



PRESS RELEASE

Malawi launches first Open Neutral Internet Exchange Point

The Government of Malawi, in collaboration with key stakeholders in the technology and telecommunications sectors, is proud to announce activation of the country's first neutral internet exchange point, the Lilongwe Open Neutral Exchange Point (LIONEX) that is located in the Capital, Lilongwe. LIONEX is poised to revolutionize internet connectivity within the country and across the region.

LIONEX is an Internet Exchange Point (IXP) designed to provide a neutral and independent platform where Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Content Delivery Networks (CDNs), and other network operators can exchange traffic. This local exchange of internet traffic will result in reduced latency, improved speeds, and more resilient internet infrastructure for Malawi and neighbouring regions. LIONEX is an open, neutral, and community-driven Internet Exchange Point that is poised to enhance internet performance, reduce costs, and promote local content development, and contributing to the growth of Malawi's digital economy.

Internet Exchange Points like LIONEX play a critical role in the development of a robust and efficient internet ecosystem. Their benefits include:

- 1. Improved Internet Performance:** By allowing ISPs to exchange traffic directly, IXPs reduce the distance data has to travel, thereby lowering latency and improving speed for end-users. This is particularly significant for services requiring real-time data transmission, such as video conferencing, online gaming, and VoIP.
- 2. Cost Savings:** IXPs help ISPs and network operators save on international bandwidth costs by keeping local traffic local. This reduction in costs can lead to more affordable internet services for consumers and businesses alike.

- 3. Enhanced Resilience and Redundancy:** By creating a local exchange point, the overall resilience of the national internet infrastructure is improved. In the event of international connectivity disruptions, local traffic can still flow smoothly, ensuring continuity of critical services.
- 4. Stimulating Local Content Development:** The presence of an IXP encourages the development and hosting of local content. This can spur economic growth by supporting local businesses, educational institutions, and government services to operate more efficiently online.
- 5. Catalyst for Digital Economy Growth:** For emerging economies and least developed countries, IXPs are essential for fostering a vibrant digital economy. They facilitate innovation, improve access to information, and enable participation in the global digital marketplace.

The launch of LIONEX marks a significant milestone in Malawi's digital transformation journey through strengthening Malawi's internet ecosystem and promoting digital inclusion for all Malawians. By improving the country's internet infrastructure, Malawi is not only enhancing connectivity but also opening up new opportunities for economic growth and social development.

LIONEX will also significantly enhance the internet experience for academic institutions across Malawi. Improved connectivity and reduced costs will bolster research, collaboration, and access to global educational resources, driving the academic and research excellence of our universities."

LIONEX is the first of many IXPs which are expected to open up soon at Data Centers and metros across the country. Malawi is taking a bold step towards strengthening its digital infrastructure. These initiatives are expected to attract more investment in the ICT sector, improve the quality of internet services, bridge the digital divide, and ensuring that more Malawians have access to reliable and affordable internet.

For more information, please contact: **The IXP Coordinator, Lilongwe Open Neutral Internet Exchange; admin@lionex.org.**



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