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| **Telecommunication DevelopmentAdvisory Group (TDAG)****25th Meeting, Geneva, 2-5 June 2020** | C:\Users\comas\AppData\Local\Temp\Rar$DRa0.735\jpg\ITU official logo_blue_RGB.jpg |
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| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau |
| 2019 progress report on THE implementation of RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT IN BDT |
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| **Summary:**In 2019, BDT embarked on a comprehensive overhaul of its use of results-based management (RBM) to equip the Bureau for the challenges of a rapidly changing development landscape and make it Fit4Purpose. This reform will make RBM relevant for the implementation of all work programmes, will be used as a managerial decision and monitoring tool, and will provide the evidence to demonstrate BDT’s impact. It will also serve as the platform to engage with internal and external partners, and to replicate and scale up successful projects and work programme initiatives. **Action required:**TDAG is invited to note this report and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.**References:**Buenos Aires Action Plan from World Telecommunication Development Conference 2017 (WTDC-17), Resolutions 25, 71 and 151 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, Resolutions 52 and 53 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of WTDC |

***Why*** ***did we embark on the far-reaching RBM change initiative*?**

Against the backdrop of a rapidly changing development landscape, a number of new organizations entering the ICT development field, and the continued requests by Member States to ensure an efficient and effective BDT[[1]](#footnote-1), the Bureau embarked in 2019 on a renewed effort to roll out an upgraded, comprehensive results-based management framework. In order to retain and enhance the relevance of BDT, our baseline analysis to create a Fit4Purpose BDT conducted over the course of the first half of 2019 demonstrated that:

* Our activities have become fragmented, making it difficult to engage partners on a systematic basis, leverage synergy opportunities with the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) and the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R), and track impact.
* The delivery of our work programmes was happening in silos, with the operational plan work programme often disconnected from projects and regional initiatives.
* Our regional initiatives, especially with similar thematic areas mandated across multiple regions, were not benefiting from the potential scaling and resource mobilization opportunities[[2]](#footnote-2).
* Our role as the UN special agency for ICTs, and in particular the BDT objective to be the “partner for digital transformation through meaningful connectivity”, was not being sufficiently recognized by other key international organizations and other Member States.

In summary, it was felt that a more coherent approach was needed to deliver on our work programmes and to ensure that BDT was viewed as a key partner in the development landscape.

***How* *did we reform our work programme approach*?**

Building on earlier efforts to use RBM as a planning methodology, a number of workshops and sessions were organized with staff from headquarters and regional and area offices throughout the fourth quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2020. The objective is to ensure that the RBM framework is not limited to planning, but that it also focuses strongly on work programme coordination and implementation in order to collect the evidence of the achievements towards impact.

Thus, BDT expanded the framework to include the following building blocks of RBM:

* ***impact pathways***, which follow thematic activity workstreams to identify the delivered outputs, the target recipients reached, the changes in capacity of the recipient population, and their resulting behaviour changes, translating into wider impact;
* articulation of the underlying ***assumptions and operational risks***, which allow to monitor where progress is stalling or blocked, and based on this feedback to quickly learn and readjust the initial planning assumptions of the work programme to bring it back on track;
* articulation of the linkages between each thematic cluster (i.e., the WTDC programmes) and the relevant ITU-D study groups and the other ITU Sectors (ITU-T and ITU-R),
* SMART ***key performance indicators*** (KPIs), which provide the qualitative or quantitative tools to continuously measure and record our achievements towards the articulated medium- and longer-term thematic goals.

Each thematic priority, of which there are ten in total[[3]](#footnote-3), and regional office[[4]](#footnote-4) (in 2020) has developed an RBM framework (theory of change) to reflect their thematic priorities and regional specificities, including all the above building blocks, in full alignment with the Buenos Aires Action Plan priorities. In doing so, the following guiding principles were spelled out:

* Working through and in coordination with thematic priorities.
* Using RBM as a basis for managerial decision-making.
* Using a holistic approach, which encompasses all available resources (human, financial) by bringing together the 2020 operational plan workplan, the projects, regional initiatives and any other activities.
* Making partnering and resource mobilization a primary focus for each staff, and the default mode of operation.
* Using the results chain and impact statements as the foundation for BDT communication.
* Delegating authority to cluster facilitators and regional directors (within predefined approval boundaries).

To further strengthen the RBM approach, additional training was provided on Project Management, Communication for Development, and Procurement.

This comprehensive approach will also require the setting up of new systems to track implementation progress, report on KPIs and expenditures incurred by deliverable, in addition to tracking the activities. This will enable direct linkages from our budget and expenditures to our work programme priorities, pending the completion of the IT systems renewal.

**What will change?**

Using RBM as a managerial decision tool for the implementation of the BDT work programme lays the foundation for an effective, efficient, and a Fit4Purpose BDT. The following key RBM related new and enhanced management processes are being implemented:

* Quarterly review meetings between the thematic clusters and the regional offices will review and allow adjustments on a holistic basis, taking into consideration the progress of all work programme elements. The first Quarterly review meeting took place the week of May 4.
* Operational risk assessments are being recorded in a unit-based risk register and at the thematic priority level, and then aggregated to the BDT level; this will allow to quickly spot all (red-marked) problem areas in order to escalate decision-making and resolve the pending programme issues. A first look at the Risk Register was shared during the TDAG RBM Web dialogue on May 14.
* Working assumptions are being reviewed on a regular basis to ensure agility in the adjustment of the work programmes, and to learn quickly from those changes.
* Key performance indicators are being finalized for each thematic priority and progress will be updated continuously on a BDT dashboard, and reported regularly.
* Performance Agreements are being implemented to establish transparent linkages between the thematic priorities, the thematic priorities and the Regions, the relevant ITU-D study groups, and the other ITU Sectors (ITU-T and ITU-R).
* A modernization of BDT systems has been initiated to align the reporting capabilities with the delegation of authority to budget holders and maintain accountability.
* Successful projects and programmes, including regional initiatives, will be replicated and scaled up with the help of our partners and based on the interest of our membership.

The above measures will result in palpable impact, the first signs of which we can see already, and the evidence of which will be tracked systematically.

A comprehensive update on BDT’s progress with RBM implementation, including an overview of the ten BDT thematic priorities was provided in the TDAG RBM Web Dialogues that took place May 12 and May 14. Further information including links to the Web Dialogue presentations can be found at: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG25/default.aspx>

**Annex A – List of BDT Thematic Priorities**



*Note: LDCs, SIDS, and LLDCs are integrated into each of the above thematic priority program*

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1. In particular, see Resolution 151 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) calling for the implementation of results-based management, Resolution 71 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) calling for a coordinated implementation of the ITU strategic plan, and Resolution 52 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of WTDC calling for strengthening the executing agency role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector.
 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See in particular Resolution 25 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) calling for strengthening regional presence and Resolution 53 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of WTDC requiring the development of a strategic and financial framework for the elaboration and implementation of the Dubai Action Plan. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Previously called “thematic clusters” in 2019, see Annex A for the list of the ten thematic priorities and their relationship to WTDC programmes, Regional Initiatives, and Study Groups [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Regional RBM workshops began in January 2020 with the Americas region. Due to travel restrictions from Covid-19, all regions will be finalized by end 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)