|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Telecommunication Development** **Advisory Group (TDAG)**  **31st Meeting, Geneva, Switzerland, 20-23 May 2024** | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
|  |  |
|  | **Document** **TDAG-2****4/2-E** |
|  | **7 May 2024** |
|  | **Original:** **English** |
| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau | |
| Reporting on the implementation of the Kigali Action Plan (KAP) | |
|  | |
| **Summary:**  This document provides a report on the implementation of the Kigali Action Plan (KAP) from **June 2023 until April 2024**, highlighting key achievements across regions, in line with KAP objectives. It also reports on the results of an exercise undertaken by BDT to aggregate the key performance indicators (KPIs) as requested by TDAG-23.  **Action required:**  TDAG is requested to review this report and to provide guidance as deemed appropriate.  **References:**  WTDC-22 Kigali Action Plan  Document TDAG-23/DT/3 | |

**Introduction**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-22) was convened in Kigali, Rwanda, from 6 to 16 June 2022, and adopted the [Kigali Action Plan](https://www.itu.int/en/publications/ITU-D/Pages/publications.aspx?parent=D-TDC-WTDC-2022&media=electronic) (KAP). The plan includes ITU-D priorities and enablers, the expected outcomes and outputs in the form of ITU-D products and services, a set of regional initiatives, new and revised resolutions, Recommendations, and ITU-D study Questions. It aligns with the thematic priorities of ITU as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) action lines.

This document reports on the implementation of the KAP from June 2023 until April 2024. It highlights the results achieved in each region, in alignment with the ITU-D priorities and enablers, through ITU-D core services as set out in the KAP. It also reports on the result of exercises undertaken by BDT to aggregate the key performance indicators (KPIs) as requested by the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group in 2023 (TDAG-23).

Annex 2 of this document contains the dashboards summarizing the implementation of the 2023 operational plan following a result-based management (RBM) framework.

**Figure 1: 2023 Operational planning: Outcomes, outputs and activities**

Chart, funnel chart

Description automatically generated

**Aggregation of the Kigali Action Plan key performance indicators**

The last session of TDAG, held from 19 to 23 June 2023 reviewed and approved key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Kigali Action Plan (KAP) implementation framework. A total of 87 KPIs were presented to TDAG of which 73 were approved. TDAG proposed further refinement and streamlining of the KPIs to provide high-level indication of overall progress.

This exercise has resulted in a total of 18 outcome indicators and 27 output indicators.

The outcome indicators will track BDT contributions to the outcomes set out in the Kigali Action Plan, in alignment with the needs of the next WTDC in 2025, while the output indicators will track, on an annual basis, the delivery of various ITU-D products and services, as specified in the ITU-D operational plan.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ITU-D priorities | Outcome indicators |
| Affordable connectivity | Number of countries with a national emergency telecommunication plan as part of their national and local disaster risk reduction strategies. |
| Number of least developed countries (LDCs), land-locked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS) with broadband plans. |
| Percentage of countries with available data where at least 90 per cent of the population is covered by 3G network or higher. |
| Digital transformation | Number of countries having adopted a digital sectoral strategy at the national level. |
| Number of countries having adopted innovation strategies and initiatives. |
| Enabling policy and regulatory environment | Number of countries with digital skills strategies at national level. |
| Number of countries advancing to the next generation of regulation (G1-G4) and/or to a higher level of preparedness for the digital transformation (G5). |
| Percentage of Member States that submitted valid data no older than two years for at least 80 per cent of the indicators of the ITU World Telecommunication Indicators short questionnaire. |
| Percentage of Member States submitting valid data no older than three years for at least 80 per cent of the indicators for the ITU’s household questionnaire. |
| Percentage of Member States that submitted valid gender disaggregated data no older than three years for the indicator ‘Share of individuals using the Internet’. |
| Percentage of Member States that submitted valid location disaggregated data (rural/urban) no older than three years for the indicator ‘share of individuals using the Internet’. |
| Percentage of Member States that submitted valid data no older than three years for at least five of the information and communication technologies (ICTs) skills listed in the questionnaire. |
| Inclusive and secure telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development | Number of countries having adopted cybersecurity strategies in their national development agenda. |
| Number of countries with a computer incident response team (CIRT). |
| Number of Member States increasing commitment to cybersecurity measured through the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI). |
| Number of countries with online child support systems identified (e.g., helplines, referral systems). |
| Resource mobilization, partnerships and international cooperation[[1]](#footnote-2) | Number of ICT development agreements signed between ITU and partners to support implementation of the Kigali Action Plan. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ITU-D Enablers | Indicators (mainly outputs) |
| Diversity and inclusion | Number of countries having developed a digital inclusion policy and strategy at national level. |
| Commitment to environmental sustainability | Number of countries having adopted an e-waste policy, legislation or regulation at national level. |
| Membership-driven | Number of new ITU-D members. |
| Excellence in human resources and organizational innovation | Number of staff training and development initiatives undertaken by BDT staff. |
| Average level of staff performance. |
| Percentage of OP budget implementation. |
| Number of project agreements signed per year. |
| Percentage of projects on track. |
| Regional presence | Number of information and communication technologies (ICTs) development agreements implemented in collaboration with UN agencies and other partners. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Output indicators (ITU-D products and services) | |
| Development of policy frameworks and knowledge products | Number of handbooks, technical reports and papers developed[[2]](#footnote-3). |
| Number of Member States assisted in developing policy frameworks. |
| Number of tools /frameworks/ resources developed. |
| Number of best practice guidelines elaborated. |
| Capacity development | Number of professionals trained and certified in telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) topics. |
| Number of individuals trained in basic and intermediate digital skills. |
| Number of ITU Academy users. |
| Number of individuals participating in capacity development activities led by BDT. |
| Provision of data and statistics | Number of data points available in published dataset. |
| Number of weekly users on ITU Datahub. |
| Percentage of Member States approving the new IDI methodology. |
| Number of digital companies tracked to monitor emissions, energy use and climate commitments. |
| Provision of technical assistance | Number of Member States having received technical assistance. |
| Number of WTDC resolutions implemented. |
| Number of project agreements signed per year. |
| Convening platforms | Number of partnerships signed. |
| Percentage of partnerships signed with United Nations agencies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) development matters. |
| Number of participants in regional development forums (RDFs), regional dialogues, and BDT-led events. |

**Progress Report June 2023 - April 2024**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Priority 1: Affordable connectivity**  ***Fostering the development of secure, modern and affordable infrastructure and services through telecommunications/ICTs*** | | |
| **Emergency Telecommunication**  ***Outcome:*** *Strengthened capacity of Member States to use telecommunications/ICTs for disaster risk reduction and management, to ensure availability of emergency telecommunications, and support cooperation in this area* | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Highlights** |
| From June 2023, the BDT continued to deploy a range of products and services, providing assistance to Member States to enhance confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs. Policy frameworks and knowledge products were developed, capacity development initiatives delivered, and technical assistance provided, which collectively **enhanced capacity of Member States to use ICTs for disaster risk reduction and management and ensure availability of emergency telecommunications.**  BDT also provided support to Member States in their efforts to **strengthen the capacity to use ICTs to build effective early warning systems and save lives through the Early Warning for All initiative.**  BDT also contributed to **strengthened capacity of Member States to swiftly deploy satellite telecommunication terminals, and coordinate national response post-disasters, and support the pre-positioning of emergency telecommunication satellite equipment** to reduce response times in the aftermath of disasters. The equipment is currently pre-positioned in the World Food Programme (WFP) emergency telecommunications cluster (ETC) warehouse in Dubai to assist the Arab States, Africa and Asia-Pacific regions. Zimbabwe has been selected as a central hub to support SADC countries, while Barbados will serve a similar role in the Americas region in times of disaster. ITU headquarters will maintain oversight and manage the deployment of equipment across these regions.  Further, through the **Early Warning for All (EW4ALL) initiative,** in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), ITU organized a series of workshops held across regions including Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Barbados, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Lao P.D.R., Nepal, Somalia, Tajikistan, Uganda. The workshops served as collaborative platforms for countries for sharing insights and best practices on early warning systems. Additionally, at the COP-28 conference, [Early Warnings for All: Artificial Intelligence to Unlock the Potential of Early Warning Systems](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Emergency-Telecommunications/Pages/AI-COP-28.aspx), ITU, UNDRR, and IFRC spearheaded initiatives focused on leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance these systems, accelerating processes and addressing gaps to achieve the goals of the EW4ALL initiative. The collective efforts garnered significant support from global partnerships, including UN agencies and international financing institutions such as UNDP, UNDRR, WMO, and the World Bank, generating commitments and pledges amounting to **USD 15 million,** reflecting **strengthened partnerships and recognition of the transformative potential of the Early Warning for All initiative.**   * **In Africa**, BDT assisted 16 members of the SADC region in identifying priorities for each Member State in terms of the use of ICTs for disaster management, including developing **national emergency telecommunication plans (NETPs).** In addition, BDT supported Ethiopia, Madagascar, and Mozambique in their efforts to strengthen capacity to use ICTs to build effective early warning systems by developing **Early Warnings for All roadmaps**. With the support of **Connect2Recover** (C2R) initiative, BDT supported Rwanda in the development of a national emergency telecommunication plan (NETP) and its preparedness for the early warning system. * **In the Americas**, BDT enhanced disaster management and preparedness for Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago through capacity development intervention in collaboration with GSMA and the World Food Programme (WFP) emergency telecommunications cluster (ETC), which attracted different stakeholders from Caribbean countries, UN regional organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), disaster management organizations, among others. * **In the** **Asia-Pacific**, country-level assessments were undertaken for Bhutan, Lao P.D.R., Nepal, and the Philippines to highlight the gaps in national digital infrastructure resilience, policy and regulatory preparedness to deal with disruptions, affordability of ICT services, and the situation regarding EW4ALL. A recent survey showed that a further 10 countries from the Asia-Pacific region expressed interest in working with ITU on such assessments. * **In the Arab States**, **the Americas, and Europe,** BDT assisted Member States in developing **national emergency telecommunication plans (NETPs).** The NETPs were validated by national stakeholders in Iraq, Somalia, and the State of Palestine. Stakeholders also came together to implement the [Common Alerting Protocol (CAP](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Emergency-Telecommunications/Pages/Common-Alerting-Protocol-and-Call-to-Action.aspx)) in Somalia, resulting in enhanced awareness and cooperation among government bodies, NGOs, and regional UN organizations, paving the way for more effective **disaster management strategies**. * **In the Asia-Pacific**, frameworks for **early warning dissemination and communication systems** were established in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Maldives, and Lao P.D.R. ITU discussed with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre) to build an e**mergency telecommunication network (ETN),** strengthening collaboration in the region. In partnership with Pacific Islands Telecommunication Association (PITA)**,** ITU [**continued to conduct Emergency Telecommunications Readiness and ICT Infrastructure Resilience Testing**](https://events.pita.org.fj/PITAStrategyForum2023)for Pacific. The first testing was conducted earlier in 2024 during the PITA Annual General Meeting in Papua New Guinea. * **In** **Europe,** a feasibility study encompassing technical, economic, and regulatory analysis to implement an **early warning system based on cell broadcast** technology was conducted in Moldova. Additionally, discussions on the development of a national emergency telecommunication plan and early warning system was launched in Georgia. Both studies were supported by the partners of C2R. | | **NETPs**   * + **Africa:** Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.   + **Americas:** Ecuador, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.   + **Arab States:** Iraq, Somalia, the State of Palestine.   + **Asia-Pacific:** Kiribati, Tonga.   + **Europe:** Georgia, Moldova.   **EW4ALL:**   * + **Africa:** Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique.   + **Americas:** Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti (countries identified for the 1st phase).   + **Asia-Pacific:** Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Lao P.D.R., Maldives, Nepal.   + **Arab States:** Somalia.   + **CIS:** Tajikistan.   **Equipment deployment:**   * + **Africa:** Zimbabwe (Hub for SADC countries).   + **Americas:** Barbados (to assist the Caribbean region).   + **Arab States:** Dubai (to assist Arab States, Africa, Asia and the Pacific). |
| **Network & Digital Infrastructure**  ***Outcome:*** *Improved telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and service, in particular broadband coverage* | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Highlights** |
| Through infrastructure mapping and analysis conducted in the later part of 2023, BDT made significant contributions in various regions that have resulted in **increased awareness of ICT infrastructure gaps in 21 countries, enabling better decision making on broadband coverage and resilience.** Data research, collection, and processing of ICT infrastructure data was conducted across **Africa, Americas, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and the CIS regions**. Connectivity and infrastructure analysis were presented to Member States, with tailored infrastructure maps produced for each of the 21 countries, enhancing global broadband mapping efforts.  BDT delivered capacity-building interventions, including ICT mapping workshops in Brazil, [**Kazakhstan**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Pages/Events/2023/Connectivity%20Week.aspx)**,**[**Sierra Leone**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Africa/Pages/EVENTS/2023/workshop-sierra-leone.aspx)**, and** [**Uzbekistan**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Pages/News/14062023.aspx)as part of the ITU-Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) project, resulting in **enhanced capacity in those countries to expand connectivity to rural and underserved areas.** Further, through the ITU-FCDO project, a self-paced training on [Infrastructure mapping and planning](https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/introduction-broadband-mapping) was launched through the ITU Academy, attracting 440 ICT professionals.  ​   * **In Africa**, under C2R, a resilience assessment was carried out in Zimbabwe to strengthen telecommunication/ICT infrastructure in the country for economic recovery from pandemics. Supported by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom, a study was carried out in Nigeria on the operational costs of the telecommunication infrastructure and connectivity. In Kenya, a study was conducted on sustainable Internet connectivity operating models, as well as an additional study into last mile connectivity projects. In South Africa, research was conducted on sustainable connectivity and digital skills models for youth not in employment, education, or training. * **In the Americas and Arab States, the capacity of Member States to develop ICT infrastructure business plans for a sustainable ICT ecosystem was enhanced** through the publication of the [ICT infrastructure business planning toolkit – 5G networks](https://www.itu.int/hub/publication/d-pref-ef-ict_struct_kit-2023/), supported by ICT business planning workshops with participation from over 60 countries worldwide. **In the Americas**, under C2R, a resilience assessment was carried out in Grenada to strengthen telecommunication/ICT infrastructure for economic recovery from pandemics and natural hazards. In Brazil, as part of the ITU-FCDO project, a working group was established consisting of members from Anatel, Nic.br, FCDO and others to propose improvements in the usability of the mapping interface developed as part of the project. * **In the Asia-Pacific,** BDT provided technical assistance to Sri Lanka to **enhance the affordability of ICT services** through the establishment of national guidelines for active and passive infrastructure sharing. Direct country assistance was provided to Mongolia to conduct a **market readiness assessment for the introduction of national roaming** in the country. Tonga was assisted in developing **national guidelines for quality of service/experience (QoS/E),** with an emphasis on reducing downtime.   Direct country assistance was also provided to **Fiji for an assessment of the digital TV model**. In addition, a pre-summit masterclass was conducted on a series of training workshops on the Spectrum Management System for Developing Countries (SMS4DC) tool were conducted for India. This included two virtual sessions and a one-week training in New Delhi. In response to multiple requests, a dedicated SMS4DC training has also been planned during the Annual General Meeting in Vanuatu.   * **In the CIS**, the **capacity of Member States to deploy 5G networks was enhanced** through trainings in Armenia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Research exploring the actual use and quality of connectivity in schools and local network infrastructure resiliency was conducted in connected schools in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, and presented at the Central Asia School Connectivity Week in Kostanay, Kazakhstan, in September 2023. * **In Europe**, technical assistance was delivered in Ukraine in the field of **rehabilitation of broadcasting stations,** which led to the elaboration of project prospects for 10 broadcasting stations, demonstrating the strengthened partnerships and collaboration in support of meaningful connectivity projects.   Following coordination with the public authorities of Ukraine, BDT has initiated special technical assistance focusing on **human capacity development for Ukraine officials working in the itdigital sector**, primarily focusing on 5G roll out, network design, network security, regulation for digital transformation.  As part of the ITU/BDT, European Mediterranean Regulators Group and the Eastern Partnership Electronic Communications Regulators Network (**ITU-EMERG-EAPEREG) work on mapping systems**, the capacity of 18 countries was built through a series of three workshops organized as part of the digital regulation network. This effort also resulted in the development of a compendium of case studies showcasing broadband mapping system capabilities across the EMERG and EaPeReg region.  The establishment of an **IPv6 laboratory** created new opportunities for Montenegro and neighbouring countries to scale up human capacity building programmes. BDT also supported Albania in the updating of its **broadband mapping systems,** and G5 Regulation Training was held in Bosnia and Herzegovina.  Technical assistance was provided to Albania for the development of technical specifications aimed at enhancing Atlas, the broadband mapping system in Albanian. The goal of these specifications is to bolster the functionality of broadband mapping systems, enabling the national regulatory authority and other stakeholders in Albania to utilize broadband mapping data more effectively. This, in turn, is intended to improve evidence-based decision-making processes and promote the development of digital infrastructure within the country. | | **Broadband Maps:**   * + **Africa:** Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Zimbabwe.   + **Americas:** Barbados, Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Grenada, Honduras, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago.   + **Arab States:** Sudan.   + **Asia-Pacific:** India, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Tonga.   + **CIS:** Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Uzbekistan.   + **Europe:** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Georgia, Israel, Latvia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Poland, Slovenia, Türkiye. |
| **Contributing to SDG Targets** | SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 | |
| **WSIS Action** | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C11 | |
| **Resolutions:** | PP 136; WTDC 34, 43, 66; WRC 646, 647; SGQ 1/1, 3/1, 5/1, 4/2 | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Priority 2: Digital Transformation**  ***Accelerating digital transformation through ICT entrepreneurship and increased ICT innovation in the ICT ecosystem*** | | |
| **Digital innovation ecosystem**  ***Outcome:*** *Enhanced human and institutional capacity of the ITU membership in telecommunications/ICTs to foster digital transformation* | | |
| **Output** | | **Highlights** |
| ITU continued to support Member States to **accelerate digital transformation** endeavours, providing policy framework tools, capacity development interventions, technical assistance, and implementing projects to foster innovation.  The [**Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development**](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/innovation-alliance/) was created and through an open call, Member States were invited to express interest in hosting Acceleration Centres in their countries provided the proposed host entities fulfilled the set criteria. In the end, 17 Acceleration Centres were selected from all the regions. Information on these CENTRES is available here: <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/innovation-alliance/events/news/>. Further, a call for interested qualified individuals to be part of this initiative’s Board was made. Twenty-three Board members were selected on the basis of their experience, expertise and knowledge. The Board Members serve in their individual capacity and participate on a pro bono basis. The Board held its first meeting from 19 to 20 March 2024 in Geneva. To support those countries that may need specific support, a Transformation Lab was established in Geneva in the BDT. For more information on this initiative, please read in conjunction with TDAG Document 16.  BDT continued to support the development of digital innovation profiles and shared technical assistance. Online courses and workshops are currently being offered.  BDT has trained over 250 stakeholders from across the globe resulting in **strengthened capacity of policy-makers, decision-makers, innovators and ecosystem builders to create thriving entrepreneurial communities and competitive ICT industries.** A new course on strategic foresight was developed for the ITU Academy platform and was rolled out in March 2024.  BDT has also convened numerous high-level forums, such as the Innovation & Entrepreneurship for SDGs, a sidetrack event at the India Mobile Congress and the Regional Innovation Forum for Asia and the Pacific, which aimed at fostering the exchange of experiences and facilitating a deeper understanding of how to integrate sustainable ecosystems that drive digital transformation.  Through the ITU digital innovation profiles, Member States obtained precise assessments of their ecosystem and presented with crafting strategies to guide national policies, including the digital economy and related master plans. The key recommendations from these assessments outlined a dynamic environment conducive to ICT-driven innovation.  Significant progress has been made in the design and **development of several playbooks aimed at accelerating digital transformation and bridging the digital innovation gap.** The strategic foresight playbook was delivered through two trend research readiness workshops (last mile healthcare readiness strategic foresight workshop held in Lucknow, in July 2023, and the strategic foresight workshop held in New Delhi, in October 2023). Further, BDT developed several additional playbooks and is currently assessing them for deployment within the network of ITU Acceleration Centres.  **In Europe,** Albania's Digital Innovation Profile is being finalized, aligning with the country's ambitious Smart Specialization Strategy (S3). This phase, supported by the launch of an inter-ministerial committee in February 2023 and led by the Deputy Prime Minister, is aimed at fostering economic growth through innovative and sustainable development in the ICT sector. The digital innovation profile will offer a comprehensive snapshot of Albania's digital landscape as of 2024, identifying opportunities and challenges to inform strategic decision-making. This is part of broader commitment of Albania to advance digital innovation ecosystems in the country as highlighted by its commitment to participation in the ITU Innovation Alliance as a board member and formalization of the ITU Innovation Centre in Albania for the ITU Europe region.  Substantial progress has been achieved in facilitating discussions and expanding opportunities for additional European countries to join the ITU Innovation Alliance, capitalizing on the national innovation strategies of interested countries to align with the ITU innovation workstream. There is a focused investigation by some nations into the integration of innovation, with a particular emphasis on cybersecurity, alongside efforts to merge innovation activities with the space sector. Ongoing discussions indicate a continuous exploration of these initiatives. | | **ITU Innovation Centres:** |
| **The following countries will be hosting innovation centres:** Albania, Argentina, Azerbaijan, China, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.  **National Strategies and Digital Innovation Profiles:**   * **Africa:** Benin, Zimbabwe. * **Arab States:** Bahrain, Oman, Egypt * **Asia-Pacific:** Brunei Darussalam, and India. * **Europe:** Albania. |
| **Digital services and applications**  ***Outcome:*** *Enhanced capacity of the ITU membership to accelerate digital transformation and sustainable economic and social development by leveraging and using new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs and services* | | |
| BDT continued to support Member States in developing and promoting digitally-enabled solutions to address sustainable development needs:   * **Digital government transformation:** BDT contributed to **increasing access for Member States to ITU tools and knowledge products to accelerate digital transformation** throughthe [GovStack project](https://govstack.global/), under which a set of 15 [specifications](https://govstack.gitbook.io/specification/) for digital government building blocks (e.g., Id, payments, exchange, consent, registries, e-Signature, GIS, eMarketplace, etc.) were published. Members States now have access to an open resource for their digital teams to reuse for either develop their own building blocks or prepare RFPs for tendering processes. [Sandbox documentation](https://govstack.gitbook.io/sandbox/) was also released to provide technical users-developers, solution architects, and service designers with the ability to replicate the Sandbox. The services available in the Sandbox followed the [Playbook](https://govstack.gitbook.io/implementation-playbook/) guidelines on service design and were also presented. [Sustainable ICT procurement Guidelines](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Environment/Pages/Priority-Areas/Green-GovStack.aspx) and [Green Data Centers](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Environment/Pages/Toolbox/Green-data-center-guide.aspx) were also published in the Green GovStack work stream. * **Open source for public services:** The Open-Source Ecosystem Enablement (OSEE) project codeveloped between ITU and UNDP, and funded by the European Union, was launched. The purpose of the project is to create a comprehensive education, training and support framework for countries to use open-source technologies to develop digital public services and products. Furthermore, webinars, workshops, and events were organized on topics such as open-source generative artificial intelligence for education and public services, data stewardship and governance, cloud infrastructure, etc. This resulted in **enhanced knowledge of the stakeholders and a strengthened international open-source ecosystem.** * **Digital Health:** BDT was instrumental in developing the “Tech Saves Lives and Money: The Case for Using Digital Solutions to Help Beat Non-Communicable Diseases” report jointly with UN Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (UNIATF). The joint World Health Organization (WHO) and ITU report reviewed and assessed the effectiveness of three broad categories of digital health interventions. The outcomes demonstrate the strong potential of digital technology to strengthen national health systems. Through these initiatives, BDTcontributed to **strengthened knowledge of Member States on the cost-benefit of digital health interventions for the global non-communicable diseases (NCD) response.** * **Digital agriculture**: a new project “MERIAN - Strengthening capacities for research, extension and agricultural digital education”, betweenITU and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and funded by the European Union was signed to enhance the formal training and education of agriculture professionals, enabling them to effectively utilize technology in agricultural practices and extension services. GovStack will be used as a framework in the development of the web platform and app to deliver the extensions of services. BDT also continued to expand the benefits of digital transformation to the rural and remote areas of **Papua New Guinea** through the EU STREIT programme, spearheaded by FAO in collaboration with ILO, ITU, UNCDF, and UNDP. This initiative involved the setup of four resource centres and organizing ongoing training sessions for farmers on diverse digital skills and e-commerce. A total of 542 participants benefited from these sessions. The newly acquired skills have empowered farmers to effectively use digital technologies, thereby fostering economic growth. Furthermore, farmers are able to share their knowledge with fellow villagers, contributing to the overall development of their communities. FAO and ITU enhanced sharing of knowledge on digital agriculture through the Digital Agriculture Solutions Forum for Asia-Pacific 2023. * **Other digital solutions:** BDT also developed an enhanced Learning Management System (LMS), which was handed over to the **Papua New Guinea** **University of Technology**. A [number of digital solutions](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/digital-impact-unlocked/building-digital-skills-to-accelerate-economic-prosperity/,%20https:/www.fao.org/in-action/eu-streit-png/news/detail/sepik-agripreneurs-break-digital-barriers-expanding-market-outreach/en) continue to be developed in close cooperation with the Papua New Guinea government and programme partners in alignment with the e-agriculture strategies previously developed. * **GovStack** launched the 1st Edition of the GovStack Women in Govtech Challenge, selecting 139 women from 240 applicants to train them on GovStack technical specifications, team management and leadership. The first group includes input from 59 countries, and the best projects will be featured at WSIS 2024. A digital government sandbox environment has been developed to serve as a platform for testing and learning the development of interoperable and secure digital government services. Four digital products/building blocks were developed and deployed in the GovStack sandbox: identity, payments, information mediator and consent. These reusable software components were integrated to demonstrate the digitalization of government services using these building blocks. Digital teams in countries are continuously exploring the reutilization of these platforms to complement their current technology stack. * **In the Arab States,** BDT launched a project in collaboration with the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA) Egypt on the development of **Smart Sustainable Cities and Communities Telecom Infrastructure in** **Egypt**. The project aims to foster an enabling environment for innovation in Egypt by formulating an evaluation, regulatory framework and methodology to support the Government of Egypt's efforts in Smart Sustainable Cities & Communities (SSC&C). Over 250 stakeholders have participated the GovStack first Deep Dive Training held in Egypt **enhancing their technical expertise on GovStack Tech Specifications and Application Program Interface (APIs)**. Deep dives provide an immersive experience into the detailed revision of the functionalities available in GovStack technical specifications and APIs, sandbox architecture, use case integration, playbook, and training resources available in GovStack.   **Djibouti** and **Somalia** have been selected as the reference implementations of GovStack. BDT is providing technical assistance for the digitalization of four priority use cases: eCabinet and eConstruction Permits in Djibouti, and High School Records and Services Portal in Somalia. Throughout 2023, service design sessions were organized to identify reusable software components/DPI/building blocks required to enable the digitalization of the priority use cases.   * **In Africa**, BDT has initiated collaboration with a GovStack Knowledge Partner to support **Togo** to implement the Digital ID platform in accordance with GovStack technical specifications. In **Kenya**, a case management system is being developed as part of the Horn of Africa engagement. Over 70 participants from Djibouti, Kenya, and Somalia participated in capacity development initiatives held in Kigali, Rwanda where participants learned from **Rwanda**´s experience on digital transformation. In **Senegal** and **Togo**, **understanding of GovStack was enhanced for over 60 stakeholders** who participated in the workshop, which brought together the digital ecosystems of the countries to review the design of their digital public infrastructure. In the **Gambia**, with the support from C2R, a deep-dive workshop on GovStack technology stack was organized for over 50 stakeholders. * **In the Americas,** 26 Heads of Agencies/Offices with responsibility for digital government enhanced their knowledge of GovStack during the annual meeting of the **Regional Network for the Development of eGovernment** in November 2023. Further engagements have led to the involvement of countries in central part of the Americas, including Belize and Guatemala. As a result, BDT has been engaging Member States in the region, including Colombia, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republicto provide in depth understanding of GovStack and explore opportunities for leveraging this global initiative. * **In the Asia-Pacific**, BDT supported and continues to support the development of policies and strategies to accelerate digital transformation in the **Federated States of Micronesia** (digital transformation strategies), **Fiji**, **Kiribati, Nauru, Solomon Islands** and Vanuatu (digital government masterplan). Over 400 stakeholders participated in capacity development initiatives on whole-of-government approach using GovStack. **Papua New Guinea** is being provided ongoing strategic advice on GovStack and digital ID implementation to accelerate their policy and digital government plan. A project on accelerating digital transformation in the Asia-Pacific, funded by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA), Australia, was also launched in August 2023 to assist ITU Members in the region.   **The Smart Villages and Smart Islands Initiative (SVSI)** continue to be rolled out and strengthened in 13 ITU Member States (Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu). This initiative is being supported through its own funds, and several project partners including UN agencies, the Joint SDG Fund, development banks (Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank (in discussion), and governments (DITRDCA (Australia), MIC (Japan), Huawei). Interest has also been expressed by Maldives and Solomon Islands. BDT has been working with partners such as the Pacific Islands Telecommunication Association, and the Government of Indonesia, to raise awareness on SVSI amongst various stakeholders (2023, Indonesia), showcasing **increased confidence in ITU as a key partner in implementing digital transformation initiatives and strengthened partnerships and collaboration for accelerating digital transformation.**  As part of SVSI, BDT, through partnerships has introduced digital services in South Malekula (**Vanuatu**), including remote learning/teaching platforms, mobile wallet services and an online police certificate application. A Smart Classroom has been equipped with 40 tablets, a digital whiteboard, a video conferencing system, and networking equipment to serve as a community venue, allowing students, teachers, and community members to actively engage in online learning, connecting the isolated villages with Port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu. In **Pakistan**, Gokina Smart Village digital health services have benefitted around 2 000 patients since May 2023, of which 84 per cent are women. In addition, 100 girl students continue to pursue formal school education through tele-education services in Gokina. On Tamana Island in **Kiribati**, as part of the UN Micronesia Digitization Joint Programme, efforts are ongoing on expanding Wi-Fi coverage in order to enhance access to digital payment services and facilitate online medical consultations. Efforts to strengthen broadband connectivity and improve access to digital services have been scaled for implementation on other Pacific island countries. Since May 2023, roughly 800 villagers in remote and isolated island communities under SVSI in the Asia-Pacific have been empowered by equipping them with basic digital skills. In the Pacific alone, BDT grass-root efforts in SVSI have reached 485 women, 19 persons with disabilities and 309 young people.   * **In the CIS**, the launch of the Regional Cooperation on Digital Government will serve as a mechanism for governments, institutions, and other regional stakeholders to exchange knowledge and work together to achieve faster and more efficient digital transformation that is human-centered and equitable. As part of the Regional Cooperation, three online thematic meetings were held. Over 40 professionals convened for the [regional forum on digital government](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Pages/EVENTS/2024/GovStack.aspx) to explore in detail opportunities provided to countries under the GovStack initiative, the tools and services available for use, as well as discuss implementation of e-government services, challenges, and possible ways to solve them through cooperation and exchange of experience within the framework of the GovStack initiative.   In Belarus, BDT continued to assist municipalities to enhance competencies in **building** **smart cities and communities,** with over 340 representatives of municipal and regional administrations trained on implementing smart solutions; building digital literacy in municipal and regional administrations in support of sustainable digital transformation; familiarizing local government officials with new technologies facilitating interactions between the general public, business and government and improving amenities for residents.   * **In Europe,** an [ITU-FAO compendium](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Documents/Publications/2024/ITU%20FAO%20compendium/final_Meeting%20the%20EU%27s%20digital%20agriculture%20requirements_An%20ITU-FAO%20compendium%20to%20pre-accession%20countries%20and%20territories_2024031.pdf) was developed for pre-accession countries, addressing **"Meeting the European Union's digital agriculture requirements".** This compendium establishes an impact pathway from regional to national levels, employing a projectized approach to strengthen national capacities.   North Macedonia and Moldova were assisted in developing their national digital transformation strategies, aligning with ITU recommendations and the building block approach. These strategies aim to enhance digital connectivity, ICT infrastructure, digital skills, government services, and support for digital businesses and innovation.  In Albania, Montenegro, and Serbia, the adoption of the building block approach will be facilitated though strategic partnerships with UN agencies under the three projects of the Digital Window of Joint SDG Fund. In Albania, the “**Digital Agriculture and Rural Transformation” project** aims to revolutionize the agri-food sector, extending digitalization benefits to underserved communities. In Serbia, the **"Digital Service Design Hub – Clicking Together with Citizens"** project focuses on enhancing public services through user-centric design and is leveraging the country's expertise to drive technological transformation. Similarly, efforts under the **“Digital Transformation of Local Self-Governments in Montenegro”** project are supporting local government digitalization and establishing local eGovernance, laying the foundation for the Smart Sustainable Cities framework.  **In response to pledges made at the ITU RDF for Europe**,BDT facilitated transformative collaboration between partners and Member States. This dynamic collaboration and partnerships aim to streamline digital transformation efforts through knowledge exchange and best practices. The collaboration was built on the platform of matcmaking roundtables.  The workshop "**Rethinking Public Services: Strategies for Achieving Digital Transformation Goals**" held as a side event to WSIS 2023 improved capacity building in 11 countries. Organized by the BDT through under the ITU Regional Initiative for Europe on digital transformation for resilience, it complemented WSIS discussions on "GovTech 4 Impact: Executive experience sharing on digital public service development in Europe". The workshop showcased expertise from European candidate and potential candidate countries, fostering constructive dialogue among key stakeholders involved in digital transformation. Participants addressed constraints, shared lessons, and explored strategies for leveraging opportunities. Delving into front-end, back-end, and infrastructure aspects of public services, the workshop provided practical insights to inspire action.  The Spotlight Series on Human-Centric Digital Transformation, consisting of three webinars, deepened the understanding of 'human-by-design' digital features, leading to the development of the "Human-Centric Digital Transformation Compendium" displaying the experiences of 10 European countries. The Compendium outlines challenges and recommendations related to the digitalization of government services, education, and health, and provides good practices aimed at guiding interested stakeholders in Europe and beyond in addressing the human-centric components of digital services and rolling out similar practices. | | **Digital government transformation:**   * Publication of specifications for digital government building blocks. * Sandbox documentation released for technical users. * Sustainable ICT procurement guidelines and green data centres published. * Development of policies and strategies supported.   **Open source for public services:**   * Project initiated between ITU, UNDP and EU. * Capacity building on open-source technologies and methodologies. * Establishment of open-source technical facilities.   **Smart villages/ Smart Islands:**   * Expansion of SVSI in the Asia-Pacific region. * Tangible impact in Pakistan and Vanuatu, with improved connectivity and digital services.   **Digital Agriculture:**   * Projects in collaboration with FAO initiated. * Trainings delivered for farmers on digital skills and e-commerce.   **Digital Health:**   * Reports and handbooks developed. * Joint initiatives with UN agencies (WHO) for NCD response. * **Africa:** Gambia**,** Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, and Togo. * **Arab States:** Egypt, Djibouti and Somalia * **Americas:** Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, and Guatemala. * **Asia-Pacific:** Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. * **The CIS:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. * **Europe:** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Sebia, Türkiye, and Ukraine. |
| **Contributing to SDG Targets** | SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 | |
| **WSIS Action** | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C11 | |
| **Resolutions:** | PP 205; WTDC 16, 30, 37, 85, 90; SGQ 2/1, 4/1, 1/2, 2/2 | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Priority 3: Enabling Policy and Regulatory Environment**  ***Promoting an enabling policy and regulatory environment conducive to sustainable telecommunication/ICT*** | | |
| **Capacity Development**  ***Outcome:*** *Improved human and institutional capacity of the ITU membership in telecommunications/ICTs to tap into the full potential of the digital economy and society* | | |
| **Output** | | **Highlights** |
| ITU is committed to enhancing both human and institutional capacity within its membership, prioritizing the delivery of high-quality training programmes. In this context, training courses were conducted through the [ITU Academy](https://academy.itu.int/) and the [ITU Academy Training Centres](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/itu-academy-training-centres) (ATCs), with the aim of making a meaningful impact for ITU membership. From June 2023 to April 2024, the [ITU Academy](https://academy.itu.int/) registered **7 800 additional users, bringing the total number of learners to over 47 300, from all Member States**, with more than 70 per cent coming from developing countries. During this period, over 130 courses were delivered via the platform to over 13 500 registered course participants, of which over 3 500 had completed their courses by April 2024 (others are still ongoing). Over 2 200 participants also completed course evaluation surveys and 90 per cent reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience.  During the first year of implementation, the **ATCs delivered 45 courses attracting around 2 900 registrations**, with over 900 course completions by April 2024. In the first quarter of 2024, BDT organized several training sessions on how to conduct engaging online training, aimed at the instructors of the 13 ATCs. The goal of the initiative was to impact the quality of the training courses, by improving facilitation, virtual delivery skills and by allowing for exchanges of best practices among the participating institutions. During the [first global annual meeting of the ATCs](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/itu-academy-training-centres/events/atc-annual-meeting-2023), representatives from all 13 ATCs convened to share methodologies and promote best practices for delivering an optimal learning experience, empowering ICT professionals worldwide.  In collaboration with **Cisco**, the [Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) initiative](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/digital-transformation-centres-initiative) expanded activities, expanded activities, with new DTCs from Senegal and Sierra Leone joining the network and bringing the total number of course participants trained in basic and intermediate digital skills to 314 910, of which 54 per cent were female. Additionally, in 2023, the **ST Microelectronics Foundation** formally became part of the DTC initiative, with one of its courses focusing on computer basics for the visually impaired, successfully delivered through the DTC in Ghana.  Partnerships are key drivers for the success of BDTcapacity development initiatives. In the third quarter of 2023, BDT launched a new project titled ‘**Capacity Development for Digital Transformation’**. Funded by the **European Commission** for a period of four years, this project aims to provide ITU Academy training to policy-makers and government officials within the ICT sector.  Through the DTC project “Boosting Digital Skills”, BDT and **the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)** facilitated the DTC activities in Ghana, impacting over 18 000 citizens of which 68 per cent are women. At the end of 2023, ITU received new funding from Norad to support the global DTC programme for another two years.  The DTC community was further strengthened by partnering with **Indosat and Airtel**. ITU and DTCI partners supported six DTCs in **Dominican Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Papua New Guinea,** and **the Philippines** in building their institutional capacities through train-the-trainer interventions, reaching 336 trainers (91 female), plus one DTC in Zambia in conducting two stakeholder engagement workshops.  BDT continues to lead the [Digital Skills Campaign](https://academy.itu.int/index.php/main-activities/ilo-itu-digital-skills-campaign) since 2016 under **the ILO Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth**. Since its launch, almost 24 million young people had been reached through this initiative. In June 2023, ITU and ILO convened a meeting of the campaign partners and potential partners to identify synergies for strengthening skills development activities for youth.  The new 4-year cycle of the [Group on Capacity Building Initiative (GCBI)](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/gcbi/) was launched in 2023. A first online GCBI meeting was held with the new members, a tentative work programme discussed, and the first physical meeting held in April 2024.   * **In Africa**: The DTCs in **Ghana** and **Zambia** strengthened the capacity of trainers through train-the-trainer interventions. Capacity development and training on emerging digital technologies and cyber laws was delivered to the legal and judiciary community in **Malawi**.   To build and strengthen capacity on spectrum management and emerging technologies, 10 training workshops and supporting technical assistance have been delivered to 42 countries under the PRIDA project **(Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Rep. of the), Côte d'Ivoire, Dem. Rep. of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe).** This has involved training on spectrum management for developing countries, aeronautical and maritime communication services, satellite broadband training and radio local area network regulations, business planning for broadband network development, spectrum aspects for the Internet of Things and dedicated training on spectrum management for young women.  Under the ITU-FCDO project, an assessment of digital skills in Nigeria was published and training was provided both in-person and hybrid in South Africa on 5G and spectrum management.   * **In the** **Americas:** Strengthened capacity of small entrepreneurs through the delivery of digital transformation workshops, which benefited 150 women and young people, from **Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and Panama.** These activities are part of the [Digital KIT Initiative](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Americas/Pages/ACTVTS/DTK/DTK-AMS.aspx) for digital transformation. This initiative is currently implemented under the **ITU-Huawei project** in support of the Regional Initiatives for the Americas.   BDT also enhanced **project management skills of indigenous people and rural communities** through a five-module online training in ITU Academy and **improved knowledge in the field of ICT Accessibility** through the executive training delivered during the 10th Anniversary of Accessible Americas (Cuba, November 2023).   * **In the Arab States:** To **build and strengthen capacity in spectrum management**, a blended training course, “ITU Training of Trainers on Quality of Services Training Programme (QoSTP) and Spectrum management training program (SMTP)”, was conducted both online through the ITU Academy Platform in Amman, Jordan. This collaborative effort was hosted by the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Jordan (TRC). This training aimed to equip the participants with the knowledge and skills to effectively train other people.   As part of the support to countries on spectrum management, dedicated assistance was provided to Comoros, focusing on spectrum valuation and digital dividend within the framework of PRIDA. A scoping mission was conducted to meet with the relevant stakeholders, and the final report was delivered and validated.   * **In the Asia-Pacific**: BDT strengthened the capacity of 158 trainers in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines to deliver digital literacy training, using knowledge resources available under the ITU Digital Transformation Centre initiative. BDT also enhanced collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and produced an assessment report on digital skills of migrants in Thailand entitled ***“Bridging the Digital Divide: Assessment of the Digital Skills of Migrant Workers and the Perspective of Employers in Thailand”.***   The collaboration between ITU and the National Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission, Thailand (NBTC) and Infocomm Media Development Authority, Singapore (IMDA) has been key to advancing digital skills development among members from SIDS, LDCs, and LLDCs. In Thailand, the ITU-NBTC Training, held from 2 to 5 October 2023, focused on emerging technologies like blockchain, artificial intelligence, and 5G, employing a whole-of-government approach through GovStack to enhance knowledge transfer within the region.  The capacity of policy-makers and regulators was enhanced through the regional policy and regulatory webinar series on 5G engagement and experience sharing in partnership with member administrations (March 2024). The Ministry of Posts and Telecom Cambodia (MPTC) and the Telecommunication Regulator of Cambodia (TRC) hosted the event on “***Key enablers for 5G adoption among Asia-Pacific countries”***, presenting a study based on econometric analysis conducted by the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and addressing issues of 5G rollout from the MPTC. The second session on ***5G use cases*** was co-hosted by the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology (CAICT). Expert members presented 5G-enabled smart operations in factories, electricity industry, health, culture, tourism, and education sectors, indicating productivity gains and impact of 5G adoption in respective verticals. 5G application enabling activities and policies by the government were also shared. Over 80 participants from 18 Member States and stakeholders participated in the event.  Under the ITU-FCDO project, in-person training was provided to BAKTI staff (Telecommunications and Information Accessibility Agency) in Indonesia on the universal service financing efficiency toolkit.  BDT, along with co-organizers and partners, organized Girls in ICT Day celebrations in Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Micronesia, Nauru, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, and ASEAN members that assisted with the delivery of digital skills training programmes and other related activities aimed at benefiting girls and young women in the region. The gatherings attracted over 2 200 participants, including girls, young women, and teachers, who engaged in 63 digital skills training programmes and associated activities as part of Girls in ICT Day from 27 April to 17 November 2023. Furthermore, these activities involved engagement with gender focal points, as well as collaboration with over 100 partners from governments, the UN agencies, industries, academia, and civil society organizations.   * **In the CIS:** BDT assisted Azerbaijan in conducting a countrywide digital literacy assessment through a household survey, encompassing defined categories (university students and academic staff, private sector, public sector). The survey covered nearly 35 000 individuals using a randomized sample of households in 13 economic regions of Azerbaijan. Additionally, separate online surveys were conducted among target groups such as staff of private enterprises (1 116) and public agencies (679); and students (6 372) and teaching staff (886) of higher education institutions. The aim of the assessment is to inform data-driven and targeted interventions for enhancing digital literacy according to government needs. The survey can also serve as a model for more regular assessment of the digital literacy level of Azerbaijan’s citizens and could be replicated. Recommendations derived from the **survey** will serve the Azerbaijani government as the basis for designing and planning relevant future interventions, policies, or strategies at the national or regional level, including industry-specific activities, awareness-raising campaigns, and advocacy. With the Assessment report to be completed in early May 2024, Azerbaijan will be the first country in the region to have adopted the new ITU methodology on digital skills. * **In Europe:** In Albania, the digital skills assessment focusing on elderly people provided valuable insights into their proficiency levels and the challenges they encounter, facilitating the identification of necessary skills training. This initiative engaged 467 participants, informing policy decisions and intervention strategies aimed at narrowing the digital divide, particularly concerning age-related factors. Furthermore, it strengthened government commitment to inclusivity by emphasizing support for all segments of society.   A digital skills, education and competencies compendium for Europe and Central Asia was created with support and inputs of the UN Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Asia in cooperation with the BDT through the ITU Office for Europe within the framework of the ITU Regional Initiative for Europe on “Accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development”. | | **Capacity development:** |
| **ITU Academy:**   * + 7 800 new users. * + 130 courses delivered. * 13 ATCs delivering high-quality courses in all regions. * All ITU Member States benefited from training courses. * High-level of satisfaction from participants.     **ATCs:**   * 13 entities from all regions. * 45 trainings and 2 900 participants in the following topics: * enhancing digital skills in Policy and regulation; * network and infrastructure; * spectrum management; * cybersecurity; * digital inclusion; * digital services.   **DTCs:**     * + 120 courses delivered within 14 DTCs from all regions. * 68 836 participants from all Member States also benefiting learners from rural and remote communities.   **Digital skills development impacting**   * ICT professionals. * Indigenous people and remote communities. * Women and girls. * Youth. * Persons with disabilities. |
| ***Outcome:*** *Strengthened capacity of Member States to enhance their telecommunication/ICT policy, legal and regulatory frameworks conducive to sustainable development and digital transformation.* | | |
| **Policy and regulation**  **Enhanced capacity of the ITU membership to improve policy, legal and regulatory frameworks**  **As part of global activities, the following products were delivered in 2023:**   * Five new studies of the [series of collaborative digital regulation country reviews](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regulatory-Market/Pages/collaborative-regulation-country-reviews/default.aspx) were published in the period: Brazil, Colombia, and Egypt, as well as Kenya and Nigeria under the ITU-FCDO project. All country reviews follow a standard methodology and put forward a set of actionable recommendations. * GSR-23 Best Practice Guidelines were adopted and shared on “Regulatory and Economic Incentives for an Inclusive Sustainable Digital Future”. * Seven new papers and articles were published on the Digital Regulation Platform aimed at improving the human and institutional capacity of the ITU membership. * **In Africa**, the ‘ICT Benchmarking in Central Africa’ project implemented in collaboration with COFED (Cellule d’appui à l’Ordonnateur national du Fonds Européen de Développement) and funded by the European Commission (EC), benefited 11 countries. In support of the project, an extensive landscaping of ICT and digital policies was conducted to lay the foundation for national regulatory roadmaps and a sub-regional harmonization roadmap aimed at accelerating digital development and digital economies in the region. As part of the ITU-FCDO project, ongoing support is being provided to the Communications Authority in Kenya on universal service financing efficiency, sustainable connectivity, and complementary access networks. Additionally, a session on “Capacity-building on an enabling policy and regulatory environment to empower communities to deploy”, in collaboration with APC and CITAD, was held at the Africa Internet Governance Forum 2023. * **In the Americas,** BDT provided support totheDominican Republic through a project on regulatory improvement. In Brazil, institutional support has been provided to Anatel, including the preparation of the Tactical Plan for 2023-2024. As part of the ITU-FCDO project, technical assistance was provided to the government of Brazil on the design of a national plan for school connectivity, under the leadership of the Civil House of the Presidency. In the second half of 2023, the ITU Regional Office for the Americas provided training to CITEL Member States within the framework of the CITEL Permanent Consultative Committee I (PCC.I), through a workshop on regulatory modernization and alternative regulatory mechanisms. BDT continues to provide technical assistance to Panama and Honduras for the modernization of the telecommunication legal framework. The Regional Office for the Americas has contributed to the EU-LAC Digital Alliance, through technical presentations on the different ITU reports and tools, and the promotion of ITU-D programmes, initiatives and projects. Likewise, in the resource mobilization strategy, a project for technical assistance in regulatory innovation to countries in Central America **for 3 million dollars has been approved for signature in 2024**.   In the Caribbean, potentially benefitting 12 countries and more than 2 million subscribers, the Examination of Feasibility of a Single Regulatory Authority (SRA) aims to facilitate a regional harmonized regulation framework for the Caribbean region. Expected long-term impacts include the development of frameworks and increased capacity to enhance the regional ICT policy/legal landscape, removal of inconsistencies and market entry barriers to encourage investors, and the availability of new measures for digital innovation and fair competition.  In Trinidad and Tobago, the Development of the Electronic Identification (E-ID) Policy and Legislation Framework strengthened skills of policy and regulation development, contributed to more people having access and greater confidence in the use of online application and using digital services. In Saint Lucia, the review of the National Information and Communications Technology Policy builds on the strengthening and expansion of public awareness and the communication of the policy to expedite buy-in and public acceptance.   * **In the Arab States,** during June and July 2023, endeavours were undertaken as part of ITU special initiatives in the State of Palestine, and in collaboration with Ministry of IT and Communication, efforts were directed towards formulating a national numbering planning framework and regulations. Similarly, in Syria, activities were carried out to develop a comprehensive ICT market review and analysis report in collaboration with Ministry of Communications (MoC) and Post Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (SyTPRA). * **In the Asia-Pacific**,BDT developed knowledge products to **enhance the awareness of ASEAN membership regarding policy and regulatory gaps**. In partnership with the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), ITU conducted a [study on Digital Policy Action Areas](https://www.itu.int/hub/publication/d-pref-asean-01-2023/) for a Connected ASEAN. This report assessed the level of readiness of digital policy, legal and governance frameworks for digital transformation in ASEAN member countries and proposed action areas to advance preparedness for digital transformation. Strengthened engagement with ASEAN was pursued through the Priority Cooperation Areas (PCA) Framework, which involved developing a reference framework for engagement with ASEAN membership, covering key BDT products and services. BDT also provided **technical assistance for developing universal service policy and infrastructure sharing policy**, with activities in progress for Tonga and Vanuatu, aiming to enhance connectivity in rural and remote areas. To further support Member States, a policy and regulation repository is being developed in the Asia-Pacific, enabling Member States to easily refer to policy practices of countries in the region. * **In the CIS**, BDT worked closely with Uzbekistan on the improvement of regulatory data, which resulted in an increase in the country’s positioning in the ITU Regulatory Tracker and improvement of the regulatory and investment environment. Under C2R, a resilience assessment was carried out in Kyrgyzstan to strengthen telecommunications/ICT infrastructure, policy and regulatory environment, and statistical data. A **Regional Forum on Digital Transformation** held in Kyrgyzstan gathered Member-States of the region to deepen their knowledge of policy and regulatory tools offered by the BDT to advance digital development. Another resilience assessment was carried out under C2R in Kyrgyzstan to strengthen telecommunication/ICT infrastructure, policy and regulatory environment, and statistical data. * **In Europe**, Digital Development Country Profiles were developed for three countries of the Europe region, i.e. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, adding to the series of existing Country Profiles (Albania, Georgia, Moldova, North Macedonia, Turkey). They provide a basis for comparative analysis and address the countries' digital development status by applying a building-block framework that analyses digital transformation from a variety of perspectives, enabling an understanding of how the various dimensions of digital development interact at the country level. They also offer a broad overview of the activities and projects being implemented at national level and in the wider region. The country profiles rely on the engagement of UN Agency members of the UN Country Teams and other UN organizations to provide a holistic picture of the situation. They seek to build a reference for discussions on digital development at the country level and aim to serve as a guide for future dialogue with country stakeholders and pave the way for increased engagements of the UN system in the country.   **These actions resulted in increased awareness and access to tools to help membership understand the fast-moving landscape and address new challenges in the digital ecosystem, incentivize investment, and enable stronger market growth.**  **Improved provision of regulatory and economic data and statistics:**   * The [2023 edition of the G5 Benchmark](https://app.gen5.digital/benchmark/metrics) provided an assessment of the state of readiness of national policy, legal and governance frameworks for digital transformation. The new visualization tools on the [G5 Accelerator platform](https://app.gen5.digital/benchmark/charts) allow for a customized analysis and deep dive into the data on 54 indicators by region or country. * The analytical companion of the 2023 G5 Benchmark dataset, the technical paper ‘Benchmark for fifth generation collaborative digital regulation 2023: global and regional trends’, highlights trends in the evolution of national legal, policy and governance frameworks for digital transformation across regions and groups of vulnerable countries (LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS). * Econometric research and analysis include studies and recommendations on affordability for ICT adoption across the globe.   **The above resulted in increased awareness and access to regulatory and economic data and analysis to support evidence-based decision-making.**  **Strengthened capacity of individuals and entities:**   * **Globally,** two **ITU global digital regulation training courses** were delivered (with financial support from CST Saudi Arabia) on effective policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks for 910 participants from 134 countries, among which 310 received a certificate.   The IMDA Executive Training, held in Singapore from 19 to 25 September 2023, highlighted the commitment to digital transformation in small States, aligning with the **Partner2Connect Digital Coalition (P2C)** initiative and benefiting members globally. The training built the capacity of policy-makers and regulators from small states in digital regulation and included 19 participants.   * **In the Americas**, BDT provided training to CITEL Member States within the framework of the Permanent Consultative Committee I (PCC.I), through a **workshop on regulatory modernization** and alternative regulatory mechanisms. In Haiti, a **network resilience assessment**, supported by C2R, strengthened the skills of the trained participants to develop new policies and regulations and make better decisions on disaster risk management and better use of digital services. * **In the Arab States,** in 2023, with the kind support of CST Saudi Arabia, a **series of digital regulation training sessions** were successfully conducted, including a regional training workshop on digital regulation for Arab States, and three national training on digital regulation events specifically designed for Saudi Arabia. The training sessions garnered widespread participation, attracting over 300 attendees from ITU Member States. In 2024, ITU in collaboration with Oman's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA), has organized a national workshop on Collaborative Digital Regulation to build the capacity of staff in the tools needed for collaborative regulation. * **In the CIS**, with the objective of contributing to capacity-building in telecommunication administrations and national statistical bodies for well-substantiated (data-based) digital regulation, the ITU Regional Office for CIS countries organized a **regional forum on digital transformation.** Offline and online, 150 participants, including 51 women, joined the forum from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Uzbekistan, along with representatives from the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS and the Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC). Forum participants enhanced their knowledge of best practices for developing national digital transformation strategies, ITU tools and metrics for assessing regulatory maturity, and the relevant ITU questionnaires. For the benefit of participants responsible for the collection of statistical ICT indicators, experts from ITU headquarters and the CIS region conducted training on using country-level statistics to create international ratings, and on the employment of the ITU Data Hub portal for country-level reporting and planning. The forum helped increase awareness in the region about the significance of collected statistical data and information on regulatory policy, and how they are used, analyzed, and disseminated. * **In** **Europe**, aligned with the aspiration of bridging the digital regulatory gap, the **ITU-EMERG-EaPeReg Digital Transformation Regulation Training** held between 10 April to 30 May 2024, deepens the understanding of over 100 professionals in the field of digital regulation strategies, evidence-based decision-making, and the latest regulatory developments. The online instruction was open to European and global participation.   **The above resulted in strengthened knowledge exchange and capacity to address the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation.**  **Provision of technical assistance:**   * **In Africa**, a market assessment on ICT affordability was undertaken to ensure increased and affordable access and use through transparent, cost based, and non-discriminatory tariffs in Zambia. Technical assistance was provided for the development of policy guidance on last-mile connectivity, big data application and use to develop an enabling regulatory environment for broadband and 5G in Uganda under the ongoing digital transformation project jointly carried out by the Government of Uganda and ITU, and financially supported by China’s South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund (SSCAF). Technical assistance provided to Namibia on the development of a national ICT policy and to Lesotho on the development of a digital transformation strategy (ongoing). Technical assistance is being provided to CRASA on the update of their Universal service toolkit (ongoing, under the ITU-FCDO project). * **In the Americas**, in Haiti and Grenada, under C2R, the **Network Resilience Assessment** contributed to greater deployment and coverage of electronics communications networks to meet the increasing demands for data and other services and built towards creating more secure networks during a disaster to facilitate business continuity and help save more lives. * **In Europe**, staff of the national regulatory authority of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been trained on the newest trends in the field of regulation, including fifth generation regulation.   **Convening platforms**   * **Globally**, the Global Symposium for Regulators 2023 (GSR-23) attracted over 750 participants from over 100 countries including government ministers, heads of regulatory authorities, and chief executives from industry. The Digital Regulation Network (DRN), a new BDT initiative launched at GSR-23, identifies common approaches to collaborative digital policy, regulation, and governance across economic sectors and across borders. * **In the Americas**, the ITU Policy and Economics Colloquium (IPEC-23) attracted over 192 delegates from 16 countries of the region and included the Regional Economic Dialogue (RED-AMS) addressing opportunities and challenges of digital transformation in the Americas region, as well as business planning for infrastructure development training to allow accurate economic evaluation of broadband infrastructure installation and deployment plans in urban and rural areas using up to 5G networks technologies. * **In Europe**, the ITU-EKIP Regional Regulatory Forum was held, offering a platform for over 150 stakeholders from over 40 countries to learn the newest global and regional trends and exchange national experiences.   **The above resulted in strengthened partnerships, engagement, and collaboration of regulators, regulatory associations, the private sector, and policy-makers from across different sectors, enriching conversations and showcasing collaboration across sectors to accelerate digital transformation.** | | **Improving national policy and regulations:**  **Global:**   * [Series of collaborative digital regulation country reviews](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regulatory-Market/Pages/collaborative-regulation-country-reviews/default.aspx) (Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Nigeria, and Kenya). * GSR Best Practice Guidelines. * Articles published on the Digital Regulation Platform on topical matters. * Global and regional digital regulation trainings.   **Africa:**   * ICT Benchmarking in Central Africa project. Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo (Rep. of the), Gabon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Dem. Rep. of the Congo, Rwanda, Chad, Sao Tome and Principe.   **Americas:**   * Regulatory improvement support to Dominican Republic, Panama, and Honduras. The Caribbean was also provided support for Grenada, Haiti, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago. * USD 3 million project approved for regulatory innovation to countries in Central America.   **Arab States:**   * Countries were supported through the BDT special initiatives (C2R).   **Asia-Pacific:**   * Study on digital policy action areas in Southeast Asia.   **CIS:**   * Armenia * Azerbaijan * Belarus * Kazakhstan * Kyrgyzstan * Russia * Uzbekistan   **Europe**:   * Albania * Bosnia and Herzegovina * Georgia * Moldova * Montenegro * North Macedonia * Sebia * Ukraine |
| ***Outcome:*** *Strengthened capacity of Member States to produce and collect high quality, internationally comparable statistics which reflect developments and trends in telecommunications/ICTs, empowered by new and emerging technologies and services, based on agreed standards and methodologies.* | | |
| **Statistics**  ITU [Statistics](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/statistics/) leads the global ICT statistics agenda. It collects and disseminates vital information and carries out world-class research to support evidence-based decision-making towards universal and meaningful connectivity and sustained digital transformation. In 2023, activities spanning the full data lifecycle, including events, new products, and new tools, further contributed to this objective.  **Development of policy frameworks and knowledge products:**  Increased awareness of Member States/decision-makers of making universal and meaningful connectivity as a policy imperative. Enhanced ability of policy-makers to assess the level of connectivity and progress towards universal and meaningful connectivity and draft evidence-based policies.   * [Facts and Figures 2023](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/facts-figures-2023/) and a special edition of [Facts and Figures for the Least Developed Countries](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/facts-figures-for-ldc/) (LDCs)on the occasion of the LDC 5 Conference provided a timely assessment of the state of connectivity globally, in key regions, and for special groups. * The [Policy Brief on the Affordability of ICT Services 2022](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/ICTprices/default.aspx) distilled the key insights about the [2022 ICT prices dataset](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Dashboards/Pages/IPB.aspx). * In July 2023, the [Dashboard for Universal and Meaningful Connectivity](https://datahub.itu.int/dashboards/umc/?e=CHE) was launched to show progress towards the UMC targets. * After a six-year hiatus, the publication of the [ICT Development Index](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/IDI2023/) was resumed, based on a new methodology [developed](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/IDI/default.aspx) through EGTI/EGH that puts universal and meaningful connectivity at its centre.   **Enhanced access of Member States and other stakeholders to critical data and regulatory information:**   * New features were added to the [ITU DataHub](https://datahub.itu.int/), a platform featuring 200+ indicators and 200+ economy profiles, thematic dashboards, data query, and download. Traffic on the ITU DataHub increased 500 per cent year-on-year (Oct. 24 vs Oct. 23).   **Enhanced ability of Member States to submit quality data thanks to a new survey platform as evidenced by higher response rates and better data quality:**   * In a survey of Member States’ ITU statistical focal points, 78 per cent of respondents said they were either extremely satisfied or satisfied with the new platform. * Expert assistance was provided to Kyrgyzstan to enhance the capacity of national authorities to identify existing gaps in the methodology and data collection.   **Data collection and production of statistics:**   * Increased commitment of Member States to data collection: In 2023, all 193 Member States submitted some data to ITU through the statistical questionnaires. * Increased awareness of the importance of data science and use of big data for information society statistics. Thanks to ITU advocacy efforts and technical assistance: Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) started a mobile phone big data pilot to better measure connectivity with the help of ITU. * Improved national infrastructure for data collection and improved data quality, thanks to ITU support, Angola's INACOM launched a new observatory and improved supply-side statistics. * Enhanced use of ICT statistics for decision making: Togo’s Ministry of digital economy and transformation launched a call to establish a national digital observatory.   **Capacity development and statistical standards**  **Strengthened capacity of Member States to produce and collect high-quality statistics:**   * The 2023 annual meetings of the Expert Groups on ICT indicators ([EGTI](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/statistics/egti2023/)/[EGH](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/statistics/egh2023/)) attracted 347 participants from 105 countries, of which nearly half (160) were women, to discuss, define and adopt new indicators. * More people enrolled in the three courses on ITU Academy:   + [Telecommunication/ICT Indicators](https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/measuring-digital-development-telecommunicationict-indicators-2): Certified: 26; Registered: 311 (100 countries)   + [ICT access and use by households](https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/measuring-digital-development-ict-access-and-use-households-and-individuals-2): Certified: 43; Registered: 322 (67 countries)   + [Mobile phone data](https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/mobile-phone-data) (launched in 2023): Certified: 41; Registered: 189 (72 countries)   **Convening platforms:**  Increased awareness of Member States about the latest trends and developments in ICT statistics and strengthened partnerships.   * The 2023 edition of the [World Telecommunication/Indicators Symposium](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/wtis23/) gathered about 300 participants under the theme “Advancing the measurement agenda to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity”. * In May, a three-year [project](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/projectumc/) for promoting and measuring universal and meaningful connectivity with a budget of EUR 3 million funded by the European Union was launched. * In July, ITU and the World Bank kicked off a [new collaboration](https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/global-data-facility/brief/international-telecommunication-union-and-the-world-bank-s-development-data-group-announce-collaboration-on-mobile-phone) to put mobile phone big data to work for policy. | | * Launch of **Facts and Figures 2023** and a special edition of **Facts and Figures for the Least Developed Countries** (LDCs) * Policy Brief on the **Affordability of ICT Services 2022** * Launch of the **Dashboard for Universal and Meaningful Connectivity** * Publication of the **ICT Development Index** resumed. * New features added to the **ITU DataHub featuring 200+ indicators and 200+ economy profiles**, thematic dashboards, data query and download. * Traffic on the ITU DataHub increased by 500 per cent in 2023.   **Strengthened capacity of Member States to produce and collect high-quality statistics:**   * Expert Groups on ICT indicators (EGTI/EGH) attracted 347 participants, including 46 per cent of women, from 105 countries to discuss, define and adopt new indicators.   **Capacity building (ITU Academy):**   * Telecommunication/ICT Indicators: Certified: 26; Registered: 311 (100 countries) * ICT access and use by households: Certified: 43; Registered: 322 (67 countries) * Mobile phone big data (launched in 2023): Certified: 41; Registered: 189 (72 countries) |
| **Contributing to SDG Targets** | SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 | |
| **WSIS Action** | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C11 | |
| **Resolutions:** | PP 2, 8, 10, 18, 21, 22, 135, 138, 139, 174, 191, 195, 196, 201; WTDC 16, 17, 22, 23, 25, 30, 37, 48, 64, 71, 77, 78, 79, 80, 84, 85; SGQ 6/1, 7/1, 5/2, 6/2, 7/2 | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Priority 4: Inclusive and secure telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development**  ***Fostering national cybersecurity strategies and strengthened digital skills*** | | |
| ***Outcome:*** *Support to Member States in developing national cybersecurity strategies and CIRTs. Increased secured online services, including child online protection, and mobilization of resources for marginalized groups and persons with specific needs.* | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Highlights** |
| **Cybersecurity**  The [**Global Cybersecurity Index**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/global-cybersecurity-index.aspx) measures commitment to cybersecurity. For the fifth edition of the index (2023), ITU has been collecting, verifying, and validating data with 173 Member States nominated focal points.  **Capacity development:**   * **Global:** BDT through its work on **national cybersecurity strategies**, enhanced the knowledge of stakeholders on national cybersecurity strategy development and implementation. This was achieved through tabletop exercises on strategy development with national stakeholders, needs assessment workshops, and continuous engagement on advisories and discussions through online meetings. In an online, self-paced training programme on national cybersecurity strategy lifecycles, 730 participants from 131 countries increased their understanding and knowledge. The CyberDrills programme achieved significant global impact, with 140 countries participating in cyber exercises and training. This fostered inter-regional cooperation and led to heightened incident response proficiency and information exchange. BDT further complemented these efforts by organizing targeted trainings on incident response technical proficiency for national stakeholders of three ITU Member States (Bahrain, Maldives, and United Arab Emirates (UAE). * **In Africa,** the Women in Cyber programme specifically targeted women interested in careers in cybersecurity. Through mentorship, training, and inspirational workshops, the programme equipped 153 women with the necessary skills to enter the workforce. Additionally, the **CyberDrill in Malawi** event engaged over 350 participants in technical workshops, which improved incident response capabilities of more than 20 Member States of the region.   The Women in Cyber programme provided several workshops to enhance cybersecurity skills and empower women in the field. The HerCyberTracks initiative focused on expanding knowledge in Cyber Diplomacy, targeted mainly at participants in **Africa and Europe**. It trained 101 participants from 22 countries across these regions.   * **In the Americas,** BDT improved knowledge and collaboration among CIRT members in the region through **regional CyberDrills**. In the Dominican Republic CyberDrill event, over 168 participants engaged in technical workshops from over 17 countries in the Americas region, collaborating with more than 8 regional and international organizations. In addition, at the Chile CyberDrill, 120 participants engaged in technical workshops from 11 countries of the Americas region, with 25 speakers from partners and the private sector. Women from the region also participated in mentorship, trainings, and inspirational workshops, enhancing their capability to engage in the cybersecurity workforce within **Women in Cyber programme.** * **In the Arab States,** country awareness and understanding of the Global Cybersecurity Index as a tool to enhance cybersecurity commitments and internal coordination was increased through an in-country workshop. Through this training, the participants’ technical skills were enhanced through hands-on workshops that built knowledge and provided networking opportunities across two different events (Interregional **CyberDrill** for the Arab States and the CIS regions, the Regional Cybersecurity Summit 2023, a regional cybersecurity management workshop and a Global Cybersecurity Index workshop for Bahrain). Through **Women in Cyber**, 106 women in the Arab **States** region participated in mentorship, trainings, and inspirational workshops, enhancing their capability to engage in the cybersecurity workforce.      * **In the Asia-Pacific,** under the **Cyber for Good** project, BDT worked with least developed countries to improve their cybersecurity capacity. Partners, (ITU-D Sector Members) delivered cybersecurity training sessions for Timor-Leste and provided technical support for Bhutan and Timor-Leste. Through its Incident Response Programme, BDT provided technical assistance to the Maldives through trainings and a capacity-building assessment gap report. This initiative also facilitated partnerships and advanced discussion on collaboration to improve incident response capabilities. Through **Women in Cyber**, 44 women in the Asia-Pacific region built their capacity in mentorship, trainings, and inspirational workshops, enhancing their skills to engage in the cybersecurity workforce.   Additionally, with the support of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) Japan, ITU started the **Pathways to Cybersecurity in the Pacific** project with the objective of building and enhancing cybersecurity capacities through the development of a certified cybersecurity capacity-building programme for entry-level professionals. The programme focuses on cybersecurity capacity-building in Pacific Island Member States.   * **In the CIS,** throughout the year, continued support and participation in special events in the region was provided, aiming to enhance communication and exchange of knowledge and best practices among CIS countries. The PosiHackDays session made use of ITU experience with national CIRTs to increase cyber resilience of countries and protect critical information infrastructure. The session also examined the role of national strategies and policies on cybersecurity, capacity-building, incident response planning, and international cooperation play in enhancing cyber resilience.   As part of the Digital Almaty International Forum, held in Kazakhstan on 2 and 3 February 2023, a panel discussion was held on international information security, with discussions on sector strategy, regulation, artificial intelligence technologies, and the work of regional organizations in conflict prevention in the cyber domain through multilateral diplomacy.  On 17 May 2023, BDT contributed to a cybersecurity summit that took place within the framework of the GSMA M360 Eurasia event.  Over 20 representatives from CIS region took part in the Inter-regional CyberDrill for the Arab States and CIS regions (Abu Dhabi, UAE, 9-10 October 2023). Representatives of the national CIRTs responded to simulated cyberattacks based on six realistic scenarios and participated in training given by leading experts from the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and Positive Technologies (a company specialized in the provision of customized information security solutions). The CyberDrill participants from the countries of the CIS region included representatives from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.   * **In Europe,** BDT in cooperation with the Malta Foundation for the Well-being of Society delivered capacity-building activities in Malta. As a result of the programme, 80 professionals have become ITU certified trainers in child online protection who can scale up their knowledge and skills at the national level. Moreover, ITU signed a joint declaration with the Malta Foundation of Well-being of the Society to further collaborate on child online protection issues. BDT also supported the translation and dissemination in Serbia of the ITU Child Online Protection Guidelines in cooperation with the Ministry of Information and Telecommunication. In Albania, BDT supported the finalisation of the roll-out of the Global Project on Child Online Protection with the concluding stakeholder event taking place in December 2023. The Guidelines were also translated in other languages such as: Albanian, Amazigh, Amharic, Armenian, Aymara, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Dutch, Hungarian, Indonesian Bahasa, Kyrgyz, Lithuanian, Maltese, Mongolian (including sign language), Nigerian, Quechua, Portuguese (Brazil), Romanian, Serbian, Swahili, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian and Uzbek.   Over 200 stakeholders from 40 countries from Europe and the Asia-Pacific benefited from the ITU CyberDrill held from 28 November to 1 December 2023 in Cyprus and hosted by the Digital Security Authority of Cyprus within the framework of the ITU-D regional initiative for Europe on trust and confidence in the use of telecommunications/ICTs. It also served as a reconfirmation of the Cyprus readiness to contribute to the improvement of the cybersecurity landscape in the region, as reinforced by the Letter of Agreement signed with ITU and laid the groundwork for future collaborative activities.  **Provision of technical assistance:**   * **Global:** BDT assisted seven countries in developing their **national cybersecurity strategies and action plans**. In two workshops, BDT provided technical expertise to help define cybersecurity objectives for the new strategies, and 65 participants from two Member States were given training in developing and implementing national cybersecurity strategies (NCS). Additionally, BDT helped to assess cybersecurity progress and efforts in Mauritania, Tanzania, Djibouti, and Burkina Faso by analysing their national cybersecurity action plans. [**The Cyber for Good project**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/Cyber4Good/Cyber4Good.aspx) delivered impactful results, this assistance included cybersecurity posture assessments, training, and access to tools for 23 least developed countries (LDCs). The assessments offered clear guidance for these countries, improving their cybersecurity strategies, specifically regarding cybersecurity strategy implementation and vulnerability management. Overall, through its work BDT enhanced the capacity of Member States to address cyber threats. This was achieved through training and cyber exercises that improved the cybersecurity skills of participants from over 140 countries, reaching more than 2 500 professionals. Additionally, the programme fostered inter-regional cooperation, leading to increased proficiency in incident response and information sharing among participating countries. * **In Africa,** the Cyber for Good project significantly improved cybersecurity capabilities across 17 least developed countries (LDCs). The **Gambia, Lesotho, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone** benefitted from capacity building through technical assistance delivered by BDT. In addition, through the Cyber for Good project, training for 280 participants on different cybersecurity topics was delivered (such as national cybersecurity strategies, data protection and privacy, child online protection, incident handling and response, and managing and organizing CIRT operations, among others). Three LDCs in Africa benefitted from in-depth assessments of their national cybersecurity strategies facilitated by the Cyber for Good project. In addition, BDT conducted gap analyses and produced tailored assessment reports: a CIRT readiness report for Lesotho and a CIRT maturity report for **Zimbabwe**. These reports included clear action plans to guide improvement efforts. By addressing these identified gaps, both countries can strengthen their incident response capabilities, ultimately leading to a more secure environment for digital development. In addition, BDT has completed the implementation of **CIRT** **projects** **in** **Burundi**, **Kenya,** and **Malawi**. By providing technical assistance to Rwanda to develop a comprehensive national cybersecurity strategy and action plan,BDT helped the country strengthen its cybersecurity posture and make strategic decisions about resource allocation for future cybersecurity initiatives.   **The following countries are assisted in different areas of cybersecurity:** Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia, Gambia, Malawi, Rwanda, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Uganda.   * **In the Americas,** BDT engaged in and supported critical CIRT projects across the region, specifically in Bahamas and in Barbados, and the development of CIRT project proposals for Bermuda, Haiti, Honduras, and Suriname, to strengthen cybersecurity infrastructure and response capabilities. * **In the Arab States,** I BDT strengthened the national cyber resilience and smart investment in cybersecurity in Morocco through support for the development of a final draft of the **national cybersecurity strategy** and action plan. The ITU Interregional CyberDrill event in the UAE fostered cooperation, leading to increased proficiency in incident response and information sharing among participating countries from the Arab States region and the CIS region, where over 500 participants from over 60 countries attended technical workshops. Two least developed countries (LDCs), Djibouti and Mauritania, benefitted from in-depth assessments of their national cybersecurity strategies facilitated by the Cyber for Good project. BDT also supported the translation and the dissemination of the Child Online Protection Guidelines in Morocco in cooperation with the Digital Development Agency (ADD). Training and awareness-raising workshops on aspects related to Child Online Protection organized by the ADD in partnership with the ITU/BDT from 18 to 20 December 2023 in Rabat. * **In the Asia-Pacific,** technical assistance was offered, and capacity was developed through CIRT maturity assessments in Bhutan and Timor-Leste. In Bhutan, the assessment enhanced the knowledge of the Bhutan computer incident response team (BtCIRT) on how to improve its cybersecurity maturity level. This built on the initial 2013 ITU CIRT assessment that led to the creation of the BtCIRT. In Timor-Leste, the assessment was conducted for the Timor-Leste computer security incident response team (TLCSIRT) in collaboration with the Autoridade Nacional de Comunicações (ANC) and will provide recommendations to ensure TLCSIRT can enhance its cybersecurity maturity level.   Through ITU **CyberDrills**, capacity of government stakeholders on cybersecurity technical response and management skills was strengthened for the 14 Asia-Pacific countries that joined the Interregional CyberDrill for Europe and the Asia-Pacific, held in Cyprus.  Cybersecurity knowledge sharing between Europe and Asia-Pacific was enhanced through the four-day **2023 Interregional CyberDrill for Europe and the Asia-Pacific, held in Cyprus.** This event brought together over 200 participants from 40 countries, 20 of which were from Europe, to engage in dialogue, training, and simulation exercises on cybersecurity.   * **In the CIS,** BDT conducted a CIRT readiness assessment in Azerbaijan. The main objective of this exercise was to assess the maturity of national computer incident response teams (CIRTs) and to provide further support to Azerbaijan in improving the integration, operation, and effectiveness of the national CIRT, building capacity and cybersecurity capabilities through coordination at the national level, which will increase awareness and the ability to participate in and contribute to the development and deployment of strategies for combating cyberthreats. This will expand the options available to Azerbaijan in reacting to incidents and assist in developing and implementing operational procedures for a more effective response to a variety of cyber incidents. The assessment sought to identify strengths and weaknesses of Azerbaijan’s national CIRT and recommends ways to improve its capabilities. The assessment included policy and strategy, organizational structure, procedures and processes, technology and tools, human resources, cooperation between sectors and information-sharing, which will allow Azerbaijan to strengthen its capacities and capabilities in cybersecurity, and ultimately to protect itself from cyberthreats and incidents.   The establishment of the CIRT project for Kyrgyzstan, with support from ITU and the World Bank, is ongoing. | | **Global Cybersecurity Index 2023.**  **National Cybersecurity Strategies:**   * 130 countries benefited by **CyberDrills** in all regions. * 3 countries provided with Incident Response exercise (Maldives, Bahrain and UAE). * **HerCyberTracks** implemented in Africa and Europe. * **Women in Cyber** programme delivered in Africa, Asia, Americas and Europe. * **Cyber for Good** activities benefited several LDCs. |
| **Contributing to SDG Targets** | SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 | |
| **WSIS Action** | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C11 | |
| **Resolutions:** | PP 130, 174, 179; WTDC 45, 69; WTSA 52, 58; SGQ 3/2 | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Priority 5 & ITU-D Enabler 6 and 7: Resource mobilization, partnerships and international cooperation**  ***Strengthening resource-mobilization strategy through international cooperation.*** | | |
| ***Outcome:*** *Strengthened cooperation and coordination with the United Nations and its agencies, other international organizations, regional telecommunication organizations and regional and global development institutions in the implementation of ITU-D priorities.* | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Highlights** |
| **Resource mobilization and partnership**  **New partnerships:** Between June 2023 and April 2024, ITU signed 73 agreements with a wide range of partners.  **New projects signed:** In 2023, The BDT signed a total of 23 new projects valued at CHF 20.9 million. These figures confirm the positive trend experienced since 2017 in the increase of funds mobilized by BDT in support of projects, showcasing **enhanced confidence in ITU as a leading partner in implementing ICT initiatives.** Further details on [project implementation by](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Projects/) BDT are included in Document TDAG/23/7, as well as in the ITU development projects portal, which includes an interactive dashboard for TDAG members.  Existing projects, partnerships, and cooperation activities have also been gaining momentum: During 2023, BDT implemented activities through 87 projects, valued at CHF 106.4 million. The new projects are multi-regional, regional, and national in nature. Most of these projects (93%) were funded through the extrabudgetary funds mobilized by from third parties, while the remaining 7 per cent were funded through the allocation of seed funding from ITU, the ICT Development Fund (ICT-DF), as well as funds allocated by ITU Council in support of the ITU-D regional initiatives.  More information on BDT resource mobilization efforts and partnerships is available in TDAG-23 documents 4, 7 and INF/1. | | * **In 2023:** 87 new agreements were signed. * Between June 2023 and March 2024 73 new agreements were signed. * **23 new projects** = CHF 20.9 million. |
| **Contributing to SDG Targets** | SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 | |
| **WSIS Action** | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C11 | |
| **Resolutions:** | WTDC 1, 2, 24, 25, 52, 58 | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Enabler 1: Membership-driven**  ***Strengthening the implementation of WTDC decisions and the dialogue among the ITU membership.*** | | |
| ***Outcome:*** *Strengthened implementation of WTDC resolutions. Enhanced knowledge-sharing, research and development, dialogue and partnership among the ITU membership on telecommunication/ICT issues.* | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Highlights** |
| In 2023, ITU-D welcomed a substantial number of new members, achieved through strengthened, concerted, and targeted outreach strategies covering various segments of the ICT ecosystem. The enhanced strategic engagement with ITU-D membership, including Member States, involved targeted visits, events, and preparation of briefs.   * **Twenty-seven new members** joined ITU-D in 2023, compared to 18 new members in 2022, reflecting a 50 per cent increase in new memberships. * Overall **net growth of membership in 2023** (the difference between gains and losses) was **four times higher than in 2022.** * Record number of attendances with **149 participants** to the Industry Advisory Group on Development Issues and Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers (IAGDI-CRO) meeting held during the GSR-23 in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt. * Increased awareness of ITU-D products and services with over **150 interactions** with the membership through outreach missions, meetings, and high-level visits.  1. **ITU Academia**  * ITU attracted 17 and lost 18 Academia affiliations in 2023. In spite of the concerted efforts by the three ITU Sectors to attract and retain Academia, maintaining growth has proved to be challenging as Academia has regularly reported difficulties in sustaining affiliation for an extended period due to budgetary limitations. * All efforts are being made across ITU Sectors to review and better promote the value proposition for the ITU Academia affiliation across the ITU. Regarding specific engagement with ITU-D, ITU Academy, Digital Inclusion and Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development are some of the main areas for which collaborations are being explored, in addition to ITU-D study groups.  1. **ITU-D study groups (SGs)**   The [second annual meeting of ITU-D Study Group 1 (SG1)](https://www.itu.int/net4/ITU-D/CDS/sg/blkmeetings.asp?lg=1&sp=2022&blk=28245) was held from 23 to 27 October 2023, with 224 participants (100 women delegates) from 59 Member States. Thirteen fellowships were granted to delegates to facilitate their physical presence.  To continue innovating and sustaining the interest of participants, a spotlight session on the [Digital Regulation Network](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/ra-network/) was held at the opening plenary, and an informal Network of Women (NOW) lunch was organized during the week. Two ITU-D SG1 management team meetings, a joint ITU-D SG1 and SG2 management team meeting, and several Question management team meetings were held in Geneva from 22 to 28 October 2023, to make the most of physical presence in Geneva. The [[SG1 management team members](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Study-Groups/2022-2025/Pages/reference/Management.aspx)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Study-Groups/2022-2025/Pages/reference/Management.aspx) prepared the SG1 meeting and advanced work on output reports of Questions and on interim deliverables through Question-level e-meetings regularly held since the end of the May 2023 rapporteur group meetings.  A total of 155 documents, which included the first 5 draft output reports of study Questions, were discussed at the ITU-D SG1 meeting 2023 to advance the work, culminating in: (1) the issue of 8 outgoing liaison statements to our external collaborators; (2) the appointment of one vice-chair and two vice-rapporteurs; and (3) the approval of the first ITU-D SG1 interim deliverable related to ;the work of ITU-D SG1 Question 6/1 on “*Best practices being adopted on fit-for-purpose digital regulation tools for consumer protection*”; (4) five proposals for public workshops to be held in conjunction with the April 2024 rapporteur meetings and one proposal for a workshop to be hosted in Brasilia by the ITU regional office for the Americas and Anatel in June 2024.  These workshops are under implementation as detailed on the [web page](https://www.itu.int/net4/ITU-D/CDS/sg/blkmeetings.asp?lg=1&stg=&sp=2022&blk=28776) of the April 2024 rapporteur group meetings. The interim deliverable for ITU-D SG1 Question 6/1 is available as [a free publication in all official UN languages](https://www.itu.int/hub/publication/d-stg-sg01-06-3-2023/) and is complemented by a [video interview](https://youtu.be/wx0ep9bT-Ys) of the authors. [outcomes of rapporteur group meetings of April 2024 will be shared after 26 April, 2024].  The [second annual meeting of ITU-D Study Group 2 (SG2)](https://www.itu.int/net4/ITU-D/CDS/sg/blkmeetings.asp?lg=1&sp=2022&blk=28246) was held from 30 October 2023 to 3 November 2023, with 195 participants from 54 Member States. Thirteen fellowships were granted to delegates to facilitate their physical presence. The [SG2 management team members](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Study-Groups/2022-2025/Pages/reference/Management.aspx), prepared this meeting and advanced work on output reports of Questions and on interim deliverables through Question level e-meetings regularly held since the end of the May-June 2023 rapporteur group meetings.  At the ITU-D SG2 meeting in 2023, 120 documents were discussed to advance the work, culminating in: (1) the issue of three outgoing liaison statements to our external collaborators; (2) the appointment of one vice-chair, three co-rapporteurs, and one vice-rapporteur; (3) the approval of the first ITU-D SG2 interim deliverable related to the work of ITU-D SG2 Question 3/2 on “*Cybersecurity assurance practices*”.  Proposals for collaboration were explored, including engagement on youth and women, statistics and related indicators, synergies with ITU development projects and WSIS. Two information sessions were held: the first one to showcase the new interim deliverable on cybersecurity assurance practices, the second one presented selected ITU projects related to digital transformation and their impacts. Both events were successfully held with good engagement.  The interim deliverable for ITU-D SG3 Question 3/2 is available as [a free publication in all official UN languages](https://www.itu.int/hub/publication/d-stg-sg02-03-2-2023/) and is complemented by a [video interview](https://youtu.be/-O7K7DbZaHk) of the authors.   1. **WSIS implementation and follow-up**   Following the outcomes of WTDC-22, in particular Resolution 30, all BDT activities contribute to the implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This includes the implementation of regular activities under the **operational plan but also projects, regional initiatives, special initiatives, as well as ITU-D study groups.**  At the facilitation level, ITU has continued to play the role of the lead facilitator for WSIS Action Lines C2 (ICT Infrastructure), C6 (Enabling Environment), and C4 (Capacity Building), while significantly contributing to WSIS Action Line C5 (Confidence in Use of ICTs). A series of facilitation meetings are being organized on the occasion of the upcoming WSIS+20 High-Level Event, to be held from 27 to 31 May 2024, in Geneva, Switzerland. BDT also continues to co-facilitate the WSIS Action Lines C1, C3, C7, C9, C11, regularly contributing to all relevant meetings and reporting.  Moreover, ITU continued to be an active member of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development and of its Steering Committee, along with UNCTAD and UNDESA. The membership of the Partnership has expanded to include 14 organizations. It has been monitoring ICT development globally, tracking progress towards the WSIS targets, and raising awareness about the importance of ICTs for development. The Partnership is actively engaged in monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with several SDG targets referring to ICTs and technology. In the global SDG indicators framework, out of 231 indicators, seven ICT indicators are included, covering six targets under Goals 4, 5, 9, and 17. ITU is the custodian of five of the seven indicators. (For more reporting on the ITU contribution to the Partnership, please see section on Measurement).  At the regional level, ITU regional offices have continued to play an important dual role in terms of implementation and follow-up. **Six Regional Development Forums (RDFs) held between 2023 and 2024 attracted over 1500 stakeholders worldwide**, providing an effective platform for all stakeholders to discuss the implementation of ITU regional initiatives contributing to the implementation of the WSIS action lines. The meetings attracted representatives of the UN system, including UN regional commissions, providing the follow-up function on WSIS implementation at the regional level.  Moreover, ITU regional offices have continued to contribute to a series of the UN regional sustainable development forums, drawing attention to the enabling role of digital for development and advocating for alignment between WSIS and SDG processes. In addition, ITU has continued to play an active role in the UN development system. At the regional level, ITU has been providing input to the UN system coordination platforms related to digital (issues-based coalitions), while promoting alignment between WSIS and SDG processes, as well as developing several products and services to support the work of UN country teams.  At the national level, ITU has become a non-resident member of the UN country teams and has been proactively contributing to the process of developing country-specific analyses and co-designing UN sustainable development frameworks. ITU has also piloted the implementation of first projects under the Digital Window of the Joint SDG Fund.   1. **ITU P2C Coalition**   P2C was Launched in 2021 by ITU in close cooperation with the Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology and the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Islands Developing States (UNOHRLLS). WTDC-22, held in Kigali, Rwanda, adopted [Resolution 88](https://www.itu.int/en/publications/ITU-D/pages/publications.aspx?parent=D-TDC-WTDC-2022&media=electronic) and instructed the BDT Director to continue working on the P2C with a focus on partnerships for project implementation and scaling of pledges.  **P2C activities, outcomes and achievements from July 2023 to February 2024:**   * **25 matchmaking round tables were organized during the 6** [**ITU-D RDFs**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Pages/regional-development-forums.aspx)**,** to ensure that individual country, and regional priorities or needs are matched as a way of operationalizing the many pledges that had been announced. BDT is focusing on translating P2C pledges into concrete actions that generate meaningful impact on the ground, directly benefiting ordinary citizens, communities, and result in the overall digital transformation in beneficiary countries. * As of 28 February 2024, P2C has received **873 pledges worth more than USD 46.07 billion, made by 426 entities** including governments, private sector companies, UN agencies and other international or regional organizations (including multilateral development banks), civil society, academia, and youth groups. The pledge-makers are from **141 countries**. At Mobile World Congress (MWC 26-29 February 2024 in Barcelona), USD 9 billion in infrastructure pledges were announced in the ministerial programme.  1. **ITU-D events:**   In 2023, ITU-D held 118 non-statutory events, including workshops, information sessions, symposia, seminars and forums, catering to various audiences, some global and others regional. Building on the momentum from 2022, there was a notable increase in the number of physical events and hybrid events, while a few remained fully virtual. Of the 118 events, 46 were fully physical, 45 hybrid, and 27 virtual. The events covered all ITU-D priorities in accordance with the Kigali Action Plan approved by WTDC-22, fostering collaboration and innovation. | | * ITU-D: 27 new members. * All BDT activities contribute to the implementation of the WSIS outcomes and 2023 Agenda for Sustainable Development. * Six ITU RDFs held in 2023 and 2024 (+over 1500 stakeholders).   **P2C:**   * P2C has received 873 pledges (141 countries), worth more than $46.07 USD billion, made by 426 entities.   **Study Groups:**   * 2 interim deliverables (papers) published155 documents were discussed at the ITU-D SG1 meeting 2023. * 120 documents were discussed at the ITU-D SG2 meeting 2023. |
| **Contributing to SDG Targets** | SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17  **Study Groups:** Contributing to SDG targets and WSIS action lines: see [mapping here](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Study-Groups/2022-2025/Pages/reference/Questions-under-study.aspx)  Resolutions: WTDC Res. 1 and 2 mainly  PP Res 208, 21, 70, 71, 77, 102, 123, 130, 131, 136, 139, 154, 167, 175, 177, 179, 180, 182, 188, 196, 197, 203, 204, 205, 209. | |
| **WSIS Action** | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C11 | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Enabler 2: Regional presence**  ***Strengthening of ITU overall global effectiveness and impact*** | | |
| ***Outcome:*** *Strengthened joint regional collaboration and cooperation and with the United Nations and its agencies, regional telecommunication organizations and financial and development institutions for achieving the 2030 SDGs related to digital economy development matters* | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Highlights** |
| At the regional level, ITU regional offices have continued to play an important dual role in terms of implementation and follow-up. **Six ITU RDFs held between 2023 and 2024 attracted over 1500 stakeholders worldwide**, providing an effective platform for all stakeholders to discuss the implementation of ITU-D regional initiatives adopted by the World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2022 and all the outcomes of the Kigali Action Plan. The meetings attracted representatives of the UN system, including UN regional commissions, Development Banks, Private Sector, Member States and Academia. During the RDFs, matchmaking round tables were successfully held. The aim was to match pledges and country specific, and regional priorities and getting commitments that are now under implementation. The Regional Offices based on the commitments follow-up to provide support during the implementation.  **ITU Regional Office for Africa:**  **The Regional Office for Africa has actively work in the implementation of various initiatives and projects across the region mainly by providing support to Member States by fostering digital transformation and accelerating transition to digital economy, improving response to cybersecurity incidents, promoting digital inclusion and meaningful connectivity. These efforts align with the four regional initiatives as set out in the Kigali Action Plan (KAP). The following are key activities and achievements under each regional initiative.**   * **Enhanced engagement among Member States, private sector, academia, regional organizations and partners for the implementation of the Kigali Action Plan, showcasing progress and national success stories during the exchanges:** The 2023 **I RDF for Africa (RDF-AFR)** was held from 3 to 5 October 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia under the theme “Digital transformation for a sustainable and equitable digital future: Accelerating the implementation of the SDGs in Africa through digital transformation". It welcomed close to 300 participants, attracted 27 contributions, and resulted in 20 new P2C commitments for Africa, achieving the milestone of the 800th P2C pledge. * **Strategic collaboration with UN agencies was strengthened**: As a signatory to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), a growing number of countries in theITU Regional Office for Africa contributed to strengthened collaboration within the UN country teams to deliver as one UN in the region. ITU has recently become a signatory to the new UNSDCFs in Cabo Verde, Malawi, Mauritius, and the Seychelles, and efforts are ongoing to become signatories in other countries. In January 2024, supporting UN resident coordinators across the continent to create a good understanding of digital transformation within their country frameworks, ITU and the UN Development Coordination Office, shared an overview of the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation in the Africa region. * **Regional priorities were addressed**: BDT provided technical assistance and strengthened capacity to support meaningful connectivity and the digital transformation process both at national and regional level in line with the Africa regional initiatives.   AFR1: Supporting digital transformation to usher in a rapid transition to a digital economy while accelerating innovation in Africa   * BDT provided technical assistance on the smart village and smart island initiative to Liberia and Cabo Verde, respectively, in collaboration with the offices of the UN Resident Coordinator to enable digital transformation for all. * To support the advancement of digital transformation in the region, through the GovStack initiative, deep dive sessions have been held with countries, including the Gambia, and Lesotho, amongst others, to share information on the whole-of-government approach to enable the effective delivery of digital government services. * Within the framework of the circular economy and greening digital transformation for waste electrical and electronic equipment, BDT in collaboration with different partners delivered support to develop and implement e-waste management strategies for a circular economy in Member States including Botswana, Malawi, Niger, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia.   AFR2: Implementation and expansion of broadband infrastructures, connectivity and emerging technologies   * To build and strengthen capacity in spectrum management and emerging technologies, capacity building and technical assistance have been delivered to 42 countries under the PRIDA project. The benchmarking of ICTs in Central Africa project has undertaken data collection across all 11 beneficiary countries including: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Rep. of the), Dem. Rep. of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe. The data will inform recommendations and capacity building programmes tailored to countries’ needs and priorities. * A market assessment on ICT affordability has been undertaken in Zambia to ensure effective competition and transparent, cost-based and non-discriminatory tariffs. * Under the joint digital transformation project between the Government of Uganda and ITU, supported by the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund (SSCAF), the BDT provided policy guidance on last-mile connectivity, big data applications, e-waste policy development. This work further supports the development of an enabling regulatory environment for broadband and 5G strategy development, among other work items. Capacity building and certified training are being implemented across the areas covered by the policy recommendations.   AFR3: Building trust, safety and security in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies and protection of personal data   * Cybersecurity being a shared responsibility, BDT assisted Chad and Rwanda to develop a comprehensive national cybersecurity strategy to ensure a smooth operation and a safe, secure and resilient digital realm. This strategy will be implemented and executed in a multi-stakeholder approach. * To improve the response to cybersecurity incident and cyber-attacks at national and regional levels, in addition to the regional CyberDrill for the Africa region, ITU performed a CIRT maturity assessment for Zimbabwe and CIRT readiness assessment for Lesotho. * Capacity development and training on emerging digital technologies and cyber laws were delivered to the legal and judiciary community in Malawi.   AFR4: Fostering emerging technologies and innovation ecosystems   * A digital innovation profile has been completed for Zimbabwe, and the findings will contribute to the strengthening of the digital innovation ecosystem in the country. Other innovation profiles in the region are either undergoing or will be undertaken in 2024. * The Network of Acceleration Centres, launched to unlock innovation for sustainable digital transformation, aims to drive digital transformation through a unique ecosystem-thinking approach, and enhance capabilities to boost innovation, entrepreneurship, and the digitalization of economies. Out of the 17 centres launched, 6 centres are located in Africa: Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. * The new Foundations for VaMoz Digital! project in Mozambique was launched at the end of 2023 with the support of the EU delegation in the country. The project spans 3.5 years and seeks to support human-centric digital transformation for sustainable development and inclusive growth through policy and regulatory interventions, strengthen digital innovation ecosystems, digital inclusion and capacity development. * The new digital skills for digital inclusion of Africa’s girls and youth project, supported by Qualcomm, is working to develop new technical content that feeds into various training platforms, including the section of the ITU Academy dedicated to youth and Africa region Girls Can Code interventions. * BDT also continued to work closely with regional organizations, including the African Telecommunications Union, African Union Commission, Smart Africa Secretariat, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Regulatory Associations, across various initiatives. These initiatives include, but are not limited to, coordination with the African Union Commission and UN agencies to develop the Action Plan for Africa for the Early Warning for All (EW4ALL) initiative to guide the implementation of the initiative at national level; development of the National Emergency Telecommunication Plan model for the SADC region to establish effective telecommunication links for disaster response and coordination that can be customized and adopted by other regions. * The UN Opportunity and Issue-Based Coalition (OIBC 3) on the continent dedicated to Innovation, Digitalization, Youth, and Transforming Education has been re-energized to better meet the needs of Member States with joint actions that bring the expertise of the agencies together in a coordinated manner. * BDT contributed to the preparations of the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-23), preparatory meetings for the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-24), and the 1st Preparatory meeting for WTDC-25, in coordination with the African Telecommunications Union (ATU) and ITU Member States.   **ITU Regional Office for the Americas:**  **The Regional Office for the Americas has actively supported Member States by implementing various initiatives and projects across the region aimed at deploying ICT infrastructure, enhancing digital inclusion and innovation, accelerating digital transformation, and formulating digital regulations. These efforts align with the four regional initiatives as set out in the Kigali Action Plan (KAP). The following are key activities and achievements under each regional initiative.**  AMS1: Deployment of modern, resilient, secure, and sustainable telecommunication/information and communication technology infrastructure   * The Standardization Bureau participated in the Open Networks Seminar, held by Anatel on 9 August 2023 and the Japanese Embassy in Brazil. The Director participated in the session “Open Networks: Disaggregation and network virtualization” and spoke about Open Networks: Perspectives from ITU and Mobile Operator Experience. Several bilateral meetings were carried out. * The Radiocommunication Bureau actively engaged in the Latin America Spectrum Management Conference, held in Brasilia, Brazil, from 20 to 21 February 2024. This conference, hosted by Anatel served as a platform for key stakeholders to deliberate on the outcomes of WRC-23. * ITU, UNICEF and Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) cooperated and collaborated in areas of common interest , including school connectivity and of the Giga initiative in the Eastern Caribbean region, through the development of the child online protection policy and strategic framework, a pilot study in rural communities in Barbados (including the provision of IT equipment and training) and presented all Giga broadband upgrade support to OECS Member States. In Barbados, there was an upgrade in broadband in 27 pilot schools and over 18 057 students and 1 382 teachers across the country benefitted. BDT and BR jointly organized the Radiocommunications Seminar for the Americas. It was held in May 2023 in Havana, Cuba. Almost 100 hybrid participants attended, with delegations from ITU 13 Member States from the Americas, as well as the participation of industry and international organizations, etc. * Workshops on Emergency Telecommunications were held in Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, and Guatemala. BDT is working on an NETP for Paraguay.   AMS2: Enhancement and expansion of digital-literacy, digital-skills and digital-inclusion programmes, especially among vulnerable populations   * Projects addressing digital skills development of vulnerable people were implemented. In partnership with META, the Americas Girls Can Code project strengthened the skills of more than 2 300 girls and provided gender policy strategy support for Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, and Mexico. * In partnership with the Gran Chaco Foundation, more than 340 young people and woman from indigenous communities based in Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay benefited from digital skills training activities (Youth Digital Inclusion project). * ITU/BDT signed an agreement with Huawei to support the implementation of the regional initiatives of the Americas region with project funds of USD 150 000. * A project on capacity building has been signed with the Costa Rica government-run electricity and telecommunications services provider (ICE). * Countries from the region supported the International Girls in ICT Day celebrations. In 2023, the initiative witnessed a significant increase in the participation of girls from diverse backgrounds, reflecting growing interest and awareness of ICT-related careers among young women. The initiative facilitated mentorship opportunities for girls with successful women professionals in the ICT industry.   AMS3: Effective support for digital transformation and innovation ecosystems through scalable, funded, and sustainable connectivity projects   * A Managers in ICT Networks in Indigenous and Rural Communities 2023/2024 programme for Latin America was developed. * ITU/BDT actively participated in the Latin American Congress on Digital Transformation, organized by ASIET and GSMA, that took place from 31 May to 1 June 2023 by sharing knowledge and expertise on ICT accessibility, digital inclusion and enabling regulatory environments in the region. * A United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in Brazil was signed. * BDT participated along with other UN agencies, funds and programmes in the SDG Fund Digital Window opportunity in Colombia and El Salvador. In Colombia the proposal by (ILO, ITU, UNDP, UNFPA) was awarded full funds and in El Salvador the proposal (ITU, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO) was awarded USD 250 000 as early-stage funding. ITU, FAO and the European Union signed the “Merian” project on 5.0 agriculture for El Salvador. The total budget of the project is Euro 5.2 million, and ITU will implement Euro 1.09 million.   AMS4: Development of enabling policy and regulatory environments to connect the unconnected through accessible and affordable telecommunications/information and communication technologies that support achievement of the sustainable development goals and progress towards the digital economy.   * Training on Basic Digital Financial Inclusion (DFI) and Digital Financial Services (DFS) was delivered in the Dominican Republic. * The **ITU RDF for Americas (RDF-AMS)** was organized by ITU/BDT and hosted by the Government of El Salvador. The Forum was held from 16 to 18 August 2023 in San Salvador and it was held in conjunction with the ITEC-ITU Colloquium on New Technologies and the Internet. 27 contributions were received and added to the P2C pledging platform. At the RDF, 147 P2C commitments, worth USD 9.86 billion were announced based on pledges that had been made. These commitments were by 91 entities from 39 countries , some of which are already being implemented in the Americas region to deliver meaningful connectivity and digital transformation. The RDF-AMS welcomed 268 participants from 22 Member States. * During CITEL Permanent Consultative Committee I (PCC.I), ITU/BDT provided a regional support to the alternative regulatory sandbox and developed a workshop for participating countries.   **ITU Regional Office for Arab States:**  The Regional Office for Arab States has actively spearheaded various initiatives and projects across the region, aimed at accelerating digital transformation and fostering a sustainable digital economy. These efforts align with the five regional initiatives as set out in the Kigali Action Plan (KAP), focusing on enhancing digital economies, ensuring cybersecurity, developing smart cities, nurturing innovation, and formulating digital regulations. The following are key activities and achievements under each regional initiative, demonstrating the commitment of ITU to advance telecommunications and technology in the Arab States region.  ARB 1: Regional Initiative 1: Sustainable digital economy through digital transformation   * The BDT facilitated GSR-23 hosted by Egypt, which focused on regulation for a sustainable digital future, which underscores Egypt's commitment to facilitating impactful international telecommunications discussions. * Oman's achievement in completing its digital innovation country profile represents a significant step towards understanding and enhancing its digital landscape. * Tunisia supported innovation and entrepreneurship through soft landing missions, highlighting the potential of emerging startups and fostering cross-border collaboration within the Arab States region. * BDT enhanced the capacity of Jordan to accelerate digital transformation and sustainable economic and social development in the health sector by developing a national digital health strategy in collaboration with WHO. * The capacity of Jordan to accelerate digital transformation and sustainable economic and social development was also enhanced through the development of an assessment study on the enabling environment for the ecosystem of immersive technologies in partnership with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA). * Collaboration and partnerships were strengthened on innovative e-agriculture solutions in the ITU-FAO e-Agriculture Solutions Forum held in Amman, Jordan from 10 to 12 July 2023. * The Network of Women launched its 2024 strategy and action plan. As part of the implementation of the action plan, three workshops organized in collaboration with Ogero-Lebanon focused on enhancing women's skills in self-motivation, effective communication, and leadership in the Arab States region. * A self-paced training course titled "Beyond Smart Cities" is now available in Arabic on the ITU Academy platform, aiming to promote digital accessibility for individuals with specific needs. * The 3rd Edition of Accessible Arab States region in November 2023 raised awareness and knowledge on ICT accessibility among members. It also bolstered political will for advancing national policies in countries like Morocco and Palestine, while strengthening partnerships with UNESCWA. * Through the organization of Girls in ICT Day, partnerships were strengthened with Member States including, Egypt, Mauritania, Somalia, and the State of Palestine. These efforts also fostered collaboration among stakeholders, including the Network of Women, to increase women's leadership in ICTs. * Increased participation of youth in ITU-D activities and policy-making processes was achieved through opportunities provided to 25 Arab Generation Connect Youth Envoys from 8 countries. These young people are actively contributing to shaping the digital future landscape in the region. * Generation Connect Youth Envoys received 52 nominations from 11 Arab States. The applications were reviewed, and 36 new youth envoys were selected from 10 Arab States.   ARB 2: Enhancing confidence, security, and privacy in telecommunications/ICTs   * In collaboration with the United Arab Emirates Cybersecurity Council, BDT facilitated the hosting of the ITU global CyberDrill in Dubai from 23 to 25 April. * To foster the effective implementation of ITU cybersecurity priorities and regional initiatives for the Arab States, ITU/BDT collaborated with the United Arab Emirates Cybersecurity Council to conduct a tabletop exercise and a cybersecurity incident simulation exercise. These capacity-building sessions took place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 18 January 2024, drawing the active engagement of 25 experts. * In collaboration with United Arab Emirates Cybersecurity Council and the Arab Regional Cybersecurity Centre (ARCC) in Oman, the Regional Cybersecurity Week 2023 from 9 to 12 October 2023 was developed focusing on Cybersecurity Innovation and Industry Development. The week brought together over 100 experts and speakers from 70 countries and 10 international organizations. * In collaboration with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) of the Kingdom of Bahrain, a regional workshop on cybersecurity management was developed. The main objective of this workshop was to teach the different roles and responsibilities involved in the crisis management of cyber-attacks. * Also, technical support was provided to National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) by developing a workshop on the Global Cybersecurity Index. * In collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), the [Arab Information and Communication Technologies Organization](http://www.aicto.org/), and the [Internet Society](https://www.internetsociety.org/regions/middle-east/), a workshop on building trust in digital government services was developed to showcase practical strategies for enhancing cybersecurity. * Cybersecurity drills and technical support training were carried out to fortify the cybersecurity culture across the Arab states. * The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s active collaboration with ITU/BDT in cybersecurity initiatives includes hosting workshops and training on digital regulation and cybersecurity, furthering its role in the global telecommunication landscape. * Morocco received support under the child online protection global programme that included capacity building and awareness-raising held in Rabat from 18 to 20 December 2023. The workshops focused on enhancing knowledge and understanding among government officials, ICT professionals, and civil society regarding child online protection. The sessions fostered interactive discussions on challenges and best practices, demonstrating a collective commitment to this important issue. * Meanwhile, discussions are underway to support Lebanon in developing its national child online protection strategy. * During the year 2023, BDT jointly with the Cybersecurity Council of the United Arab Emirates organized and held capacity building CyberDrills with a record participation of countries. Five Guinness Book World records certificates were awarded. In 2024, the first Global CyberDrill was successful held in Dubai with a record participation of over 104 countries with Ministerial representation, Chiefs of Industry, Regulators, and other stakeholders. The drills were a great success. A new world Guinness Book World record was recorded.   ARB 3: Developing digital infrastructure for smart sustainable cities and communities   * In January 2024, collaboration between BDT and NTRA Egypt led to the signing of a project focused on Smart Sustainable Cities and Communities. The objective of this initiative is to advance the development of telecommunication infrastructure for smart sustainable cities and communities, alongside formulating a regulatory and licensing framework tailored for smart cities and communities within Egypt. * Collaboration with WHO developed a national digital health strategy for Jordan, showcasing the country's dedication to integrating digital technologies into healthcare systems. * Oman's exploration of smart cities collaboration with BDT highlights the sultanate's focus on leveraging technology to enhance urban development and sustainability. * In collaboration with the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Jordan (TRC), a blended training course on ITU training of trainers on quality of service training programme (QoSTP) and spectrum management training programme (SMTP) were held from 22 to 26 Oct 23 and were conducted both online through the ITU Academy platform and in Amman, Jordan.   ARB 4: Building Capacities and Encouraging Digital Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Future Foresight   * Oman's achievement in completing its digital innovation country profile represents a significant step towards understanding and enhancing the digital landscape. BDT provided support to the country. * Working with Tunisia we supported innovation and entrepreneurship through soft landing missions, highlighting the potential of emerging startups and fostering cross-border collaboration within the Arab States region. * The Arab Innovation and Entrepreneurship Network (AIEN) undertook soft landing programmes with Algeria, Egypt, and Tunisia, facilitating market exploration and networking opportunities for promising startups. * Strengthened partnerships and collaboration through the ideation of four innovative project ideas between the UN and the Government of Egypt on energy, food, water and transportation using digital technologies in the national ideation workshop, were held from 26 to 27 November 2023, in Cairo, Egypt. * In Tunisia, around 200 public sector employees were trained on a range of digital skills through the ITU Academy as part of a joint project with GiZ. * In Lebanon, with significant support and active participation from OGERO, there was a focus on implementing child online protection (COP) reflecting a commitment to creating a safer online environment for the younger generation.   ARB 5: Developing means of digital regulation   * In collaboration with Saudi Arabia, assistance in telecommunication/ICT projects emphasized training and digital transformation, contributing to the region's capacity-building efforts was held as a side-event to the **RDF.** * Bahrain hosted of the **ITU RDF for the Arab States (RDF-ARB)** on accelerating digital development that showcased Bahrain’s leadership in embracing digitalization. * ITU organized digital regulation workshops and training sessions across multiple countries, including discussions on the ITU Regulatory Tracker and G5 Benchmark tools, to enhance understanding and implementation of digital regulation. * Saudi Arabia’s advisory services project that we manage, focused on space radio services and digital transformation strategies, marking significant progress in developing means of digital regulation across the Arab States region. * With the support of the Regional Office, Qatar continued its digital regulation discussions and will host PP-26, demonstrating its commitment to global dialogues and innovation.   **ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific:**  **The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has actively work in the implementation of several projects and activities across the region mainly by providing support to Member States through multi-stakeholder partnership to accelerate digital transformation and transition to digital economy, enhancing digital skills development and fostering cooperation towards the improvement of connectivity. These efforts align with the regional initiatives as set out in the Kigali Action Plan (KAP). The following are key activities and achievements.**   * In the Asia-Pacific region, BDT continues to work closely with the UN country teams and the United Nations Development Coordination Office (UNDCO) in 2023 and to collaborate on initiatives for digitalization. As a result, digital transformation components within the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks in the Pacific [[9669\_UNSDF\_pacific\_A4\_01.05.23\_WEB\_version\_LR\_3.pdf]](https://pacific.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/9669_UNSDF_pacific_A4_01.05.23_WEB_version_LR_3.pdf), of which ITU is a signatory, were strengthened. ITU continues to implement Joint Programmes in the Pacific. Accelerating SDG achievement through digital transformation to strengthen community resilience in Micronesia; and advancing the SDGs by improving livelihoods and resilience via economic diversification and digital transformation. These joint programme initiatives contributed towards the opening of the digital window of the UN SDG fund. Digital transformation components were strengthened in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks in the [United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022–2026 in Thailand](https://thailand.un.org/en/166885-united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-unsdcf-2022%E2%80%932026) to which ITU is a signatory. ITU continues to contribute towards the implementation of Outcome 2 on human capital and strengthening of institutions, partnerships and the empowerment of people. Under this framework, activities such as Girls in ICT Day, digital skills assessment for migrants in Thailand and strategic engagement to implement mAgeing were held jointly with UN agencies. * ITU is part of the newly constituted multi-stakeholder partnership to promote activities under digital skills, digital safety, digital culture, and digital ethics in Indonesia. The partnership consists of UNESCO, FAO, ITC, UNDP, UNICEF, UNIDO, WHO, RCO, Government of Indonesia, National University Network of Indonesia and APDI and aims to create synergies and impact. * At the **ITU RDF for Asia and the Pacific (RDF-ASP)** held in Thailand in September 2023, 20 countries and partner organizations from across the region came together to discuss the Asia-Pacific regional initiatives and the Kigali Action Plan, the needs of the region and candidate countries for implementation. The Forum led to enhanced awareness and high-level commitment from ITU Member States in the Asia-Pacific region and strengthened cooperation and collaboration with UNDCO, UNCT and agencies such as UNCDF and WMO. Increased financial commitments were evidenced by new pledges made during the P2C roundtable matchmaking sessions; 11 new P2C pledges and commitments were announced, and several joint declarations were signed including with Huawei, Indosat, and IICF, which brought more resources and expertise for the implementation of the regional initiatives. * BDT enhanced awareness and high-level commitments to accelerating digital transformation in the first Pacific ICT Digital Ministerial Dialogue held on 28 August 2023 in Papua New Guinea. The [Lagatoi Declaration](https://wanpasifik.org/lagatoi-declaration/), adopted during the meeting, calls upon ITU and other development partners to strengthen its regional presence in the Pacific. Following the Ministerial Meeting, a two-year ITU project was launched in 2024 that will conduct a feasibility study aimed at addressing the special needs for telecommunication/ICT development in the Pacific small island developing States, funded by the Australia Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA) and ITU. * BDT also continued to work closely with the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) to enhance capacity and strategic alignment of activities. BDT contributed its expertise and enhanced participation of Member States on key APT and ITU events such as the APT Symposium on Inclusive Connectivity and the **RDF-ASP**, through coordination of experts and fellowship for participants. * A robust regional presence was also cemented with the inauguration of the Area Office for South Asia and Innovation Centre in New Delhi, India, in March 2023. The new Area Office started producing tangible outcomes, including the enhancement of technical expertise for experts from 10 countries through the delivery of GovStack and whole-of-government approach training. Additionally, the office achieved increased capacity through SMS4DC training for 20 experts from the Indian Ministry of Communications, focusing on spectrum management and proficient usage of tools. * In innovation, BDT efforts have strengthened Member State capabilities. This was evident through the success of the Regional Innovation Forum, Digital Health Workshop, and Innovation & Entrepreneurship for SDGs. This assistance extends to governments, industry players, academia, and entrepreneurs, contributing significantly to their advancement at various stages of the innovation journey. * Over the course of this reporting period, BDT has signed eight agreements valued at over USD 3.1 million for new extrabudgetary projects and voluntary contributions for the Asia-Pacific as a concrete outcome of BDT technical assistance, analysis and capacity development. * ITU continued its longstanding partnership with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) China by jointly organizing a high-level annual event. In 2023, the event was organized under the theme “**Building a Digital Future for All**”.   BDT initiated cooperation with the [International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries (ITTLLDC)](https://land-locked.org/) and jointly organized an event focused on the common challenges of landlocked developing countries from Asia and the Pacific and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) for efficient policy making in the continuously growing digital sector. ITTLLDC applied to become An ITU-D Sector member in 2024.   * BDT, along with co-organizers and partners, organised 8 Girls in ICT Day celebrations across many countries including Fiji, Kiribati, Indonesia, Micronesia, Nauru, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, and ASEAN member countries, that assisted with the delivery of digital skills training programmes and other related activities aimed at benefiting girls and young women in the region. The gatherings attracted over 2 200 participants, including girls, young women, and teachers, who engaged in 63 digital skills training programmes and associated activities as part of Girls in ICT ASP from 27 April to 17 November 2023. Furthermore, these activities in Asia and the Pacific involved engagement with gender focal points in the aforementioned 11 countries, as well as collaboration with over 100 partners from governments, UN agencies, industries, academia, and civil society organizations.   **ITU Regional Office for the Commonwealth of Independent States:**  **The Regional Office for the Commonwealth of Independent States has actively work in the implementation of projects and initiatives across the region mainly by providing support to Member States to enhance knowledge on 5G technologies and deployment, improvement of digital regulation and ICT data, response to cybersecurity incidents and accelerating process for digital transformation. These efforts align with the regional initiatives as set out in the Kigali Action Plan (KAP).**   * Regional priorities are addressed through technical and expert assistance, capacity building, and knowledge sharing in the region, streamlined with the regional initiatives: CIS 1 on networks and infrastructure; CIS 2 on cybersecurity; CIS 3 on policy and regulatory measures to support digital transformation: CIS 4 on digital skills for all, including people with disabilities: CIS 5 on smart cities. These are also complemented through global programmes and initiatives, such as child online protection, GovStack, C2R, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development, Generation Connect. The following are key activities undertaken: * In the realm of digital infrastructure, more than 700 public sector representatives from Armenia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan were trained on 5G technologies and deployment. In Tajikistan as well as in fifteen other countries worldwide, BDT launched the Early Warnings for All Initiative. A new project on community networks was launched jointly with the Union of Operators of Armenia and other partners aiming to connect five remote and mountainous communities with over 1 500 households. * On digital skills and accessibility, over 120 university students were trained on building and accelerating startups in Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Russia. Research on the digital skills for persons with disabilities was conducted, which assessed the current status and the training needs to enable persons with disabilities to harness digital technology in their daily lives. The outcomes of the research were presented at the regional roundtable in December 2023. Technical assistance was provided to three training centres on digital skills for persons with disabilities from Armenia, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan to upgrade the equipment and software used for ICT trainings purposes. * To support the digital transformation of Member States in the area of digital regulation and ICT data, BDT helped to streamline national statistics and ICT data systems with ITU standards in Azerbaijan. A digital skills assessment followed, which included surveying 34 500 respondents from around the country, as well as of university students and academic staff, private sector, public sector. The outcome report will be finalized in 2024 and will contribute to the development of comprehensive strategic approach to advancing digital literacy and digital skills across the country. * Following Armenia and Kazakhstan, a C2R assessment of digital resilience was completed in Kyrgyzstan, analysing ICT data systems and providing policy recommendations to the authorities. * In the area of digital government and digital services, over 60 professionals convened for the [regional forum on digital government](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Pages/EVENTS/2024/GovStack.aspx) to explore tools and services provided by the GovStack initiative, discuss implementation of e-government services, challenges and possible ways to solve them through cooperation within the framework of the GovStack initiative. It is the first large event involving the GovStack regional cooperation, launched in October 2023 jointly with Kazakhstan for Central Asia and Caucus countries. * On cybersecurity, a CIRT readiness assessment was conducted in Azerbaijan. A project create a CIRT in Kyrgyzstan is ongoing. Continuous efforts are made to enhance human capacities, through training sessions, CyberDrills, and policy discussions at national and regional events. * Child online protection is an area of focus. In Armenia, BDT supported trainings to over 340 educators, parents and school children and a promotion campaign reached over 23 000 viewers. A broad survey among 7 805 school pupils was conducted across Armenia to understand how children use the Internet, identify problems and assess the level of knowledge about threats relating to safe use of the Internet. A solid policy dialogue with the participation of around 15 government authorities and organizations resulted in the development of a national plan to enhance relevant policies related to protecting children online. * In Uzbekistan, a course on information security for educators was carried out. Training sessions were given for 305 trainers from 14 regions of Uzbekistan on safely measures and risks, and the means to address these aspects with children offline. In Kyrgyzstan, similarly, BDT supported development of trainings in local languages and rolled out training programmes for 86 information technology teachers from schools and education centres of seven regions and the capital city of Kyrgyzstan, followed by the training of 516 teachers from rural areas, and an information campaign on child online protection guidelines for more than 2 500 parents and teachers. * On the subject of smart cities, over 550 representatives of municipal and regional administrations in Belarus enhanced their understanding of implementing smart solutions, building digital literacy and facilitating interaction between citizens, business and government through technology. * Collaboration with United Nations country teams (UNCT), UN Agencies and Economic Commissions continued at the regional and country level. ITU is a member of UNCTs in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Uzbekistan and supports dialogue with UN resident coordinators in other countries of the region. BDT technical assistance projects and capacity-building events are reflected on the United Nations SDG data portal. ITU participates in the planning and reporting exercises of the country teams, and the ITU statistics products and country studies are being incorporated in their analytical reports. * Together with the ITU Regional Office for Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the ITU Regional Office for CIS countries is coordinating the work of the United Nations Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Asia (UNDTG4ECA). During the UNECE regional sustainable development forums the group organized roundtables related to SDG 9 and SDG 17. * **The ITU RDF for CIS** ([RDF-CIS 2024](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Pages/EVENTS/2024/RDF.aspx)), held in March 2024, provided a platform to exchange views between ITU Member States, Sector Members, partners, and other stakeholders in relation to the membership priorities. BDT reported on the progress that has been made towards implementing the outcomes of the [World Telecommunication Development Conference 2022 (WTDC-22)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/default.aspx) so far, including the [Regional Initiatives for the CIS region](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Pages/WTDC22RIs.aspx). A segment of the RDF was dedicated to the [P2C Digital Coalition](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/partner2connect) matchmaking roundtables where members and stakeholders expressed their commitments based on contributions or pledges aimed at addressing priority needs of the countries in the CIS region, with the goal of advancing digital development and implementation of the regional initiatives.   **ITU Office for Europe Region**  **The Office for Europe Region has been involved in various regional coordination activities by providing support to Member States mainly to facilitate digital development, strengthening of cooperation opportunities in the field of cybersecurity, digital inclusion, regulation and digital skills development. These efforts align with the regional initiatives as set out in the Kigali Action Plan (KAP).**   * Collaboration with a series of European institutions has been strengthened, including the European Commission, Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), EaPeReg and EMERG. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with EMERG, paving the way towards a series of concrete actions. Funding opportunities have been identified, facilitating the co-creation of new global and regional projects. These are financed by the European Commission with a budget of Euro 25 million. * **The ITU RDF for Europe (RDF-EUR),** held on 22 to 23 May 2023 in Romania, back-to-back with the CEPT Committee for ITU Policies (Com-ITU) meeting, was attended by over 200 participants (including 95 onsite), representing 40 Members States, 5 regional organizations, and 7 UN specialized agencies. The meeting resulted in the 2023-2024 Implementation Plan for regional initiatives for Europe, and the announcement of EUR 109 contributions converted into P2Connect pledges. Special announcements included a declaration on cybersecurity capacity building and gender inclusion in cybersecurity in the Western Balkans, signed with the Government of Slovenia, also representing France and Montenegro; a partnership with 5G Techritory to advance 5G technologies in Europe and globally; and the regional launch of the new EU-funded project on Universal Meaningful Connectivity for Europe. * **In response to pledges made at the RDF-EUR**, BDT is facilitating the implementation of the commitments that were made in beneficiary countries. * Regional priorities were addressed through the implementation of several actions under ITU-D regional initiatives. A series of technical assistance has been provided to 9 countries in the field of connectivity, digital resilience, digital skills, digital inclusion, child online protection, among others. * Special assistance was also provided to Ukraine in response to ITU Council Resolution 1408. Technical assistance to Ukraine concerned restoration of 40 broadcasting stations affected by war. The assessment of the first 10 stations is being carried out to provide coverage to over 10 million citizens. * Significant regional and interregional platforms for knowledge exchange and best practice sharing were established, focusing on priority subjects such as “Accessible Europe: ICT 4 ALL” with more than 400 stakeholders from 50 countries and an Interregional CyberDrill involving over 200 participants from 40 countries in Europe and the Asia-Pacific. * BDT engaged with several new European stakeholders that have become Sector members of ITU. * BDT also continued to work closely with the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunication Administrations, on the regular basis providing coordination, reporting, assistance, or co-creating some of the actions at the regional level. * Strategic collaboration with UN agencies were further strengthened, while placing ITU in the centre of all coordination mechanisms for digital development, this included regional level co-chairmanship of the UN Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Europe, co-chairmanship of the UN Brussels Taskforce for Digitalization for Sustainable Development, at the national level, co-chairmanship of Digital Transition Task Teams under the UN country teams. * The roundtable on SDG 17 “Building effective partnerships for digital transformation" was organized at the [Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region](https://regionalforum.unece.org/events/regional-forum-2024), with two additional side events "Human-Centric Approach to Digital Transformation" and the Launch of the ITU-FAO Meeting the EU’s Digital Agriculture Requirements. A Compendium for pre-accession countries, which served as inputs for the SDG 17 roundtable. * Several interagency products have been developed, including UN Digital Development Toolbox, nine UN Digital Development country profiles, ITU-FAO Digital Agriculture Compendium for EU pre-accession countries, ITU-UNEP-UNITAR Western Balkans regional e-waste monitor. * Three projects have been co-created and were accepted under the Digital Window of the Joined SDG Fund, including ITU-UNOPS (Smart Cities) project in Montenegro, ITU-FAO-ILO (Digital Agriculture) project in Albania, ITU-UNDP-FAO (Digitalization of Public Services) project in Serbia. New financing mechanisms have been piloted, such as Digital Window of the Joint SDG Fund (Montenegro and Serbia) and the Joint Acceleration Fund in Montenegro. | | **Africa:**   * [**RDF-AFR**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Africa/Documents/2023/RDF/meeting-report/RDF-AFR-2023-Report.pdf)**:** accelerating the SDGs. 20 new P2C commitments and 800 P2C pledges. * Strategic collaboration within UNSDCF in Cabo Verde, Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles. * The benchmarking of ICTs in Central Africa project data collection across all 11 beneficiary countries for recommendations and capacity building programmes. * Out of the 17 ITU Acceleration centres launched, 6 centres are located in Africa: Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. * ITU assisted Chad and Rwanda to develop a comprehensive national cybersecurity strategy.   **Americas:**   * [**RDF-AMS**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Americas/Documents/EVENTS/2023/RDF-2023/Outcome-EN.pdf): 147 P2C commitments, worth USD 9.86 billion made by 91 entities from 39 countries. * Close collaboration with ITU Radiocommunication Sector: Radiocommunications Seminar for the Americas and the Latin America Spectrum Management Conference. Close collaboration with ITU Standardization Sector: Open Networks Seminar in Brazil. * Strategic collaboration within UNSDCF in Brazil. ITU and FAO signed joint project “Merian” on 5.0 agriculture with the European Union for El Salvador - total budget of Euro 5.2 million. * 2 300+ girls and women benefited of digital skills activities in theAmericas region Girls Can Code project. * 340+ young people and women from remote communities strengthened their digital skills through the Youth Digital Inclusion project. * GIGA OECS: Barbados -upgrade in broadband in 27 pilot schools, 18 057+ students and 1 382 teachers benefitted.   **CIS:**   * [**RDF-CIS**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Documents/Events/2024/RDF/outcome/RDF-CIS%20Outcome%20Report_EN_FINAL.pdf)**:** advanced digital development and implementation of the regional initiatives. * 700+ public sector representatives from Armenia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan were trained on 5G technologies and deployment.   **Arab States:**   * [**RDF-ARB**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/ArabStates/Documents/events/2023/RDF-23/ARB-RDF-2023-Outcome-report%20-%20vFinal.pdf)**:** Active participation from representatives from 19 Member States and the State of Palestine to discuss the implementation of the five regional initiatives for Arab States region as well as other activities under the five thematic priority areas adopted at WTDC-22. 28 written contributions were submitted including new P2C pledges to achieve meaningful connectivity and sustainable digital transformation in the region. * Collaboration with UN-ESCWA and League of Arab States to develop the regional ICT strategy. * Strategic collaboration to support the development of several UNSDCF in the region.   **Asia-Pacific:**   * [**RDF-ASP**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/AsiaPacific/Documents/Events/2023/RDF-2023/report/RDF-ASP-2023-Report.pdf)**:** 11 new P2C pledges and commitments were announced, and several joint declarations were signed at the RDF-ASP. * Signed 8 agreements valued at over USD 3.1 million for technical assistance, analysis and capacity development. * Enhancement of technical expertise for 10 countries through the delivery of GovStack, and whole-of-government approach training. * ITU enhanced high-level commitments to accelerating digital transformation during the first Pacific ICT Digital Ministerial Dialogue (The Lagatoi Declaration). * Multi-stakeholder partnership to promote activities under digital skills, digital safety, digital culture, digital ethics in Indonesia. * ITU continues to implement joint programmes in the Asia-Pacific: Accelerating SDG achievements through digital transformation to strengthen community resilience in Micronesia; and advancing the SDGs by improving livelihoods and resilience via economic diversification and digital transformation.   **CIS**   * 120+ university students were trained on building and accelerating startups in Armenia, Kazakhstan and Russia. * Child Online Protection in Armenia: supported training to 340+ educators, parents & school children, campaign with 23000+ viewers, 7805 school pupils surveyed, policy dialogue resulting in the development of a national plan. * ITU is a member of UNCTs in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Uzbekistan. ITU technical assistance projects and capacity-building events are reflected on the United Nations SDG data portal. * 550 representatives of municipal and regional administrations in Belarus enhanced competencies in implementing smart solutions for Smart Cities.   **Europe:**   * [**RDF-EUR**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Documents/Events/2023/0522-23%20-%20RDF/reports/EUR-RDF-2023-Outcome-report.pdf): announcement of EUR 109 contributions converted into P2C. * Collaboration strengthened with European Commission, BEREC, EaPeReg and EMERG. * Technical assistance provided to 9 countries. * Special assistance provided to Ukraine in response to ITU Council Resolution 1408. * Co-Chairmanship of the UN Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Europe, Co-Chairmanship of the UN Brussels Taskforce for Digitalization for Sustainable Development & Co-Chairmanship of Digital Transition Task Teams under the UN Country Teams. * Accessible Europe: ICT 4 ALL - 400 stakeholders from 50 countries. |
| **Contributing to SDG Targets** | SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 | |
| **WSIS Action** | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C11 | |
| **Resolutions:** | WTDC 16 | |

### 

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Enabler 3: Diversity and Inclusion**  ***Developing strategies and solutions on digital inclusion.*** | | |
| ***Outcome:*** *Strengthened capacity of the ITU membership to develop strategies, policies and practices for digital inclusion and equity, in particular for the empowerment of women and girls, persons with disabilities, persons with specific needs and low-income households.* | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Highlights** |
| At the policy level, the **capacity of Member States and policy-makers to design and implement digital inclusion policies and strategies was strengthened**; workshops on mainstreaming gender in digital policies were conducted, benefitting 28 countries and 370 policy-makers. In April 2024, a self-paced training was launched on the ITU Academy, as well as a microsite.  The **Girls in ICTs celebrations** expanded worldwide, culminating in November 2023 in the Pacific islands. This year, the Philippines hosted the international celebration theme on 25 April under the theme of Leadership and a Girls in ICT workshop took place in Geneva during ITU-D Study Group 1 Rapporteur Group meetings, from 15 to 26 April 2024. Regional and national events were also held across the globeIn 2024, the Network of Women in ITU-D will continue to meet and exchange views on gender to bridge the digital gender divide mainly at at TDAG-24 and GSR-24.  BDT contributed to **increased capacity of end users and individuals through digital inclusion training sessions related to gender, child online protection, ICT/digital accessibility, older persons, remote and indigenous communities**. Overall, 13 training courses were developed through the ITU Academy, and 11 workshops and mentoring sessions have been delivered under the EQUALS HerDigitalSkills initiative, benefiting 664 girls and young women. The EQUALS gender transformative digital skills education framework, released in March 2024, aims to tackle gender norms and stereotypes in digital skills training. Further, a self-paced course was developed under the African Girls Can Code Initiative hosted on the ITU Academy with 14 modules on soft skills and technical skills. Further, training sessions were delivered to trainers in 11 countries (**Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda**) to raise awareness on the training content available and to equip them with the skills to facilitate the national coding camps.  Two council working groups on child online protection were convened with over 300 participants. Under the child online protection global programme, countries received support through capacity building programmes delivered face to face and online self-paced trainings. These training courses are available on the ITU child online protection website and the ITU Academy platform. Additionally, under the child online protection initiative, BDT launched a game and an app for children.  A global partner meeting of the protection through online participation (POP) research collaboration was held in Madrid, Spain. Co-led by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the meeting brought together stakeholders from various sectors, including key players from the ICT Industry. The preliminary research findings are scheduled for release this year. As already stated, the 2024 Global Girls in ICT Day celebration was hosted and held by the Philippines under the theme, Leadership. The event was very well attended.  **In the Asia-Pacific,** participation in the ITU Girls in ICT Day initiative expanded across the region throughout 2023, with events in Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Micronesia, Nauru, Pakistan, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, and ASEAN member countries. The events fostered a strong community network, empowering female participants through knowledge sharing and advocacy in ICTs. This resulted in increased interest in the initiative from other countries and stakeholders highlighting the expanding reach and potential for future partnerships. Discussions with key partners such as the Office of the NBTC, Thailand and DITRDCA, Australia have also opened avenues for securing funding, ensuring sustained impact and expansion of the Girls in ICT Day initiative into 2024 and beyond. This collaborative effort has not only **strengthened the Girls in ICT community in the region but also set a solid foundation for increasing engagement and support in the coming years.**  Through partnerships with governments, UN agencies, the Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA) and the Pacific Telecommunications Council (PTC), the awareness and skills of more than 1 000 girls and young women in Fiji, Kiribati Micronesia, Nauru, and Tonga has been increased through a range of training in cybersecurity (online safety and online scamming), coding, emerging technologies, telecommunications, leadership, career development, digital financial literacy. The programmes **strengthened partnerships and collaboration for digital inclusion among key stakeholders and partners including governments, UN country teams, regional organizations, civil society and academia**.  **Under ICT/digital accessibility, older persons, remote and indigenous people, and youth activities and projects:**  **Knowledge development for policy-makers:** **Enhanced capacity on ICT accessibility to mainstream digital inclusion for all people to over 4 100 policy- and decision-makers** in formulating and implementing digital inclusion policies and strategies and enabling broader participation of all their citizens in the digital society, and economy. This achievement was possible through **interventions and training sessions, conducted in 46 events (34 online and 12 in person), held globally** (including: UN Conference of State Parties on the CRPD implementation; UN Global Initiative on Mainstreaming Knowledge on Ageing; WSIS sessions; HLD led by ITU Members (SG Q7/1); Global Summit on Independent Ageing IANGE 2023; International Symposium on Digital Inclusion in Thailand (NBTC), **and regionally** (including ITU Accessible ICT for All events in **the** Americas, Arab States, and Europe regions); Information Session on Healthy Aging in Thailand through ICT (with the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society -MDES and WHO). Additionally, **over 1 200 participants from 98 countries** registered in **online self-paced and tutor-led training courses in topics of ICT accessibility, older persons and indigenous peoples** delivered through ITU Academy.  **Resources: Increased the number of existing (70+) tools and resources to support ITU Member efforts in digital inclusion implementation process with six additional knowledge materials** including the new ITU/BDT-online training course “Managers in ICT Networks in Rural and Indigenous Communities in Latin America”; Online self-paced training course “Beyond Smart Cities” in Arabic and Russian; Practical “Guidebook on ICT/digital accessibility for experts or agencies developing and implementing the Smart Villages and Smart Islands Programme” relevant to the ASP region and guidelines and video tutorial in Mainstreaming Digital Accessibility for an Inclusive Digital Transformation. A tailor-made training curriculum tailored to the sub-Sahara region aimed to develop Managers in ICT Networks in Rural and Remote Communities is in development.  **Youth engagement:** **BDT facilitated the** **participation and presentations of Generation Connect Youth Envoys (GCYE), in various BDT activities, comprising over 20 meetings and events. This involvement provided tangible opportunities for young people to evolve as digital changemakers,** including scholarships for five GCYEs to attend the University of Geneva SDG Summer School, fellowships for two young women to the EQUALS in Tech Awards, and the designation of six Generation Connect Youth Envoys as WIC Global Youth Leaders in China. A new GCYE group was selected based on nominations received from over 60 Member States. These individuals will undergo mentoring and skill-building to contribute to BDT efforts in empowering youth through ICTs. The organization of the Global Youth Summit is in development.  **Projects: ITU-D has developed tailored projects in the Gran Chaco region (Americas)** for youth from remote and Indigenous communities. **In Africa,** within the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, and at Global Level, **a 3-year Generation Connect Youth Leadership Programme** was launched in collaboration **with Huawei in 2024.**  **Expert advice: ITU-D championed through content and expertise contributions on digital inclusion topics** (including on ICT accessibility, older persons digital inclusion, gender issues and youth digital empowerment) to support the work of ITU study groups, thematic regional and global meetings and events as well through contributions and reports across the UN System within the UN Inter-sectoral work.  Under the **Digital Accessibility** programme, BDT contributed to **enhanced awareness of digital accessibility and skills across the Asia-Pacific region**. This was achieved through collaborative efforts and expert knowledge showcased at the International Symposium for Digital Inclusion organized by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission, Thailand (NBTC). BDT promoted digital accessibility knowledge resources and tools, alongside digital skills initiatives supporting persons with disabilities. These efforts strengthened the ITU partnership with NBTC and increased awareness among ICT and civil society organizations (CSOs), as well as the organisation of persons with disabilities communities in Thailand. This laid the groundwork for future initiatives in digital accessibility. Additionally, a guidebook aimed at enhancing digital accessibility, including universal design principles for delivering digital services and applications, particularly through mobile devices, was developed under the Smart Island and Smart Village initiative. It targeted policy-makers, industry, development agencies, and CSOs.  In collaboration with the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society (MDES) and WHO, ITU organized an information session on Healthy Aging in Thailand through ICTs. This session raised awareness of the challenges and opportunities of digital inclusion and healthy aging, fostering collaboration among stakeholders. By bringing together national stakeholders, including ministries, academia, and UN agencies, the initiative aimed to support Thailand's older population in the digital age, emphasizing the importance of a collaborative, evidence-based approach to strategy development.  **In the Americas**, during Accessible America in November 2023,BDT delivered executive training, contributing to **increased awareness among Member States on digital inclusion and ICT accessibility. This was evidenced by their commitment to adopting ICT accessibility policies and strategies at the national level**. Accessible Americas provided Member States with the opportunity to share practices on ICT digital policies and promote digital inclusion. Furthermore, a training session on project management skills and ICT network maintenance was conducted for indigenous and remote communities in Latin America. Attended by 37 participants from 10 countries, the training emphasized the practical application of knowledge to empower individuals from indigenous and rural communities.  **In the Europe region**, the Regional Forum for Europe, **“Accessible Europe: ICT 4 ALL”**, was organized in partnership with EC and AccessibleEU Resource Centre. It brought together over 400 stakeholders from 50 countries and provided an opportunity for all involved stakeholders to strengthen knowledge, identify partnership opportunities, join forces, share good practices, and established a strong foundation for future cooperation in advancing digital accessibility. | | * Vulnerable group and marginalized communities and empowered. * Strengthened capacity of policy-makers * Access to digital inclusion tools and resources increased. * Partnerships for digital inclusion strengthened. * Girls in ICT initiative expanded across regions. * **Africa:** Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. * **Asia-Pacific:** Bhutan, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Micronesia, Nauru, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, and ASEAN member countries. |
| **Contributing to SDG Targets** | SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 | |
| **WSIS Action** | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C11 | |
| **Resolutions:** | PP 70, 175, 179, 184, 198; WTDC 46, 55, 58, 67, 76; SGQ 7/1 | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Enabler 4: Commitment to environmental sustainability**  ***Developing strategies and solutions on climate-change adaptation.*** | | |
| ***Outcome:*** *Enhanced capacity of the ITU membership to develop telecommunication/ICT strategies and solutions on climate-change adaptation and mitigation and the use of green/renewable energy.* | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Highlights** |
| **ITU-D products have been made available to support Member States in developing strategies and solutions on climate-change adaptation.**  BDT supported the Government of **Rwanda** and the country’s electronics producers in strengthening of the e-waste regulatory framework and setting up the producer responsibility system in Rwanda. The impact of this support was demonstrated during the [Rwanda EPR Blueprint for Electronics Event](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Africa/Pages/EVENTS/2023/Rwanda-EPR-Blueprint-for-Electronics-Event.aspx) (7 and 8 November 2023). Assistance was also provided to the government of the **Dominican Republic**, leading to the launch of a regulation on the [Integral Management of Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)](https://dr1.com/news/2023/07/27/executive-branch-issues-decree-to-regulate-electrical-waste-management/) in October 2023, which could enable an estimated market of USD 71 million in e-waste annually in the country. Electronics producers in Uganda and Zambia were engaged through initiatives initiated with the governments of **Uganda and Zambia** in 2023. A [Government Consultation Workshop on an EPR Implementation Roadmap on the Management of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment in Zambia](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Africa/Pages/Government-Consultation-Workshop.aspx) took place in October 2023. The purpose of the workshop was to introduce participants to e-waste and circular economy basics, explore regulatory frameworks, agree on terms and definitions, and establish a roadmap for implementing an EPR system. In Uganda, a [Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on the Regulation of E-waste Management and Electronics Producers’ Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Africa/Pages/EVENTS/2023/uganda-e-waste-workshop.aspx) took place in November 2023, resulting in **enhanced stakeholder understanding of e-waste management through EPR principles and potential regulatory pathways for the country.**  In **Malawi,** BDT provided support to strengthen the [policy framework for the environmentally sound management of e-waste](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Environment/Pages/Spotlight/WEEE-Policy-Support-Malawi.aspx). This included consulting on and preparing the national e-waste management policy, which was submitted to the Office of the President and Cabinet and approved in 2023. It is currently pending the final endorsement by the presidency. BDT has [provided similar capacity building and technical assistance in Burundi](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Environment/Pages/Spotlight/WEEE-Policy-in-Burundi.aspx) to public and private sector stakeholders, where the national e-waste management policy was submitted to the cabinet in 2023, with a decision to proceed with the policy framework into a regulation to ensure an appropriate level of enforcement.  In 2023, BDTsupported the governments of [Botswana](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Environment/Pages/Spotlight/WEEE-Policy-in-Botswana.aspx) and [Niger](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Environment/Pages/Spotlight/WEEE-Policy-Niger.aspx) in developing their e-waste management strategies. The two strategies are currently pending the approval by the relevant authorities. BDT assistance in preparing these strategies has set the stage for the development of national e-waste management systems, providing Botswana and Niger with a clear direction and vision for addressing e-waste.  In July 2023, BDT releasedthe [Circular and Sustainable Public Procurement Guide for ICTs](https://www.itu.int/hub/publication/d-hdb-guidelines-04-2023/) under the Green GovStack initiative, showcasing ITU commitment to addressing the full life cycle of ICTs, not just from a waste perspective but also from an upstream angle. The guide will enable BDT to provide training to procurement professionals, influencing their purchasing decisions, and improving their ability to adopt circular procurement practices. Additionally, an e-learning course titled “[Circular and Sustainable Public Procurement for ICTs](https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/circular-and-sustainable-public-procurement-icts-0)” accompanies the guide.  The **Global E-waste Monitor 2024** was released in March 2024. The publication, a collaboration between ITU, UNITAR, and Foundation Carmignac, presents current global e-waste trends and challenges within the circular economy framework. It emphasizes the growing disparity between e-waste generation and recycling rates, addressing topics like transboundary movements, legislation, material recovery, treatment technologies, environmental impact assessment, and regional perspectives up to 2023.  BDT has **strengthened the capacity of national statistics offices, ICT regulators and ministries, and ministries of environment** in delivering training to the six member states of the East African Communications Organization to support the uptake of e-waste data and increased regional harmonization in measuring e-waste.  **In Europe,** BDT and partners released the [Regional E-waste Monitor for the Western Balkans](https://www.itu.int/pub/D-HDB-E%20WASTE-2023-WB), launched in December 2023. The report offers six recommendations for holistic e-waste management in the region, advocating preventative measures, awareness, improved collection and treatment, safety protocols, fair compensation, and enhanced training. It aims to guide policy-makers, industries, and communities towards sustainable practices.  **In the CIS,** BDT supported the release of [National E-waste Monitor for Kazakhstan](https://ewastemonitor.info/the-national-e-waste-monitor-kazakhstan/), offering recommendations and a national roadmap for sustainable e-waste management, alongside key statistics. This effort contributes to global capacity building in e-waste data and statistics. Similarly, National E-waste Monitors for Namibia and Botswana were released in March 2024.  **In the Asia-Pacific**, with support from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA), Australia, a project document titled “Creating a Circular Economy for Electronics and Electricals in Thailand and in Mongolia” was signed in January 2024 with the objective to create sound recommendations for a regulatory framework for the governance of e-waste management under extended producer responsibility (EPR) in Mongolia and Thailand. At the end of the project, it is expected that the two beneficiary countries will have the capacity to better regulate the management of e-waste and will have the necessary policy tools and principles at hand to implement sustainably financed e-waste management regulation where the private sector plays a significant role.  BDT released two new e-learning courses on e-waste data and statistics in September 2023: “[Addressing the e-waste challenge through data and statistics](https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/addressing-e-waste-challenge-through-data-and-statistics-0)” and “[An introduction to the e-waste challenge](https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/introduction-e-waste-challenge-0).” These two parts of a single e-learning package aim to provide an overview of the global e-waste challenge, including e-waste statistics and legislation based on the latest data from the Global E-waste Monitor and the Global E-waste Statistics Partnership. The courses allow participants to follow the methodologies used and key principles adhered to when collecting and improving e-waste statistics and data.  In June 2023, BDT expanded its environmental initiatives by hosting events including the [Green Digital Transformation and a Circular Economy for Electronics.](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/AsiaPacific/Pages/Events/2023/South-Asia-Information-Session-Green-Digital-Transformation-and-a-Circular-Economy-for-Electronics.aspx) The events aimed to provide an overview of the role of ICTs in climate change and e-waste challenges for sustainable digital transformation. At the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) on June 8, 2023, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, an event titled “[Going Green with the Digital Transformation”](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/gsr-23/programme-overview/session-details?sessionid=16) discussed regulator involvement in improving GHG emissions reporting and regulating e-waste from the ICT sector.  In July 2023, BDT, in partnership with the EU Africa RISE Facility and the Government of Botswana, organized the [Transform through the Circular Economy and EPR Event](https://africarisevent.eu/transform). This event aimed to strengthen regional collaboration among SADC Member States and featured updates on e-waste management progress in east and southern Africa. Botswana also demonstrated its commitment by presenting its draft national e-waste management strategy developed with BDT.  BDT collaborated with partners to monitor industry emissions, support countries in tracking ICT sector emissions, and develop green ICT strategies. This included the release of reports and guides such as the [Green Data Centres practitioner's guide](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Environment/Pages/Toolbox/Green-data-center-guide.aspx) and the [Green and Digital Entrepreneurship for Women](https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/green-and-digital-entrepreneurship) e-learning course. ITU also actively participated in international climate conferences like COP28 and COY18, promoting digital technology-driven climate action and fostering partnerships for sustainable development. | | * **E-waste management guidelines** and systems developed.      * **Global E-waste Monitor** 2024 released. * Strengthened policies and strategies. * Strengthened capacity to **track ICT sector emissions** and develop green ICT strategies. * Strengthened partnership and collaboration. * **Africa:** Botswana, Burundi, Kenya, Niger, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia. * **Americas**: Dominican Republic. * **Asia and the Pacific:** Mongolia and Thailand * **CIS:** Kazakhstan |
| **Contributing to SDG Targets** | SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 | |
| **WSIS Action** | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C11 | |
| **Resolutions:** | WTDC 66 | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ITU-D Enabler 5: Excellence in human resources and organizational innovation** | |
| **Outputs** | **Highlights** |
| The Director of BDT launched a series of new initiatives aimed at achieving organizational excellence and building internal innovation capacity to enhance BDT delivery, including:   * The **BDT Senior Management Retreat** held in February 2024 that provided an opportunity for constructive discussions and exchange of ideas on ways to increase the impact of BDT, guided by the BDT4Impact approach or results-based approach, and increasing efficiency and timeliness in the implementation of both projects and Operational Plan activities. * The retreat served as a platform to align the **operational strategies of the ITU-D** with the Regional Initiatives aligned with the Union’s Strategic Plan adopted at PP-22, and the Action Plan adopted by WTDC-22. * The BDT Director has encouraged the adoption of **work-life balance** through regular messages to staff and encouraged staff to participate in training courses as a way of achieving life-long learning for Staff. * BDT was reminded on the need to uphold transparency and accountability in managing and delivering to the Membership. * Regular **Staff engagement meetings** are being held and open to all staff regardless of their contractual status and these meetings provide safe space for expression and ideation on challenges and opportunities in BDT’s mission to deliver with impact. * Volunteering innovative ideas by staff was also encouraged by the BDT Director and a platform was created for staff to proposed new ideas that the BDT could consider to achieve and sustain BDT4Impact. * Regular donor reporting was cited as being of high priority and has to be always prioritized so that partners and donors are aware of BDT’s activities and the impact being made on the ground. | * Senior Management Retreat 2024. * Work-life balance. * Staff engagement meetings. |

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Output indicators for:

   **ITU-D Priority:** Resource mobilization and international cooperation.

   **ITU-D Enablers**: Partnerships and international cooperation, and Resource mobilization. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Study Groups outputs. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)