



WELCOME



## THE SMILING COAST

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## The role of the incumbent in Universal access

1. Universal access ?
2. General objectives.
3. Role of the incumbent operator.
4. Conclusions.

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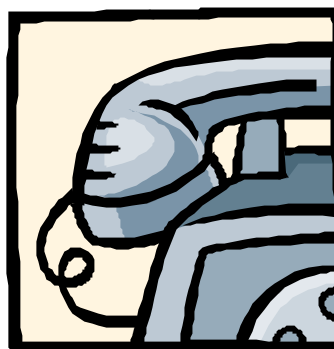
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## Universal access definition

Universal access: the more immediate goal of providing convenient and affordable access to communications on a community or local basis, through combinations of public facilities (payphones, telecentres, etc) and individual private service.

- 1. Availability**
- 2. Affordability**
- 3. Accessibility**



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## General Objectives (ITU Model)

- ⇒ Provide universal access to basic telephone communication (highest priority)
- ⇒ Provide access to advanced communications capabilities (quality and capacity for e.g internet)
- ⇒ Provide support for economic development and opportunity (availability e.g. telecentres)
- ⇒ provide direct support to public and community service institutions e.g. educational facilities.

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## Role of the Incumbent Operator in The Gambian Telecommunications Environment.

### Historical perspective

- > Monopoly (Gamtel).
- > Government-owned ( 100%).
- > Investment strategy ( MOU targets primarily influence by social and political factors).
- > Financing – tax and dividend waivers & soft loans. Subsidization from international revenues.
- > Achievements ( Rural telephony(Phase I and II, payphones, Telecentres, GRTS, etc )



## Role of the incumbent operator in The Gambian telecommunications environment

- Transitory stage( market reform)
  - Introduction of private sector participation (e.g. Africell, prepaid platform operators, ISPs etc).
  - Growing competition in the mobile sectors.
  - Impact of mobile competition to the fixed network ( investment strategy focus shift?)
  - Development of regulatory and legal Framework



## Role of the incumbent operator in The Gambian telecommunications environment

### • Universal access and competition

- Investment strategy driven by profit? (privatised incumbent environment).
- Financing options changes. Due to cross subsidization minimisation/elimination. Universal access fund?
- Regulatory constraints on Tariffs and Interconnections- Impact of tariff rebalancing ?



## Conclusions

### **Incumbent operator (GAMTEL):**

- Significant contribution (but equitable) to the universal access fund.
- Competitive interconnection charges and connectivity.
- Information sharing of operational experience from universal access projects.
- Adopt discriminatory tariff structure (affordability).
- Support training of local communities and educational facilities.
- Introduction of new technologies (hearing aid, tele-medicine etc).