



# ITU Regional Development Forum for Africa (RDF-AFR)

## 'Digital transformation for a sustainable and equitable digital future: Accelerating the implementation of the SDGs in Africa'

organized by the International Telecommunication Union in collaboration with the  
Ministry of Innovation and Technology, Ethiopia

**3-5 October 2023**  
**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Please note that submitted information will be presented during the RDF-AFRP2C Roundtables and it will also be reflected on the pledging platform of the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition.

## CONTRIBUTION FORM

**ORGANIZATION:** NetPoints Limited, Nigeria

**FOCAL POINT:** Uchechi Chuta, Chief Executive Officer, e-mail: [netpointsky@gmail.com](mailto:netpointsky@gmail.com),  
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**TITLE:** Electricity and the internet: two markets, one big opportunity

### DESCRIPTION OF ACTION:

The markets for rural energy access and internet connectivity are ripe for disruption – and increasingly, we're seeing benefit from combining the offerings. Today, new business models are emerging, breaking market barriers to jointly provide energy access and broadband connectivity to consumers.

As highlighted in our business model, access to internet has the potential to boost growth, expand economic opportunities, improve service delivery and help in meeting the SDGs. The digital economy is growing at 10% a year—significantly faster than the global economy as a whole. Growth in the digital economy is even higher in developing markets: 15 to 25% per year.

To make sure everyone benefits, Reliable Clean Energy, Access Devices and coverage needs to be extended to the roughly four billion people that still lack access to the internet. In our prototype, NetPoints has recently tested its products (Industrial Panel PCs, energy efficient low energy PCs that could be delivered by Solar without any excess energy consumption) to provide internet to remote populations.

But as cool as our solution might sound, these innovations do nothing for the one billion people who still live off the grid... *and don't have access to the electricity you need to use the internet in the first place!* The findings of our *Internet Inclusion strategy* is put this nicely: "without electricity, internet is only a black hole".

That's why efforts to expand electricity and broadband access & Connectivity should go hand in hand: close coordination between the energy and ICT sectors is probably one of the most efficient and sensible ways of making sure rural populations in low-income countries can reap the benefits of digital development. This thinking is also reflected in a new generation of our disruptive ICT infrastructure projects.

The challenge? People who lack both electricity and internet are often overlooked by traditional operators because they are typically considered either too remote or too poor. Several smaller players are now stepping in to serve these neglected segments of the market and challenge the way internet and electricity are delivered.

In rural Africa, some of these innovative service providers are working to increase INTERNET Penetration by combining efficient solar panels with energy efficient Industrial PCs to provide internet connectivity. In the same vein, We just recently tested our grant winning Solar Powered





Internet Kiosk developed with a 24hour Computer access points/ WiFi access points too that can be powered with small solar systems. Using a different model, we plan to offer a new type of computer based installation, a change in technology that reduces the electricity requirement. For remote communities, bundling a public Computer access point with a solar and battery mini-grid is another affordable option.

In addition to offering electricity in a new way, Distributed Energy Service Companies (DESCOs) should start bundling pay-as-you-go solar electricity and mobile or wifi services. For example, we have partnered with MTN, Africa's largest mobile telecommunications company, to integrate GSM, mobile money systems and financial platforms that allow customers to rent-to-own solar home systems, appliances and pay for electricity through mobile phones.

One of them is competing policy objectives. In Nigeria, for instance, energy availability in rural areas is lower than connectivity, therefore energy and broadband providers may want to prioritize different areas when looking to expand their services. Our team will play an important role here, disseminating good practices, policy advice, and market analytics.

Better harmonization between internet providers and power companies will go a long way in addressing the rising demand for high-, our speed internet and reliable electricity. With support from Investors ,our team is working with ICT and energy experts across our network to support our disruptive business models, including most importantly those that bundle energy and internet access.

**COUNTRIES in FOCUS:** Nigeria, Africa and indeed the rest of the World

**YEARS of IMPLEMENTATION:**

☒ 2024

☒ 2025

**RELEVANT ITU REGIONAL INITIATIVE:**

☒ AFR1: Supporting digital transformation to usher in a rapid transition to a digital economy while accelerating innovation in Africa

☒ AFR2: Implementation and expansion of broadband infrastructures, connectivity and emerging technologies

☒ AFR3: Building trust, safety and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs and protection of personal data

☒ AFR4: Fostering emerging technologies and innovation ecosystems

Please find more information on the ITU Regional Initiatives 2023-2025, as defined by WTDC-22, [here](#).

**RELATED ITU-D PRIORITIES AS DEFINED BY THE ITU WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2022**

☒ Affordable connectivity

☒ Digital transformation

☒ Enabling policy and regulatory environment

☒ Resource mobilization and international cooperation





- ☒ Inclusive and secure telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development

Please find more information on the ITU-D Priorities, as defined by WTDC-22, [here](#).

### RELATED ITU PRIORITIES AS DEFINED BY ITU PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE 2022

- ☒ Inclusive and secure telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and services
- ☒ Digital applications
- ☒ Enabling environment

Please find more information on the ITU Priorities, as defined by PP-22, [here](#)

### RELATED WSIS ACTION LINE: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

- ☒ C1: The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
- ☒ C2: Information and communication infrastructure
- ☒ C3: Access to information and knowledge
- ☒ C4: Capacity building
- ☒ C5: Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs
- ☒ C6: Enabling environment
- ☒ C7: ICT applications
- ☒ C8: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
- ☒ C9: Media
- ☒ C10: Ethical dimensions the Information Society
- ☒ C11: International and regional cooperation

### RELATED SDG:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 1: No Poverty                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 2: Zero Hunger                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 4: Quality Education               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 5: Gender Equality                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 13: Climate Action                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 17: Partnerships for the SDGs              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth |  |





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☒ SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

