

Sub-Saharan Africa will have 427 million mobile internet users by 2020

Mobile technology continues to play a critical role in moving towards universal internet access in all regions of the world. In 2016, about 288 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) had access to mobile internet representing only 28% of SSA's population. By 2020, the number is projected to reach 427 million people, representing 39% of the region's total population. Despite this strong growth, SSA continue to lag behind other regions in the proportion of people accessing the internet over mobile phone devices globally.

Developing countries are kept offline by high data costs, inadequate digital infrastructure, scarcity of content in local languages and slow download speeds. In SSA, a major obstacle that keeps people from achieving universal digital access is data costs. Landlocked countries have some of the highest prices for every megabit per second (Mbit/s) while coastal countries such as Ghana have cheaper internet prices. Deregulation of data prices however, can lead to a reduction in internet prices as was the case in Nigeria.

