|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Council 2017 Geneva, 15-25 May 2017** |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Agenda item: ADM 7** | **Document C17/34-E** |
| **31 March 2017** |
| **Original: English** |
| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES DEVELOPMENT FUND  (ICT-DF) | |

|  |
| --- |
| Summary  This document reports on the situation regarding the Information and Communication Technologies Development Fund (ICT-DF) and its use in the implementation of development projects.  Action required  The Council is invited to **take note** of the report and **approve** the transfer of USD 2 million from the Exhibition Working Capital to ICT-DF Capital Account.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  References  PP [*Resolution 11 (Rev. Busan, 2014);*](http://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/opb/conf/S-CONF-ACTF-2014-PDF-E.pdf) *Council Resolutions* [*1111*](http://www.itu.int/council/index97/1997/131/131.html)*,* [*1114*](http://www.itu.int/council/index97/1997/134/134.html) *and* [*1338*](http://www.itu.int/md/S11-CL-C-0106/en)*.* |

**1 Introduction**

1.1 As stipulated by the ITU Constitution, one of the functions of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector is to discharge the Union’s dual responsibility as a United Nations specialized agency and as an executing agency for implementing projects.

1.2 The [ICT-DF](http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Partners/Pages/ICT-DF/default.aspx) is a special initiative launched in 1997 aiming to develop partnerships and generate commitments (financial and otherwise) from the Member States, Sector Members, public and private sector, multilateral organizations, financing institutions, development agencies, etc. in order to ensure that national, regional, and global projects are implemented, leading to sustainable development. It is used as seed funding with a view to mobilize substantial resources from membership and partners to cover the total projects’ funding needs.

1.3 The ICT-DF Steering Committee (ICT-DF SC)[[1]](#footnote-1) aims to a) review and approve the projects submitted for funding from the ICT-DF, b) approve the amount of funding from the ICT-DF to be allocated to the approved projects, and c) monitor the implementation and budgetary performance of the projects supported by the ICT-DF.

**2 Main Activities and Progress of ICT-DF**

2.1 Members of the ICT-DF Steering Committee met on 1 September 2016 (50thICT‑DF SC meeting) and 14 March 2017 (51st ICT-DF SC meeting).

2.2 The 50th ICT-DF SC reviewed and approved to fund the following two projects, e.g.:

* ***Establishment of an Arab Regional Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Center for Persons with disabilities (PwDs)*:** This project relates to the implementation of the WTDC-14 Arab States Regional Initiative titled “Ensuring access to telecommunications/ICTs, in particular for persons with disabilities”. It aims to establish a Regional ICT Center for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) for the Arab region to promote ICT Accessibility with the aim of supporting regional stakeholders in their efforts towards the inclusion and empowerment of PwDs in the Arab region through the development and provision of affordable and customized accessible ICT tools. This three-year project was signed on 27 November 2016 between ITU and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of Egypt.
* ***Implementation of a Wireless Broadband Network in Madagascar*:**Taking into account PP-14 Resolution 124, *Support the New Partnership for Africa’s Development*, this project aims to improve connectivity through installing a Wireless Broadband Network to connect schools, hospitals and public facilities with developing ICT applications and building human capacity. Similar projects have been implemented in other African countries such as Burundi, Djibouti, Mali, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Lesotho, and Swaziland.

2.3 The 51st ICT-DF SC reviewed and approved the following three projects, e.g.:

* ***Support for Development of a Bahamas Smart Island - Smart Bahamas****:* This project aims to support the Bahamas, as a case for other small islands developing states (SIDS), to build one of the first “Smart Islands” in the Americas region through developing and making use of ICTs to improve the quality of life of citizens, encourage more efficient and competitive enterprises in the country and provide more and better public services in a sustainable manner. It has a potential to replicate its success, if so, to other island states in the Caribbean and beyond.
* ***Monitoring of the Radio Spectrum in Cuba***: This project aims to modernize the spectrum monitoring system currently in place at the fixed monitoring station in Havana, Cuba, and thus strengthen the monitoring spectrum. The modernized fixed monitoring station is expected to increase the capacity and capability to monitor and measure the technical parameters of radio stations, radio direction-finding, and the detection of sources of interference and unauthorized radio stations, especially in VHF and UHF. In addition, it intends to train the related professionals of the Cuban Government and improve their knowledge and skills, particularly in aspects related to Radioelectric Spectrum Management.
* ***Accessing the Digital Dividend in Africa***: This project, as a multistakeholder partnership led by ITU, EC, and AUC, aims to foster universally accessible, affordable, and effective wireless broadband across the African continent through improved and harmonized spectrum utilization. It is expected to address the issues of spectrum at national, regional, and Pan-African levels to generate significant social and economic benefits for the end beneficiaries (citizens of the African states) and provide opportunities for the private sector through public-private partnerships (PPPs) to contribute to the development of services and generate sustainable growth.

The 51st ICT-DF Steering Committee decided to check the status of funds relating to projects funded by ICT-DF, e.g.: whether the approved funds have been fully implemented and spent; and, if not, the remaining funds should be returned back to the ICT-DF when possible. The Steering Committee will continue to regularly review project proposals and support selected projects in the various Areas of Action with special attention to regional initiatives approved by WTDC based on the criteria and themes set by the ICT-DF rules and procedures within the limit of the ICT-DF Capital Account.

**3. Status of ICT-DF Projects**

3.1 As of mid-March 2017, ICT-DF portfolio was composed of 17 projects; e.g. [13 ongoing projects](http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Projects/Pages/Portfolio.aspx?Status=Ongoing&Theme=&Region=&Country=&ICTDF=1&Keyword=) and four projects approved by the 50th and 51st ICT-DF meetings (refer to Sections 2.2[[2]](#footnote-2) and 2.3). These projects are distributed as follows per regions and per areas of action (Figures 1 and 2).

3.2 For the same period, some 30.7% of the ICT-DF portfolio amounting to approximately CHF 19.7 million is being supported by ICT-DF contributions, which is corresponding to approximately CHF 6.1 million. Distribution of the contributions to the ICT-DF portfolio between ICT-DF, other in‑cash and in-kind contributions is showcased in Figure 3.

3.3 Taking into account the approved projects by the 50th and 51st ICT-DF SC meetings, by the mid-March 2017, the overall ITU development projects portfolio ([here](http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Projects/Pages/default.aspx)) is 59 which is distributed as follows in terms of number as well as contributions (Figures 4 and 5).

**4. Evolution of the ICT-DF Capital Accounts**

4.1 Total interest income of ICT-DF Capital Account in 2016 was USD 36,507, which was composed of interest on ICT-DF Capital (USD 1,015) and interests on projects (USD 35,492).

4.2 As of 31 December 2016, after funding projects concerned by ICT-DF, ICT-DF Capital Account remained with an amount of USD 2,587,177, as of 31 December 2016, while the Exhibition Working Capital Fund is amounted to CHF 10,075,816.46.

4.3 As indicated in Figure 6, between 31 December 2012 and 31 December 2016, the ICT-DF Capital Account has gone from 3.7 million USD to 2.6 million.

4.4 Following approval by the 51st ICT-DF SC meeting (March 2017) of three projects (refer to Section 2.3), it is expected that ICT-DF Account will stand at around USD 1.69 million.

**5. Ways forward**

Taking into account the demands from membership for supporting various projects, the high level of contributions from partners/donors, as well as the level of the ICT-DF Capital Account of which the amount is around USD 1.69 million (as of March 2017), the Secretary-General recommends that Council-17 approves the transfer USD 2 million from the Exhibition Working Capital to ICT-DF Capital Account with continued efforts for resource mobilization.

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

1. ICT-DF SC is composed of the ITU Secretary-General (Chairman), the ITU Deputy Secretary-General, and the Director of the BDT. The ICT-DF Administrator acts as Secretary of the ICT-DF Steering Committee. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Establishment of an Arab Regional Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Center for Persons with disabilities (PwDs) signed in November 2016 is part of the ongoing projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)