

2nd August 2024

To

MTN South Sudan
Zain South Sudan
Digitel South Sudan

Subject: Response to Tariff Adjustment by MTN, ZAIN & DIGITEL.

Dear Sir/Madam

The Internet Society South Sudan Chapter is a collective of technologists and members of South Sudanese society who are dedicated to strengthening access to the internet and fostering its openness. This Chapter is a part of **The Internet Society**, which is an International Non-Profit Organization founded in 1992 with its headquarters based in Reston United States. The other was based in Geneva Switzerland with a total of 83 Organization members. Presently, Internet Society has over 117,000 individual members and more than 100 chapters globally. Our primary purpose is to promote the open development, evolution, and use of the Internet for the benefit of all people throughout the world; more so in South Sudan.

According to statistics cited by Data Reportal, South Sudan has 1.36 million internet users. More than 90% of the users access the internet through their mobile phones. This shows that telecommunication companies play a very vital role in the growth of the internet access ecosystem in South Sudan.

The purpose of this letter is to engage you on the issue of regulated exchange rate adjustments and impact on Tariffs for Mobile services in South Sudan, by MTN South Sudan, Zain and Digitel. Such an adjustment will increase the cost of access of the internet for ordinary citizens who are grappling with economic pressures like currency devaluation and decrease in buying power. This increase in data and call rates ultimately results in fewer people having access to the internet. The impacts of this would be detrimental to the citizens and the country at large.

While we recognize that telecommunications entities largely run as private companies and corporations, thus you are compelled to regulate your operating costs, and that the change in tariffs enables you to continue staying in business. We beseech you to see the impacts of the regulated adjustment of your exchange rate and its impact on mobile services. We further urge you to counter these far reaching effects. We call upon your institution to allocate funds, invest in facilities and innovations that can reduce the cost of the internet as well as increase coverage.



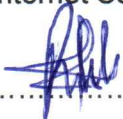
Below is a list of innovative measures that can be taken in action:

1. **Community networks** - A community network is a computer-based system that is intended to help support communities by supporting, augmenting, and extending already existing social networks, by using networking technologies by, and for, a community. This would place an emphasis on local ownership, and management, and empower communities hardest hit by the tariff.
2. **Community engagement** - Sponsoring digital empowerment initiatives in the form of Public Private partnerships, Regulatory Reforms, Digital Inclusion Initiatives, Subsidies and grants, and hackathons would help to spur community solutions to the issue of Internet and Digital Accessibility.
3. **Establishment of an IXP**- An Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) are vital elements of Internet infrastructure that enable networks to exchange traffic with each other. Multiple Internet service providers (ISPs) can connect at a single IXP, creating the potential for a range of technical and economic benefits for the local Internet community. By keeping local traffic local and avoiding international links, local operators and users can reap substantial cost savings, provide substantial local bandwidth, and significantly improve local Internet performance in the country.

As the South Sudan Internet society Chapter, we would be happy to engage you in a fruitful discussion about how some of these approaches may be actioned to ensure continued access and openness of the Internet in the Republic of South Sudan.

Yours Sincerely

Acting/Secretary General
Richard Mawa Micheal
Internet Society South Sudan Chapter



CC

National Communication Authority
Ministry of Information, Communication Technology and Postal Services