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| **Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG)**  **30th Meeting, Geneva, Switzerland, 19-23 June 2023** | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
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| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau | |
| Financial implications of the Regional Initiatives approved by WTDC-22 | |
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| Summary  The World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-22), held in Kigali, Rwanda from  6 to 16 June 2022, adopted the Kigali Declaration and the Kigali Action Plan, including 28 regional initiatives (RIs) across the six regions of ITU-D Sector.  The full implementation of these regional initiatives will require significant financing which would need to be generated by ITU through resource mobilization and other efforts. In the previous cycle, WTDC-17 suggested an allocation of 1 million CHF per RI, to ensure ITU had adequate funding to engage in partnerships and other collaborative efforts that would ensure the effective and full implementation of these RIs. No financial resources were allocated for this purpose.  Following the adoption of Regional Initiatives by WTDC-17, Council allocated in its 2018 session a total of CHF 5 M as seed funding for the period from 2018-2021.  This document provides an overview of the WTDC-22 adopted RIs, and outlines the request being made by BDT to Council for the allocation of financial resources towards accelerating the implementation of the new RIs.  Action required  TDAG is requested to note this document and provide advice as deemed necessary, in particular, the request by BDT to Council within the 2024-2027 budget process, for additional resources to be allocated for the implementation of the RIs adopted by WTDC-22 as was the case in 2018.  References  n/a | |

1. **Introduction**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-22), held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 6 to 16 June 2022, adopted the Kigali Action Plan, including 28 RIs (distributed across ITU-D’s six regions). Based on the experience during the previous implementation cycle of RIs (2018 to 2022), it was evident that medium[[1]](#footnote-2) to large-scale[[2]](#footnote-3) projects have high impact at national and regional levels.

During the period 2014-2018[[3]](#footnote-4), ITU signed 87 projects with a value of CHF 25.7 million and allocated CHF 3.4 million in cash contribution to these projects (including contributions from the ICT Development Fund (ICTDF) for a value of CHF 1.2 million). However, the majority of the projects remained small- and medium-sized due to a lack of meaningful funding that could support large-scale projects.

At the 2018 session of ITU Council, in recognition of this issue, the Council approved a total allocation of CHF 5 million to be used as seed funding for ITU projects, which would in turn attract larger funding from donors and partners, thereby improving the size and impact of those projects.

During the period 2019 to 2022, ITU signed 97 projects with a value of CHF 58.9 million and allocated CHF 9.4 million in cash contribution to these projects (including contributions from the ICT-DF for a value of CHF 3.3 million). This represented a significant increase in the funding mobilized by BDT in projects, when compared to the previous period. It should be noted that 60 of these projects (61 % of total projects) benefitted from the Council allocated RIs funding.

Detailed information on the implementation of WTDC-17 RIs co-financed by Council 2018 allocated CHF 5 million and resources arising from our resource mobilization effort is available in Annex 1 to this document.

1. **Overview of the regional initiatives**

WTDC-22 approved RIs across ITU’s strategic objectives, creating synergies across regions which will be leveraged in implementing the RIs. The RIs are listed in Annex 2.

1. **Proposals**

The implementation of these RIs has already commenced in 2023 as coherence was established among the Operational Planning process, projects planning, and Regional Initiatives implementation based on Results Based Management that focuses on Outcomes rather than fragmented actions. However, effective implementation of these RIs will be limited if dedicated funds are not allocated. Further, successful resource mobilization without seed money will also be compromised.

Based on the previous experience, it is proposed that BDT request that Council, to enable more comprehensive implementation allocates at least the same amount as was allocated in the previous cycle, for the current cycle. It should however be noted that based on our experience during the cycle 2018 – 2022, external partners tend to commit an average of 50% of the ITU contribution for each project. This effectively means, the higher the allocated amount to each of the RI, the more likely it is for external partners to commit more funds towards projects related to the RIs.

|  | **Options for partial implementation** | **2024-2025** | **2026-2027** | **TOTAL 2024-2027** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Allocation of KCHF 100 for 2024-2025 and KCHF 200 for 2026-2027 | Maximum of CHF 2.8 million | CHF 5.6 million | **CHF 8.4 million** |
| 2 | Allocation of KCHF 100 to each RI for 2024-2025 and KCHF 100 for 2026-2027 | Maximum of CHF 2.8 million | CHF 2.8 million | **CHF 5.6 million** |

**Explanatory note on the options for partial implementation**

**Option 1:** Allocation of KCHF 100 for each Regional Initiative for the first two years and KCHF 200 in the next two years would most likely attract funding for medium-sized projects.

**Option 2:** Allocation of KCHF 100 in the first two years and the same amount for the next two years will most likely attract financing for small and medium-scale projects. The enhancements in ITU’s other resource mobilization effort and leveraging the Partner2Connect Digital Development Coalition may improve the ability of the ITU to attract partners, further enhancing the impact of the RI funding.

**Conclusion**

In the budget approval process for 2024-2027 BDT proposes to request that Council consider the allocation of dedicated financial resources for the implementation of the Regional Initiatives adopted by WTDC-22 for all the six regions.

Annex 1

Utilization of the financial resources approved by Council   
to support the implementation of the WTDC-17 Regional Initiatives

Annex 1 is available in a [separate file](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-TDAG30-C-0025).

Annex 2

WTDC-22 Regional Initiatives

During the six regional preparatory meetings in 2022, the regions articulated their specific priorities in a set of regional initiatives, which can be found in the Kigali Action Plan. These regional initiatives (twenty-eight in total) are intended to address specific telecommunication/ICT priority areas, through partnerships and resource mobilization to implement projects. Under each regional initiative, projects are developed and implemented to meet the region's needs.

**Africa regional initiatives**

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 regional initiatives**

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 States regional initiatives**

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. 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 regional initiatives**

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 regional initiative**s

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 regional initiatives**

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.

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1. Medium-scale projects being those valued at CHF 500,000 to CHF 1,000,000. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Large-scale projects being those valued at more than CHF 1,000,000. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Period from 1 January 2014 to 31 March 2018, in line with reporting timeline for Council 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)