|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Council 2021Virtual consultation of councillors, 8-18 June 2021** |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  | **Document C21/INF/6-E** |
| **7 April 2021** |
| **English only** |
| Report by the Secretary-General |
| STRENGTHENING THE REGIONAL PRESENCE |

|  |
| --- |
| SummaryThis information document contains the nine annexes to Document C21/25.Action requiredThis document is submitted to the Council **for information**.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_References*[Document C19/25](http://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0025/en), [C20/25](http://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0025/en)*, *[C21/25](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0025/en)* |

1. The purpose of this document is to provide additional information on the strengthening of the regional presence. It contains the following annexes:[[1]](#footnote-2)

[**Annex 1**](#Annex1): Key achievements by region for 2020

[**Annex 2**](#Annex2):Contribution to other Sectors and the General Secretariat

[**Annex 3**](#Annex3):Support activities towards empowering Regional and Area Offices

[**Annex 4**](#Annex4)**:** Summary of the 2020 Regional and Area Offices expenditure

[**Annex 5**](#Annex5)**:** 2020 operational plan and project implementation level by region

[**Annex 6**](#Annex6)**:** Breakdown of the 2020 Regional and Area Offices expenditure by category

[**Annex 7**](#Annex7)**:** 2020 Fellowships awarded and recruited experts

[**Annex 8**](#Annex8)**:** Summary of staffing level by Regional and Area Offices

[**Annex 9**](#Annex9)**:** Breakdown of staffing level by Regional and Area Offices

ANNEX 1

Key achievements by region for 2020

1. **Africa region**

In 2020, BDT implemented project activities under 10 technical cooperation projects for a total amount of 909,288 USD in the Africa region, in collaboration with Member States. In addition, activities on 26 actions of the BDT Operational Plan were implemented for an amount of 434,000 CHF.

In 2020 the project “Enhancing the Digital Ecosystem and Digital Skills for the Economic Empowerment of Women in Ethiopia” funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and the ITU ICT Development Fund (ICT-DF) will build capacity at the policy level, increasing governments’ ability to mainstream gender in information and communication technologies (ICTs), and will expand the digital horizons of women entrepreneurs in the textiles and apparel sector value chain. This validation workshop aimed to give the project stakeholders an overview of the project goals, approaches, and activities.

In February 2020, the ITU and ILO initiated high-level stakeholder engagement for the ITU-ILO “Boosting Decent Jobs and enhancing Digital Skills for the Youth in Africa’s Digital Economy” initiative, with the Regional Directors of both organizations visiting the Ministers of ICT, Youth and Employment in each of the countries of Rwanda, Kenya, Côte d’Ivoire and Nigeria. Work on the initiative started in these countries as well as Senegal and South Africa. National project documents were developed to meet specific needs within the countries and validation workshops took place in 2020. Programme partners and beneficiaries joined a virtual roundtable at the end of 2020 featuring multi-stakeholder dialogues to build sustainable partnerships and explore funding mechanisms. The project is actively seeking partners.

Within the framework of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), a baseline assessment to support cross border digital payments was undertaken in 2020. The baseline assessment emphasized the need for continental collaboration in the form of standardized payments and reporting protocols, expansion and refinement of the necessary platforms, and the enhancement of regional regulation on digital finance to optimize flexibility and security.

In collaboration with FAO, a Digital Readiness Assessment for Agriculture to assess the digital agriculture environment in Africa was conducted in 2020. Focusing on country and sub-regional dynamics, the study highlights the state of infrastructure, policy and regulation, human resource capital, digital penetration, and innovation capacities. It also maps out digital services available in the countries, the state of the digital ecosystem, investment opportunities and recommendations to transform agriculture through digitalization.

The [Regional Innovation Forum for Africa (RIF-AFR)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Africa/Pages/Regional-Innovation-Forum-for-AFR--.aspx) under the theme ‘Mainstreaming competitive digital innovation ecosystems in the age of COVID-19’ was organized online on 29 October 2020.

Following the regional workshops that were conducted in Lesotho (2018) and in Benin (2019), a digital health curriculum and a case study in Lesotho on digital health system requirements and architecture were prepared in 2020. Digital health training material and a related online course were also developed in December 2020

[GSR-20 Regional Regulatory Roundtable Discussion for Africa and Arab Regions](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/GSR/2020/Pages/Competition-Policy-Analysis-in-Digital-Environment-for-Arab-Africa.aspx) webinar was organized on 20 August 2020 within the framework of GSR-20. It aimed at engaging representatives of the National Regulatory Authorities from Africa and Arab countries, as well as other stakeholders to advance discussions on regulation for digital transformation in the post-COVID-19 era. Special focus was dedicated to the role of National Regulatory Authorities in shaping an enabling environment for the development of resilient and secure digital connectivity for all.

ITU assisted Malawi, through the Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority and the Environmental Affairs Department, in the development of a national policy on the management of e-waste. In October 2020, 17 ministries and departments and four local authorities were consulted online.

Baseline assessments to facilitate digital financial inclusion and digital government for Ethiopia were prepared in 2020. The assessments highlight the need for enhanced digital connectivity, capacity development and policy strengthening as a fundamental element to digital transformation. Reliable and robust digital connectivity is crucial as other digital products and services are dependent on seamless and equitable access to internet for their operation.

Under the digital innovation ecosystems development work streamDigital innovation profiles were prepared for Mali and Niger at the end of 2020.

The report on Regional Good Practices Accelerating Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Digital Innovation was developed in late 2020 and will be shared in 2021.

ITU technically assisted the Kingdom of Eswatini with Commercial unbundling of the Eswatini Posts and Telecommunications Corporation in December 2020.

Assistance was extended to Lesotho, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Malawi in the form of trainings and designing of ICT statistics and household survey tools and instruments throughout the period 2018-2020.

Giga is a partnership between ITU and UNICEF to connect every young person in the world to information, opportunity, and choice, and using connecting schools as a starting point to reach out to connect the entire communities they serve. The project is under implementation in Giga accelerate countries: Kenya, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Zimbabwe. Several more countries in the region have already advanced on the mapping of schools and their connectivity, in addition to other work.

Virtual C&I training for Africa was held 16-27 November 2020 that included specifications for building diffrent types of laboratories. Participants acquired knowledge on specifying required equipment for different types of laboratories, among other things. Participants included 14 countries with 25 participants.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the [2020 ITU Regional Economic Dialogue (RED) for Africa](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regulatory-Market/Pages/Events2020/RED-AFR-2020.aspx) on affordable and meaningful connectivity, addressed the economic impact and recovery strategies to build back better, business models and peering arrangements as well as a reviewed the [Guidelines on Cost Modelling](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-SG01.RGQ-C-0324/).

Kenya Communication Authority was technically assisted with establishment of Conformity and interoperability Framework in December 2020.

[ITU CyberDrill 2020: Africa Regional Dialogue](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/CyberDrill-2020-Africa-Regional-Dialogue.aspx) was held online on 23 September 2020.

To raise awareness of the 2020 ITU Child Online Protection (COP) Guidelines, the Regional Africa launch was held together with a four-day long online training in English and French on the Guidelines in October 2020. The workshop was addressed to representatives of ministries, regulators, telecom operators, universities and general education institutions, telecommunication equipment manufacturers, research and design institutes, software developers and other interested stakeholders of the ITU Member States, Sector Members and Associates from Africa Region.

ITU completed CIRT implementation and a draft cybersecurity strategy for Liberia in December 2020.

A Public Key Infrastructure framework was developed for Malawi in December 2020.

A national cyber drill was held for the Kingdom of Eswatini on 15 December 2020.

Guidance was extended to the South African government on their work towards developing a national data policy including a review of the cloud, privacy and cyber-security draft policy. A workshop for key policy bodies was held on 29-30 January 2020.

The global Digital Transformation Centre (DTC) initiative to which this project contributes aims to create a global network of centers whose main purpose is to develop digital skills mainly at basic and intermediate level for citizens. DTCs were established in Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Rwanda and Zambia.

The Smart Zambia Institute (SZI), an ITU Digital Transformation Centre based in the Republic of Zambia, celebrated the completion of the training of 72 master trainers in digital skills at basic and intermediate level. The trainings were delivered by Cisco under the auspices of the ITU Digital Transformation Centres Initiative and conducted online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC) and the ITU Digital Transformation Centre (DTC) in Ghana has launched its first DTC digital skills train-the-trainer programme since the organization joined the DTC initiative. The training, which took place at the Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in Accra, kicked off with the training of 23 master trainers.

In November 2020, ITU signed a partnership agreement with the Government of Norway in support of the DTC initiative. The support from Norway will boost digital skills in the countries hosting a DTC, in particular Ghana where 14 000 citizens will be trained under this new project.

In 2020, a series of 17 trainings delivered by the Africa region network of ITU Centres of Excellence (CoE) built capacity of more than 238 participants in field of broadband, Internet governance, cybersecurity and next generation networks.

To address digital skills gaps, the ITU Digital Skills Assessment Guidebook was launched to stakeholders in Africa on 14 October 2020.

Through cooperation between the ITU and ITSO, the online basic course program “Satellite Communications and Radio Regulations Procedures” was developed and put in place with the primary objective of raising awareness amongst individuals, organizations and institutions on policies, regulations, licensing frameworks and technical aspects associated with the provision of satellite communications services. This online training was delivered to countries in Africa on 1 October-15 November 2020 and was attended by 50 participants from African countries.

The ITU course on ‘Train-the-Trainers on designing and delivering e-learning for ITU Africa Centres of Excellence’ was delivered online on the ITU Academy platform on 10-14 September 2020.

A national digitals skills implementation program has been developed for South Africa under the said Digital Skills development programme/initiative following the proclamation of a national strategy in August 2020. Five consultative workshops were held in the period from November and December 2020 on the implementation frames, national concept, and project documents.

To engage members in a discussion on steps needed to bridge the digital divide using universal service funds, USO and innovative financing mechanism, a webinar on USO 2.0 was organized in December 2020.

To build capacity on digital inclusion for all in Africa, a bilingual English/French online training was developed and delivered through ITU Academy in December 2020.

As a joint initiative between ITU and UNECA to celebrate UN@75, a hybrid continental African Girls Can Code inspired coding camp was held over two weeks and an e-Learning sub site of the AGCCI online platform was launched in December 2020.

The Spectrum Management Training Programme was also delivered online to countries in Africa on 1 October-15 November 2020 and was attended by 50 participants. The same training is planned for July-August 2021.

Five virtual workshops on spectrum were achieved, a global meeting with focal points, meetings of the Technical Committee and the Global Steering Committee were successfully organized.

Virtual masterclass on spectrum and cross-border frequency coordination for SADC Member States was held on 14-15 December 2020 with an aim to contribute to spectrum coordination mechanisms and framing of the SADC roadmap for IMT-2020.

1. **Americas region**

In 2020, BDT implemented project activities under 8 technical cooperation projects for an amount of 247,183 USD in the Americas region, in collaboration with Member States. In addition, activities under 21 actions of the BDT Operational Plan were implemented for a total amount of 316,000 CHF.

Because of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, a virtual event of Accessible Americas was held from 25 to 27 November 2020. The event reiterated that Accessible Americas is a regional knowledge development platform in ICT accessibility aiming to support ITU Members and regional stakeholders in their implementation efforts by sharing good practices and challenges, leveraging their capacity in the ICT accessibility topic, offering networking and partnership opportunities to facilitate the development of digitally inclusive societies.

In the framework of the Training program for Innovative Communication Tools for the Strengthening of Indigenous Communities, with focus on how to develop, manage and operate a network - 2020 Edition, 5 modules were delivered:

1. Module 1: Development of web pages with content of interest for indigenous communities, 159 registered participants (Sep 28 – Oct 1);
2. Module 2: Emergency Information Systems, 159 registered participants (Oct 12 – 25);
3. Module 3: Web tools for network development, 159 registered participants (Oct 26 – Nov 8);
4. Module 4: Development of an indigenous radio network, 159 registered participants (Nov 9 – 22); and
5. Module 5: Use of digital content on the indigenous radio network, 158 registered participants (Nov 23 – Dec 6).

In the framework of the Training Program for Promoters and Technical Promoters in Indigenous Communities in Telecommunications and Broadcasting 2020-2021, 1 course was delivered:

Community communication and technologies, 70 participants registered (Oct 19 to Nov 22).

Two studies on 5G were developed for Peru and Ecuador.

Two virtual editions of Americas Girls Can Code were carried out in 2020:

* AGCC Brazil: August 24 – 28 at [www.agccbrasil.org](http://www.agccbrasil.org); and
* AGCC LATAM: September 2 – 4 at [www.agcclatam.org](http://www.agcclatam.org).

AGCCs were organized in partnership with ITU Digital Transformation Centres from the Americas region (CTC and IFB) and counted on 7,195 registered participants from 23 countries. A total of 25 partners from both public and private sector joined ITU to support AGCC. The events were comprised by 22 workshops, 20 Live streaming with 125,000 views.

* A report on “Regional Good Practices. Accelerating innovation, entrepreneurship and digital transformation” was issued, as well, a Regional Innovation Forum on Innovation for the Americas was organized in the framework of the ITU Global Innovation Forum.enhancement of regional regulation on digital finance to optimize flexibility and security.
* In collaboration with FAO, a Digital Readiness Assessment for Agriculture to assess the digital agriculture environment in Africa was conducted in 2020. Focusing on country and sub-regional dynamics, the study highlights the state of infrastructure, policy and regulation, human resource capital, digital penetration and innovation capacities. It also maps out digital services available in the countries, the state of the digital ecosystem, investment opportunities and recommendations to transform agriculture through digitalization.
* The [Regional Innovation Forum for Africa (RIF-AFR)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Africa/Pages/Regional-Innovation-Forum-for-AFR--.aspx) under the theme ‘Mainstreaming competitive digital innovation ecosystems in the age of COVID-19’ was organized online on 29 October 2020.

A tailored e-learning module was developed during 2020 that will allow ITU to provide technical assistance in the development of WEEE policy. The e-learning provides key concepts of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) management, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policy development, information about stakeholder roles and responsibilities, and suggested definitions.

1. **Arab States region**

In 2020, BDT implemented project activities under 10 technical cooperation projects in the Arab States region for 117,422 USD, in collaboration with Member States. In addition, activities on 24 actions were implemented for an amount of 245,000 CHF.

Partnerships continued for the implementation of projects in the fields of innovation and entrepreneurship, environment, and digital inclusion.

1. **Asia and the Pacific region**

In 2020, BDT implemented project activities under 11 technical cooperation projects for a total amount of 548,085 USD in the Asia and the Pacific region, in collaboration with Member States and partners. The projects were funded by Department of Communications and the Arts (Australia), National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (Thailand), Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning (Republic of Korea), Estonia, and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (ITSO). In addition, activities on 21 actions were implemented for an amount of 364,000 CHF.

Progress was made in the development of digital government services in Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, and Vanuatu and digital agriculture services in Mongolia. Together with UNICEF and UNESCO ITU conducted a study to map the digital divide in Thailand. In the areas of network, spectrum management and infrastructure, ITU supported Afghanistan, Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Mongolia, Vanuatu and Samoa. USO 2.0 approach framework, developed in cooperation with ITU, was endorsed by ASEAN Ministers and is expected to accelerate the development of the digital economy particularly for LDCs within this region through better connectivity and access.

More than 1,100 participants developed digital skills through trainings and workshops. Three digital transformation centres in the region started their mission to build digital skills and literacy at national level and have trained more than 36,000 participants. National cybersecurity strategy frameworks were strengthened in Bhutan, Kiribati, and Solomon Islands, and CIRT frameworks through specialized country assistance in Tonga, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, and Vanuatu. Samoa, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, and Solomon Islands were assisted in developing National Emergency Telecommunication Plans through a project supported by DITRDC.

Several Pacific Islands were helped to develop their satellite communications capacity and emergency communications solutions. Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, PNG, Vanuatu, Tonga, and Tuvalu started connecting through Ku band Satellite connectivity equipment and the associated training through a project supported by ITU, ITSO, Intelsat, and Kacific.

1. **CIS region**

Activities on 15 actions were implemented for an amount of 250,000 CHF.

Further progress was made on project implementation and fundraising. Comparison of the number and value of projects in the CIS region between 2019 (91,400 CHF) and in 2020 (393,100 CHF) demonstrates a 300% increase in project value in 2020 over 2019. In fact, the Regional Office’s performance in project value in 2020 is the second highest seen from the office in 10 years.

Other areas in which the region has improved on performance in 2020 include engagement and cooperation with the UN System for the benefit of countries, direct assistance, and inclusion in large scale global projects. In 2020 the Regional Office has been involved in UN engagements for Belarus and Kazakhstan at the level of the UN Sustainable Development Coordination Framework, as well as working in close cooperation with UNESCAP on digital resilience projects, and the World Bank on cybersecurity initiatives.

The office also doubled the volume of direct assistance to countries in the region, with four (4) countries benefitting in 2020, up from two (2) in 2019. Finally, countries in the region have also been selected for involvement in the ITU/UNICEF GIGA project, and Connect2Recover which will deliver further benefits and advance the aims of the Regional Initiatives.

1. **Europe region**

In 2020, BDT implemented project activities under 4 technical cooperation projects for a total amount of 291,941 USD in the Europe region, in collaboration with Member States. In addition, activities on 38 actions were implemented for an amount of 285,000 CHF.

Direct assistance to countries included the development of the National Frequency Plan in Albania, Review of National Frequency Plan for Moldova, Digital Innovation Profile in Georgia, Strategic Review of Child Online Protection in Moldova, and National Assessment of Digital Accessibility in Serbia. In addition, roll out of the Child Online Protection at the national level has been launched in over ten countries, thanks to which COP Guidelines are available in 10 countries in Europe region.

Moreover, several agreements with the regulatory authorities have been signed, with the aim of strengthening the process of collection of data for the ITU Terrestrial Transmission Maps. In the context established in 2019 consortium of partners (including ITU, the World Bank and the European Investment Bank) to address potential needs of countries in the field of broadband mapping systems, a strategic mapping of the national approaches for mapping infrastructure and services was carried out in 2020. In addition, discussions have been held with a series of relevant European stakeholders aiming at the development of the Guidelines on the National Mapping Systems for Infrastructure and Services.

Regional assessments on 5G Implementation in non-EU countries has been carried out providing an overview of dynamics in implementation, innovation, national strategies, and policies including spectrum related issues was carried out. As a result, further investigation on EMF has been launched engaging European administration.

Moreover, a regional assessment on ICT accessibility in the Europe region was carried out as an immediate response to the Member States commitment to establish enabling environments ensuring accessible telecommunications/ICTs for persons with disabilities by 2023 (see ITU Target 2.9)

A new partnership between ITU, Estonia (MFA Estonia), Germany (BMZ) and DIAL was developed with the aim of accelerating digital transformation and digitalization of government services, particularly in low-resource settings. The partnership will establish a framework for digital cooperation among governments to assist countries in implementing scalable digital services and applications in a cost efficient, accelerated, and integrated manner. As one of the building blocks a project between ITU and Estonia of 400,000 EUR has been signed and is under implementation.

Strategic partnerships were strengthened, including with the European Commission, resulting in scaling up the Accessible Europe platform and the establishment of the mHealth Hub for Europe, an ITU-WHO-EC project. Reinforced collaboration with BEREC (Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications), EaPeReg (Eastern Partnership Electronic Communications Regulators Network) and RCC (Regional Cooperation Council for Western Balkans) was continued. In addition, ITU Office for Europe joined UN Brussels and co-leads Task Force on Digitalization for Sustainable Development with the aim of strengthening cooperation with the relevant EU institutions.

Special efforts were dedicated to engagement of ITU Office for Europe in the UN Sustainable Development System, that resulted in engagement with UN Country Teams in nine countries as well as establishing and operationalization of the UN Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Asia, being the mechanism for coordination and support to the UN Country Teams.

ANNEX 2

Contribution to other Sectors and the General Secretariat

Regional and area offices contributed to the implementation of ITU strategic plan and ITU-R, ITU-T, and the General Secretariat operational plans as follows:

1. **ITU-R**

Conference calls and face-to-face meetings were organized between the regional and area offices and the BR senior management, covering each time overviews, updates, and briefings of activities run in the various regions.

With the objective of informing and assisting the ITU membership on radiocommunication-related matters, in particular developing countries, BDT and BR continued to organize spectrum-related workshops, seminars, meetings, and capacity-building activities, with the support of the regional offices and in cooperation with the relevant international organizations and national authorities. During 2020, the following events were organized in that direction, among others:

* ITU ITSO Satellite training 2020, Colombia;
* ITU Regional Radiocommunication Seminar 2020 for AMS, 13-24 July;
* [**ITU ASP CoE F2F training course on Spectrum Management and IMT-2020 Radio Technology Application**](http://itu.int/go/SRMC_Harbin)**, 17-21 June 2019, Harbin, China;**
* Seminar for Europe and CIS on Spectrum Management and Broadcasting, 1-2 July 2020, online; and
* ITU Regional Forum for Europe: 5G Strategies, Policies and Implementation, 22-23 October 2020.

The above events fostered human capacity building on the use of the radio-frequency spectrum and the satellite orbits, as well as the application of the provisions of the ITU Radio Regulations.

In addition, direct assistance was provided (upon demand) to several countries, including Albania, Central African Republic, Colombia, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Gambia, Liberia, Moldova, and Uganda, to support their national spectrum management activities, long-term frequency management for mobile broadband, as well as transition to digital broadcasting and the allocation of the digital dividend.

Additionally in 2020, the joint ITU-European Union (EU)-African Union (AU) programme Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA) continued its activity enhancing digitalization by addressing various dimensions of broadband demand and supply in Africa and building the capacities of AU Member States in the Internet Governance space. In the 42-month programme, ITU is responsible for the EUR 5.5 million component aimed at “Increasing wireless broadband penetration through improved and harmonized spectrum utilization and regulations”. BR professionals actively participate in PRIDA capacity building activities and collaborate in the finalization of PRIDA baselines studies and reports. More than 500 professionals in Africa were trained in 2020 under PRIDA activities.

Furthermore, 18 Papers on 5G implementation in non-EU countries of the Europe Region were elaborated in cooperation with the Member States. ITU Regional Assessment for Europe on EMF Limit Levels and Risk Communication Challenges was launched in Q4/2020 engaging all Member States.

1. **ITU-T**

At the initiative of the TSB Director, conference calls and face-to-face meetings were organized on a regular basis between the regional and areas offices and the TSB senior management, covering each time overviews, updates, and briefings of activities organized by each TSB department in the various regions. These coordination activities, as well as the establishment of a TSB Focal Point for the Regions, were conducted keeping in mind the goal of improving coordination and increasing the efficiency of the overall operations, events, and activities in the Standardization Sector in each of the Regions. The use of this coordination mechanism is a tool that has led to a significant improvement in the overall coordination with regional and areas offices in terms of events and activities, as well as enhancing the knowledge of the ITU-T standardization activities in each region.

A short overview of the activities run by the Regional Offices is presented below for each Region.

#### Africa

2.1 Contribution and coordination of Regional Offices in ITU-T events - Africa

* + 1. **ITU-T events or joint events held in the Africa Region**

In 2020, the Regional Office for Africa participated in and contributed to the organization of the following regional events organized by ITU-T/TSB:

* ITU-T SG13 events held in Abuja, Nigeria: A workshop on Standardization of fiber networks towards a better-connected Africa (3 – 4 February), followed by a regular meeting of the African group to SG13 (5 – 6 February);
* The ITU-T SG12 RG-AFR activities held in Ndjamena, Chad: A workshop was delivered on “Quality of Service” (2 – 3 March) and the regular meeting of the African Group of SG12 was hosted (4 – 5 March); and
* The Africa Telecommunication Union (ATU) WTSA-20 Preparatory Meeting and the OTT forum (27 – 30 July) continued work towards the African Common Proposals for WTSA-20.

**2.1.2** **Specific collaboration - Regional Office for Africa and TSB**

TSB assisted the Regional Office in identifying the best experts when need arose, in order to provide technical assistance to member states in areas of TSB competence. The Regional Africa Office consulted countries and encouraged them to propose nominations for relevant and vacant positions in TSAG and Study Groups. Additionally, the Regional Office participated in regular consultative meetings with the TSB Director, as well as the Interregional meeting for preparation of WTSA-20.

#### Americas

* 1. Contribution and coordination of Regional Offices in ITU-T events - Americas

The ITU Regional Office for the Americas contributed to the following events related to ITU-T in 2020:

* Participation in CITEL Meetings such as CCPI; and
* The National Financial Inclusion Global Initiative (FIGI) Security Clinic for Mexico (24-26 November).

#### Asia and the Pacific

2.3 Contribution and coordination of Regional Offices in ITU-T events – Asia and the Pacific

2.3.1 ITU-T events or joint events held in the Asia and the Pacific Region

In 2020, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific participated in and contributed to the organization of the following regional events related to ITU-T/TSB:

1. The Regional Office attended the Pacific Area Standards Congress (PASC) Web Meeting Session with ISO, IEC and ITU-T on 20 May 2020;
2. Presentation by the Regional Office on behalf of TSB in the “Virtual Training related to Participating in International Standardisation” organized by Standards Australia on 27 May 2020;
3. TSB and the Regional Office delivered several presentations in the ASEAN workshop on Smart Cities Ecosystem 23-24 June; and
4. TSB and the regional office participated in several APT meetings related to the preparation of WTSA-20.

2.3.2 Other activities of the ITU Regional Office for the Asia and the Pacific related to ITU-T

Additional training activities in 2020 included the following activities by the ITU Centre of Excellence for Asian and the Pacific through the ITU Academy:

* Conformity & Interoperability relating to Smart City (6-24 April);
* Digital Transformation: Enhancing IoT-Driven Accessibility (11-17 May);
* IoT Sensors and Network for Disaster Communication (20-31 July);
* ICT applications relating to smart cities and communities (17-30 August);
* Advanced Broadband Network QoS and Applications (24 August- 4 September);
* IoT Advanced Applications - Smart City and Industry 4.0 (14-25 September);
* Building IoT Solutions for Smart Sustainable Cities (28 September to 9 October);
* Developing Internet of things Ecosystem held on ITU Academy (2-13 November);
* Government Innovation based on Emerging Technology (4-29 November); and
* Government and Smart Cities for Resilience held on ITU Academy (30 November to 18 December).

#### Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

2.4 Contribution and coordination of Regional Offices in ITU-T events – CIS

**2.4.1 ITU-T events or joint events held in the CIS Region**

During the January – August 2020 timeframe the Regional Office for the CIS Region participated and contributed to the organization of the following regional events organized by ITU-T/TSB:

* Meetings of the ITU-T SG3RG-EECAT and ITU-T SG20RG-EECAT, 4-5 March 2020, Minsk (Belarus).

**2.4.2 Other activities of the ITU Regional Office for the CIS related to ITU-T**

Experts from TSB and ITU-T Study Groups participated in the following activities of the ITU Regional Office for the CIS Region:

* ITU Forum "Smart sustainable cities: from concept to implementation" 3-5 March 2020, Minsk (Belarus); and
* Project "International Research, Development and Testing Centre for new equipment, technologies, and services" (jointly with Rostelecom, ITU-T Sector Member).

Also, within the framework of the Regional Initiative CIS5 ITU-T experts have contributed to development of standards on future networks and applications. The ITU Regional Office together with ITU-T Study Groups experts has developed technical reports on four areas: 1) building regional test laboratories; 2) development of communication networks for the period up to 2030; 3) the quality of networks in pandemic; and 4) testing of augmented reality applications and equipment.

**2.4.3 Specific collaboration – Regional Office for the CIS and TSB**

The ITU Regional Office for the CIS Region has been closely working with the TSB and U4SSC secretariat to explore potential opportunities for case studies and pilot projects in the region and to contribute to the implementation of the Regional Initiative CIS3 “Development and regulation of infocommunication infrastructure to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and resilient”.

Aiming to bridge the standardization gap, Belarus was provided with technical assistance in the unification of the top-level information exchange of data and the development of a standard regulating the format of data and the exchange of information of smart city systems. The ITU Regional Office for the CIS Region is facilitating engagement of countries in the ITU-T AI for Good and Smart Incubator programmes.

#### Europe

2.5 Contribution and coordination of Regional Offices in ITU-T events – Europe

ITU Office for Europe is closely working with the TSB on several issues, promoting activities carried out by the Sector. The Office facilitated contributions from and engagement of national or regional European organizations in the activities of ITU-T. The Office also followed the work of the Project Team on ITU-T of the CEPT.

Close coordination with TSB ensured that all activities of ITU Office for Europe have cross-sectoral character, whenever relevant. In addition, a special standardisation session was organized during 5G Techritory, as well as ITU Regional Forum for Europe on 5G Strategies, Policies, and Implementation. TSB work was highlighted during the United National Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for Europe and Central Asia. Regional contest on digital innovative solutions for Accessible Europe benefited from the expert support of TSB. The ITU Regional Development Forum for Europe benefited from the contribution by the European vice-chair of ITU-T Study Groups and vice-chair of TSAG.

1. **General Secretariat**

With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which acknowledges the important role of ICTs as a critical enabler for advancing the globally agreed sustainable development goals (SDGs), cooperation between ITU regional and area offices with relevant regional and other international organizations dealing with socio-economic development and financing for development matters has continued to grow.

Levering ITU membership in the UN development system, and as a financial contributor to the UN Resident Coordinator system, the ITU, through its Regional and Area offices, strengthened its efforts in engaging in the national and regional UN System. ITU is an active partner in the enhanced collaboration with the UN Regional Coordinators (RCs), UN Country Teams (UNCTs) and UN RC system in general. ITU offered to engage in phases, starting with 22 pilot countries, aligned with ITU’s Regional Presence. The interaction with the RCs and UNCTs helps ensure ITU, through its regional and area offices, remains fully responsive to requests from those countries, as generated through the cooperation framework.

ITU also participates also in the process of implementation of the UNSG Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, as a co-champion on the Global Connectivity and Capacity Building Working Groups. ITU is also involved as a participant in the Digital Inclusion Working Group.  The ITU teams from regional offices, HQ and ITU Liaison office are involved in the work of the UNSG Roadmap Response Team (Digital Cooperation RRT) led by the UN Development Coordination Office. This cooperation aims to support of 2021 Cooperation Framework implementation countries.

Regular coordination calls between ITU Liaison Office in New York and the ITU Regional and Area Offices have been held and facilitated exchange of information as well as coherence of actions undertaken at the regional and national level. Regional Offices have been contributing to the process of ongoing UN Development System reform, drawing attention to the opportunities and challenges the non-resident specialized agencies may face under the new framework.

Continued efforts have been dedicated to draw attention to the importance of the ITUs work at the national and regional levels, including the work on the ITU Regional Initiatives. Moreover, Regional and Area Offices have been continuing advocacy for strengthening of ICT component in the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

Council-16 resolved to use the WSIS framework as the foundation through which ITU helps to achieve the 2030 Agenda, within ITU’s mandate and within the allocated resources in the financial plan and biennial budget, noting the WSIS-SDG Matrix developed by UN Agencies.

With the aim of strengthening the implementation of the WSIS Outcomes at the regional level, ITU regional and area offices have continued to coordinate and collaborate at the regional level with the UN regional economic commissions and UN Regional Development Group, as well as all UN agencies (in particular those acting as facilitator for WSIS Action Lines) and other relevant regional organizations, especially in the field of telecommunication/ICT, with the aim of aligning WSIS and SDG processes and their implementation as requested by UNGA Resolution 70/125, developing partnerships for implementation of inter-agency and multistakeholder projects, advancing implementation of WSIS Action Lines and advancing achievement of SDGs and strengthening regional input to the WSIS Forum, WSIS Prizes and WSIS Stocktaking. Following TDAG advice, WSIS and SDG have been incorporated in the agendas of the ITU Regional Development Forums that serve as the mechanism for coordination on the implementation of the ITU Regional Initiatives and priorities.

ANNEX 3

Support activities towards empowering regional and area offices

A number of activities were scaled up in 2020 to further support and empower the regional and area offices. Regular town hall meetings are held with the regional staff as well as HQ to ensure all staff are briefed and information is widely shared.

Weekly activity reports continue to gather inputs of HQ and all field offices and share amongst the staff. Programme HQ Focal Points also continued regular consultations with field staff on OP and project implementation.

An additional senior management retreat was held in 4th quarter of 2020 for senior staff in HQ, regional and area offices.

A project management certification programme was implemented for a number of regional colleagues. By the end of 2020, 72 BDT staff completed the certification, including 33 staff from regional and area offices.

The communication for development training took place in Brasilia, Brazil, for all ITU staff in the region. The objective was to continue in the other regions, but plans changed due to COVID. Tailored trainings on social media, blog writing and mobile journalism are held during the year, in cooperation with corporate communication.

A call for change champions was launched in 2019, with ten initial staff from HQ and the field undertook a UN certified change management programme. These 10 colleagues were the first “Change Champions” of the Bureau, 5 from the field and 5 from HQ. In 2020 two additional cohorts of “Change Champions” expanded the network to 33 more staff (24 HQ and 9 field). These colleagues are helping drive forward a change agenda and help shape a Bureau that is fit for purpose.

An intensive results-based management (RBM) exercise was scaled up in 2020. RBM training was provided across all BDT units and regions in 2020. A Delegation of Authority framework was launched in June 2020 to improve coordination efficiency between Headquarters and regional offices. A quarterly management review process was also launched to routinely evaluate resources, risk assessments and key performance indicators (KPIs).

Electronic tools continue to be improved for planning, monitoring, and sharing of information and activities. BDT launched a series of dashboards to visualize data from multiple systems, increasing real-time monitoring capacity of actionable information.

All regional colleagues are now equipped with the ‘Security Communications And Analysis Network’ (SCAAN) app. SCAAN is a digital platform and mobile application network designed to provide more efficient communications and assistance to field staff especially during a crisis.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **Annex 4** |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | **Summary of the 2020 Regional and Area offices expenditure** |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |















**ANNEX 5**

Implementation level = Actual expenditure figures after 2020 accounting closure

**ANNEX 6**



**ANNEX 7**

**2020 Fellowships awarded and recruited experts**

In line with the relevant provisions of Resolution 213 (Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on measures to improve, promote and strengthen ITU fellowships, a number of fellowships were awarded by ITU-T and ITU-D per region, per country and per gender.

Ordinarily, approximately 600 fellowships are awarded each year averaging USD 900,000 and implemented using ITU regular budget which enables eligible Member States to participate in ITU activities.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, since mid-March 2020 international travel and the activities of ITU have been severely impacted. All ITU meetings, conferences and events have gone virtual and as a result the awarding of fellowships halted in mid-March 2020. Work is being done to consider and propose innovative ways to repurpose fellowships to assist participants for eligible countries to attend and participate in virtual meetings.

**From 1 January to mid-March 2020,** 53 fellowships had been awarded for seven activities, four of which were held at ITU headquarters and two in the Africa region, as shown in Table 1.



|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **ANNEX 8** |  |  |
| Summary of staffing level by Regional and Area Offices  |



|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **ANNEX 9** |
| Breakdown of staffing level by Regional and Area offices |
|  |



\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Expenditure figures in annexes have been updated in line with the 2020 accounting closure. Staffing figures are as of end 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)