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| **Council Working Group on theWorld Summit on the Information Society****31st meeting – Geneva, 19-20 September 2017** |  |
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|  | **Document WG-WSIS-31/14-E** |
| **14 July 2017** |
| **English only** |

**Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development**

1. **Background**

1.1 The Resolution 140 (Rev. Busan, 2014) invited Member States inter alia to support, through relevant UN processes, the creation of synergies and institutional linkages between WSIS and the Post-2015 Development Agenda to continue strengthening the impact of ICT for sustainable development. Member States are also invited to contribute and closely collaborate with the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development as an international, multi-stakeholder initiative to improve the availability and quality of ICT data and indicators, particularly in developing countries.

1. **Recent Activities and Progress Achieved**

2.1 ITU continues to be an active member of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development and together with UNCTAD and UIS is one of the three members of its Steering Committee. Over the years, the Partnership has grown to a total of 14 partner organizations, with the ILO joining in 2014. The Partnership has been very active in tracking the progress of the WSIS Targets and has also taken a lead role in increasing awareness about the importance of ICT for development and in international ICT monitoring.

2.2 The Partnership made a concerted effort to highlight the role that ICTs will play in achieving the SDGs. In 2015, a joint proposal of ICT indicators to help track the SDGs and its targets was prepared by the Partnership which served as the basis for the substantive inputs provided by ITU to the United Nations Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs). The report of the IAEG-SDGs was presented to the 47th session of the UN Statistical Commission (held in March 2016). The Commission endorsed the report containing the global indicators framework for the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The framework includes 231 indicators, 5 of which are ICT indicators collected by the ITU at the global level.

2.3 The Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development presented a report on ICT statistics at the 47th session of the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) that took place in New York from 7 to 11 March 2016. The UNSC appreciated the report and congratulated the Partnership for the excellent work done and expressed support for the continuation of its activities in particular with respect to a regular review of the core list of ICT indicators; the work on gender and use of ICT; measuring international trade in ICT services and ICT-enabled services; and national coordination of ICT statistics. It further acknowledged the role of ICT as an enabler for achievement of the SDGs and the ICT sector as a major provider of big data, and recommended in that context that the Partnership develops guidance to improve cooperation with the different stakeholders for the purposes of producing high quality and timely ICT statistics and of leveraging the potential benefits of using big data for official statistics. The Commission recommended to increase efforts for strengthening capacity of national statistical systems in producing ICT statistics and requested the Partnership to report back to the Commission in 2018 with a review of the status of official ICT statistics and their integration into the monitoring framework of the 2030 Agenda.

2.4 The Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development organized a session during the WSIS Forum 2017 on the measurement of progress towards the SDGs through ICT indicators. The session highlighted the significant role ICTs will play in achieving the SDGs and highlighted the importance of measuring progress towards achieving the SDGs through ICT indicators, beyond the current SDG Indicators Monitoring Framework. Recognizing that ICTs have great potential to accelerate human progress as a tool and enabler to achieve the SDGs, the Partnership launched a Task Group on ICT for SDGs (TG-SDGs) that will prepare a thematic list of ICT indicators that will try to capture the cross-cutting and multi-faceted contribution of ICT to the SDGs. The TG-SDGs is open to all interested stakeholders. The session further included country experiences on collecting ICT indicators for sectors that are relevant to the SDGs.

2.5 As a key contribution of ITU to measuring ICT for development, the 14th ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS) was held in Gaborone, Botswana, from 21-23 November 2016. The Symposium, which was hosted by the Government of Botswana, attracted more than 400 participants from 59 Member States, as well as public and private organizations (including academia) and other regional and international organizations. WTIS-2016 featured several high-level debates addressing key questions related to ICT policy and measurement, including initiatives on how to close the digital divide to ensure an inclusive information society, understanding the structural impact of ICTs, big data for monitoring the information society, ICT indicators for disaster risk reduction, and stakeholders’ perspective regarding better ICT data for better policy making. The results of the work of the Expert Group on Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (EGTI) and the Expert Group on Household Indicators (EGH) were presented. WTIS-16 adopted a number of conclusions and recommendations which will guide countries as well as ITU in future work on ICT measurement. The 15th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS-17) will take place in Tunisia, from 14 to 16 November 2017. WTIS-2017 will feature high-level plenary talks on ICT data for investment, and emerging ICT trends in artificial intelligence, big data, cloud computing, and Internet of Things (IoT). Participants will have opportunities to join a selection of demos, tutorials, and lightning talks on data visualization and Big Data analysis tools, crowdsourcing data, next-generation networks and tracking the digital economy.

2.6 The Measuring the Information Society Report 2016 (MISR 2016), which has been published annually since 2009, features key ICT data and benchmarking tools to measure the information society, including the ICT Development Index (IDI). The IDI 2016 captures the level of ICT developments in 175 economies worldwide and compares progress since the year 2014. The report assesses IDI findings at the regional level and highlights top performing countries and those that have most dynamically improved their rank in the IDI since 2014. It also uses the findings of the IDI to analyze trends and developments in the digital divide. The report highlights the role of ICTs in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and presents the newly agreed SDG indicator framework, including the ICT indicators. In addition, it presents 2015 prices for ICT services for about 160 countries and provides a detailed analysis of mobile-cellular, fixed-broadband and mobile-broadband prices over the period 2008-2015. The report includes a chapter looking into the current status of mobile adoption, focusing on those who do not own or use a mobile phone yet and their main barriers to mobile-phone adoption, as well as evidence that despite the rapid spread and evolution of the Internet, socio-economic factors and analogue skills remain important determinants for benefitting from the opportunities of the Internet.[[1]](#footnote-2) The MISR 2017 will be launched during the WTIS-17, to be held in Tunisia, from 14 to 16 November 2017. MISR 2017 will assess IDI findings at the regional level and highlight countries that rank at the top of the IDI and those that have improved their position in the overall IDI rankings most dynamically since 2016. It will also use the findings of the IDI to analyze trends and developments in the digital divide. It will include for the first time individual country profiles providing a snapshot of the latest ICT landscape and efforts made to increase the ICT access, use and proficiency of their citizens. The analytical report will be complemented by a series of statistical tables providing country-level data for the indicators included in the IDI.

1. The Report is available at http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/publications/mis2016.aspx [↑](#footnote-ref-2)