

DIGITAL

Digital reforms could generate Shs14.6 trillion

GSMA says reforms aimed at improving internet access, affordability and infrastructure could unlock billions in economic value.

Digital economy. |

TOMBRIAN ANGURINI

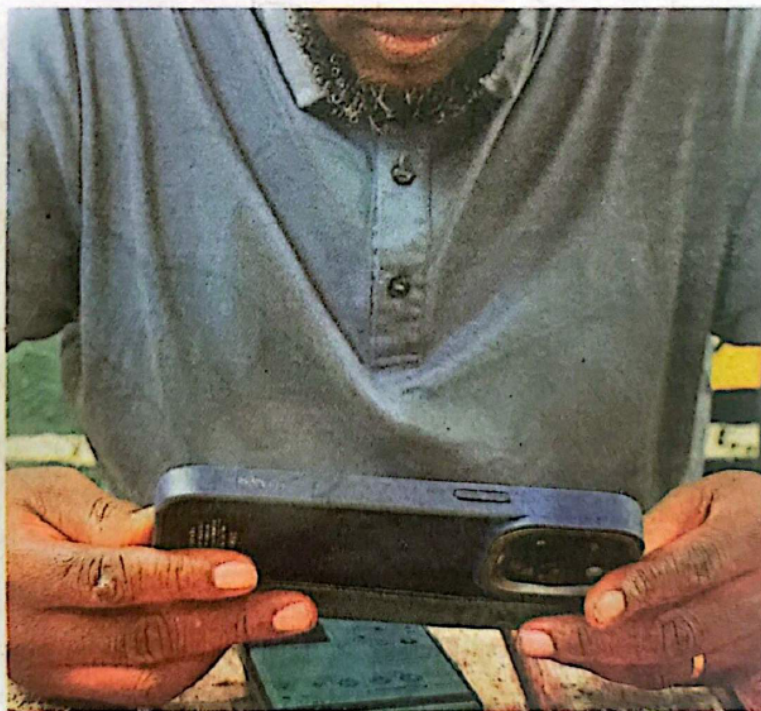
Uganda could generate some Shs14.6 trillion in economic value by 2030 if key digital policy reforms are implemented, according to projections by GSMA.

GSMA estimates that the reforms would significantly accelerate the country's digital transformation, creating 1.79 million new jobs and increasing the number of internet users by four million people.

The reforms would also strengthen the sector's contribution to the national economy, which already accounts for 9 percent of GDP and generates Shs2.1 trillion in additional tax revenues, driven by the expected rise in active internet users to 19 million.

GSMA also projects that 4G network coverage could reach 99 percent of the population, while digitalisation is expected to stimulate job creation across key sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, and trade.

The projections align with Uganda's Digital Transformation Roadmap, which lays the foundation for the country's



Expanding internet connectivity across Uganda could boost digital inclusion, drive economic growth and create new opportunities. PHOTO/FILE

long-term Digital Uganda Vision 2040.

Under the roadmap, government aims to achieve 90 percent household connectivity and 90 percent nationwide broadband coverage by geography, while also ensuring that 90 percent of citizens can access government services online.

The strategy also focuses on building a digitally skilled society capable of supporting the country's expanding digital economy. In addition, it aims to nurture a vibrant startup ecosystem that can generate homegrown technological solutions.

However, to realise the projections, GSMA says government must reduce tax

es on mobile data and entry-level smartphones, create a more predictable investment environment for telecommunications operators, and accelerate digital literacy programmes across the country.

These reforms, GSMA says, are essential to expanding internet access and encouraging greater digital adoption across the economy. Uganda has 38.6 million mobile subscriptions and about 14.2 million active internet users, while 4G population coverage stands at 96 percent.

The ICT sector contributes about 9 percent to Uganda's GDP, with approximately 2.3 million people employed in the digital economy.

Taxes on data

'GSMA says government must cut taxes on mobile data and ... create a more predictable investment environment.'