

RURAL COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR UGANDA

BY THE

UGANDA COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

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POLICY AND STRATEGIES FOR RURAL COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT IN UGANDA

1.0 BACKGROUND.

1.1 General Facts on Uganda

Uganda is a landlocked country, covering an area of 235,885-sq. km. It is bordered by Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan.

Since 1986, Uganda has had a steady GDP growth and although it is classified as a Least Developed Country (LDC), it is currently enjoying an estimated average steady growth of 5.0% per annum with a G.D.P per capita estimated at US \$ 300 for the 1999/2000 period.

Uganda, which enjoys a good climate and fertile soils, is basically an agricultural country with a population of about 21.3 million. About 80% of the population lives in rural areas, largely consisting of smallholder subsistence farmers but who contribute more than 70% of Uganda's wealth.

1.2 The Communications Infrastructure Situation

Prior to 1996, Uganda's communications infrastructure was among the least developed, not only in Africa, but also in the whole world.

For example, at the end of 1996 Uganda had 45,145 fixed lines which translate in a tele-density of 0.21 per hundred people, while in respect of postal services, the per capita number of letters posted was 0.55 in the same year. Both figures are way below *the average* when compared with other economies in the world.

Further more, 70% of the communications services were in the same period concentrated in urban areas, leaving the rural areas, which contribute a significant portion of the country's wealth, with the least access to these vital communication services. This phenomenon isolated the rural communities and denied them the opportunity to initiate valuable interactions with the outside world.

1.3 Sector Reform.

Recognizing the fact that a well developed communications infrastructure plays a vital role in the development of a country, the Government of Uganda pronounced a Telecommunications Policy in 1996 which was aimed at reforming and restructuring the communications sector as one of the strategies for promoting and bringing about rapid development in the sector.

The main objective behind this sector policy is to increase the penetration and level of telecommunication services in the country through private sector investment rather than government intervention. It is a recognised fact that government is currently unable to raise the required level of investment while the private sector has the ability to invest if the investment environment is conducive.

Accordingly the reform strategy in the policy sought to achieve the following:

- Facilitate private sector participation in the communications sector as well as in the overall national development.
- Provide a legal framework for the development of communication services in Uganda.
- Separate the roles of policy formulation, regulation and operations,
- Introduce competition through licensing of multiple operators;

In liberalising the telecommunications sector, government had the following specific sector policy objectives:

- (I) Put in place an independent regulator.
- (II) Increase of tele-density from 0.28 lines per 100 people to 2.0 lines per 100 people by the year 2002.
- (III) Improve communication facilities and quality of service, and add a variety of new communications services.
- (IV) Serve the unmet customer demand and
- (V) Increase the geographical distribution and coverage of the services throughout the country.

The above policy resulted into the enactment of the Uganda Communications Act in 1997, which not only provided for the

restructuring of the communications sector in Uganda but established a legal framework for the development of the sector.

Since 1998, the country has witnessed the following developments in the communications sector:

- The splitting of the then Uganda Post and Telecommunications Corporation into Uganda Posts Ltd (UPL), Uganda Telecom Ltd (UTL), and Post Bank (U) Ltd.
- The establishment of Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) as an independent regulator.

The main objectives of UCC are:

- (a) To enhance national coverage of communications services and products, with emphasis on provision of communications services throughout of Uganda;
 - (b) To develop and improve rural communications services.
 - (c) To expand the existing variety of communications services available in Uganda, including modern and innovative postal and telecommunications services;
 - (d) To encourage the participation of private investors in the development of the communications sector
 - (e) To introduce, encourage, and enable competition in the sector through regulation and licensing of competitive operators in order to achieve rapid telecommunications network expansion, standardisation of technical requirements, and operation of competitively priced quality services.
- In general, the overall service subscriber base has been doubling each year since 1998, while the number of Service Providers, especially in the public pay communication network services category, has been growing at about 1.5 times, each year.
 - UTL was privatised in June 2000 with the sale of 51% shares to a consortium known as UCOM comprising of M/s Telecel of Switzerland; Detecon of Germany and Orascom of Egypt.

- Tele-density has grown to about 1 line per 100 people, counting both mobile and fixed service lines.
- The Second National Operator, MTN which was licensed in April 1998 started commercial operations in October 1998. MTN is licensed to compete in all aspects of telecommunications with the former monopoly operator Uganda Telecom Limited (UTL).

1.4 Rural Communications

1.4.1 General

In order to ensure rural communications development the reform process in the sector has provided for specific measures which will ensure growth in the communications infrastructure network and equitable distribution of communication services within the country.

These measures include:

- (i) Provision for rollout service obligations (obligatory requirements for improvement of quality and geographic penetration of services) in the National Operator Licenses (both Telecom and Postal).
- (ii) Introduction of effective competition within the sector through licensing of more service providers.
- (iii) Statutory provision for the establishment and administration of a Rural Communication Development Fund by UCC.

Resulting from these measures, there has been tremendous improvement and development of the communication sector as evidenced by the following performance indicators:

- The high growth in the number of service providers and the variety of services offered today.

- General reduction in tariffs for services.
- Improved customer care by service providers.
- Extensive penetration of services across the country.

However, although currently basic telecommunication and postal services are available practically in all the districts especially at the district headquarters, coverage or presence of services outside the district headquarters is still inadequate and in most cases non-existent.

From analysis of the current trends in the expansion and distribution of communications services in Uganda, it can reasonably be assumed that there will be “basic” services throughout Uganda at both district and county levels by 2002. This means that the focus now should shift to sub-counties.

1.4.2 Communication Services Coverage.

As stated above, on average, communications services cover district and county centres and probably one other major town. This coverage in most cases does not go beyond 10 km radius from the district headquarters or major towns. The situation becomes even worse at the sub-county level.

Based on the UCC/IDRC Rural Communication Development Study, out of the 920 sub-counties currently gazetted, about 520 of them, are expected to have had coverage by mid-2001. This leaves about 400 sub-counties with no coverage at all by mid-2001.

Further still, out of the 400 sub-counties in the second category, only 200 are expected to get coverage by mid-2002 while the remaining 200 shall have no coverage mainly due to low population density and remoteness.

In summary therefore, there are about 200 sub-counties which are not likely to get services by mid- 2002, primarily due to reasons highlighted above, which may contribute to their inability to support commercial services in the short to medium term. Such areas therefore would require other interventions if they are to get access to basic services.

The Rural Communications Development Fund (RCDF) of the Commission becomes necessary and relevant in the circumstances.

1.4.3 Establishment of the RCDF

One of the functions of UCC as spelt out by the Uganda Communications Act, is to establish and administer a Rural Communications Development Fund (RCDF).

The RCDF is essentially intended to act as a means of intervention to ensure that basic communication services of acceptable quality are accessible, at affordable prices, and at reasonable distances, by all people in Uganda.

1.4.4 General Principles of the Rural Communications Development Initiatives

All countries the world over, continue to grapple with issues related to the provision of basic communications services to their people. This is mainly because many of these countries have come to realise that:

- (a) Communication plays a key role in the social and economic development of any country.
- (b) There are communities or sections of the population which lack” basic” access to communications.
- (c) Competition alone may not always be adequate to ensure equitable distribution of basic communication services.

Although countries have adopted different approaches, the general principles governing a Rural Communications Development Fund remain the same.

These general principles are that an RCDF fund is primarily:

- Used to assist areas where provision of commercial services is not feasible.
- Used to provide basic (universal) access

- Accessed through some form of competition by operators.
- Contributed to by the service operators.
- Limited in scope compared to needs, and therefore is only used to leverage investment rather than provide all the solutions.

The Commission took into account the above principles when establishing the RCDF.

1.4.5 The UCC/IDRC RCDF Study.

UCC, with assistance from the International Development Research Corporation (IDRC) of Canada, carried out a study, which was aimed at developing policies and strategies for Rural Communications Development in Uganda.

UCC has primarily used the findings, interpretations and recommendations, of the report, to develop the policy and strategies for Rural Communication Development, as well as the establishment and administration of the RCDF.

2.0. NEED FOR A POLICY FRAMEWORK.

2.1. Contribution of Communication Services to Rural Areas

Communication services contribute to the development of rural areas in the following ways:

- (i) Communication is a vital tool in the social and economic development of a country. Therefore availability of quality basic communication services to everyone at affordable rates is critical.
- (ii) Availability of communication services in rural areas facilitates connection to the global information family.
- (iii) Rural communication services play a very crucial role in local governance and administration as decentralization takes root in Uganda.

- (iv) The availability of rural communication services improves access to market information and reduces the cost of general administration.
- (v) Access to communication services in rural areas reduces isolation of communities in remote areas and improves service delivery in the fields of health, education, agriculture etc.

The inequitable distribution of communication services in Uganda between the urban and rural areas calls for a specific rural communications development policy to address the situation.

2.2. Efforts to Promote Rural Development

Government has come up with a number of development programmes and initiatives which are intended to promote development of the rural areas. These include the following:

- The Poverty Eradication Plan.
- Universal Primary Education.
- Rural Electrification and Transformation Project
- The Uganda Information Infrastructure Agenda.
- Information and Communication Technology policy development.
- Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture.
- Health Improvement and Delivery

UCC's policy on rural communications development is intended to supplement government efforts in the above programmes by directing the development and delivery of communication services in the rural areas which will bring about socio-economic development in these areas.

2.3 Scope of the Policy

The scope of this policy covers the following:

- (i) The Objectives of Rural Communication Development
- (ii) The Policy Actions for Rural communications Development.

- a) Policies on the Provision of Basic Services.
 - b) Policy on Tariff control for Rural Communication Services
 - c) Policy on Special Interconnection
- (iii) Strategies for Implementing the Policy:
- a) Establishment and administration of the RCDF.
 - b) Development of the RCDF Manual of Procedures
 - c) The Disbursement Policy of the RCDF.
 - d) The access to radio frequency spectrum under the RCDF.
 - e) Policy Actions on the sources of funds for the RCDF.
 - f) The Fund Program of the 1st Year of the RCDF.

3.0 THE POLICY STATEMENT.

3.1. Objective of the Policy

3.1.1 General Policy Objective:

The general objectives of the policy are to:

- (i) Provide of access to basic communication services within a reasonable distance to all the people in Uganda.
- (ii) Ensure effective utilization of the RCDF to leverage investment in rural communication development.
- (iii) Promote ICT usage in Uganda.

3.1.2 Specific Policy Objectives.

The specific objectives of the policy are to:

- (i) Ensure that all sub-counties with at least 5,000 inhabitants have access to basic communication services by 2005.
- (ii) Ensure that the limited resources of the RCDF are effectively utilized to create immediate impact.

- (iii) Support establishment of an Internet Point of Presence (PoP) in every District of Uganda by 2003, where each PoP shall be associated with at least one Internet cyber cafe.
- (iv) Increase the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) in Uganda, by supporting introduction of ICT use in at least one “vanguard” Institution in every district of Uganda, by 2003.
- (v) Promote provision of communication services in rural areas as a profitable business.

3.2 Mission of the Policy

TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL UGANDA AND ENSURE THAT PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS HAVE REASONABLE AND AFFORDABLE ACCESS TO COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES.

3.3 Policy Actions.

- (i) The established Rural Communications Development Fund (RCDF) shall be the main tool of rural communications development. The management and administration of the RCDF shall be under UCC.
- (ii) Funds from the RCDF shall be accessed on a competitive basis as far as practicable.
- (iii) The RCDF shall be used to establish basic communication access, through SMART subsidies, to develop rural communications. That is, the RCDF shall be used to encourage commercial suppliers to enter the market but not to create unending dependency on subsidy.
- (iv) *Special Interconnect* arrangements shall be used as a means of enhancing rural communication sustainability.
- (v) Basic access shall be defined to be *a package of Essential, Supported services. The package is defined to initially include voice grade access to public telephony networks and public access to where stamps can be bought, and where letters can be posted and collected.* The definition of the Basic Access shall be reviewed as regularly as necessary in

order to cope with the changing technology and environment.

- (vi) Promote the use of Internet in Uganda by supporting the:
 - a) Establishment of an Internet PoP in every district in Uganda.
 - b) Introduction of ICT use in at least one “vanguard” institution/organisation in every district in Uganda.
 - c) Establishment of a Ugandan Internet Exchange Point.
- (vii) Use special tariffs to promote rural communications, as long as they do not distort fair competition.

3.4 Strategies.

The following strategies shall be used to achieve the objectives of the Policy:

3.4.1 Management And Administration of the RCDF

- (i) Except for UCC Pilot Projects, all other applications shall be in response to UCC’s public invitation.
- (ii) UCC will set up an RCDF Board which will over see the management of the RCDF. The Board will be responsible to the UCC Commission and will function like any other UCC Commission Committee.
- (iii) In the initial stages where the Board shall need direction, the Commission will have more representation and control in the Board but power will devolve to the Board progressively.
- (iii) UCC shall prepare the RCDF Manual of Procedures, which shall among other things contain the following:
 - Functions of the RCDF Board
 - Procedures for disbursement of funds from the RCDF.
 - Functions of the Board and operational guidelines.

- Principles of bidding

3.4.2 Disbursement of the RCDF Funds.

Disbursement of the RCDF funds shall be for purposes of providing basic communications and Internet Services in rural areas.

Disbursement of these funds will mainly take the form of non-commercial but competitive grants, along the following principles:

- a) The disbursement of the RCDF funds for public telephony projects shall be by open tender.
- b) The disbursement of the RCDF funds for Internet Points-of-Presence and training contracts shall be by open tender.
- c) The disbursement of the RCDF funds to applications in rural areas, which do not have services but are seeking amounts less than US\$15,000 shall be by **DIRECT DISBURSEMENT**. The main criterion for being considered will be the presentation of a business plan demonstrating financial viability and/or self-sustainability following the start-up contribution.
- d) The disbursement of the RCDF funds to applicants seeking support for 'rural packages' to enhance access to services for public telephony kiosks or telecentres and requiring grants equal to or less than US\$1,000 each shall be by **DIRECT DISBURSEMENT**. The main criterion for being considered will be the presentation of a business plan demonstrating financial profitability and/or self-sustainability following the start-up contribution.
- e) The disbursement of RCDF funds to support provisions of 'rural packages' to enhance access to services for a 'bulk' of public telephony kiosks or telecentres requiring grants less than US\$1,000 for each kiosk or telecentre *but in 'bulk' (exceeding more than 5 five access points)* shall be by open tendering.

- f) The disbursement of RCDF funds on a competitive basis, to support usage and ICT capacity in one school in each District.

3.4.3 Prioritisation

- (i) The priority of the services to be offered shall determine the order in which funds are disbursed. The initial proposed prioritisation shall be:
1. Support for establishment of access to basic access services in sub-counties, which are un protected.
 2. Support for introduction of Internet Points –of Presence (PoP) in every District H/q.
 3. Promotion of ICT Capacity (training, management and maintenance of services established at vanguard institutions)
 4. Promotion of ICT content creation.
 5. Establishment of a domestic IXP.
- (ii) Start-up Activities.

The following shall be the initial areas of concern.

- a) Provision of subsidies to independent area operators in the fully unprotected areas
- b) Support for pilot telecom – postal integration in small communications centres and kiosks/shops
- c) Support for the establishment of Internet PoPs in every district.
- d) Increase ICT use and capacity in Uganda by supporting ICT access by one ‘vanguard’ institution per district.
- e) Support the establishment of a national Internet exchange point (IXP).

- f) Support one school in each District, to start using ICT and also develop ICT capacity.

3.4.4. Access to Radio Frequency Spectrum

In its role as manager of the radio spectrum resource, UCC will in all its plans endeavour to cater for rural communication systems while bearing in mind the freedom of choice of technology by the operator. Specifically:

- a) UCC shall, in all its national radio frequency plans endeavour to anticipate the needs for spectrum use in rural areas and make the necessary reservations. The plans shall take into account the developments in technology.
- b) In general, assignments for rural service provision shall be made on an “as-required” basis to meet the requirements for utilization of the most cost-effective and appropriate technology.
- c) UCC may consider waiving, in part or in full, its normal frequency fees in the case of rural service provision.

3.4.5. Basic Licensing Principles for Rural Communications License.

As required by the law, all rural communications operators shall be issued with licenses. However UCC shall indicate which class of license and the specific conditions for the license, at the time of invitation for bids. Details of the classes of Rural Communication Licenses shall be given in the RCD Manual.

Otherwise the basic licensing principles will include, but not be limited to:

- a) Penalties for phones installed but not working. This is to ensure service availability and basic quality of service.
- b) Monopoly licenses for predominantly rural areas with sparse population.

- c) Minimum level of service requirements based on payphone services available at the postal outlet.
- d) While UCC will not dictate the choice of technology or methodology, it will expect the operators to use current or state-of-the-art technology.

3.4.6. Sources of Funds to the RCDF

The major sources of funding for the RCDF will be:

- a) UCC budgetary allocations
- b) Donations and grants from development partners
- c) Specifically targeted donations
- d) Government inputs.

In the cases where the Fund shall receive funds from other sources other than UCC's own internal sources,

- a) UCC will endeavour to ensure that all disbursements are in accordance with UCC's approved program and priority.
- b) Notwithstanding the above, where there are differences between UCC's established procedures and those proposed by the donor or development partner, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that the primary goals are still maintained through implementation with modified procedures for the case in point.

3.4.7. Fund Program

The Fund program shall be decided upon taking into account the size of the RCDF and the current priorities. The following methods have been identified, initially, but the Board shall be able to review and propose amendments if necessary:

(I). Alternative 1: General Disbursement Ratios of the RCDF.

Table A below shows the proposed General Disbursement Ratios, which shall only be used especially when the Board

feels that there are enough funds to attend to all priorities at once.

The ratios shall be subject to review every year at the time of preparation for the UCC annual budget.

Table A. General Disbursement Ratios

| Item | RCDF Investment (%) |
|---|----------------------------|
| Public telephony infrastructure | 40 |
| User 'rural packages' | 3 |
| Internet POPs and wireless access | 12 |
| IXP initiative | 1 |
| Vanguard institutions /organization ICT projects (one per district) | 10 |
| ICT start-ups and training(including support of ICT in one school per District) | 20 |
| Rural post franchise support costs | 8 |
| ICT training capacity investment | 3 |
| ICT Awareness and ICT Content creation projects | 3 |
| Total | 100 |

(II). Alternative 2: Step-by-Step Method

Using this methodology, the RCDF shall be used to attend to the identified priorities starting with the first priority and using the balance, if any, to start on the second priority. This method is considered appropriate where there are limited funds.

If this method is selected in the first year, then in the case of basic communication services, disbursement shall be in rounds, as follows:

- (a) **Round 1:** Access to one (1) basic services point in all sub-counties with at least 5,000 inhabitants.
- (b) **Round 2:** Access to a second basic service access point in all sub counties with at least 10, 000 inhabitants.
- (c) **Round 3:** Internet Points of Presence, with at least one (1) public Internet café, in all districts of Uganda.

- (d) **Round 4:** Access to ICT by one “vanguard” institution /organization in every district in Uganda.
- (e) **Round 5:** Support of ICT capacity in Uganda.
- (f) **Round 6:** Establishment of Internet Exchange Point for Uganda (IXP).
- (g) **Round 7:** ICT Awareness and ICT content creation.

3.4.8 Provision Of Basic Services

There will be areas in Uganda, where the National Communications Operators may not find it economically viable to provide service and hence will be without access to basic services.

This is despite the fact that:

- (a) The National Telecommunications Licensed Operators are required to provide at least one (1) payphone in each County in Uganda,
- (b) The National Telecommunications Licensed Operators are required to have a presence in each sub-county.
- (c) The National Postal Operator has presence up to county levels.

The areas, which will not be served by the national operators, will be referred to as the “ Un-protected” areas, which essentially mean that UCC will use the alternative method of licensing Independent Area Operators to provide the basic services.

Assuming that “basic” services will reach both districts and county levels by the year 2002, the main focus of this policy shall be the sub-counties, which are un-protected by July 2001.

Since the identified demand in many areas is still for simple voice communication and simple access to where

letters can be posted and received, the main focus of rural communication development shall be a payphone and or postal access, for a population of 5,000 people or 2 payphones in every sub-county. The minimum service provided will be at least one public pay telephone per sub-county or a payphone for a population of 5,000 people, while on the postal side, the minimum service provided shall be at least one postal access point.

In principle, it will be mainly sub-counties, which will not be served by national telecommunications, and postal operators that will be eligible for the RCDF subsidy.

In order to allow for bidders to get the maximum economy out of the venture, bidders may be allowed to bundle areas and services (e.g. telephony and internet) if they wish. Bidders will also be allowed to seek and obtain agreement with authorized postal service providers for franchise arrangement in order to provide postal services.

3.4.9 Tariffs for Rural Communication Services.

UCC recognizes the challenge involved in providing rural communication services. Whereas UCC shall, through a study, establish the cost of providing communication services in Uganda, in the initial stages the rural operators shall have to apply a tariff that is not in excess of UCC's approved tariff cap. The tariffs shall be reviewed annually.

UCC will also apply the “ service price-caps” in protection of consumers.

3.4.10 Special Interconnect

UCC recognizes:

- (i) That provision communication services in rural places will require “unique” marketing strategy in order to make it viable.
- (ii) That rural communication business presents new opportunities, especially for National Operators.

- (iii) That rural communication operator's input, cost wise is likely to be greater than that of the National Operators.
- (iv) Fair revenue sharing is crucial for sustainability of rural communication services providers.

As a policy therefore UCC shall adopt the principle of special interconnect where rural communication is concerned. This basically means that a fair sharing mechanism will have to be established, during negotiation of the interconnection agreement, which will ensure that rural communication operators are fairly compensated for the part they play in making the service reach its final destination in the rural areas.

In following the principle of no cross-subsidization, calls to rural places will not be priced "higher" as a result of the "special interconnection" agreement.

3.4.11. Monitoring And Evaluation:

(i) Monitoring.

Given its statutory obligation, the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), shall be responsible for the implementation of the Rural Communications Development Policy.

However, in order to improve on efficiency in managing the Fund, UCC shall appoint a Board, which shall be charged with the day to day management of RCDF. The Board which shall be responsible to the Commission shall manage the Fund in accordance with UCC's approved policies and procedures.

UCC shall continue to execute its regulatory role by monitoring performance of the rural license and compliance thereof.

(ii) Evaluation.

UCC shall annually receive an operation's report from the Board and using this report as a basis along with other

inputs from stakeholders, UCC shall evaluate the progress made in meeting the communication needs of the rural areas and use the evaluation to review the programme as the need may be.

The following performance indicators shall be used to evaluate the programme:

- (a) The growth/increase in the number of sub counties which have access to basic services.
- (b) The growth /increase in the number of districts that have Internet Points of Presence.
- (c) The growth/increase of the number of vanguard schools /Institutions which have been established.
- (d) The growth/increase in the number of people trained out of the vanguard schools or institutions.
- (e) The quality and quantity of programs undertaken in the areas of content creation and ICT awareness.
- (f) The overall sustainability and profitability of the RCDF supported programs.
- (h) The socio-economic impact of the RCDF supported programs in the community.

The Policy itself will normally be reviewed every after two (2) years to take into account the changed environment and to ensure that its provisions remain relevant. UCC will be responsible for initiating the review process, and if necessary, the reform process.

Since government is responsible for the overall communications policy, UCC will continue to advise Government on the most appropriate policies for rural communications development.

GLOSSARY

Basic Communication services: Communication services including voice grade access to public telephony networks and public access to where stamps can be bought and where letters can be posted and collected.

Communications Services: Services performed consisting of the dissemination or interchange of sound, video or data content using postal, radio or telecommunications media, excluding broadcasting.

Direct Disbursement: Disbursing funds for rural communications on basis of submission of satisfactory documents.

ICTs: stands for Information and Communication Technologies. They can be broadly defined as technologies that provide an enabling environment for physical infrastructural and services development of applications for generation, transmission processing storing and disseminating information in all forms, including voice, text, data, graphics and video

Internet Exchange Point (IXP): is used to interconnect Internet service providers. It facilitates transfer of local information/messages between the Internet Service providers (ISPs) leaving the international bandwidth links for the transfer of information to and from overseas.

Internet Points of Presence (POPS): Places where internet access is readily available and affordable to a consumer.

National Postal Operator: This implies Uganda Post Limited

National Telecommunication Operators: This means Uganda Telecom Limited and MTN Uganda.

Radio Frequency Spectrum: a series or band of electromagnetic waves propagated in space without an artificial guide.

Service Providers: offers services to end users, either by using the basic service and infrastructure provided by network operators on a re-sale basis, or by providing services via own infrastructure where they form part of a network operation. Service provision may range from provision of basic voice or data service on a re-sale basis to the provision of sophisticated value-added services.

Tariffs: Usage conditions under which a customer may utilise the telecommunication system.

Telecentre/kiosk: Communication centre where a consumer in rural areas can easily access telecommunications services.

Telecommunication Services: means a service consisting of the conveyance or reception of any sounds, signs, signals, writing or images by wire, optical or other electronically guided media systems whether or not such signs, signals, writing, images, sounds or intelligence have been subjected to rearrangement, computation or other process by any means in the course of their transmission, emission or reception.

Teledensity: number of subscriber lines per population expressed as a percentage.

Telecom-Postal Integration: integration of provision of postal services and telecommunication services to enable consumers access them at the same place or location.

Universal access: access of basic communication services that are of an acceptable quality at affordable prices and at reasonable distances.

Vanguard Institution: Pilot institution/organisation that is a centre for ICT access.