reach around $184 billion as countries increasingly benefit from the improvements in productivity and efficiency brought about by mobile technology. In sub-Saharan Africa, mobile contributions amounted to $155 billion of economic activity in 2019, representing 9% of GDP.

The numbers tell the story. According to the GSMA Mobile Economy 2020 report, mobile technologies and services have enabled several important milestones over the next five years: half a billion mobile subscribers in 2021, 1 billion mobile connections in 2024, and 50% subscriber penetration by 2025. These achievements will be underpinned by continued and consistent investment in network infrastructure.

The digitalisation of Africa will not happen overnight. This is a long-term commitment that will require a sustained investment in network infrastructure and skills development.

During the pandemic, the telecoms industry had to work closely with governments and businesses to develop initiatives that would support economic activity and keep people connected. Connectivity has truly become a matter of survival. From our partnership with Discovery Health to curb the spread of Covid-19 to zero-rating key platforms to ensure access to critical information for the most vulnerable, we worked together to ensure everyone is connected and no one is left behind.

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Today, Vodacom Lesotho, together with our Vodacom and Vodafone teams across Africa, invites governments, industry and the public to join our Africa.Connected campaign to accelerate and build upon our existing digitalisation efforts as we come together to ensure everyone is connected and no one is left behind.

Connectivity is an economic imperative. The UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development estimates that an additional $109 billion in investment is required to achieve universal, affordable, and good quality broadband internet access by 2030 in order to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. But therein lies the opportunity. There is so much at stake and ambitious targets to close the current digital divide. We simply cannot achieve this if we work in silos. We must get more people online.

We must get more people online

Internet connectivity and usage across Africa remains low, with an average of 16% of the population connected to the internet and the smartphone market limited to 4% of the population. The mobile market in sub-Saharan Africa will reach around $184 billion as countries increasingly benefit from the improvements in productivity and efficiency brought about by mobile technology. In sub-Saharan Africa, mobile contributions amounted to $155 billion of economic activity in 2019, representing 9% of GDP.

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