

# United Nations Development Programme and EIB identify effective digital response to COVID-19 in Africa

# Africa's digital solutions to tackle COVID-19

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The new report published today by the EIB, UNDP and BearingPoint '[Africa's digital solutions to tackle COVID-19](#)' highlights how proven digital innovation can be replicated to curb the spread of COVID-19 in Africa. It also estimates investment required to implement such high impact solutions.

[Ambroise Fayolle](#), European Investment Bank's Vice-President responsible for innovation and development, said: *"The global development community is united to support Africa at this time of need. The European Investment Bank is pleased to join forces with UNDP and BearingPoint to identify smart and cost-effective technological investment that can increase the resilience of African countries to COVID-19. In the coming days we will host discussions amongst policy and business leaders from across Africa to enable practical and proven solutions to be shared. This ground-breaking report complements the EIB's accelerated financial and technical response to support COVID-19 related health and economic resilience investment across Africa as part of Team Europe. The digital solutions presented in this study are good examples of investment that we intend to support together with our partners."*

*"This paper comes at a time when Africa has demonstrated leadership in digital innovations in the area of financial technologies replicated across the world, such as mobile money. Building on this progress, it is time to invest more aggressively in digital capabilities for the socioeconomic transformation of Africa,"* said Ahunna Eziakonwa, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Africa.

In Africa, the COVID-19 pandemic is disrupting millions of people's livelihoods, with disproportionate impact on poor households and small businesses. This creates urgency to secure supplies of essential products, contain the spread of the virus, support health systems, stabilise financial systems and help businesses to survive.

### **Sharing digital solutions amongst African partners**

The EIB and UNDP analysis shows that African countries can quickly launch powerful digital projects to better tackle the pandemic. ICT solutions presented in the report cover a broad range of key policy challenges, including crisis management coordination, by helping medical personnel, enabling to anticipate and control the spread of the virus, supporting the poor communities and assisting governments to better communicate.

The survey reviewed more than 100 digital solutions in Europe and Africa and interviewed 50 respondents from 30 African countries in charge of coordinating digital investments related to the COVID-19 outbreak.

### **Broad range of digital solutions already improving lives across Africa**

Pioneering and innovative digital solutions identified as offering easy to implement and affordable solutions include a telephone based application for contact-tracing in Kenya, drones spreading messages in rural areas in Ivory Coast and delivering samples to medical laboratories in Ghana and Rwanda, a self-diagnosis application available in 15 African countries, an online learning platform in Tanzania for students and teachers in secondary schools,

a platform to organise and monitor food and non-food distribution to the poorest people, as well as a system to map the effects and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic through social media data.

### **Survey estimates financing needed for digital solutions to improve COVID-19 response**

The study reveals that investment needed to implement ICT solutions is not massive compared to other development programmes and financing initiatives, and has the capacity to generate tremendous benefits in terms of saving life and safeguarding economic and social resilience. Global investment required to carry out these digital solutions in the 30 African countries studied has been estimated at €680 million in the first year.

**Read the report:** [Africa's digital solutions to tackle COVID-19](#)

**Participate in a webinar (held in French) to know more about the study report on 24 July 2020 – 15:00 (CEST):**

<https://app.livestorm.co/bearingpoint/evaluation-des-besoins-dinvestissement-dans-les-infrastructures-numeriques-en-afrique-face-au-covid-19>.

### **Background information**

#### **About the European Investment Bank**

The EIB is present in more than 160 countries and has been active across Africa since 1963. The EU Bank is among the leading financiers on the continent, supporting private and public sector projects.

#### **About the United Nations Development Programme**

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

Learn more at [undp.org](https://undp.org) or follow at @UNDP.

UNDP's collaboration with EIB complements the Tech Access Partnership, launched by the United Nations Technology Bank, together with UNDP, UNCTAD and WHO, as part of a coordinated approach to strengthen developing countries' responses to COVID-19 and increase access to lifesaving health technologies.