



ITU/NBTC/ADB Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on Universal Access and Service and Broadband Deployment 2015

25-27 March 2015

Pullman Bangkok Kingpower Hotel, Thailand

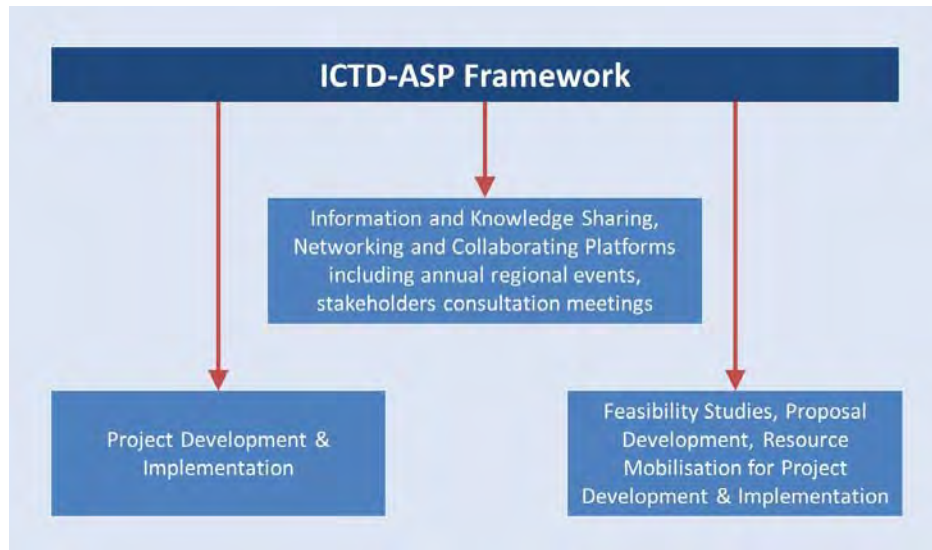
Within the Framework of



ICTD-ASP Overview

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) jointly launched a new framework on ICT for Development in the Asia-Pacific Region (as known as ICTD-ASP) in Manila, Philippines during 29-30 April 2014¹.

The ICTD-ASP is a platform for multi-stakeholders partnerships for project development, and implementation as well as information and knowledge sharing about ICT development for development across sectors in the Asia-Pacific region.



The objectives of the ICTD-ASP are to: (i) provide assistance to developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region for bridging the gap between their development plans and the implementation of their ICT for development investments; (ii) share information about projects/initiatives being implemented in the region and mobilise resources and facilitate ICTD investment financing through fostering partnerships in the region; and, (iii) strengthen institutional ICT capacity through ICTD knowledge sharing and networking in the region.

¹ <http://www.ictd-asp.org/>

Currently, the ICTD-ASP framework has identified two main programmes to be implemented in the next 3-4 years. These are:

- 1) Universal Access and Service, and Broadband Deployment Programme
- 2) e-Government and ICT Applications for Sustainable Development Programme

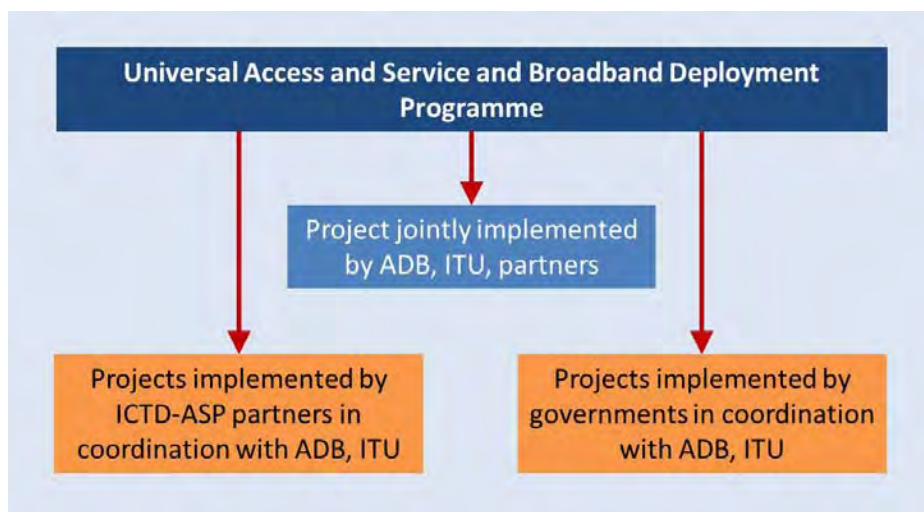
It is also envisaged that annual regional forums will be organized for each programme in the next four years i.e. 2015-2018. The first Asia-Pacific regional forum for *Universal Access and Service and Broadband Deployment Programme* and the first Asia-Pacific regional forum for *e-Government and ICT Applications for Sustainable Development* will both take place in Bangkok, Thailand in 2015.

Universal Access and Service and Broadband Deployment Programme

The Universal Access and Service and Broadband Deployment Programme is one of the two main programmes within the ITUD-ASP framework. The programme focuses on bridging the digital divide. It aims at promoting investment in expanding infrastructure nationwide especially covering rural and remote areas so that access to voice and data services is available and affordable to all.

In addition to providing a platform for knowledge sharing and networking, the ICTD-ASP Framework is also aimed to promote and facilitate project development and implementation. In this regard, potential projects will be identified through consultation with multi-stakeholders. The Framework will help mobilise resources including funding and partners. Feasibility studies may be required and assisted by the ICTD-ASP Framework.

It is therefore envisaged that at least a new project will be created and implemented by the ICTD-ASP Framework every year from 2015-2018; while more projects would be developed and implemented by partners of the Framework.



ITU/NBTC/ADB Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on Universal Access and Service and Broadband Deployment (1st ICTD-ASP on Programme 1)

At the launch of the ICTD-ASP in Philippines in April 2014, General Sukit Khamasundara, Commissioner of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission of Thailand (NBTC) announced that Thailand and NBTC in particular would host the first ICTD-ASP Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on Universal Access and Service and Broadband Deployment in Thailand in 2014.² Due to certain circumstances, however, the plan to organise the event has been postponed to the first quarter of 2015.

² See General Khamasundara's speech at, <http://www.ictd-asp.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/1.3.-Sukit-Khamasundara.pdf>

Forum

The Forum will feature a three-day plenary meeting and exhibition. It will be the first of the series of annual regional forums on universal access and service and broadband deployment in the Asia-Pacific region under the ICTD-ASP framework. The Forum is aimed to, *inter alia*:

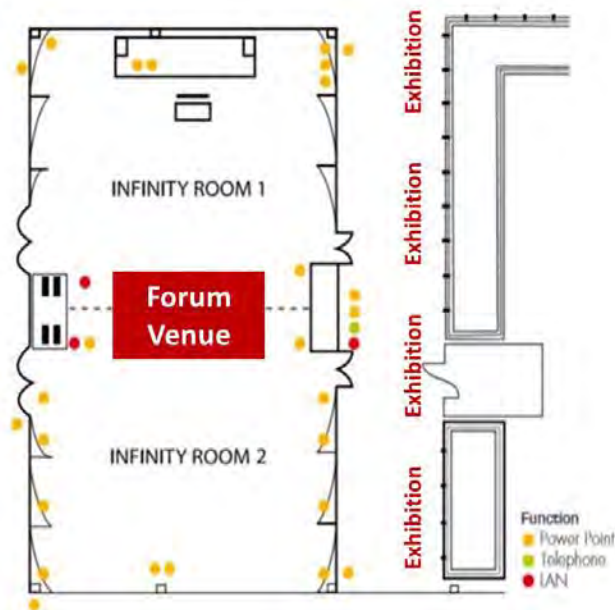
- Provide a forum for all relevant stakeholders to meet and discuss about issues, challenges, and opportunities concerning Universal Access and Service, sustainable ICT development projects as well as broadband deployment;
- Identify innovative approaches for promoting broadband through USO framework and/or public-private partnership;
- Identify potential projects which could be implemented under the ICTD-ASP framework;
- Push forward a proposal to make the Asia-Pacific USO forum a regular event e.g. on an annual basis;

Venue and Dates

Venue of the Forum is the Pullman Bangkok King Power Hotel from **25-27 March 2015**. Visit hotel website at: <http://www.pullmanbangkokkingpower.com/>

The Forum will be held at 'Infinity Room 1' and 'Infinity Room 2' in that altogether can accommodate more than 250 people (class-room setting).

For more information about the Forum, please visit the Forum website at, <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/AsiaPacific/Pages/events.aspx>.



Host and Organisers

The Forum will be hosted by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission of Thailand (NBTC) and jointly organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Target Audience

The Forum targets policy makers, national regulatory authorities, practitioners, scholars, financiers, public and private sector including NGOs and the civil society and all other relevant stakeholders in making, implementing, and promoting the Universal Access and Service and/or National Broadband Policy in their respective countries or internationally.

It is expected the Forum would attract more than 200 participants of which delegates from over 20 countries and international speakers and experts from around the world would attend.

Tentatively invited countries to the Forum include, *but not limited to*, the following countries.



Potential Partners and Sponsors

The Forum is inviting interested organisations to partner and sponsor the event through in-cash and/or in-kind contributions.

Expected partners/sponsors include:

- UN agencies
- Australian Government
- U.S. Government (e.g. USAID)
- Industry and private sector such as Intel, Microsoft

Exhibition and Side Events

The exhibition will showcase USO projects in Thailand which covers USONET (Community Internet Centre), TTRS (Thai Telecommunications Relay Service), DAISY, NBTC-ITU Volunteers.

Event partners and sponsors are welcomed to organise side events. Rooms for bi/multi-bilateral meetings will be provided upon request.



Tentative Agenda

Day 1: Wednesday 25 March 2015	
08:00 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:30	<p>Opening Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome Remarks by Mr. Ioane Koroivuki, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific ▪ Welcome Remarks by ADB ▪ Opening Remarks by General Sukit Khamasundara, Commissioner, National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC)
09:30 – 10:00	Group Photo and Coffee Break
09:50	Opening of the Exhibition
10:00 – 12:00	<p>Session 1: Modern Universal Access and Service Framework</p> <p>The underlying concept of universal access and service is to ensure that telecommunications services are accessible to the widest number of people (and communities) at affordable prices. The concept of universal access and service is underpinned by the three principles namely: Availability, Affordability, and Accessibility.</p> <p>An old concept of universal access and service which seeks to narrow the telecommunications gap especially voice has unfortunately not been enough to tackle the today's high demand for data i.e. access to information and knowledge through the Internet. Thanks to the rapid development of technologies, the scope of universal access and service has been widened to include Internet and even broadband in many countries; however, it is still much restricted in scope in some other countries.</p> <p>A periodic review and adjustment of the universal access and service framework (including the universal service fund), vision, policy and administrative mechanisms need to be put in place. A modern concept of universal access and service addresses both supply and demand sides.</p> <p>This session will examine the new approach and principle of modern universal access and service scheme and look into country practices. It will also focus on topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Universal access and service policy and legislative framework ▪ Market reform, market gap analysis, market incentives and enabling environment ▪ Infrastructure sharing, interconnection rates, taxes, spectrum and reasonable fees ▪ Modelled universal access and service programmes and projects
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch break (inviting sponsorship)
13:00 – 15:00	<p>Session 2: Universal Access and Service from the Supply Side: Infrastructure and Broadband Deployment</p> <p>With the ever-escalating global demand for rapid and easy access to information and the growing evidence of the economic and social benefits generated by ICTs</p>

	<p>and broadband in particular, there has been a substantial increase in government participation and intervention within the telecom/ICT sector with an aim to lay down nation-wide broadband network. These include utilisation of the universal access and service fund. With these regards, the restriction of many universal access and service framework and fund as regards financing of broadband should be revisited and preferably removed.</p> <p>Global trends also show that wireless broadband is the most suitable approach for achieving the governments' goal due to its relatively lower shared costs and coverage of geographically separated areas which do not necessarily have high population density; its ease of penetration, and its ability to deploy and rollout rapidly. Therefore, making spectrum available for affordable wireless broadband services, in frequency spectrum bands designated for mobile/wireless services, is a prerequisite for a good quality wireless broadband plan.</p> <p>This session will address the role of universal access and service particular the fund in national broadband deployment. Topics also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Innovative approaches for promoting national broadband rollout through the universal access and service framework ▪ Technology options for network rollouts in rural/remote areas ▪ Efficient spectrum management for wireless broadband deployment ▪ National broadband policy/plan and multi-stakeholders approaches
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee break (inviting sponsorship)
15:15 – 17:15	Session 2: Universal Access and Service from the Supply Side: Infrastructure and Broadband Deployment (cont'd)
19:00 – 20:30	Welcome Dinner hosted by NBTC

Day 2: Thursday 26 March 2015	
09:00 – 10:30	<p>Session 3: Universal Access and Service from the Demand Side: Promoting ICT Uptake and Social Inclusion</p> <p>Sustainability is underpinned by targeted and comprehensive training and other educational programmes designed to ensure self-sufficiency in areas such as the operation of community e-centres, in addition, to facilitate the use of telecommunications technologies by population segments who previously had little or no access to telecommunications of any kind. It is therefore important that universal access and service framework needs to take into account the need for sustainability. With these regards, appropriate training and education need to be addressed due to widespread illiteracy and general lack of knowledge amongst many segments of poor and disadvantaged populations.</p> <p>It is also important to ensure that the universal access and service framework incorporate the need for development of specific content and applications; ensuring connectivity and provision of ICT equipment for anchor institutions such as schools, universities, libraries, hospitals and cultural institutions.</p> <p>This session will look at innovative approaches for demand generation particularly the development of user applications and content; as well as</p>

	<p>sustainability issue. Topics will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demand creation and user application and content development ▪ Broadband access for schools ▪ Government digital agenda and e-services ▪ Innovative approaches for sustainable community e-centres and possible business models ▪ Child online protection and cyber-security ▪ Continuous training and capacity building programmes
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee break (inviting sponsorship)
10:45 – 12:15	Session 3: Universal Access and Service from the Demand Side: Promoting ICT Uptake and Social Inclusion (cont'd)
12:15 – 13:15	Lunch break (inviting sponsorship)
13:15 – 15:15	<p>Session 4: Universal Access and Service and the need for Digital Inclusion</p> <p>Today, in general terms, the overall concept of social and digital inclusion has been absent from many universal access and service policy frameworks. In order for universal service to truly bring benefits to all, it needs to be re-examined and re-defined to ensure that all communities as well as targeted population groups have access to ICTs.</p> <p>While a number of universal access and service frameworks have articulated a policy with respect to specific elements of digital inclusion such as services for persons with disabilities, many of them have so far not translated the articulated policy into specific targets and actions. Community e-centres also need to take into account the needs of accessibility or assistance for persons with disabilities.</p> <p>This session will look at some services which should be taken into account in the universal access and service policy framework. The session will include the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Model ICT Accessibility Policy ▪ Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), digital audio books (DAISY) ▪ Emergency communications in disaster/emergency management, and audio description in broadcasting, Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) ▪ Single emergency number
15:15 – 15:30	Coffee break (inviting sponsorship)
15:30 – 17:00	Session 4: Universal Access and Service and the need for Digital Inclusion (cont'd)

Day 3: Friday 27 March 2015

09:00 – 10:30	<p>Session 5: Universal Service Funds & Public-Private Partnership</p> <p>Over the last two decades, national regulatory authorities have increasingly been turning to the concept of a universal service funding mechanism (USF) designed as an incentive to encourage operators to assist in achieving universal service goals.</p> <p>The Asia-Pacific region in particular has a considerable number of functioning USFs and a high level of activity amongst the funds. It also displays a greater focus than other regions as regards the deployment of broadband through the use of USFs. Nonetheless, many funds face numerous challenges and pitfalls that need to be overcome to ensure that society as a whole can benefit from these funds today and in the future.</p> <p>This session aims at addressing issues, challenges, and opportunities in USF; while to explore other approaches based on innovative public-private partnership aimed at stimulating effective and efficient use of the funds as well as facilitating achieving the universal service goals and especially national broadband deployment. Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ USF Mechanism: Challenges and Opportunities▪ USF Management: Policy and Organisational Structure (Administrative Control VS Independent Fund Manager)▪ Innovative Public-Private Partnership▪ Alternative financing mechanisms▪ USF programme monitoring and evaluation
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee break (inviting sponsorship)
10:45 – 12:15	<p>Session 5: Universal Service Funds & Public-Private Partnership (cont'd)</p>
12:15 – 13:15	Lunch break (inviting sponsorship)
13:15 – 14:45	<p>Session 6: International Coordination/Cooperation and Conclusion</p> <p>This session will focus on building effective international coordination and cooperation that promote the universal service and broadband initiatives. It will also discuss about the ICTD-ASP framework and potential projects to be formulated and implemented under the framework. Topics of discussion will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ International cooperation and regional and sub-regional coordination and cooperation frameworks▪ Regular platform for networking and knowledge sharing among policy makers, industry, and relevant stakeholders in the region▪ Potential projects under the ICTD-ASP (programme 1)▪ Ways forward
14:45 – 15:00	<p>Closing Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Closing remarks by Mr. Ioane Koroivuki, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Closing Remarks by General Sukit Khamasundara, Commissioner, National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC)
--- End of Forum --- Coffee & Tea (inviting sponsorship)	
15:30 – 17:00	ICTD-ASP Stakeholders Meeting (closed session)