**Summary:** We would like to propose the following as the overall theme for WTDC-21:

* Building Back Better: Bridging the Digital Divide

**Action required:** Discussion

The Administrations of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Lithuania are pleased to provide the following contribution for discussion at the next session of WTDC WG-Prep.

We continue to believe that WTDC-21 offers an invaluable opportunity to put the development sector’s critical work at the centre of the effort to ensure that all people in all countries have access to affordable, high quality broadband.

We would additionally like to propose the following as the overall theme for WTDC-21 itself:

* Building Back Better: Bridging the Digital Divide

In our view, there is no more important contribution that WTDC can make than to bring the development agencies, ITU’s members and stakeholders, and financial institutions together to take stock of what’s required to finally meet the challenge of ensuring affordable connectivity for all people, everywhere and to collaborate on action. The ITU is uniquely placed, as the international organisation dedicated to telecommunications, to be at the centre of this effort.

As so many have said, the pandemic has made starkly clear that people without fast, affordable connectivity are at a very significant disadvantage compared to those who are well-connected. We cannot allow those left behind to get further behind; on the contrary, we need to ensure they can catch up.

We see this challenge as the greatest the telecommunications community faces, but also our greatest opportunity. We must seize it, and to do so, we must design WTDC-21 around that objective. Adopting a theme that makes that vision and objective clear is essential.

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| C:\Users\comas\AppData\Local\Temp\Rar$DRa0.735\jpg\ITU official logo_blue_RGB.jpg**TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations**  **30 September 2020, Virtual** | | |
|  | | **Document TDAG-WG-Prep/15-E** |
|  | | **18 September 2020** |
|  | | **Original: English** |
| **Source:** | Lithuania, United Kingdom | |
| **Title:** | Proposal for overall theme for WTDC-21 | |

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