

## Uganda resumes fibre optic cable construction

Sixteen new districts will be hooked onto Uganda's National Data Transmission Backbone in 2009 once construction of the second phase of the broadband cable begins. Over 1,500 kilometres of optical fibre cable will be constructed to extend the communication infrastructure to more towns.

 By [Walter Wafula](#) 5 Jan 2009

“The installation of the national fibre network will improve access and lead to a substantial reduction in price by about 40% for data and 15% for voice services over the first seven years of the project,” President Museveni said.

In Uganda access to web portals at internet cafes costs an average of UGX20 per minute, while between UGX90,000 and UGX320,000 per month is charged by internet service providers for various broadband packages.

“The low infrastructure base coupled with high tariffs charged by telecommunications companies is responsible for the low access and use of data video and multimedia services,” Museveni said.

Towns expected to benefit from the second phase of the project include those of, Iganga, Busia, Mbale, Gulu, Masaka, Mbarara, and Ntungamo.

The first phase of the infrastructure was completed early last year with the Mukono, Entebbe and Wakiso districts, which were linked to Kampala by the cable, benefiting. So far, the cable has made it possible for government ministries within the locations to implement e-governance and will subsequently be opened to the private sector and individuals.

Installation of the project is being implemented by Chinese technology firm company, Huawei Technology following a \$106 million loan advancement to Uganda.

### ABOUT WALTER WAFULA

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