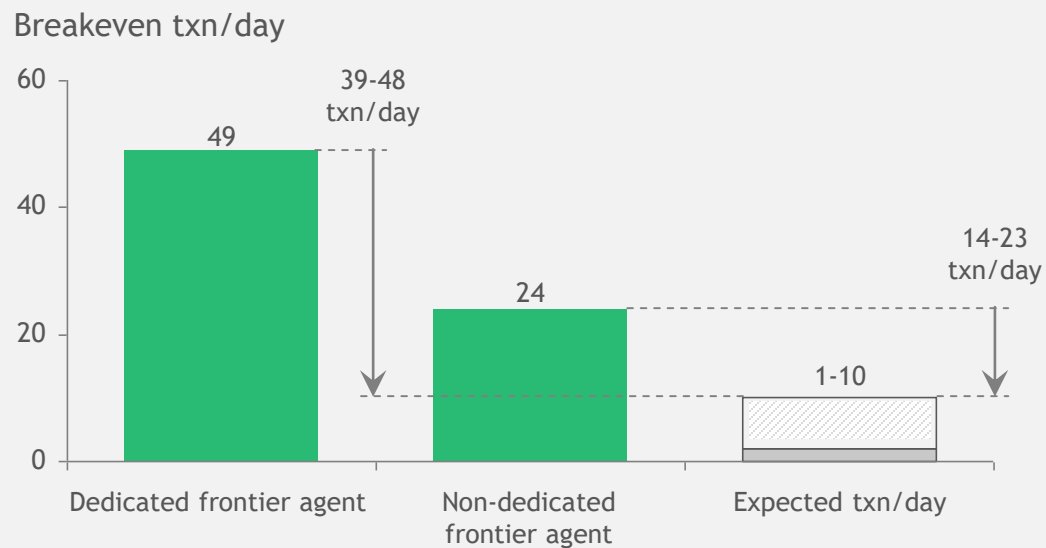
However, agent economics likely unviable at frontier due to low txn volumes & limited financial infrastructure

Transaction volumes

Lower transaction volume in frontier geographies¹...

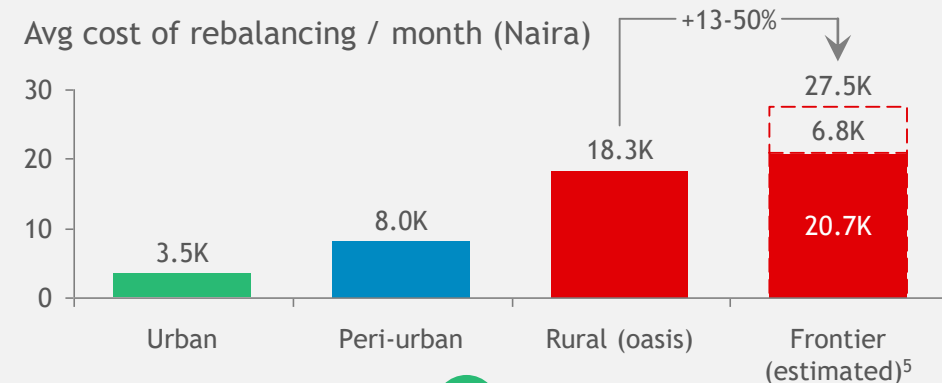


...which falls below required transactions for agents to breakeven²



Financial infrastructure

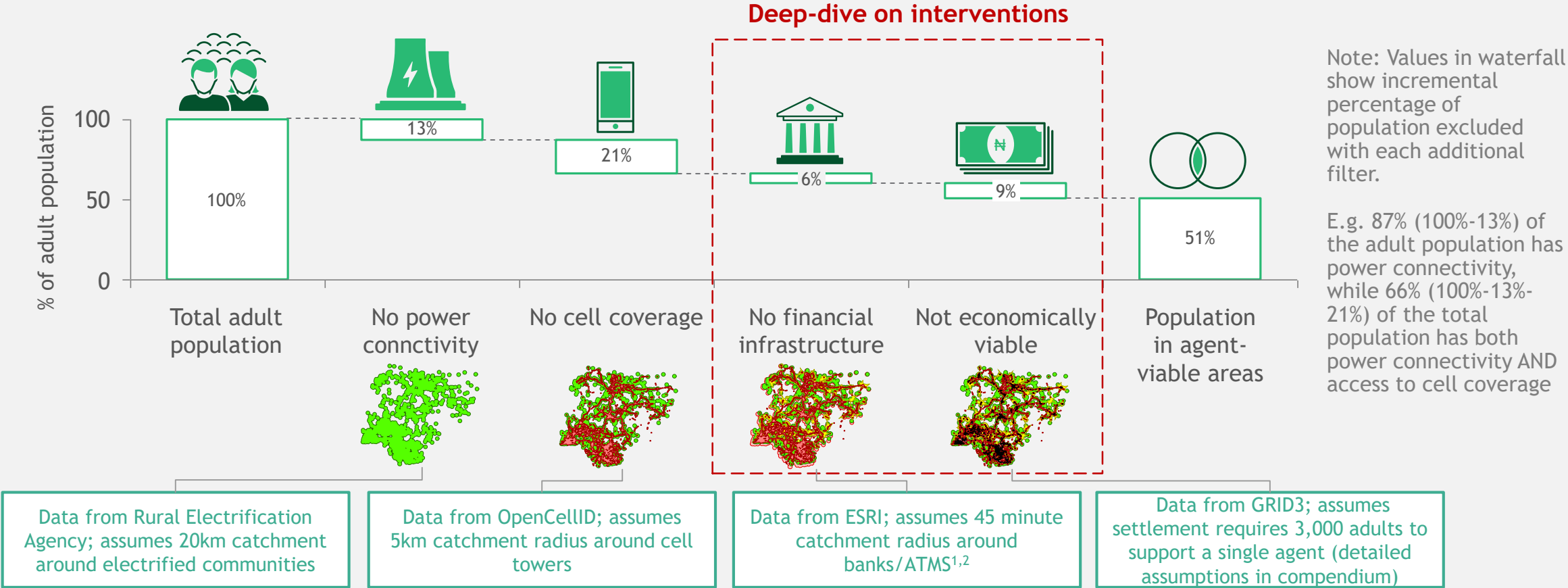
Limited financial infrastructure means frontier agents are often 60+ min from rebalancing point, resulting in increased rebalancing costs³



Operational burden also impacts agent viability at frontier. Long rebalancing trips⁴...

- May not be perceived as "worth the hassle" by new agents or non-dedicated agents with alternate income
- May become a bottleneck as rural txn volume grows and need for rebalancing increases
- Result in long periods of store closure, which negatively impact customer experience

Existing agent model likely to reach 51% of Nigeria's adult population



Interventions likely needed to increase desired reach for CICO agents

1: Assumed agents located maximum of 30 minutes from bank + customer willingness to travel 15 minutes to agent location
2: Drive times from ESRI likely optimistic, actual road conditions may result in drive times much longer than estimated

Interventions can allow agents to be viable in more challenged locations, leading to an increase in reach

Agents must be able to reach settlements of ~500 adults in order to cover ~80% of the adult population

Population segment	Share of adult population (%)	Cumulative share of adult population (%)
>10,000	47%	47%
8,000 - 9,999	4%	51%
6,000 - 7,999	5%	56%
4,000 - 5,999	5%	62%
2,000 - 3,999	8%	69%
1,000 - 1,999	6%	75%
500 - 999	5%	81%



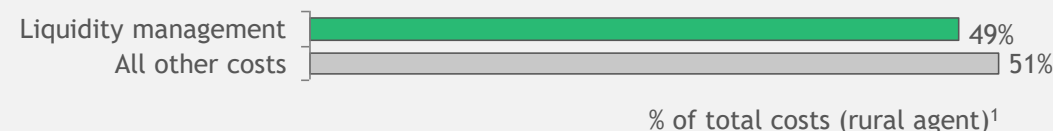
To improve agent viability, consider interventions to address low revenues and high operating costs

Low revenue potential a factor of...

	Potential improvement levers
Low population sizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical, but taken as a given
Low DFS penetration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer education • Marketing • Bank account registrations • Technology reliability
Low transaction frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitizing G2P payments • Creating products with human-centered design

Other potential levers: Offering recurring monthly subsidies, increasing average transaction size, increasing agent commissions

Liquidity management the most significant cost driver...



However, cost of float runners must be borne by provider (or subsidized by a 3rd party, e.g. government or NGO)

Detail: Interventions to address low transaction volumes can extend viability at the frontier

Improvement levers can change a location from unviable → viable

Assumptions

Population size = 500 adults

Avg recurring cost = ₦51.2K per month¹

Avg revenue per transaction = ₦72 per transaction²

		DFS penetration (% of adult population)					
		10%	12%	14%	16%	18%	20%
Transaction frequency (per person, per month)	1	-₦47.6K	-₦46.9K	-₦46.1K	-₦45.4K	-₦44.7K	-₦44.0K
	2	-₦44.0K	-₦42.5K	-₦41.1K	-₦39.6K	-₦38.2K	-₦36.8K
	3	-₦40.4K	-₦38.2K	-₦36.0K	-₦33.9K	-₦31.7K	-₦29.6K
	4	-₦36.8K	-₦33.9K	-₦31.0K	-₦28.1K	-₦25.2K	-₦22.4K
	5	-₦33.2K	-₦29.6K	-₦26.0K	-₦22.4K	-₦18.7K	-₦15.1K
	6	-₦29.6K	-₦25.2K	-₦20.9K	-₦16.6K	-₦12.3K	-₦7.9K
	7	-₦26.0K	-₦20.9K	-₦15.9K	-₦10.8K	-₦5.8K	-₦0.7K
	8	-₦22.4K	-₦16.6K	-₦10.8K	-₦5.1K	₦0.7K	₦6.5K
	9	-₦18.7K	-₦12.3K	-₦5.8K	₦0.7K	₦7.2K	₦13.7K
	10	-₦15.1K	-₦7.9K	-₦0.7K	₦6.5K	₦13.7K	₦20.9K

Potential levers to increase DFS penetration

- Increased customer education
- Increased marketing
- Increased bank account registrations
- Increased technology reliability

Potential levers to increase transaction frequency

- Digitizing G2P payments
- Creating products through human-centered design

Other levers to address low revenues

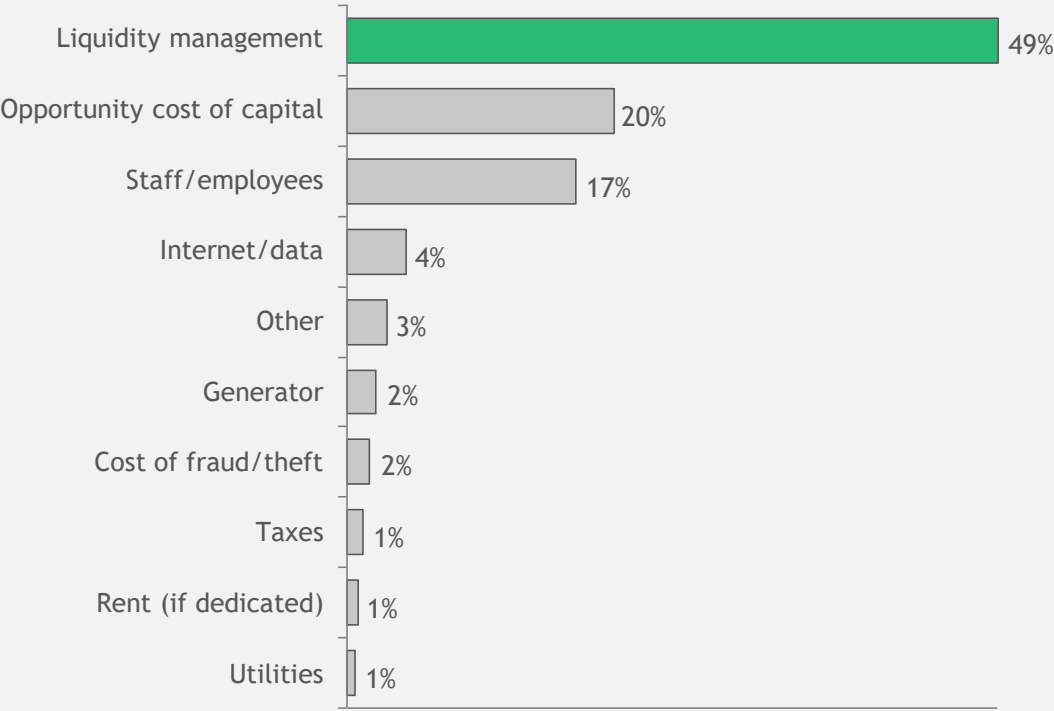
- Offering recurring monthly subsidies
- Increasing average transaction size



1: Avg recurring cost of a rural, non-dedicated agent (from agent interviews)
2: Avg revenue per transaction for an agent in sample (from agent interviews)

Detail: Similarly, addressing high liquidity management costs can also improve agent viability

Rural agent operating costs can be decreased by ~50% with float runners



% of total costs (rural agent)¹

Which could reduce the need to increase revenues or provide subsidies

Assumptions

Population size = 500 adults
Avg revenue per transaction = ₦72 per transaction²

Agent viability (no liquidity management support)

Agent profit per month		DFS penetration (% of adult population)		
		16%	18%	20%
Txn vol (per person, per month)	7	-₦10.8K	-₦5.8K	-₦0.7K
	8	-₦5.1K	₦0.7K	₦6.5K
	9	₦0.7K	₦7.2K	₦13.7K

Agent viability (float runners)

Agent profit per month		DFS penetration (% of adult population)		
		16%	18%	20%
Txn vol (per person, per month)	7	₦14.0K	₦19.1K	₦24.1K
	8	₦19.8K	₦25.5K	₦31.3K
	9	₦25.5K	₦32.0K	₦38.5K

1: Avg cost structure of rural agent in sample; includes dedicated and non-dedicated agents; costs of rent, utilities, generator, and maintenance excluded for non-dedicated agents
2: Avg revenue per transaction for an agent in sample (from agent interviews)

Next steps required include analysis refinement, stakeholder engagement and intervention design



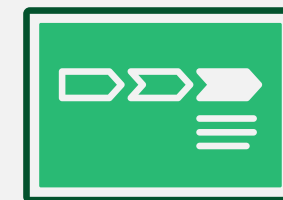
Analysis refinement

- Refresh with latest data (e.g. updates to GRID3; GSMA; refreshed bank/ATM locations)
- Refine estimates of economic activity to reflect movement beyond where people live (e.g. markets)



Stakeholder engagement

- Share preliminary findings with relevant stakeholders (incl. providers, regulators)
- Start (or continue) discussions on critical agent viability drivers such as upcharging



Intervention design

- Develop robust analyses of expected costs, benefits and impact for specific intervention
- ...incl. any unintended consequences
- ...and how they layer upon / interact with one another

Detail: While potential interventions come to mind, more action needed to explore further

While key drivers of agent viability suggests potential interventions

Low txn volumes a significant economic driver for frontier agents. Digitizing G2P suggests win-win way to stimulate demand and provide distribution channel for government programs

Extra fees also instrumental to agent profitability, driving ~20-25% of margin on avg (and viability in some agents); Suggests consideration of fee caps required

Liquidity management costs are significant - highest of recurring cost items and increasing in frontier, suggesting float runners could have significant impact

...several economic and operational factors to consider

- How will agents manage increased liq. mgmt needs from G2P payments?
- How to ensure this does not become a month-end mass "cash-out" of system (not building DFS ecosystem)?
- How to ensure consumer protection esp. of the most poor and vulnerable?
- Is the agent the right point to set market-based pricing, or the provider?
- Can float runner model be operational in Nigeria? (sig. less financial infrastructure relative to Bangladesh)
- With provider margins stressed at frontier, who would pay for service?

Deep-dive analysis required, as well as stakeholder engagement



Critical to also understand any unintended consequences and how interventions can interact positively or negatively with one another

Examples only - not comprehensive list of drivers, interventions or implications

Appendix: Details on methodology

Provider methodology

Overview

Objective to understand economic drivers of providers, incl. key drivers of economic profitability

We focused on incremental agent expansion (vs. end-to-end profitability) given the focus on CICO economics and interest in expanding reach in Nigeria

We engaged 10+ organizations in Nigeria

- FSPs, super agents and others
- Some had been offering services for years, others more recently or about to begin operations

Initial interviews explored strategic objectives, operating model and challenges faced...

...then data from 7 providers helped highlight key factors impacting agent point economics

- Complete data from 3 providers; partial from 4
- Triangulated with findings from global study

What this is not intended to be

- Not intended to provide “definitive benchmark” for provider offering services
- Not assessment of past performance – nearly all providers shared data based on “new” models from the past 6-12 months

What this enables

- Understanding ranges for provider cost and revenue and key differences in model driving differences
- Estimating breakeven volume and profitability for incremental agent points ...
- ... and how this changes between urban, peri-urban, rural oasis and rural frontier geographies



Agent methodology

Overview

Objective to understand key drivers of agent viability, incl. endogenous and exogenous factors

We conducted in-depth interviews with agents

- 90+ min interviews incl. standardized questions for quantitative analysis, open-ended sections
- Observational study of each interview site to complement feedback from agents

Sample of 30 agents to get cross-section of variables of interest

- Urban, peri-urban and rural in Lagos and Kano, incl. many 60-180 min from nearest bank / ATM
- Mix of bank and 3rd party providers
- Mix of dedicated / non-dedicated
- Efforts to include agents with low transaction volumes (difficult with survivorship bias)

What this is not intended to be

- Not a representative study - sample selected to ensure cross-section for variables of interest
- Rural sample not representative of "frontier" - rural agents interviewed were in "oases" therefore impact of exogenous factors was modeled

What this enables

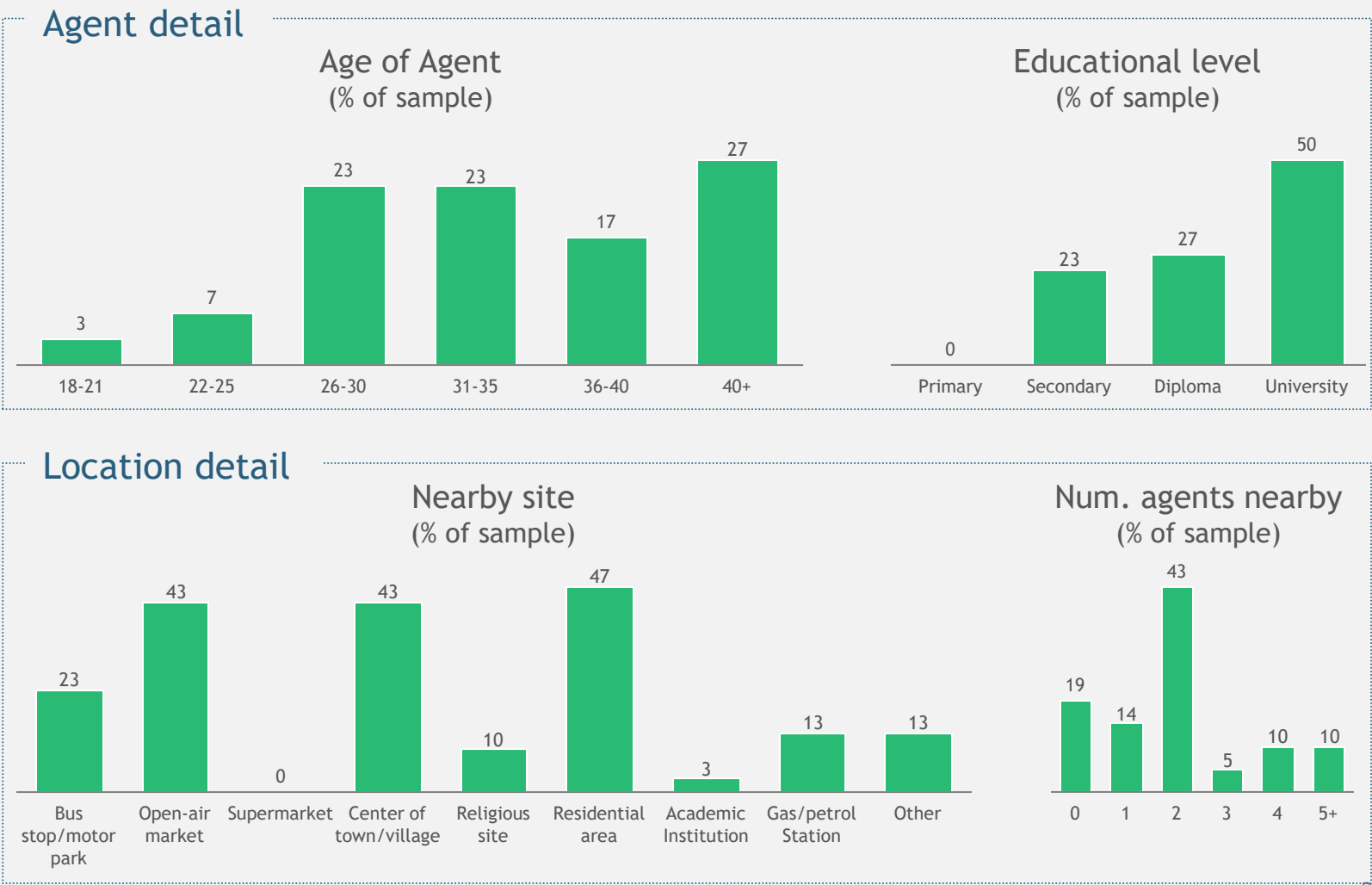
- Sizing of magnitude and direction of impact of exogenous constraints, and the operational choices agents make to mitigate their effects
- Strong understanding of cost (recurring cost esp. had tight variance)
- Understanding of key challenges to CICO economics for agent channel, including estimations for the frontier
- Understanding of linkages between provider operational choices and impact on agent viability



Detail: Overview of agents interviewed (I)



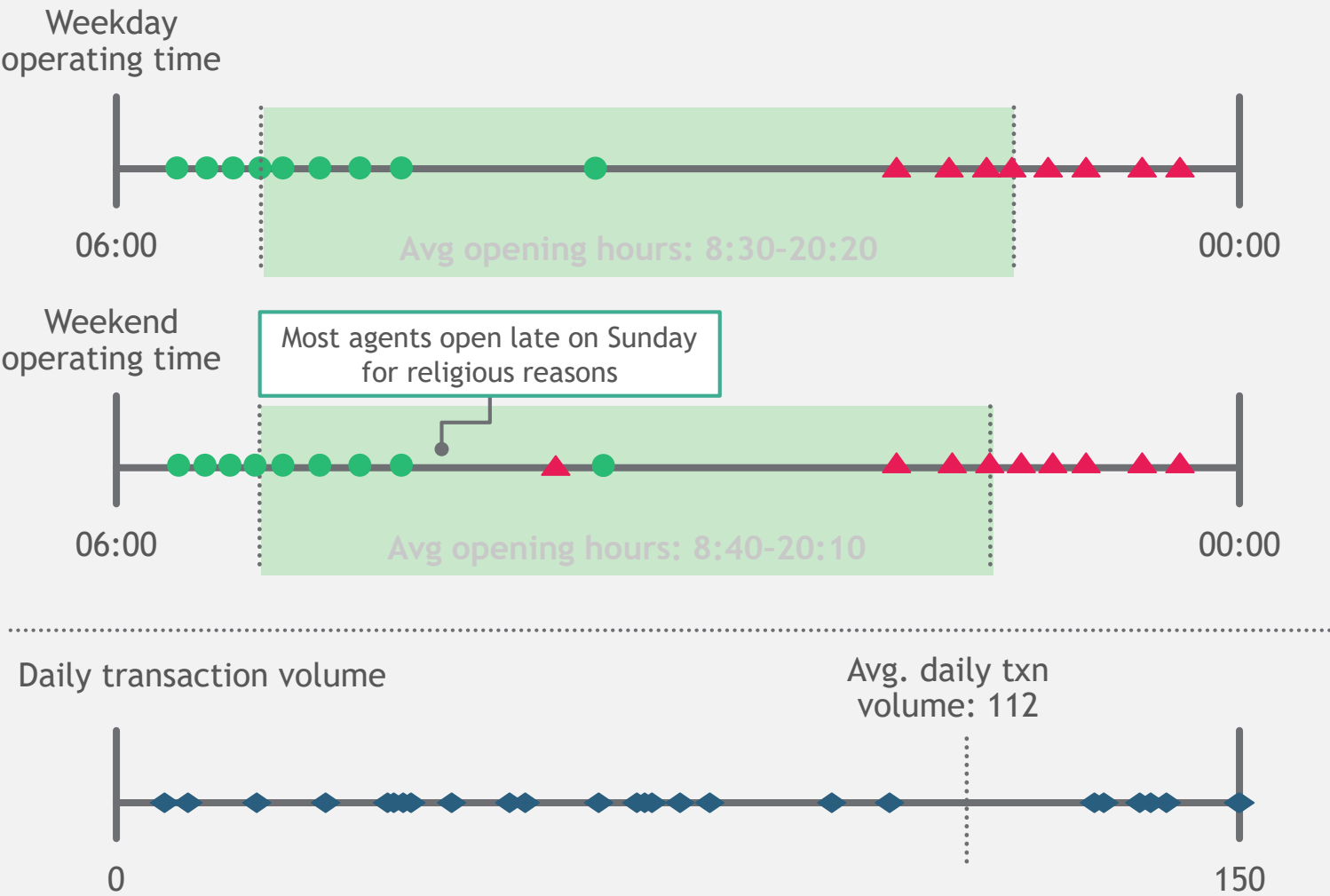
Date visited: August 2018
No. of interviews: 30
Sites visited: Lagos, Agege, Ikorodu, Badagry, Rogo, Fagge, Karaye, Dawanau, Wudil, Kiru
10% female, 90% male



Detail: Overview of agents interviewed (II)



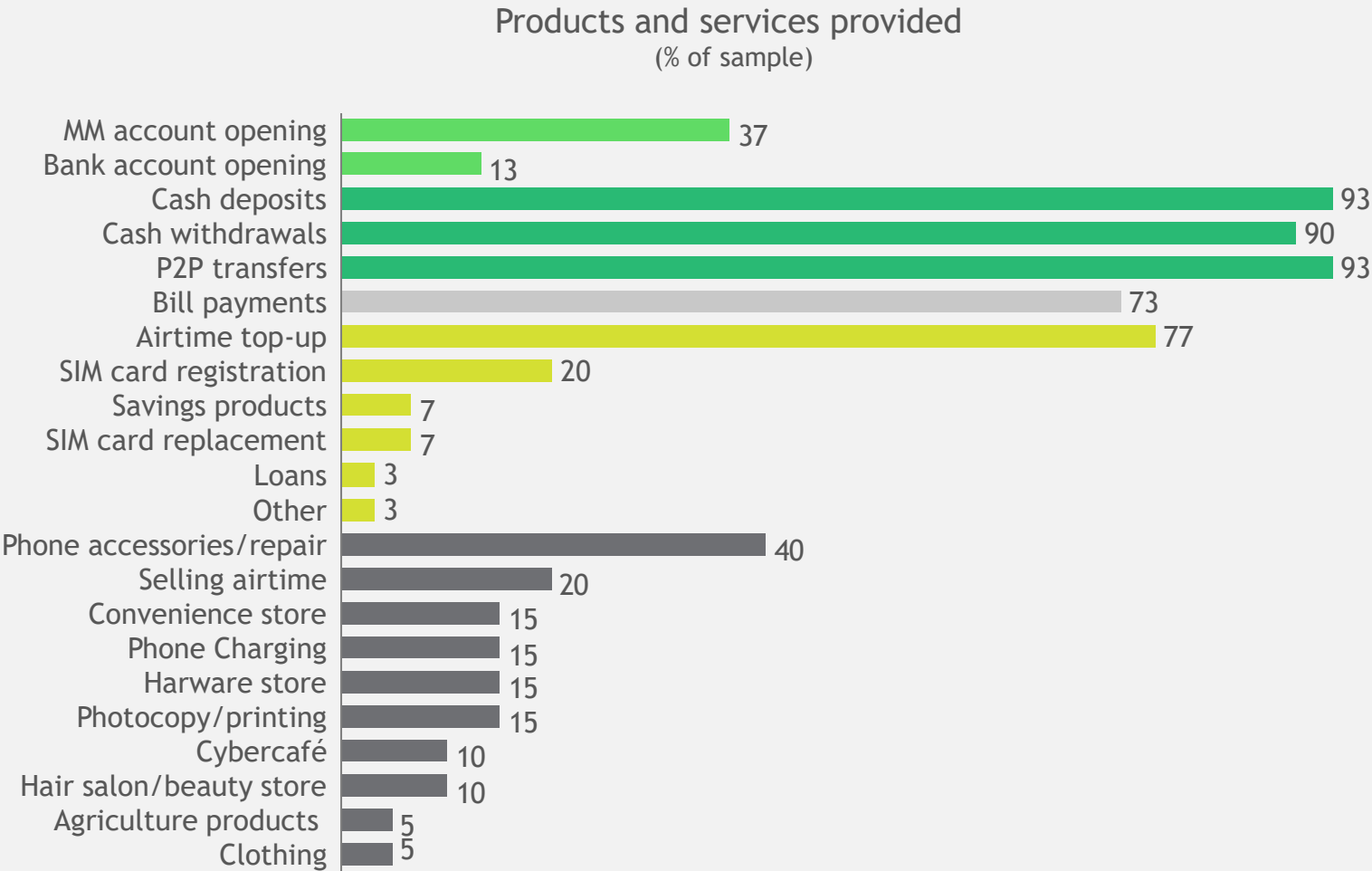
Date visited: August 2018
No. of interviews: 30
Sites visited: Lagos, Agege, Ikorodu, Badagry, Rogo, Fagge, Karaye, Dawanau, Wudil, Kiru
10% female, 90% male



Detail: Overview of agents interviewed (III)



Date visited: August 2018
No. of interviews: 30
Sites visited: Lagos, Agege, Ikorodu,
Badagry, Rogo, Fagge, Karaye,
Dawanau, Wudil, Kiru
10% female, 90% male



Geospatial methodology

A

Data acquisition & processing

B

Population based catchment analysis

C

Spatial intersection

D

ArcGIS online visualizations

- A1

Geocoding of street addresses to get coordinates
- A2

Preprocessing of LAT/LON to spatial point locations
- B1

Generated drive time polygons using street n/w dataset - 5,10,15 mins etc.; tools used: ArcGIS and Alteryx
- C1

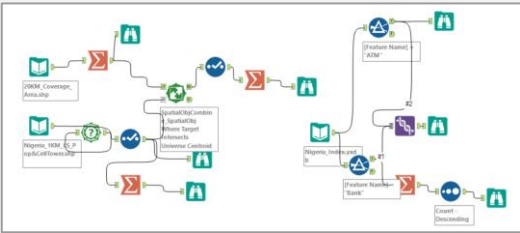
Intersected multiple polygon layers to perform catchment analysis; tools used: Spatial Analyst/Network Analyst
- D1

Mapping of layers—Power, cell, population coverage, financial infrastructure etc.

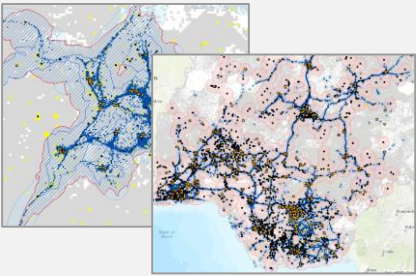
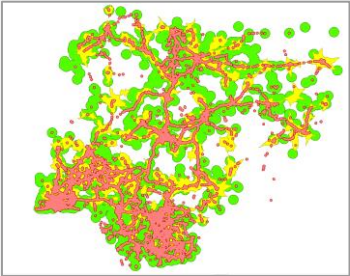
```
Command Prompt - modified_30.py n.txt
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.14393]
(c) 2016 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\sharma priyanka>cd..
C:\Users>cd..
C:\>cd geocode
C:\geocode>modified_30.py n.txt
n.txt
open file 'n_out.xls', mode 'ab' at 0x2B812E0>
Shakuti Street, Wuse 1, Abuja, Nigeria
Suite F108, Ikota Shopping Complex, VGC, .. do, Lekki, Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria
House,8th Flr, 21/25 Broad St, Lagos Island, Lagos, Nigeria
A & S Bureau, 16 Abayomi Ademola Street, Ilasamaja, Lagos, Nigeria
88/92, Broad Street, Lagos Island, Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria
B BUREAU, 12 Unity Rd, Kofar Mata, Kano, Nigeria
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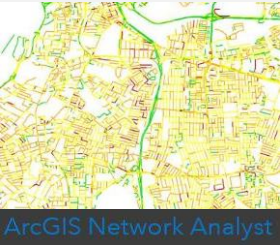
Google API converting addresses to LAT/LON



Population based catchment analysis- Alteryx Model



Key data sources and tools

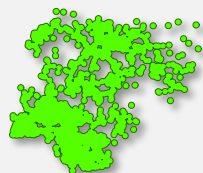


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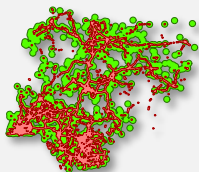


Detail: Geospatial methodology

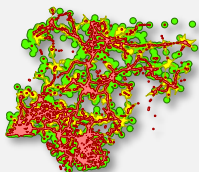
Financial infrastructure



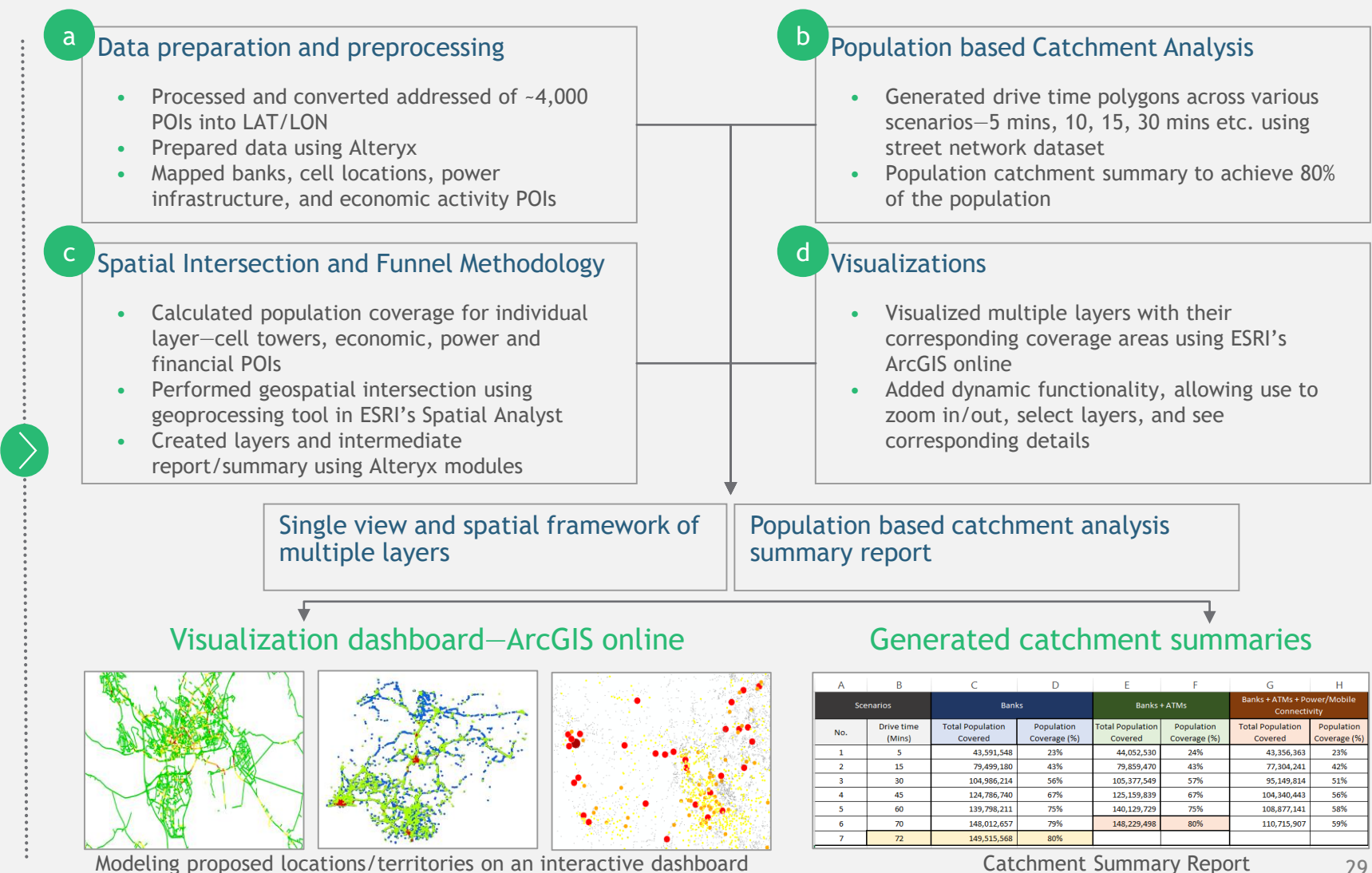
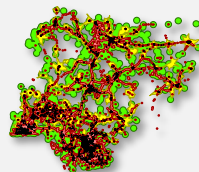
Economic activity



Cell towers



Power connectivity



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