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Associação de Reguladores de Comunicações e Telecomunicações da CPLP

# **Study on the Universal Service of Electronic Communications**

**São Tomé and Príncipe, 03.02.2015**



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## 1. Scope

1. Analysis of the reality and perspectives associated with the **universal service** and with the “**universalisation**” of access to and use of ECS in ARCTEL countries.

2. Typically, **universal service** entails:

- Guaranteeing provision of a specified minimum set of electronic communications services (ECS):
  - With appropriate levels of quality of service;
  - With affordable prices, throughout the national territory;
  - Offered to the population in general;
  - With adaptation to the needs of citizens with disabilities.
- Enabling free calls to a national emergency number from any telephone, with the possibility of obtaining caller location information.
- Access to and use of the FTS is the provision most commonly associated with universal service, although broadband is also included in some countries.

### 3. “**Universalisation**” refers to activities and projects which:

- Are not strictly included within the scope of the universal electronic communications service,
- Likewise contribute to the universalisation of access to electronic communications equipment and services,
- May have private or public origin or stem from public-private partnerships

Examples of activities related to “**universalisation**”:

- Projects to subsidise electronic communications equipment and services;
- Initiatives which aim to promote digital literacy;
- Measures which promote the sharing of infrastructure suitable for carrying electronic communication networks;
- Investment incentives;
- Development of infrastructure in rural or remote areas;
- Projects to train people with special needs in the use of electronic communications.



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## 2. Methodology

## 2.1 Literature review

The literature review covers aspects related to:

- Implementation of policy and regulatory instruments of universal service;
- Assessment of the net costs of universal service;
- Financing and allocation of the net costs of universal service;
- Procedures to designate universal service providers.
- Selection of services to be covered by universal service;
- Factors which motivate/discourage ECS uptake and use.



## 2.2 NRA questionnaire

- Concept and scope of universal service;
- Providers of the universal service;
- Financing of the universal service;
- Universal service pricing;
- Guarantee of universal service quality;
- Obligations of universalisation:
- Projects/ Initiatives of universalisation;
- Future of the universal service;
- Other Questions.

## 2.3 Case studies

- Compile experiences of success (and possibly lack of success) in implementing the universal service and “universalisation” projects;
- May contribute to identifying and sharing “best practices” and to identifying solutions for the future;
- Will be formulated based on contributions received from NRAs and public information

## 2.4 Statistical and market information

The processing and analysis of statistical and market information (including in particular legal background) within ARCTEL will allow:

- Greater dissemination of the conditions of market development, facilitating the performance of studies and attracting FDI;
- A more rigorous assessment of the effectiveness of the results of current and planned universal service policies and “universalisation”.



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## 3. Objectives

1. Formulation of a set of conclusions, recommendations and best practices, which can be shared in order to:
  - Improve the current management of universal service funds;
  - Instil improvements into current universal service regulatory frameworks.
2. Based on compiled information and data, presentation (where appropriate) of a new universal service concept and future scenarios which may be used as guidelines and recommendations for CPLP countries and other countries with similar characteristics.



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## 4. Timetable



## Timetable (2)

	March				April				May				
	2-6	9-13	16-20	23-27	30-3	6-10	13-17	20-24	27-1	4-8	11-15	18-22	25-29
PROJECT TEAM									30.04 Send study 1 <sup>st</sup> draft				
NRA	Deadline for Questionnaire responses		16 Send response to questionnaire + case study survey										
ARCTEL											Arctel GA (Luanda) and presentation /discussion of Study  (14-15 May)		