The digitalisation of our continent is at a critical juncture. What we must put in place is a strategic and considered set of public-private partnerships to compete in the global digital economy.

The mobile industry worked hand-in-hand with governments and businesses to develop initiatives that helped obviate the impact of the pandemic, such as mobile-money transaction fee waivers, discounts on data tariffs for health and educational activities, as well as cash and equipment donations. Mobile companies and other industry players have supported vulnerable communities during the pandemic, while also contributing to economic recovery efforts. Vodacom Tanzania extended direct support to the governments of The United Republic of Tanzania and Zanzibar through a donation of Tsh. 2.3 billion as well as providing free internet connectivity to the Dar es Salaam Ministry of Health offices.

In November of 2020, United Nations leadership addressed the 12th Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly to announce the launch of the Africa.Connected campaign. The campaign is a partnership between the African Union and the United Nations to build a connected continent. The urgent need for connectivity demonstrated in the current crisis has illustrated the potential benefits of widespread connectivity for the continent. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that everyone is connected — or should be. Our societies depend on access to information to make decisions and take action. To advance education, economic recovery and post-pandemic, the continent must accelerate digitalisation and expand regional cooperation, not only for the support to transfer knowledge from countries, expanding opportunities and creating new business opportunities for more than 1 billion people. To support this, Vodacom Tanzania is launching the Africa.Connected campaign. Vodacom Tanzania aims to take the continent into the digital age and transform it through technology. As such, we aim to provide a support to lift governments and citizens out of poverty and transform the economy and lives of citizens.

In order to achieve the outlined targets, there is a significant task ahead. To do so, however, there is a role for other stakeholders in addition to governments, investors, businesses and organisations. Both local and international, it is an imperative to continue sustainable and inclusive digital transformation. The UN Digital Cooperation Roadmap provide sensible frameworks for how this could progress. The UN Digital Cooperation Roadmap is a document that outlines how to achieve universal connectivity by 2030. It sets out a comprehensive framework for accelerating digital transformation, reducing inequality, and supporting sustainable development.

Africa.Connected

Public-private partnerships are crucial to accelerating development

There is much at stake and ambitious targets to close the current digital divide that we simply can’t achieve if we work in isolation. The continent’s digital divide is not just academic content but also vocational and more practically oriented information for all learners, even those not in formal education. This is a long-term commitment that requires collaboration and is only possible through authentic collaboration.

The digitalisation of our continent will stop at nothing less than universal, sustainable, and affordable connectivity for all. This is a long-term commitment that requires collaboration and is only possible through authentic collaboration.

Leave no one behind: uniting to bridge the digital chasm in Africa

By Hisham Hendi – Managing Director, Vodacom Tanzania

There is no ‘one size fits all’ solution to connect everyone wherever they are. Each country faces unique challenges that must be addressed with a unique solution. Therefore, it is important to work with governments to roll out and support digitalisation efforts for their citizens and communities. It is our hope that with the continued partnership between governments and businesses, the digitalisation of the continent will be successful. The Digital Economy for Development Roadmap is a document that outlines how to achieve universal connectivity by 2030. It sets out a comprehensive framework for accelerating digital transformation, reducing inequality, and supporting sustainable development.

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