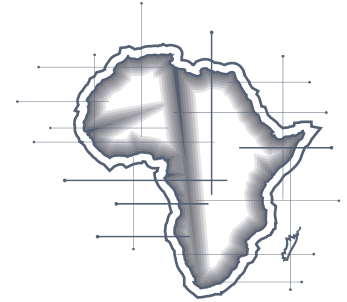




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# vsat

very small aperture terminal

ENTER THE KNOWLEDGE ERA

ENTER THE KNOWLEDGE ERA



## Message from the Rector

Connectivity has continued to be a serious drawback for most of Africa's tertiary educational institutions, hampering the delivery of programs, interaction and access to learning and teaching resources. In order to address these challenges, the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa a body consisting of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, The Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation have pooled their resources to fund a consortium of eleven African universities and two higher education organizations to purchase bandwidth in bulk.

The AVU was identified by the Partnership as the ideal institution to manage the consortium and the Internet bandwidth services are provided by Intelsat. The consortium is geared towards providing cost effective and reliable internet services thus increasing access to tertiary education and training across the continent. The AVU is now in the process of publicizing this partnership so that more African universities can learn from this example and join the consortium or even form regional consortia for bandwidth and connectivity purposes.

*K. P. Dzwimbo*

Rector, The African Virtual University



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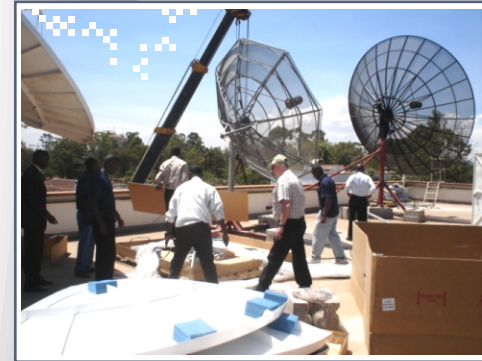


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his is the digital age where technological advancements contribute substantially to the exchange of information, ideas and knowledge. The Internet has become a 'must have' and part of our daily lives providing unprecedented access to information, communication and collaboration not witnessed before.

Institutions of Higher Education in Africa are becoming increasingly aware of the need for Open, Distance and eLearning (ODEL) programs that utilize effective and efficient Internet services to enhance the delivery of their courses throughout the continent. Despite the potential for growth, Internet access in Africa still faces many challenges; these include but are not limited to poor connectivity, high bandwidth charges and restrictive license regulation in many countries. These challenges greatly affect the quality of teaching and learning at institutions of higher education.

VSAT's (Very Small Aperture Terminal) will afford African institutions the opportunity to participate in the global knowledge economy by providing access to cost effective resources for tertiary education. VSATs provide students and staff with quick, easy and reliable internet access to vast teaching and learning resources such as online courses, digital libraries and e-Learning. VSATs will provide a solution to the connectivity challenge and dramatically improve the teaching and learning process.



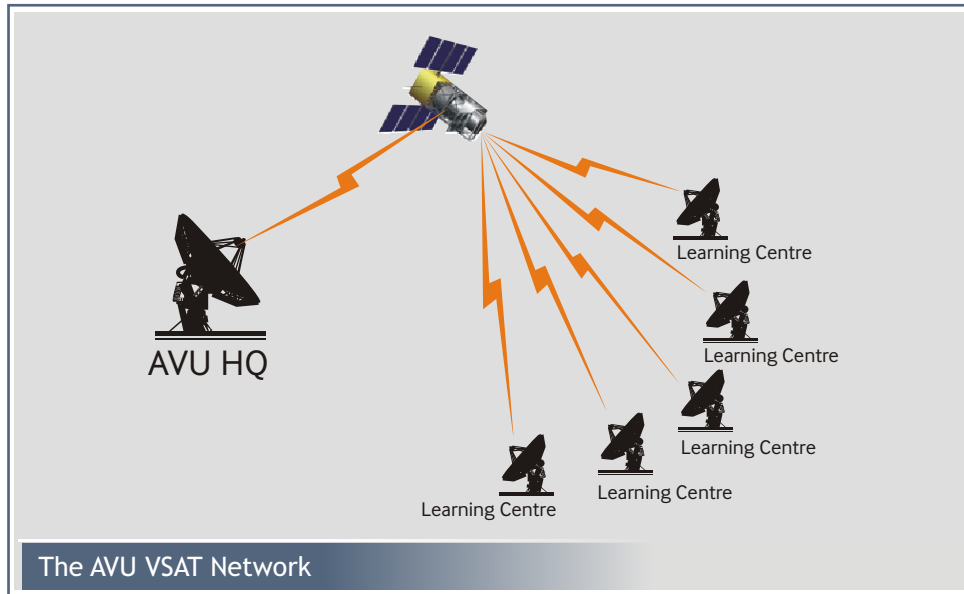
*Unpacking the VSAT to be installed at the AVU Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya*



## The AVU VSAT Network

A VSAT network is based on wireless satellite technology and consists of the VSAT (sometimes referred to as dish or antenna) for sending and receiving signals and the satellite located in the sky. The VSAT sends a signal to the satellite and this signal is in turn communicated to the receiving VSAT station on the earth.

The AVU VSAT service covers the entire African continent, inclusive of the African islands, e.g. Cape Verde, Seychelles, Madagascar, Mauritius and the Comoros.



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*The AVU VSAT solution will revolutionize tertiary education delivery in Africa, as one of the best methodologies of delivering and organizing content, teaching and learning in higher education and training, for a particular purpose: that African universities use such methodologies to increase access to demand-driven programs in Africa.*





## WHO IS THE VSAT NETWORK FOR?

The AVU VSAT Network is open to all AVU partner institutions, learning centres, and all educational institutions in Africa. The following services are available from the VSAT network:

- Dedicated Internet access via VSAT operating in the C-band;
- Video streaming / broadcasting;
- Video conferencing; and
- Content archiving and multicasting.

## HOW DOES ONE JOIN THE AVU VSAT NETWORK?

To join the network, institutions are required:

- Sign the AVU VSAT Bandwidth Provision Agreement;
- Secure a VSAT operating license
- Procure the necessary VSAT equipment

The AVU will provide the following:

- Installation configuration, commissioning and activation of the network;
- Onsite training during installation;
- 24 x 7 support to ensure uninterrupted Internet services



*The VSAT being installed at the AVU Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya*



## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

The AVU seeks to increase access to demand-driven higher education opportunities by providing dedicated and guaranteed bandwidth for learning and teaching resources.

African universities today pay an average of **US \$ 10 per kbps/month** (ranges from \$7 to \$22 per kbps/month) or **US \$ 10,000 per MBPS** (almost all satellite based), which is estimated to be over 200 times the cost of equivalent bandwidth in Europe and North America.

The AVU has tailored its VSAT solution to provide substantially lower pricing at approximately one-third of the cost paid by institutions of higher education for dedicated bandwidth.

**For information on joining and pricing, contact:**

E-mail: [tech@avu.org](mailto:tech@avu.org)

Tel: +254 (20) 2712056, +254 (20) 2712071

Fax: +254 (20) 2710099

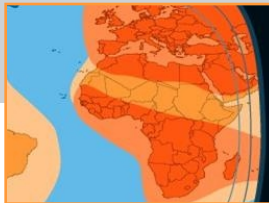
Mobile: +254 733 624412, +254 722 205883



*The VSAT will aid the AVU and its partners meet its objective of enhancing capacity by leveraging the power of Information & Communications Technologies (ICTs) to provide world-class degree, diploma and certificate programs across Africa.*

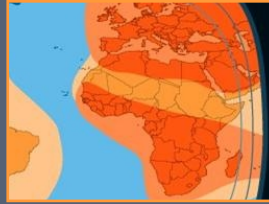


*The AVU VSAT solution will provide superior dedicated online connectivity at incredibly low costs*



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