Full steam ahead - AfricaConnect

Internet 2 Spring conference
Matthew Scott, General Manager, DANTE
NRENs around the world connected to GEANT
FEAST feasibility study recommendations accepted by EC
DANTE has submitted initial project proposal draft and supporting documentation to the EC
DG AidCO and DANTE are in Contract Negotiations towards AfricaConnect
The first negotiation meeting took place end of February
Some important derogations to standard terms in EC contract needed
DANTE and UbuntuNet alliance have agreed all detailed workplans and budget
UbuntuNet Alliance discussing process of identifying NRENs ‘ready’ to connect
Overview

- 4 year project divided in Planning/Procurement Phase and Operational Phase
  - Planning and Procurement (up to 12 months)
  - Operational Phase (months 13-48)
- Total Budget of 14.8 M Euro (80% funded by EC, 20% from AfricaConnect beneficiary partners)
- Location is Southern and Eastern Africa with an emphasis on Ubuntunet Alliance member countries
- Partnership will be sought with UbuntuNet Alliance, NRENs in the region, interested EU NRENs, TERENA
- Carnegie funding very likely to be given to UbuntuNet Alliance for procurement phase A (20% of 500k EURO)
Phase A of AfricaConnect

Planning and Procurement phase:

- Procurement of the network connectivity from telecom providers;
- Procurement of the network equipment from equipment suppliers;
- Design of a cost-effective technical solution for the network based on offers received;
- Development of Cost-sharing model to ensure fair and affordable distribution of costs between UbuntuNet partners;
- Confirmation of service requirements and subscriptions with UbuntuNet Alliance;
- Contract awards to suppliers;
- Start of development of a sustainability plan for the regional network and its connected NRENs.
Phase B of AfricaConnect

Operational Phase:

- Network Operations:
  - Implement and test network prior to operational service
  - Network management and operations required to provide stable connectivity services (usually done ‘in-house’ by partners);
- User support
  - Support to collaborative user communities within the region and towards Europe
  - Support the uptake of the use of ICT applications by the research and education community.
- Promotion
  - of the use of the network to the end-users (students, researchers, doctors) and
  - of the network to the international stakeholder community
Phase B of AfricaConnect

Operational Phase:

- Training and support activities
  - including capacity building for the consolidation of the NRENs and training local staff in the effective engineering, management and operation of the network.
- Increasing political dialogue to raise the political and financial support necessary for a successful and sustainable network