

**DONOR AGENCIES BRIEFING ON MEASURING ICT FOR DEVELOPMENT  
held at the ITU, Geneva, 18 October 2004**

Minutes of the Meeting

1. A briefing for donor agencies on the subject of measuring the information society was held on 18 October 2004 at the headquarters of the ITU in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting was hosted jointly by ITU and UNCTAD and was organized under the umbrella of the Partnership on "Measuring ICT for Development", which includes the following partners: ITU, the OECD, UNCTAD, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, four UN Regional Commissions (ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA), the United Nations ICT Task Force and the World Bank.
2. The objectives of the meeting were to: (i) brief donor agencies on the current status and availability of ICT data and indicators, in particular in the developing countries; (ii) showcase available databases on ICT indicators, to illustrate the gaps and data needs to be focused on; (iii) present steps that have been taken by the international community to develop a harmonized set of indicators under the umbrella of the Partnership; and (iv) brainstorm on a joint approach developed by the partners to enhance the capacity of developing countries to produce information society statistics and thus close the global information society data gap.
3. The meeting was attended by 30 participants, including representatives from 8 donor countries and 5 partners (see attached list of participants). Two donors were connected via videoconference (the European Commission in Brussels and the German Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau in Frankfurt).
4. The first part of the meeting was devoted to short presentations by partners and experts on the topic of e-measurement and its relevance for information society developments; and an introduction to the Partnership, its main objectives, contributions by different partners, and ongoing activities, such as the global ICT indicators stocktaking and the regional workshops on ICT indicators. Partners also gave an overview of currently available ICT indicators and future data needs (see attached agenda).
5. During the second part of the meeting, partners briefly presented key elements of a joint capacity building project for developing countries, including the main proposed activities at the international, regional, and national levels, and possible operational modalities for implementing a joint project. This was followed by an interactive debate between partners and donors, during which the following issues were raised:

*Measuring the impact of ICT*

6. Donors asked what kind of data would be collected by this initiative. They particularly emphasized the need for quantitative data to measure not only access to and use of ICTs, but also their socio-economic impact. ICT statistics will also be instrumental in monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (see below).
7. Partners explained the need for measuring readiness, usage and impact in a consequential manner and that at this stage much emphasis will be on measuring ICT usage by individuals, households, businesses and schools, a prerequisite for measuring impact. They also noted that the work of the Partnership will contribute towards measuring the digital

divide. In addition, ICT statistics will provide evidence for decision makers in national governments and donor institutions that ICT is conducive to and a tool for development. ICT data will allow countries to monitor and evaluate national e-strategies, quantify some of their impact (such as savings generated by e-government), and benchmark their countries against others. It was noted that measuring ICT for development is also a policy exercise, requiring a solid technical basis, and that this Partnership thus combines both substantive and statistical (technical) aspects.

#### *Link with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*

8. Several participants emphasized the need to link the work on measuring ICT to the work on monitoring progress made towards achieving the MDGs. In this context, the Partnership should not only focus on the WSIS process, but, more importantly, on the discussions taking place in the context of the broader MDG agenda and the General Assembly high-level plenary meeting on the MDGs, to be held in New York in September 2005.

9. Some participants enquired as to the social relevance of measuring the information society, for example its relevance to poverty reduction. Therefore, the type of data that will be collected will be crucial, such as measuring ICT usage at the household level. This was confirmed by partners, explaining that partners have mandates on many different areas of development, such as education, poverty reduction or enterprise development and that ICTs are viewed as important tools for development. The development and collection of indicators on the information society will thus make an important contribution to assessing national and regional progress towards the achievement of the MDGs. The participation of the UN ICT Task Force Working Party on ICT indicators and MDG mapping in the Partnership will play a critical role in this regard.

10. Although it was recognized that for potential donors it is important to support ICT work in different sectors having a clear output, it was noted that measuring the information society is a cross-cutting endeavour that will require gradual deployment of resources and initiatives, and will have a longer-term effect. Just as progress towards the MDGs will follow an extended timeline, this e-measurement initiative will require ongoing evaluation and the activities of the Partnership will respond to the evolving demand from countries.

#### *Capacity building*

11. A substantial part of the discussion focused on the various capacity building needs of developing countries for the collection of ICT statistics at the national level. In this context, Statistics Canada presented its experience in ICT data collection, noting that even in a country with favourable circumstances, the establishment of an e-measurement exercise requires precision and a clear strategic framework. A sound measurement system and basic established indicators allow for the measurement of, for example, ICT impact. It was noted that countries and international institutions that are advanced in ICT data collection could provide their expertise to national statistical offices (NSOs) in developing countries.

12. One of the participants noted that in some countries the capacity of NSOs was so limited that other data sources (private or internationally sponsored collections) would always prevail. However, others emphasized that capacity building should lead to sustainable ICT data collection at the national level and therefore the involvement of NSOs was crucial. Several countries have already expressed interest in that regard. Developing countries should develop the capacity to launch programmes for the collection of official ICT statistics, which will be comparable at the international and regional level. This will be essential for their abilities to take informed decisions on ICT policies and strategies, to identify priority areas for

policy action, to monitor, assess and revise national ICT strategies, or to benchmark national economies vis-à-vis those of other countries. Countries should be able to maintain readily available data on ICT access and usage by businesses, households and other sectors, and regional e-measurement networks should be established. It was noted that incorporating ICT-related questions into existing surveys could be a low-cost starting point for countries that have no ICT surveys yet. A mention was made of the fledgling international network for household survey vehicles, and that ICT questions could be incorporated into those surveys.

### *Complementary and overlapping roles of partners*

13. Some participants raised their concern about possible overlap or duplication of efforts by the partners. It was explained that precisely because the measurement of ICT covers many different sectors, the partnership was necessary to ensure a coordinated approach vis-à-vis stakeholders, including NSOs. For example, partners used the same model questionnaire to conduct the global stocktaking of information society statistics concomitantly and will consolidate results at the end of 2004. The roles of partners are being defined to correspond to their respective mandates and expertise, where each partner focuses on a "data thread".

### *Implementation*

14. Regarding the implementation of a joint Partnership project, some participants commented on the brief presentation that was given as regards the allocation of resources, including donor funds deposited in a specific trust fund. Donors requested clarifications on the ultimate responsibility for Partnership activities. Partners explained that each area of activities would be assigned to a lead executing agency, which would be responsible for its implementation and accountable to the steering committee. The steering committee and trust fund mechanisms were proposed for the sake of efficiency in the management of eventual contributions, and inputs from donors on these proposals were welcome. The partners also explained that any constraints by donors to contribute to a specific trust fund mechanism, or priorities in the use of funds for specific activities or regions, would be taken into consideration.

15. Donors appreciated the relevance of measuring ICT to development and partners were strongly encouraged to continue their coordinated and collaborative approach. Several donors expressed interest in contributing in-kind to the activities of the Partnership (in the form of advocacy, consultancies, or logistical support for activities), and further discussions between partners and donor agencies are expected with respect to other contributions and funding of specific activities, in particular training and workshops for NSOs at the national and regional levels, and the development of training material.

16. As a follow-up to the meeting, partners will prepare a project document, incorporating the feedback received at the meeting, and outlining each set of capacity building activities and their corresponding budget estimate, to be submitted to donors for further discussion.

**Agenda**

**ITU/OECD/UNCTAD/UIS/UN Regional Commissions/  
World Bank/UN ICT Task Force**

**Donor Agencies Briefing:  
"Measuring ICT for Development"**

*18 October 2004*

*Press Room, First Basement, ITU Tower Building, Geneva*

**9:30 – 9:40 Opening of the meeting by hosts**

*Pierre Gagne (ITU) 5 min*

*Peter Fröhler (UNCTAD) 5 min*

*Pape Touré (ITU, Chair of the meeting)*

**9:40 – 10:00 Introduction: Measuring ICT for Development**

Presentation by experts on relevance of ICT indicators for policy-making, research and analysis, business and social development; ICT impact assessment; and implementation of WSIS Plan of Action.

*Jose Maria Figueres (CEO, WEF and Chair, UN ICT TF) by videotape, 5 min*

*Tim Kelly (ITU) 5 min*

*Sergei Kambalov (UN ICT Task Force) 5 min*

*Tim Davis (Statistics Canada) 10 min*

**10:00 – 10:30 Current status and availability of ICT data and indicators**

Presentation by Partners of available ICT databases at the international level.

*Martin Schaaper (OECD) 7 min*

*Esperanza Magpantay (ITU) 7 min*

*Scarlett Fondeur Gil (UNCTAD) 5 min*

*Bruno Lanvin (WB) 7 min*

**10:30 – 10:40 International collaboration and presentation of Partnership**

*Susan Teltscher (UNCTAD) 10 min*

*10:40 – 11:00 Coffee break*

**11:00 – 12:45 Brainstorming on ICT indicators project proposal**

*Moderator: Peter Fröhler (UNCTAD)*

Short presentation of project proposal, followed by an interactive debate on: objectives, main activities, expected outcome, operational modalities for implementing a joint project (monitoring and evaluation, fund management, policy decisions etc.)

*5 min each, followed by interactive debate*

*Bruno Lanvin (WB) – objectives, expected outcomes, data coverage*

*Esperanza Magpantay (ITU) – activities national and regional level*

*Martin Schaaper (OECD) – activities international level*

*Susan Teltscher (UNCTAD) – operational modalities*

**12:45 – 13:00 Closing and way forward**

*Pierre Gagne (ITU)*

*Peter Fröhler (UNCTAD)*

List of Participants

Organization	Name	E- mail
1. Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)	Cameron Hill	Cameron.hill- gene@dfat.gov.au
2. European Commission	Harry De-Backer	Harry.De-Backer@cec.eu.int
3. Finland Mission	Teemu Sepponen	Teemu.sepponen@formin.fi
4. Industry Canada	Richard Bourassa	Bourassa.Richard@ic.gc.ca
5. ITU	Esperanza Magpantay	magpantay@itu.int
6. ITU	Herawasih Yasandikusuma	yasandikusuma@itu.int
7. ITU	Pape Gorgui Toure	Pape-gorgui.toure@itu.int
8. ITU	Pierre Gagne	Pierre.gagne@itu.int
9. ITU	Savitri Bisnath	bisnath@itu.int
10. ITU	Tim Kelly	Tim.Kelly@itu.int
11. ITU	Hamadoun Touré	Hamadoun.Toure@itu.int
12. Korea Agency for Digital Opportunity	Jin-Jyu Jeong	jeong@itu.int
13. Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW)	Frank Weiler	Frank.Weiler@kfw.de
14. OECD	Martin Schaaper	Martin.schaaper@oecd.org
15. OECD	Tambo Ichiro	Ichiro.tambo@oecd.org
16. Statistics Canada	Tim Davis	Tim.davis@statcan.ca
17. Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	Anja Prodoehl	Anja.prodoehl@deza.admin.ch
18. Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	Gerold Weigel	Gerolf.weigel@deza.admin.ch
19. UN ICT Task Force	Sergei Kambalov	kambalov@un.org
20. UNCTAD	Genevieve Feraud	Genevieve.feraud@unctad.org
21. UNCTAD	Henri Laurencin	Henri.laurencin@unctad.org
22. UNCTAD	Peter Fröhler	Peter.Froehler@unctad.org
23. UNCTAD	Scarlett Fondeur Gil	Scarlett.Fondeur.Gil@unctad.org
24. UNCTAD	Susan Teltscher	Susan.Teltscher@unctad.org
25. United Kingdom Department for International Development	Fiona Power	f-power@dfid.gov.uk
26. World Bank	Bruno Lanvin	blanvin@worldbank.org
27. WSIS Secretariat	Charlotte Sgier	Charlotte.sgier@itu.int
28. WSIS Secretariat	Christopher Clark	Christopher.clark@itu.int
29. WSIS Secretariat	Sang-Hak Lee	Sang-hak.lee@itu.int
30. WSIS Secretariat	Seiji Tsugawa	Seiichi.tsugawa@itu.int
<b>Note:</b> The meeting was also addressed by videotape by José María Figueres, Chairman of the UN ICT Task Force.		