

What Will Grow Africa's Digital Economy?

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META

Start with the people using the internet

The real centre of the story

- A trader selling through messaging
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- A student learning online
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- A small business finding customers on social media

Different problems need different answers

Precision before prescription

- *Is the problem investment?*
- *Is it competition?*
- *Is it harm to users?*
- *Is it tax?*
- *Is it fraud or abuse?*

The evidence does not clearly show a broken market

What the data shows

OPERATOR REPORTS

Data use and data customers are **growing**

INDEPENDENT STUDY

African operators are still growing and still making money from connectivity

The ITU says: prove the problem first

The existing framework

- 1 Look carefully at the effects
- 2 Recognise that operators and OTTs depend on each other
- 3 Prefer conditions that help cooperation

Everyone invests in different parts of the internet

Different players invest in different parts of the system

2AFRICA

45,000
KM

33
COUNTRIES

Open-access subsea cable system

When access costs more, people use less internet

The evidence from experience

Uganda OTT levy

Introduced in 2018

Internet use fell

Lesson: do not price people out of access

Choose the tools that grow access

The path forward

- 1 Start with the user
- 2 Be clear about the harm
- 3 Keep the burden of proof high
- 4 Choose tools that expand access