The convergence of telecommunications, media and information technology sectors and the challenges facing this in Kenya

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Abstract:

The key objective of the study was to find out the convergence in three sectors; telecommunications, media and information technology. The study sought to find out the extent and speed, challenges and the regulatory policies embracing convergence. Twelve institutions drawn from three sectors mentioned above. The respondents offered information on the extent of computer usage, level of networking of available of the available computers, ownership of production and transmission such private and public property. The findings showed that most of these institutions had in more ways than one, facilitated an environment conducive for convergence,

- The challenge to regulatory structures. The existing regulations are not flexible to allow new technologies into the market.

- The challenge of globalization. With globalization is difficult to have one regulatory structure worldwide.

- The challenge to distinction between public and private activities.

- The challenge to the consistency of regulation. Regulating especially similar services differently particularly on the basis of technology could present discriminatory treatment which might hold back competition.

- The challenge of abundance of regulation based on scarcity. Regulatory approaches were based on the perceived scarcity on both frequency and content. The following recommendations were made;

- Building on current structures. This option envisages a vertical regulatory model. This means that different rules apply to the different sectors.

- Separation regulatory model for new activities. This option envisages a separate regulatory model for new activities to co-exist within the different sectors e.g. telecommunications and broadcasting.

- Progressively introducing a new regulatory model. This would progressively introduce a new regulatory model to cover the whole range of existing and new services.