

“Access Africa is built off of a core USTDA strength: connecting U.S. companies to the partners and projects that will shape Africa’s digital transformation.”

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Launched in June 2019, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency’s (USTDA) **Access Africa initiative** supports quality information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure across Africa. Working with the public and private sectors across the continent, Access Africa brings together critical stakeholders and designs targeted programming to advance inclusive, secure, and sustainable connectivity.

Access Africa leverages USTDA’s project preparation and partnership-building tools to support the use of U.S. technologies and services in Africa’s ICT sector. Since its inception, Access Africa has funded more than a dozen new ICT infrastructure activities with the potential to leverage more than US\$1 billion in financing.

Access Africa is facilitating the continent’s digital transformation by advancing the implementation of Africa’s ICT priorities including fiber optic infrastructure, data centers, rural connectivity, smart cities and cybersecurity. USTDA’s commitment to Access Africa includes funding for the following activities:

FIBER OPTIC CABLES & DATA CENTERS

- **Democratic Republic of the Congo:** Across Africa, USTDA is advancing industry best practices to improve digital infrastructure and introduce mobile infrastructure solutions. In the DRC, USTDA’s Connectivity and Digital Infrastructure Standards Workshop promoted increased connectivity and an enabling regulatory environment in areas including satellite connectivity and fiber optic infrastructure.
- **Nigeria:** A feasibility study and pilot project for Aldreda Fields Ltd. will help expand broadband connectivity in Lagos using open-access aerial, wholesale fiber to the premises networks. This open-access model offers a potential solution that can be replicated in other parts of Nigeria.

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- Nigeria: A feasibility study for Backbone Connectivity Network will lead to faster, more reliable connectivity for millions of residents and corporate customers in Port Harcourt and the neighboring coastal communities of Nigeria's South-South region. The study is assessing the deployment of a subsea cable branching unit, a cable landing station, terrestrial fiber deployment, and a data center near Port Harcourt.
- Regional Sub-Saharan Africa: USTDA is supporting SEACOM, a pan-African service provider, with a feasibility study to assess the provision of telecommunication services in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The study is reviewing where to expand infrastructure and recommend related investments in fiber optic cabling and networking equipment. The project will provide affordable, reliable high-speed connections across East Africa, enhancing business growth and spurring innovation and productivity in the region.

RURAL CONNECTIVITY

- Nigeria: A feasibility study for Hotspot Network Limited will help expand digital access for millions of Nigerians living in rural communities. The study will support Hotspot's deployment of up to 2,000 mobile network base stations through an assessment of Nigeria's rural telephony market, as well as the project's technical options, cost and revenue options, and recommended financing and implementation plans. The project will utilize an Open RAN technology approach.
- Nigeria: USTDA is hosting a reverse trade mission to strengthen the quality of Nigeria's satellite communications systems and connectivity. This visit to the United States will connect Nigerian satellite representatives with U.S. companies seeking to provide communications satellite technology and operation services to Nigeria.
- Regional Sub-Saharan Africa: A feasibility study grant will help Jenny Internet assess the economic and technical viability of expanding affordable last-mile connectivity infrastructure in rural areas of Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Mozambique and South Africa.
- South Africa: A pilot project for the Wireless Access Providers Association is enabling the expansion of internet access to rural and semi-rural areas in South Africa through the use of U.S. TV white space technologies. By harnessing unused digital spectrum, this technology will provide fast and affordable connectivity. Access Africa partners Microsoft and Adaptrum are part of the consortium completing the pilot project.

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- South Africa: A feasibility study will help Dark Fibre Africa assess the economic and technical viability of extending its fiber network and bringing secure and reliable internet access to underserved populations in rural areas of South Africa.
- South Africa: USTDA’s South Africa Connectivity Standards Workshop convened public and private sector stakeholders for discussions on the standards, regulations, and technologies that can support South Africa’s digital transformation. The workshop discussed trends in wired and wireless connectivity solutions including 5G, Wi-Fi 6, TV White Space, and High-Altitude Platforms.

SMART CITIES & CYBERSECURITY

- Nigeria: USTDA hosted a digital connectivity and security standards workshop that convened public and private sector leaders from the United States and Nigeria to identify the technologies and solutions that can accelerate Nigeria’s digital transformation and ensure secure connectivity. The workshop assessed the latest trends on digital trade standards, connectivity, spectrum management, data privacy and cybersecurity.
- Rwanda: A feasibility study grant to the Rwanda Development Board will assess smart city solutions for Kigali Innovation City, a planned mix-use development that will serve as a hub for the technology industry in Rwanda.
- South Africa: USTDA partnered with the City of Cape Town on a feasibility study to assess potential ICT investments that will increase access to affordable and reliable telecommunication and municipal services across the City. A second phase of this assistance is providing a detailed technical analysis to help the City use technology to strengthen its water resources management.
- South Africa: USTDA hosted a reverse trade mission to the United States for representatives from South African banks, telecommunication companies, and regulators, that led to the deployment of U.S. cybersecurity solutions. This investment is strengthening the country’s resilience to digital threats, protecting millions of the country’s consumers from cyber-crime. During the visit, delegates met U.S. officials and dozens of U.S. firms that specialize in state-of-the-art cybersecurity solutions.

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