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| **Telecommunication DevelopmentAdvisory 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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|  | **Document** **TDAG-19/****44-E** |
|  | **9 May 2019** |
|  | **English only** |
| Chairman, Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) |
| DRAFT REPORT OF THE 24TH TDAG MEETING |

**Introduction**

The 24th meeting of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) was held at ITU headquarters in Geneva, from 3 to 5 April 2019, under the chairmanship of Ms Roxanne McElvane Webber. It attracted 111 participants representing 56 Member States, 22 ITU-D Sector Members, 2 Academia and 1 Associate. Participants considered 41 contributions, of which 5 were submitted by membership.

Among other things, TDAG-19:

* Endorsed the ITU-D four-year rolling Operational Plan 2020-2023.
* Appointed Ms Amparo Arango Echeverri (**Dominican Republic**) as a Vice-Chairman of TDAG, replacing Ms Katrina Naut.
* Appointed Ms Aichurok Maralbek Kyzy (**Kyrgyz Republic**) as a Vice‑Chairman of TDAG, replacing Ms Nurzat Boljobekova.
* Appointed Mr Al-ansari Almashakbeh (**Jordan**) to be a TDAG representative to the ISCG, replacing Ms Nurzat Boljobekova.
* Appointed Ms Anastasia Sergeyevna Konukhova (**Russian Federation**) as a Vice-Chairman of Study Group 1, replacing one Vice-Chairman, who stepped down.
* Appointed Mr Abdelaziz Alzarooni (**United Arab Emirates**) to be Vice-Chairman of Study Group 2, replacing one Vice-Chairman, who stepped down.

During TDAG, breakout sessions on four process and governance topics and four programme topics, and informal sessions on regional initiatives of the six ITU-D regions were organized to foster fruitful discussions and an exchange of views. A brief summary of each breakout session is described under each corresponding agenda item. Full summaries of discussions of the breakout sessions are provided in **Annex 2**. A debriefing on informal sessions on regional initiatives can be found in document [TDAG-19/DT/11](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-190403-TD-0011/en).

**Opening**

The Chairman of TDAG, Ms Roxanne McElvane Webber (**United States**), opened the 24th meeting on 3 April 2019, welcoming the participants and elected officials. With her on the podium were Mr Houlin Zhao, ITU Secretary-General; Mr Malcolm Johnson, ITU Deputy Secretary-General; Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT); Mr Chaesub Lee, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau; and Mr Yushi Torigoe, Deputy to the Director of BDT and Secretary of the meeting. Ms Webber introduced the TDAG Vice Chairmen by study group and region: Ms Regina Fleur Assoumou Bessou (**Study Group 1**), Mr Ahmad Reza Sharafat (**Study Group 2**), Mr Christopher Kemei (**Kenya**), Mr Abdulkarim Oloyede (**Nigeria**), Mr Al-ansari Almashakbeh (**Jordan**), Mr Arseny Plossky (**Russian Federation**), Mr Wim Rullens (**Netherlands**), and Ms Blanca Gonzalez (**Spain**)..[[1]](#footnote-2)

1. **Address by the Secretary-General**

Mr Houlin Zhao, ITU Secretary-General opened the 24th meeting of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group and called on participants to observe a minute of silence: “ITU suffered a big loss in last month’s Airline crash. Today, we remember our dear colleagues from the Development Bureau, who worked in our Africa Regional Office, and who perished in this tragedy. Marcelino Tayob and Maygenet Abebe exemplified the best of ITU.”

As this was the first TDAG meeting since the Plenipotentiary Conference in October-November 2018 (PP‑18), in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the Secretary-General congratulated Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin on her election as Director of BDT.

Highlighting the main conclusions of PP-18, including a new Strategic Plan for ITU for 2020-2023, with bold and ambitious targets, and a reinforced role of ITU in areas ranging from deploying future networks in developing countries to strengthening ITU regional presence to building security and confidence in the use of ICTs, the Secretary-General also noted the new areas of work for ITU, approved in Dubai, including bridging the financial inclusion gap, fostering innovation to support the digital economy and society, and encouraging the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises in the activities of the Union.

The Secretary-General urged TDAG to increase efforts to encourage investments in ICT development. “What you do here during the course of this meeting will help us continue to leverage technology to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and deliver on the promise of the digital economy.” He then highlighted some of the upcoming events and invited TDAG participants to attend: WSIS Forum 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland (8 to 12 April 2019); AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva, Switzerland (28 to 31 May 2019); the 19th edition of the Global Symposium for Regulators in Port Vila, Vanuatu (9 to 12 July 2019); ITU Telecom World 2019 in Budapest, Hungary (9 to 12 September 2019); and the World Radiocommunication Conference 2019 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt (28 October to 22 November 2019).

## The Secretary-General also highlighted a recent meeting he had held with ICT ministers from the Africa region to discuss how to help Africa boost development efforts, how to attract and encourage further investment in the continent, and how to work together to facilitate new opportunities of partnership in Africa’s best interests.

1. **Address by the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)**

Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of BDT, joined the Secretary-General in paying tribute to Marcelino and Maygenet. Recognizing the dedication and outstanding work they carried out the Director announced an ITU Solidarity Fund to continue to support the bereaved families. In addition, and in memory of their outstanding work for ITU, a number of fellowships are being considered in the name of Marcelino, and a sponsored Girls in ICT Prize in the name of Maygenet that will honour aspects of their work for which they were passionate. “We hope that this might serve as a way for their names to live on and continue to inspire us all, as they always did when they were with us,” Ms Bogdan-Martin said.

Welcoming participants to her first TDAG meeting as Director of BDT, Ms Bogdan-Martin said: “I am delighted to see the faces of so many long-standing and valued colleagues, and also to welcome those delegates who are new to the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group.” She thanked the TDAG bureau for having participated in the 2019 BDT Management Retreat, which assessed working methods and identified clear and concrete actions for reform.

The Director outlined her strategic priorities, which include improved efficiency, achieving regional relevance, a greater focus on partnerships, more effective capacity building and data-driven thought leadership based on strengthening statistic-gathering and analysis capabilities. Our goal, she said, is to succeed in implementing the outcomes of WTDC-17 and connect the remaining 50 per cent of the world population through the work of a BDT that is fit for purpose.

As she put it: “Connecting the remaining half of the world’s population is a new type of challenge. These people and communities have different needs, and face different barriers − some of which are considerable. We need to work differently, to be much more innovative and creative in our approach to policy-making and ICT regulation, and to be more proactive in our efforts to identify new types of hybrid partnership models that can bring connectivity to where it is most needed.”

The Director underlined the need to reinforce collaboration with membership and within BDT to build on internal strengths, and where needed, to reform and streamline BDT priorities and processes. This means leveraging the skills of BDT staff and encouraging team work to be able to connect with and support the Member States.

The Director also emphasized the importance of creating inter-Sectoral synergies and leveraging ITU-wide skills and expertise. She also announced future actions and initiatives that will engage young people including creating a new youth development advisory group, and working towards more youth engagement in WTDC-21. Innovations to the workings of the TDAG were also announced, and the Director underlined the unique opportunity TDAG offered for discussion and strategic advice.

1. **Opening remarks by the Chairman of TDAG**

The TDAG Chairman extended a warm welcome to the former Chairman and stated that TDAG will build on the tremendous work already achieved. She noted that the Secretary-General and the new BDT Director are committed to connecting the unconnected and to taking actions that will make a difference. This, she stated, is the essence of the Development Sector, keeping mindful of those that are continuing to grow, emerge and thrive. She added that this simple and impactful message is important and can guide activities. In her words: “It is something very concrete through which we can measure whether we are achieving our goals.”

The TDAG Chairman highlighted that by supporting the work ITU elected officials are doing, the world will be changed in a way that cannot be achieved in isolation, nor as individual countries, companies, or academia. ITU-D is able to impact the world in so many ways: in youth, health and social economic development.

The TDAG Chairman was confident that the new leadership will continue to refine, improve and innovate “… we must always be prepared for endless transformation.”

1. **Adoption of the agenda and Time Management Plan**

**Documents** [**1**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0001/) and **DT/1** were considered together.

All meeting documents cited in this report were introduced on behalf of the BDT Director, unless stated otherwise.

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| The agenda was adopted without modification.The Time Management Plan was adopted following modification. |

**4.1 Appointment of two new TDAG Vice-Chairmen to vacant positions**

[**Document 7**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0007/): “Appointment of two Vice-Chairmen of TDAG” contains letters from the administrations of the Dominican Republic and Kyrgyz Republic submitting their candidates for these positions.

TDAG expressed gratitude to two of its vice-chairmen, from the Americas region and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region, respectively, who had served admirably for the first year of the 2018-2021 period.

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| TDAG appointed by acclamation **Ms Amparo Arango Echeverri**, Manager of International Relations of the Dominican Institute of Telecommunications (INDOTEL), as a TDAG Vice‑Chairman, replacing Ms Katrina Naut.TDAG also appointed by acclamation **Ms Aichurok Maralbek Kyzy**, Chief Expert of the Radio Spectrum Management Department of the State Communications Agency in the State Committee of Information Technologies and Communications of the Kyrgyz Republic, as a TDAG Vice‑Chairman, replacing Ms Nurzat Boljobekova. |

1. **Outcomes of the Plenipotentiary Conference in 2018 (PP-18) related to the work of ITU-D**

[**Document 4**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0004/): “Outcomes of the 20th ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in 2018 with implications for the work of ITU-D” summarizes new and revised resolutions, decisions and recommendations providing guidance to the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector on harnessing new technologies for the benefit of humanity.

These outcomes are contained in the Final Acts signed by Member States at the end of PP-18, reaffirming their commitment to the common vision of a connected world, where information and communication technologies are a source for good for everyone, everywhere. Of particular note are:

* Resolution 71 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) on the strategic plan for the Union for 2020-2023. This plan contains the vision, mission, values, and five strategic goals for the Union; a set of common targets; the ITU results framework, including the four ITU-D objectives adopted by World Telecommunication Development Conference 2017 (WTDC-17); linkages with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and linkages with the financial plan, including allocation of resources to goals, objectives and outputs.
* Decision 5 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) on revenue and expenses for the Union for the period 2020-2023, which includes the financial plan of the Union for 2020-2023. TDAG underlined the need to balance the budget for those years.
* Resolution 25 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) on strengthening the regional presence.
* New Resolution 209 on encouraging the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the work of the Union.
* New Resolution 213 on measures to improve, promote and strengthen ITU fellowships. Commenting on this resolution, TDAG requested a detailed breakdown of statistics regarding fellowships by gender, age and area of expertise. The secretariat clarified that a separate document providing these details will be submitted to Council-19, which will make recommendations to the ITU Secretary-General, in line with Resolution 213.

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| TDAG requested the secretariat to update the document to include: * **Resolution 70** on mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women through telecommunications/information and communication technologies.
* **Resolution 136** on the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies for humanitarian assistance and for monitoring and management in emergency and disaster situations, including health-related emergencies, for early warning, prevention, mitigation and relief.
* **Resolution 169** on the admission of academia to participate in the work of the Union.
* **Resolution 175** on telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs.
* **Resolution 179** on the ITU role in child online protection.
* **Resolution 196** on protecting telecommunication service users/consumers.
* **Resolution 198** on empowerment of youth through telecommunication/information and communication technology.
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1. **ITU-D four-year rolling Operational Plan 2020-2023**

[**Document 6**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0006/)**:** “ITU-D four-year rolling Operational Plan 2020-2023” outlines the Telecommunication Development Sector objectives, their corresponding outcomes, along with outcome indicators to measure the level of achievement, and products and services (outputs) for members.

TDAG discussed the key elements of the 2020-2023 rolling operational plan presented in five parts. Part 1 is the executive summary. Part 2 provides detailed descriptions of (i) outputs by objectives and policy issues related to outputs; (ii) outcomes and outcome indicators; (iii) annual expected results and performance indicators; and (iv) the risk analysis. Parts 3 and 4 provide descriptions of departments, and regional and area offices, including human resource allocations for the period 2020-2023. Part 5 provides details of regional initiatives per region premised on results-based management.

The ITU-D four-year rolling operational plan is aligned with the structure of the overall strategic plan for the Union for 2020-2023, and with the limits set in the financial plans for these years. The plan highlights a period dominated by the implementation of WTDC-17 outcomes and PP-18 decisions and resolutions with implications for the work of ITU-D and the preparations for the next WTDC in the last quarter of 2021.

TDAG endorsed by acclamation the four-year rolling operational plan and expressed support for the Director’s vision, drawn up as a milestone for her first 100 days in office. One of the first elements of the Director’s 100-day plan was the establishment of thematic clusters organized around the 11 programmes defined in the Buenos Aires Action Plan adopted by WTDC-17. This new cluster approach is designed to better deliver the Buenos Aires Action Plan, reinforce collaboration within BDT and the other ITU Sectors, and leverage expertise from both headquarters and the regional and area offices in order to improve the quality and timeliness of ITU-D deliverables.

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| TDAG endorsed the document and supported the BDT Director’s strategy for improving delivery of services through the clustering of topics, based on the outcomes of WTDC-17 and PP-18. |

**6.1 General Secretariat four-year rolling operational plan 2020-2023**

[**Document 25**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0025/)**:** “Draft operational plan for the General Secretariat for 2020-2023,”introduced on behalf of the Secretary-General, will be presented to the ITU Council session in June 2019 for approval. The Plan is published pursuant to No. 87A of Article 5 of the ITU Convention, which provides that the operational plan of activities to be undertaken by the ITU General Secretariat shall be prepared annually, on a four-year rolling basis.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

1. **Report on the implementation of the ITU Strategic Plan and ITU-D Operational Plan 2018, including regional trends and activities**

[**Document 2 (including Annexes 1 and 2):**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0002/)“Performance Report 2018” provides the status of implementation of the objectives, outcomes and outputs defined in the ITU-D operational plan for 2018. The report is structured around the five objectives adopted by WTDC-14.

Under these objectives, several events were held successfully: TDAG-18 was organized in April 2018, in Geneva. A series of regional development forums were held, as well as meetings of study groups and rapporteur groups.

BDT continued to provide direct assistance to many countries, by raising awareness, building capacity, and providing knowledge exchange tools and platforms. Some 43 new partnership agreements were signed with various stakeholders.

BDT continued to assist countries in establishing and strengthening their national computer incident response teams and in organizing cyberdrills and activities on child online protection.

Cooperation was enhanced between ITU and a number of partners working in capacity building. Some 131 countries organized International Girls in ICT Day events in 2018, encouraging the 57 748 girls participating in 2186 events to take up careers and studies in ICTs.

BDT continued to provide assistance to developing countries in the use of ICTs to mitigate and address the effects of climate change, develop e-waste strategies, policies and regulatory frameworks; facilitate emergency disaster response and, in particular, improve communications for disaster relief.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

**Regional trends and activities**

[Annex 1 to Performance Report 2018](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0002/) features world and regional trends in access to and use of ICTs from 2005 to 2018, and information on the implementation of regional initiatives in 2018. A general upward trend continues in the access to and use of ICTs. With the exception of fixed-telephone subscriptions, all indicators have been increasing steadily. The world crossed the halfway line in 2018 in terms of Internet use, with 51.2 per cent of the world population using the Internet.

Regional Directors gave brief summaries of regional activities undertaken during 2018. They emphasized the importance of partnerships and mobilizing additional funding from ITU membership and beyond for the implementation of the regional initiatives. Ways of collaboration and coordination among the regions and between regional and global activities of the three ITU Sectors were discussed.

In the **Africa region,** project activities were implemented under 13 technical cooperation projects with an overall cost of USD 2.8 million, in collaboration with Member States. In addition, activities on 41 actions of the BDT operational plan were implemented for an amount of CHF 850 000.

ITU provided support to the Africa Telecommunications Union (ATU) in organizing the preparatory meetings for the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-19) and other global events. ITU also facilitated the harmonization of policies and regulatory frameworks in the region. Assistance was provided to different countries in various areas. A number of projects are ongoing in areas of institutional reform, telemedicine, wireless broadband, judiciary training, computer incident response team (CIRT), m-diabetes, and m-cervical cancer. Several regional workshops were organized in the areas of conformance and interoperability, IPv6, cybersecurity, Internet of Things (IoT), ICT economics and finance, quality of service, international roaming, and ICT accessibility and digital inclusion. Several national workshops were also organized.

In the **Americas region**, project activities were implemented under 12 technical cooperation projects for an amount of USD 1 million, in collaboration with Member States. In addition, activities under 35 actions of the BDT operational plan were implemented for a total amount of USD 589 000.

Twenty-two additional capacity building activities were implemented in the areas of ICT policy and regulation, IoT communication protocols, LTE radio access technologies, radio-frequency spectrum, cybersecurity, emergency communications, satellite communications, digital television, ICTs and climate change, Internet exchange points (IXPs) and optical access in network communications. Direct assistance was provided to different countries in areas of e-waste management, national ICT plans, transition from analogue to digital broadcasting, infrastructure deployment and web accessibility. Several regional workshops and forums on conformance and interoperability, Internet governance, cyberbullying, ICT accessibility and digital inclusion, cybersecurity and cyberdrills, emergency telecommunications, and IoT were organized.

In the **Arab States region**, project activities were implemented under five technical cooperation projects for USD 872 000, in collaboration with Member States. In addition, activities on 29 actions were implemented for an amount of CHF 404 000.

Through the ITU Arab States region centres of excellence network, 13 capacity building courses were implemented in different aspects of ICT applications and services, new technologies and broadband. A cooperation agreement was signed for the organization of Girls in ICT Day events until 2019. Assistance was provided to the Arab Incubators and Technoparks Network, and a study was conducted on Internet networks and IXPs development in the region. Capacity building activities on different topics were organized. Direct assistance was provided to a few countries in different areas. Efforts were continued in relation to cybersecurity through the organization of the regional Cybersecurity Week as well as child online protection and cybersecurity activities. ICT accessibility was promoted through the organization of regional ICT Accessibility Week.

In the **Asia and the Pacific region**, project activities were implemented under ten technical cooperation projects for a total amount of USD 668 000, in collaboration with Member States and partners. In addition, activities on 35 actions were implemented for an amount of CHF 402 000.

The key emphasis was on specialized assistance and capacity building in the areas of radio spectrum management and monitoring, spectrum master plans, policy and regulatory frameworks, cybersecurity, CIRT, national cybersecurity strategies and child online protection, broadband, conformance and interoperability, ICT applications, telecommunication sector road maps and e-applications for Pacific Islands, quality of service, ICT indicators and statistics, Internet of Things, implementation of IPv6, ICTs for promoting innovation, ICTs for the empowerment of women, e-governance, smart and sustainable cities, e-agriculture, and emergency telecommunications. In terms of training, the focus was on the areas above and on QoS, blockchain, GIS for agriculture, digital financial services, digital skills for job creation, among others.

In the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region**, BDT implemented activities on 20 actions for an amount of CHF 292 000.

To raise awareness of membership and facilitate dissemination of best practices, regional events were organized on e-health, cybersecurity and child online protection, digital transformation, mobile number portability and conformance and interoperability, big data and cloud computing, IoT and future networks, spectrum management, and IMT-2020/5G. Other activities include online training courses on e-health for students, doctors and IT professionals, implementing ITU-T international standards to shape smart sustainable cities, country assistance on redistributing digital dividend frequencies for new technologies including IoT, as well as assessment of readiness to implement a national CIRT.

In the **Europe region**, BDT implemented activities under two technical cooperation projects for a total amount of USD 493 000 in collaboration with Member States. In addition, activities on 26 actions were implemented for an amount of CHF 257 000 .

Efforts to strengthen the implementation mechanism for the region were continued, including the coordination of actions with relevant organizations and UN bodies in the region. More than 32 workshops, seminars, expert group meetings on broadcasting, broadband, accessibility, cybersecurity, innovation, human capacity building were organized in 2018. In addition, human capacity of more than 660 professionals was built through the Europe region network of centres of excellence that offered more than 17 training opportunities in 2018. Direct assistance was provided to several countries in the fields of innovation, broadcasting, broadband, cybersecurity, and ICT applications. More than 10 publications and reports were written during the year.

TDAG welcomed **this open dialogue and interaction with Regional Directors** as a source of first-hand information allowing TDAG to provide guidance and advice where needed. With so many activities implemented, TDAG sought to know how the impact could be best measured, suggesting that all success stories be widely shared, and any challenges faced in implementing planned activities be documented as lessons learned.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

**Breakout session: The role of regional presence**

During a breakout session on the role of regional presence, discussions included suggestions on ways the regional and area offices can better respond to the needs of the members, represent the ITU as a whole, and leverage ITU’s membership in the wider United Nations family by working with UN Resident Coordinators. The need to ensure that regional and area offices possess the right skill sets in order to be able to provide direct assistance to members was also stressed. Bringing the work of the study groups closer to the countries was also noted. Roles and relationships of ITU Sectors and regional and area offices should be further clarified to strengthen collaboration and synergies. The breakout session also emphasized the need to comply with Joint Inspection Unit recommendations.

1. **ITU-D contribution to the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society** (**WSIS) Plan of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

[**Document 3**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0003/)**:** “ITU-D Contribution to the Implementation of WSIS Outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” highlightsimportant milestones in the global discussion on this topic.

PP-18 reconfirmed the ITU mandate and contribution to the implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the SDGs, while drawing attention to the need to ensure that ITU activities relating to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are implemented in close alignment with the WSIS process.

WTDC-17 established clear links between ITU-D objectives, outcomes and outputs, and relevant WSIS action lines and SDGs and their associated targets (presented in Annex 1). The mapping of ITU-D study group Questions against WSIS action lines and SDGs provides additional guidance on the contribution of the study groups to both processes (Annex 2).

All actions carried out by ITU-D on the basis of this guidance are reported to the ITU membership through regional development forums, TDAG, and the Council Working Group on WSIS. In addition, flagship activities undertaken by BDT constitute a substantive part of the annual report on ITU contribution to the implementation of the WSIS outcomes.

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| TDAG agreed that a segment on WSIS and SDGs should be included as a regular agenda item in the regional development forums. It was also proposed to consider the possibility of holding regional development forums (RDFs) back to back with WSIS and SDG regional forums and with the UN Regional Commissions Regional Forums on Sustainable Development.  |

1. **ITU-D study group-related matters**

Documents 12 and 13 were considered together.

[**Document 12**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0012/)**:** “ITU-D Study Group 1 – Activities and progress,” introduced by the study group Chairman, Ms Regina Fleur Assoumou Bessou, presents the status of work since the start of the new study period (2018-2021).

Study Group 1 which covers “the enabling environment for the development of telecommunications/ICTs” and deals with seven Questions held its first meeting of the 2018-2021 study period at the ITU headquarters in Geneva, from 30 April to 4 May 2018, attended by 131 participants from 57 Member States. Highlights from this meeting include the appointment of 9 rapporteurs/co-rapporteurs and 71 vice-rapporteurs to lead the Questions under study; the 93 contributions received to start the work of the 2018-2021 study period; the receipt of 29 incoming liaison statements; the agreement on and dispatch of 13 outgoing liaison statements; the approval of draft work plans; and the preparation of draft initial outlines/tables of contents of the expected outputs for all Questions and detailed lists of responsibilities.

The rapporteur group meetings of ITU-D Study Group 1, held from 17 to 28 September 2018, refined the outlines of study group Question deliverables and continued the drafting and exchanging of information on chapters of the reports, guidelines and case studies.

The second meeting of Study Group 1 in the 2018-2021 study period, held from 18 to 22 March 2019, attracted 160 participants from 57 Member States. This meeting appointed nine additional vice-rapporteurs to support the Questions under study; received 152 contributions to advance the work; received 23 incoming liaison statements and agreed on and dispatched five outgoing liaison statements.

A highlight from this meeting is the release of the first annual deliverable related to the work of Question 2/1 on “Trends in new broadcasting technologies, services and applications” . This annual deliverable was released under the auspices of the Chairman of Study Group 1 to inform the public of the work and to stimulate and encourage further contributions.

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| TDAG commended the Chairman of ITU-D Study Group 1, Ms Regina Fleur Assoumou Bessou, for the study group achievements since the start of the new study period 2018-2021.  |

[**Document 13**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0013/)**:** “ITU-D Study Group 2 – Activities and progress,” introduced by the study group Chairman, Dr Ahmad Reza Sharafat, presents the status of work since the new study period (2018-2021).

Study Group 2covers “ICT services and applications to promote sustainable development” and deals with seven Questions. Study Group 2 held its first meeting of the 2018-2021 study period from 7 to 11 May 2018, attended by 125 participants from 49 countries. Highlights from this meeting include the appointment of 12 rapporteurs/co-rapporteurs and 47 vice-rapporteurs to lead the Questions under study; the receipt of 99 contributions to start the work of the 2018-2021 study period; the receipt of 40 incoming liaison statements; the agreement on and dispatch of 18 outgoing liaison statements; the approval of draft work plans; and the preparation of draft initial outlines/tables of contents of the expected outputs for all Questions and detailed lists of responsibilities.

The rapporteur group meetings of ITU-D Study Group 2, held from 1 to 11 October 2018, refined the outlines of study group Question deliverables and continued the drafting and exchanging of information on chapters of the reports, guidelines and case studies.

The second meeting of Study Group 2 in the 2018-2021 study period was held from 25 to 29 March 2019 and brought together 133 participants from 49 countries. This meeting appointed two additional co-rapporteurs and seven additional vice-rapporteurs to support the Questions under study; received 101 contributions to advance the work, including draft chapters for final output reports and annual deliverables; received 27 incoming liaison statements and agreed on and dispatched 15 outgoing liaison statements.

Study Group 2 considered one annual deliverable, entitled “A holistic approach to creating smart societies” submitted by the Rapporteur Group for Question 1/2 for release. The deliverable seeks to provide key principles of a holistic approach to creating smart societies, describes components of a layered architecture of a smart city and society and features some related case studies. A panel session was also held to present the deliverable and debate on these topics. This annual deliverable has been released under the auspices of the Chairman of Study Group 2 in order to provide the membership with timely information as well as to encourage and facilitate further contributions on this topic.

TDAG noted from the presentations that both study groups had also been building synergies between the work undertaken in the study Questions and the activities in the regions. Expert knowledge exchanges on specific study topics were conducted in several countries in 2018. Good progress has also been made on identifying possible linkages between ITU-D study Questions with ITU projects, ITU capacity building activities, and WSIS activities, as well as with the work in the other ITU Sectors. The value of topical panel sessions during the study group and rapporteur group meetings was acknowledged, as were the additional sessions planned for the upcoming rapporteur group meetings in October 2019.

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| TDAG commended the Chairman of ITU-D Study Group 2, Dr Ahmad Reza Sharafat, for the study group achievements made since the new study period 2018-2021. TDAG noted that the ITU-D study group website will feature a new area that showcases ongoing work. TDAG also addressed the question of involving possible external publishing companies to showcase quality work, and noted that this is something to be discussed further. |

**Breakout session: ITU-D study groups - increasing efficiency**

The breakout session on ITU-D study groups considered three main issues to identify approaches and mechanisms to increase the efficiency and meaningfulness of ITU-D study group activities and outputs: (1) ITU-D study groups as a platform, (2) ITU-D study group deliverables and (3) the generation by members of great inputs for excellent outputs of ITU-D study groups. To allow for in-depth discussions in ITU-D study group meetings, the participation of experts should be ensured. Alternative mechanisms could be further explored (including 1-1 matchmaking and online collaboration and exchange) to provide stakeholders with opportunities to exchange experiences. While the content of the deliverables was satisfactory overall, more efforts are needed to raise awareness, present and share such reports and guidelines to a wider audience. Consolidated topical reports and the revision of existing reports to ensure that they reflect the changing digital environment was encouraged. Countries in particular regions would further benefit from deliverables that are customized to specific needs of the regions. Such a regional focus and additional in-depth input from the countries could be achieved through closer collaboration with regional and area offices. As for the meetings of ITU-D study groups, it is necessary to reconsider the structure and schedule of work to balance the allocated time and associated workload of each rapporteur group.

**9.1 Appointment of two new Study Group Vice-Chairmen to vacant positions**

[**Document 8**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0008/)**:** “Appointment of two new Vice-Chairmen of ITU-D Study Groups”contains nomination letters from the administrations of the Russian Federation and the United Arab Emirates putting forward, respectively, the candidatures of Ms Anastasia Sergeyevna Konukhova, an international legal protection specialist at the Analysis Center of the Federal State Unitary Enterprise Radio Research and Development Institute for the post of Vice-Chairman of ITU-D Study Group 1; and Mr Abdelaziz Alzarooni, Information Security Engineer, for the post of Vice-Chairman of ITU-D Study Group 2.

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| TDAG appointed by acclamation **Ms Anastasia Sergeyevna Konukhova** as a Vice-Chairman of ITU-D Study Group 1.TDAG appointed by acclamation **Mr Abdelaziz Alzarooni** as a Vice-Chairman of ITU-D Study Group 2. |

1. **Collaboration with the other Sectors**

Documents 5, 9, 10, 11, 24, 28, 38 and 41 were considered together.

[**Document 5**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0005/)**:** “Progress report by the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) on issues of mutual interest”, introduced by the ISCG Chairman, Mr Fabio Bigi, highlights recent achievements and the way forward on inter-Sector collaboration and coordination.

The Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) on issues of mutual interest (initially established as the Inter-Sector Coordination Team on Issues of Mutual Interest) was set up under decisions of the Sector advisory groups in order to eliminate duplication of efforts and optimize the use of resources.

Following revisions to Resolution 191 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on the strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union, the “Team” has become a “Group” with a broader mandate. ISCG now identifies mechanisms to strengthen cooperation and joint activity on issues of mutual interest not only among the three Sectors but also of the General Secretariat, paying particular attention to the interests of the developing countries and taking into account the activities of the regional offices, including their role in the organization of events (workshops, seminars, symposia).

At its meeting on 4 April 2019, held in conjunction with the TDAG-19 meeting (3-5 April), ISCG took several decisions. Firstly, ISCG agreed to a revised list of areas of mutual interest.

Secondly, ISCG agreed to its revised terms of reference, which it had submitted to RAG, TSAG and TDAG through a liaison statement of 3 December 2018, for review, comment and approval. The revised terms of reference also include a change in the names of the representatives of TDAG to ISCG, with Mr Al-ansari Almashakbeh replacing Ms Nurzat Boljobekova.

Thirdly, ISCG decided to post a mapping table of study group Questions on the [ISCG website](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/inter-sectoral-team-on-issues-of-mutual-interest.aspx) and to keep updated this table as a living document. For this purpose, ISCG also agreed to send a liaison statement to RAG, TSAG and TDAG requesting this mapping table to be updated regularly. The Inter-Sector Coordination Task Force (ISC-TF) was also requested to note this liaison statement and review this mapping table with a view to eliminating possible overlaps of activities.

Fourthly, ISCG decided to post the mapping table of resolutions of the Plenipotentiary Conference (PP), Radiocommunication Assembly (RA), World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC), World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) and WTDC on the [ISCG website](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/inter-sectoral-team-on-issues-of-mutual-interest.aspx). Each Sector is invited to review, provide comments and make use of this mapping table with a view to streamlining resolutions.

Lastly, ISCG agreed to request RAG and TSAG to add a hyperlink of the [ISCG website](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/inter-sectoral-team-on-issues-of-mutual-interest.aspx) to their own websites in order to make available relevant information to their participants.

As a next step, ISCG proposed to start a practical trial of cooperation among the three Sectors and the General Secretariat on two or three specific topics. Possible topics will be discussed at the next meeting of ISCG, to be held in conjunction with TDAG-20 meeting (24-27 March 2020). If necessary, an e-meeting of ISCG may be sought in conjunction with the TSAG-19 meeting (23-27 September 2019).

TDAG welcomed the progress report and commended Mr Bigi for the groups’ achievements.

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| TDAG approved the way forward and the appointment of Mr Al-ansari Almashakbeh as a TDAG representative to the ISCG. |

[**Document 9**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0009/): “Outgoing liaison statement: Coordination with the other Sectors” presents updates to three tables linking ITU-D study Questions to related ITU-T work items and study Questions submitted by TDAG to TSAG on 5 December 2018 for comment and any further action deemed appropriate.

The mapping between ITU-T study groups, working parties and work items, and ITU-D study Questions started in the 2014-2017 study period. ITU-D Study Groups 1 and 2 reviewed and updated three mapping tables at their first meetings of the 2018-2021 study period, held in April-May 2018: Table 1: ITU-D Questions vis-à-vis ITU-T Questions, including relevant work items (constantly evolving); Table 2: Matrix of ITU-D and ITU-T Questions; and Table 3: List of ITU-T Questions which could be related to ITU-D Questions even in the absence of relevant ITU-T work items.

To facilitate coordination and further strengthen collaboration between the two ITU-D study groups and the study groups in the other ITU Sectors, work on the three mapping tables evolved during the ITU-D rapporteur group meetings in September and October 2018. TDAG, working remotely, thanked the chairmen of the ITU-D study groups for updating the three mapping tables so comprehensively to support coordination between the Sectors. TDAG submitted the three updated mapping tables to the TSAG meeting in December 2018 for comment and any further action deemed appropriate.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

[**Document 10**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0010/): “Incoming liaison statement: Liaison statement on coordination among the Sectors” contains proposed revised terms of reference of the ISCG on issues of mutual interest.

Through this liaison statement of 3 December 2018, the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) on issues of mutual interest submitted its proposed revised terms of reference to RAG, TSAG and TDAG for review, comment and approval.

The ISCG on issues of mutual interest first proposed revisions to its terms of reference at its meeting in April 2018. No decision was taken at that time. The revised terms of reference circulated to the Sector advisory groups in December 2018 are based on the discussions that took place during the TDAG meeting and Council meeting in April 2018, as well as on revisions to Resolution 191 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on the strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

[**Document 11:**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0011/) “Incoming liaison statement: Liaison statement on ITU inter-Sector coordination” provides updated mappings of common interest areas of work between the ITU-D and ITU-T study groups and between the ITU-R and ITU-T study groups for ITU inter-Sector coordination.

At its meeting in Geneva on 10-14 December 2018, TSAG reviewed and accepted all amendments to the mappings in Attachments 1 and 2 received through a liaison statement of 3 December 2018 from TDAG and updated them accordingly:

* Attachment 1 – Matching of ITU-D SG 1 and 2 Questions of interest to ITU-T study groups.
* Attachment 2 – Matching of ITU-R Working Parties of interest to ITU-T study groups.

The mappings indicate either ongoing ITU inter-Sector cooperation or possibilities for new inter-Sector cooperation and are expected to help the three Sectors avoid overlap. TSAG, through this liaison statement, encouraged the groups to take the next steps in engaging in bilateral inter-Sector coordination. TSAG further invited any suggestions that would improve the collaboration and cooperation between the ITU Sectors and requested to be informed of any overlaps or possible duplication of work.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

[**Document 24**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0024/): “Incoming liaison statement: Liaison statement on ITU inter-Sector coordination" reports that TSAG has approved the proposed revised terms of reference of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) on issues of mutual interest.

At its meeting in Geneva from 10 to 14 December 2018, TSAG reviewed the proposed revised terms of reference received through a liaison statement of 3 December 2018 from the Chairman of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group on issues of mutual interest. TSAG added to these terms of reference the words “General Secretariat”, approved them and sent them to ISCG, and to TDAG and RAG for information. TSAG stated that it is looking forward to fruitful cooperation with ISCG.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

[**Document 28**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0028/): “Incoming liaison statement: Liaison statement on streamlining resolutions” provides a mapping of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference and ITU Sector resolutions aimed at identifying candidate resolutions for streamlining.

TSAG, through this liaison statement, provided a mapping of resolutions of WTSA, WTDC and RA onto those of the Plenipotentiary Conference.

The mapping is presented in an attachment entitled “Mapping of WTSA, WTDC, and RA Resolutions onto PP Resolutions with the purpose of identifying candidate Resolutions for streamlining”. TSAG would welcome any comments on its mapping from TDAG, RAG, ISCG, the Inter-Sector Coordination Task Force (ISC-TF) and all ITU-T study groups by 31 August 2019.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

**Document** [**38**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG24-C-0038): “Incoming liaison statement - LS/r on ITU inter-Sector coordination (reply to TSAG LS13)” is a decision from ITU-T Study Group 11 responding to Inter-Sector coordination matters.

TSAG had sought views at its meeting on 10-14 December 2018 on whether the inclusion of rapidly evolving work items in the mapping tables is an appropriate way to support collaboration and cooperation across the Sectors. The question is therefore: is it worthwhile maintaining work items in future tables, or it is sufficient to focus in the tables on the study group Questions alone?

At its meeting held in Geneva from 6 to 15 March 2019, ITU-T Study Group 11 reviewed liaison statements from TDAG on “Coordination with the other Sectors” and from ITU-D Study Group 1 on “matching of ITU-D SG1 and SG2 Questions of interest to ITU-T study groups”. ITU-T Study Group 11 decided that it is sufficient to have the tables on the study groups and Questions without the list of work items because details of Questions and related work items are already listed on study group websites. As a result of this decision, ITU-T Study Group 11 does not have any updates to the matching tables provided by ITU-D study groups.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

**Document** [**41**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG24-C-0041): “Incoming liaison statement - Liaison statement from the Chairmen of ITU-D SG1 and SG2 to TDAG on mapping work related to ITU-D Question-to-Question, ITU-D to ITU-T, and ITU-D to ITU-R mapping to support collaboration” shares an update on the mapping work that has been ongoing in ITU-D study groups.

The purpose of the mapping is to identify topics of mutual interest and the entities responsible for those topics across the three ITU Sectors in accordance with their mandates and Constitution and Convention of the Union. The mapping will facilitate smoother information exchange within the Union on the topics of mutual interest, and responsible entities in each Sector will know whom to contact regarding incoming and outgoing communications on such topics.

TDAG welcomed the liaison statement, which is a result of extensive discussions in the ITU-D study groups and which helps to focus on the next steps related to mappings and coordination with the other ITU Sectors.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

## Preparations for WTDC-21, including regional development forums and regional preparatory meetings

**Regional Development Forums**

[**Document 14**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0014/): “Regional Development Forums” provides background information on the status of preparations for regional development forums to be held in 2019.

PP-18 reviewed the role of regional offices, requesting ITU to ensure that all planned activities of the three Sectors and the General Secretariat in the regions are consolidated into the parts of the operational plans relating to regions and implemented in coordination with the regional offices.

WTDC-17 resolved to reinforce the platforms for regional coordination, including regional development forums, with the aim of strengthening the regional presence as an extension of ITU as whole, and ensuring that the activities of the Radicommunication Bureau (BR) and the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (TSB) are effectively incorporated in the actions of regional offices. A series of regional development forums have been scheduled in 2019 with this in mind.

Building upon PP-18 and WTDC-17 outcomes, regional development forums should provide the opportunity for dialogue between regional offices and decision-makers of ITU Member States and Sector Members on the activities carried out at the regional level, so that they can play a part in the implementation of the ITU strategic plan, and the programmes, projects and regional initiatives set out in Resolution 17 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC.

The format and function of regional development forums have evolved based on the membership guidance in Resolution 25 (Rev. Dubai, 2018). TDAG was invited to provide guidance as appropriate to ensure that regional development forums provide best possible value to the Development Sector, while contributing to the implementation of the WSIS action lines and achievement of SDGs.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

**Preparations for WTDC-21**

[**Document 33**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0033/): “Streamlining PP Resolution 208 and WTDC Resolutions 1 and 61” (Russian Federation) proposes the suppression of Resolution 61 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of WTDC on the “appointment and maximum term of office of chairmen and vice-chairmen of study groups in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group”.

PP-18 acknowledged the need for WTDC, WTSA and RA to streamline resolutions. This conference approved new Resolution 208 on the appointment and maximum term of office for chairmen and vice-chairmen of Sector advisory groups, study groups and other groups, which contains similar text found in Resolution 61. While this suppression is justified, it will be necessary to modify Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC on “Rules of procedure of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector” to ensure that it captures all relevant content when Resolution 61 is suppressed at WTDC-21.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

[**Document 34**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0034/):“Streamlining PP Resolution 140 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) and WTDC Resolution 30” (Russian Federation) proposes the streamlining of the two resolutions.

PP-18 revised Resolution 140 on “ITU's role in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as in their follow-up and review processes”. It was considered reasonable to streamline at WTDC-21 Resolution 140 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference and Resolution 30 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) on the “Role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

[**Document 37**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0037/)**:** “Proposals for Financing Regional Initiatives” (Russian Federation) contains suggestions on how Member States can finance these initiatives.

In recent years, there has been a steady practice of concluding agreements on the implementation of projects within the framework of regional initiatives, in which ITU partners (interested administrations and/or other organizations) have provided financial contributions in-kind. One of the reasons for this approach was the considerable difficulties, and often impossibility, for a number of developing countries to allocate money from the national budget, which, in most cases, is approved long before the deadline for coordinating projects, to participate in the implementation of regional initiatives.

A proposal was put forward to preserve the practice of accepting the contribution of project partners in-kind.

BDT clarified that in-kind contributions could only be accepted in financing regional initiatives if they can be quantified using a sound methodology and all supporting documentation, ensuring compliance with internal financial regulations and external audit requirements.

The accounting of in-kind contributions will be done in accordance with IPSAS (international public sector accounting standards.

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| In discussing the seed money that has been allocated by the Council to the regional initiatives, TDAG agreed that in-kind contributions that can be quantified can be included in project documents as one of the funding sources and must be submitted with the initial project document. |

[**Document**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0033/) **39:** “Preparations for World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021” (Russian Federation)provides information on an invitation from the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to host this conference in Addis Ababa from 13 to 24 September 2021.

TDAG was informed that consultations are under way with the Government of Ethiopia through its Ministry of Innovation and Technology in order to agree on the requirements for holding WTDC-21 outside Geneva.

The offer from the Government of Ethiopia will be submitted to the ITU Council meeting in Geneva on 10-20 June 2019 to approve the place and dates in accordance with No. 42 of the ITU Convention.

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| TDAG thanked Ethiopia for the kind and generous invitation and noted the importance of beginning to make concrete plans, including decisions about regional preparatory meetings. Correspondence groups will begin in 2020. |

**Breakout session: WTDC preparatory process and format**

During the breakout session on the WTDC preparatory process and format, participants highlighted that during the previous WTDC the first three days were largely spent on policy statements. It was emphasized based on the experience of the last Plenipotentiary Conference that committees should start their meetings as soon as possible and preferably from day one of the conference, the policy statements could run in parallel with committee meetings. It was further suggested to consider organizing dialogue sessions/round tables one day prior to WTDC opening.

The discussions on regional preparatory meetings (RPMs) were focused on how these meetings could become more effective. There was general agreement that RPMs should be held back-to-back or together with other preparatory meetings organized by regional organizations. The group discussed as well that organizing informal inter-regional meetings could also facilitate discussion during WTDC, and suggested that this meeting(s) can be scheduled one day before the last TDAG prior to WTDC.

It was highlighted that there is a need to balance the work between committees (in particular committees 3 and 4), and also run committees in parallel as necessary. It was also suggested to engage more closely with other stakeholders, including academia and NGOs in the preparatory process.

The need to have a full understanding of the financial implications of conference proposals, including the regional initiatives, prior to their adoption was stressed.

1. **Report on ITU-D major events/initiatives**
	1. **Infrastructure and spectrum-management activities**

[**Document 29**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0029/)**:** “ITU-D infrastructure development” provides an overview of results achievedin conducting national and regional capacity-building workshops and national spectrum-management assessments, as well as in providing assistance for broadband connectivity.

Infrastructure was recognized as one of the main goals of the ITU membership at WTDC-17 and at PP-18. In addition, it falls under SDG 9: to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

BDT has continued to implement and update the ITU broadband maps with information obtained from administrations, regulators, operators and public sources. A project has been launched to develop a broadband mapping tool to help identify gaps and opportunities.

Training courses have been developed on: 5G implementation in Europe and CIS; Broadband development based on 4G and 5G technologies; Digital future powered by 4G/5G; and the future of cable television, jointly organized by BDT, BR and TSB. Technical assistance was provided within the scope of the Korean Basic National Spectrum Management Project. It was also provided in developing broadband connectivity and ICT applications in order to offer free or low-cost digital access for schools and hospitals and underserved populations in rural and remote areas. Assistance was also provided in setting up sub-regional IPv6 testbeds to facilitate IPv4-to-IPv6 migration.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

**Breakout session: Telecoms/ICT network infrastructure**

During the breakout session on telecoms/ICT infrastructure the discussion was structured around the following three questions:

1. How can ITU/ BDT most effectively assist countries in improving their last mile connectivity?
2. How can the information contained in the broadband maps be best used?
3. What are the impediments countries are facing to completing the digital broadcasting transition and how can ITU assist them?

Following the discussions, a compilation of different cases studies on last mile connectivity (e.g. business and financing models, and regulations and policies) and guidelines on the possible solutions were suggested. In addition, the development of a platform was discussed to engage the different stakeholders and promote collaboration on last mile connectivity and services. To best use the information contained in the broadband maps, the promotion of the visibility and use of broadband maps was proposed, for example through a link on the regulators’ and ministries’ web pages. Lastly, to assist countries with the digital broadcasting transition, recommendations were made for the promotion of the impacts and benefits of the analogue to digital broadcasting transition, in specific regions and countries.

[**Document 32**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0032/)**:** “Implementation of WTDC Resolution 9 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)” on theparticipation of countries, particularly developing countries, in spectrum management provides a summary of ITU activities being undertaken to implement this resolution.

WTDC-17 revised Resolution 9 instructing the BDT Director to report annually to TDAG on the implementation of the resolution. Annex 1 to Resolution 9 provides examples of the specific needs of developing countries in spectrum management.

Of the 14 main topics listed for implementation of Resolution 9, ITU efforts have thus far focused primarily on: assistance in raising the awareness of national policy-makers as to the importance of effective spectrum management for a country’s economic and social development; economic and financial aspects of spectrum management; innovative ways of spectrum licensing; training and dissemination of available ITU documentation; and assistance in developing methodologies for establishing national tables of frequency allocations and spectrum redeployment.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

Documents 36 and 40 were considered together.

[**Document 36**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0036/)**:** “Implementation of Resolution 9 Requirements” (Algeria) calls for a review and discussion on the approach and action plan proposed in 2018 to implement Resolution 9 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) on participation of countries, particularly developing countries, in spectrum management.

[**Document 40**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0040/en)**:** “Liaison statement from the Chairmen of ITU-D SG1 and SG2 to TDAG on the contributions of ITU-D Study Groups 1 and 2 to the implementation of WTDC Resolution 9” on participation of countries, particularly developing countries, in spectrum management proposes a way forward on how these two study groups could provide input within the scope of their work.

TDAG noted that ITU-D Study Groups 1 and 2 have agreed that in order to fulfil the needs of developing countries stated in Resolution 9 they shall need close collaboration with the relevant parties in ITU-R. To this end, both study groupshave identified study Questions for which close collaboration will be sought with ITU‑R.

In the case of ITU-D Study Group 1, the Questions are: Question 1/1 on strategies and policies for the deployment of broadband in developing countries; Question 2/1 on strategies, policies, regulations and methods of migration and adoption of digital broadcasting and implementation of new services; Question 4/1 on economic policies and methods of determining the costs of services related to national telecommunication/information and communication technology networks, including next-generation networks; Question 5/1 on telecommunications/information and communication technologies for rural and remote areas; and Question 7/1 on access to telecommunication/ information and communication technology services by persons with disabilities and other persons with specific needs.

For ITU-D Study Group 2 the Questions are: Question 1/2 on creating smart cities and society: Employing information and communication technologies for sustainable social and economic development; Question 4/2 on assistance to developing countries for implementing conformance and interoperability programmes and combating counterfeit information and communication technology equipment and theft of mobile devices; and Question7/2 on strategies and policies concerning human exposure to electromagnetic fields.

A contact point from within each rapporteur group has been assigned the task of ensuring that information on spectrum specific requirements and needs is gathered for each Question. In addition, a Vice-Chairman from Study Group 1 (*Mr Roberto Hirayama, Brazil*) and a Vice-Chairman from Study Group 2 (*Ms Nora Basher, Sudan*) have been given the responsibility of coordinating WTDC Resolution 9 issues with the contact points for each study Question.

For each annual study group meeting, these two vice-chairmen will prepare (with the help of the BDT Focal Point for Resolution 9) and submit a summary of the compiled findings on WTDC Resolution 9 issues to the ITU-D Study Group 1 and 2 Chairmen, who in turn will report the relevant information to the BDT Director. The BDT Director can then send a summary of these findings to the BR Director. Such a summary, to be provided each year, can serve as the basis for a contribution to TDAG on the implementation of WTDC Resolution 9.

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| TDAG approved the proposed way forward. |

* 1. **Cybersecurity and ICT applications**

[**Document 30**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0030/)**:** “Cybersecurity and ICT Applications Activities” provides a summary of work and activities carried out by BDT in cybersecurity and ICT applications. The BDT cybersecurity programme provides for the development of publications, conducting of national and regional capacity-building workshops and collaboration with partners to deliver high-quality products and services.

An example of this is the “[National Cybersecurity Strategy Guide](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/str/D-STR-CYB_GUIDE.01-2018-PDF-E.pdf)” launched at ITU Telecom World 2018 and developed through a multi-stakeholder effort, facilitated by ITU, in partnership with 11 intergovernmental and international organizations and private sector, academia and civil society entities. The main objective of this reference guide is to assist countries in the development and implementation of national cybersecurity strategies, including cyber-preparedness and resilience.

BDT also conducts regional and national cyberdrills for ITU Member States, the aim being to enhance the communication between participating teams and further improve the incident response capabilities, along with maintaining and strengthening national and international cooperation among countries in ensuring continued collective effort against cyberthreats.

In 2018, data collected from 155 countries in preparation for the third edition of the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) measured country progress in cybersecurity and helped to identify areas for improvement. The GCI was submitted to ITU-D Study Group 2 meeting for review and comment. TDAG requested that the document clearly include an explanation on the distinction between countries that submitted the survey information and those that did not.

Looking at the proposed ways forward to implement cybersecurity-related objectives, TDAG encouraged BDT to continue measuring cybersecurity progress with the GCI while improving the methodology and scoring mechanism through continuous dialogue and collaboration with Member States, industry, academia and experts in the area of cybersecurity and data analysis. TDAG suggested that a mechanism should be developed to ensure that products and services are developed taking into consideration input from the membership.

Turning to ICT applications and services, it was noted that a main pillar of this programme is assisting countries in the development of national sector-specific e-strategies, which can contribute to digital transformation. In the health sector, for example, the joint ITU-WHO National eHealth Strategy Toolkit, published in 2012, has become the reference point for many countries in digital health strategy development. In 2018, ITU and WHO helped several countries to develop e-health strategies. Several mHealth projects have been launched through the joint ITU-WHO “Be He@lthy, Be Mobile” programme, which promotes the use of mobile technologies for non-communicable diseases.

In e-agriculture, a Hackathon to end Hunger was organized in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in order to identify and support innovative solutions to address challenges in the areas of food and agriculture. The ITU-FAO National e-Agriculture Strategy Guide has already been piloted in several countries. In one country, a blockchain-application was developed to track pigs. A report on the use of drones in agriculture has also been published.

A way forward in ICT applications that may resonate with Member States is the development of new tools to guide governments in their digital transformation process, for example the development of government enterprise architecture.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

* 1. **Regulatory and market environment, including the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR)**

[**Document 16**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0016/)**:** “ITU-D Policy and Regulatory Programme”provides an overview ofthe main activities carried out in 2018, including the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR), the Regional Economic Dialogues, the Global ICT Regulatory Outlook Report, analytical reports on 5G, artificial intelligence, and digital identity, and an econometric study on the impact of broadband, digitization and ICT regulation.

The 18th edition of the GSR, held in July in Geneva, attracted over 600 participants, including government ministers, heads of ICT national regulatory authorities and industry executives from more than 125 countries. GSR also provided a platform for the exchange of knowledge among regional regulatory associations and private-sector chief executive officers. GSR participants adopted [best practice guidelines](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regulatory-Market/Pages/bestpractices.aspx) on new regulatory frontiers to achieve digital transformation.

The 19th edition of GSR will be held from 9 to 12 July 2019 in Port Vila, Vanuatu, hosted by the Government of Vanuatu and the Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulator (TRBR). The theme for this edition is “Inclusive connectivity: The future of regulation”.

TDAG had earlier warmly congratulated the Government of Vanuatu for its generous offer to host this event, which will take place for the first time in the Pacific islands.

TDAG requested further clarification on events, portals, studies and research, and asked that information on reports and studies be made available to membership, and also be shared with regional offices so that it can be disseminated widely in the regions to provide best practice on policy and regulation.

BDT in its response provided links to past and upcoming Regional Economic Dialogues (REDs) and “Experts’ Knowledge Exchanges”. On the question of events focusing, in particular, on the digital economy and the collaboration with economic institutions which have primary responsibility for economic policy, BDT gave, as an example, the [Financial Inclusion Global Initiative (FIGI)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/extcoop/figisymposium/Pages/default.aspx). Led by ITU, the World Bank Group and the Committee on Payments and Market Infrastructures, and with financial support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, FIGI is a three-year programme of collective action to advance research in digital finance and accelerate digital financial inclusion in developing countries.

With respect to the [Digital Ecosystem Portal](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regulatory-Market/Pages/Collaborative_Regulation/App_Economy.aspx), which was considered to contain a lot of material, including the report [“POWERING THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: Regulatory approaches to securing consumer privacy, trust and security”](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/pref/D-PREF-BB.POW_ECO-2018-PDF-E.pdf) some questions were raised about the subject matter of this report. BDT noted these comments while clarifying that this portal aims to share knowledge and practices on issues relevant to policy-makers and regulators in the evolving ecosystem, responding to issues as raised by membership in the GSR Best Practice Guidelines.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

* 1. **Digital inclusion**

[**Document 31**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0031/)**:** “ITU-D Digital Inclusion Programme”presents an overview of digital inclusion objectives, strategies and key actions that have already been implemented or are planned.

Notable activities include the three self-paced online training courses on “ICT Accessibility: the Key to Inclusive Communication” developed and made available through the ITU Academy. A total of 15 video tutorials have been produced to show how to develop and remediate accessible digital documents. In addition, the ITU-D educational 360° [web accessibility programme, Internet for @ll](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Persons-with-Disabilities/Pages/Internet-for-%40ll.aspx), has been developed and made available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. The programme helps ITU Member States to make public websites and information accessible to all citizens, including persons with disabilities, while building country expertise in ICT accessibility.

A Digital Skills Toolkit has been publicized, along with the joint ITU-ILO Digital Skills for Jobs Campaign on Decent Jobs for Youth, in order to incentivize stakeholders to train 5 million young people with job-ready digital skills.

Over 500 ITU members have enhanced their knowledge and/or successfully obtained ITU certifications in ICT accessibility topics through participation in face-to face training delivered at regional events or via online training offered by ITU Academy. Around 300 indigenous people have also benefited from the successful online training course on indigenous radio/networks.

TDAG acknowledged the need to highlight the importance of implementing policies on digital inclusion and accessibility, and underlined the need to foster an enabling environment to achieve trust in ICTs.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

* 1. **Capacity-building activities**

[**Document 17**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0017/)**:** “Report on the Work of the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI) to TDAG” coversthe work undertaken by GCBI. The group was established pursuant to Resolution 40, adopted at WTDC-10, and revised at WTDC-2017, in order to advise the BDT Director on matters relating to capacity building.

During its meeting on 27-28 February 2018 in Geneva, GCBI exchanged regional experiences and noted an increase in the demand for digitally skilled workers in all regions and the inability of most countries to develop the requisite skills at the pace required by digital transformation. The target audience for capacity-building activities needs to be broad and include professionals, such as middle and senior-level managers, young people and students, researchers, SMEs, underserved communities and other ICT users.

TDAG welcomed the work of GCBI, thanked the previous Chairman Mr Santiago Reyes‐Borda for his work and charismatic leadership and welcomed the new GCBI Chairman Dr Lidia Stępińska-Ustasiak, Counsellor, Head of Social Policy Unit, Office of Electronic Communications (UKE) of Poland. TDAG expressed appreciation for the proposed future work of GCBI, including developing an ITU capacity building framework, a harmonized way of stocktaking of activities, and new models for identifying different target audiences. TDAG also highlighted the importance of doing work on building capacity for digital inclusion, including digital literacy.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

[**Document 18**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0018/)**:** “Capacity Building Activities” highlights the training delivered to the ITU membership in close collaboration with partners, including centres of excellence (CoE), the private sector, and academia. The [ITU Academy](https://academy.itu.int/index.php?lang=en) platform serves as the main delivery channel for ITU training activities.

In 2018 alone, around 1 840 participants were trained through 55 courses delivered by the CoE network. Capacity-building activities focused primarily on policy and regulation, broadband access, cybersecurity, ICT applications and services, spectrum management, Internet governance, innovation, digital broadcasting, conformance and interoperability, cloud computing, quality of service and ICT accessibility.

The [Global ICT Capacity Building Symposium (CBS)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Capacity-Building/Pages/events/CBS/2018/default.aspx), held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from 18 to 20 June 2018, attracted 331 participants from 36 countries. The theme was developing skills for the digital economy and society. The outcomes of the symposium provided strategic guidance to the national and international community on issues relating to skill development in the field of ICTs and digital technologies.

The publication “Capacity Building in a Changing ICT Environment 2018” features articles highlighting the different levels of skills required, from basic digital skills to more advanced skills in order to satisfy more complex requirements, such as network management and data analytics.

TDAG welcomed the report and noted the important activities related to the centres of excellence, ITU Academy, and working in partnership with other stakeholders. TDAG suggested that BDT should explore mechanisms to leverage the expertise created through the training activities and emphasized the importance of including the gender dimension in the capacity building and skills development work.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

**Breakout session: Capacity building and skills development**

During the breakout session on capacity building and skills development, there was overall agreement that certified, structured training courses add greater value and impact compared with typical capacity-building workshops. In addition to the courses currently offered on the ITU Academy platform, training was also needed for policy-makers at decision-making and less technical levels. There was agreement that ITU should expand its capacity development work and provide digital skills training to those at the bottom of the pyramid and outside the ICT sector. Such capacity-building work could be performed by involving local community networks and implementing training-of-trainers courses. Regional telecommunication organizations could help in the process of mapping capacity development initiatives, selecting experts, and identifying digital skills gaps and needs in the regions.

* 1. **ICT data and statistics, including World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS)**

[**Document 19**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0019/)**:** “Report on ICT Data and Statistics 2018” provides a summary of the work carried out on ICT data and statistics in 2018. The report covers data collection and dissemination, methodology development, data analysis, and capacity building.

ITU continued to collect internationally comparable ICT statistics through three questionnaires: the World Telecommunication Indicators questionnaire, the questionnaire on access and use of ICTs by households and individuals, and the ICT Price Basket questionnaire. Data collected were disseminated through the ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database.

Methodologies and international standards on ICT statistics are continuously improved through the work of the Expert Group on Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (EGTI) and the Expert Group on ICT Household Indicators (EGH). Meetings of EGTI and EGH took place in Geneva, in October 2018. Nearly 130 statistical experts from ICT ministries, national statistical offices telecommunication regulators from 54 countries and international organizations attended the meetings and discussed how to better track access to and use of ICTs by households and individuals.

BDT also successfully organized the 16th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS-18) in Geneva, which attracted more than 320 participants from 85 countries, representing public and private organizations, including ministries, regulators, national statistical agencies, universities and research institutions, telecommunication operators, ICT firms and regional and international organizations. The “Measuring the Information Society Report 2018 - Volume 1” was released during WTIS-18. Compared to previous editions, it did not feature the ICT Development Index (IDI).

ICT statistics are an important output of ITU and an essential input into ICT policy. TDAG stressed that statistics published by ITU must be reliable and trustworthy. Furthermore, data should be made available to the public on the ITU website, to the extent possible.

BDT explained that in 2018, the IDI was not published because of the limited data submitted by countries which required ITU to make a lot of estimates and there were also concerns over the quality of data which were submitted for some of the new indicators. This was the case despite the fact that BDT had organized and ran capacity-building workshops in all the regions. In order to remedy the issue and publish the IDI in 2019, the ICT Data and Statistics Division (IDS) has embarked on another series of capacity building workshops around the world. While this has helped in improving the quality of data, it may not solve all of the issues. An option for 2019 will be to use the old indicators for the IDI, and to phase in new indicators only when certain thresholds are met in terms of quantity and quality of the data provided by Member States. However, this will make ITU statistics lag behind developments in the ICT sector and not reflect the true technological evolution.

Resolution 131 (Rev. Dubai 2018) has put more demands on the staff in the division, and in order to carry out the work, resources will need to be increased.

The BDT Director noted that the quality and reliability of ITU data provides the basis for analysis and decision-making across the ITU membership and beyond. ITU will continue to provide capacity building for ITU Member States and ITU regional offices can play a central role in interfacing with administrations. TDAG encouraged experts from Member States to contribute actively in the ongoing work. The BDT Director will put forward a proposal to Council-19 to strengthen internal statistical capacity.

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| BDT will continue to make best efforts to collect the data associated with the new indicators including through capacity building workshops, and will engage the regional offices in these efforts. |

**Breakout session: ICT data and statistics**

During the breakout session on ICT data and statistics, participants underlined the need to maintain ITU’s role as the main global source for ICT data, trust, relevance, visibility, accessibility to data and cooperation with various stakeholders are essential components. Methodologies should be developed and data collected on emerging topics and new services, in partnership with other relevant organizations. Statistical work should be shared with ITU study groups as needed. The Measuring the Information Society Report could be divided into a series of smaller, more focused reports, which would enhance visibility and impact. However, the participants noted that there could be drawbacks with this approach as they wanted everything contained in one publication that could serve as reference. Cost implications should be studied on submitting questionnaires in all the six languages, including translation of all documents into all official languages. Some suggested that ITU should be pragmatic and realistic when including new indicators in the ICT Development Index, focusing on indicators with widely available quality data. The conceptual framework also needs to be continuously revisited. The ICT Development Index analysis could be enhanced by exploring a number of factors that potentially impact the rankings and by including policy recommendations.

[**Document 35**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0035/)**:** “Proposals on the Work of Study Groups on Statistics in the Field of Telecommunication/ICT in accordance with the Revision of Resolution 131 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) Measuring Information and Communication Technologies to Build an Integrating and Inclusive Information Society” (Russian Federation) suggests actions to be taken in order to fulfil the new instruction given in the resolution.

In particular, Resolution 131 as revised instructs ITU-D study groups to take into account the relevant findings of the “[Measuring the Information Society Report](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/publications/misr2018.aspx)” (MISR) in order to help Member States bridge the digital divide. The proposals put forward require ITU-D study groups to be more involved in the work of EGTI/EGH through three liaising measures:

1. The ICT Data and Statistics (IDS) Division of BDT should provide information on the [MISR](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/publications/misr2018.aspx) and other relevant ITU statistical publications to study groups.
2. Study Groups 1 and 2 should assign rapporteurs to participate in EGTI/EGH and report back to their respective study groups.
3. Where study groups have topics in their mandate related to ICT indicators included in the ICT Development Index (IDI), they should be involved in the work on the revision of the IDI, as appropriate. When the report from the breakout session was presented in plenary, it was decided that study groups would not conduct work on statistics as it was specialized and the work had to be done within the context of expert groups.

TDAG agreed that IDS staff should present data to study group meetings relevant to questions under consideration. Rapporteurs or vice-chairmen of study groups could also attend the statistical expert meetings and could provide inputs. However, this should not add to the workload of study groups, which should leave the technical discussions to the indicator experts.

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| TDAG agreed that relevant ITU ICT statistics and information on the latest publications should be made available to study groups, that revision or update to such data should occur in the context of the expert groups and that members of study groups can be invited to attend these meetings as appropriate.  |

* 1. **Emergency telecommunications, climate change, e-waste, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS**

[**Document 26**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0026/)**:** “Emergency Telecommunications, Climate Change, E-waste, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS” provides a summary of work on emergency telecommunications, climate change and e-waste and concentrated assistance to least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS).

Activities implemented in 2018 included face-to-face and online training, sharing of guidelines and good practices on ICT access and use as part of policy guidance. A special report “[ICTs, LDCs, and the SDGs – Achieving Universal and Affordable Internet in the LDCs](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/LDCs/Pages/ICTs-for-SDGs-in-LDCs-Report.aspx)” has been published, highlighting that, while Internet access has increased substantially, 800 million people in LDCs are still unconnected.

BDT worked within the Environment Management Group (EMG) and was instrumental in the establishment of what is now known as the E-waste Coalition. During the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, the E-waste Coalition published the report “[A New Circular Vision for Electronics - Time for a Global Reboot](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Climate-Change/Pages/ewaste/A-New-Circular-Vision-for-Electronics-Time-for-a-Global-Reboot.aspx)”, in which ITU and six other UN entities came together, with the support of the World Economic Forum and World Business Council for Sustainable Development, and called for an overhaul of the current electronic system, with the aim of supporting international efforts to address challenges relating to e-waste.

BDT organized the 3rd Global Forum on Emergency Telecommunications (GET-19): Saving Lives, held from 6 to 8 March 2019, in Balaclava, Mauritius. It was attended by multi-stakeholders from governments and private sector, international and non-governmental organizations.

A question was raised as to whether BDT plans to write similar reports on LLDCs and SIDS that face unique challenges due to transit relationship. BDT confirmed that similar reports are being prepared jointly with the Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS in New York.

Clarification was also sought on the methodology used in the [country case studies](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/LDCs/Pages/Publications.aspx) referenced in the document and on whether ITU had discussed possible synergies with the case studies which the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is carrying out under its “[Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment of Least Developed Countries (eT Ready)](https://unctad.org/en/Pages/Publications/E-Trade-Readiness-Assessment.aspx)”, especially given that one of the seven areas of those studies is “ICT infrastructure and services”.

BDT explained that its case studies were carried out on the basis of structured interviews, survey data, and document review which translates to both primary and secondary sources. **The UNCTAD Programme on Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment** was designed to provide a thorough overview of the current e-commerce situation in the countries. BDT works very closely with UNCTAD and the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the role of ICTs in facilitating trade. BDT is a partner on the “e-Trade for All initiative”, and participates in the annual UNCTAD e-Commerce week. UNCTAD and ITU also work closely as members of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development. BDT will create links to the “eT Ready” assessments and explore if UNCTAD could link to ITU’s work on LDCs.

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| TDAG recognized the importance of initiatives on emergency telecommunications, climate change, e-waste, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS. |

* 1. **ITU-D projects**

[**Document 27**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0027/)**:** “ITU-D Projects”provides an overview of the outcomes related to ITU project implementation in the six regions of ITU-D , namely Africa, Americas, Arab States, Asia-Pacific, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Europe, as well as globally.

## Some 20 new projects, valued at around CHF 10.8 million, were developed and signed in 2018. Most projects are developed for Member States, co-financed by ITU and external partners.

## As at year-end 2018, the ITU project portfolio had 63 ongoing projects, valued at CHF 68 413 879 and with the following regional distribution of projects: Asia-Pacific (11); Africa (11); Americas (8); Arab States (9); and CIS (1). ITU projects are mostly funded through extra-budgetary resources. Projects have four types of funding sources: Funds in Trust (FIT), ICT Development Fund (ICTDF), voluntary contributions, and the ITU regular budget. Most projects have at least two funding sources.

Funds from ICTDF are granted as seed money for the implementation of projects related to BDT areas of action in developing and least developed countries. Projects are chosen, based on their potential long-term sustainable impact and their facilitation of multi-national cooperation and partnership.

For the funding of projects to implement the WTDC-17 regional initiatives, ITU Council-18 decided to allocate CHF 2 million for the period 2018-2019 from the 2017 operational plan and included CHF 3 million for 2020-2021 in the Financial Plan 2020-2023. These funds were allocated as seed money in order to attract funds from partners. As an initial step towards the implementation of regional initiatives, ten new projects from all regions were under development at the end of 2018 for implementation from 2019.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

* 1. **Innovation**

[**Document 22**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0022/)**:** “ITU-D Innovation”provides an overview of ITU-D innovation as one of the outputs and goals adopted at WTDC-17 and endorsed at PP-18.

TDAG noted the various actions implemented by BDT, particularly, in knowledge sharing, empowering stakeholders through innovation capacity building and in national innovation ecosystem assessments through close coordination with regional offices. TDAG welcomed the ways forward with regard to strengthening innovation activities, in particular, the launch of new toolkits to accelerate digital transformation, building an entrepreneurial ecosystem and nurturing innovation communities; scaling up expert-led digital innovation profile assessments; increasing innovation capacity building at the national, regional and global levels and creating synergies between different ITU platforms, for example ITU Telecom World and WSIS.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

**Breakout session: ITU-D Innovation**

The breakout session on innovation was carried out with the objective of scaling up the impact and delivery of the innovation programme throughout the organization. Discussions highlighted the need to build a culture of innovation in ITU (potentially by including physical innovation spaces) in line with the objectives set forth by the membership. The need to inject innovation into ITU’s products and services through co-creation with membership and promotion of intrapreneurship were key recommendations. Additionally, the importance was highlighted of a national, regional and global platform that facilitates interaction between stakeholders and enables knowledge sharing for sustainability. Furthermore, other measures, such as a measurement framework to help scale ICT-centric innovation and the development of an innovation assistance fund, were seen as beneficial to scale impact.

1. **Membership, partnership and private sector-related matters**

[**Document 20**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0020/)**:** “ITU-D Sector Membership”provides an overview of the evolution of ITU-D Sector membership and its strategies and actions to strengthen this membership in accordance with the outcomes of WTDC-17 and PP-18.

A number of strategic objectives were highlighted and include reaching out to new entities to join as Sector Members, Associates, Academia and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Reaching out to new entities is done in close coordination and cooperation with regional and area offices at various regional and international events, and goes hand in hand with communicating and promoting BDT programmes, projects, initiatives and actions. A pilot project implemented by ITU-D study groups to encourage SMEs to participate in their work has proved to be an attractive initiative. It is hoped that the decision of PP-18 to introduce reduced fees for SMEs will help increase industry participation, particularly from developing countries. Academia is the main growing segment, with 37 new affiliated academic institutions having joined the work of all three Sectors. Outreach for Academia is led by the General Secretariat, with the support of the three Sectors.

It was noted that in 2018, ITU-D attracted the following eight new Sector Members: ECPAT International (Thailand); World Wide Web Foundation (USA); Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Zambia); Mobile and Wireless Forum IVZW (Belgium); Turkcell Iletisim Hizmetleri A.S (Turkey); Sigma Telecom (Turkey); Symantec Corporation (USA); Masyarakat Telematika Indonesia (Indonesia). Furthermore, the following four joined as Associates: High-tech Bridge SA (Switzerland); Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd. (India); Axon Partners Group Consulting (Spain); and NRD Cyber Security (Lithuania).

During the same period, the following nine Sector Members and one Associate left ITU-D: Sri Lanka Telecom Ltd. (Sri Lanka); Thuraya Telecommunications Company; PT Indosat Tbk. (Indonesia); ADD International (Bangladesh); Sitronics Ex. JSC Intellect Telecom (Russian Federation); Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Co. Ltd. (Guyana); Central Science Research Telecommunications (Russian Federation); UMTS Forum (United Kingdom); Telecom Egypt Data S.A.E (TE Data) (Egypt); and Sysoco (France) (Associate).

In terms of Academia, the following five left all ITU Sectors: Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne (Switzerland); Lund University (Sweden); Aarhus University Department of Engineering (Denmark); University of Groningen (Netherlands); and King Abdullah University of Science (Saudi Arabia).

TDAG discussed measures to increase Sector membership while taking note that Academia and Associate categories are the main growing segments of membership. Member States, regional offices and Sector Member industry associations were invited to further engage and reach out to existing and prospective members, including SMEs, in national and regional events and the Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers (CRO) meeting to be held at GSR-19.

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| BDT agreed to make best efforts to maintain existing members and recruit new ones, and would list all Sector Members in the regions on the Regional Presence website. |

[**Document 21**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0021/)**:** “ITU-D Partnership and resource mobilization” presents the key objective, actions for results-based management, and ways forward to enhance partnership and resource mobilization.

After recalling the importance of partnership and resource mobilization highlighted by WTDC-17 and PP-18, the document presents an overview of the key objective, actions for results-based management, and ways forward to enhance partnership and resource mobilization with diverse stakeholders including other United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations, ITU Member States, ITU-D Sector Members, Associates, Academia and other relevant partners from developed and developing countries, to avoid duplication of efforts and support ITU-D in the implementation of its programmes and the regional initiatives.

More specifically, the document provides an analysis related to partnership status on the number of new partnerships signed during the four-year development cycle. In 2018, forty-three new partnership agreements and seven addenda/amendments were signed between BDT and various stakeholders.

BDT will continue to enhance resource mobilization and strengthen the partnership with multi-stakeholders from not only the ICT sector, but also beyond in the converged ecosystem for the implementation of WTDC-17 outcomes, WSIS Goals, and PP-18 Goals – especially new Goal 5 - as well as the contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SDG 17 in particular.

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| TDAG noted the document. |

**Breakout session: Partnership building and resource mobilization for projects**

The breakout session on partnership building and resource mobilization for projects was carried out with the objective of strengthening strategic partnerships (including resource mobilization) with a variety of stakeholders. Discussions highlighted the need to adopt a multi-stakeholder platform approach, taking into consideration the interests and complementary capabilities of all parties, not only the beneficiary countries. A more flexible and modular approach towards project design and implementation was recommended for a more inclusive stakeholder participation at different stages of the project cycle. The importance was stressed of enhancing awareness-raising of ITU’s work including partnership opportunities, and exploring more strategic alliances with development banks and other UN agencies. Lastly, participants recalled the key role of ITU membership in promoting the work of ITU-D and supporting resource mobilization efforts for regional initiatives and projects.

1. **Calendar of ITU-D events**

[**Document 15**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG24-C-0015/)**:** “Calendar of ITU-D Events in 2019-2022”provides an overview of major meetings foreseen in this period, including the world telecommunication development conference to be held in the last quarter of 2021, in line with Resolution 77 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) on the scheduling of future conferences, forums, assemblies and Council sessions for the period 2019-2023.

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| TDAG noted the document and stressed the need to avoid consecutive meetings of study groups, TDAG and WSIS. |

**ANNEX 1**

**Areas of work of TDAG Chairman and Vice-chairmen**

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|  | **Key Areas of Work** | **Leaders/**Co-leaders |
| 1 | Strategic Plan, Operational Plan and Declaration | **Ms Blanca Gonzalez** (Spain)Mr Christopher Kipkoech Kemei(Kenya)Mr Wim Rullens (Netherlands) |
| 2 | Rules of procedure of ITU-D(WTDC Resolution 1) | **Ms Regina Fleur Assoumou Bessou**, Chairman, Study Group 1 (Côte d'Ivoire)Mr Nguyen Quy Quyen (Viet Nam) |
| 3 | Collaboration with other Sectors | **Mr Arseny Plossky** (Russian Federation)Mr Al-ansari Almashakbeh (Jordan) |
| 4 | Capacity building and Academia | **Mr Ahmad Reza Sharafat**, Chairman, Study Group 2 (Islamic Republic of Iran)Mr Abdulkarim Ayopo Oloyede (Nigeria)Mr Hugo Darío Miguel (Argentina)Mr Tariq H Alamri (Saudi Arabia) |
| 5 | Private sector | **Mr Kishore Babu GSC Yerraballa** (India)Mr Al-ansari Almashakbeh (Jordan) |
| 6 | TDAG mandate (WTDC Resolution 24) | **Ms Roxanne McElvane Webber** (United States of America) |

**ANNEX 2**

**Summaries of TDAG-19 breakout sessions**

1. **Process and governance topics**

**1.1 Partnership building and resource mobilization for projects**

**Key takeaways:**

* The Telecommunication Bureau (BDT) is to focus on a multi-stakeholder platform approach taking into consideration the interests and complementary capabilities of all parties, not only the beneficiary countries.
* BDT is to consider a flexible and modular approach towards project design (governance structure, type of agreements and time-frame) and implementation (global and regional partnerships/projects open to embracing new partners at various stages).
* BDT and its membership are to enhance awareness-raising of ITU’s work, including partnership opportunities, exploring more strategic alliances with development banks and other UN agencies.
* Recall ITU-D membership’s key role in promoting the work of ITU-D and supporting resource mobilization efforts for regional initiatives and projects.

**Discussion summary:**

The ITU Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) breakout session on partnership building and resource mobilization for projects was carried out with the objective of strengthening strategic partnerships (including resource mobilization) with a variety of stakeholders. Discussions focused on the need to adopt a multi-stakeholder platform approach for which projects can be modulated to accommodate interests from beneficiaries, donors and other partners. In particular, participants agreed on the need to better understand private-sector motivations and seek closer alignment with those of beneficiary countries.

A more flexible and modular approach towards project design and implementation was recommended. For all partners to benefit from the project and to ensure inclusiveness, their interests and capabilities should be matched within the structure of the project. Flexibility is required regarding the types of agreements and partnerships to enable partners to get involved at different stages.

Platforms for sharing information and opportunities were mentioned, while recognizing that the current fundraising scenario is very competitive. Participants agreed on the need for further efforts to raise awareness of ITU’s work and project portfolio. It was recommended that ITU continue to explore large-scale projects with strategic partners such as development banks and other UN agencies to (i) raise ITU’s visibility, (ii) avoid duplications and (iii) open to new sources of funds and partners.

National experiences with public-private partnerships (PPPs) were also shared, highlighting the importance of having appropriate national legislation and systems in place for the smooth functioning of PPPs. A forth “P” was noted, related to placing “people” (civil society) at the centre to thereby ensure a more inclusive approach. The concept of an “anchor partner” was shared, i.e. the key player(s) with high stakes in a project and therefore an interest in securing its success.

Lastly, participants recognized the competitiveness of fundraising. While ITU is a catalyst, as it already brings multistakeholders together, it requires support from its membership in its effort to mobilize resources. It was therefore recommended that ITU membership take an active role in promoting the work of BDT for partnerships.

**1.2 The role of regional presence**

The discussions of the participants included suggestions on ways the regional and area offices can better respond to the needs of the members, represent the ITU as a whole, leverage ITU’s membership in the wider UN family by working with UN Resident Coordinators, and endeavour to increase its presence for countries. Field offices should monitor and evaluate projects in the field and bridge information flows between members. It was suggested to consider a specific number of online and physical meetings with countries and reflect that in a calendar shared with members.

Necessary human and financial resources should be reviewed in view of the limited resources available. In this regard, the financial procedures, transfer of funds for specific projects in the region, and related controls should also be reviewed.

The need to ensure that regional and area offices possess the right skill sets in order to be able to provide direct assistance to members was also stressed. Bringing the work of the study groups closer to the countries was also noted. Capacity building for field office staff should be conducted.

Participants discussed the need to strengthen collaboration and synergies between the regional and area offices, and other ITU Sectors. To that end, the roles and relationships concerning cooperation between Sectors and field offices should be further clarified.

Participants also emphasized the need to comply with Joint Inspection Unit recommendations.

**1.3 WTDC preparatory process and format**

Policy statements, regional preparatory meetings, inter-regional meetings, WTDC committees, other stakeholders, and regional initiatives.

Participants highlighted that during the previous WTDC, the first three days were largely spent on policy statements. It was emphasized based on the experience of the last Plenipotentiary Conference that committees should start their meetings as soon as possible and preferably from day one of the conference, the policy statements could run in parallel with committee meetings. It was further suggested to consider organizing dialogue sessions/round tables one day prior to WTDC opening.

The discussions on regional preparatory meetings (RPMs) were focused on how these meetings could become more effective. There was general agreement that RPMs should be held back-to-back or together with other preparatory meetings organized by regional organizations. The group discussed as well that organizing informal inter-regional meetings could also facilitate discussion during WTDC, and suggested that this meeting(s) can be scheduled one day before the last TDAG prior to WTDC.

It was highlighted that there is a need to balance the work between committees (in particular committees 3 and 4), and also run committees in parallel as necessary. It was also suggested to engage more closely with other stakeholders, including academia and NGOs in the preparatory process.

The need to have a full understanding of the financial implications of conference proposals, including the regional initiatives, prior to their adoption was stressed.

**1.4 ITU-D study groups - increasing efficiency**

**Key takeaways:**

* **In-depth discussions in ITU-D study groups could be facilitated** by ensuring the participation of experts and providing stakeholders with opportunities to exchange experiences (1-1 matchmaking, online collaboration and exchange, etc.), in addition to the formal study group settings.
* While the content of the deliverables was satisfactory overall, further efforts are needed to **raise awareness, present and share** such reports and guidelines. Consolidated topical reports and the revision of existing reports to ensure that they reflect the changing digital environment was encouraged.
* Countries in particular regions would further benefit from **deliverables that are customized to the specific needs of the regions.** Such a regional focus and additional in-depth input from the countries could be achieved through closer collaboration with regional and area offices.

**Discussion summary:**

1. Regarding possible improvements to **ITU-D study groups as exchange platforms**, the following points were raised:
* Ensure a **more flexible work structure and time management plan** by allocating time to each rapporteur group in proportion to the number of contributions received for consideration. This would require a flexible time management plan that is fixed when the contribution deadline is reached. At the same, changing the time management plan too close to the meeting should be avoided to allow members to plan their participation relating to specific Questions of interest. Extending the deadline from 12 days to around 30 days may therefore be required.
* Encourage **more active use of the collaborative site** that facilitates online exchange of information during and between meetings (e.g. use of the platform to connect members with specific questions with members who have experiences in a specific area).
* Encourage “**speed-dating” sessions** by organizing in-depth exchange sessions to facilitate the sharing of experiences among specific countries and stakeholders to better understand commonalities, differences and lessons learned.
* Encourage **participation of authors of contributions** to ensure that sufficient expertise is available to answer more in-depth questions from other members when contributions are presented.
* Encourage **an open discussion between members of the management teams**, for example, to discuss what actions are undertaken by each member, identify problems to better measure progress made, etc.
1. Regarding the quality of **ITU-D study group deliverables** and ensuring their usefulness for the ITU membership, the following points were raised:
* **Dissemination of deliverables/reports**: the reports are of good quality, countries need to be more aware of them to assist them in responding to their national priorities. One possible approach is to extend expert meetings and exchanges in the regions on the topics under study and the deliverables that are elaborated on.
* **Consolidation of deliverables/reports**: centralize all information on a topic in a single document and consider revising existing reports instead of creating a new report on the same topic. Parts of reports that are common to several Questions could be merged and shared in topical reports.
* **Revision of current deliverables/reports**: consider revising the reports on Question topics that span several study periods rather than creating new ones (as is currently done for ITU-D Recommendations and in ITU-R study groups).
* **Region-specific reports**: reports, guidelines and/or conclusions could be tailored to meet the specific needs of the different regions.
* **Language and user-friendliness of reports**: a more **user-friendly and focused presentation** of the deliverables/reports explaining complex technical matters in a **simple language** was encouraged, noting that policy-makers are not necessarily technical experts.
1. Regarding the **generation of great inputs for excellent outputs**, a suggestion was made to **work more closely with regional offices**. National data that are collected in the countries in the regions could be made available to the study groups for specific studies, through close collaboration between the regional ITU-D Study Group 1 and 2 vice-chairmen, the Directors and focal points in the regional and area offices. Regional groups for ITU-D study groups, or certain study Questions, could be established as is done in ITU-T study groups.
2. **Programme topics**

**2.1 ICT data and statistics**

**Key takeaways:**

* Trust, relevance, visibility, accessibility to data and cooperation are essential components to re-establish ITU as the main global source for ICT statistics.
* Be pragmatic and realistic when including new indicators in the ICT Development Index (IDI). Revisit the conceptual framework and focus on indicators with widely available quality data.
* There are benefits and drawbacks to dividing the Measuring the Information Society Report into a series of smaller, more focused, high-impact reports. Cost implications need to be studied, including translation into all official ITU languages.
* The IDI analysis should explore various factors, including the size of the country, and should go beyond reporting rankings by also providing policy recommendations.

**Discussion summary:**

The discussion on ICT data and statistics centred on three questions. The first was how to re-establish ITU as the main global source for ICT data. Trust, relevance, visibility, accessibility to data and cooperation with diverse stakeholders were seen to be the essential components. Visibility and accessibility can be improved by ensuring that access to statistics is free and simple through the ITU website. This would prevent users from having recourse to other organizations that are using ITU data without due acknowledgement. Trust can be enhanced by ensuring that the website reflects the most recent version of methodologies. By developing methodologies and collecting data on emerging trends and new services, such as social media, OTT, IoT and AI, ITU will remain a relevant actor. It is important to reinforce and establish partnerships with other stakeholders, such as OECD and Eurostat and with other ITU Sectors. The functioning of expert groups can be improved by leveraging the vast knowledge of study groups when developing indicators on new topics, such as spectrum allocation. ITU delegates should have automatic access to the online expert groups, for example through their TIES account.

The second question focused on problems encountered in the 2018 IDI calculations and a possible way forward for the publication of the IDI in 2019. It was noted that during the IDI revision in 2017, indicators were proposed for inclusion therein without addressing what the underlying conceptual framework should be, leading to an unstable index. While some of the new indicators were appropriate, such as mobile network coverage, others have low data availability and are not fully harmonized among countries. Currently, too many data must be estimated. An assessment should be conducted if sufficient high-quality data are available before the inclusion of a new indicator. ITU should be realistic and pragmatic. Partnerships should be strengthened with other international and regional organizations, NGOs, academia, etc., and countries should have access to the raw data.

The third question concerned the publication of the Measuring the Information Society Report as a single report or as a series of smaller, more focused reports, which would also ensure a more timely release of the data. While a number of delegates noted that a series of shorter reports would enhance the visibility and impact of ITU data, others observed that since many different reports were already released every year – from ITU and from other organizations – there were benefits to maintaining the collated report. In any case, the financial implications should be studied, including translation of all reports into all official languages. Certain analytical suggestions were made. IDI rankings should be accompanied by recommendations for countries on improving their ranking. The report should also analyse the impact of various factors on the ranking, such as size of the country, and discuss separately landlocked developing countries and small island developing states. A high level of interest was also expressed in the price basket analysis.

**2.2 ITU-D Innovation**

**Key takeaways:**

* Build an innovation culture at ITU: ITU should inject innovation into its products and services through creation with membership and promotion of intrapreneurship, developing innovative business models, innovation risk management and an innovation lab.
* Encourage membership to help scale ICT-centric innovation works: a national, regional or global platform should be developed that facilitates interaction among stakeholders (including diaspora) and shares success stories, good practices, problems and solutions.
* Scale assistance to countries: provision should be made for an innovation road map and institutional framework for its implementation, and a measurement framework to help scale ICT-centric innovation.
* Help accelerate the innovation agenda of countries: innovation assistance funds can be established to accelerate countries’ innovation agendas.

**Discussion summary:**

**1. How can ITU build a culture of innovation throughout the organization?**

* ITU, in designing products and services, must inject innovation by co-creating and involving Member States (all stakeholders, young people, both genders, and persons with disabilities and specific needs) using a structured approach at the early stages.
* Other proposals included promoting intrapreneurship, building frameworks to address the objectives set by Member States and developing innovative business models to deliver sustainably on the objectives.
* The breakout group also noted the lack of experimentation space in ITU and proposed that ITU build an innovation lab.

**2. How might ITU membership help scale assistance to the countries to foster ICT-centric innovation ecosystems?**

* A platform is needed to work with all stakeholders in clusters, providing a space for people to improve innovation in their communities at an early stage.
* Countries should be encouraged to showcase their innovations, products and services, enabling people to find solutions and addressing similar challenges shared by others. For example, regional offices can consider a system allowing them to highlight specific innovative ideas brought by a particular country.
* Countries can share good practices with others through ITU.
* Countries require national entities to steer their innovations. They should establish a national innovation agenda and mechanisms for development, and receive assistance in building their road maps to scale implementation.

**3. How might countries contribute to sharing of good practices, monitoring of ICT innovation capabilities and developing action plans that address the growing digital innovation gap?**

* ITU should develop a key performance indicator system for countries to monitor and measure the progress of innovation within their countries.
* Innovation assistance funds can help accelerate the innovation agenda.

**2.3 Telecoms/ICT network infrastructure**

**Key takeaways:**

* Compilation of case studies on last mile connectivity, for example business and financing models, regulations and policies, and preparation of guidelines on the possible solutions.
* Creation of a platform to engage different stakeholders and promotion of collaboration on last mile connectivity and services.
* Promotion of the visibility and use of broadband maps, for example, through a link on the regulators’ and ICT ministries’ web pages.
* Promotion of the impacts and benefits of the analogue to digital broadcasting transition in specific regions and countries.

**Discussion summary:**

The discussion on telecoms/ICT network infrastructure focused on the following questions:

1. How can ITU/ BDT most effectively assist countries in improving their last mile connectivity?
2. How can the information contained in the broadband maps be best used?
3. What are the impediments countries are facing to completing the digital broadcasting transition and how can ITU assist them?

The discussion on Question 1 recognized that although different resources exist relating to last mile connectivity, the material is not easily accessible. It was also acknowledged that gaps in last mile connectivity exist both within a country and between neighboring countries. The main suggestions are:

* compilation of case studies on last mile connectivity, presenting the countries’ experiences and practices, business models, policies and regulations;
* consideration of community network models in policies and regulations by the regulators;
* development of policies and regulations to promote the last mile connectivity between and within countries;
* innovative thinking around financing, business and taxation models to promote last mile connectivity;
* creation of a platform to engage stakeholders (e.g. through success stories and business cases) and promote cooperation between satellite and terrestrial operators to provide last mile connectivity;
* use the universal service/access funds for last mile connectivity projects;
* creation of new business models to attract additional funding.

Regarding question 2, the importance of the data being collected and displayed on the broadband map was acknowledged. These data provide reliable information on broadband, for example for investments. Drawing on another example from an NGO, access to the broadband map was recalled to promote innovation, allowing users to consider new solutions to connectivity problems. Recommendations were made for greater visibility of the broadband map on the ITU website and other platforms, to allow more people to use and contribute to the map. Regulators and ICT ministries could be invited to include a link to the broadband map on their website, for example. Lastly, it was suggested that countries should be asked to provide data.

Concerning question 3, participants recognized that migration issues were central to countries’ policies. Promotion of the impacts and benefits of migration (e.g. through workshops and platforms) and ITU’s involvement in the policies, regulations and implementation at country level was proposed.

**2.4 Capacity building and skills development**

**Key takeaways:**

* ITU should extend its capacity development activities and provide digital skills training to those at the bottom of the pyramid and reach the unconnected. Training-of-trainers is a good approach in this regard.
* ITU should also provide training for decision-makers, including from non-ICT sectors. This training should be policy-related and not overly technical.
* Certified training is the best approach towards capacity building as it adds value and has a greater impact.
* Regional telecommunication organizations and local community networks should be involved in identifying gaps and reaching out to all citizens.

**Discussion summary:**

Around 30 delegates participated in the breakout group, including representatives from countries and Geneva missions. All three questions received due attention, with more emphasis on question 3 regarding extending ITU’s work on capacity and skills development to other target audiences. There was overall agreement that certified, structured training courses have greater value and impact compared with typical capacity-building workshops. In addition to the courses currently offered on the ITU Academy platform, training was also needed for policy-makers at decision-making and less technical levels. There was agreement that ITU should expand its capacity development work and provide digital skills training to those at the bottom of the pyramid and outside the ICT sector. In order to reach those currently unconnected, basic digital skills training for all age groups was required. Such capacity-building work could be performed by involving local community networks, and developing and implementing training-of-trainers courses. Regional telecommunication organizations could help in the process of mapping capacity development initiatives, selecting experts, and identifying digital skills gaps and needs in the regions. An interregional approach could strengthen capacity development efforts and increase impact.

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1. Key areas of work for members of the TDAG Bureau can be found in Annex 1 to this report. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)