



BDT MEMBER COMMUNIQUÉ

ITU's Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) study groups kick off work for the 2026-2029 study period, focused on advancing universal meaningful connectivity for bridging the digital divide and digital transformation

Geneva, Switzerland, 27 April 2026

The first meetings of ITU's Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) Study Groups 1 and 2 for the 2026-2029 study period convened in Geneva, Switzerland, at ITU Headquarters. Study Group 1 met from 13 to 17 April, followed by Study Group 2 from 20 to 24 April.

These meetings marked the beginning of the work by ITU-D members to address 10 study Questions focused on universal meaningful connectivity for bridging the digital divide, and digital transformation. The scope of the new study Questions approved at the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2025 (WTDC-25) comprises continuing and new topics including new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs, applications of artificial intelligence (AI) in delivering universal meaningful connectivity, the availability and affordability of user devices, and the utilization of new and emerging telecommunication/ICT technologies.

"As we begin a new study period, I am pleased to say that the innovative and forward-looking mandates of the ITU-D Study Groups reflect today's pressing issues," said Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director of the ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT). "The work of the ITU-D Study Groups is fully aligned with our new Regional Initiatives and with our ITU-D priorities to drive universal meaningful connectivity for bridging the digital divide and digital transformation."

As part of their mandates, the study groups explore their respective study areas, with Study Group 1 focusing on "universal meaningful connectivity for bridging the digital divide," while Study Group 2 addresses "digital transformation."

"It is my vision that study groups remain extremely relevant in identifying key issues and building a knowledge base that is useful and updated to members, allowing us to run the extra mile in the direction of our fundamental goal, a goal that we all share, which is closing the digital divide and not leaving anyone behind," emphasized Mr. Roberto Hirayama, Chair of ITU-D Study Group 1.

“We need to draw a clear and effective plan for digital transformation under one important headline, which is digital transformation for humanity and for all mankind,” noted Dr Fadel Digham, Chair of ITU-D Study Group 2.

ITU-D study groups serve as platforms for ITU-D members to share knowledge, experiences, and innovative ideas on how information and communication technologies can support digital development across the world.

Study groups produce key deliverables such as reports and guidelines to assist countries, industries, and organizations in formulating and implementing effective telecommunication and ICT policies, strategies, projects, and initiatives.

Key outcomes of the meetings:

- Appointment of rapporteurs, co-rapporteurs, and vice-rapporteurs for the study Questions of ITU-D Study Groups 1 and 2.
- Assignment of coordination responsibilities to address cross-cutting issues in alignment with WTDC Resolutions.
- Development of preliminary work plans and draft tables of contents to guide the work of rapporteur groups during the study period.

A commitment to inclusivity

The meetings reflected ITU’s ongoing dedication to gender balance, with female participants making up 43 per cent of Study Group 1 and 40 per cent of Study Group 2 attendees, underscoring efforts to promote gender parity in the ICT sector.

Participation and resources

Participation in ITU-D study groups is open to all ITU-D members, fostering an inclusive environment for diverse perspectives and contributions. Archives from the meetings are accessible via the following links:

- [Study Group 1 Meeting](#)
- [Study Group 2 Meeting](#)



[ITU Interviews: Roberto Hirayama, Chair, ITU-D Study Group 1](#)



[ITU Interviews: Dr. Fadel Digham, Chair, ITU-D Study Group 2](#)

For additional resources and background information, visit the [ITU-D Study Groups website](#).

For inquiries, please contact:

ITU-D Study Groups Secretariat

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About the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations agency for digital technologies, driving innovation for people and the planet with 194 Member States and a membership of over 1,000 companies, universities, civil society, and international and regional organizations. Established in 1865, ITU coordinates the global use of the radio spectrum and satellite orbits, establishes international technology standards, drives universal connectivity and digital services, and is helping to make sure everyone benefits from sustainable digital transformation, including the most remote communities. From artificial intelligence (AI) to quantum, from satellites and submarine cables to advanced mobile and wireless broadband networks, ITU is committed to connecting the world and beyond.

For more information, visit: www.itu.int