



ITU Regional Development Forum for Africa (RDF-AFR) 2026

*Universal, meaningful, and affordable connectivity for
an inclusive and sustainable digital future*

25-26 May 2026
Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Event website: <http://itu.int/go/RDF-AFR-26>

RDF-AFR 2026 is organized by the International Telecommunication Union in cooperation with the Africa Telecommunications Union (ATU) and hosted by the Government of Zimbabwe.

The Forum is held back-to-back with the 2nd African Preparatory Meeting (APM) for ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26) on 27-29 May 2026

REVISED PROGRAMME*

Monday, 25 May 2026

08:30 - 09:00 Networking Coffee

09:00 - 10:30 **Session 1: Infrastructure Development for Universal Meaningful Connectivity**

This session is a high-level discussion to explore strategies to accelerate investment and development of digital infrastructure to advance universal and meaningful connectivity in Africa. Speakers will share insights and engage with the audience on innovative solutions, financing models, and policy frameworks, and the role of their respective organisations in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union's Agenda 2063 through inclusive and sustainable digital transformation.

Moderator: Ms Halima Letamo, Head, ITU Area Office for Southern Africa

Panellists:

- Hon. Mondli Gungubele, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Communications and Digital Technologies, South Africa
- Mr Louis Marc Sakala, Directeur General, Agence de Régulation des Postes et des Communications Électroniques (ARPCE), Congo
- Ms Helen Vosloo, Executive, Economics and Market Development, Communications and Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN), Namibia
- Ms Helen Kyeyune, Lead, Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Amazon
- Mr Laurent Ferrali, Senior Director, Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)
- Mr Timothy Adi Ashong, Director General, Pan-African Satellite Communication Organization (RASCOM), Côte d'Ivoire

10:30 - 11:00 Coffee Break



**11:00 - 12:00****Opening ceremony**

- Hon. Richard Moyo, Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution for Matabeleland North Province
- Dr Gift Kallisto Machengete, Director General, POTRAZ
- Mr John Omo, Secretary General, African Telecommunications Union (ATU)
- Dr. Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau
- Hon. Tatenda Mavetera, Minister, Ministry of Information Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services, Zimbabwe

Appointment of the Chair of the ITU Regional Development Forum for Africa

12:00 - 13:00**Session 2: State of Digital Development and Trends: Challenges and Opportunities**

Africa's digital transformation holds significant promise for socio-economic progress. Enhanced mobile broadband coverage, a youthful population, and growing innovation are driving change across the continent. However, major challenges persist; although more than 82% of Africans are covered by mobile broadband, only 36% use the internet, the lowest rate worldwide. High connectivity costs, rural-urban disparities, limited digital skills, device affordability issues, fragmented regulations, cybersecurity threats, weak data protection, and insufficient electricity continue to prevent many people from fully benefiting from digital technologies.

Addressing these challenges will require coordinated investment, supportive policy and regulation, and large-scale digital skills training. In this session, speakers will share their experiences in tackling these structural gaps that continue to hinder balanced and inclusive digital progress across the region.

Moderator: Mr Mayamiko Nkoloma, Director General, Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)

Presentation and setting the scene: Dr Emmanuel Manasseh, Director, ITU Regional Office for Africa

Panellists:

- Hon. Tatenda Mavetera, Minister, Ministry of Information, Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services, Zimbabwe
- Mr John Omo, Secretary General, African Telecommunications Union
- Ms Liza (Roussot) Zouabi-Niedermeier, Executive, Group Pricing Compliance and Regulatory Economics, Telkom
- Mr Mothibi Ramusi, Chairperson, Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA)
- Mr Amara Brewah, Director-General, National Communications Authority (NATCA), Sierra Leone
- Rev. Ing. Edmund Yirenkyi Fianko, Director General, National Communications Authority (NCA) of Ghana

13:00 - 13:15**Special Announcements**

NETP Model for West Africa

NETP Model for Southern Africa





13:15 - 14:30	Group Photo and Lunch Break
14:30 - 16:00	Session 3: Building upon the outcomes of the WTDC and UN processes towards the results and impact-oriented regional actions in Africa (Financing Regional Initiatives) Member States at the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-25) held in Baku, Azerbaijan, adopted five regional initiatives for Africa. This session will address actions carried out in the region by different stakeholders and how these relate to the outcomes of WTDC-25. The session will offer an opportunity to discuss ITU's role in the UN system and its contribution at the regional and country levels to foster digital development, focusing on the joint programming collaboration as a framework for local resource mobilisation to facilitate financing of Regional Initiatives. Moderator: Dr Christine Sund, Senior Advisor, ITU Regional Office for Africa Panellists: – Hon. Emma Theofelus, Minister, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Namibia – Dr Beaulah Chirume, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services, Zimbabwe – Mr Dominic Ooko, Deputy Director, Revenue Assurance and Financial Reporting, Communications Authority of Kenya – Dr Aliyu Yusuf Aboki, Executive Secretary, WATRA – Mr Brian Mwansa, Acting Executive Secretary, CRASA – Dr Zhicheng Qu, Chief Standardization Director for ITU Affairs, ZTE Corporation – Mr Koffi Fabrice Djossou, Senior Expert in Charge of Innovation, West African Development Bank (BOAD)
16:00 - 16:30	Special Announcements ITU-ATU-ICANN partnership on regional technical collaboration for strengthened digital infrastructure in Africa
16:30 - 17:00	Coffee Break
Networking dinner	

Tuesday, 26 May 2026

08:30 - 09:00	Networking Coffee
09:00 - 10:30	Session 4: ITU Regional Initiatives for Africa The five regional initiatives on Africa adopted during WTDC-25 focus on themes relevant to resilient digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital applications and funding mechanisms. This session will explore strategies through which these regional initiatives will be jointly implemented focusing on priorities which shaped these initiatives and received contributions. Moderator: Ms Tahiry Rakotoheriniaina, Head, ITU Area Office for Central Africa and Madagascar





	Presentation: Learning from Asia-Pacific on Smart Islands and Smart Villages. Dr Atsuko Okuda, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, ITU Presentation: Regional Initiatives accelerator, Mr Mohammed Ba, Head of Digital Innovation, ITU Presentations – Mr Michel Tchonang Linze, Coordonnateur, FGI Afrique centrale, Secrétaire Exécutif FGI Cameroun – Ms Gaso Grace Pascal, Generation Connect Youth Envoy/ITU-Huawei Generation Connect Young Leaders Programme, South Sudan. – Eng. Victor Kweka, Manager for Spectrum Management, TCRA, Tanzania – Dr Stella Erebor, Head, Internal Audit Department (HIAD), NCC, Nigeria
10:30 - 11:00	Coffee Break
11:00 - 12:30	Session 5: Partner2Connect matchmaking roundtable: Matching the country and regional needs with stakeholders' interests to support digital development across Africa This session will serve as a matchmaking platform for P2C pledges and RI for the Africa region. The session will highlight innovative approaches to building sustainable, high-value partnerships that unlock transformative opportunities. It will focus on catalysing impactful initiatives to accelerate the region's digital agenda, driving inclusive and impactful capacity-development efforts to support digital transformation and regional growth. Moderator: Mr Ali Drissa Badiel, Head, ITU Area Office for Western Africa Presentation on Partner2Connect – Mr Paul Demba, Project Manager for School Connectivity Initiatives, Telecommunications Development Bureau, ITU Presentation: Summary of contributions (draft <i>Regional Roadmap for the Implementation of the ITU Regional Initiatives for Africa</i>) Dr Emmanuel Manasseh, Regional Director for Africa, ITU Presentations – Hon. Mark-Alexandre Doumba, Minister, Ministère de l'Économie numérique, de la Digitalisation et de l'Innovation, Gabon – Hon. Samuel Nartey George, Minister, Ministry of Communication, Digital Technology and Innovations, Ghana – Ms Bernice Edande Otye, Permanent Secretary, ARTAC – Ms Fleur Assoumou Bessou, Chair of TDAG – Mr Kakou Stanislas Kanvoli, Director of Legal Affairs and International Cooperation, Ministry of Digital Transition and Innovation, Côte d'Ivoire – Mr Harold Msusa, Secretary, Ministry of ICT, Malawi – Mr Clodé Sanhá, Director of Radiocommunications and Engineering of ARN-TIC (Autoridade Reguladora Nacional das Tecnologias da Informação e Comunicação), Republic of Guinea-Bissau Interactive discussions with stakeholders on the draft <i>Regional Roadmap for the Implementation of the ITU Regional Initiatives for Africa</i>
12:30 - 13:00	Presentation of the draft 2026 RDF-AFR report by the Chair



**13:00 - 14:00****Closing ceremony**

- Dr Gift Kallisto Machengete, Director General, POTRAZ
- Mr John Omo, Secretary General, African Telecommunications Union (ATU)
- Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau
- Hon. Dingumuzi Phuti, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Information Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services, Zimbabwe

END OF RDF-AFR 2026

*Kindly note that the opening ceremony will now take place from 11:00-12:00.

