

## RECOMMENDATION ITU-D 8

## Promotion of the application of telecommunication facilities for developing various sectors of rural infrastructure and rural economy

### Question 4/2: *Communications for rural and remote areas*

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Valletta, 1998),

*considering*

- a) that the main demand for telecommunication services in the rural and remote areas is for calls between small local communities and elsewhere;
- b) that the provision of services to individual residences in remote communities is relatively costly;
- c) that there is a need for supporting facilities, such as power and security, and for assistance to inexperienced users;
- d) that the provision of a small number of lines at a centrally located public call office (PCO) is both effective and efficient;
- e) that establishing the PCO provides a valuable opportunity to involve the community and promote local entrepreneurial possibilities;
- f) that the PCO can add functions, features and capability as the community needs them,

*noting*

- a) the general recognition that universal access to telecommunication services in rural and remote areas is appropriate and adequate;
- b) the opportunity for government support of social and cultural development to be provided more effectively at much lower cost through telecommunications,

*recommends*

that recognized operating agencies<sup>1)</sup> servicing rural and remote areas:

- 1** make it their objective to provide universal access to telecommunication services at an affordable price to the entire population of a country, with uniform availability of services and quality standards across the entire country;
- 2** provide “universal access to telecommunication services” in rural and remote communities through the provision of several lines which are made available at a convenient central location, with appropriate commercial management, and with, in addition, lines made available on cost-based terms to public sector institutions, to business enterprises and to private subscribers;
- 3** establish, as a policy objective, that PCOs should be encouraged and should be helped to evolve, over time, as local needs and wants dictate, into “multipurpose community telecentres” (MCT);
- 4** establish the MCT as the focal point to make available, distribute and promote the many social and cultural development opportunities that rural telecommunications make possible;
- 5** cooperate with public institutions in order to make emergency services available at all PCOs and MCTs, preferably with a free call and a unique call number.

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<sup>1)</sup> Recognized operating agency (ROA): an ITU category of Sector Member.