

USF Policies for ICT Use and Digital Skills

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Agenda

- Broadband
 - Global Objectives, What is it, Why is it important, Status today
 - Key elements
- Tools for Broadband Adoption
 - Subsidies
 - USF and Digital Skills
- USFs are still underutilized
 - Opportunity with digital skills
- Examples
- Summary

Broadband Objectives

- We encourage widespread, affordable, high-quality broadband for all – focused on both deployment and adoption, including infrastructure, devices and **Digital Skills**.
 - Competitive markets
 - Abundant spectrum for broadband
 - Targeted government programs to address market failures



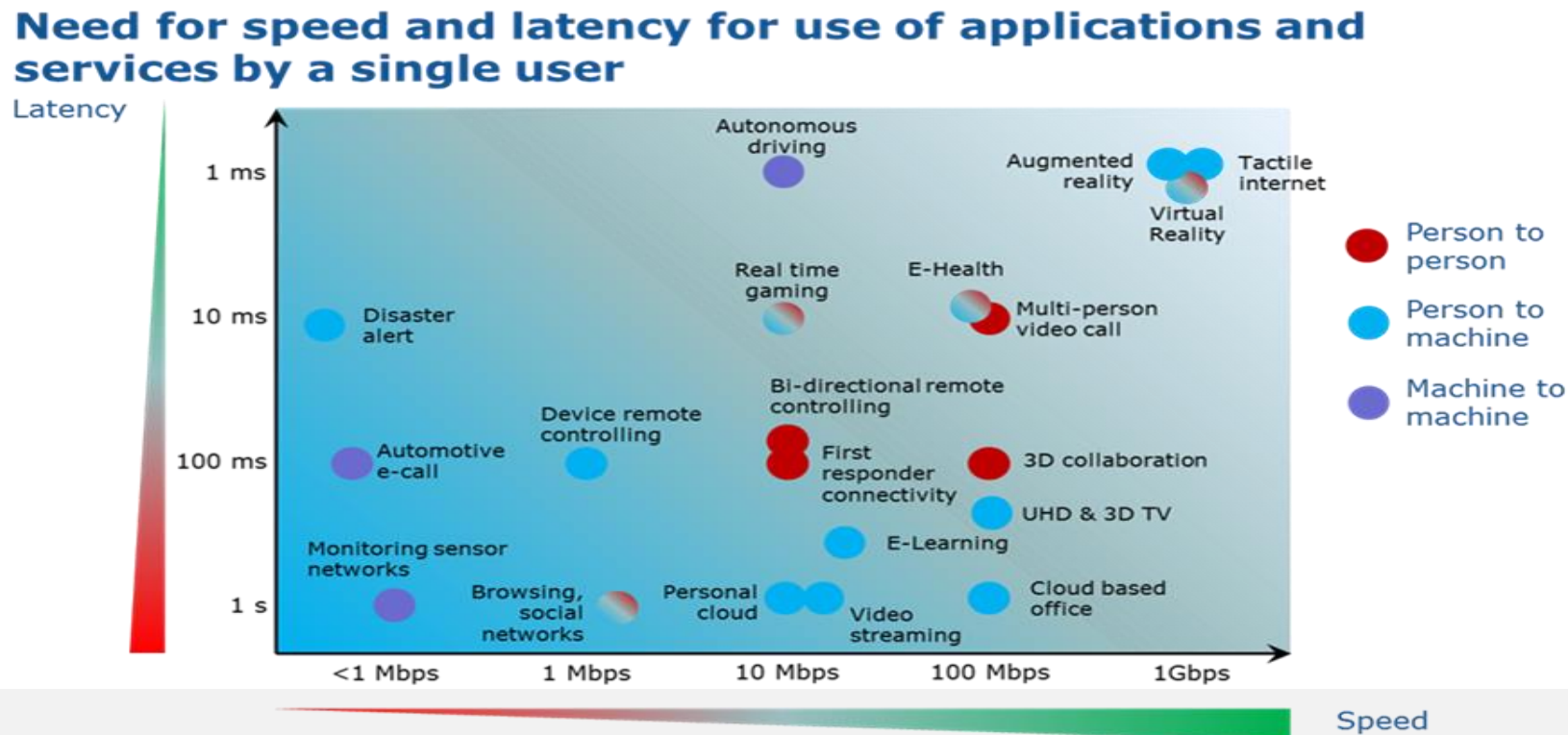
- Intel works with policy makers and partners to unlock the benefits of broadband and ICT for all:

- [Private networks using fixed wireless](#)
- [Workforce development and STEM](#)
- [AI for youth](#)
- Appointed member of Oregon Broadband Advisory Committee
- Past experts on broadband commission [WG](#)
- [Broadband Publications](#)



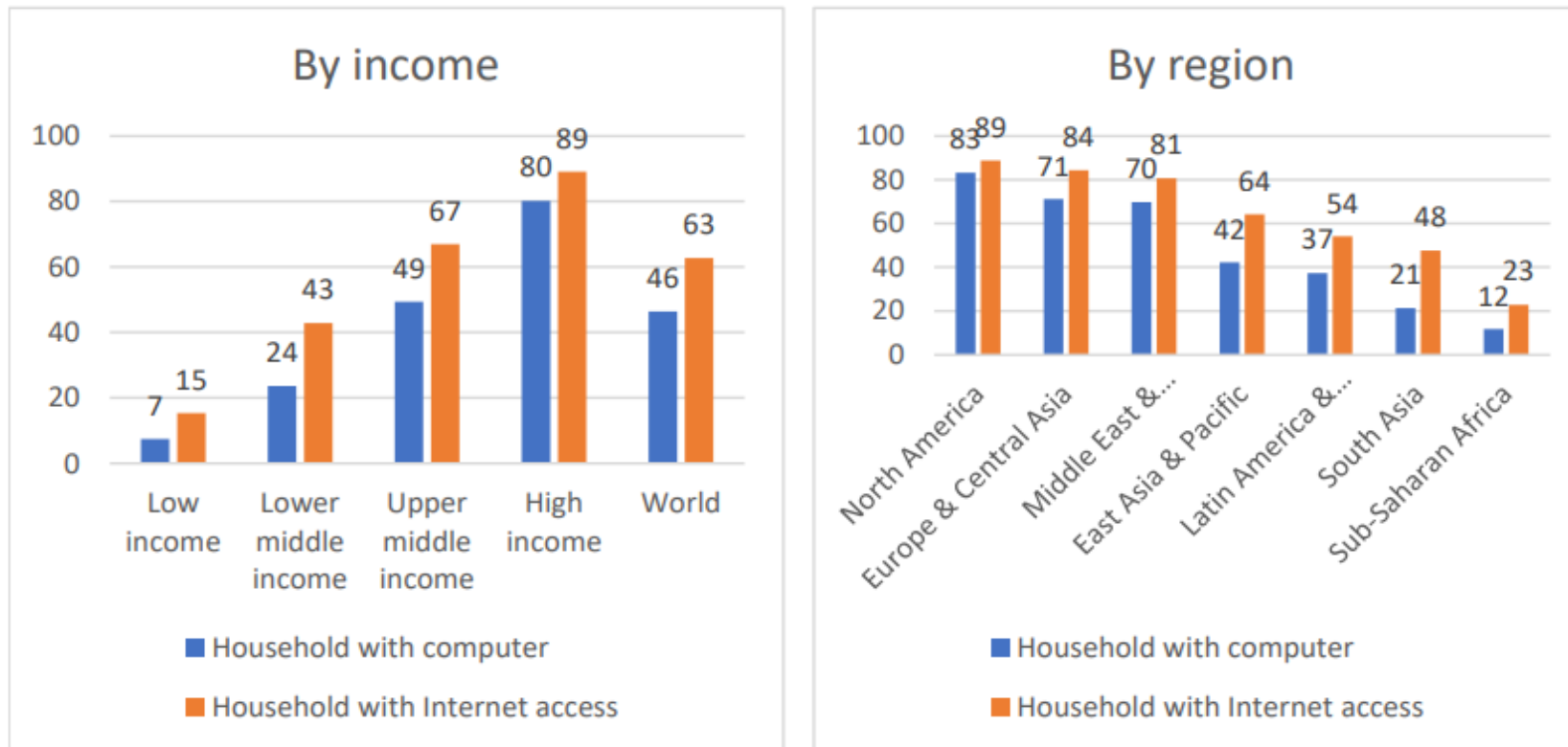
Why Broadband and What Is It

- Broadband is Good for Society
 - [Economic growth](#), creates Jobs (necessary for today's jobs), is important in healthcare for telemedicine, and studies show it helps SMEs, and [improves social outcomes](#).



Broadband and Computers

Figure 1.9: Households with a computer and Internet access (%), 2020 or latest available data

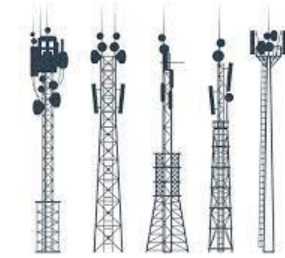


Note: Country averages.

Source: ITU. Broadband Commission: the State of Broadband 2022

Key Elements of Broadband

- Broadband = Deployment and Adoption
- 5 A's of Broadband
 - Access = infrastructure (Networks and Devices)
 - Affordability
 - High cost areas
 - Low income
 - Awareness/Interest
 - What can BB do for me = knowledge and enticing applications
 - Will my ID and data be safe = security
 - Ability
 - How do I do this = Digital skills teaching
 - Advanced digital skills for workforce
 - Additional factors
 - fear
 - embarrassment
 - language barriers
 - Lack of communal support



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Tools for Broadband Deployment and Adoption

- National Broadband Plans
 - Raul Katz study shows planning grew broadband in LAR
 - Malaysia BB grew 20% after national plan in place
- Broadband Mapping
- Make Spectrum Available
- Encourage sharing of ROWs
- Incentives
 - Use of existing USF
 - Direct govt funding
 - Tax reductions
 - Share govt ROWs
- Digital Skills Programs
 - Digital literacy
 - Advanced digital skills, STEM, and Workforce development

Underutilization of USF Continues

- According to recent ITU and A4AI Reports USFs are still underutilized;
- The ITU study examined 43 such funds and found that 20 had used 50 percent or less of the funds, 8 of these used less than 25 per cent, and 3 had used no funds at all (ITU, 2021; https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/pref/D-PREF-EF-2021-ECO_FIN-PDF-E.pdf)
- Reasons included poor governance unclear or unmeasurable objectives, poor coordination and unfair process to allocation of resource, all contributing to underutilization, misallocation and inefficient use of resources.
- According to Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI); <https://webfoundation.org/docs/2018/03/Using-USAFs-to-Close-the-Gender-Digital-Divide-in-Africa.pdf>)
 - A majority of African countries have a USF in place that is collecting funds. 37 African countries (or almost 70%) have a USF set up, and 62% of these funds are considered 'active'. However, most governments are failing to spend the USF funds collected.
 - In 2016, USAFs across Africa disbursed just 54% of funds collected. Across all 37 USFs in Africa, unspent funds total an estimated US\$408 million — enough to bring 6 million women online, or to provide digital skills training to 16 million women and girls.

USF Examples for Adoption

- A4AI study in Latin America: <https://a4ai.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/USAF-Report-English.pdf>

Costa Rica - Connected Homes Program

- Program has been active since 2015. An ITU WSIS Prize Winner Project. Provides subsidized Internet connections and computers to low-income households (up to 80 percent of subsidy for computer and broadband).
- Financed by National Telecommunications Fund (FONATEL- Universal Service Fund in Costa Rica) is part of Telecommunications Superintendence (SUTEL), the Costa Rican telecommunications regulator.
- During COVID-19, extended the coverage of program by 46,462 additional households, thus surpassing the goal of 140,496 beneficiary households to 186,958 households

Dominican Republic

- Dominican Telecommunication Institute (INDOTEL) is also implementing comprehensive connectivity projects that include social components. The project “Connect the Unconnected” (Conectar a los No Conectados) includes actions from both connectivity and access supply and demand side.

Summary

- Broadband and ICT use are essential
- Govt. Incentives required for market gaps
 - Use existing Universal Service Funds
 - Direct govt funding
 - Tax reductions
- Establish Digital Skills programs using USF for the un/underserved
 - Digital literacy
 - Advanced digital skills for future workforce
 - STEM
 - AI programs, advanced coding, etc.

[Intel Broadband E-book](#)

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US Broadband Funding

- US providing billions in Broadband funding for the unserved, and disadvantaged (~[23% of Americans without home internet](#))
 - American Rescue Plan [Capital Projects Fund](#): 10 billion for projects including broadband
 - [Infrastructure and Jobs Act Broadband Programs through NTIA](#)
 - BEAD: 42.45 billion for deployment and adoption
 - Middle mile: 1 billion for middle mile projects
 - Tribal Funding: added 2 billion for tribal broadband projects
 - Digital equity Acts: 2.75 billion for digital inclusion and equity programs (literacy, etc.)
 - FCC Affordable Connectivity Program [ACP](#): 30 – 75 dollars/month toward subscription, 100 toward a device
 - FCC emergency Connectivity Fund [ECF](#): 7.17 billion for schools to buy devices for students, as well as Wi-Fi routers.
- Additional Resources
 - [Connected Nations](#)