International Telecommunication Union
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA

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Addis Ababa, 28 March 2022

To: -   ITU Member Administrations and Regulators in the African Region
-     Sector Members and Academia in the African Region

Subject: **Information Sessions on Connect2Recover : Research Competition Papers focusing on Africa**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to announce that the Telecommunication Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is organizing three virtual Information Sessions on Connect2Recover Research Competition Papers focusing on Africa. The aims of the global Connect2Recover Research Competition are to strengthen research focus, to build a global research community, and to promote knowledge sharing on digital resiliency and digital inclusion to build back better with broadband for pandemic recovery. As a result of the Research Competition that was launched in July 2021, 15 research proposals have been selected as winners, and 12 of them focus on Africa.

We would like to invite you to participate in the virtual information sessions, which would provide you with an opportunity to directly engage with the research teams, exchange views and insights which would directly benefit each research paper that promises to have an impactful outcome on ICT landscape in Africa.

I am pleased to share with you the agenda for three information sessions (Annex 1), which are based on the three themes as follows:

i.   Digital Inclusion for Education and Vulnerable Persons: 5 April 2022, 14:00-15:30 CET;
ii.   Digital Inclusion for Job Creation and Health: 21 April 2022, 12:00-13:30 CET; and
iii.   Digital Connectivity and Resilience: 5 May 2022, 14:00-15:30 CET.

We would, therefore, appreciate your participation by confirming nomination of participants with their name, designation, organisation, and email address with connect2recover@itu.int. Mr. Sameer Sharma who is responsible for Connect2Recover (email: sameer.sharma@itu.int) and Ms. Caroline Gaju from the ITU Regional Office for Africa (email: caroline.gaju@itu.int) are at your disposal for any enquiries.

We look forward to your participation in the information sessions.

Sincerely Yours,

Anne-Rachel Inné
Regional Director for Africa and
Liaison to ECA and AU

Annex 1: Agenda for Information Sessions

Information Session
Connect2Recover : Research Competition
Theme: Digital Inclusion for Education and Vulnerable Persons
5 April 2022, 14:00-15:30 CET

14:00 - 14:10	**Welcome Remarks:** **Mr. Alex Wong**, Chief, Special Initiatives, ITU **Mr. Cosmas Zavazava**, Chief, Partnerships for Digital Development, ITU **Opening Remarks: Ms. Anne-Rachel Inné,** Regional Director, Regional Office for Africa, ITU
14:10 – 14:25	**Introduction to Connect2Recover and research competition by Sameer Sharma,** Senior Advisor, ITU
Session 1: Digital Inclusion: Education	
14:25 - 14:40	**Research Paper 1: Inclusive higher education post-Covid-19** **Presenter**: Dr. François van Schalkwyk, Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology (CREST), Stellenbosch University, South Africa Q&A
14:40 - 14:55	**Research Paper 6: Taking Action towards Digital Inclusion in African cities and regions: policy framework for digital resiliency in education for a better COVID-19 recovery** **Presenter**: Professor Hassan Radoine, Director of School of Architecture, Planning & Design, Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Morocco Q&A
14:55 - 15:10	**Research Paper 11: Determinants of Digital Inclusion in Higher Education: Exploring the Ethiopian Context** **Presenter**: Mr. Wondwossen Mulualem Beyene (PhD), Freelance researcher, Hawassa University, Ethiopia Q&A
Session 2: Digital Inclusion: Vulnerable Persons	
15:10 - 15:25	**Research Paper 9: An Assessment of Digital Inclusion among the Vulnerable Persons in Developing Economies** **Presenter**: Dr. Fredrick Kanobe, Lecturer, Kyambogo University, Kampala, Uganda Q&A
15:25 - 15:30	**Concluding Remarks: Ms. Anne-Rachel Inné,** Regional Director, Regional Office for Africa, ITU

Information Session
Connect2Recover : Research Competition
Theme: Digital Inclusion for Job Creation and Health
21 April 2022, 12:00-13:30 CET

12:00 - 12:10	**Welcome Remarks:** **Mr. Alex Wong**, Chief, Special Initiatives, ITU **Opening Remarks: Ms. Anne-Rachel Inné,** Regional Director, Regional Office for Africa, ITU
12:10 – 12:25	**Introduction to Connect2Recover and research competition by Sameer Sharma,** Senior Advisor, ITU
Session 1: Digital Inclusion – Job Creation	
12:25 - 12:40	**Research Paper 3: Building resilient micro-enterprises with digital transformation** **Presenters**: Dr. Stan Karanasios, Associate Professor, University of Queensland, Australia; Dr. PK Senyo, Associate Professor, University of Southampton, United Kingdom; and Dr. John Effah, Associate Professor, University of Ghana, Ghana Q&A
12:40 - 12:55	**Research Paper 14: The digital financial inclusion of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) of the COMESA region into electronic business during and post the COVID 19 pandemic**: Mr. Forbes Makudza, Marketing Lecturer, Manicaland State University of Applied Sciences, Zimbabwe Q&A
Session 2: Digital Inclusion - Health	
12:55 - 13:10	**Research Paper 10: Tele-medicine as a panacea to medical tourism in Africa exploiting communications satellite technologies** **Presenter:** Dr. Lasisi Salami Lawal, Senior Research Fellow, Federal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria Q&A
13:10 - 13:25	**Research Paper 15: Digital health through telemedicine ecosystem against pandemics, epidemics and natural disasters in Sub-Saharan Africa** **Presenter:** Dr. David Botchie, Senior Lecturer, Brunel University, United Kingdom Q&A
13:25 - 13:30	**Concluding Remarks: Ms. Anne-Rachel Inné,** Regional Director, Regional Office for Africa, ITU

Information Session
Connect2Recover : Research Competition
Theme: Digital Connectivity and Resilience
5 May 2022, 14:00-15:30 CET

14:00 – 14:10	**Welcome Remarks:** **Mr. Alex Wong**, Chief, Special Initiatives, ITU **Opening Remarks: Ms. Anne-Rachel Inné,** Regional Director, Regional Office for Africa, ITU
14:10 – 14:25	**Introduction to Connect2Recover and research competition by Sameer Sharma,** Senior Advisor, ITU
Session 1: Digital Connectivity and Resilience	
14:25 - 14:40	**Research Paper 2: Market Resilience in Emerging Digital Economies: Case Study of Kenya During Covid-19 Pandemic** **Presenter**: Dr. Geoffrey Gitau, Principal Investigator, African Advanced Level Telecommunications Institute (AFRALTI), Kenya Q&A
14:40 - 14:55	**Research Paper 4: Covid-19 Recovery: Rebuilding Digital Inclusion for the Rural Counties of Kenya** **Presenter**: Mr. Leonard Mabele, Research fellow, Strathmore University, Kenya Q&A
14:55 - 15:10	**Research Paper 5: CoLRN: A Community-based Vision for Local Resilient Networks** **Co-Presenters**: Ms. Ndinelao Iitumba, Masters Student, Department of Computer Science, University of Cape Town, South Africa; and A/Prof. Melissa Densmore, Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science, University of Cape Town, South Africa Q&A
15:10 - 15:25	**Research Paper 8: Federated Digital Platform: Pilot project Botswana** A 10-minute fireplace conversation with: **Co-Presenters**: Mrs. Dr. Pia Hollenbach, University of Lausanne; Mr. Yame Toto Follett Nkgowe, Project Consultant for SmartBots; and Mr. Dr. Sajid Sheikh, Project Consultant for SmartBots Q&A
15:25 - 15:30	**Concluding Remarks: Ms. Anne-Rachel Inné,** Regional Director, Regional Office for Africa, ITU