Tanzania

The arrival of submarine cables in the East African nation has spurred greater ICT activity in a sector underpinned by a forward-thinking regulatory environment.

Mobile services: There are six mobile operators, with the top three accounting for over 85 per cent of the market in December 2016. The three market leaders are Vodacom, a subsidiary of the South African mobile group; TIGO, a subsidiary of the Luxembourg-based MILLICOM mobile group; and AIRTEL, a subsidiary of the Indian mobile group. Other mobile operators include ZANTEL, operating on the island of Zanzibar, and a subsidiary of MILLICOM; HALOTEL, a subsidiary of the Vietnamese VIETTEL group; and Smart, owned by the Aga Khan Development Network, with a 51 per cent share, and a Cypriot mobile group, with a 49 per cent stake. Coverage from 2G is high, at over 95 per cent of the population, with 78 per cent of households having a mobile phones in 2015-2016, including (a) 93 per cent on the island of Zanzibar; and (b) 92 per cent of urban and 70 per cent of rural homes on the Tanzania mainland.[450] All the mobile operators have deployed 3G while TIGO, Smart, ZANTEL and Vodacom have commercially launched LTE.

Fixed services: Tanzania Telecommunication Limited (TTCL) is the incumbent operator. In 2001, it was partly privatized, when 35 per cent of its shares were sold to a consortium. In 2016, the Government of Tanzania repurchased the outstanding shares and currently again owns 100 per cent. TTCL offers fixed-telephone service through copper landlines. TTCL's fixed-broadband offerings include ADSL (up to 2 Mbit/s), fibre-optic and fixed wireless LTE. It competes with other fixed-broadband providers, primarily using fixed wireless broadband and a few offering fibre-optic connections, mainly to businesses in urban areas. The National ICT Broadband Backbone (NICTBB) infrastructure –covering more than 7 500 km – has been operational since June 2012. It is structured as a public–private partnership between the Government and operators. NICTBB has cross-border connectivity to the neighbouring countries of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia and Malawi. Operators provide funding while the Government contribution is through arranging rights of way and their costs. The Government owns the network while operators use the capacity. All licensed operators use the NICTBB on open access terms with cost-based prices. Part of the network has been deployed along the railway network. The arrival of submarine cables beginning in 2009 has boosted international connectivity, enabling the deployment of the latest broadband technologies. Tanzania is currently connected to the Eastern Africa Submarine System (EASSy) and SEACOM, is the landing point for the Seychelles to East Africa Submarine (SEAS), and several other submarine cables are in the pipeline. The Tanzania Internet Exchange launched in 2004 and has 35 peering members.

Key indicators for Tanzania (2017)		Africa	World
Fixed-telephone sub. per 100 inhab.	0.2	0.9	13.0
Mobile-cellular sub. per 100 inhab.	69.7	74.4	103.6
Active mobile-broadband sub. per 100 inhab.	8.7	24.8	61.9
3G coverage (% of population)	85.0	62.7	87.9
LTE/WiMAX coverage (% of population)	13.0	28.4	76.3
Individuals using the Internet (%)	*16.0*	22.1	48.6
Households with a computer (%)	*4.0*	8.9	47.1
Households with Internet access (%)	*14.4*	19.4	54.7
International bandwidth per Internet user (kbit/s)	*1.4*	11.2	76.6
Fixed-broadband sub. per 100 inhab.	3.2	0.6	13.6
Fixed-broadband sub. by speed tiers, % distribution			
-256 kbit/s to 2 Mbit/s	*58.3*	38.7	4.2
-2 to 10 Mbit/s	*19.3*	37.2	13.2
-equal to or above 10 Mbit/s	*22.4*	24.1	82.6

Note: Data in italics are ITU estimates. Source: ITU (as of June 2018).

Government policy: Responsibility for the ICT sector falls under the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communications. The 2016 National ICT Policy lays out the vision for the sector. The policy has 22 specific objectives, with the main objective of transforming Tanzania into an ICT-driven middle-income economy and society. The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority was operationalized in 2003, with responsibility for electronic communications, including telecommunications and posts. The primary sector law is the Electronic and Postal Communications Act of 2010.

Conclusion: Tanzania has created an enabling environment through a predictable regulatory environment, competition and open access to backbone networks. This is resulting in growing access to ICTs.