



ARAB STATES REGIONAL INITIATIVES

ARB1 Development of broadband access and adoption of broadband

Objective: To assist Arab States (particularly least developed countries¹) in the implementation and development of broadband infrastructure in urban and rural areas, and to develop, facilitate and spread access to broadband networks and services in the Arab States, including issues related to conformance and interoperability.

Expected results

Assistance to the countries in the following:

- 1) Establishment of national and regional strategic plans and work programmes for the telecommunication/ICT sector to meet the needs of the Arab countries in this field
- 2) Improving broadband network infrastructure, including the deployment and connection of optical fibre cables, for the provision of good-quality and affordable telecommunication/ICT services in urban and rural areas, including migration to next-generation networks (NGN) and future networks (FN), keeping pace with the rapid developments in this vital, developing field
- 3) Development of ICT applications that can support multilingualism and address local needs, particularly to cater for the special needs of persons with disabilities and inhabitants of remote regions in relation to broadband networks
- 4) Development of human resources, through training programmes and workshops to exchange expertise, in order to address regulatory, technical and economic issues related to broadband communication networks, NGN and FN, and migration thereto
- 5) Implementation of national programmes on conformance and interoperability, establishing cooperation agreements with regional laboratories to assist in this regard, and setting guidelines in accordance with international best practices, including regulatory frameworks that need to be considered
- 6) Development of guidelines and recommendations with regard to regional cloud computing taking into consideration regulatory frameworks.

¹ There are six LDCs in the Arab region, namely: Comoros, Djibouti, Somalia, Yemen, Mauritania, and Sudan.

ARB2 Building confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs

Objective: To build confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs and e-commerce in the Arab region and combat all forms of cyberthreats, including the misuse of ICTs.

Expected results

Assistance to the countries in the following:

- 1) Formulation of national and regional regulatory and technical policies and frameworks and legal measures to ensure data privacy and combat the different forms of cyberthreats in the Arab region, thereby ensuring optimal and secure use of the Internet and its various applications and building confidence in the Internet
- 2) Establishment of national computer incident response teams (CIRTs) in the Arab region (in particular in least developed countries) and optimal coordination both among them and between them and CIRTs in the other regions
- 3) Protection of Arab children and youth from harmful and abusive content on the Internet and making them aware of its risks, through the launch of awareness-raising campaigns and workshops, training curricula and study of the possibility of establishing a regional centre to prepare special awareness programmes to protect Arab children and youth from the risks of ICTs.

ARB3 Use of telecommunications/ICTs for smart and sustainable development and protection of the environment

Objective: To raise awareness of the importance of sustainable development and environmental protection, and formulate legislation and regulatory frameworks in order to achieve smart and sustainable development.

Expected results

Assistance to the countries in the following:

- 1) Formulation of strategic plans and regulatory frameworks for the transition to smart and sustainable development in various relevant spheres
- 2) Exchange of expertise between Arab countries in the field of smart and sustainable development in various spheres, and study of the negative effects resulting from e-waste and finding appropriate solutions to deal with it
- 3) Addressing the challenges of scarce resources, for example water, in the Arab region by means of smart management of those resources using telecommunication/ICT applications
- 4) Use of telecommunications/ICTs to confront the consequences of climate change for the Arab region, formulation of mechanisms to control emissions of harmful gases, and gradual transitioning to clean and sustainable energy
- 5) Exchange of expertise in the field of policy of smart, sustainable and green cities in the Arab region, ensuring the gradual transformation of Arab cities to smart and sustainable cities.

ARB4 Smart learning

Objective: To bring about a shift from traditional methods of teaching in schools and universities, using books and paper-based sources, to smart learning with the use of tablet computers, the latest software and modern telecommunication/ICT techniques to provide access to a range of academic information, resources and subject matters.

Expected results

Assistance to the countries in the following:

- 1) Eradication of digital illiteracy in the Arab region
- 2) Finding smart and low-cost computing devices, either with the support of Arab governments or by concluding agreements with manufacturers to provide such devices
- 3) Development of Arab educational e-content for schools and universities in the Arab region.

ARB5 Ensuring access to telecommunications/ICTs, in particular for persons with disabilities

Objective: To ensure the right of access to telecommunications/ICTs for persons with disabilities in the Arab region.

Expected results

Assistance to the countries in the following:

- 1) Formulation and updating of national and regional regulatory policies and frameworks to ensure access for persons with disabilities of all kinds to telecommunications/ICTs, facilitating their involvement in the community and enabling them to enjoy their full rights
- 2) Development of ICT applications and software that enable persons with disabilities to access information, references and other resources for education and leisure, and provision of specialized national and regional applications for libraries, databases and other purposes via the Internet and other telecommunication/ICT media
- 3) Participation of persons with disabilities in Arab workshops, training courses and conferences, by providing all the requirements and facilities and removing all the obstacles.