

Company: Lumitel, Bujumbura, Burundi

Company Description: Lumitel is a mobile communications company, providing voice, messaging, data and communication services in Burundi. Founded in 2013, Lumitel launched its service in May 2015. It provides services to over 3 million users. Lumitel became the largest operator in Burundi within 1 month of operation. Lumitel began setting up a 4G LTE system in Burundi in 2016.

Nomination Category: Company / Organization Categories

Nomination Sub Category: Company of the Year - Telecommunications - Medium-size

Nomination Title: Viettel Burundi (Lumitel) Company

1. Which will you submit for your nomination in this category, a video of up to five (5) minutes in length about the achievements of the nominated organization since 1 January 2023, OR written answers to the questions for this category? (Choose one):

Written answers to the questions

2. If you are submitting a video of up to five (5) minutes in length, provide the URL of the nominated video here, OR attach it to your entry via the "Add Attachments, Videos, or Links to This Entry" link above, through which you may also upload a copy of your video.

Written answers to the questions

3. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this first question: Briefly describe the nominated organization: its history and past performance (up to 200 words):

Total 191 words used.

Telecom Internet Data Explosion in Burundi

- o In 2013, Burundi had one of the weakest telecom infrastructures in Africa. Only 35% of the population had access to electricity, and rural areas had no connectivity. In 2015, there were just **1 million mobile subscribers**, mostly using 2G, with no data services.
- o Since its launch in 2013, **Viettel Burundi (Lumitel)** has transformed the industry. By 2024, mobile coverage has reached **95%** of the population (~12 million), and internet coverage is at **50%** (~6.5 million). Around **65%** of the population (~8.5 million) now access mobile services, and **3 million 3G/4G users**.
- o Lumitel has held the **#1 market position** for over a decade, operating **586 sites BTS stations**, nearly **1.5 times more** than its nearest competitor. Its 3G network covers 50% and 4G covers 28% of the population.
- o 4G coverage has steadily grown from **17.8% in 2020 to 34% in mid-2025**, and is projected to reach **75% by year-end**. Data subscribers have grown from **901,000 in 2022 to 1.3 million in 2025**.

Lumitel's investment has triggered a data revolution, bridging the digital divide in one of Africa's most underserved nations

4. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this second question: Outline the organization's achievements since the beginning of 2023 that you wish to bring to the judges' attention (up to 250 words):

Total 250 words used.

From 2023 to present, Lumitel has maintained its leading position in Burundi's telecommunications sector, achieving breakthroughs in technology, business growth, and social impact—despite the country's challenging economic environment.

On technology, Lumitel made Burundi one of the first 21 African countries to launch 5G, reinforcing its role in national digital transformation. In 2024 alone, 4G coverage rose from 20% to 35% (+106 BTS), reaching 2 million new users. Notably, 75 stations were built in white zones, bringing 1.6 million rural people online for the first time. Internet speeds increased by 25%, reaching 5.6 Mbps—17% faster than the nearest competitor.

On business, Lumitel posted its strongest growth in 9 years, with 2024 revenue up 54% (vs. 25% in 2022, 38% in 2023). It contributed 6% of national GDP and ranked among Burundi's top 2 taxpayers. Total subscribers hit 4 million (~70% market share), with over 80% using mobile data and e-wallets 2.7 million subscribers (~90% market share) (~15% of increased revenue of Lumitel).

On digital innovation, Lumitel launched platforms like My Lumitel (300,000 users), 1Tbet (200,000), LumiSoko, expanding its digital ecosystem.

On social contribution, Lumitel invested US\$2 million in community initiatives:

- o Partnered with UNHCR to distribute 100,000 free SIMs/year;
- o Built water points and supported 2,000 vulnerable households with First Lady's office;
- o Co-implemented the PAFEN project (>US\$13M) with Government and World Bank;
- o Sponsored Muyinga HQ, co-hosted the ICT Festival, offered free internet to 261 schools/clinics, and supported sports and disaster relief efforts.
- o Sponsorships for sport, Community welfare

5. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this third question: Explain why the achievements you have highlighted are unique or significant. If possible compare the achievements to the performance of other players in your industry and/or to the organization's past performance (up to 250 words):

Total 249 words used.

Lumitel's achievements in the 2023-2024 period are groundbreaking in terms of technology, business and social responsibility, especially outstanding in the context of Burundi being a difficult market and many carriers have withdrawn or reduced investment:

1. Technology and coverage: While Smart stops operating from 2022, Econet stops investing from 2023, Lumitel is the only network operator still expanding strongly:

- o The first and only network operator to deploy 5G in Burundi.
- o Owns 592 BTS stations - 1.5 times more than the second network operator.
- o 3G coverage reaches 50% of the population (3.2x higher than competitors), 4G reaches 28% (6x higher than competitors).
- o Plan to increase 4G to 80% of population in next 3 years.

2. Outstanding business:

- o Mobile subscriber market share 70% (4 million customers), data 80% (1.2 million customers) - 2.3x and 4x higher than competitors respectively.
- o 2024 revenue increased by 54% - the highest in operating history.
- o Fastest 4G coverage growth since service launch.

3. Strategic CSR: Unlike its competitors' small-scale charity activities, Lumitel implements large-scale, long-term, multi-industry CSR (both deep and wide), in coordination with the Government & international organizations: Sponsor education, healthcare, clean water, sports, disaster relief.

The period 2024–2025 is the year with the highest social funding value in the past 10 years (2025 is 3 times higher than the average of the years 2022 before).

Contributing 6% of national GDP, creating jobs for more than 100,000 people, Lumitel proves to be a pillar company in socio-economic development of Burundi.

6. You have the option to answer this final question: Reference any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words):

Total 248 words used.

Highlighted reference links :

*Full links found in file attached

- Government recognition, including commendation from the President and the Ministry of Information and Communications:

- o <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-values-friendship-with-burundi-party-chief-post312893.vnp>
- o <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnamese-pm-meets-with-visiting-burundian-president-post312894.vnp>
- o <https://en.qndn.vn/economy/international-cooperation/lumitel-a-bright-spot-in-vietnam-burundi-collaboration-576700>
- o <https://www.mae.gov.bi/en/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/MAGAGAZINE-NR-40-Of-4-April-2025-VA.pdf>

- News on national media VietnamPlus, QDND and Burundi affirms Lumitel's leading position:

- o Minister ICT visit:
 - <https://vietnamnet.vn/en/vietnam-and-burundi-sign-mou-on-telecom-and-technology-development-2343678.html>
 - <https://x.com/MagazineJimbere/status/1862168753045193173>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/tvmashariki/posts/pfbid02ehXUZp9gimxmxZvTh7AxQfgD8gRHJUdng9HWQMwl3RJBM59flnW3U2oiUVzqjNvI>
 - https://x.com/mashariki_tv/status/1862135722595008913/photo/2
 - <https://x.com/MagazineJimbere/status/1870161209665667556/photo/1https://x.com/MagazineJimbere/status/1870160135391150153/photo/2>

- o Party Secretary visit:
 - <https://en.baoquocte.vn/party-secretary-le-hoai-trung-receives-burundi-ruling-party-official-to-expand-partnership-280602.htm>
 - <https://lecourrier.vn/renforcement-de-la-cooperation-entre-le-pcv-et-le-cnnd-fdd-du-burundi/1266305.html>

- Cooperation program reporting with UNHCR, World Bank and Office of the First Lady:

- o UNHCR, World Bank:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fii42w2GL8g&>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWWDnqxYM3rU>
- o President certificate:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/JimbereMagazine/posts/pfbid0vyeYwYEdsGbkh1RYTmZSmhp4H9qHoU5YC99P312ENmPN7e3Mejrd9BXK8RFUW4DI>
 - <https://x.com/MagazineJimbere/status/179152552713780048>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/tvmashariki/posts/pfbid0PFMFc67hRys1MzhHN19TxpCbPT7bRHC7Qt43sE2QtqPMcqXYeWRinUaR4Xkf8Jf>

- o Photos, social media and videos of project telecommunication expanding coverage 4G and launching 5G:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/lumitelburundi/posts/lumitel-f%C3%A9-ses-11-ans-au-service-de-la-communaut%C3%A9-burundaise-19-d%C3%A9cembre-201891823196452154>
 - https://x.com/lumitel_burundi/status/1869688344571150418

- o 4G new coverage sites:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/Akezanet/posts/pfbid02GP97j4x8A3LHUsaU11FP5im9KGe2HP3rKhsLWDch2FTKie66H4szoziT2QKUzQK>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/tvmashariki/posts/pfbid0s8WDSLUC8LQ2LBtUXQSWsUYv3rGlo4jkCPMPf9UrAwKnFkhKvSNCKgGBEY3mrU2I>

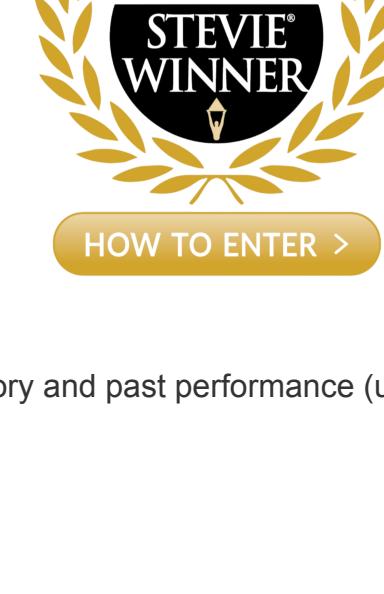
- o Benchmark data shows Lumitel's market dominance and investment compared to competitors:<https://arct.gov.bi/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/RAPPORT-DES-INDICATEURS-TIC-EDITION-2023-VALIDE-PAR-LE-CTIS-DU-28-EME-SESSION-20241.pdf>

- o Lumitel website: <https://www.lumitel.bi>

- o Vietnam ambassador charity activities:
 - <https://x.com/akezanet/status/1849802256838730054>
 - https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=96837041984729

- o National Women League:
 - https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=995336802784671&
 - https://www.instagram.com/p/DIWskoss_ST/

- o National Cup:
 - <https://x.com/makambaProvince/status/1807007447501983946/photo/3>



HOW TO ENTER >

Attachments/Videos/Links:

[Viettel Burundi \(Lumitel\) Company](#)

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