INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

COUNCIL WORKING GROUP FOR THE ELABORATION OF THE DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN AND THE DRAFT FINANCIAL PLAN 2016-2019

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Contribution by the Chairman

Report on the Public Consultation by the Council Working Group on ITU's Strategic Plan for 2016-2019

1   Introduction to the Public Consultation by the Council Working Group on ITU's Strategic Plan for 2016-2019

The ITU Council Working Group for the Elaboration of the draft Strategic Plan and the draft Financial Plan for the Union for 2016-2019 (CWG SP-FP) is mandated to develop coordinated drafts of these plans to be reviewed by Council 2014 and forwarded to PP-14 for adoption. To properly develop the draft strategic plan, it is important to consider everyone's opinions, ideas and proposals on where ITU should prioritize its efforts in the post-2015 era.

To this end, the CWG SP-FP agreed during its second meeting in Geneva (13-14 November 2013), on conducting a Public Consultation on the proposed strategic framework, glossary and structure of the draft strategic plan, which resulted from this second meeting.

The Public Consultation was held from December 16, 2013 to January 31, 2014. An online platform (www.itu.int/PublicConsultations) was launched for this purpose, and all inputs, including the ones received via e-mail to strategic-planning@itu.int, have been published on this platform. It was decided to continue receiving and processing inputs until the 11th of February, to better facilitate the discussions of CWG SP-FP and consider as many opinions and proposals as possible.

The Council Working Group received 17 detailed comments and input documents (from: 1 regional organization, 4 administrations, 10 civil society, international/national associations and private sector organizations, and 2 individuals). The detailed list of contributions is provided in Section 3 (full inputs are published online at http://www.itu.int/en/council/wg-sfp/Pages/contributions-sp.aspx).

This document highlights the key findings of the consultation and summarizes the proposals and comments with regards to the ITU 2016-2019 Strategy framework. The document reflects solely the views of the authors and organizations who participated in the consultation.

The key findings of the Consultation and overall suggestions for the 2016-2019 ITU Strategy are summarized below:

- ITU's activities need to be inclusive and address gaps related to ICTs, including marginalized gender groups, people with disabilities, youth, rural communities and least developed countries;
- The importance of broadband as an enabler for development;
- The proposed strategic framework (ITU-wide vision, mission, values, strategic goals and targets) that strengthens the concept of working as One ITU, has been strongly supported;
- The role of ITU as part of the UN system in contributing towards achieving the global sustainable development goals is fundamental;
- The need for broad cooperation and for further embracing multi-stakeholder processes has been recognized; and
- Other priorities and considerations for ITU have been proposed, including the role of ICTs in climate change, Cybersecurity and specifically child online protection, the need of regulatory changes relating to convergence, and some views expressed on ITU's work on standardization and ITU's regional presence.

Specific proposals for revisions of the proposed draft strategic plan have been also identified and will be presented to the CWG SP-FP for their direct consideration, along with the proposed draft text of the strategic plan.

2   Key findings

2.1   ITU's strategy needs to be inclusive and address gaps related to ICTs

A majority of contributions (Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), New Zealand, LIRNEasia, International Association for the Advancement of Innovative Approaches to Global Challenges (IAAI), Costa Rican Institute of Electricity (ICE), Association for Progressive Communications (APC), Education Without Borders (EWB), Telecentre.org, Women and Information Society) believe that ITU's strategy should give priority to ensuring inclusiveness, and to facilitating full participation and enjoyment of the evolving digital environment by marginalized groups and populations, including marginalized gender groups, people with disabilities, youth, rural communities and least developed countries. A contribution (Women and Information Society) specifically proposes that ITU:

> "Assist members in the development of ICT national policies, strategies and plans with gender component, through sharing best practices and collecting, disseminating sex-disaggregated ICT statistics and measurement. Foster gender component inclusion into the ICT national programs in planning, budgeting, financial resource allocation and implementation processes".

Another contribution (Telecentre.org) highlights the importance and relevance for ITU to work on supporting women with disabilities:

> "ICT can be used in the most effective ways for education and training of women with disabilities. The digital literacy needs of women with disabilities are extremely diverse. As with all other members of society, women with disabilities must acquire the knowledge and skills required for the community in which they live. (…) Women with disabilities are more likely to face poverty, unemployment and under-education than their male counterparts. This means they are less likely to have access to ICT which, in turn, means they are less likely to overcome socioeconomic barriers".

Empowering the youth to participate in and benefit from ICTs and their growth is key according to several contributions. A contribution (EWB) insists in the need for more opportunities and initiatives to develop the ICT industry through employment of youth, while another (IAAI) points out to the role ITU could play to "build the knowledge base and ICT Infrastructure for youth to lead civic engagement in local and global sustainable development action", and to "engage all relevant actors - including global citizens/youth, local communities/cities, private sector, etc. in decision making process".

Some other contributions point out the importance of bridging the digital divide, while a contribution (EWB) suggests that efforts to assist the development of Africa specifically, need to be further strengthened.

The contribution from APC suggests that "the goals and targets established in the context of inclusiveness should explicitly draw attention to the needs of women and of marginalized social and economic groups. It is important to ensure that no-one is left behind in the emerging Information Society."

2.2   The proposed strategic framework strengthening the concept of One ITU is strongly supported

The proposed strategic framework comprising ITU-wide vision, mission, set of values, strategic goals and targets, strengthening the concept of working as One ITU and introducing measures to evaluate progress towards achievement of goals, has been strongly supported. No contribution opposes to the proposed framework and most of them explicitly support it (APT, Bahrain, New Zealand, Finland,

ICE, APC and Individuals: 3 and 13). Contribution from APT proposes content revisions to some components of the framework and also highlights the importance to strengthen the results-framework and the performance monitoring and evaluation processes.

The contribution from Bahrain suggests that "the structure and responsibilities of the elected officials should be reviewed to ensure that it is aligned with the One ITU strategic approach." It adds that there is a need to "establish coordination mechanisms across the three sectors to ensure that related Study Groups (including other groups / committees such as Joint Task Committee) are aware of and, where necessary, participate in each other's work".

The contribution from New Zealand, while supporting the ITU-wideness of the proposed mission, vision, values and strategic goals, suggests some modifications to the framework.

Another contribution (ICE) endorses the ITU-wide strategic goals and sectoral and intersectoral objectives and proposes ways to evaluate progress towards achieving them. Other inputs support the framework and in addition highlight the importance of precision in quantitative/qualitative outcomes (Individual: 3), and to the need for concise definition of objectives and targets (Finland).

The contribution from APC strongly backs the four ITU-wide proposed strategic goals, as follows:

> "APC welcomes the focus which could be achieved by the ITU working towards four strategic goals concerned with growth, inclusiveness, sustainability and innovation, as identified in drafting of the Strategic Plan. These goals reflect critical needs at both global and national levels, and are relevant to all countries, particularly developing countries. Focusing on them will also help to address the risks of relevance and mission dilution which have been identified in work to develop the Strategic Plan".

2.3   The importance of broadband as an enabler for development

Several contributions agree that the development of broadband and its leverage as an enabler for development are essential to ensure sustainable progress for all through ICTs. Some of them highlight the relevance of broadband for national development (Bahrain, LIRNEasia, Women and Information Society, Telecentre.org and International Microwaves Telecom Solutions (IMTS)), while a regional think thank (LIRNEasia) suggests that "although 60% of the global population lives in Asia, only 38% of them have access to the Internet while fewer can afford broadband" and this is a serious drawback for the region. Contributions agree on the strategic importance of broadband development: a contribution (IMTS) explicitly suggests that "ITU shall consider Broadband as a strategic priority[1]", while another (Women and Information Society) believes that having "a computer with a broadband connection provides opportunities for enhanced participation and independence of life" for women with disabilities.

2.4   The key role of ITU as part of the UN system towards achieving the global sustainable development goals

A commonly proposed theme is that ITU's strategy should be aligned with the global development agenda and ITU's work should contribute in achieving the sustainable development goals.

The contribution from IAAI recognizes that ITU should participate in the "efforts of United Nations System in the field of Sustainable Development, post2015 development agenda, climate change etc." and insists on the "need to engage all relevant actors - including global citizens/youth, local communities/cities, private sector, etc. - and their resource use decisions towards globally agreed (UN) goals in order to be successful".

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[1] « Considérer le raccordement au très haut débit comme une priorité stratégique »

The contribution from APC points out that

> "It should be recognized that the ITU is only one of many actors involved in the achievement of these objectives. The cooperation and engagement of a variety of UN and other international agencies, and of private sector and civil society stakeholders, is essential if they are to be effectively pursued. (…) APC is concerned by the very limited attention which has been paid to date to the impact and potential of ICTs in discussions concerning the forthcoming Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda. It is important for the ITU, as the relevant technical agency, to work with UN agencies concerned with human development, and with other stakeholders, to bring a stronger focus to bear on the impact and potential of ICTs in these discussions".

2.5 The need for broad cooperation and for further embracing multi-stakeholder processes has been recognized

Collaboration is, according to many contributions (APT, Finland, Poland and APC), the key for success on ITU's efforts to progress towards achieving its strategic goals. A contribution (Individual: 3) highlights:

> "The need for repositioning ITU in the ICT ecosystem through enhanced collaboration with several other stakeholders. ITU being the preeminent specialized agency in ICTs in UN system, collaboration with other agencies in UN and others need to be taken to a next level in building strong partnerships".

The contribution from Finland suggests that "ITU should not by itself try to take over new issues but, if relevant for its objectives, it should engage in enhanced co-operation and coordination around ICT issues with other organizations".

The contribution from APT clearly emphasizes on the importance of cooperation, in particular by extending this kind of consultations to include other UN-related stakeholders' views:

> "We acknowledge the key role played by ITU in conjunction with other organizations continuously in enabling and implementing ICTs to bridge the digital divide through international cooperation. However, considering the enormous task ahead in making Telecommunications/ ICTs available to bridge the digital divide in all aspects to accomplish the vision and mission of ITU, if not taken up already, the formal consultation in preparation of Strategic Plan may also include UN and other International organizations working in ICTs in building strong partnerships and common strategy in line with the UN theme of 'Delivering One'".

The relevance of coordination with other stakeholders is at the core of the contribution from Poland, drawing the attention "to the untapped potential that can be harnessed for the benefit of the developing world through the establishment of an effective and well-targeted cooperation between the ITU and organizations having resources, expertise and interest in the ICT filed". The contribution points out that "ITU in general and the BDT in particular, possess an undisputed and long-standing record of continuous commitment for the development, expansion and operation of telecommunications networks and services, particularly in developing countries", however "ITU is not the only institution tasked with and interested in capacity building and facilitating sustainable growth driven by ICTs. There is a number of regional and global bodies of intergovernmental character that enjoy a well-established reputation for running successful ICT projects in the LDCs, sharing in fact the ITU's objectives in that field. The likes of the European Union, The World Bank,

The European Investment Bank or the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development can be listed as examples".

The contribution from APC concludes that partnership "is not an end in itself, but a means to achieve more inclusive discourse and engagement which will improve the quality and increase the effectiveness of decision making", and states that "the ITU should move towards full recognition of the principle of multistakeholder participation in its formal processes and decision-making structures, facilitating the participation of civil society and other stakeholders". The contribution from Poland proposes "to work for greater openness of the ITU so that is reaches out beyond its boundaries and try to incorporate third party institutional approach in order to find regional and global synergies especially for the LDCs".

Another contribution (BITKOM) is commending ITU's unique position and expertise as compared to other Standards Development Organizations, while also refers to need for enhanced cooperation:

> "ITU-T is undergoing a process of change which was initiated essentially by the liberalization of the telecommunications market. This process is characterized by the fact that ITU-T does an excellent job in some areas while it still needs to find its place in other areas, especially in new fields of technology. This has led to the initiation of projects overlapping to a certain extent with projects in other standardization organizations. This requires significantly closer cooperation than previously necessary to permanently avoid competing activities and unnecessary duplication of work".

2.6   Other findings

ICTs and climate change

A contribution (ICE) suggests "fostering a knowledge base related to this important issue", while another one (Bahrain) explicitly proposes that ITU should focus on "Green Technologies", namely on the issues of climate change and e-waste.

According to another contribution (IMTS) "it would be interesting, in order to reduce the dissemination by some entities such as associations of some inexact information about the impact of ICTs on climate change, that ITU implement a scientific methodology for knowing the actual impact of ICTs on these issues".[2]

Cybersecurity and Child Online Protection

Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs and the specific proposed objective is generally supported by the contributions (APT, New Zealand, ICE), while another contribution (Bahrain) highlights that ITU should focus on cybersecurity, and in particular in the area of child online protection.

Other areas of work in which ITU should focus

Apart from the above mentioned areas of work, a contribution (Bahrain) proposes that ITU should also focus on the following areas:

- Regulatory changes relating to convergence; and
- e-education.

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[2] Il serait intéressant, pour limiter la propagation d'informations inexactes de la part de certaines structures associatives, de mettre en place une méthode scientifique de référencement sur les impacts réels des TIC sur ces problématiques

Negative externalities which ITU has not addressed: Cultural exclusion

A contributor (13) argues about ICTs and cultural exclusion. In particular, about the risks associated with English becoming a *lingua franca*. It states that besides considering some collaterals of the use/growth of ICTs, there is one area to be addressed as well:

> "There are a limited number of cultures and languages on Earth, and about half of them are endangered. (…) We therefore need an explicit program within the ITU to preserve such languages and cultures, to liaise with UNESCO in a big way on this issue, and to reduce the "environmental" consequences of our actions."

ITU's work in standardization

The strategic relevance of the standardization work of ITU is highlighted by several contributions. The contribution from an association (IAAI) concludes that:

> "The key for progress towards global agreed goals are innovative and interoperable information management systems that document and incentivize local and global sustainable development action. ITU can play a crucial role in getting such decentralized self-organizing global/local e-governance information system in place by facilitating global standard setting and interoperability of global challenges related ICT systems building on Open Government Data, Big Data, GIS systems, participatory evaluation, etc."

Another contribution (DENIC) suggests that there is a need to clarify the meaning of 'resources' in the definition of the ITU-T objective to 'Ensure equitable, economic and efficient allocation of numbering, naming, addressing and identification resources'.

Regional presence of ITU

One contribution (Finland) specifically suggests that there may not be a need to "maintain such a wide network of field offices. Contact and cooperation with national authorities, regional organizations and other key stakeholders can be achieved without the physical presence of the ITU. Improved efficiency is a key factor for a balanced budget".

3   List of contributions

All contributions received for the CWG SP-FP Public Consultation on the proposed strategic framework of ITU for 2016-2019 are listed below. The detailed inputs of the contributions are available online on the web platform (http://www.itu.int/en/council/wg-sfp/Pages/contributions-sp.aspx).

Table 1: List of contributions

No.	Date	Organization / Country	Contact
1	20.12	Education Without Borders (EWB) / Sudan	TAHA, Asaad
2	21.12	Telecentre.org foundation / Syria	EID, Nabil
3	09.01	Individual (3) / India	Kishore Babu YGSC
4	29.01	International Microwaves Telecom Solutions (IMTS) / France	SYLVIE, Laurens
5	29.01	International Association for the Advancement of Innovative Approaches to Global Challenges (IAAI) / Austria	POLZER, Miroslav
6	30.01	DENIC eg / Germany	SCHWEIGER, Jörg
7	29.01	Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT) / Thailand	Forhadul Parvez

8	29.01	BITKOM - German Association for Information Technology, Telecommunications and New Media / Germany	Christian Herzog
9	30.01	Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (Bahrain)	Musab Abdulla
10	31.01	Instituto Costarricense de Electricidad (Costa Rican Institute of Electricity - ICE) / Costa Rica	STRADI, Julio
11	31.01	Women and Information Society NGO / Armenia	ABAZIAN, Narine
12	31.01	LIRNEasia / Bangladesh	KHAN, Abu Saeed
13	05.02	Individual (13) / Vanuatu	TOULMIN, Llewellyn
14	07.02	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (New Zealand)	HUTCHINGS, Ian
15	09.02	Finnish Transport and Communications Ministry and Foreign Ministry (Finland)	ANDERSSON, Martin
16	11.02	Ministry of Administration and Digitization (Poland)	PUKALUK, Michał
17	11.02	Association for Progressive Communications (APC) / Global	BETANCOURT, Valeria