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Q1: Respondent details

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Q2: Country or Customs territory

COTE D'IVOIRE

Q3: Organization

Public sector

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Q4: Title of case story

Connect Africa Initiative

Q5: Case story focus

Infrastructure upgrading and the development of related services markets, including through support for investment climate reforms.

Q6: Case story abstract

The Connect Africa Initiative is a global partnership launched in October 2007 to mobilize the human, financial, and technical resources needed to bridge major gaps in ICT infrastructure across the continent. A total of US\$ 55 billion (UA 34.08 billion) has so far been pledged for the development of infrastructure and services necessary to achieve both the ICT-related MDGs and the World Summit on Information Society Action Plan. The Bank Group will play a leading role in the coordination of this initiative.

Major programmes under Connect Africa Initiative include:

- International Fiber Connectivity
- National Backbone Initiatives
- Policy and Regulation
- E - applications

Q7: Who provided funding?

Bilateral donor, Multilateral organization,
South-South partner, Private sector

Q8: Project/Programme type

Single country, Multi-country, Regional

Q9: Your text case story**1. International Fiber Connectivity**

High-speed international connectivity is a major constraint on the delivery of broadband services in Africa. A number of submarine cable backbone projects have been proposed in the recent years with coverage of 70,000 km coastal line and estimated cost of US\$6.4 billion.

Major fiber projects include:

East African Submarine Cable System

SEACOM

The East African Marine System (TEAMS)

2. Regional Backbones Initiatives

The absence of regional connectivity between States with access to the submarine cable and landlocked countries and more generally, the scarcity of cross-border backhaul links is one of the key broadband access gaps in Africa.

Central African Backbone (CAB): The project aims to implement a telecommunications network made up of on-ward terrestrial fiber connections linked to undersea optical fiber cable system in the African Western Coast (SAT3) that would link several Central African countries and provide the region with a digital broadband access to the global fiber network. The planned broadband backbone would leverage the fiber optic infrastructure laid along the oil pipeline between Kribi (Cameroon) and Doba (Chad), and will interconnect in its phase 1 three countries: Cameroon, Chad, and RCA.

East Africa Broadband Network (EABN): The project aims at implementing an integrated East African Broadband ICT Infrastructure Network (EAC-BIN) that would provide cross border connectivity between five EAC Partner States (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda) and link up with global gateways through submarine fibre cable systems. The initiative is expected to be implemented within the Connect Africa framework before end of 2010.

Maritime Communications for Safety on Lake Victoria (MCSLV): The project aims at establishing Maritime Communications for Lake Victoria with the following components: a) wireless communication system based upon GSM technology allowing two-way contact between boats in distress and rescue centres; b) Regional Maritime Communications Centre (RMCC), with capacity to process distress radio traffic from the public in the region; and c) A maritime communications system that would facilitate Search and Rescue operations. Lake Victoria is shared by three EAC country: Kenya, Tanzania & Uganda.

South Africa Region Backbone –SATA Backhaul: Project aimed at improving cross border links that would interconnect the SADC member states. The objective is to improve cross border connectivity of the SATA participating members member countries through optical fibre networks and link them to submarine cable systems including the Eastern African Submarine cable System (EASSy).

West Africa Network – ECOWAN: To improve the connectivity between ECOWAS offices and affiliated organisations, therefore contributing to the integration of the ECOWAS region by providing a robust platform for regional information systems. ECOWAN is an Intranet linking all member state capitals and enhanced with broadband communications. It will serve as the Enterprise Information System for ECOWAS and will be connected to the global internet. ECOWAN is ECOWAS owned and operated, and accessed only by ECOWAS officials and affiliated organizations.

ECOWAS Power Pool-based Fibre Network: The objective of the WAPP project is to expand broadband access in the ECOWAS region by first leveraging the West Africa Power Pool's (WAPP) communications infrastructure network, and linking the WAPP network to national and regional infrastructure to bridge connectivity gaps in the ECOWAS region.

National Initiatives:

The absence of national backbone networks is another obstacle to the widespread use of advanced communication services in RMCs. The lack of national backbone infrastructure makes it costly and not commercially viable to provide communication services beyond the main urban centers.

National Backbone Initiative:

Burundi

Burkina Faso

Democratic Republic of Congo
Niger
Rwanda
Tanzania
Uganda

3. Policy and Regulation

Substantial challenges still exist in the development of technology neutral and convergent licensing regimes, promotion of competition, establishment of fair interconnection rules and tariffs, management of resources such as radio frequency spectrum and numbers, design and execution of universal access strategies and the enforcement of standards. Policy and regulatory intervention that abolish exclusivity on market entry, reduce license fees and simplify licensing procedures as well as those promoting open, transparent and non-discriminatory access to the networks are the foundation for improved national and regional broadband networks. Besides, most RMCs face challenges in new policy areas in particular those pertinent to electronic transaction and cyber security.

See current challenges and issues in:

ICT regulation toolkit
African Union ICT policy harmonization framework
African Information Society Initiative – National Information and Communication Infrastructure policies

4. E - applications

The Bank has been a key investor in e-application. A number of national, regional and multinational projects that focus on integrated rural development, agriculture, health, education and infrastructure have also benefited from the Bank's financing over the last fifteen years. These projects have had ICT components that often include provision of hardware and software, systems studies, health/education management information systems and training. In this regard, during 1995-2005, the Bank spent over US\$80 million in the form grants and loans to support the application of ICT in health, education and agriculture.

Q10: Lessons learnt

Respondent skipped this question
