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| **Council Working Group on theWorld Summit on the Information Society****32nd meeting – Geneva, 24-25 January 2018**  |  |
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|  | **Document CWG-WSIS-32/08-E** |
| **11 December 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. The Partnership will present a report to the 49th session of the UNSC, to be held in New York from 6-9 March 2018, on the current progress made on improving the availability and quality of ICT statistics.

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. The Partnership will organize a thematic workshop during WSIS Forum 2018 on the progress made related to the thematic list of ICT indicators.

2.5 As a key contribution of ITU to measuring ICT for development, the 15th ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS) was held in Hammamet, Tunisia, from 14 to 16 November 2017. The Symposium, which was hosted by the Government of Tunisia, attracted around 420 participants from 74 Member States, as well as public and private organizations (including academia) and other regional and international organizations. WTIS-2017 featured plenary sessions on ICT data for investment, emerging ICT trends (in artificial intelligence, big data, cloud computing, and Internet of Things (IoT)), the launch of the Measuring the Information Society Report (MISR 2017) including the results of the ICT Development Index (IDI) 2017, smart data for smart sustainable cities, as a selection of demos, tutorials, and lightning talks on data visualization, big data analysis tools, crowdsourcing data, next-generation networks and tracking the digital economy. The Symposium also included a session co-organized with the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development on tracking the digital economy, and included presentations and discussions highlighting how digitization has transformed the world today, and how the digital economy has highly influenced trade, commerce, labour requirements and government policies. The session further highlighted the work of the Partnership Task Group on ICT for the SDGs (TG-SDGs) on developing a thematic list of ICT indicators to measure ICT availability and use in sectors relevant to the SDGs that are not covered in the global SDG indicators framework, such as indicators on skills, e-commerce, financial inclusion, e-government and e-waste. WTIS-17 adopted a number of conclusions and recommendations which will guide countries as well as ITU in future work on ICT measurement.

2.6 The Measuring the Information Society Report 2017 (MISR 2017), 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 2017 captures the level of ICT developments in 176 economies worldwide and compares progress since 2016. MISR 2017 includes two volumes. Volume 1 assesses IDI findings at the global and regional level and highlights top performing countries and those that have most dynamically improved their rank in the IDI since 2016. The report presents a quantitative analysis of the current ICT trends and highlight new and emerging trends and measurement issues.[[1]](#footnote-2) The MISR 2017 was launched during the WTIS-17, held in Tunisia, from 14 to 16 November 2017. It includes for the first time individual economy 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 is complemented by a series of statistical tables providing country-level data for the indicators included in the IDI.

2.7 As a key contribution of ITU to exploring new data sources for official statistics, the ITU project on ‘Big Data for Measuring the Information Society’ was concluded successfully at the end of 2017. The project, which was initiated in June 2016, included pilot studies in six countries (Colombia, Georgia, Kenya, Philippines, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates) that aims to explore how big data from the ICT industry, particularly from telecommunication operators, can produce new or complement existing indicators to measure the information society. The outputs of the project include six country reports and a methodology document describing the big data ICT indicators and methodologies and how the indicators can be produced by operators and service providers, and compiled at the country level. The methodology document was developed and enhanced based on experiences by pilot countries and can be used by countries to ensure international comparability of the ICT indicators that are produced from big data sources.

1. The Report is available at <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/publications/mis2017.aspx>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)