



NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency  
Agence de Planification et de Coordination du NEPAD

## Thematic Area: Cross Cutting Issues - The NEPAD e-Africa Programme



### Aims and goals

The aim of the NEPAD e-Africa Programme is to strengthen the 3 pillars which will support ICT on the continent. These are:

- Adequate and reliable broadband infrastructure connecting all countries of the continent,
- ICT skills amongst the African populations enabling them to use ICT as a tool for development,
- e-Applications and e-Services in all social sectors making Africa is digitally competitive.

### What's currently happening in the programme?

The AU-NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Programme and the AU-NEPAD e-Schools Initiatives are currently the two priority programmes of the e-Africa Programme.

### The AU-NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Programme.

The AU-NEPAD's ICT Broadband Infrastructure Programme, a component of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), aims to connect all African countries to one another by broadband optical fibre and connect Africa to the rest of the world through existing and planned submarine (Uhurunet) and terrestrial (Umojanet) cable systems. This will help integrate the continent and enabling trade, social and cultural interchanges to take place with ease and affordability.

### The AU-NEPAD e-Schools Initiative

The AU-NEPAD e-Schools Initiative aims to harness ICT to improve the quality of teaching and learning in African secondary and primary schools in order to equip young Africans with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to participate confidently and effectively in the global information society and knowledge economy.

### What progress has been made so far?

The AU-NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Programme.

### The Kigali Protocol

Signed in 2006 in Kigali, Rwanda,

Previously known as the NEPAD e-Africa Commission, The NEPAD e-Africa Programme is the special task team of NEPAD responsible for the structured development of the ICT sector on the Africa continent. The NEPAD e-Africa Programme works in the area of ICT to promote Africa as a globally competitive digital society by developing policies, strategies and programmes at continental level for the development of information and communication technologies (ICT) throughout Africa.

the Protocol on policy and regulatory framework is the enabling the environment for the development of the continental AU-NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Network. It comprises of Uhurunet submarine cable around the continent, and Umojanet cross-border terrestrial network.

The Protocol is based on principles that include:

- The principle of Open Access to broadband capacity should be applied on terms that are transparent and affordable.
- The principle of non-discrimination should be applied in relation to Authorised Service Providers getting access to the AU-NEPAD Network.



### Implementation of Uhurunet submarine cable

Uhurunet is being developed by Baharicom Development Company (BDC) as part of the ACE (Africa Coast to Europe) submarine cable that will extend from Europe to South Africa, running along the West African coast, and connecting African countries along that coast. The ACE/Uhurunet project represents an overall investment of around USD 700 million for the consortium. The Uhurunet submarine cable will be completed in 2012 and African citizens will use this bridge to cross into the global information society and knowledge economy.

### Umojanet cross-border terrestrial Network

Umojanet is a terrestrial network that will link every African country to its neighbours, and will connect to Uhurunet and other submarine cable systems to realise the dream of abundant and affordable broadband on the continent. Development of Umojanet is being lead by Umojanet Corporation. The first phase of Umojanet will be realized in two regions in parallel; in Eastern and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa.

### The AU-NEPAD e-Schools Initiative

Sixteen African countries participated in the AU-NEPAD e-Schools demo Project. With the help of consortia of private sector companies, over 80 demo e-Schools were implemented. Each school in the demonstration project was equipped with a computer laboratory containing at least 20 PCs as well as a server and networking infrastructure and peripheral devices such as scanners, electronic whiteboards and printers.

To date, challenges remains mainly in terms of Internet Connectivity, teacher training and maintenance of equipment. Challenges that NEPAD Agency and its Public Private Partners grouped under the Information Society Partnership for Africa's Development (ISPAD) are striving to address in preparation for a roll out of the initiative across the continent.

The new programmes of the NEPAD e-Africa Programme include e-Governance and e-Commerce (including the African Payment Gateway).

### Who is leading the Programme?

The NEPAD e-Africa Programme is within the Office of the CEO of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), and is lead by Dr Edmund Katiti - [ekatiti@eafriacommision.org](mailto:ekatiti@eafriacommision.org)  
For more information visit: [www.nepad.org](http://www.nepad.org) and [www.eafriacommision.org](http://www.eafriacommision.org)

Media contact:

Gilles Eric Foadey - [ErickF@nepad.org](mailto:ErickF@nepad.org)