Project Number:	
Project Title:	**CONNECTING THE AMERICAS-MESOAMERICAN INFORMATION HIGHWAY**
Abbreviated name of the project:	COMPLEMENTARY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE MESOAMERICAN INFORMATION HIGHWAY
Estimated duration:	33 MONTHS
Estimated Start Date:	04/01/2012
Estimated End Date:	12/31/2014
Regional Cooperation Agencies::	COMTELCA, Proyecto Mesoamérica (REDCA)
Implementing Agency:	ITU Area Office Tegucigalpa
Beneficiary Countries :	Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama
ITU Project Manager:	

SUMMARY OF CONTRIBUTIONS (US$)

Description	Cash USD	Adm. in kind USD
Staff costs	360,000	144,000
SubTotal:	**360,000**	**144,000**
Total :		**504,000**
Grand Total:		**504,000**

Brief Description:

This project seeks to identify the additional infrastructure necessary to take advantage of, in each country, the backbone of fiber optics (Mesoamerican information highway) that has been installed using the infrastructure of the Central American Electrical Interconnection System (SIEPAC).

The construction of telecommunications hubs is an important part of these complementary, infrastructures, needed for the development of broadband through the hosting of the Internet exchange points (IXP).

Once the infrastructure to be built in each country is identified, it is intended to define projects, elaborate designs, and develop estimates of investment by country, showing alternative proposals for the recovery of the investment as it should be commercially viable and convenient for the activities of the countries.

For the	Signature	Date	Name/Title
ITU:	_____	___/___/_____	
Partner(s):	_____	___/___/_____	

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.1. JUSTIFICATION

During the past twenty years the telecommunications sector in Central America has been involved in a set of changes, turning the region into an attractive area for investment. The evolution of telecommunications in all their areas and the need for Governments to ensure services to the vast majority of the inhabitants has been marking guidelines for the implementation of the changes in regulations and promote a genuine information society, through the connectivity and the use of information and communications technologies (ICT) as modern development tools.

In the countries of the Americas region, the Digital divide (particularly on broadband) with regard to developed countries is increasing, presenting a great deficiency keeping back the economies of the region; this requires concrete actions which encourage the growth of broadband and the reduction of the Digital divide.

Although AMI backbone network passes through the countries of the region from Panama to Guatemala, its topology and design is limited to the route of the power line, in cases of underserved areas where there is also demand for telecommunications services; access points are located at sites away from the main cities; This is the case of the majority of the countries of the region, which leads to the need for complementary telecommunications infrastructure located closer to demand.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The project is considered to develop the following actions:

a. Analyze and propose actions to eliminate the barriers that limit the entry into operation of any regional operator of telecommunications, particularly the network of fiber optics Centroamericana (REDCA).
b. Develop a Business Plan by country which should include:
    i. The identification of the necessary infrastructures to optimize the use of the AMI for the benefit of the population and underserved areas (schools, health centers, local governments, persons with disabilities, indigenous people).
    ii. Proposals for design criteria for the construction and implementation of complementary infrastructures.
    iii. Financial feasibility analysis in order to get financing.
    iv. Proposal to measure the impact of the recommendations as result of the implementation of complementary infrastructure, including at least: broadband penetration, broadband affordability, quality of service, traffic volume, number of exchange point, amount of traffic exchange points by country, new services available due to the new complementary infrastructure.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

Influence the increase of broadband penetration and affordability of access to Internet in the countries of the region through the identification and proposal of solutions for the entry into operation of REDCA.

Identify, analyze and develop design proposals, under international standards, for the construction of necessary infrastructure for the provision of the transport service to different operators in the region, as well as those infrastructures that contribute to the development of telecommunications in each of the countries and in the promotion of broadband, enabling the possibility of new services in the Member States.

4. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- National operating licenses extended by the regulatory agencies or, in their absence, a Regional license issued by COMTELCA.
- Commercial operation of the fiber optic trunk network.
- Business plan to justify the implementation of the complementary infrastructure identified by each country.

5. INDICATORS:

The following indicators will be used to measure the progress of the project:

MEASUREMENT	INDICATOR
Operation licenses.	Number of licenses.
Business plans subject to assessment for financing.	Approved financing

6. MAIN ACTIVITIES:

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE FOR
Recruitment of the consultant	COMTELCA/ITU
Analyzing and proposing actions to eliminate the barriers that limit the entry into operation of any regional operator of telecommunications, particularly the Red de Fibra Óptica Centroamericana (REDCA).	Consultant/REDCA/COMTELCA/AMIST
Develop a Business Plan by country which should include:	Consultant/REDCA/COMTELCA/AMIST
I The identification of the necessary infrastructure to take advantage of the backbone fiber optic network for the benefit of the telecommunications market and the integral development of countries.	
ii. Proposal of design criteria for the construction and implementation of complementary infrastructures	
iii. Financial analysis of feasibility to get financing.	
iv. Develop a model terms of reference	

7. INPUTS:

For the success of the project it is necessary that the parties participate with:

CONTRIBUTION IN CASH	***$360,000***
CONTRIBUTION IN KIND	1. Human resource. 2. Support material 3. Office equipment 4. Unforeseen 5. Logistical support. **Estimated value of $144,000**

8. RISKS:

- Lack of support to access the required information. The ITU project manager will promote the effective participation of the administrations in order to minimize this risk.
- Failure to make corresponding adjustments in each country regulatory frameworks.
- Failure to complete SIEPAC infrastructure.
- Absence of adequate counterpart staff.

9. MANAGEMENT:

The roles and responsibilities of the various participants are defined in section 6.

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

Products listed in section 4 and indicators in section 5 will help the ITU Regional Office, the ITU Area Office in Tegucigalpa and COMTELCA, perform the monitoring and assessment of the present project.

11. SUSTAINABILITY:

This project by its nature is self-sustainable.

12. WORK PLAN:

Activities	2012				2013				2014				2015			
Quarter	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Recruitment of the consultant																
Analyzing and proposing actions to eliminate the barriers that limit the entry into operation of any regional operator of telecommunications, particularly the Red de Fibra Óptica Centroamericana (REDCA).																
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iii. Financial analysis of feasibility to get financing.																
iv. Develop a model terms of reference																

13. ESTIMATED BUDGET:

SPONSOR CLASSES	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
		US $
	STAFF COSTS	
3004	External - consulting services	$504,000.00
	Sub-total:	**$504,000.00**
	SUB-TOTAL	**$504,000.00**
	TOTAL BUDGET	**$504,000.00**