

# World Bank, Alcatel study digital divide

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The World Bank said Tuesday it has been working with Alcatel to see what can be done to bridge the digital divide between rich and poor nations.

In its latest report entitled "Addressing the Information and Communication Needs of the Poor," the bank said that new business and technologies can serve poor countries by providing healthcare, mobile banking and market information.

"Studying this issue (of providing poor people with information technology) with a major and reputable private sector partner seemed the ideal way to balance development goals with private sector realities," stated the bank's program manager of information development, Mostafa Terrab.

Thierry Albrand, vice president of digital bridge for Alcatel, said that "since the global economy is increasingly linked to information and communication, reducing the growing inequalities in access in technologies is a priority. Yet in order to meet the developing countries' needs for telecommunications services in appropriate and affordable ways, we have to be creative both technologically and financially. Alcatel is already playing an active role in bridging the digital divide and was eager to work with this unique partnership of international development agencies to help develop some answers to these tough questions."

Alcatel is a leading French telecommunications provider.

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