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| **Regional Preparatory Meeting  for WTDC-17 for Arab Region (RPM-ARAB)** | P:\SUP\Logos\Post-150th Anniv\ITU-logo-UNblue.jpg | |
| **Khartoum, Sudan, 30 January - 1 February 2017** | | |
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| **Republic of the Sudan** | | |
| REGIONAL INITIATIVES FOR THE ARAB REGION | | |

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| **Priority area:**  Priority setting for Regional Initiatives, related projects and financing mechanisms  **Summary:**  This document contains a proposal on Regional Initiatives for the Arab Region for a period of 2018-2021.  **Expected results:**  The document is submitted to RPM-Arab for consideration.  **References:**  N/A |

**1) Development of broadband access and services**

**Objective:** To assist Member States in the region accelerates the development of broadband infrastructure and access including implementation of services and applications in urban and rural areas for the objective of achieving sustainable development goals.

**Expected Results:**

1. Improving broadband network infrastructure, including the deployment and connection of optical fibre cables, for the provision of good-quality and affordable telecommunication/ICT services in urban and rural areas
2. Development of human resources, through training programmes and workshops to exchange expertise, in order to address regulatory, technical and economic issues related to broadband communication networks
3. Assist memberstates to develop national broadband policies and strategies,
4. Improved broadband infrastructure and access to affordable ICT services in urban and rural aremas
5. Studies and assistance on effective utilization and optimization of optical fibre cable networks, especially submarine cable networks
6. Development of mechanisms and tools to facilitate the use of ICTs by persons with disabilities and persons with special needs.
7. Facilitate access by all countries, in particular landlocked countries, to underwater cables under fair conditions
8. Promote the creation of national and regional Internet exchange (IXP) points.
9. Promote the development of local content and access adapted to local conditions
10. Encourage the transition from IPv4 to IPv6.Increased local expertise through cooperation between countries, access to training resources, including training manuals, for all stakeholders in the Arab telecommunication/ICT sector

**2) Financial Inclusion**

**Objective:** To provide financial services to reach un-served population of the countries in Arab Region. In addition, it strives towards a more inclusive growth by providing valuable financial solutions that are affordable for the consumer and sustainable/profitable for the provider and available to the poor in particular.

**Expected result:**

1. Provide assessing for the existing state of financial inclusion. Depending on national and regional specific needs
2. Provide the necessary support and solution to make the financial inclusion become a powerful tool to overcome the problem of financial exclusion
3. Development of appropriate policy, regulatory and legislative framework on financial inclusion at national and regional level
4. Provide the necessary consideration in the differen dimension areas of financial inclusion which are access, usage and quality
5. To identify linkages amongthe main issues: financial inclusion, financial stability, financial integrity and financial consumer protection

**3) Regionally Harmonized Strategies and Policies Concerning EMF Exposure**

**Objective:**To create a harmonized strategies and policies for the EMF exposure that to be customized for the Arabic region countries , taking into account the present deployed technical specification and characteristics of the networks in addition to the relatively high temperature degrees that may contribute more energy to the radiated EMF.

**Expected Results:**

1. Establishing minimum level of harmonized strategies and policies on a regional base
2. Updated regulations and directives concerning EMF radiations
3. Review and agreed upon minimum permissible level for the radiated EMF
4. Shared knowledge and database
5. Raise awareness among Arab region

**4) Emergency Telecommunications**

**Objective:** To provide assistance to Arab MemberStates at all phases of disaster management, i.e. preparedness, mitigation and relief before, during and after all emergency situations and disasters.

**Expected Results:**

1. Identification of suitable technologies to be used for emergency communications, and identify the minimum redundancy for the networks to be survived during the crises
2. Improving information sharing mechanism in emergency communications and enhance collaboration to maximize resources,which resulting in specific coordinated actions in border areas
3. Develop National and Regional emergency communication plans and early-warning systems, taking into account analysis to determine challenges and required solutions
4. Development of appropriate policy, regulatory and legislative frameworks on emergency communications at national and regional level
5. Increas human capacity skills on emergency communications
6. Temporary availability of emergency communication equipment in the Arab region, at the initial stage of a disaster intervention, as part of ITU cooperation in cases of emergency

**5) Connecting people with disabilities**

**Objective:** To ensure the right of access to telecommunications/ICTs for persons with disabilities in the Arab region.

**Expected Results:**

Assistance to the countries in the following:

1. Formulation and updating of national and regional regulatory policies and frameworks to ensure access for persons with disabilities of all kinds to telecommunications/ICTs, facilitating their involvement in the community and enabling them to enjoy their full rights
2. Development of ICT applications and software that enable persons with disabilities to access information, references and other resources for education and leisure, and provision of specialized national and regional applications for libraries, databases and other purposes via the Internet and other telecommunication/ICT media
3. Participation of persons with disabilities in Arab workshops, training courses and conferences, by providing all the requirements and facilities and removing all the obstacles
4. Train persons with disabilities to give them telecommunication/ICT user skills, and training for trainers in the use of these methodologies

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