Early Warning System

IFC-51154

WIOCC VI Debt

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Quick Facts

Countries	Congo, Democratic Republic of, Nigeria
Financial Institutions	International Finance Corporation (IFC)
Status	Approved
Bank Risk Rating	B
Voting Date	2025-12-05
Borrower	WEST INDIAN OCEAN CABLE COMPANY LTD
Sectors	Communications, Infrastructure
Investment Type(s)	Loan
Investment Amount (USD)	$ 20.80 million
Project Cost (USD)	$ 577.00 million

Project Description

Accorind to bank provided information, the proposed IFC investment comprises a senior secured sustainability-linked loan ("SLF") of up to US$20.8 mn to WIOCC's subsidiaries: WIOCC Mauritius ("WIOCC MU") (US$ loan) and OADC PropCo South Africa ("OADC SA") (ZAR loan), jointly referred to as "WIOCC Group". Both entities are existing IFC clients under the 2024 SLF loans (#48053 and #49887) https://disclosures.ifc.org/project-detail/ESRS/48053/wiocc-slf-loan and WIOCC MU is a client under IFC's 2020 loan (#44202); https://disclosures.ifc.org/project-detail/SII/44202/rse-covid-wiocc. IFC also holds a 10% equity stake in WIOCC Holding Company; WIOCC III equity in 2022 (https://disclosures.ifc.org/project-detail/ESRS/41580/wiocc-iii);

This current project is considered an extension of WIOCC SLF loan (#48053) and OADC SLF Loan (#49887) which also sought to enhance connectivity and data hosting services for individuals and businesses in Africa. Proceeds from the new transaction will support WIOCC in expanding its network through further deployment of subsea and terrestrial cables to extend coverage in South and West Africa and increase data center capacity, primarily in Nigeria and South Africa as well as leverage the existing metro infrastructure to expand its Open Access Metro business improving fiber connections to estates and businesses for ISPs in Lagos and other States of Nigeria.

WIOCC was established in 2007 for the development and operation of submarine and terrestrial fiber optic cable networks. In 2019, WIOCC established Open Access Data Centres (OADC) to expand into the development and operation of open access data centres, and in 2024, it established Open Access Metro Services (OAMS) to offer open access wholesale fibre-to-the-home/business (FTTx) infrastructure to internet service providers (ISP). Currently, WIOCC offers connectivity solutions throughout 30+ countries in Africa, operates 6 data centres in South Africa, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with a combined installed capacity of 5.6 MW, and provides fibre-to-the-home/business (FTTx) services in Nigeria.

In 2007, IFC along with other development finance institutions (DFIs), approved loan financing for the Eastern Africa Submarine Cable System (EASSy, Project #25340), in which WIOCC was a majority shareholder. In 2022, IFC acquired a minority equity stake in WIOCC (Project #41580 and approved a new loan in 2024 (Project #48053) for the refurbishing of existing data centres in DRC, Johannesburg and Durban and the construction of new data centres.

The proposed IFC loan and parallel loans, which are partly mobilized by IFC, will help fund capital expenditure plans to expand WIOCC's pan-African data centre network across the Target Countries, fund the expansion of WIOCC's FTTx business in Nigeria, and fund capacity and network expansion for the connectivity business. IFC's proposed financing package includes an equity investment of up to US$50 million and a sustainability-linked loan of up to US$20.4 million equivalent (a US$10 million tranche and a South African Rand tranche of US$10.4 million equivalent).

The project's principal activities include: (a) acquiring capacity from existing submarine cables, (b) expanding data centre infrastructure, (c) growing the new fiber-to-the-home/business (FTTx), and (d) investing in terrestrial fibre. Key efforts are focused on increasing data centre capacity in South Africa and Nigeria through the construction of a new block at the Lagos (Lekki) Data Centre and the expansion of the current facility in Durban. Concurrently, connectivity efforts will add bandwidth by securing more capacity on major submarine cables like Equiano, EASSy, 2Africa West, and 2Africa Gera. The FTTx component will be implemented in partnership with a local ISP, with only limited last-mile construction expected.

Investment Description

- International Finance Corporation (IFC)

The total Project cost is estimated at US$577 million, to be financed with a combination of equity, new debt (US$65 million), and internal cash generation supported by already signed customer contracts. IFC’s proposed financing package includes, a US$ denominated sustainability-linked loan of up to US$10 million equivalent and a Rand denominated sustainability-linked loan of up to Rand 185 million (approximately US$10.7 million equivalent).

Private Actors Description

WIOCC Holding Company Limited (WHCL) is currently owned by a private equity Fund, African Capital Alliance, IFC, Management and 10 African telecommunication operators namely: Dalkom Somalia, Djibouti Telecom SA, Lesotho Communications Authority, Mocambique Telecom, S.A, Office National Des Telecommunication du Burundi, Telkom Kenya Limited, Tel-One (Private) Limited, Uganda Telecom Limited, BoFiNet, and Zanzibar Telecom Public Limited Company.

The West Indian Ocean Cable Company (WIOCC) Group is a top pan-African digital infrastructure provider, offering open-access data centres and high-capacity fibre networks across Africa. WIOCC Holding Company Ltd, its parent company, provides wholesale broadband connectivity linking African countries to Europe and beyond. WIOCC Holding Company has been a client of IFC since 2007.

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Private Actor 1	Private Actor 1 Role	Private Actor 1 Sector	Relation	Private Actor 2	Private Actor 2 Role	Private Actor 2 Sector
-	-	-	-	WEST INDIAN OCEAN CABLE COMPANY LTD	Client	Communications

Contact Information

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION

You can submit a request for information disclosure at: https://disclosures.ifc.org/#/inquiries

If you believe that your request for information from IFC has been unreasonably denied, or that this Policy has been interpreted incorrectly, you can submit a complaint at the link above to IFC's Access to Information Policy Advisor, who reports directly to IFC's Executive Vice President.

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM OF IFC/MIGA

The Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO) is the independent complaint mechanism and fact-finding body for people who believe they are likely to be, or have been, adversely affected by an IFC or MIGA- financed project. If you submit a complaint to the CAO, they may assist you in resolving a dispute with the company and/or investigate to assess whether the IFC is following its own policies and procedures for preventing harm to people or the environment. If you want to submit a complaint electronically, you can email the CAO at CAO@worldbankgroup.org You can learn more about the CAO and how to file a complaint at http://www.cao-ombudsman.org

Bank Documents

- Environmental & Social Review Summary