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My own interest in capacity building is focused on policy, regulation and strategy. This combines a number of academic disciplines:

- economics
- engineering
- law
- management
- politics
- statistics

Nobody can encompass all of these, however hard they might try.

What we need are engineers who can speak to politicians, lawyers who can listen to economists and so on. We need people who can work in multi-disciplinary teams in order to formulate national strategies and legislation, then implement them within the resulting regulatory framework.

We also need agencies that cooperate and collaborate, from ministries of economics and trade to national competition authorities and statistical agencies. The independence of regulators does not mean their isolation, they exist in complex webs of organisations.

To keep up with the most advanced nations calls for highly skilled staff, who are confident in their work.

Policy makers and regulators have to face across the table and in more formal processes global manufacturers, operators and service providers backed up by expensive teams of economists and lawyers. These players ensure their interests are well represented and they are not lightly to be engaged with.

We need to look at a initial training at universities for both bachelor's and master's degrees. We need to ensure that the curriculum is current and appropriate. We need to ensure telecommunications is embedded in a wide range of courses. The result has to be graduates available to employers with world class analytical skills and a sound knowledge of

contemporary markets and technologies.

We also need to recognise that continuing professional development for those in employment in the sector will be an enduring challenge. Nobody can stand still, there is always more to learn.

Whether it is university education or continuing professional development, we must ensure and enforce quality assurance of the courses and of the curricula. We cannot afford to waste efforts in sub-standard education or training.

One African country had to "de-accredit" a number of business schools that had proliferated under a system that, while well-meaning, was too lax and consequently failed individuals students, employers and ultimately the nation.

The aspiration in education must always be to be world class.

At the moment InfoDev is working on the Global Capacity Building Initiative (GCBI), which will begin in Africa with efforts to improve the training of regulators.

Some people have said Africa is different, I am not sure there is evidence of that. The manufacturers seem to be the big multi-national firms and especially the Chinese (Huawei and ZTE). The consolidation of the operators seems to be substantially global:

- Etislat
- France Telecom
- Millicom
- Telecom Portugal
- Vodafone
- Zain

Admittedly MTN is today African, but it is under offer from Bharti of India and, perhaps, also from Etisalat. The operators do not appear to see Africa as distinct or, at least, not significantly so, it is part of a global market, though with some regional and national variations.

People talk much too casually about localisation of practices from other places. All too often I come across regulatory practices from ten years ago from some distant coutnry washed ashore in a developing country and passed off as global best practice. The source country has generally moved on, sometimes repudiating the former policies and practices. Sometimes the ideas are more mythological than a detailed or profound understanding of the circumstances that drove the source country to a particular *ad hoc* measure.

We must first ensure that individuals fully understand why policies were adopted in particular country. Only then can try to apply it in their home country.

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In doing so they need to conduct an impact assessment and public consultations, to test the validity of their proposals.

We are, I think, all agreed that we should use evidence-based policy.

My colleague Alison Gillwald presented this morning some of the work from [Research ICT Africa](#) (RIA) which provides a snapshot of household usage of ICTs in Africa. This is complex area of the social sciences which is a vital contribution to the policy debates. Yet such evidence is rare in Africa.

One of the biggest problems is the shortage or dearth of teaching materials. We need many more case studies, many more analyses of regulatory regimes, or decisions and appeals. We need the raw materials for teaching. We also need the text books, where the material can be presented in a systematic way for students.