

Ivory Coast eyes better online access with satellite broadband

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Abu Dhabi's Yahsat on Monday launched its satellite broadband service in Ivory Coast in a bid to boost internet access in this west African nation where only 27 percent of the population is online.

Named YahClick, the service offers broadband internet connectivity to businesses, government agencies and remote areas of the country.

"This broadband satellite service promises to improve telecommunication capacities across the country which until now have been very weak," Yahsat's Africa manager Yannick Kashila told AFP.

In Ivory Coast, the leading economy in French-speaking West Africa, internet penetration remains stagnant at only 27 percent. In rural areas, only 2.0 percent of homes have access, compared with 16 percent in urban areas.

"Today in 2018, having good internet connectivity has a direct influence on the economic development of a developing nation," said Morris Michael Kofi, head of Cee-Net Technologies, which supplies [internet](#) technologies and is partnering with Yahsat.

"A 10-percent increase of [broadband connectivity](#) can have a positive impact equating to around 1.4 percent of GDP in a developing country," he told AFP.

Mobile telephony currently accounts for around 8.0 percent of Ivory

Coast's GDP and the sector is one of the country's biggest employers.

The daily volume of financial transactions conducted over mobile networks—payments or money transfers—in Ivory Coast equates to some 15 billion CFA francs (23 million euros/\$29,000,000)

There are three operators dominating the mobile market in Ivory Coast: France Telecom's Orange, South Africa's MTN and the Ivorian-Saudi group Moov.

YahSat, which is based in the United Arab Emirates, is a satellite operator targeting markets in the Middle East, Africa, central and southwest Asia and Europe. It is owned by the Emirati investment fund Mubadala.

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