|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Logo  Description automatically generated | **Regional Preparatory Meeting  for WTDC-21 for Asia and the Pacific  (RPM-ASP)  Virtual, 9-10 March 2021** | | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
|  | |  | |
|  | | **Document** **RPM-ASP21/9-E** | |
|  | | **10 February 2021** | |
|  | | **English only** | |
| Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC) | | | |
| Responses to COVID-19 and its Impact on infrastructure and affordability | | | |
|  | | | |
| **Agenda item:**  N/A  **Summary:**  Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC) proposes to explore how the technical community have cooperated with the health sector and how network operators have adapted their businesses in the face of the pandemic. These examples can contribute to ITU’s Global Network Resiliency Platform (#REG4COVID).  Additionally, APNIC offers to partner with ITU in offering technical capacity building to increase network operators’ resiliency in the region.  **Expected results:**  RPM-ASP is invited to examine this contribution and approve the proposals contained therein.  **References:**  N/A | | | |

**Expected outcomes**

Increased information sharing of the key initiatives and measures undertaken by the technical community to support infrastructure capacity and resiliency in the region. This will help to build better preparedness for global events such as the COVID pandemic, focusing on national response to future similar emergencies.

Increased resilience and network capabilities of ITU Members in the region. This can also help to narrow the digital divide and inequalities between and within economies.

**Background and proposal**

Since the pandemic in 2020, economies have undergone a global lockdown that has disrupted not only the way businesses operate at the national level, but also the way people interact for work, education and entertainment. This has resulted in unprecedented demand for Internet access as the main substitute for those activities that have shifted online, as they cannot longer be done face-to-face.

Faced with such extraordinary circumstances, network operators have worked tirelessly to ensure seamless Internet connectivity for users in order to help maintain people’s livelihoods.

Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC) proposes to explore the key initiatives and measures undertaken in the Asia Pacific region to ensure seamless Internet connectivity for users as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In particular, we will look at examples of how the technical community have cooperated with the health sector and how network operators have adapted their services in the face of the pandemic. These examples can contribute to ITU’s Global Network Resiliency Platform (#REG4COVID).

APNIC offers to partner with ITU to offer technical capacity building for network operators in the region to increase their network resiliency in critical areas such as Internet routing and network security.

Our envisioned outcomes are twofold:

First, to promote greater understanding of the key initiatives and measures that were undertaken by the technical community to support the infrastructure and economic needs in the region. By highlighting the critical role of network operators in the continued functioning of economies in the region, ITU Members will be able to build better preparedness for global events such as the COVID pandemic, focusing on national response to future similar emergencies.

Second, technical training for network operators particularly in developing economies can help to narrow the digital divide and inequalities between and within economies. Training will also increase the overall resiliency and network capabilities of ITU Members in APAC.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_