The African University of the future: foresight and experience in the use of ICTs

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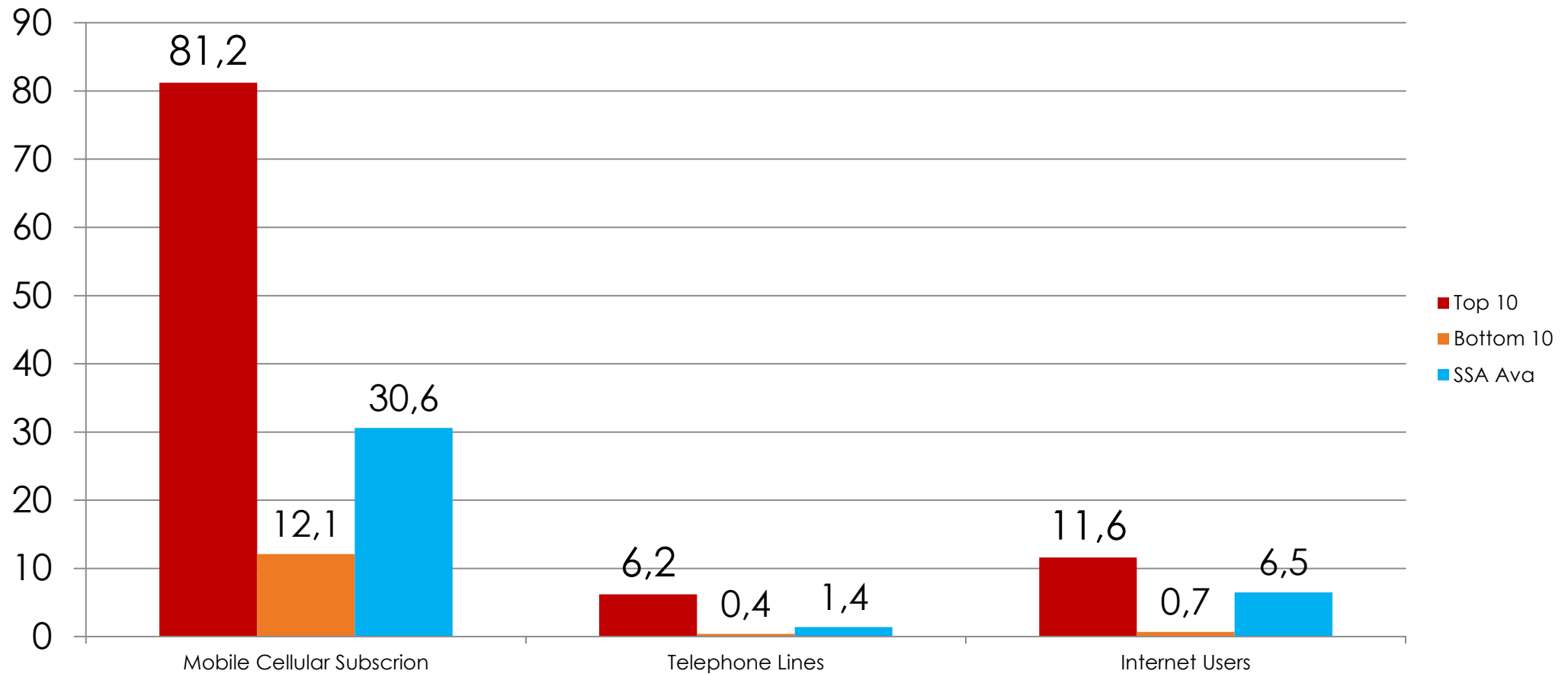
Challenges of the African university

- **Increasing access to higher education**
  - Participation rates range from as low as 4% in the poorest countries to 18% in South Africa.
- **Balancing the difficult equation of access and equity**
  - Access to quality education
  - Concern with epistemological access
- **Increasing cost of higher education amidst poverty and the underdevelopment of the state in some countries**
- **Lack of reliable bandwidth for the poor and the majority of students**

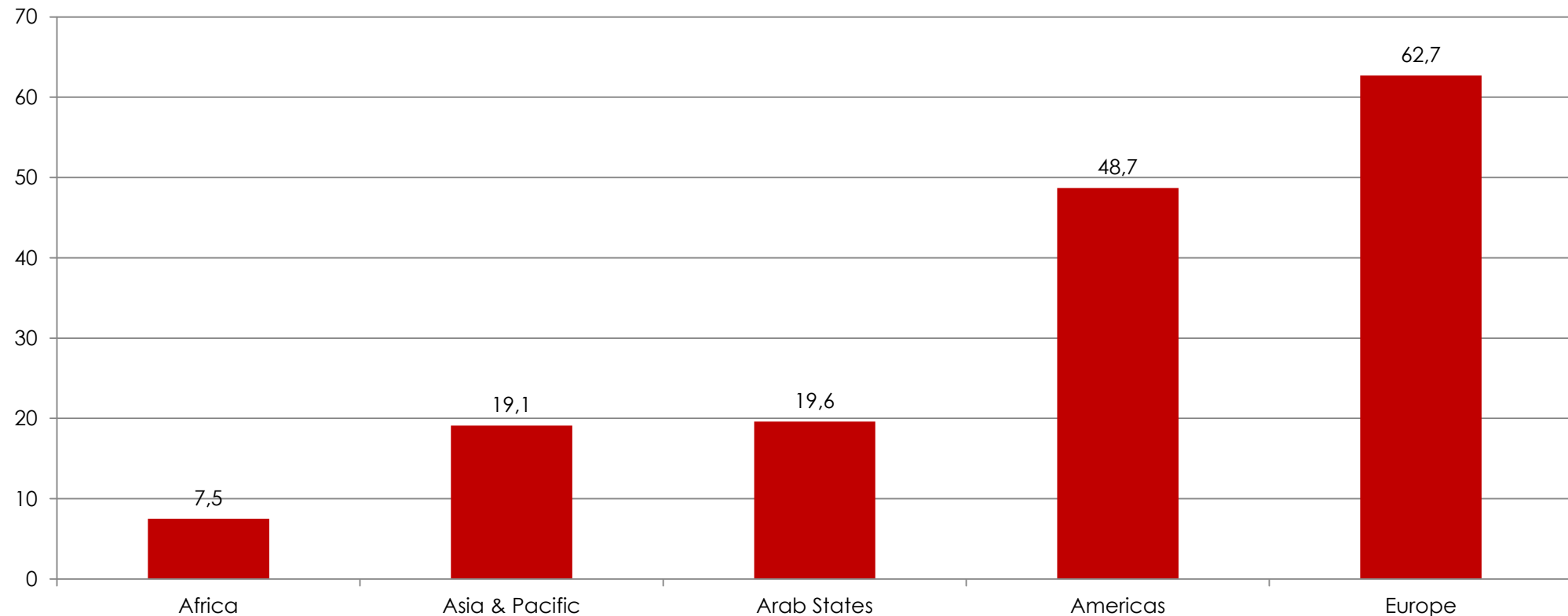# Wireless and Wire line Broadband Subscriptions per 100 Inhabitants, By Region, (Worlds Bank, June 2011)

Region	Wireless	Wire Line
East Asia and Pacific	16.6	10.5
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	14.5	9.2
European Union and Western Europe	45.9	27.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	12.2	7.1
Middle East and North Africa	13.1	2.5
North America	34.0	24.5
Sub Saharan Africa	2.9	0.3
South Asia	1.6	0.8

Average Penetration rates: Top 10 Countries in SSA versus Bottom 10 (2008 – World Bank)

Where we stand in relation to the rest of the world

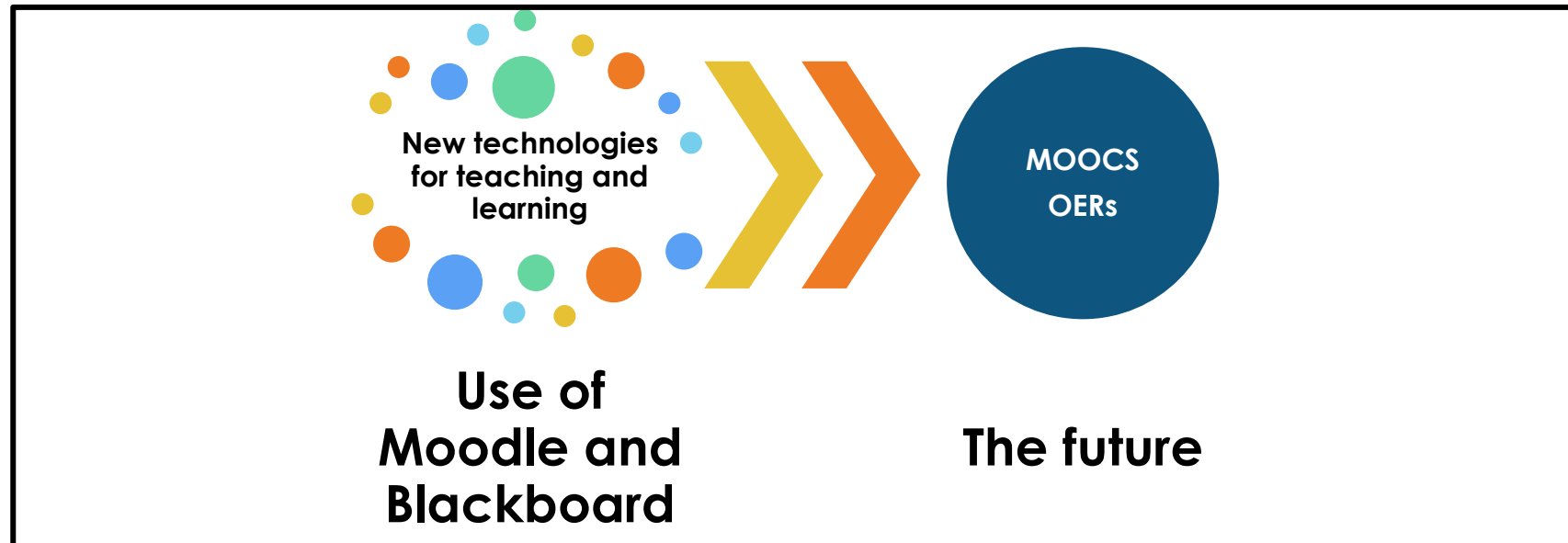Internet Users Per 100 Inhabitants (ITU 2010:202

Emerging new business model

- **Premise:**
  - The future of the African university and the African university of the future
- **The present:**
  - Focus on the contact university, print based materials, and the central role of the academic. Move toward a student centric model based on constructivism
- **The transition: blended mode of facilitation of learning and student learning**
  - The rise of the networked university and its challenges-learning spaces on campus
  - The emergence of NRENs on the African continent-emerging COPs
- **The transition:**
  - Move to an entrepreneurial academic program and its delivery 24/7
- **ICTs and increasing access to knowledge and focus of content delivery**

The African university of the future

▶ Use of ICTs in teaching and learning examples from South Africa

New technologies for teaching and learning

MOOCS OERs

Use of Moodle and Blackboard

The future

From the UoT to the ODeL university

Blended learning

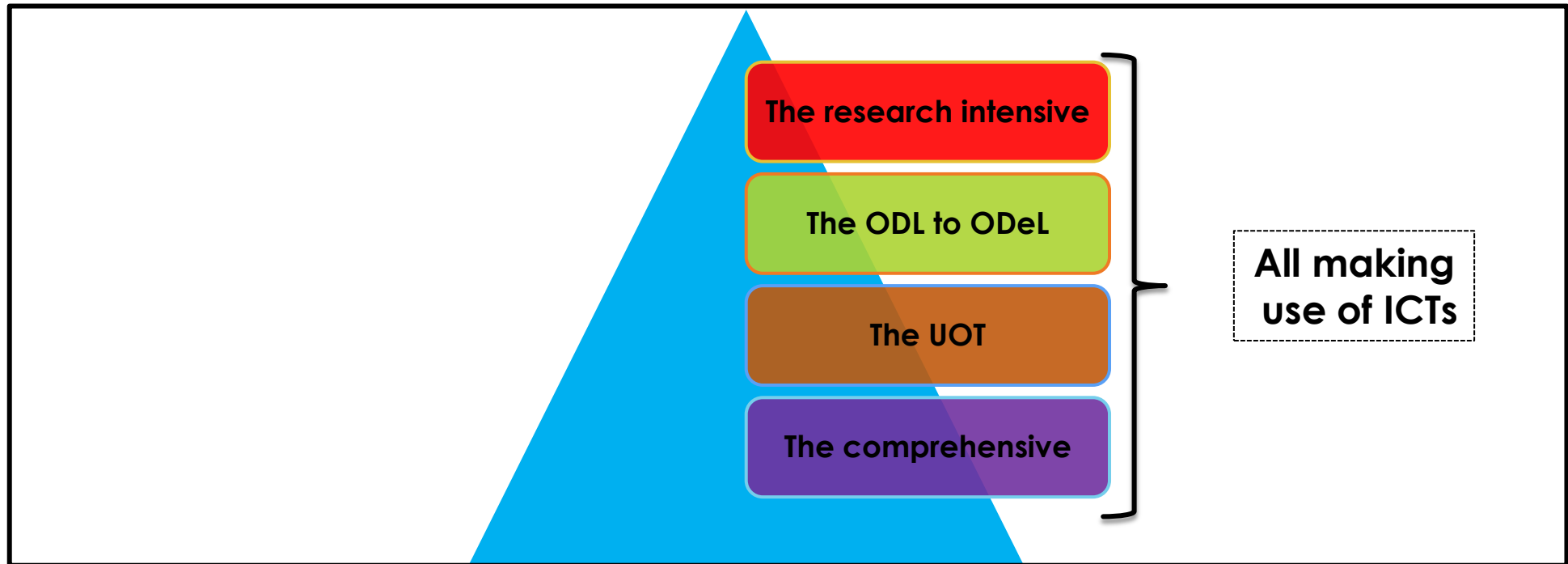- Most universities now have both print and electronic learning

ODeL

- The rose of the open and distance learning university and its challenges

The future

- The rise of MOOCs and OERs
- Changing role of LMS and the use of digital technologies

The South African higher education space

The research intensive

The ODL to ODeL

The UOT

The comprehensive

All making use of ICTs

Conclusion: the challenges

- **Which model to adopt and how to manage issues of cost-efficiency and quality of higher education and training in Africa**
  - Transition to an open mass university to satisfy the social justice mandate
- **The niche versus the elite university (Barber, 2013)**
  - Continuing challenge of differentiation and the research university
- **The comprehensive university**
  - The most prevalent model on the continent and for the best model
  - Allows use of ICTs to augment the contact universities with its limited resources.
- **Capacity**
  - Staff and institutional capacity remains a challenge especially bandwidth