

RECOMMENDATION ITU-D 7

Planning and implementation of national telecommunication development plans for rural and remote areas**Question 4/2: *Communications for rural and remote areas***

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Valletta, 1998),

considering

- a) that telecommunications are a powerful means of conveying information of all kinds;
- b) that the implementation of telecommunication infrastructures in rural and remote areas promotes economic, social and cultural development;
- c) that such activities are absolutely essential in rural and remote areas for improving the quality of human life in these regions;
- d) that substantial, planned rural programmes achieve major economies of scale in terms of the costs of both equipment and recognized operating agencies' construction programmes¹⁾;
- e) that the telecommunication industry is inherently commercial in nature;
- f) that there is extensive evidence that the provision of rural telecommunication services can generally be arranged so as to be profitable,

noting

the low telephone penetration in the rural and remote areas of developing countries,

recommends

- a) that administrations, as policy-makers and regulators, and ROAs:
 - 1** include rural telecommunication development among their high priorities;
 - 2** define, approve and implement national development plans which specifically include rural and remote telecommunications;
 - 3** participate in the promotion and financing of rural telecommunication development programmes in general, with the appropriate authorities at the national level;
 - 4** organize and implement national rural telecommunication development initiatives through a carefully planned, orderly, progressive, multi-year programme, as part of the national telecommunication development master plan, to ensure that such programmes are implemented efficiently and economically;
- b) that administrations make arrangements for national rural telecommunication development initiatives to be the responsibility of ROAs which are managed as commercial entities.

¹⁾ Recognized operating agency (ROA): an ITU category of Sector Member.