International Telecommunication Union

ITU-D STUDY GROUP 2 4th STUDY PERIOD (2006-2010)

QUESTION 17-2/2:

Progress on activities for e-services/applications in the world

THE STUDY GROUPS OF ITU-D

In accordance with Resolution 2 (Doha, 2006), WTDC-06 maintained two study groups and determined the Questions to be studied by them. The working procedures to be followed by the study groups are defined in Resolution 1 (Doha, 2006) adopted by WTDC-06. For the period 2006-2010, Study Group 1 was entrusted with the study of nine Questions in the field of telecommunication development strategies and policies. Study Group 2 was entrusted with the study of ten Questions in the field of development and management of telecommunication services and networks and ICT applications.

For further information

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ABSTRACT

This document provides information on the planned and past activities of the BDT Programme 3 related to e-services and ICT applications in developing countries.[1]

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[1] This includes least developed countries (LDCs), Small Islands Developing States, and countries with economies in transition.

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Report on E-Services/Applications Activities by ITU-D Programme 3

Study Group 2 Question 17-2/2 was adopted by the fourth World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) held in Doha, Qatar from 7-15 March 2006 as a follow-up to the previous Question.

The ICT Applications and Cybersecurity Division (CYB), which has overall responsibility for Programme 3 of the Doha Action Plan adopted at the 2006 World Telecommunication Development Conference, has identified e-health, e-environment and e-government as priority domains within the ICT applications elements defined in the Programme.

While e-health is addressed through a specific Question (14 of Study Group 2), the other e-services and related applications, with a specific focus on e-government and e-environment, require specific attention to ensure that Members States will be properly assisted.

Past and ongoing BDT activities

- Based on the recommendations of the scoping study on e-Environment (ICTs for e-Environment), developed last year, BDT is currently working on an e-Environment Toolkit that will provide Member States a methodology and suggest a series of indicators for countries to evaluate their readiness on the use of ICTs for the environment. An e-Environment Readiness Index (EERI) is also been developed as part of the toolkit. Representatives from United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other ITU sectors have contributed comments to initial drafts.

- Following the findings of the scoping study on e-Government (Electronic Government for Developing Countries) released in draft in 2008, BDT is developing an e-Government Toolkit. This toolkit will be produced as a series of modules that will examine priority areas of action for policymakers in four dimensions of the e-Government environment: infrastructure, policy, governance and outreach. The initial module, currently being finalized, proposes a framework to evaluate the e-government readiness of a country based on indices and indicators relating to these fours dimensions. Representatives from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have provided comments on the initial draft.

- Programme 3 conducted an informal SG2 Question 17-2/2 workshop on "Assessing e-Government Readiness: Proposed UN Tools to Support Policymakers", Geneva, Switzerland on March 24, 2009 to present to our membership the progress made on the initial module of ITU's e-Government Toolkit and introduce them to the beta version of the ITU Quick Check e-Government Tool.

- Continuing the collaboration between BDT and UNDESA, the entities organized the joint seminar "e-Government and Public-Private Partnerships for Better Public Service Delivery and MDGs Implementation" during the WSIS Forum 2009 (18-22 May 2009).

- BDT also contributed to the Facilitation Meeting on e-Environment at the WSIS Forum 2009. At the meeting, organized by BDT in collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), BDT introduction to our Membership the progress achieved on the ITU e-Environment Toolkit report and the EERI.

- To facilitate access to ICT applications resources and BDT activities in this area, CYB has updated the format of the ITU web site dedicated to e-services http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/cyb/app/.

Regional activities

- Europe/CIS Region:
  - Expert assistance to the Republic of Belarus on "e-government preparedness".
- Americas Region:
  - BDT actively participated in the "Third ITU symposium on ICTs and Climate Change" in Quito, Ecuador (8-10 July 2009).

Planned BDT activities (2009)

BDT activities in 2009 are focusing on three strategic dimensions:

1   Elaborating assessment and implementation toolkits to facilitate the establishment of national e-strategies and usage of related applications and services.
  - Once the initial modules on readiness assessment for the e-environment and e-government toolkits are completed, they will be circulated in draft form among the members of SG2 Question 17-2/2 for your input. A second version of the ITU Quick Check tool is being developed to improve its capabilities and include some of the membership suggestions.
  - Subsequent modules of the toolkits will be developed taking into account the comments received.

2   Providing expertise and concrete assistance to Members States.
  - At the request of our membership, assist Member States in conducting readiness assessments in the area of e-government and test the usefulness of the EERI for e-Environment readiness assessments.

3   Continuing our collaboration with the UN organizations that are focal points for the WSIS Action Line C7, in particular, with UNDESA for e-government and UNEP for e-environment to avoid duplication of efforts and improve the use of available financial resources.

Future of Question 17-2/2

The extent of activities currently undertaken by ITU-D in the area of e-services and ICT applications suggests the need for further discussions by the membership on whether the question currently under study should be extended or revised.

The future of Question 17-2/2 was informally discussed during the informal SG2 Q17-2/2 workshop in March 2009. Noting the lack of experience of developing countries on e-Government, Chairman Kisrawi proposed to continue the work of Q17 and its focus on this area. He also suggested for SG2 to create a new Question on e-Environment applications, pointing out ITU's current interest on the role of ICTs in combating climate change. Based on the participants' comments, Chairman Kisrawi proposed to develop two separate Questions, one for e-Government and one for e-Environment, keeping e-Health applications separate under Question 14.