AFRICACOM | AFRICATECH
2020
KEY TAKEAWAYS

AfricaCom is the biggest telecoms and technology event in Africa, connecting business leaders from the worlds of connectivity and communications, enterprise digital transformation, ICT policy, broadcasting and digital media.

AfricaCom, together with the recently launched **AfricaTech**, creates a powerful vehicle for digital transformation, economic development and social empowerment. AfricaTech was held virtually for the first time this year from 9 to 13 November 2020.

Webber Wentzel was invited to speak at and attend AfricaTech 2020 as a Virtual VIP guest. This infographic serves to usefully highlight our key takeaways from the event and other relevant info from the event. As a leading African law firm, we wish to actively engage with existing and prospective clients regarding developments in this space. Please reach out to any one of our **Key Contacts** for any assistance required, and browse our website for our latest articles and news updates.

KEY THEMES

1 Digital Infrastructure Investment
Building the foundations of digital connectivity and empowering Africa's connectivity champions.

2 4IR for Africa
Propelling Africa to the forefront of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

3 Enterprise Tech
Technology is fundamentally reshaping the way we do business. How should enterprise leaders respond?

4 Connecting the Next Billion
Bridging the digital divide to enable everybody to participate in Africa's thriving digital economy.

5 Tech for Good
Technology investment to drive socio-economic development.

6 Diversity & Inclusion
Design, build and run a better, more inclusive, digital world with equal opportunities for everybody.

7 Future of Work
Drive workplace innovation and discover how emerging technologies will impact skills requirements and optimise processes in your organisation.

8 Talent & Skills Development
Investing in talent and the skills necessary to derive real value from disruptive technologies.

9 Scaling Start-Ups
Scale start-ups to scale economic impact: entrepreneurship as an engine for growth.

KEY MESSAGE

Africa represents the greatest opportunity for exponential tech growth, and the global COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated both the need for tech adoption and the opportunity for investment.

What is needed is a concerted & collaborative effort by all players to remove some of the main digital inclusivity barriers facing Africans, in order to unleash Africa's potential to become a leader in the 4IR.

KEY DRIVERS FOR ACCELERATING AFRICA'S DIGITAL FUTURE

1 **Improve infrastructure:** broadband & fibre connectivity; access to and affordability of mobile devices.
2 **Increase connectivity:** speed, quality & cost of data & internet connection; improve digital literacy. *[Africa has the highest growth rates globally in mobile & data traffic – Ericson Mobility Report]*
3 **Improve policy & regulatory environment:** key to attract investment and encourage market development through innovation, partnerships, entrepreneurship, job creation & knowledge sharing.

Digital inclusion
"350m internet users in Africa in 2019, which is more than 20 times that of 2005, however, digital inclusion remains a key barrier in Africa."
Alioune Ndiaye, CEO – Middle East and Africa of Orange

As a leading law firm in the sector, Webber Wentzel is committed to lowering the barriers for further growth in the tech market, for example by lobbying for relaxations to IP exchange controls & loop structures. In addition, we specialise in providing expert advice to clients within the complex, often uncertain, and ever-evolving regulatory framework, with the ability to find innovative solutions to **structure within the gaps** for our clients.

accelerateHER

4 Technologies to have the biggest impact on women in the next 2 – 5 years
(Hon Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT Government of Rwanda)

1 **FINTECH:** digital financial inclusion for women.
2 **REMOTE WORKING TECH:** breaking the physical and social barriers in the workforce; addressing the gender pay gap; providing work flexibility.
3 **E-LEARNING:** support learning, re-learning, and upskilling of women.
4 **MOBILE TECH:** open up opportunities and access to knowledge.

2 Most impactful ways tech is changing the lives of women
(Renee Hunter, Portfolio Lead at Value for Women)

1 **TIME SAVING:** addressing the fact that women spend disproportionately more time doing unpaid care work.
2 **FEMTECH:** tech solutions which target women's needs, such as female sexual health or GBV, which is set to double in value in the next 5 years.

⚠ KEY AREAS OF CONCERN

- **INCLUSIVITY:** tech in and of itself is not inclusive, and there needs to be more focus on making tech (including access to and affordability of data) more inclusive for women and in particular women living in rural areas.
- **MENTORSHIP:** not enough mentors available in programmes which target female entrepreneurs, and not enough female mentors (according to recent research from the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs).

Webber Wentzel has recently committed to the United Nation's Women Empowerment Principles, a seven-step guideline on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace.

FUTURE TRENDS FOR AFRICA

3 UNDERLYING TRENDS as focus areas for Africa

Affordability   **Speed**   **Connectivity**

Specific trends identified as opportunities:

Micro-payments   Improving policy & regulation   Blockchain & DLT
Micro-manufacturing   Digital identity   Mobile tech   Cloud tech
Edge data centres and edge computing   Artificial intelligence   SaaS
Biometrics   Big data analytics   Digital engagement

KEY QUOTES

"COVID-19 accelerated two years of digital transformation in two months."
Lillian Barnard, Managing Director of Microsoft

"We are really focusing on edtech and encourage entrepreneurs to work with government."
Alan Winde, Premier of Western Cape

"The pandemic can be seen as a strategic lever that has facilitated change – we need to keep up the momentum."
Prof Tshilidzi Marwala, Vice-Chancellor of UJ & Deputy Chair Presidential 4IR Commission

"65% of global GDP will be digitalised by 2022."
David Harrowsmith, CEO of Morwation, referring to the IDC FutureScape for Worldwide Digital Transformation

"Fintechs are no longer the enemy of banks; the atmosphere has shifted to one of collaboration rather than competition."
Jessica Davies, Senior Disruption Analyst at Nedbank

"Technology has been an amplifier and has had a catalytic effect on the [Kolisi] Foundation's efforts. We have been able to leverage and connect resources with the need during this time purely because of the digital platforms made available to us through our partners, some of which we have only met online – we exist virtually as networked communities."
Mahlatse Mashua, CEO of Kolisi Foundation

4IR COMMISSION

4IR Commission Report has been approved by Cabinet and will be road showed for public comment. The Report includes 8 recommendations:

1 **Investment** in human capital
2 **Establish** a national AI institute
3 **Establish a platform** for advanced manufacturing
4 **Secure and avail data to enable** innovation (Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services is in the process of gazetting a draft data and cloud policy to give guidelines for investing in data centres)
5 **Incentivise future** industries, platforms and applications for 4IR
6 **Build 4IR infrastructure** which integrates with existing economic and social infrastructure
7 **Review,** amend and create policy and legislation
8 **Establish 4IR strategy** and implementation coordination council

ⓘ FOR MORE INFORMATION
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