



Helios Towers white paper finds communications networks must evolve to meet exponential growth in data demand

- Global data traffic expected to grow 7x by 2040 and 12x across Helios Towers' nine markets
- Terrestrial mobile and fibre networks are expected to carry approximately 97% of global data traffic by 2040, with satellite complementing ground-based infrastructure
- The white paper concludes that integrated terrestrial and satellite ecosystem is the most effective path to universal, affordable connectivity

London, 28 July 2026: Helios Towers plc ("Helios Towers", "the Group" or "the Company"), the independent mobile tower company, has today published a white paper exploring how communications networks will need to evolve to meet rapidly growing demand for connectivity across Africa & Middle East.

Over the past five years, data consumption has increased six-fold across Helios Towers' markets, supporting strong mobile operator performance and record tenancy additions in Q1 2026.

Independent forecasts expect video streaming, cloud services and artificial intelligence to drive continued data consumption, and coupled with significant population growth, data consumption is projected to expand 12x in Helios Towers' markets over the next fifteen years.

Against this backdrop, the white paper examines how terrestrial mobile and fibre networks, together with Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite technologies, will need to evolve to support this future connectivity demand across urban, rural and remote environments.

The analysis concludes that the future of connectivity will be defined by complementary technologies rather than competing ones. While terrestrial networks are forecast to continue carrying 97% of global data traffic by 2040, satellites will play an important role in reducing dead zones and through satellite backhaul, unlocking incremental terrestrial network opportunities in rural locations where around 300 million people live today globally with no coverage.

The paper also finds that closing the digital divide will depend on more than expanding network coverage alone. While around 300 million people globally remain outside mobile coverage, more than 3.1 billion people already live within network coverage but do not use mobile internet, highlighting the importance of affordability, device access and digital skills alongside continued infrastructure investment.

Tom Greenwood, CEO of Helios Towers, said:

"At Helios Towers, we see first-hand the exponential growth in data demand across Africa and the Middle East, and the increasing need for communications networks to evolve to meet it. Our white paper shows that the future of connectivity will be built on an integrated infrastructure ecosystem, where terrestrial and satellite technologies work together to deliver affordable, resilient and universal connectivity. While terrestrial infrastructure will continue to provide the capacity and scale needed to support growing digital economies, satellite has an important role to play in extending coverage to the most remote communities. Together, these complementary technologies will help unlock the next phase of digital growth."

Marcus Weldon, Senior Technical Advisor to Helios Towers, said:

"The evidence is clear that no single technology can meet the scale and complexity of future connectivity demand on its own. As data traffic continues to grow, terrestrial and satellite networks each have distinct strengths, and the greatest opportunity lies in integrating them. Terrestrial infrastructure will remain the foundation for delivering affordable, high-capacity connectivity at scale, while satellite technologies will complement existing networks by extending coverage and improving resilience in remote and hard-to-reach areas. The future of connectivity will be defined by complementary technologies working together to deliver the best outcomes for customers and communities."

The analysis combines independent industry research with practical insight from Helios Towers' 16 years of experience owning and operating telecommunications infrastructure across Africa and the Middle East.

The white paper is available to download: <https://www.helios Towers.com/future-networks-white-paper>

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About Helios Towers

- Helios Towers is a leading independent mobile tower company connecting people and powering growth across Africa and the Middle East. We deliver world-class operations at nearly 15,000 mobile tower sites across nine countries in Africa and the Middle East - the fastest growing region globally for mobile services - providing mission critical infrastructure and power services to leading mobile network operators ("MNOs").
- Our pioneering approach enables colocation - the sharing of telecom tower sites - by hosting multiple MNOs on individual sites, creating benefits in the performance quality, the environmental impact, and the cost of rolling out and running mobile networks in our markets.
- Helios Towers' business excellence methodology focuses on delivering world-class performance for its customers - centred around the development and upskilling of its people. We foster a culture of learning and continuous improvement to deliver global standards in processes and innovation, which makes us the partner of choice for all the region's leading MNOs.
- As one of the largest and fastest-growing FTSE-listed companies focused on operating in Africa and the Middle East, Helios Towers' disciplined approach to capital allocation, long-term partnerships with leading MNOs and its operational capabilities deliver resilient performance that is reshaping digital connectivity in the region and catalysing investment that is essential to unlocking its human and economic potential.