

Reducing the mobile gender gap in Africa by 2020

Dar es Saalam, Tanzania - At Mobile 360 Africa, GSMA announced a further nine signatories to the Connected Women Commitment Initiative, which focuses on reducing the gender gap in mobile internet and mobile money services.



Image by 123RF

Orange Mali, Smart Burundi, Smart Tanzania, Smart Uganda, Tigo Chad, Tigo Ghana, Tigo Senegal, Tigo Tanzania and Zantel, join with other GSMA operator members in committing to connect millions more women in low- and middle-income countries by 2020. Collectively, these operators represent more than 85 million mobile internet and mobile money customers.

These commitments build on the 15 million women already benefiting from female-focused services offered by GSMA Connected Women operator partners. Through the Connected Women Commitment Initiative, operators are working to increase the proportion of their female customers, supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

“Tackling the gender gap in mobile phone ownership is a critical topic that business leaders and governments should be encouraged to address said Mats Granryd, Director General, GSMA. “GSMA research estimates there are 200 million fewer women than men who own a mobile phone in low- and middle-income countries, therefore missing out on key socio-economic opportunities. Ensuring digital and financial inclusion for women is essential, because when women thrive, societies and economies thrive.”

Existing and potential commitments amongst the mobile operators include, for example: increasing the number of female agents; improving the data top-up process to be safer and more appealing to women; and improving digital literacy among women through educational programmes and interactive content.

Closing the gender gap in mobile phone ownership and usage in the developing world could unlock an estimated US\$170 billion market opportunity for the mobile industry in the period 2015-2020.

The Connected Women Commitment Initiative was launched in February 2016, with initial commitments from operators including Dialog Axiata PLC in Sri Lanka, Digi Telecommunications Sdn Bhd (Digi) in Malaysia, Indosat Ooredoo in Indonesia, Ooredoo Maldives, Ooredoo Myanmar, Robi Axiata Limited in Bangladesh, Tigo Rwanda and Turkcell in Turkey.

Find out more about the [Connected Women Commitment Initiative](#).

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