



Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)

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**CONTRIBUTION TO TDAG MEETING
OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT SECTOR FOR 2000**

The Operational Plan is comprehensive and reflects our understanding of the decisions of the Plenipotentiary and the WTDC. The introduction of the Key Performance Indicators and the Quarterly Assessments is a particularly good feature.

In an effort to be comprehensive and to “cover all bases” there is an inevitable overlap. This is by no means a bad thing, but there may be a need, in the Quarterly Assessments for some form of high level reporting of major results. This could be in the form of an Executive Summary, showing what major outputs have been achieved for the CHF \$32 Million annual investment in the Sector.

While there are understandably some restrictions in format, to fit in with the overall ITU Operational Plan, there could be more effort in future operational plans to emphasize the unique nature of the Development Sector. Developmental impact could be given stronger impact, and more specific references made to partnership arrangements. References to partnerships should stress the interdependence of the ITU and its partners. In many cases the performance of the ITU Development Sector will be dependent on guarantees of performance by its partners. Achieving success in partnership arrangements can consume considerable staff time and this should be calculated in the staff allocation.

It is recognized that this is the first operational plan, and has naturally had to draw upon existing documents and experience. However, there are several references to past programs, which may not be appropriate to the “new look”. The next Operational Plan should be carefully edited to ensure that the vocabulary used is consistent with the mission and not with past practice. An example of this is the usage in 2.5 of the term Technical Assistance. Many of the “tools” needed for telecommunication development are not technical (although all of the examples given are technical) but must encompass managerial and policy knowledge and techniques.

In this connection, the role of the BDT in assisting developing countries to overcome barriers to access and growth (i.e. advice on tariffs, spectrum management) is well recognized but is not clearly articulated in the document. This is important because many countries trust the ITU as an impartial, unbiased source of advice free of commercial interests. We know that this role is not always appreciated or supported by the private sector, but is an essential aspect of the ITU’s role as an intergovernmental body and a Specialized Agency of the United Nations.

Specific references should be made in the following:

In 2.4 (Pilot Projects) reference should be made to CIDA, the Global Knowledge Partnership and other partners that may contribute to the performance of these activities.

In 3.1 (Multipurpose Community Telecentres) reference should be made to CIDA in the case of the four countries concerned in the CIDA/ITU MOU and its associated workplan (i.e. Bolivia, Cape Verde, Nepal, Malawi).

Finally, 3.2 should make mention of the CIDA/ITU Memorandum of Understanding.