

SMARTPHONES ON THE INCREASE - DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES ON SURGE

By Correspondent

THE USE of mobile phones in Tanzania has continued to grow, with smartphone ownership showing a steady increase, according to the latest report by the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA). The first Quarter Communication Statistical Report July -September 2025 indicates that mobile phone penetration rose from 92.7 percent in June to 99.3 percent September 2025.

TCRA Director General, Dr. Jabiri Bakari, said in Dar Es Salaam recently that the proportion of smartphone users also increased from 36.75 percent in June to 39.53 percent in September 2025. As of September, the total number of active



Dr Jabiri K. Bakari | Director General - TCRA

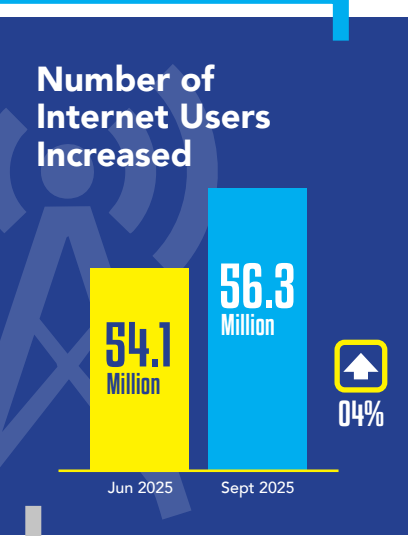


mobile devices stood at 58.85 million, of which 26.94 million were smartphones.

Dr. Bakari noted that the growing use of smartphones continues to open up new opportunities for individuals and businesses, including online marketing, access to digital education, and improved productivity.

“Many Tanzanians are using their smartphones to run online businesses, market their products, and learn new skills,” he said.

Reflecting this growth, users have expressed satisfaction



with the expanding digital landscape.

“Through my phone, I can now sell my clothes to customers across the country,” said Neema,

a trader from Mwanza. “Before, I only relied on people visiting my shop.”

Mwasampeta Aloyce, a resident of Uyole in Mbeya, elaborated on the importance of owning a smartphone in today’s generation:

“A smartphone helps with fast communication, internet access, learning, and entertainment. It also simplifies business, financial payments, and banking services. It assists in getting maps and transport, taking photos, tracking health, and even offering security support. Overall, a smartphone is a powerful tool that connects the world, increases efficiency, and makes life easier.”

Network Infrastructure Expands

The report shows that by September 2025, the country had 9,745 communication towers, with Dar es Salaam leading with 1,225 towers. This expansion has improved network coverage and the quality of voice and data services across several

regions.

“We’ve seen a huge leap in internet access, and this has translated into inclusivity of services from towns to rural areas where the digital divide was previously an obvious issue,” said Isaiah Mussa, an ICT expert.

The report further shows an increase in the number of internet users by 4.1 percent, rising from 54.1 million in June to 56.3 million in September 2025. Internet access is provided through mobile data, fiber optic (broadband), and wireless connections, with the number of users having increased by 5.5 percent since December 2024.

“In Sub-Saharan Africa, every 10 percent increase in internet penetration contributes up to 2 percent in GDP growth. This isn’t just about connectivity



— it’s about economic empowerment,” explained Dr. Ndumbaro, a Dar es Salaam-based economist.

Broad Coverage across Technologies

Tanzania continues to record high coverage across different generations of mobile technology. The report shows that 2G services reach 98.6 percent of the population, 3G covers 93.8 percent, 4G covers

94.2 percent, and 5G now reaches 28 percent, up from 26 percent in June 2025.

Dar es Salaam remains the country’s communication hub, hosting the largest number of installations for 2G, 3G, 4G, and 5G networks.

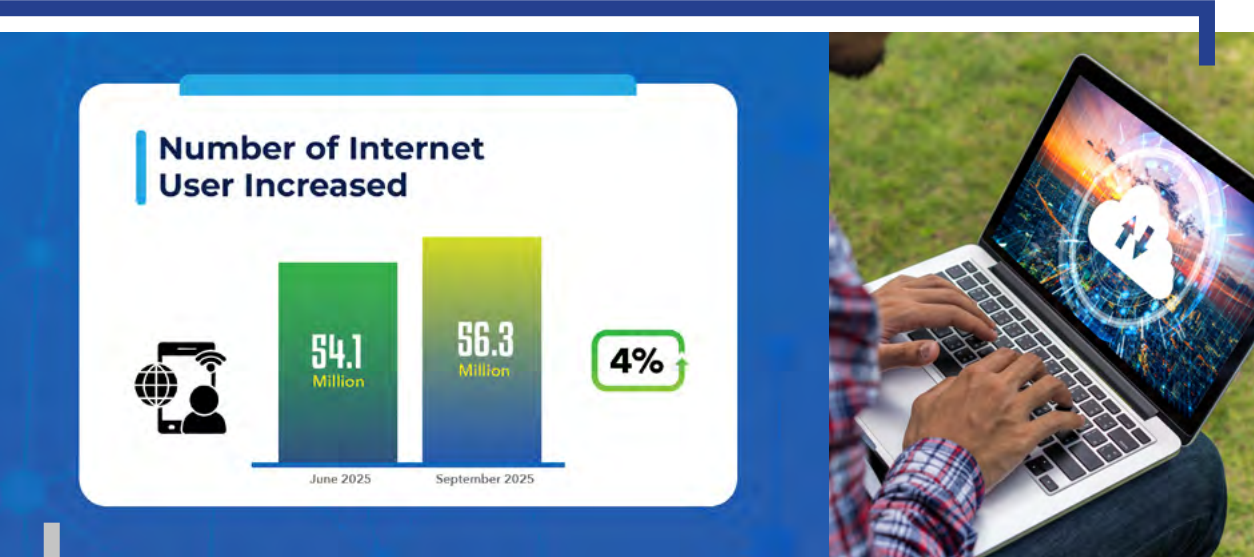
“The high-speed 5G network has brought major transformation in communication by enabling ultra-fast connectivity, minimal latency, and the ability to connect many devices simultaneously,” said Engineer Charles Thomas.

“This technology has enabled the use of self-driving cars, telemedicine, smart cities, and e-commerce. Overall, 5G enhances efficiency, innovation, and economic development by improving access to the internet and digital services globally,” added Engineer Thomas.



“5G is incredibly fast,” said Moses Kasmiri, an internet user in Dar es Salaam. “Downloading large files takes just seconds, which makes my online work easier.”

The report concludes that the continued rise in smartphone ownership and internet access is contributing to greater digital inclusion, allowing more Tanzanians to participate in online business, education, and communication.



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