

In Brief

Broadband Advances in Africa

Ghana has been ranked number one in Africa as the country with the highest Internet speed, according to the latest global Internet speed report released in March 2012 by US-based Ookla. The organization is a leader in broadband testing and web-based network diagnostic applications. Its NetIndex compares and ranks consumer download speeds around the world, and reported Ghana had an average broadband speed of 5.19 megabits per second.

According to the index, Ghana beat Kenya to second place with 4.4 Mbps, South Africa to sixth place with 2.98 Mbps, and nearby Nigeria to the eighth place in Africa with 2.3 Mbps. Morocco, Angola, Tunisia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Libya were all in the top ten, but behind Ghana. Between the telecom operators in Ghana, professed broadband speeds range from 3.1 Mbps (Expresso) to 14.4 Mbps (Vodafone).

At the global level, Lithuania was first with 31.67 Mbps followed by South Korea with 30.59Mbps and Latvia in third place with 27.41 Mbps.

Ghana placed 72nd in the global rankings, ahead of Italy at 73rd with 5.05 Mbps and several other European countries. Kenya came in 75th.

World Bank: Achievements in Governance and Anti-Corruption

The World Bank has made significant progress in implementing its governance and anticorruption (GAC) strategy, and is now more open and transparent than ever before, according to a fact sheet recently released by the World Bank in Washington.

“Incorporating Government and Anticorruption into the World Bank’s Work across Countries, Sectors,

and Regions: Many projects and country programs integrate political economy assessments, risk identification and mitigation measures, and stronger controls and oversight.

The implementation of the Operational Risk Management Framework (ORAF), which was introduced in all projects in FY2011, will further enable addressing risks related to poor governance and corruption, as part of the risk framework.

There are good examples of political economy analysis for countries, sectors, projects across all regions of the Bank that are disseminated and shared with country teams. Some examples of these include India’s Power Sector, Mauritania Utility Service Reforms. West Bank & Gaza Water and Sanitation, and Yemen Water Sector. In FY2011, the Bank announced that it will not lend directly to finance budgets in countries that do not publish their budgets, or in exceptional cases, at least commit to publish their budgets within 12 months. In sectors, the implementation of the GAC strategy has examined how to re-orient investment lending to strengthen institution-building and results-orientation. An example is how Bank support for Brazil’s flagship conditional cash transfer program, Bolsa Familia, the improved accountability and reduced fraud and errors in the program.

Strengthening the Bank’s Corporate Investigations and Sanctions Regimes: The Bank has implemented the recommendations of the Volcker Report by successfully strengthening the Integrity Vice Presidency (INT). In the last few years, INNT has ramped up its investigative, preventive and forensic resources to reduce the risk of fraud and corruption in Bank financial projects. Some of the highlights in INT efforts of INT’s efforts in 2010/2011 are: The World Bank has debarred 423 firms, individuals and non-governmental organizations, preventing them from participating in future Bank-financed projects, 45 of these entities were debarred in the last fiscal year. Since December 2010, the World Bank has also cross debarred 15 firms and individuals and continues to cooperate with other signatory multilateral development banks (MDBs) to advance the enforcement of the Cross-Debarment agree-

ment signed in April 2010. INT has also undertaken assessments of the risks and lessons learned about preventive measures at the sectoral level such as the Global Roads Review.

A more open, transparent and accountable World Bank. The World Bank Group has been actively working on a number of Open Development initiatives that are closely linked to ongoing commitments to integrate our governance with anti-corruption agenda into all of the bank's work. The Mapping for Results and Aid-flows website, tools that promote better monitoring of project results, enhance transparency, and strengthen country dialogue and civil engagement. The Kenyan government – in partnership with the World Bank and others, launched the Kenya Open Data portal making several large data sets, including the national census and statistics on government spending at national and county level available to researchers, journalists, web and software development and the general public.

The one-year anniversary of the Bank's landmark Access to Information policy, from July 1 2010 to March 31, 2011, the Bank posted 7,064 new documents and reports, and the public has viewed more than 4 million pages on this site since the Access to information policy went into effect.

Supporting Collective Actions on Global Governance: in December, 2010 the World Bank launched the International Corruption Hunters Alliance, a network of 286 anti-corruption officials from 134 countries that aims to strengthen global anticorruption efforts through parallel investigations, facilitating access to investigation information and enforcement jurisdictions that can advance national-level prosecutions of wrongdoers. The World Bank also has supported programs such as the Stolen Assets Recovery (SAR) initiative and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), among others.

Emirates Cabinet Approves e-Government Plan for 2014

The Plan 2014 aims to complete the e-transformation of all services offered by the public, enhance legal and legislative environment for e-services and develop the institutional framework of e-Government. It also strives to create and implement a cloud computing

strategy for the federal government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

It will provide the citizens with additional channels to access government services, such as Internet, mobile phone and e-kiosks, in addition to traditional customer service centers. "In two years, all ministries and federal authorities must provide a host of comprehensive e-services to customers, stated he Prime Minister. The plan consists of four phases. The first two phases focus on enhancing the IT infrastructure, setting up a comprehensive e-Government legal framework, and developing unified criteria for e-services quality. It will develop the government cloud strategy, set up and operate government information network, database and disaster recovery center, which will ensure that the services are not disrupted in time of emergency. The government will also establish a customer service center to ensure high quality of e-services.

The third phase will introduce applications and advances in e-services including UAE encyclopedia or e-information and a variety of mobile applications. The fourth phase aims to develop an efficient mechanism for performance management to elevate the UAE's standing on the UN e-Government Readiness Index. It will also evaluate and assess customer satisfaction, and setting up policies for business continuity to guarantee that services are provided in a constant manner in different conditions and situations.

US Allocates \$7 Billion for Public Safety Network

Legislation has been approved by the US Congress to build a new nationwide interoperable public sector network. The reallocation of the 700MHz "D-block" section of airwaves will improve the country's homeland security and provide first responders with new voice, video, and data communication technologies that are needed to meet public safety requirements. The \$7 billion budget was granted to kick-start the project. A number of Congressmen expressed support for this action because they see "reallocation of the D Block being what first responders have long advocated as well as funding for the construction and maintenance of the network and ensures the input of federal, state and local leaders."

Funding for the system will come out of an expected \$22 billion stemming from future FCC auctions to

commercial wireless providers of unused spectrum and “white space” spectrum – the band of frequencies between TV channels that are currently blank and serve as a buffer between the broadcast signals of various stations. Wireless communications placed in white space are not expected to be powerful enough to interfere with TV transmissions.

The new legislation would also ease the nation’s growing spectrum shortage. The reallocation of D Block means that public safety will have 20 MHz of contiguous spectrum to launch the nationwide wireless broadband network in addition, public safety also will not be required to return its 700 MHz narrowband spectrum. The project’s governance will be handled by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

Public-private partnerships are expected to fulfill the project with the four major national wireless providers and smaller carriers. A solid nationwide plan is considered the most effective being implemented by each state.

Indonesia to Use e-Audit System in Western Province

The Supreme Audit Agency will be using an electronic audit system to reach the isolated towns of West Papua as part of the agency’s move to enhance and improve the financial accountability of government institutions. West Papua is a province of Indonesia covering the western peninsula of the island of New Guinea and has a population of 761,000 people. The e-audit system, which has already been implemented in other regions, would enable financial reports from the local administration, the central government and relevant state firms to be uploaded to the agency’s database.

The system would establish a link-and-match relationship between the government and parties related to state financial management and the Supreme Audit Agency. With the system, the government will be able to check and monitor state finances, and track irregularities in financial reports more efficiently. According to the Agency, the e-audit system is urgently needed in West Papua because the financial reports from the region were often late and not properly made. As well, the number of local administrations in West Papua has more than doubled in the last five years.

The number of auditors, meanwhile, has always been limited. The objective of the system will be the ability to study and prevent state losses and also improve the province’s financial accountability and transparency.

The Philippines Unveils Revenue and Development Roadmap

The Department of Science and Technology (DGST) recently unveiled its five-point development program for 2012 in line with the Aquino administration’s national development agenda. The development program focuses on the use of local technologies for agriculture, energy, service delivery and genomics while adopting the policy that “local technology works.”

The five point technology development agenda involves: First, more public-private partnerships (PPPs) to solve national problems using local technology. Second, development of appropriate technologies to create growth in the countryside such as food processing technologies, and “smart firms.” Third, improvement of industry competitiveness, particularly in the prototyping of automated gateway transit system for public transport and producing better graduates for outsourcing electronics and renewable energy industries. Fourth, enhancing the delivery of government and social services, particularly the Government Broadband Network, National Telehealth Services, and National 3D Mapping. Fifth, using genomics to sequence the genetic makeup of Filipinos, agriculture crops and wildlife.

In a bid to improve taxpayer services, the Philippine tax department is planning to move all of its business processes online. Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) wants to make it smooth for those who want to register as taxpayers, and prevent identity fraud, by creating a database of biometric identities of each such individual. This makes it essential to clean the department’s database of biometric identities of each such individual in order to prevent tax evasion. It is also important to make best use of data collected by the agencies over time, relate it to data from other agencies (residential data, business licenses, property information), and use predictive capabilities to assess, score and determining the right strategy to collect the taxes.

E-filing is intended to make it easy for taxpayers who want to comply to file tax returns and pay their taxes. A multi-channel access for taxpayers, providing access over the phone, e-filing as well as paper-based processes such as the SAP Tax and Revenue Management solution, ensures better user experience. And this translates into better compliance and willingness to pay taxes, thus generating more revenue for the coffers at the minimum possible expenditure.

Mobile and Social Media will add to this in the very near future. They will be another channel for taxpayer interaction replacing other channels such as Internet, call centers or walk in. Social media is increasingly becoming popular and they are a very promising prospective channel for the governments to interact with taxpayers in a structured and very personal way. Some tax agencies have tested the water and seen good results.

Korea's National Tax Service has optimized its mobile phone application <http://m.nts.go.kr> for smartphones. The NTS Twitter account provides NTS news, recent tax information and collects customer comments. The year-end tax settlement app is also available on mobile devices along with tips on how to compute as well as save tax. It has Global Positioning System (GPS) built into the software to help locate local tax offices. NTS also sends SMS messages to taxpayers to notify tax arrears, status of complaints and other information requiring tax filing.

The Philippines BIR, which started online services in 2001's now a virtual community which is now an online portal with a search facility, capability for single sign-on to all web-based applications, direct access to content-related resources and customization of the views of users within the portal. Given the fact that 90% of the world population has access to mobile networks, mobile applications are increasingly likely to be the next buzz word in the world of tax services. It can also address concerns regarding countries with lower Internet penetration.

Adding to that the fact that the initial investment is not very high for introducing mobile applications and Return on Investment (RoI) is quick and substantial.

In the Philippines, IT has helped several tax agencies revise their taxpayer segmentation which in the past was often based on large vs small taxpayers or segmentation by tax types. Today, segmentation by compliance is receiving more attention, as tax agencies are dealing differently with taxpayers based on whether or not they are willing to be compliant. So there is a clear relationship between making it easy for taxpayers to be compliant and the usage of multi-channel access, educational programs and better citizen's services.

India Launches e-Payment Gateway

The Government Electronic Payment Gateway (GePG) is a system that will serve as a single window for all transactions and payments from the government. The system, covering all central government departments and ministries, is expected to eliminate almost twenty million checks. When fully operational, it is expected to cover a total payment of over US 122 billion). GePG will facilitate direct credit of dues from the government into the account of beneficiaries using digitally signed electronic advice (e-advice).

GePG is expected to impact the working of a large number of government and bank employees involved in government payments. The entire process is intended to spare valuable human resources which could be re-deployed to perform other important functions of the organizations. It will reduce the citizen interface by eliminating beneficiary dependency on government office and officials to hand over the check since the payments would be effected directly to their accounts. The entire payment process is trackable and delays can be monitored online. The GePG is also scalable, capable of handling all government payments.

The system has been delivered by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), Department of Expenditure and Ministry of Finance.

Open Government Partnership Identifies Challenges

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) Support Unit has prepared an initial list of 57 applications of civil society representatives selected to receive funding in 2012. Decisions on funding were based on "demonstrated experience on transparency, accountability and civic participation work in the country or region; strong commitment to ongoing engagement with OGP; meeting the transparency and government criteria established by OGP application process; demonstrate support of additional local civil society organization; and continue to work on a balance of issues.

Among the organizations selected to receive funding to attend the OGP Annual Meeting in April 2012a are:

the National Budget Group, Azerbaijan; Transpaencia Hacker, Brazil; e-Government Academy, Estonia; T1 Georgia, PATTIRO Indonesia; Center for Public Policy, Latvia, nd PATTIRO, Indonesia.

Thailand Launches Its First “Smart City”

As part of the Smart Thailand program, the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (MICT) and the Interior Ministry are preparing to launch the first “Smart City” in Nakhon Nayok province early in 2012. Some e-services will be tried out and the entire process will be connected to wireless broadband for residents and tourists. The ICT Minister indicated that the government is on track to make the country Smart Thailand as all elements, including network, cloud content or services are being done to support the e-Government. Nakhon Nayok will be a pilot project to demonstrate the possibilities of the Smart Thailand initiative.

The ICT Minister Anundith Nakornthap, announced “in the next six months, we will see our efforts to create a Smart Thailand become a reality in this province. We also plan to develop a d launch many projects in parallel, including government e-services. Recently the first ten e-services were launched by the e-Government Service Agency, and free Wi-Fi projects are now operational in many provinces.” The Minister added “there are many more organizations from the private and government sectors that have accepted and adopted and MICT free Wi-Fi scheme through their own pilot free Wi-Fi projects in certain areas.” By the end of the year, he expects to see more deployment of free Wi-Fi. He also expects that by the third quarter, after the telecom master plan becomes effective, there will be a 3G auction which will further improve the broadband penetration rate.

The cloud service provided by the E-Government Agency would encourage government organization that do not have their own IT infrastructure to move towards e-government and launch their e-services. ThaiCERT and Cyber Security Operation Center (CSOC) will provide secure e-services to support the move to e-Government. The Governor of Nakhon Nayok has indicated “the province will be where people can use government e-services with their own smart card easily, quickly and efficiently, while tourists can enjoy their

trip here with free hi-speed wireless Internet throughout the province. Local businesses and farmers can also get benefit from the hi-speed Internet infrastructure and availability of the government’s e-services.

Cyber-Security is a Cyber-Security is a Global Issue: ITU

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has prepared a study on cyber-security and cybercrime that was presented to a meeting sponsored by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to alert UN member countries of risks posed to governments, enterprises and citizens from cybercrime. The mission statement prepared for the meeting stated that cybercrime is a global issue requiring a global solution. Several actions were recommended:

- Every government should commit to giving its people access to communications;
- Every government should commit itself to protecting its people in cyberspace;
- Every country should commit itself not to harbor terrorists-criminals in its own territories;
- Every country should commit itself not to be the first to launch a cyber-attack on other countries; and
- Every country should commit itself to collaborate with others within an international framework of cooperation to ensure that there is peace in cyberspace.

ITU Secretary General, Dr. Hamadoun Toure, presented a Cybersecurity Global Status Update. He pointed out that “cybercrime takes a toll on the global economy in terms of: online fraud, identity theft, and lost intellectual property; on governments, companies and individuals around the world; and inflicting damage on the innocent, on the vulnerable, and on our children.”

Financial impacts of cybercrime were presented. It is estimated that overall cost of cybercrime is as much as \$1 trillion on a global basis. The estimated average cost to an individual US organization was \$3.8 million per year. In 2011 the estimated average cost to an individual US organization is \$5.9 million per year. The most costly cyber-crimes are those caused by malicious code, denial of service, stolen or hijacked devices and malicious insiders.

Several of the major attacks in 2011 were described:

- Major criminal intrusion in Defense Research and Development in Canada – the Finance Department and Treasury Board were forced to disconnect from the Internet;
- Hackers penetrated the French government computer network;
- South Korea’s Defense Network was penetrated;
- Attacks on EU Commission and External Action Services;
- Attacks on Sony causing millions of logins to be leaked;
- Attacks on NATO’s internal network;
- Hackers disrupted 51 Malaysian government websites;
- Japan experienced heavy cyber-attack;
- US Treasury under sustained cyber-attack;
- More than 100 Pakistan government sites under malware attack;
- Thousands of UNDP logins leaked; and
- Cyber-attack hit Fujitsu local government system in Japan.

The ITU has been involved in cyber-security issues for many years. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2005 entrusted the ITU to initiate the first WSIS Action Plan on “Building Confidence and Security in the Use of ICT’s. The

ITU membership has endorsed the Global Cyber Security Agenda (GCA) framework on international co-operation in cyber-security. ITU has established the International Multilateral Partnership Against Cyber Threats (IMPACT) that is pioneering the deployment of solutions and services to address cyber-threats on a global scale.

The ICCP Working Party on Information Security and Privacy (WPISP) in 2011 prepared a Recommendation on the Implementation of the OECD Recommended Cross-border Cooperation in the Enforcement of Laws Protecting Privacy (OECD Digital Economy Papers No 178).

“This Recommendation is intended to foster international co-operation among Privacy Enforcement Authorities to address the challenges of protecting the personal information of individuals wherever the information or individual may be located. It reflects a commitment by Member countries to improve their enforcement systems and laws where needed to increase their effectiveness in protecting privacy.

“The main focus of this Recommendation is the authority and enforcement activity of Privacy Enforcement Authorities. However, it is recognized that other entities such as criminal law.