CONVERGENCE BETWEEN MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

IMPLICATIONS FOR REGULATION OF MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The convergence of mobile telecoms services and financial services has complicated the traditional nature of the telecoms business and raised significant questions regarding new the roles of telecoms regulators, policy makers and law makers in the business. This thesis explores three closely-related questions. First, what is the impact of the convergence of mobile and financial services on the Kenyan telecommunications sector? Second, do Kenya’s telecom regulations recognize inter-sectoral converged services such as mobile financial services, as telecommunications services? Third, what regulatory approach, if any should telecoms regulators and policy makers adapt, to effectively regulate converged services such as mobile financial services to promote innovation?

The main aim of the research is to propose a telecoms regulatory framework that promotes innovation and development of mobile financial services, and other converged services, by mobile network operators. I argue that telecommunications regulations should be adapted to anticipate and promote the convergence of telecoms and non-telecoms services. In addition, telecom regulators should be given a broader mandate in regulating converged telecoms service such as mobile financial services.