

INFORMATION ECONOMY REPORT 2013

The Cloud Economy and Developing Countries





NOTE

Within the UNCTAD Division on Technology and Logistics, the ICT Analysis Section carries out policy-oriented analytical work on the development implications of information and communication technologies (ICTs). It is responsible for the preparation of the *Information Economy Report*. The ICT Analysis Section promotes international dialogue on issues related to ICTs for development, and contributes to building developing countries' capacities to measure the information economy and to design and implement relevant policies and legal frameworks.

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Developed countries: the member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (other than Chile, Mexico, the Republic of Korea and Turkey), plus the new European Union member countries that are not OECD members (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Romania), plus Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco and San Marino. Countries with economies in transition: South-East Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Developing economies: in general, all the economies that are not specified above. For statistical purposes, the data for China do not include those for Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Hong Kong, China), Macao Special Administrative Region (Macao, China), or Taiwan Province of China.

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Two dots (..) indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported. Rows in tables have been omitted in those cases where no data are available for any of the elements in the row;

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A slash (/) between dates representing years, for example, 1994/95, indicates a financial year;

Use of an en dash (-) between dates representing years, for example, 1994–1995, signifies the full period involved, including the beginning and end years;

Reference to "dollars" (\$) means United States of America dollars, unless otherwise indicated;

Annual rates of growth or change, unless otherwise stated, refer to annual compound rates;

Details and percentages in tables do not necessarily add up to the totals because of rounding.

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PREFACE

Innovation in the realm of information technology continues its rapid pace, with cloud computing representing one of the latest advances. Significant improvements in the capacity to process, transmit and store data are making cloud computing increasingly important in the delivery of public and private services. This has considerable potential for economic and social development, in particular our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and define a bold agenda for a prosperous, sustainable and equitable future.

The *Information Economy Report 2013* marks the first time the United Nations is examining the economic potential of cloud computing for low- and middle-income countries, where rates of adoption are currently low. With governments, businesses and other organizations in the developing world considering whether to migrate some or all of their data and activities to the cloud, this publication is especially timely. I commend its information and analysis to all those interested in learning more about the benefits and risks of the cloud economy.

BAN Ki-moon Secretary-General United Nations

Ki Mow Boan

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CONTENTS

Note	II
Preface	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
List of abbreviations	ix
Overview	xi
CHAPTER I THE CLOUD ECONOMY ECOSYSTEM	4
A. Evolution to the cloud	
B. Definitions of key terms concerned with cloud computing	
Cloud computing and cloud services	
Cloud service categories Cloud deployment models	
C. Drivers and barriers related to cloud computing	
D. The cloud economy ecosystem	
E. Implications for developing countries	
L. Implications for developing countries	12
CHAPTER II TRENDS IN THE CLOUD ECONOMY AND RELATED	
INFRASTRUCTURE	
A. Trends in the cloud economy	
Cloud markets and traffic	
Leading corporate players in the cloud economy	
3. Can cloud computing trends be seen in trade statistics?	
B. Trends in cloud-related infrastructure 1. Factors determining the cloud readiness of countries	
Factors determining the cloud readiness of countries	
National backbone, Internet exchange points and data centres	
National backbond, internet exchange points and data contres	
Quality of service of broadband networks	
Affordability of broadband services	
C. Conclusions	36
CHAPTER III IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	43
A. Drivers and barriers of cloud adoption	
Drivers of cloud adoption	
2. Barriers to cloud adoption	
Assessing drivers and barriers to cloud adoption in developing countries	
B. Cloud adoption in selected countries: experiences and opportunities	
Supply-side cloud opportunities in developing countries	
Cloud use by different stakeholders in developing countries	
C. Conclusions	63

CHAPTER IV GOVERNANCE, LAW AND REGULATION OF CLOUD SERV	
IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	
A. International legal and regulatory trends	
B. Public law and cloud services	
Cloud as a regulated activity	
Regulating in a multi-jurisdictional environment	
C. Private law and cloud services	
D. Implications for developing countries	
Provision of cloud services	
2. Conditions of supply	
3. Treatment of data	75
E. Concluding remarks and policy recommendations	76
CHAPTER V POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	81
A. Recognizing the diversity of cloud adoption strategies	82
B. Recommendations to Governments	83
Designing strategic policy approaches to the cloud	83
Addressing the infrastructure challenge	85
Strengthening the legal framework	88
4. Map opportunities on the supply side	89
5. The human resource challenge	90
6. Government use of the cloud	91
7. Implementation and follow-up of the strategy	91
8. Raising awareness	91
C. Recommendations to development partners	92
References	95
STATISTICAL ANNEX	101
Glossary	111
List of selected publications in the area of science, technology and ICT for develo	pment113
Readership survey	116

CONTENTS

Boxes		
l.1.	The expansion of computing and communication power	
l.2.	Economies of scale and the cloud	
II.1.	Cloud computing services in international classifications	
II.2.	Cloud services over satellite	
III.1.	Barriers to cloud adoption in Ghana4	
III.2.	Government data centres in developing countries53	
III.3.	Examples of cloud service provision in developing countries	
III.4.	Selected cloud aggregators in developing countries56	
III.5.	Government cloud use in the Republic of Korea58	
III.6.	Towards a government cloud in India60	
III.7.	Benefiting from the cloud's elasticity – the case of Zenga Media	3
IV.1.	Protecting personal data in the cloud – different options and challenges69	9
IV.2.	Legislating for cloud: the case of Mexico7	1
IV.3.	UNCTAD support to e-commerce legislation harmonization	7
V.1.	Promoting the cloud economy in Kenya84	1
V.2.	Approaches to measuring the quality of broadband services86	3
V.3.	The African Internet Exchange System Project	3
Tables	S Control of the cont	
l.1.	From mainframes to the cloud	3
l.2.	Different computing categories	5
II.1.	Estimates and forecasts of cloud revenue, 2010 and 2015 (Billions of dollars)16	3
II.2.	Top 10 companies by estimated number of servers, 201218	3
II.3.	Top 10 generators of SaaS revenue among the global 100 software firms, 201119	9
II.4.	Top importing and exporting economies of computer servers of the type described under HS	
	847150, 2008–2012	2
II.5.	Infrastructure-related indicators used in different cloud readiness indices	5
II.6.	Theoretical highest mobile broadband speeds, W-CDMA family)
II.7.	Comparison of 3G and LTE speeds and latency in Finland)
II.8.	Relevance of broadband characteristics by cloud service	1
II.9.	Quality of service performance, by groups of economies	
III.1.	Selected cloud service providers in Ghana, 201354	1
V.1.	Potential advantages and risks/disadvantages of cloud adoption82	

Box table and figure

预览已结束,完整报告链接和二

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