



# Mind the Gap

Refugees and communications technology literacy



Tuesday 8 November 2011

Dr Linda Leung

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# Spanning the disciplines of...

- Global Studies
- Technology studies
- Refugee Studies

30 interviews  
43 surveys

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TECHNOLOGY'S REFUGE  
THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY BY ASYLUM  
SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

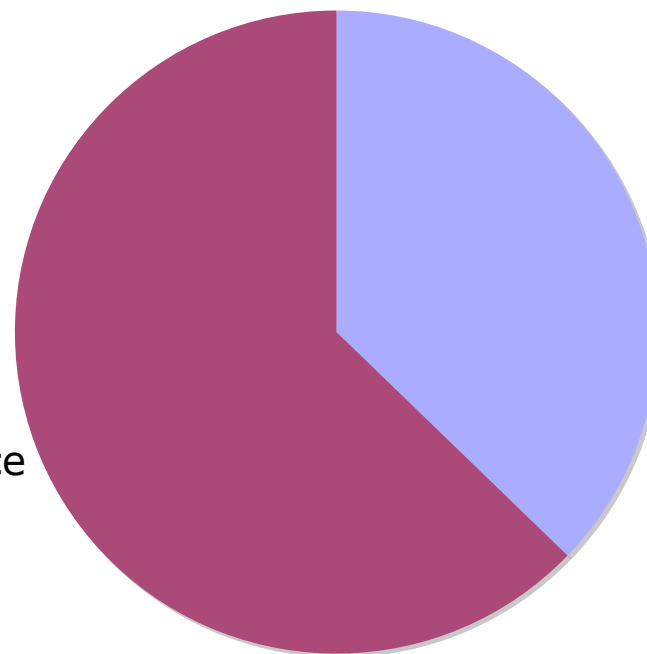
Linda Leung, Cath Finney Lamb and Liz Emrys



## Proportion of survey respondents with and without experience of using landline telephones before coming to Australia



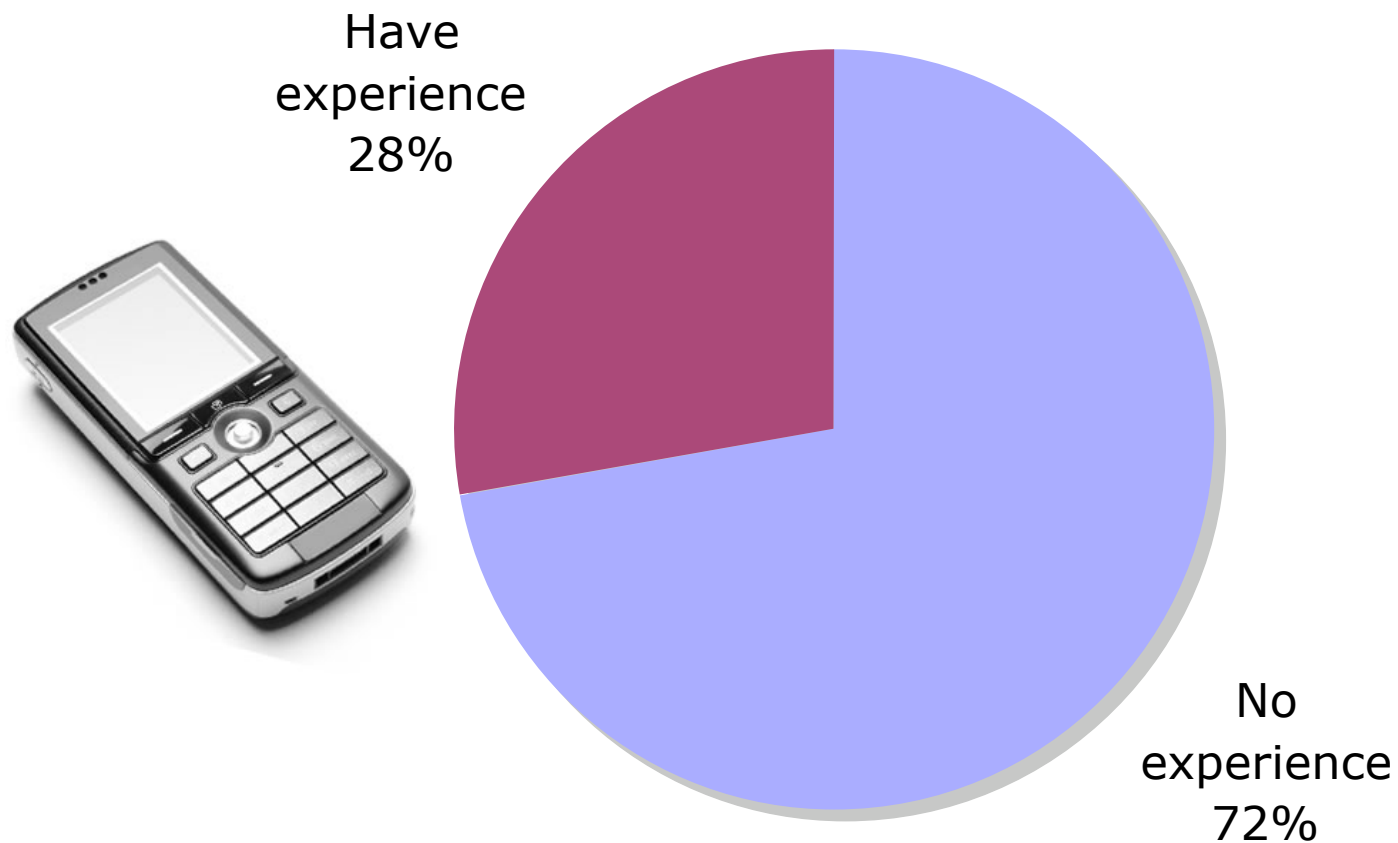
Have experience  
63%



No experience  
37%

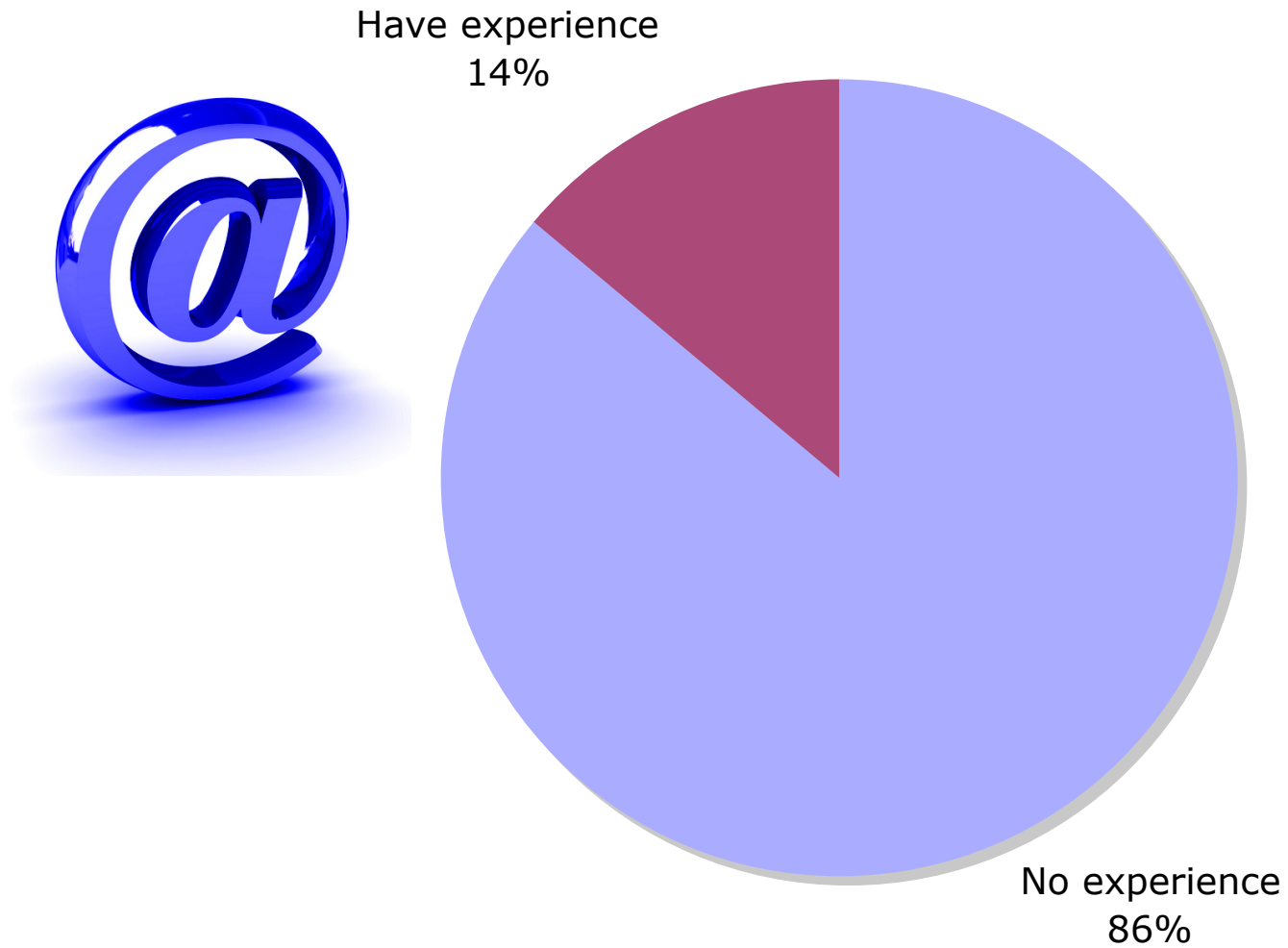
27 out of the 43 respondents had experience of using landline telephones, while 16 had none whatsoever

## Comparison of survey respondents with and without experience of mobile phones before coming to Australia



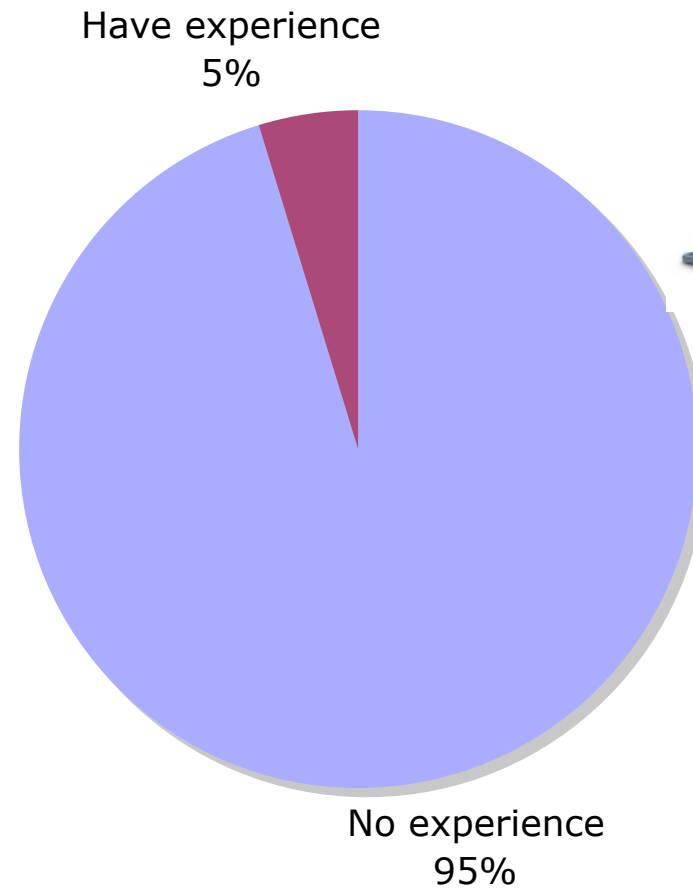
Of the 43 survey respondents, nearly three quarters had no experience of using mobile phones before coming to Australia.

## Survey respondents with no experience of email before coming to Australia



86% of survey respondents had never had any experience of email prior to arrival in Australia

## Survey respondents with no experience of the Internet before coming to Australia



Only 2 of the 43 survey respondents indicated that they had used the Internet before arriving in Australia. Both of these respondents were men. This means that 95% of respondents had never had experience of using the Web, chat or instant messaging.

## Percentage comparison of respondents with experience of technology before and after arrival in Australia

<b>Before</b>	<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>	<b>After</b>
63%	Landline telephone	72%
28%	Mobile phone	84%
49%	Letter writing	12%
9%	fax	23%
14%	email	51%
5%	Internet	23%

The project sought to:

1. examine refugees' knowledge of telecommunications products and services when newly arrived in Australia
2. investigate telecommunications literacy in refugee settlement service provision; and
3. develop a telecommunications consumer education program tailored to recent arrivals from refugee backgrounds.



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Refugees and communications technology literacy



# 60 interviews



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Refugees and communications technology literacy



# Refugees' technology use affected by...

- Availability
- Accessibility
- Affordability

# Availability compromised

*“No mobile. It was not permitted to anybody to have a mobile phone when Saddam was the president.”*

*“...the landline most of the time was busy or would get connected with other lines. So it wasn't a quite good service. We really depend on it to talk. We have no other options, no mobile, no Internet, no nothing ... because it was a bad time – the economy of Iraq was very bad. So that all affected everything in life and also the communication service. So sometimes we have no line at all. It stops for one or two days, and that stops also any communications for no reason.”*

(Respondents from Iraq)

# Available but not affordable

*“Satellite telephone was also there but it was expensive and then unless you feel something burning, this is why you can go spend your money - it cost was expensive to use the satellite connection.”*

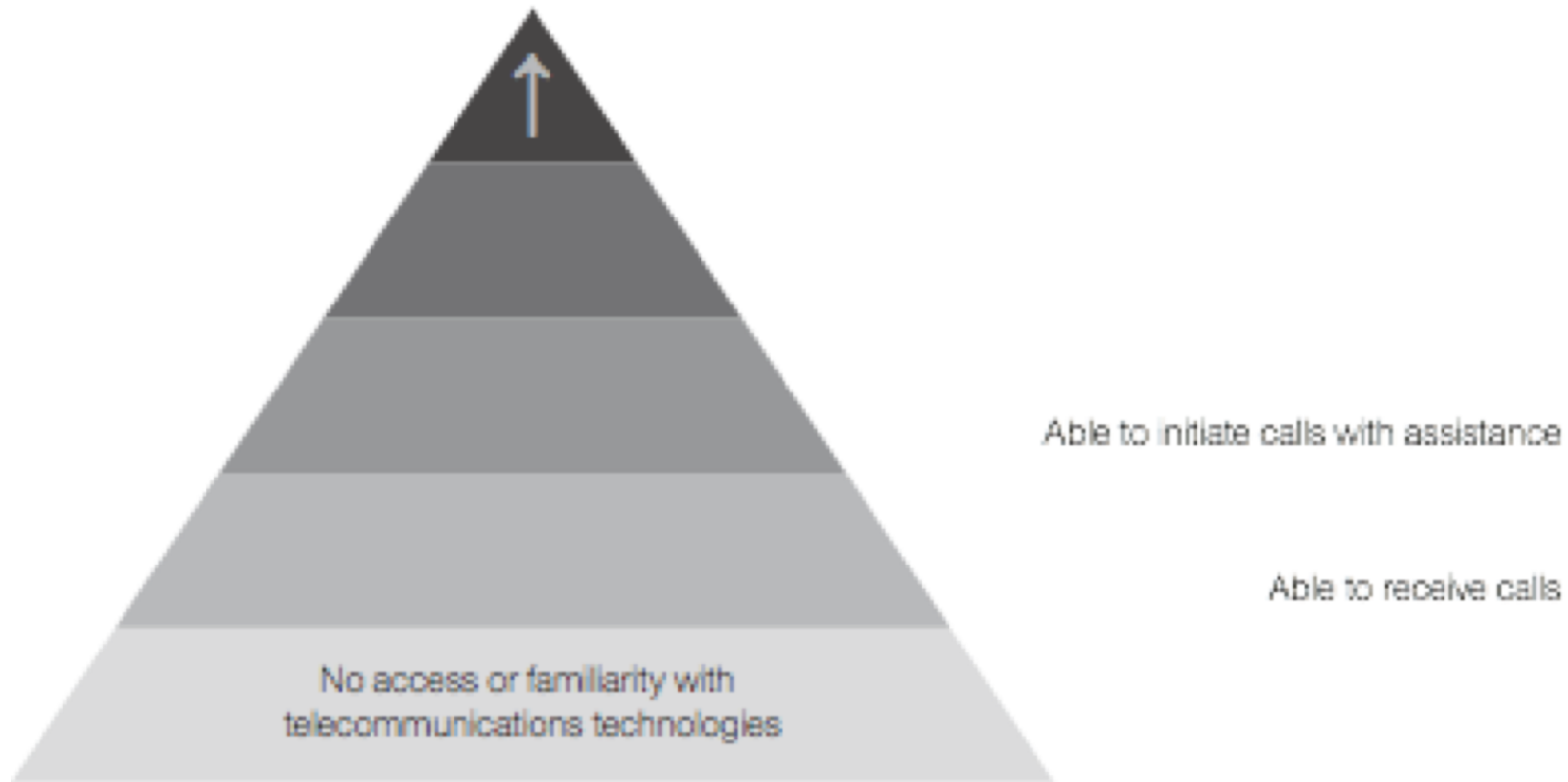
(Respondent from Sudan)

# Available but not accessible

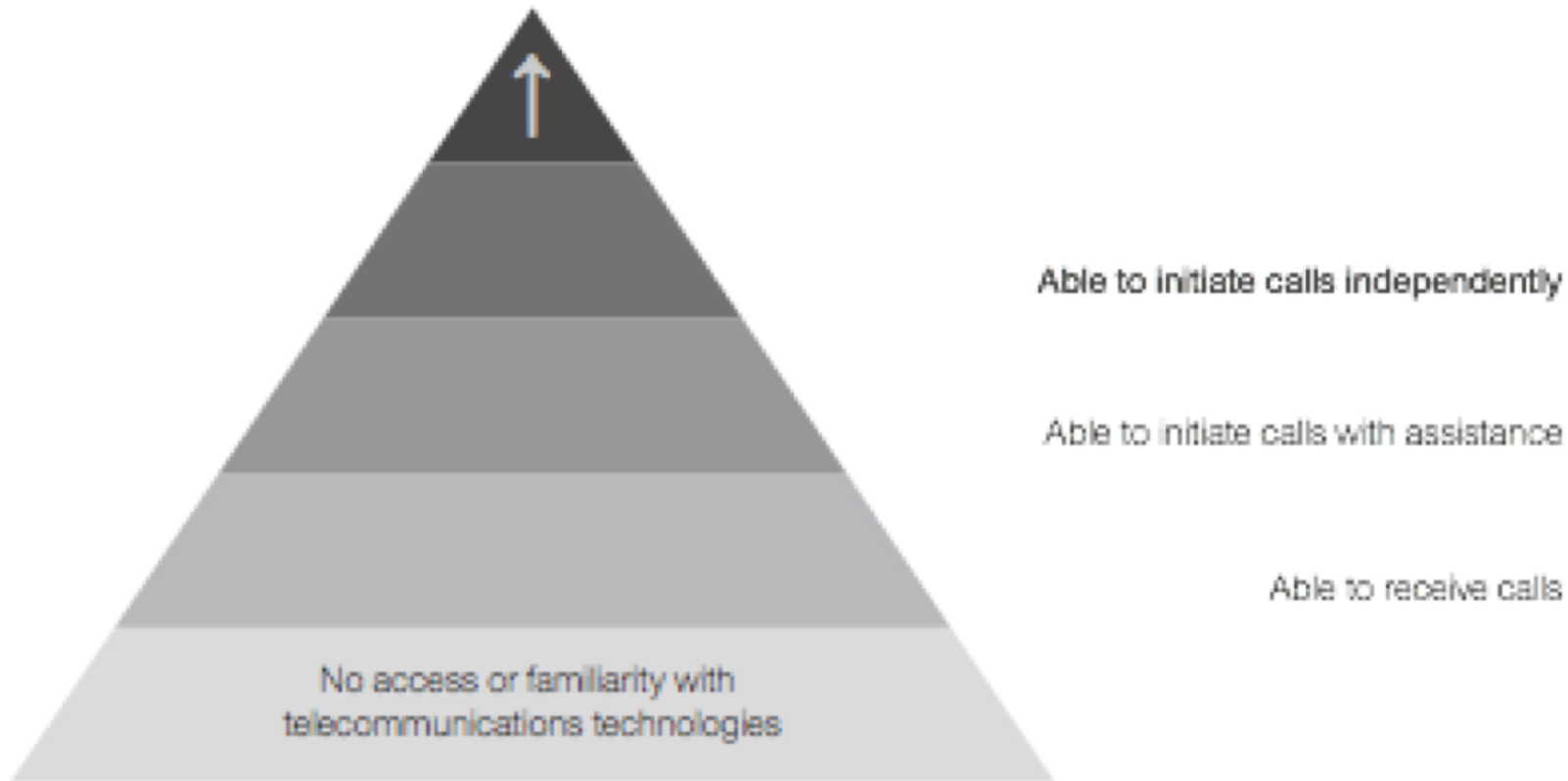
*“...as you know Burma is a very poor country. You can't use the telephone, internet if you are not the member of the government. If you are not rich you can't use at all because very expensive. Only people who, they work for the government, is a member of government and if they are related to the government.”*

(Respondent from Burma)

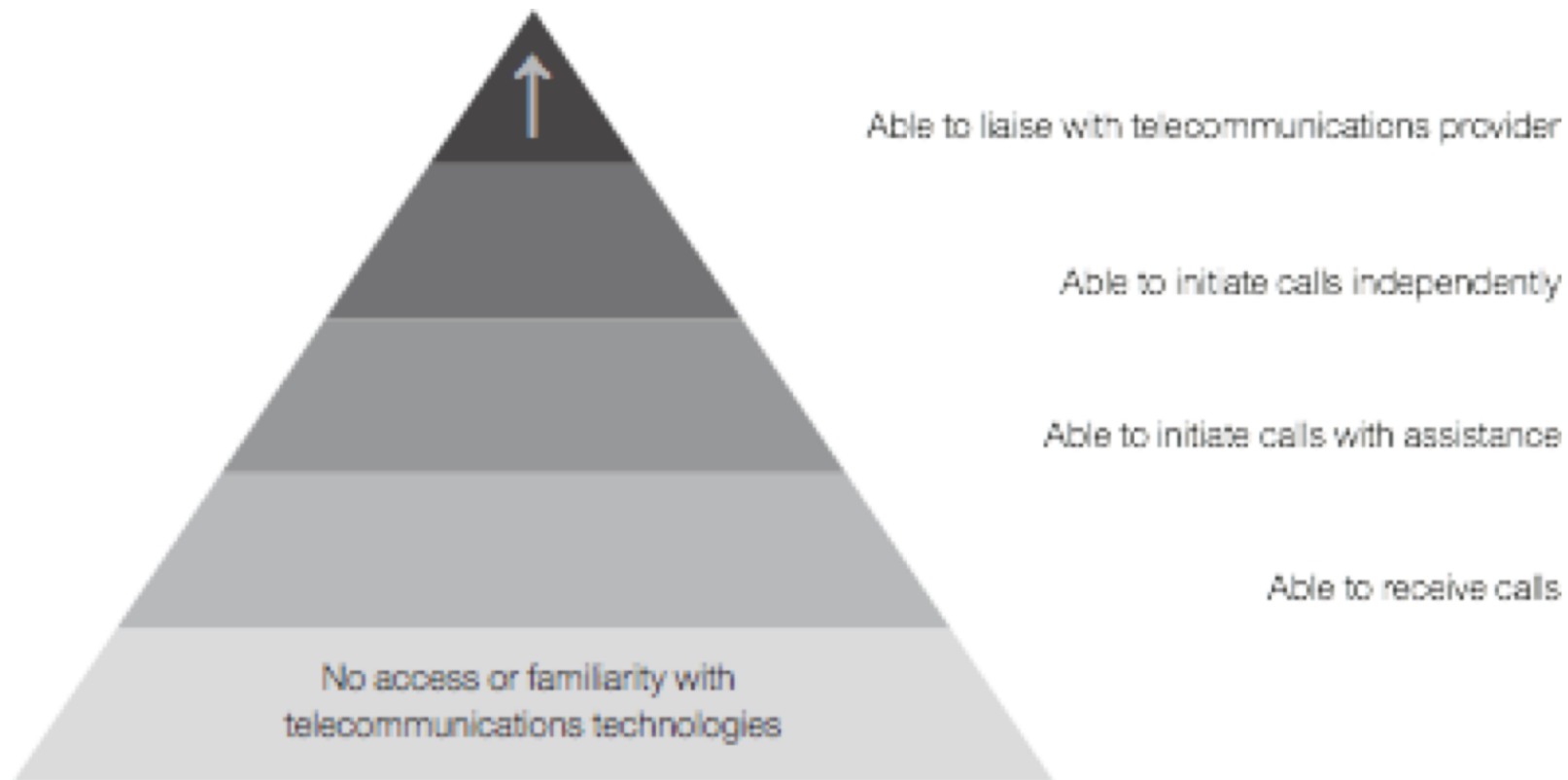
# Country of origin



# Intermediate country



# Australia

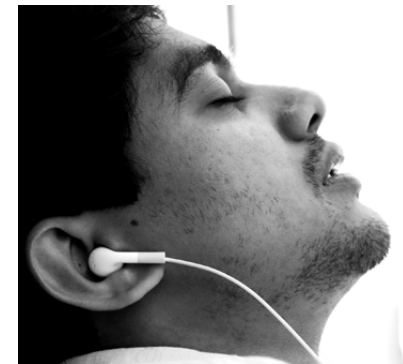


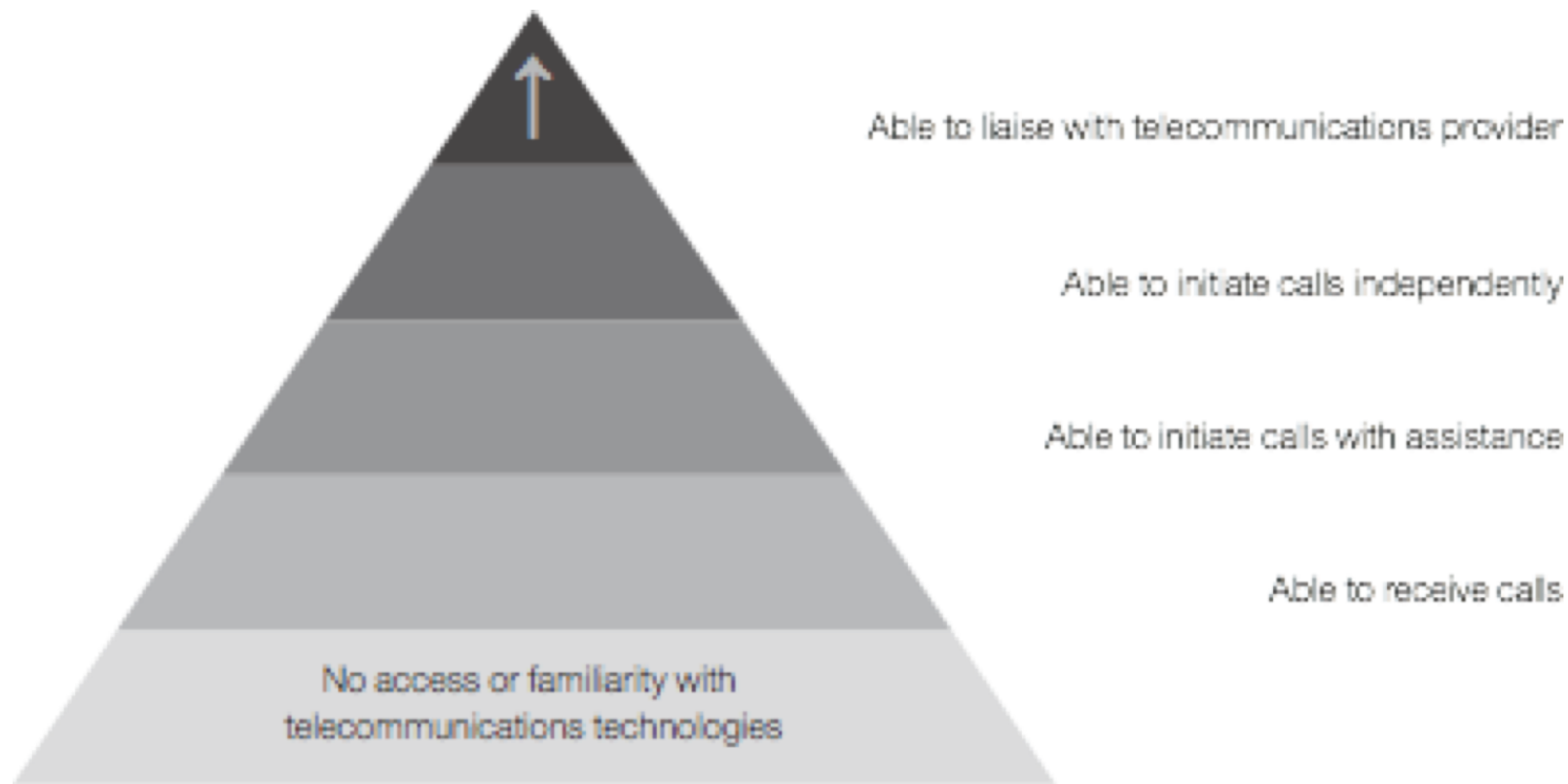
# Most used mobile phone functions

1. Voice calls



2. Listening to music (use of bluetooth for exchanging music files)





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