

## Uganda: Operators urged to cut mobile broadband charges



18 Feb 2010

The call for low cost mobile broadband connectivity was made by speakers at the inaugural meeting of Mobile Monday Kampala, held this week, 15 Feruary 2010. The meeting convened at least 85 participants to discuss the Future of Mobile Broadband in Uganda - the theme of the meeting.

Simon Kaheru, director business convergence, SMS Media, observed that with mobile broadband in Uganda, internet-based services and commerce will increase as the economy witnesses an influx in outsourcing for many reasons other than just internet access. But for this to happen he said that the cost of connection needs to decrease.

Dr. Dorothy Okello, the co-ordinator of Women of Uganda Network, decried the current cost of mobile technologies and broadband saying that it prohibits stay-at-home mums from being able to access mobile broadband services to enable them to work at home.

Monthly service charges for mobile broadband connection in Uganda range between UGX49,000 (US\$25) and UGX120,000 (US\$61) per month for 1GB, a statement from Mobile Monday Kampala said.

Mobile broadband, said Okello, presents an opportunity for low cost access to a lot of information, engagement and participation of women at all levels in the economy.

Patrick Mwesigwa, the Uganda Communications Commission predicted that the cost of mobile broadband in Uganda will reduce with the increase of more players in the industry and entry of more fibre optic cables like the East African Submarine System (EASSy).

## ABOUT WALTER WAFULA

Walter Wafula is a seasoned journalist who has reported for the Daily Monitor new spaper in Kampala-Uganda. He is also a contributor on Bizcommunity.com website. Email Walter at wafwalt@yahoo.com and connect on Linkedln.

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