

## **Contribution from Burkina Faso to the Global Symposium for Regulators 2013 (GSR13)**

The ICT sector is an evolving one in which innovations are constantly emerging, opening up investment opportunities that can be crucial to the economic, social and cultural developing of our countries. The sector is also one of the biggest providers of jobs for young people.

In many countries the past decade has been marked by strong growth of mobile subscriber bases, penetration rates and teledensity.

This expansion of mobile networks and the convergence of new technologies have created new requirements, in particular a demand for access to very high-speed Internet allowing the transmission of higher data volumes. With the new fourth-generation (4G) networks, consumers will be able to surf the web anywhere, using portable phones or tablets, at speeds five or ten times higher than were possible with the third generation.

On the other hand, the advent of 4G will also require refarming of existing frequencies as well as a review of existing regulations, in the light of market dynamics (aggressive competition between operators involving advertising campaigns designed to show off their strength), new services on offer, and the cross-border nature of the new technologies. Given that the new-generation networks are strongly associated with cloud IT systems, regulation in this area must be appropriate, effective, open and dynamic, in order to promote innovative content and stimulate economic growth.

In most African countries, existing network infrastructure is obsolete and has inadequate capacity to handle existing traffic. In addressing such concerns, particular emphasis must be placed on the development of network infrastructure to match the growth in new services and respond to users' needs.

Given the cost of infrastructure and its importance for overall economic development, States need to ensure:

- *Ex-ante* regulation to promote infrastructure and services.
- Better organization of the market, with increasing emphasis on globalization and decentralization through transnational projects and public-private partnerships to enhance investor confidence. These days, all stakeholders share responsibility for developing the sector, a process in which public authorities have an opportunity to collaborate closely with the private sector to ensure the security of investments.

States would act as a catalyst by reducing or eliminating at least some import duties and taxes, while also seeking appropriate solutions to environmental problems.

As these new technologies do not stop at national borders, changes in the regulatory framework should open up many new opportunities for users. It is essential to adopt clear standards to create a conducive environment for operators to work in and enable them to use frequencies that are not vulnerable to interference for their broadband services.

With the advent of cloud computing, IT resources are becoming virtualized, mutualized and accessible in networks. Any user can now access applications, upload and save files and work normally, from the comfort of home or anywhere in the world, saving time and money.

Since telecommunications, media and IT are now integrated and provided on one platform, legislative and regulatory reforms should include measures to enable the new ICT environment to adapt. This must also take account of regulators' efforts to tackle the problem of copyright infringements that are perpetrated more easily with broadband services, including social networks. Digital products are by their very nature easy to copy and disseminate and must be protected accordingly.

ARCEP of Burkina Faso takes the view that regulations which remove restrictive barriers will be more effective and provide better incentives for operators and service providers, as well as encouraging investment in development of the sector. It is essential at this stage to ease conditions for obtaining licences.