

Democratic Republic of Congo

Country Profile	
Regulator	L'Autorité de régulation de la poste et des télécommunications du Congo
Acronym	(ARPTC)
Website	https://www.arptc-rdc.com/
Twitter	https://twitter.com/OfficielArptc
Contact	info@arptc-rdc.com
Ministry	Societe Congolaise des Postes et Telecommunications
Acronym	(SCPT)
Website	http://www.scpt.cd
Twitter	https://twitter.com/SCPT_SA
Contact	info@scpt.cd

National Policy

The telecommunications and Internet policies are all being managed by the DRC ministry of telecommunication called "Societe Congolaise des Postes et Telecommunications". The ministry is responsible for all digital communication tools (including radio, television, fixed and mobile telephones, and the Internet).

Operator Licensing and legal framework

The telecommunication sector in DRC is governed by the legal texts below :

The Framework Law n ° 013/2002 of 16 October 2002 on telecommunications in the DRC: the law provides for two structures to manage the ICT sector, namely the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications and the Regulatory Authority ; Law No. 014/2002 of 16 October 2002 establishing the Regulatory Authority of Post and Telecommunications of Congo "ARPTC" ; That sector is also made up of several conventions and other instruments signed by the DRC, including the convention of the UIT, the Malouga - Torremolinos convention (1973), the Convention of the African Postal Union, etc.

Technical and Administrative Requirements

The liberalization of the ICT sector to private partners in the framework of the economic reforms initiated by the country's authorities enabled it to rank among the growth sectors of the Congolese economy. Recently the president launched a digital revolution which might include some special policies that could allow open-source projects and community networks to have special broadcast licenses.

DRC's Geographical structure is mostly valleys and mountains.

Licensing Fees

The Authority of Regulation of Posts and Telecommunications (ARPTC) prepares the license and specifications, which are then approved and signed by the Ministry of Post, Telephone and Telecommunication and published in the official journal. The main procedures to operate in the telecommunication industry under the public service concession are as follows: Obtain a license specifying frequency Create business as a limited liability company

Internet Service Providers The following steps are required to operate an Internet network: Submit an application to the ARTC Meet the ARTC licensing requirements

Access to Spectrum

Technical and Administrative Requirements

Licensed

Access Networks

Operator	800MHz	900MHz	1800MHz	2100MHz	2600MHz	3500MHz
Airtel	None	None	YES	YES	YES	None

PtP Networks

License-Exempt

Access Networks

Frequency	Power Limit	Transmit Power
2.4GHz		
2400 - 2483.5 MHz	2.4EIRP	
5GHz		
5150-5250 MHz	5.1EIRP	
5250-5350 MHz	5.2EIRP	
5470-5725 MHz	5.4EIRP	
5725-5800 MHz	5.8EIRP	

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Secondary Use

Access Networks

PtP Networks

Spectrum Fees / Costs

Application

Annual

Auction

Backhaul

List of some ICT operators in DRC

- Mobile and fixed telephony
- Internet, Data and others
- AIRTEL RDC
- CIELUX
- VODACOM RDC
- HUAWAI RDC
- TIGO RDC
- TECHNOLOGIES
- ORANGE RDC
- IBURST RDC
- AFRICELL RDC
- INFRACO
- STANDARD TELECOMS
- M. INTERCOM
- MICROCOM
- TECH MAHINDRA
- Agywa Telecom(ISP)
- Oliversoft(ISP)

Gender

The DRC population is estimated at 85 million inhabitants, of which 65% are women. For 15 years, DRC experienced instability caused by internal conflict and external pressure. It has one of the most serious human rights violation records in the world. Women and girls are the victims of sexual violence perpetrated mostly by combatants from both sides. Rape and sexual violence is used as a weapon of war. Victims are discouraged from filing complaints because of lack of confidence in the legal system and strong presence of men in the judiciary. But there is growing mobilisation of women and human rights organisations in the fight to end violence against women (VAW) in partnership with the United Nations and international organisations.

Legislation and VAW: Women now occupy 8.4% of seats in parliament, which is an improvement. There are national laws that protect women and girls against violence. These include, the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo; the Law on Sexual Violence; the Family Code; the Labour Code and the Criminal Code. DRC has ratified CEDAW and the Protocol of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Resolution 1820 of the United Nations Security Council points out that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime. All these provisions exist to protect female victims of violence; however they are often not enforced.

Information and communication technology (ICT): The lack of broadband infrastructure and networks do not support the development of the ICT sector in DRC. Sixty-seven percent of the population lives in rural area and does not have access to ICTs. Internet services are under-developed and access costs are unaffordable to most. The number of fixed line subscribers does not exceed 10,000 and that of internet users, approximately 100,000. The number of cybercafés is small with approximately 210 cybercafés in the country, of which 65% are in the capital, Kinshasa. There are only 5 or 6 internet service providers that are operational of an estimated 30. On the other hand, mobile telephony has seen a very strong expansion, surpassing 300,000 subscribers in the year 2000 with nearly 10 to 12 million lines (many subscribers have two lines), and a penetration rate about 20%. Sex-disaggregated data is not available. Intersections between violence against women and girls and ICTs in the DRC are not well established. There are cases of men and boys using mobile phones to film their female partners nude and transmitting them via Bluetooth¹. Women and girls seldom have means of defending themselves. Mobile phones are used frequently as a method of control over married women. The internet makes it possible to share experiences and receive information to advance the cause of women's rights but can facilitate violence towards Congolese women and girls. Poorly trained in the use of ICT tools, Congolese women and girls do not have a technical framework for using ICT to counter the violence they experience. Professional women in the media often denounce they experience sexual harassment, without anything being done.

ICTs used in combating VAW: Projects using ICTs to combat violence against women and girls in the DRC are often implemented by international organisations; very few local women's rights activists and organisations have the ability or the technical and financial means to do so. There are radio and television programmes in French and Lingala which play a vital role on matters related to violence against women and girls and which use cell phones to involve listeners and give a forum to voices that would have no other means of access to media. ICTs are used to protect human rights defenders who are often threatened. Recommendations For government: promote competition in the telecommunicationsFootnotes

¹Bluetooth is a wireless protocol for exchanging data over short distances from fixed and mobile devices.

Universal Service

Mid 2017, The government of the DRC announced the launch of the fund for access and universal

service to improve connectivity.

Léon Juste Ibombo, Minister of Telecommunications and the Digital Economy, said the fund would enable it to provide communications infrastructure and services in both rural and landlocked areas of the DRC.

“The operators have been informed that they will be contributing 2% of their turnover to the new fund,” said Ibombo.

According to the Minister, the fund is an active step being taken by the government in conjunction with the industry's stakeholders to address poor network coverage and poor quality of service in the country. He said the government has been sanctioning operators, especially Airtel and MTN, since 2014 - yet there has been no significant improvement in the quality of service offered by operators.

In addition to the new fund announcement, he also issued an ultimatum to operators to improve the quality of their service within two months.

“The government of the republic, by my voice, wishes to emphasise that the quality of services is a non-negotiable requirement. Consumers must have a normal and adequate voice and data service, which is nothing more than the consideration for a purchased service such as the payment of their recharge cards, among other things.”

Investment protection for operators

In a related development, the country's minister for new information and communication technologies, Emery Okundji, has assured the GSMA that the country is making efforts to ensure that the investments made by the telecoms operators in the country are well-protected.

Speaking at a GSMA workshop in Kinshasa under the theme How to liberate and fully exploit the potential of 4G in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Minister said the government is building a telecom ecosystem in which all stakeholders will benefit.

“To safeguard the investment of telecom operators in the country, the DRC guarantees them the option of renewing their license once it expires. The draft law on telecommunications tabled by the government for adoption in parliament fixes the duration of a license at 20 years and provides for the possibility of its renewal. Such a provision constitutes, certainly, a guarantee of security of investments.”

Cooperatives

Resources / References

<https://www.genderit.org/resources/democratic-republic-congo-drc-violence-against-women-and-ict>

<https://www.spectrummonitoring.com/frequencies/frequencies1.html>

<https://www.investindrc.cd/en/procedures/other/158-requirements-for-registration-and-licensing-of-a-civil-engineering-company>

<https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/gsma-digital-inclusion-and-mobile-sector-taxation-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-report.pdf>

<https://www.privacyshield.gov/article?id=Congo-Democratic-Republic-Establishing-an-Office>

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