

The Open Internet as cornerstone of digitalisation for Africa

Global Gateway Communication

"Investment in digital infrastructure will also be linked with standards and protocols that support network security and resilience, interoperability, and an open, plural and secure internet."

The EU will also promote access to the Open Internet, given its role as a key driver of innovation, socio-political, economic, and cultural development."

KEY ELEMENTS EXPLAINING THE SUCCESS OF THE OPEN INTERNET

The key to the success of the Open Internet is its decentralised architecture, underpinned by the multistakeholder internet governance model, and democratically developed principles, regulations and policies for the application layer.

Decentralised architecture

built on stable open standards and protocols that are developed in open consensus-driven processes

Multistakeholder Internet Governance

that drives a people-centred evolution of the Internet in global, regional and national stakeholder dialogues

Democratically developed principles, regulations and policies to ensure that applications respect fundamental rights and empower a locally driven development

AFRICA'S MULTIDIMENSIONAL OPEN INTERNET CHALLENGE

Divides in access to the internet persist between regions and countries, between rural and urban populations, between men and women.

Percentage of people using the Internet in 2020

Percentage of people using the internet in 2020	By location: urban / rural	By gender	By age	Totals
World	Urban – 76%	Female – 57%	Youth* – 71%	63%
	Rural – 39%	Male – 62%	Rest of population** – 57%	
Africa	Urban – 50%	Female – 24%	Youth – 40%	33%
	Rural – 15%	Male – 35%	Rest of population – 27%	

* Individuals aged 15 to 24 using the Internet as a percentage of the total population

** Individuals below 15 years old or over 24 years old as a percentage of the respective population

Source: ITU. 2021. Table developed with data from *Measuring digital development, Fact and Figures 2021*. Estimates of the total number of people using the Internet are for 2021 while the other figures are for 2020.

Getting everyone connected is key. It is equally crucial how and with which technologies one country makes its digital transition. An Open Internet-based digital transition is the cornerstone for a locally driven development in Africa.

OPEN INTERNET PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ADVANCING AND PROMOTING MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTERNET OPENNESS

EU-Africa partnerships prioritise the advancement of an Open Internet by supporting efforts and digitalisation programs that aim at:

- Strengthening Open Internet infrastructure
- Creating Open Internet enabling policy and regulatory environments
- Developing Open Internet skills and competencies
- Stimulating an Open Internet economy, trade and innovation
- Supporting meaningful participation in Internet governance

Priorities must be refined and scoped in response to regional, national, and subnational contexts, local demand and already existing initiatives and cooperation partnerships.

Digital infrastructure for Open Internet connectivity

- Building Internet Exchange Points (IXPs)
- Supporting a robust Domain Name System (DNS) and a vibrant DNS sector
- Establishing carrier neutral data centres to host content locally
- Promoting use of the latest standards and protocols including the transition to IPv6
- Supporting Digital Commons and promoting the use of open-source software

Protocol adoption per continent

	Africa	Europe	Americas	Asia	Oceania
HTTPS	77%	87%	79%	75%	72%
IPv6	6%	18%	16%	20%	9%
DNSSEC TLD	35%	86%	52%	59%	52%

Source: Internet Society Pulse, April 2022

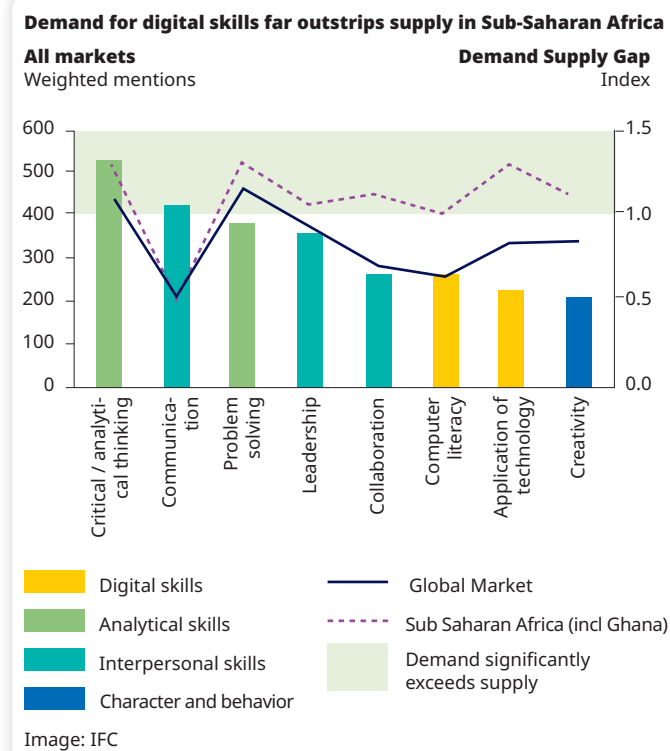
Open Internet and enabling policy and regulatory environments

- Data governance that ensures the protection of personal data, right to privacy, and trustworthy AI
- Cybersecurity and cybercrime responses defined through stakeholder engagement
- Creation of fair and open digital markets
- Protection and promotion of local culture online and creation of local content
- Transparent and predictable regulation of traffic management and network neutrality
- Protection and promotion of human rights online and development of alternatives that avoid the use of shutdowns, mass-surveillance and censorship
- Building e-government and digital public services

Open Internet skills and competences

- Skills development integrated in existing education and curricula (including STEM)
- Capacity building to provide the general population with basic security and social skills online
- Skills to improve Africa's presence and influence on the Internet

Supply and demand for most important workforce skills

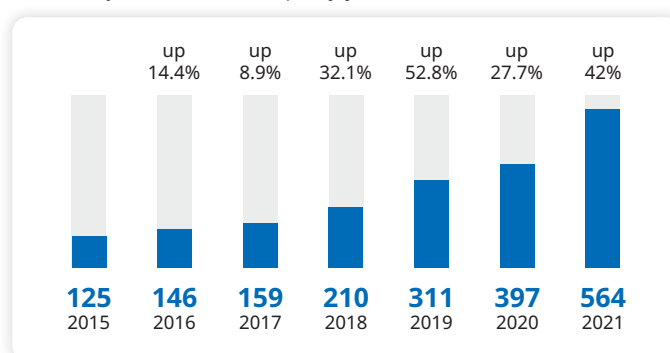


Source: World Bank/IFC

Open Internet economy, trade, innovation and startups

- Africa-based digital platforms and e-commerce
- Stimulating digital entrepreneurship
- Job-matching to activate the African potential
- Encouraging a strong ecosystem for fin-tech innovation tech startups and tech innovators
- Creation and support of digital hubs across the continent

Funded African tech startups by year 2015-2021



Source: Disrupt Africa's African Tech Startups Funding Report 2021

Participation in Open Internet governance

- Maintain and strengthen local and regional African Internet governance processes
- Enhance African participation in global Internet governance processes
- Foster existing and new collaborations in technical Internet governance
- Perform country level multistakeholder assessments using UNESCO's Internet Universality Indicators