



# **Bridging the Standardization Gap** A View from Germany

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# The Standardization Gap Problem

- Definition: disparities in the ability of developing countries, relative to developed ones, to access, implement, contribute and influence international ICT standards, specifically ITU Recommendations
- Both a cause and a manifestation of the wider digital divide
- It contributes to the persistence of the wider digital divide
- Recognized as issue by PP-06 Resolution 123 and WTSA-04 Resolution 44
- Digital Divide and Standardization Gap is especially a problem in sub-Saharan Africa and least developed countries
  - providing mobile and broadband access to rural/low-density populations in the Global South is a challenge





# **Benefits of Open Standardization**

- Open Standards are defined (among other things) by:
  - Achieved by means of accepted pre-defined procedure
    - All interested parties can contribute
    - Transparent, collaborative/cooperative and due process
    - Based on consensus (but not unanimity)
  - IPRs meet FRND or similar requirements
  - All details of the standards are public and available for nominal fee/free of charge
- They enable economies of scale for interoperable technologies (infrastructure, equipment, software etc.) and thus lower costs for users
- Examples: GSM and DVB standards are used on all continents
- ITU-T right place to develop globally interoperable open standards. Easier access than to many industry fora for developing countries



Current Standardization issues in ITU-T (i.e. for NGN)

- Access Technologies (XDSL, Fiber, FMC ....)
- Services such as IPTV
- Security/Data Protection
- Numbering, naming, addressing
- Network aspects of identification systems (including RFID)
- Quality of service, network management
  - The needs/requirements of governments and civil society in developing and least developed countries regarding these issues can become part of ITU-T standards that are globally interoperable



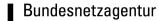


#### E-Services Needs of users in

Government and Society

- E-Government
- E-Health
- E-Learning/E-Education
- E-Banking
- E-Agriculture
- ICT and the Environment (Use of sensors etc.)
  - Specifications based on the needs of governments and civil society in developing and least developed countries can become part of ICT standards that are globally interoperable







- Publishing ITU-T standards for free on the Internet (since 2007): both ITU-T recommendations and draft recs undergoing approval procedures
- Tools for remote participation
- In 2008 five regional BSG fora in the Americas, Africa, CIS/Central Asia, Asia-Pacific and Arab States (following some fora in 2007)
- BSG fund established (in collaboration with industry and ITU-D)
- BSG Group established in TSAG
- Increased role of developing countries in ITU-T structures (chairmanships/vice-chairmanships, hosting of meetings)





# Role of Regional Groups in ITU-T

- WTSA-04 Resolution 54 on Regional Groups
- Examples:
  - Arab regional group in Study Group 2
  - Americas regional group in Study Group 6
- Can be held annually as part of larger regional ITU, ITU-T, and ITU-D meetings in the regions to enable input of regional needs/specifications into ITU-T standardization process (parent SG groups)
  - Lower travel costs within regions
- Important to keep the goal of global interoperability intact



# Further steps in Bridging the Standardization Gap

- Work along the "Standardization Development Ladder" identified by TSB
  - Ongoing process
- Continuing five regional BSG fora in the Americas Africa, CIS/Central Asia, Asia-Pacific and Arab States in the coming years
- BSG funds increased
- ITU-R also publishes recommendations and documents on the Internet for free
- Results of May 2008 TSB questionnaire to developing countries on BSG
- Development of new services/applications that meet the needs of the different regions within the ITU-T, while ensuring global interoperability





### Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit!

# Thank you for your attention!

