

## **Planning for Mobile Broadband: Connecting All Users**

As governments across the Arab region seek to enhance progress made in developing communications networks to allow broadband internet to be rolled out to all citizens, careful planning is needed. As digital economies grow, so can the relationship between citizens and government be enhanced with the use of new services such as eHealth and eGovernment.

However, the allocation of precious natural resources such as spectrum will prove a vital part of this. When properly allocated, along internationally harmonised guidelines, spectrum can be an important driver of social and economic development and a creator of jobs. Like other areas in the world, the Arab region is at an important phase of development in terms of spectrum allocation, with vital bands such as the 2.6GHz band and the Digital Dividend soon to be planned across the region. The 2.6GHz will be a crucial provider of capacity in high-population, urban areas while the Digital Dividend will play a vital role in covering sparsely-populated areas and connecting rural communities to broadband services.

As well as the timely allocation of harmonised spectrum, it is also of central to the take-up of mobile broadband services that governments take a common-sense approach to the taxation of mobile services and to the level of environmental impact assessments imposed on mobile operators.

The GSMA is the global representative of the mobile operator community, and works closely with governments, regional bodies and international organisations like the ITU to ensure that the best policies are put in place to ensure that take up of mobile and mobile broadband services is maximised.