International Telecommunication Union

TELECOMMUNICATION/ICT MARKETS AND TRENDS IN AFRICA

2007

Kigali, Rwanda
Connect Africa Summit
29-30 October 2007

ITU International Telecommunication Union

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PREFACE

During the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), governments and world leaders agreed on the need to work towards bridging the digital divide to build "*a people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life, premised on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*"[1]

Together with some other UN agencies, ITU was nominated as leading facilitator for several action lines at the WSIS in Tunis in 2005. Within its mandate, ITU launched the *Connect the World*[2] initiative in 2006. *Connect the World* is a multi-stakeholder effort, established within the context of the WSIS to encourage new projects and partnerships to bridge the digital divide. By showcasing development efforts which are now underway and by identifying areas where needs are the most pressing, *Connect the World* will generate the momentum to "*connect the unconnected by 2015*".

Connecting the unconnected is not an end in itself, but an important contribution to the UN Millennium Development Agenda, because it enables people to achieve development goals such as universal primary education, gender equality or environmental sustainability.

Connect Africa, part of ITU's *Connect the World* initiative, seeks to help assess the current situation, trends, challenges and opportunities of the telecommunication/ICT market in Africa.

ITU has been measuring the development of the Information Society for many decades by collecting data in cooperation with its Member States and partner institutions. Besides highlighting the need to connect the least connected region of the world, this report seeks to help governments, the private sector, civil society and the international development community to take informed policy decisions.

This report provides a comparative analysis of the development of the African telecommunication/ICT market. In this regard, trends in main (fixed) telephone lines, Internet, broadband and mobile cellular services are examined, as well as privatization and investment conditions. The report points out the challenges of the African telecommunication market, as well as the need for coordinated action.

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[1] Geneva Declaration of Principles (2003): http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents.

[2] ITU: http://www.itu.int/partners/index.html.

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