



# INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BUREAU

**WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT  
CONFERENCE (WTDC-98)**

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*For action*

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**Agenda item: 1.3**

**PLENARY MEETING**

## **Japan**

### **PROPOSAL ON RURAL TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

#### **1 Statement of the problem**

In the course of the spectacular growth in info-communications since the first WTDC, the gap in this area between developed and developing nations has persisted and in fact has grown wider in many cases. In particular, the gap in rural telecommunications in developing countries has become a serious issue.

However, in view of the economic feasibility, the technology that is really needed for rural telecommunications in these countries, i.e., the technology for building low-cost, long-lasting and easy-to-operate systems, is not likely to be developed by free competition among corporations.

Development of leading-edge technologies is possible through voluntary activities in the private sector where market mechanisms are at work expanding business opportunities. On the other hand, progress cannot be achieved easily in developing communications systems in developing countries because it is not economically feasible.

In light of this situation, attention should be shifted from simply "introducing technologies to developing countries" to "designing technologies for developing countries" and the following research project is proposed to address these ends.

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#### **2 Issue proposed for study**

In view of the importance of developing a system suitable for the growth of rural telecommunications in developing countries and, notwithstanding this, of the least likelihood of such a system being developed if hopes are placed only on the private sector and on market mechanisms, research on a "scheme for promoting the development of rural telecommunications systems in developing countries" is proposed in order to review what role ITU can play in achieving this goal.

Possible options for the scheme to promote the technology development are, for example, subsidy support by ITU, formation of a joint research group, commissioning of research projects to business corporations and holding technology development competitions. The method that can deliver the best results will be investigated over a one-year period.

### **3 Description of the expected output**

A report will be produced on the concrete details of a scheme that is best suited to development of the technology needed to build rural telecommunications systems in developing countries.

### **4 Required timing of the expected output**

Considering the need to start the process of the actual development as early as possible, the report on the development scheme must be completed within one year.

### **5 Proposed by:**

Japan.

### **6 Sources of input required in carrying out the study**

In promoting the research, information gathering and analysis of data on current conditions in rural telecommunications in developing countries and the technology development scheme will become necessary. To foster the development, input that will enable the scheme to be reviewed must be solicited widely from the administrations, telecommunications businesses, manufacturers and research institutes of various countries.

### **7 Target audience for the output**

#### **a) Type of target audience**

Developed countries, developing countries, least-developed countries, telecommunication policy makers, telecommunication regulators, service providers and manufacturers.

#### **b) Target audience - Who specifically will use the output**

The output will be used by ITU as a concrete proposal for promoting technology development under its initiative, utilizing manufacturers, research institutes, etc., from industrialized and developing countries.

#### **c) Proposed method for implementation of the results**

Based on the report and, if necessary, a decision of the Council, ITU will organize administrations, telecommunications businesses, manufacturers, etc., of various countries to promote the technology development.

## **8 Proposed method of handling this issue**

### **a) How?**

- 1) Within a study group
  - Question (over a multi-year study period) - No
  - Focus group (12 months duration maximum) - Yes
- 2) Within regular BDT activity
  - Programmes - Yes
  - Projects - No
  - Expert consultants - Yes
- 3) In other ways
  - (None)

### **b) Why?**

As mentioned earlier, this research is aimed at studying a technology development scheme for one year to promote the development of rural telecommunications in developing countries. Since it is desirable for the report to gather, analyse and review the information on the current state of telecommunications and technology development in these countries over a wide range, including consultation with experts, it should be classified as a programme for development of rural telecommunications systems.

## **9 Coordination requirements of the study**

Cooperation of administrations, telecommunications businesses, manufacturers and research institutes from various countries is necessary.

## **10 Other relevant information**

(None.)

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