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| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau | | | |
| Regional Initiatives for the 2023-2025 Cycle and Vision for WTDC-25 | | | |
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| **Agenda item:**  8  **Summary:**  This document outlines the regional initiatives (RIs) adopted during WTDC-22 under the Kigali Action Plan, presenting an overview of key initiatives for each region. It also aims to inspire discussions during RPMs to define new regional initiatives for the upcoming WTDC-25 and for the next cycle.  **Action required:**  The RPMs is invited to note this report in its deliberation in identifying new regional initiatives.  **References:**  N/A | | | |

# Regional Initiatives for 2023-2025 period

1. **Introduction**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference 2022 (WTDC-22), held in Kigali, Rwanda, marked a significant milestone in advancing the objectives of ITU's Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D). Under the Kigali Action Plan, 28 regional initiatives (RIs) were adopted to address region-specific ICT priorities. These initiatives align with the ITU’s strategic goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing affordability, inclusivity, and digital innovation. Resolution 17 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) underscores the importance of collaboration and resource mobilization to implement these initiatives effectively.

1. **Regional Initiatives Across ITU-D Regions**

**Africa Region:**

* AFR1: Supporting digital transformation to usher in a rapid transition to a digital economy while accelerating innovation in Africa.
* AFR2: Implementation and expansion of broadband infrastructures, connectivity and emerging technologies.
* AFR3: Building trust, safety and security in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies and protection of personal data.
* AFR4: Fostering emerging technologies and innovation ecosystems.

**Americas Region:**

* AMS1: Deployment of modern, resilient, secure and sustainable telecommunication/information and communication technology infrastructure.
* AMS2: Enhancement and expansion of digital-literacy, digital-skills and digital-inclusion programmes, especially among vulnerable populations.
* AMS3: Effective support for digital transformation and innovation ecosystems through scalable, funded and sustainable connectivity projects.
* AMS4: Development of enabling policy and regulatory environments to connect the unconnected through accessible and affordable telecommunications/information and communication technologies that support achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and progress towards the digital economy.

**Arab Region:**

* ARB1: Sustainable digital economy through digital transformation.
* ARB2: Enhancing confidence, security and privacy in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in the era of new and emerging digital technologies.
* ARB3: Developing digital infrastructure for smart sustainable cities and communities.
* ARB4: Building capacities and encouraging digital innovation, entrepreneurship and future foresight.
* ARB5: Developing means of digital regulation.

**Asia-Pacific Region:**

* ASP1: Addressing special needs of least developed countries, small island developing states, including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries.
* ASP2: Harnessing information and communication technologies to support the digital economy and inclusive digital societies.
* ASP3: Fostering development of infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity and connecting the unconnected.
* ASP4: Enabling policy and regulatory environments to accelerate digital transformation.
* ASP5: Contributing to a secure and resilient information and communication technology environment.

**CIS Region:**

* CIS1: Developing infrastructure to promote innovation and partnerships in the introduction of new technologies – the Internet of Things, including the industrial Internet, smart cities and communities, 5G/IMT-2020 and next-generation NET-2030 communication networks, quantum technologies, artificial intelligence, digital health, digital skills and environmental protection.
* CIS2: Cybersecurity and personal data protection.
* CIS3: Creating an enabling legal and regulatory environment to accelerate digital transformation.
* CIS4: Digital skills and information and communication technology accessibility for the public, in particular for persons with disabilities.
* CIS5: Development of smart cities and communities.

**Europe Region:**

* EUR1: Digital infrastructure development.
* EUR2: Digital transformation for resilience.
* EUR3: Digital inclusion and skills development.
* EUR4: Trust and confidence in the use of telecommunications/ information and communication technologies.
* EUR5: Digital innovation ecosystems.

1. **Focusing on Regional Initiatives for the CIS Region**

The CIS Region's initiatives highlight its dedication to harnessing ICTs for sustainable development, addressing critical challenges, and needs of assistance. Resolution 17 underscores the need for coordinated efforts and partnerships to implement these initiatives effectively. The following presents the objectives and Expected Results: of each Regional Initiative as agreed by WTDC-22.

**CIS 1: Developing infrastructure to promote innovation and partnerships in the introduction of new technologies – the Internet of Things, including the industrial Internet, smart cities and communities, 5G/IMT-2020 and next-generation NET-2030 communication networks, quantum technologies, artificial intelligence, digital health, digital skills and environmental protection**

**Objective:** To provide assistance to the Member States and ITU Sector Members in States members of the CIS in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region in the process of telecom operators pioneering innovative technologies (as they are introduced in the form of new services), while ensuring the sustainability and improving the functioning of telecommunication networks, including 4G and 5G/IMT-2020 networks, and next-generation NET-2030 networks, in the context of the widespread adoption of the concept and technologies of the Internet of Things (IoT), the industrial Internet, smart cities and communities, quantum technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), digital health, digital skills and environmental protection.

**Expected results:**

1. Developing recommendations for new technologies –IoT, including the industrial Internet, smart cities and communities, 5G/IMT-2020 and next-generation NET-2030 communication networks, quantum technologies, AI, digital health, digital skills and environmental protection.
2. Establishing telecommunication/ICT infrastructure to promote innovation and partnerships in the introduction of new technologies – IoT, including the industrial Internet, smart cities and communities, 5G/IMT-2020 and next-generation NET-2030 communication networks, quantum technologies, AI, digital health, digital skills and environmental protection.
3. Raising the technological level of organizations that develop solutions and the overall level of people's well-being in the region.
4. Bridging the digital divide in the countries of the CIS region.
5. Digital skills enhancement for people in the countries of the CIS region.

**CIS 2: Cybersecurity and personal data protections**

**Objective**: To provide assistance to ITU Member States of the region in developing and maintaining secure, reliable and robust digital networks and services and in solving problems related to the protection of personal data.

**Expected results:**

* 1. Establishment and enhancement of national cybersecurity incident response teams.
  2. Capacity building, enhancing communication and incident response capabilities, and ensuring a continued collective effort at the regional level among the national cybersecurity incident response teams to combat cyberthreats through global, interregional, regional and national cybersecurity drills.
  3. Training and retraining of specialists with technical and management profiles through targeted regional and national training programmes.
  4. Coordination of the gathering and sharing of best practices in the development of national strategies and cybersecurity and measurement of countries' commitment to cybersecurity.

**CIS 3: Creating an enabling legal and regulatory environment to accelerate digital transformation**

**Objective**: To provide assistance to ITU Member States of the region in developing related laws and regulations and digital services in various economic sectors, fostering innovation, increasing information sharing and strengthening cooperation in regulation, thereby contributing to the creation of an enabling regulatory environment for all stakeholders.

**Expected results**:

1. Creation of an interconnected innovation ecosystem for start-up development and digital transformation in the countries of the region.
2. Expert assistance in the creation of digital public services based on open innovation.
3. Expert assistance in the creation of a regulatory and legal framework and coordination mechanisms for innovation development in the finance and education sectors (Fintech and Edtech).
4. Sharing of information on changes in the legal and regulatory framework and market developments in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector and digital economy.
5. Building of institutional, human and technical capacity in relevant aspects of sector-specific legislation, regulatory matters, economic and financial issues and market developments.

**CIS 4: Digital skills and information and communication technology accessibility for the public, in particular for persons with disabilities**

**Objective:** To provide assistance to ITU Member States of the region in formulating recommendations for the development of the public's digital skills, paying particular attention to persons with disabilities.

**Expected results:**

1. A detailed study on the needs of persons with disabilities in terms of methodology for digital-skill training.
2. Recommendations on the development and improvement of digital literacy for persons with disabilities.
3. Creation of a network of training centres for persons with disabilities, including in remote areas of countries.
4. Methodological support and training of teachers for training centres for persons with disabilities.
5. Recommendations on the development of the public's digital skills in art and culture and the reduction of barriers to public access to museum collections.
6. Cooperation with museums for the development of special programmes for public access to museum exhibits.
7. Professional development courses, forums, training and seminars on matters related to the development of the public's digital skills in art and culture.

**CIS 5: Development of smart cities and communities**

**Objective**: To provide assistance to ITU Member States of the region in developing legal and regulatory frameworks, creating necessary infrastructure, introducing modern services and applications in different aspects of smart cities and communities (education, healthcare, tourism, transport, energy, security, the environment, etc.) and raising the digital literacy of the public, business and authorities.

**Expected results**:

1. Recommendations on the development of a legal and regulatory framework for the establishment of smart cities and communities (SC&C) at all architectural levels and the organizational aspect of SC&C development.
2. Recommendations on the development of necessary infrastructure, including the use of telecommunications and other connective media, to support the sustainable development and creation of SC&Cs in developing countries.
3. Pilot projects for different aspects of SC&C (education, healthcare, tourism, transport, energy, security, the environment, etc.).
4. A rating and key performance indicator system for SC&C.
5. Professional development courses, forums, training and seminars on issues related to SC&C development and raising the digital literacy of the public, business and authorities.

These initiatives were designed and implemented to address the specific needs of the CIS region while contributing to global efforts to bridge the digital divide. By prioritizing partnerships, resource mobilization, and knowledge sharing, the regional initiatives aim to achieve sustainable development through ICTs and ensure that no one is left behind in the digital era.

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