



**ALLIANCE FOR  
AFFORDABLE INTERNET**



# **Liberia ICT Policy 2017-2021**

**Report on initial stakeholders consultation held in  
Monrovia on November 23rd 2016**

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# Goals of consultation



- ❖ To convene under the auspices of the GoL (MoPT ), a half day consultation meeting of public and private sector stakeholders to build upon the framework of draft ICT policy for 2017-2021
- ❖ To incorporate emerging ICT needs since last public engagement into draft policy and close identified gaps
- ❖ To support the policy framework to ensure improved affordability and access to broadband infrastructure and related services to all citizens
- ❖ Consensus for action, policy commitment, co--investment in shared infrastructure

# Key thematic areas addressed



## Supply-side: Access & availability

- *spectrum management*
- *Infrastructure sharing*
- *National universal access programme (including Fund)*
- *Priority infrastructure plan (e.g.. National Fiber Terrestrial Backbone, Metro Rings, Fiber Ring for Monrovia, National Data Centre)*

## Data & Consumer protection. Cybersecurity

- *National identification system*
- *Data protection and privacy*
- *Cybersecurity policies and mandates*
- *Quality of service*

## Demand-side: Growth

- *Governance and supply of public services*
- *E- Commerce/ Education/ Health Services*
- *Content development*
- *Digital skills and digital literacy programmes*

## Legal and regulatory framework

- *Institutional reforms, objectives and targets across various sectors*

## Affordability

- *Gender-responsive policies w/ targeted interventions for marginalized/poor*
- *Set affordability target at “1 for 2” (1 GB < 2% monthly p.c. income)*

## Measuring progress

- *Research and development policy*
- *Results-based systems for M&E*

# Working groups during consultation



- ❖ Group 1: **Supply-side: Access and availability**
- ❖ Group 2: **Data, consumer protection & public awareness**
- ❖ Group 3: **Demand-side growth**
- ❖ Group 4: **Legal and regulatory Framework**
- ❖ Group 5: **Affordability and Measuring Progress**

## **Group activity included the following:**

- ❖ Use Leading questions to guide discussions per group
- ❖ Select a leader to facilitate group and report back to everyone
- ❖ Select a recorder to take notes and submit to workshop facilitators
- ❖ Review Goal, Objectives and Strategies: Record input, suggestions for modification
- ❖ Prepare summary of recommendations to present

# Consultation process



## Objectives:

- (1) Identify policy gaps
- (2) Develop new ideas to shape policy
  - (3) Stakeholder feedback

# Discussion Outcomes and Recommendations



# Legal and regulatory framework



## Policy should:

- ❖ have a clearly defined governance structure to ensure coordination.
- ❖ consider restructuring the current Ministry to embrace current and future ICT needs of Liberia, e.g., consider a Ministry of ICT to ensure full ownership and clear oversight of all digital and ICT policy issues (ACTION: Research and identify good case studies in Africa)
- ❖ incorporate clear E-legislation that will engender trust in the legal and regulatory bodies
  - be clear on rules on Cybercrime- Currently no laws on E- transactions. (Liberia is looking to pass the E- transactions Act. It will be falling on parts of the Act from ECOWAS.)
- ❖ harmonise existing legislation and regulatory framework especially addressing sectoral overlaps, e.g., Banking and Telecoms, Cyber Issues and Citizens Identity, convergence of Media Telecommunications and technology
  - Factor in new rules for competition , convergence (media/broadcasting), IT, telecommunications & finance . (It should be clear on which ministry should have oversight and which regulatory authority)
- ❖ have a clearly defined role for Libtelco. Consideration should be given for a possible overhaul or restructuring, e.g., should it be a government ISP, Infrastructure company or be a state IT company. Reforms needed to ensure clear mandate.

## Supply-side: Access and availability

### Policy should :

- ❖ ensure Spectrum alignment is paramount
- ❖ push for infrastructure sharing to enable competition
- ❖ address issues of pricing and affordability
- ❖ access to spectrum for rural access should be prominent
- ❖ there should be direct interventionist incentives to encourage rural investment
- ❖ factor in strategic targets to be achieved eg on last mile connectivity, from subsea ACE cable, metro fibre to national backbone to connect redundancy to the borders of Liberia to ( e.g., Côte D'ivoire, Guinea) boost regional competition
  - As short term measure Liberia needs redundant links to the CCL in ACE cable route e.g., consider redundant links to Cote D'ivoire.
  - link Fibre deployment to Major routes development across Liberia to light up communities
- ❖ encourage a multisectoral approach to strategic development with greater collaboration between roads, finance, power and MoPT ministries in infrastructure roll out.
  - On infrastructure roll out have a dig once policy and streamlined process to stimulate interest
- ❖ incorporate a tower security strategy - engineering standards for towers and ducts, compliance assessment monitoring, enforcement strategy, emergency preparedness



## **Demand-side growth**

### **Policy should:**

- ❖ have interventions that encourage local content development
- ❖ set out use of Universal service funds to stimulate demand
- ❖ encourage E- governance and supply of public services
- ❖ encourage E- Commerce/ Education/ Health Services / Agriculture and other industries
- ❖ encourage Content development
- ❖ stimulate digital skills and digital literacy programme
- ❖ provide incentives to encourage funding for accelerated programs at universities and vocational institutions

## Data, consumer protection & public awareness

### Policy should:

- ❖ have very strong Cybersecurity policies and mandates . Clear ownership on cybersecurity (eg. police, Liberia should sign up to the CERT Africa immediately as a short term measure to curb current attacks on its ICT networks
- ❖ set clear standards for Quality of service .
- ❖ provide guidance for emergency preparedness : Touch on emergency response policy / disaster recovery and business continuity
  - National security implications may need to be discussed further
  - Who should be developing cybersecurity Policy for Liberia?
- ❖ encourage an efficient National identification system to boost digital services
- ❖ incorporate clear direction for data protection and privacy

# Affordability & Measuring Progress

## Policy should:

- ❖ remove barriers to access and affordability of ICT services eg Taxation on handsets. duties on imported equipment. Encourage a multisectoral approach
- ❖ encourage the use of new low cost technologies and innovations especially in rural areas eg pop up base stations, alternative energy technologies
- ❖ encourage the development of a Research and development policy
- ❖ have SMART clear deliverables, responsibility and timelines (that was a shortcoming of the 2010 policy)
- ❖ have an implementations strategy
- ❖ have results-based systems for measuring success and evaluation



# Next Steps

- Initial recommendations will be used to guide the development of a comprehensive ICT policy draft framework (considering current draft policy)
- Update project work plan to reflect suggestions from stakeholders and GoL based on initial conversations
- Draft ICT policy document and prepare consultation document based on draft policy (to include key consultation questions and items to reach consensus); this will be done in coordination with Drafting Working Group
  - Drafting process will include a number of tasks, from research and case study development to interviews with ICTD experts and industry leaders experience in similar policy developments
- Share Draft ICT Policy with Review Working Group for initial stakeholder feedback and inputs to the consultation process
- Organize and conduct public consultations on the new draft policy in separate locations in Liberia to ensure full participation across all sectors
- Develop Final draft policy by integrating inputs and insights from public consultations
- Organize and conduct Final public consultation to present Final Draft Policy and collect final input
- Submit Final Draft Policy to the GoL for review and approval

# Event Gallery



Group discussions

# Participant list



| Name                  | Organisation                               | Designation                      | Sector        |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Dr Frederick Norkeh   | Ministry of Post and Telecommunications    | Minister                         | Government    |
| Zotawon Titus         | Ministry of Post and Telecommunications    | Deputy Minister                  | Government    |
| Christian Browne      | LIPA                                       | IT Director                      | Government    |
| Victor Neeplo         | MFDP                                       | Data Centre Manager              | Government    |
| Nyemoh Waylee         | Moways                                     | Manager                          |               |
| Darren Wilkins        | Libtelco                                   | Executive Director               | Government    |
| D Nalon Kaine         | MOPT                                       | Cheif Information Officer (CIO)  | Government    |
| PeterKing Quaye       | Youth IGF                                  | Ambassador- Advocacy & Policy    | Civil Society |
| Emmanuel D. Nyemah    | MIA  | ICT Technician                   | Government    |
| Morris S. McGee       | NOCAL                                      | IT Specialist                    | Public        |
| Babatunde Osho        | Lonestar MTN                               | CEO                              | Private       |
| Louis Roberts         | Lonestar MTN                               | Deputy CEO                       | Private       |
| Bliidi Elliott        | Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA) | Director of Administration (DoA) | Private       |
| Malcolm Joseph        | CEMESP                                     | Executive Director               | Civil Society |
| Abdullai Kamane       | CEMESP                                     |                                  | Civil Society |
| Soukarlay J.Y. Weamie | CSA  | Director/HRMIS/ IT Services      | Government    |
| Michael Jensen        | Nethope                                    | Consultant                       | NGO           |
| Steve Song            | Village Telco                              | Consultant                       | Civil Society |
| Eleanor Sarpong       | A4AI                                       | Policy Advocacy Manager          | NGO           |



# Thank you!

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