



IDA 21

IDA in Focus: Digital
*Creating strong foundations for
the digital economy to thrive*

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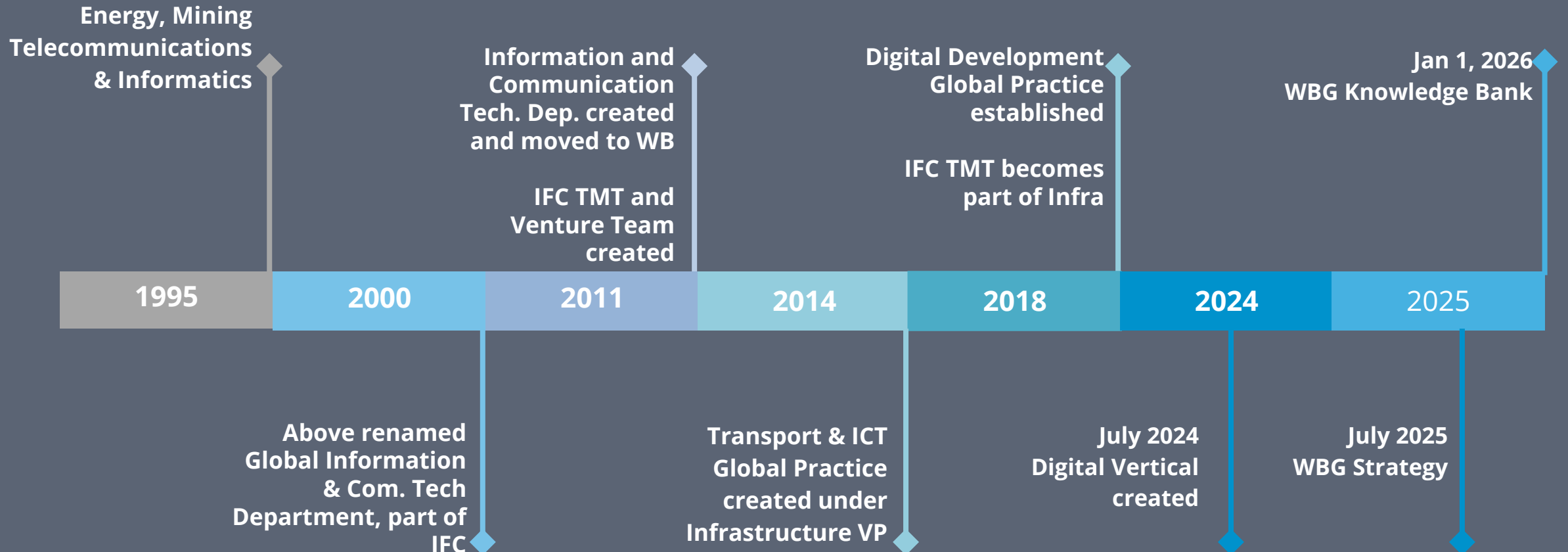


WORLD BANK GROUP



A New Digital Vertical Built on Decades of Digital Work

Since 1995, digital has evolved from an infrastructure and telecoms unit into a Digital and AI Vertical expanding into DPI, services, applications, and emerging technologies.



WORLD BANK GROUP DIGITAL STRATEGY



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Our Mission

To connect all people, governments, enterprises to digitally enabled services, harness safe and secure digital and AI use, and leverage digital tools to create more economic and job opportunities for development impact.

Opportunities to Close the Digital Divide

Over **3 billion people** in LICs and MICs do not use the internet, and 228 million are without broadband coverage

Entry-level devices are unaffordable for **2.9 billion people**

3.3 billion people do not have access to official digital IDs

Less than 1% of AI traffic flows to LICs

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A streamlined IDA21 policy package aligned with WBG Verticals and new Scorecard





Delivering Results

Key Numbers and Commitments

IDA Policy Commitment: Support 50 countries in Digital Access

Supporting 50 countries to increase access to inclusive, affordable, safe and sustainable broadband connectivity and/or foundational digital platforms including through approaches leveraging private sector investment.

Digital IDA Portfolio

38 Total Countries

42 Active Projects

**\$4.98bn Total IDA
Commitment**

Beyond the Digital IDA portfolio, **206 projects** across **65 countries** include digital components.

Key Flagship Missions – Bringing Digital Solutions to Scale

Digital and AI will support WBG sectoral initiatives such as M300, AgriConnect, UHC1.5 and Mission Water to achieve their goals

M300

Supporting **private-sector partners** to co-finance and roll out **bundled off-grid energy and connectivity solutions**



AgriConnect

Developing **Open Network Stacks (ONS)** to scale digital solutions across the agricultural value chain





Future Digital Support - FY26 WBG Innovation Award Winners

Digital & AI will support WBG Innovation Award Winners centered on Digital and AI actions

Project IQ

The WBG has been working to make procurement faster, smarter and more resilient. This low-cost, AI-powered platform, Project IQ, streamlines project management and procurement by using AI to automate documentation, reduce errors, and cut procurement time. The pilot in Indonesia cut procurement delays by more than half and saved more than \$100 million.

AI Environmental and Social Supervision Tool for Civil Works

The WBG has been working to make it easier to identify and escalate environmental and social (E&S) issues for faster action. This innovative, AI-powered risk monitoring tool will help detect E&S risk patterns early, such as from social media, and support proactive mitigation of risks - across both our public and private sector operations.

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Knowledge Products Enhance Lending & Investments

Core Analytics

Applying Knowledge for Solutions

Showcasing Expertise



Knowledge360

Fixed Broadband

Interested in **subsea cables**? We're excited to share the updated **Sector Insights** to guide you in screening and evaluating potential investments.

Whenever we send an email, make a mobile phone call, click on a link, or stream a video, we rely on data transfer. Typically, this data passes through subsea cables, which carry information from one place to another, and from one part of the world to another. As a result, subsea cables are a critical part of the global digital infrastructure that connects people, businesses, and continents.

GLOBAL TRENDS

Consistent Demand Growth

International bandwidth demand continues to grow reaching a **32% CAGR from 2020 to 2024**, representing a tripling of demand which now surpasses 6.4 Pbps.

The sustained demand for international connectivity is driven by (1) advancements in **B2C communication**, including accelerating 4G/5G adoption and rising data consumption; (2) strong acceleration of **digitalization** and growth in **cloud and AI adoption**; (3) **replacement of old cables**; (4) increased investments by **hyperscalers**; (5) the need to ensure **network resilience** against natural disasters and geopolitical tensions; among others.

Submarine Cables

the Hidden Highways of the Internet

WORLD BANK LIVE

WATCH THE REPLAY This event took place on November 25, 2025

Building AI Foundations: From Farms to Future Economies

LIVESTREAM BUILDING AI FOUNDATIONS

Watch on YouTube

READ: Digital Progress and Trends Report 2025 | Harnessing AI for Agricultural Transformation

Digital Progress and Trends Report 2025

- LAUNCH AND KEY MESSAGES**
EXPLORE NEW INSIGHTS ON FOUNDATIONS DRIVING AI GLOBALLY
- FOUR Cs FRAMEWORK**
4C FRAMEWORK OF AI FOUNDATIONS: CONNECTIVITY, CREATIVITY, CREDITABILITY, COMPLETION
- Infographics**
Adoption widens in middle income countries, but innovation gap remains
MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES ALL MAJOR GENAI USERS
40% of middle income countries have adopted GenAI
73% of middle income countries have adopted GenAI
200+ countries have adopted GenAI
200+ countries have adopted GenAI
- Leadership**
Sangbu Kim, World Bank Vice President for Digital, talks about the need for Small AI and potential for broader



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Country and Project Examples

Improving Access: Transformational Opening of Ethiopia's Telecom Sector

Development Challenge

Limited competition, due to the government being the sole telecom provider, **constrained access, affordability and quality** in the country's telecom infrastructure.



Solution

Four years of coordinated support:

IDA supporting establishment of an **independent regulator, liberalizing the market, and partial privatization of incumbent operator**. IDA funding also expanded broadband services for **public institutions and schools**.

IFC advised **first full-service telecom licenses and provided financing support** to Safaricom Ethiopia

MIGA: **\$1b guarantees** (incl. \$76m "first-loss" layer from IDA's Private Sector Window to help crowd-in private capital)

Results

4.1 million new broadband internet subscriptions

Enhanced internet services to **10 million** existing subscribers

90% reduction in mobile data bundle prices

Similar approach replicated in **Comoros** and **Guinea-Bissau**

IDA funding also supports small island states such as **Kiribati** with international connectivity, lowering wholesale costs and enabling service providers to more affordable internet, thereby, connecting more people.

Ecosystem: Catalytic Drivers to Improve Digitization in Niger

Development Challenge

Digital financial services are underdeveloped, which are an effective way to improve financial inclusion. Millions of citizens **lacked access to mobile connectivity and formal ID**, inhibiting financial inclusion.



Solution

IDA funding is supporting efforts to enhance digital inclusion and rural growth through **access to mobile connectivity, digital ID, and digital financial services**.

WBG helped deploy mobile connectivity sites and established 123 digital centers in villages that serve as **hubs for digital transactions and skills training**.

Support for developing a **user-centric digital financial services platform** tailored to the population's needs.

MIGA provided **guarantees to support investment in large mobile money** provider in the region.

Results

Facilitated opening of **8.4 million mobile money accounts** and over **151,000 people enabled to make/receive financial payments**.

Similarly, approaches for improving digital ID to foster digital services used in **Ethiopia, Nigeria, Pakistan**



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Where We Are Going

Looking Ahead

Small AI, Big Impact



**Affordable, Accessible,
Context Specific**



**Does not need massive
infrastructure or cutting-
edge servers**



**Enables growth, boosting
small business opportunities,
driving job creation**

Harnessing AI for Development

Agriculture: In **Kenya**, a mobile-based app allows farmers to photograph diseased crop leaf and receive instant diagnosis without needing constant internet access.

Health: In **Zambia**, health teams use AI to read X-rays during screening for tuberculosis.

Education: In **Ghana**, a WhatsApp-based AI math tutor delivers short lessons and practice questions on basic smartphones, providing more personalized support to students.



The Future is Digital

Building a digital transformation pipeline

Leveraging investments and derisking

Forward leaning and utilizing Digital Strategy and IDA Commitments



Thank You