Webinar on Connect2Recover: Building back better with broadband

Closing Remarks

Alex Wong, Chief, Special Initiatives, Office of the Director, BDT, ITU

26 May 2021 , 15:50- 17:20 Geneva Time

Ladies and gentlemen, Good morning, good afternoon and good evening.

First of all I would like to thank our partners MIC Japan (YAMAGUCHI Norifumi) and Government of Saudi Arabia (H.E Dr. Ali H. Alghamdi) for their support and contribution to the Connect2Recover Initiative. This has been a very timely response, where the lack of meaningful connectivity during the COVID-19 Pandemic has had the worst impact on those most vulnerable communities.

We have had a very rich and interactive discussion, and have shared just some of the many resources from the ITU that we will be using in C2R. Let me summarize three key takeaways that I would ask you to note:

1) First: The COVID-19 pandemic helped broaden our view of resilience, and sharpened and re-energized our focus on closing the global connectivity gap. The methodology that C2R has developed stresses the need for high quality data to having an accurate picture of broadband availability, adoption, and usage, and the importance of national broadband plans.

2) Second:The core focus of C2R, therefore, is, with the support from the Govts of Japan and Saudi Arabia, to partner with countries and use the C2R methodology to assess the resiliency of their internet network, and identify the policy and regulatory changes required in their national broadband plans to improve this resilience in times of crisis and disaster.

3) And finally, in building back better, using a country's improved internet resilience as a base, Connect2Recover will specifically focus on education, jobs and healthcare. Here we will implement pilots and scale where possible, and partnerships with other ITU projects, our UN partners, and other organization from private sector, civil society, and academis will be key. We would welcome additional support from potential partners and donor agencies to support us so we can **build back better with broadband** in all LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS.

I thank all the speakers for their contribution, in particular our speakers from Haiti and Rwanda for providing their specific insights, and to all participants for taking the time to join

this webinar. I am also grateful to our hosts of the Preparatory Meeting for LDC5 for allowing us this opportunity to present C2R. Thank you very much and have a great day.