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| **Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG)**  **24th Meeting, Geneva, 3-5 April 2019** | C:\Users\comas\AppData\Local\Temp\Rar$DRa0.735\jpg\ITU official logo_blue_RGB.jpg |
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| ITU-D DIGITAL INCLUSION PROGRAMME | |
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| **Summary:**  This report provides an overview of the main activities of the ITU-D Digital Inclusion as one of the outputs and goals adopted at the World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2017 (WTDC-17), and the Plenipotentiary Conference in 2018 (PP-18), respectively.  Following a results-based management and actions, the report presents an overview of ITU-D Digital Inclusion objectives and strategies, the key actions that have already been implemented or planned to be, and ways forward to implement the ITU-D Digital Inclusion.  **Action required:**  TDAG is invited to note this document and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.  **References:**  N/a | |

# Background

Despite the increasing deployment of telecommunication/ICT networks, equipment, services and applications, many people remain excluded from the information society. Therefore, ITU works to bridge the digital divide for an inclusive information society.

ITU is people-centered and committed to ensuring that everyone without exception benefits from telecommunications/ICTs. Inclusiveness is ITU’s strategic goal Nr.2, and its target 2.9 explicitly calls for enabling accessible environments for all people, including for persons with disabilities in ALL countries by 2023. In line with ITU’s vision and mandate, ITU membership has recognized Digital Inclusion as one of the main priorities to consider at both WTDC-17 and PP-18.

Digital Inclusion is reflected as Output 4.3 in the Buenos Aires Action Plan and directly contributes to WSIS actions lines C1, C2, C3, C4, C6, C7, C8 and C9, with the aim to accelerate the implementation of SDGs, and to associated targets: 4 (target 4.3, 4.4, 4.5); 5 (targets 5.5, 5b); 8 targets 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8b); 10 (target 10.2) and 17 (target 17.7).

# Objectives and Strategies

In accordance with WTDC-17, the main objectives of ITU-D Digital Inclusion Programme are to support ITU Members in their implementation process including through the development of resources and tools, awareness raising in developing and implementing the digital inclusion strategies, policies and practices and strengthening capacity in digital inclusion topics through capacity building trainings.

Digital Inclusion activities have been designed to promote ICT accessibility and ensure it contributes to the social and economic development, especially for people with specific needs, including persons with disabilities (PwD) and elderly, women and girls, youth and children, Indigenous Peoples and people living in rural areas.

Considering that ITU Members expressed the need for set priorities, as well as acknowledging the global efforts in building inclusive digital societies, the Digital Inclusion Programme implementation strategy takes a holistic approach, while recognizing that activities aimed at one group also positively impact the other groups. At the same time, the implementation of activities specifically responds to each of the target groups of persons with specific needs.

# Key Actions and Results

In 2018, BDT conducted several key actions to foster the Digital Inclusion globally by developing and implementing a variety of activities including: development of key resources and providing capacity building in ICT accessibility, devising guidelines for national digital skills development strategies, promotion of digital skills for decent jobs for youth, as well as awareness activities to encourage hundreds of thousands of girls and young women to pursue ICT studies and careers.

# Development of Digital Inclusion key resources:

**3.1.1** A set of three (3) free [self-paced online certificate training courses entitled “ICT Accessibility: the key to inclusive communication”](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Persons-with-Disabilities/Pages/Self-Paced-Online-Training-on-ICT-Accessibility.aspx) was developed in response to the outcomes of WTDC-17, and the ITU Regional Initiative for Europe, aiming to provide a general understanding of ICT accessibility policies, regulations, technology trends, and public procurement rules. These consist of three modules as follows: ***Module 1: Enabling communication for all though ICT accessibility; Module 2: ICT accessibility policy regulations and public procurement standards; Module 3: Achieving ICT accessibility through public procurement.***

**3.1.2** Fifteen (15) [video tutorials on how to develop and remediate accessible digital documents](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Persons-with-Disabilities/Pages/Video-Tutorials-on-Accessible-Digital-Content.aspx) (e.g., Word, Pdf, Excel, PP, etc.) were developed in Spanish, English, and French.

**3.1.3** Educational [ITU-D Programme in web accessibility “Internet for @ll”](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Persons-with-Disabilities/Pages/Internet-for-@ll.aspx), available in English French Spanish and Arabic (based on related regional initiatives). The Programme responds to the ITU Member States’ priority to **make public websites accessible for ALL**, by providing the necessary know-how to ensure that all citizens, including persons with disabilities and elderly users, can access online information and communication.

**3.1.4** BDT shared innovative strategies with all ITU Members on how to build their national digital skills development strategies by publishing the **ITU Digital Skills Toolkit** on the ITU Publications website at <https://www.itu.int/pub/D-PHCB> and BDT website at <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Pages/Reports.aspx>.The Digital Skills Toolkit is available in the six ITU official languages along with e-pub and Kindle versions.

**3.1.5** BDT raised visibility for and shared its key resources in the G20 Repository of Digital Policies.

# Digital Inclusion support to Global Initiatives and awareness raising

**3.2.1** The global development of **Digital Skills strategies along with the joint ITU-ILO Digital Skills for Jobs Campaign of the Global initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth** to incentivise stakeholders to train 5 million young women and men in job-ready digital skills was shared with 1,250 ITU members and other stakeholders through over 20 regional, global and ITU meetings including: WSIS High Level Dialogue on Digital Skills; Mobile Learning Week, Paris, France; Digital Skills for Everyone: Accelerating Europe’s Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth, Belgium; Enabling Digital Entrepreneurship through Better Connectivity and Skills, E-Commerce Week, Geneva, Switzerland; Digital Skills for African Youth, Tunisia; the 21st session of the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development(CSTD), Geneva, Switzerland; the Commonwealth ICT Forum 2018, Spain; Women4Mediterranean, Portugal; the Arab Round Table on Youth and Citizenship, Tunisia; the [Subregional workshop on Digital skills development in the Pacific [ITU-PITA]](http://itu.int/go/digitalskillspacific2018), Fiji; and the Network for Public Service Innovations through South-South Network of the Global South-South Development Expo, UN Headquarters, New York, United States.

**3.2.2** Digital Inclusion is leading the **Global Campaign of the International Girls in ICT Day**. [A Portal](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Women-and-Girls/Girls-in-ICT-Portal/Pages/Portal.aspx) that collects all events was developed, and assistance to event organizers provided when needed. As a result, 171 countries organized the International Girls in ICT Day events in 2018, encouraging 57,748 girls participating in 2,186 events to take up ICT careers and studies. New countries that joined the campaign in 2018 include Mongolia, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, and Uzbekistan. Some ITU Sector Members organized the events - Cisco organized events for 4,349 girls and Microsoft for 3,600. ITU Member States, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Senegal, Colombia, Guatemala, and Chile attracted the largest numbers of girls (listed in order of the scope of the campaign).

BDT in headquarters and Regional Offices also organised related events and participated in related in-country Girls in ICT Day events or those held in a respective region such as the Brasilia Regional Office in partnership with UN Women, who organized a digital inclusion event for 80 girls attending public schools in Brasilia, Brazil; an awareness-raising event for students at the Webster University in Geneva, Switzerland, in support of International Girls in ICT Day ; providing training for 25 girls in digital marketing and social media best practices during the workshop organized under the “Girls in ICT Day” by the Regional Office in Cairo and GIZ Egypt. ITU also acknowledged around 50 events in Asia-Pacific carried out on Girls in ICT Day in partnership with MDES (Thailand), FAO, UNESCO, and CISCO.

**3.2.3** A total of 360,500 Girls in ICT Day Portal views was recorded, with 185,859 reached by the Girls in ICT Day Facebook posts. #GirlsinICT reached over 93 million accounts for an estimated exposure of 379 million timeline deliveries.

# Digital Skills trainings provided for Digital Inclusion of persons with specific needs

**3.3.1** In collaboration with the Americas region and Fondo Indigena, the online training course on “Indigenous Radio/Networks - Communication Innovative Tools for the strengthening of Indigenous Communities of the Americas Region” developed in 2016 was revised to update the topic and include the recent technologies. The training course received over 600 registrations (instead of a maximum 100). ITU accommodated 300 Indigenous people in 2018 and remaining 300 will be trainined in 2019. See more at (<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Indigenous-Peoples/Pages/default-bis.aspx>).

**3.3.2** A second curriculum for a blended training programme for Indigenous people in the Americas region (online and hands-on/face-to-face training) was developed to build the capacity of Indigenous technicians to ensure the self-sustainability of indigenous community-related networks. The course will be delivered in 2019.

# Assistance provided and capacity building to ITU membership in ICT Accessibility

**3.4.1** In collaboration with the Regional Office for the Arab States, assistance to formulate the national ICT Accessibility Policy of Sudan was provided.

**3.4.2** Capacity in ICT Accessibility was provided to all participants to the meeting of the Rapporteur Group of Q7/1 on 28 September.

**3.4.3** In support to the Arab States Regional Initiative, a course “Train the trainers” was developed and customized for the Arab Region on “Accessible Digital Content and Remediation for the stakeholders delivering digital financial services”. The training was delivered to over 40 persons on 16-18 October 2018 in Cairo, Egypt.

**3.4.4** In support to the development of regional experts in ICT accessibility in the Americas region, an executive training session certificate based on “Fundamentals of ICT accessibility” was provided by the BDT Focal Point during “The *5th Accessible Americas-ICT for ALL*” regional event held in Jamaica in November. Ninety (90) trainees successfully achieved the knowledge and obtained ITU certifications.

**3.4.5** Capacity was built and awareness was raised among over 1,500 ITU Members and stakeholders in ICT Accessibility, as a key to inclusive communication, though thematic, regional and global events and meetings during the seminar “Basics on ageism” organized by UN in cooperation with WHO and ILO; the UN-CRPD (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), Geneva, Switzerland; the ITU Forum on ICT Accessibility organized within the Zero Project Conference, Austria; a WSIS workshop on “Practical applications of ICTs supporting digital inclusion and access to information, services and livelihood for PwDs”; the 2018 M-Enabling Summit, during an interactive session on “Global Accessibility Policy Up-date”, United States; the Global Summit on Disability, UK; Accessible Americas V: ICTs for ALL” in Jamaica; the 1st Accessible Europe – ICT for ALL in Austria; as well as among key stakeholders in Sudan as part of the assistance to formulate the national ICT Accessibility Policy of Sudan.

**3.4.6** Almost 200 digital inclusion programmes and practices were shared on the Digital Inclusion Newslog during 2018, with 6,585 views of the newslog posts. Awareness was raised and the good practices shared among ITU members through the weekly publication of innovative digital inclusion practices and strategies on the ITU-D Digital Inclusion newslog at: <http://digitalinclusionnewslog.itu.int/>.

# Way Forward

Considering the rapid evolution of the telecommunication/ICT services for persons with specific needs, the Digital Inclusion Programme aims to ensure strategic implementation through:

# Strengthening Digital Inclusion activities aiming at increasing the number of Member States advised and/or supported in their implementation process of Digital Inclusion strategies and policies in their countries by:

* Developing additional key resources in Digital Inclusion to be used by ITU membership;
* Providing training courses to ensure the strengthening of Digital Skills for social and economic empowerment of persons with specific needs (for Indigenous People also considering the self-sustainability aspect);
* Raising awareness on the Digital Inclusion strategies and devising appropriate tools to ensure that women and girls are not only encouraged to take on studies and careers in ICT but also develop the skills, increase confidence, and receive the support they need to succeed in their ICT studies and careers;
* Identify strategic partnership to ensure that appropriate digital skills are promoted and provided to young people to contribute to reducing global unemployment;
* Building capacity in ICT accessibility policies, practices and services to ensure that PwD benefit from telecommunication/ICT products and services.

# Adjust Digital Inclusion activities to ensure that these respond to the evolving needs and priorities of ITU Members in this area:

* Develop activities and resources in line with the advancement of the ITU Members’ work within ITU-D Study Group 1, Question 7, “Access to telecommunication/ICT services by persons with disabilities and other persons with specific needs”;
* Develop resources in line with the results of the annual ITU’s regional and global events (e.g. Accessible Europe; Accessible Americas –ICT for ALL, WSIS, Girls in ICTs Day celebrations, etc.).

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