



Inaugural **Technology Information Confederation Africa** CONFERENCE

 **6-9 September 2023**

 **Imperial Botanical Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda**

 www.ticonafrica.org

Hosted by



CONCEPT NOTE

EVENT: TICON Africa Conference 2023

DATE: 6th to 9th September 2023

VENUE: Imperial Botanical Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda

CONFERENCE THEME: Unifying ICT Talent to Power the Continent to 2030 and beyond.

INTRODUCTION

Africa is a continent with immense potential for growth and development, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a pivotal role in driving progress across various sectors. However, the persistent digital divide presents a substantial challenge that hinders the continent's advancement. The lack of access to technology limits information dissemination, educational opportunities, and economic growth, creating inequalities and impeding sustainable development efforts. To address this issue, it is crucial to focus on unifying ICT talent across Africa, empowering young people, collaborating with public and private organizations to bridge the digital divide that will drive the continents' growth and development.

Technology Information Continental Africa also known as TICON Africa has identified this challenge of digital divide across African and it is mobilizing ICT Professionals on the continent to tackle this issue. With a population of 1.4 billion, and only 22% of the population having access to the internet, this issue severely limits opportunities for education, information, and economic growth. By bridging the digital divide, we can empower individuals, communities, and nations to thrive in this increasingly interconnected global landscape.

TICON Africa believes that by leveraging the power of technology and collaboration, we can create a more inclusive and equitable digital future for Africa. Our mission is to unite ICT professionals, organizations, and stakeholders to address the digital divide and unlock the continents' potential.

Through strategic partnerships with governments, NGOs, and businesses, TICON Africa aims to expand access to affordable and reliable internet connectivity in underserved areas, advocate for policies that promote digital infrastructure development, such as broadband expansion and the deployment of mobile networks, and ensure widespread connectivity across the continent.

In addition to infrastructure, TICON Africa recognizes the importance of digital literacy and skills development. We work to empower our people by providing training programs, mentorship opportunities, and resources to enhance their ICT skills. By nurturing a new generation of digital leaders, we can foster innovation and drive sustainable development across various sectors, including education, healthcare, agriculture, and entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, TICON Africa believes in the power of collaboration to accelerate progress. We facilitate knowledge-sharing platforms, conferences, and networking events to foster partnerships and exchange best practices among ICT professionals. By creating a vibrant community of experts, we can collectively tackle the challenges of the digital divide and find innovative solutions tailored to Africa's unique context.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Africa faces a significant technological disparity that hampers progress in multiple sectors and undermines its potential for sustainable development. The lack of access to modern technology and digital infrastructure contributes to limited information dissemination, inadequate educational opportunities, and hinders economic growth, creating a vicious cycle of inequality and marginalization. Marginalized communities, including rural areas, women, persons with disabilities and disadvantaged youth. They bear the brunt of this divide, further exacerbating existing social and economic inequalities and impeding sustainable development efforts.

To address these challenges and unlock Africa's full potential, concerted efforts are required to bridge the digital divide and foster inclusive technological development. Mobilizing ICT professionals across the continent becomes crucial in enhancing capacity building among various stakeholders. These professionals can play a pivotal role in designing and implementing initiatives that promote digital literacy, skills training, and entrepreneurship, particularly targeting young people. By equipping them with the necessary technological skills, Africa can cultivate a new generation of innovators and problem solvers who can drive sustainable development in diverse sectors.

In addition to empowering individuals, collaboration between public and private organizations is vital to foster a comprehensive and sustainable approach to bridging the digital divide. Governments need to prioritize the development of robust digital infrastructure, expanding internet connectivity, and ensuring affordable access to technology for all citizens. Simultaneously, private enterprises can contribute by investing in research and development, supporting tech startups, and partnering with local communities to provide technology solutions tailored to their needs.

Furthermore, the digital divide in Africa should not be seen merely as a local issue but as a global concern that requires international collaboration and support. Developed nations, multinational corporations, and non-governmental organizations should actively contribute by providing funding, expertise, and technology transfer initiatives. By fostering international partnerships, Africa can tap into global resources, knowledge, and best practices to accelerate its technological development and bridge the existing gaps.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the TICON Africa conference is to bring together ICT professionals from across the African Continent to;

1. Encourage the adoption and implementation of ICT policies and frameworks that support the growth and capacity development for the digital economy in Africa.
2. Facilitate knowledge transfer and technology transfer initiatives to empower African ICT professionals with the latest advancements and trends in the industry.
3. Promote entrepreneurship and innovation in the ICT sector by providing platforms for startups and small businesses to showcase their solutions and connect with potential investors.
4. Advocate for the protection of digital rights and privacy, and promote cybersecurity measures, and build capacity that will ensure a safe and secure digital environment in Africa.
5. Collaborate with educational institutions to integrate ICT into the curriculum and enhance digital literacy among students, equipping them with the necessary skills for the future.
6. Support research and development in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and the Internet of Things, and explore their potential applications in addressing African challenges.
7. Foster international partnerships and collaborations to leverage global expertise and resources in advancing ICT development and capacity in Africa.
8. Raise awareness about the social and economic impact of ICT and advocate for its inclusion in national development agendas and policies.
9. Monitor and evaluate the progress of ICT initiatives and projects in Africa, and share success stories and lessons learned to inspire and guide future endeavors.
10. Establish sustainable funding mechanisms and investment opportunities to support capacity building programs, and technological innovation in Africa.
11. Promote gender equality and inclusivity in the ICT sector by encouraging the participation and representation of women in leadership roles and technical positions.
12. Engage with policymakers and stakeholders to address regulatory challenges and create an enabling environment for the growth and innovation of the ICT sector in Africa.

CONFERENCE FORMAT

The TICON Africa conference will include;

1. Keynote speeches and panel discussions, including roundtable discussions on specific topics of interest with designated facilitator guiding the discussion and encourage active participation. Speakers can also present a concise and impactful idea or project related to ICT allowing a diverse range of perspectives to be shared with dynamic engagement encouraged.
2. Tech Demos and Exhibitions with a dedicated space for showcasing cutting-edge ICT solutions and projects from across Africa. This can include interactive tech demos where participants will experience the products firsthand and engage in discussions with the developers. The exhibitions will also feature startups and organizations working on impactful ICT initiatives, providing them with a platform to connect with potential partners and investors.
3. Opportunities to connect experienced professionals with emerging talents in the ICT field through one-on-one sessions, masterclasses, group discussions, and networking opportunities. This will facilitate knowledge sharing, career guidance, and fosters professional relationships within the industry.
4. Opportunity for participants to organize informal sessions during the conference focusing on specific topics or interests. These sessions will provide an opportunity for like-minded individuals to gather, network, and engage in more specialized discussions.
5. A virtual component allowing remote participation for those who cannot attend in person. This virtual paid platform will live stream keynote speeches, panel discussions, and selected sessions, as well as interactive virtual networking spaces and chat features for remote participants to engage with speakers and other attendees.
6. Social events and cultural experiences to provide participants with opportunities to unwind, network in a relaxed setting, and experience the local Ugandan culture. This will include a networking receptions, cultural performances, visits to local ICT hubs and innovation centers.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The TICON Africa Conference is designed to develop actionable strategies with these strategic outcomes:

1. Increased awareness and understanding of the digital divide in Africa and its impact on sustainable development. Emphasizing the importance of developing sustainable and inclusive digital solutions that address the specific needs and challenges of African communities.
2. Enhanced collaboration and networking among ICT professionals, public and private organizations, policymakers, and key stakeholders.
3. Concrete action plans and recommendations for bridging the digital divide and promoting inclusive access to ICT resources for personal and professional growth.
4. Strengthened capacity building initiatives to target the young people and empower local communities, with essential digital skills and foster entrepreneurship. Integration of ICT into education systems, equipping students with the necessary digital skills and knowledge from an early age that will prepare them for the digital economy and facilitate their future participation in the global workforce.
5. Policy recommendations to support the growth of ICT infrastructure and digital innovation. Advocating for increased investment, improvement in connectivity, and coverage, and establishment of reliable power supply to ensure the sustainability and accessibility of digital services across the continent.
6. A roadmap for unifying ICT talent and leveraging it to power the African continent to 2030 and beyond.

CONCLUSION

To overcome Africa's technological disparities and promote sustainable development, it is imperative to mobilize ICT professionals, strengthen capacity building initiatives to bridge the digital divide. Bridging the digital divide in Africa is not only a matter of technological advancement; it is a catalyst for social and economic transformation. By empowering marginalized communities, fostering collaboration between public and private sectors, and leveraging international support, Africa can pave the way for inclusive technological advancement, unlocking new opportunities for economic growth, education, and information dissemination across the continent.

TICON Africa is committed to working hand in hand with these stakeholders to create a future where every African has equal opportunities to thrive and contribute to the continents' growth and development. By unifying ICT talent, empowering young people, and fostering collaboration between public and private organizations, Africa can begin to overcome its technological disparity and create a future where ICT is a catalyst for inclusive growth, innovation, and prosperity.

The TICON Africa conference aims to bring together ICT professionals and practitioners from across Africa to address the digital divide and harness the potential of technology for sustainable development.

Together, we can build a connected Africa that harnesses and leverages the full transformative potential of ICT for the benefit of all to 2030 and beyond.