

# TNM registers 35% subscribers growth

 By Gregory Gondwe: @Kalipochi

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Telekom Networks Malawi Limited (TNM), reportedly the first mobile phone service provider in Malawi, has announced in its 'results for the year ended 31 December 2011' report over the weekend, that it has registered a 35% growth in subscriber base.



The report, signed by TNM's chairperson Professor Mathews Chikaonda and vice-chairperson Hiteshi Anadkat, also claims it has increased its market share to 42% from 37% within the same period a year before.

As of last year the company was boasting a subscriber base of slightly over two million users for both its post- and pre-paid services.

Chikaonda and Anadkat say the prevailing challenging macro-economic environment will continue to provide obstacles to sustained business performance, which in essence will also affect further growth and attraction of subscribers.

"Major delays in investment in the network, due to limited access to foreign exchange, may result in strain on the network and impact on quality," they said.

## An agent for economic growth

They however said the encouraging trend in the demand for data is projected to further increase, but the service quality may be limited by the lack of quality international connectivity for Malawi as a country.

"We remain committed to delivering our promise to our customers of quality service and being an agent for economic growth of the country," said Prof. Chikaonda and Anadkat.

Since its incorporation, TNM says it has achieved various milestones which include its launch in 1995 with 36 base transceiver stations covering across Malawi, becoming the third largest network in Southern Africa after South Africa's MTN and Vodacom.

The other milestone is when it started commercial operations in 1996 offering post-paid services with a capacity of 7 000 subscribers. In the same year capacity was increased to 10 000 subscribers.

By June 2000 the company says it launched pre-paid services before following up with SMS services in 2001 and international roaming in 2002. In April 2005 TNM recorded 100 000 customers followed by a rebranding process in 2007 with a brand promise 'always with you'.

In October 2008 TNM commissioned Next-generation network (NGN) replacing the legacy switch and was followed by introduction of GPRS/EDGE, which also helped to increase subscribers. In 2009, TNM became the first mobile phone operator to launch 3.5G technology in Malawi which buoyed it to register a subscriber growth to a million in 2010.

## ABOUT GREGORY GONDWE: @KALIPOCHI

Gregory Gondwe is a Malawian journalist who started writing in 1993. He is also a media consultant assisting several international journalists pursuing assignments in Malawi. He holds a Diploma and an Intermediate Certificate in Journalism among other media-related certificates. He can be contacted on [gregorygondwe@gmail.com](mailto:gregorygondwe@gmail.com). Follow him on Twitter at @Kalipochi.

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