

NGN for Developing Countries

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Abstract

This presentation discusses the opportunities and challenges for developing countries in the migration to next generation networks within a broader context of the global efforts to bridge the digital divide. ICTs play an important role in delivering social and economic development as declared in the Millennium Development Goal 8 and the World Summit of Information Society. Efficient and innovative NGN systems can also bring significant benefits not only to developed countries, but also for the developing countries. However, there are various regulatory and market issues particular to the unique conditions of developing countries, such as initial investment for capital, huge urban-rural digital divide, and a lack of widespread affordable terminal devices. In particular, the presentation focuses on the issue of low demand for broadband among the rural and low-income users and discusses possible ways to trigger new demands for NGN services based on the case studies of recent affordable, accessible, and innovative ICT services. It argues that the future NGN services should be inclusive to the need of rural or digitally disadvantaged people in developing countries, while suggesting the provision for infrastructure investment needs to match with the creation of optimal service demands for making affordable broadband services in rural areas a reality.