Council Working Group for
Strategic and Financial Plans 2024-2027
First meeting – Virtual, 29-30 September 2021

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FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE ITU 2020-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

Summary

This document presents findings and lessons learnt from the implementation of the ITU 2020-2023 strategic plan to be considered for the development of the ITU strategic and financial plans for 2024-2027.

Action required

The CWG-SFP is invited **to note and consider** this document for the development of the ITU strategic framework for 2024-2027.

References

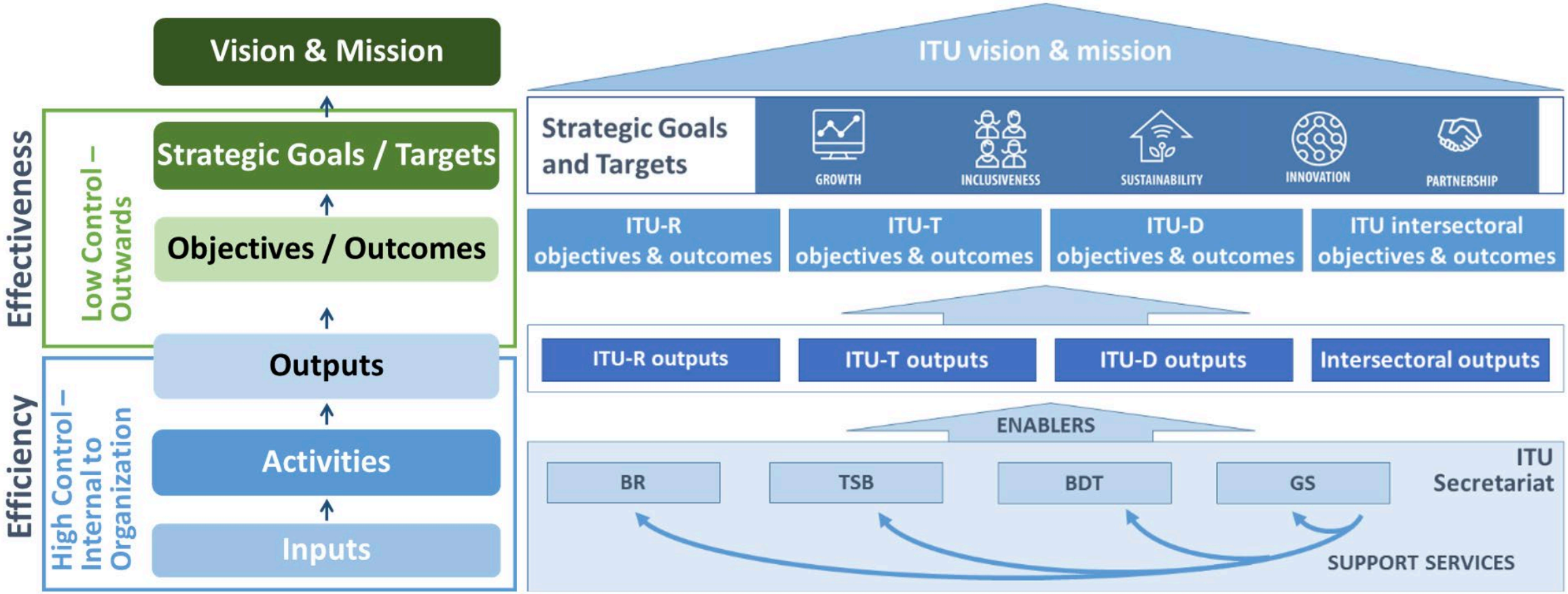
Documents PP Res.71 (Rev. Dubai, 2018), PP Res.200 (Rev. Dubai, 2018), C21/35, ITU Connect 2030 Agenda

Findings and lessons learnt from the ITU 2020-2023 Strategic Plan

Reporting on targets

1st meeting of the CWG-SFP
29-30 September 2021

Structure of the Strategic Plan 2020-2023:



Progress towards the Strategic Goals and Targets 2020-2023

- Progress towards the achievement of the Targets is presented in the Connect 2030 interactive site (see **here**)

- Detailed presentation of the results on the implementation of the SP is provided in the "Report on the implementation of the strategic plan and activities of the Union, April 2019 – April 2021", **Highlights**, **Full report**

(Reference: The "ITU Strategic Plan 2020-2023", PP Resolution 71 (Rev Dubai, 2018) (**here**))

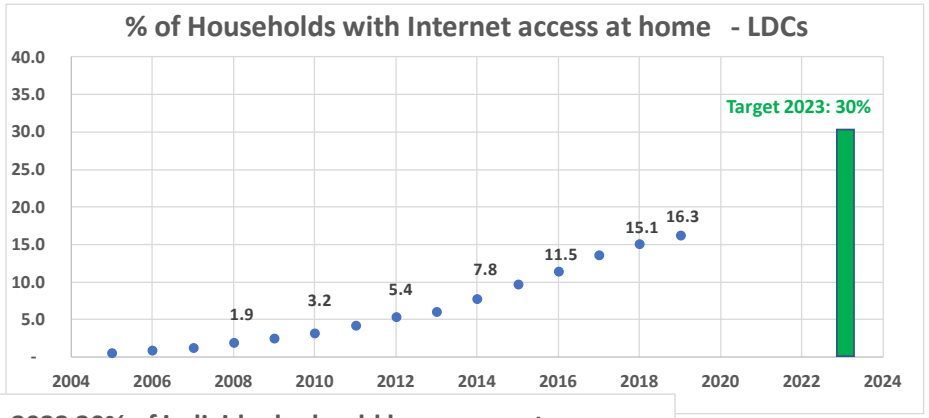
Analysis of progress towards key targets

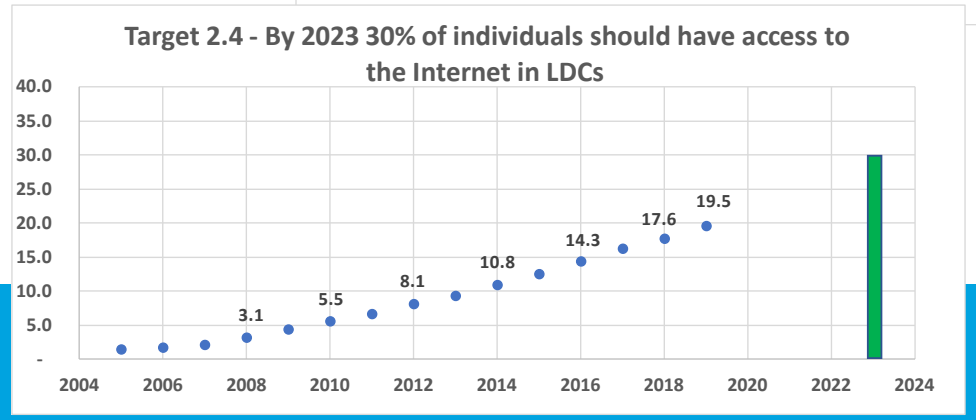
- # Internet usage (households and individuals)

Targets 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2,3 and 2.4

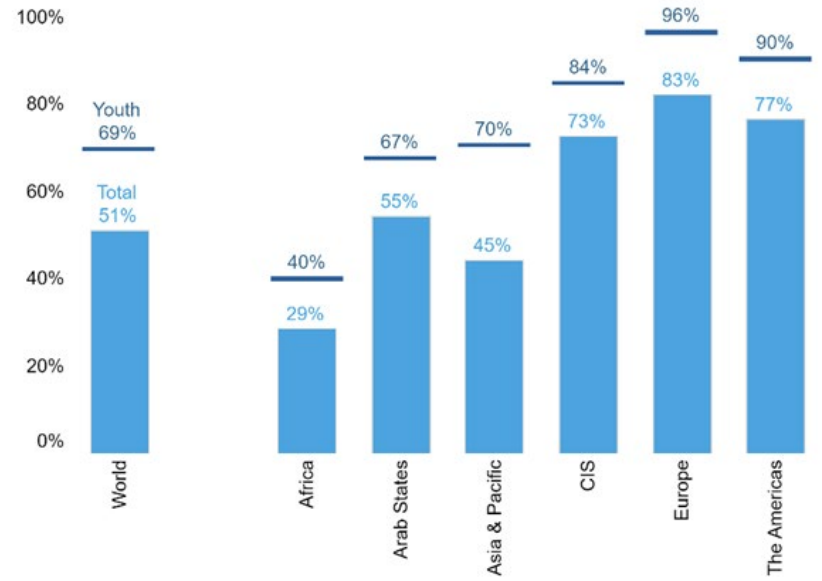
- Internet usage continues to grow: An estimated 4.1 billion people were using the Internet regularly in 2019, reflecting a 5.3 per cent increase in 2018. The global penetration rate increased from nearly 17 per cent in 2005 to over 53 per cent in 2019. Between 2005 and 2019, the number of Internet users grew on average by 10 per cent every year.
- In recent years, though, global growth rates are stabilizing, as some parts of the world are reaching saturation levels. Early indications are that COVID has boosted the Internet usage growth rate significantly in unconnected regions.

Efforts need to be ramped up/accelerated for the Internet penetration in LDCs to achieve the target





% of individuals using the Internet, 2019

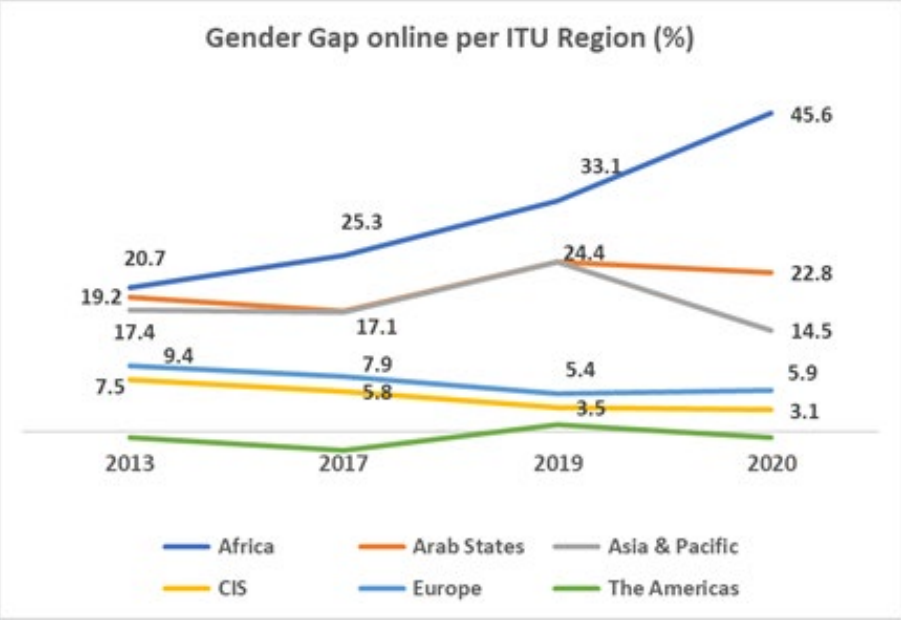


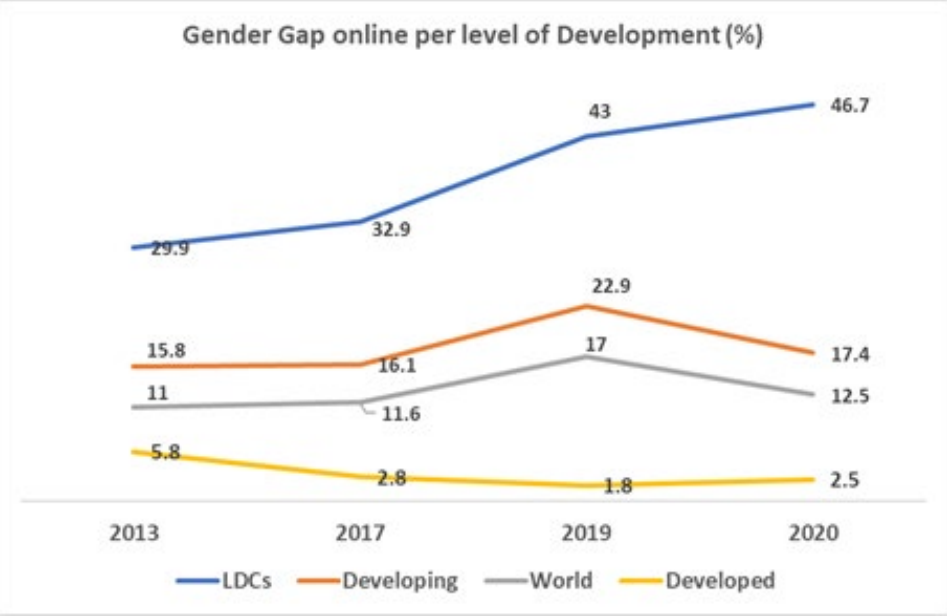
- # The digital gender gap is growing fast in developing countries

Target 2.7

- In all regions of the world, more men than women are using the Internet. The gap is small in developed countries and large in developing countries, especially LDCs. Between 2013 and 2019, the gender gap hovered around zero in the Americas and shrank in the CIS countries and Europe. However, in Africa, the gender gap has been growing steadily while in the Arab States and Asia Pacific it has decreased from 2019-2020 (after having significantly increased from 2017 to 2019). The global gender gap has increased owing to the rapid growth in the number of male Internet users in LDCs.
- Target has a 2nd component: **mobile ownership per gender**. More data required (only measured in 2019: For the 59 countries for which data are available, there is a 6.6 percentage point difference between man and women owning a mobile phone).

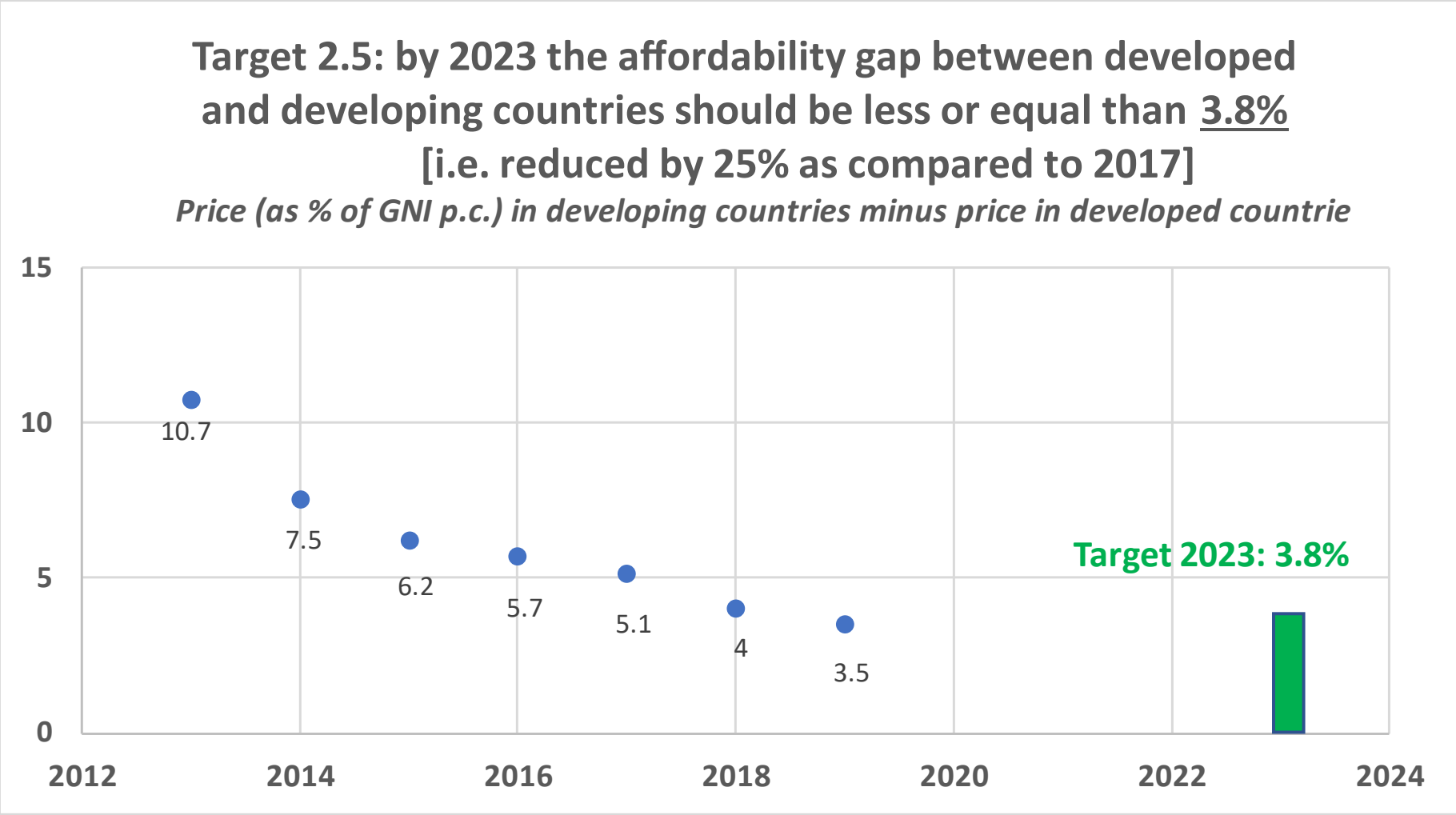
Gender gap =
[% male - % female] / (% male)





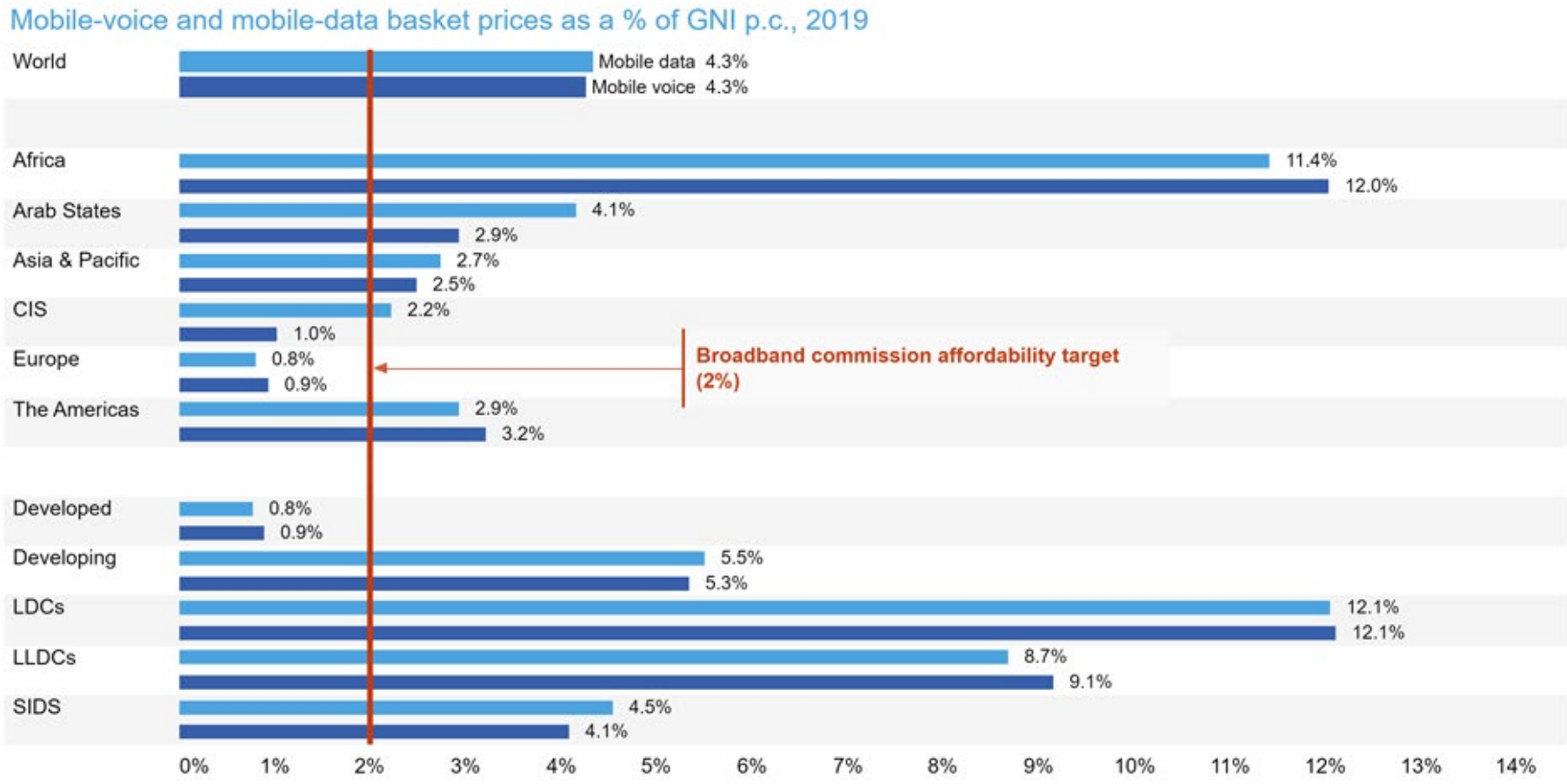
- **Affordability is steadily improving.** Targets 1.3, 2.5 and 2.6

❑ Affordability target at World level, as well as the affordability gap between developed and developing world show overall good progress..



- **Affordability is steadily improving.** Targets 1.3, 2.5 and 2.6

❑ However, broadband connectivity is still expensive in LDCs: In 2019, in 61 countries, a fixed-broadband subscription including 5 GB of data costs less than 2 per cent of gross national income (GNI) per capita. A mobile broadband subscription with a 1.5 GB data package costs less than 2 per cent of GNI per capita in 89 countries, including four LDCs. Although considerable progress has been made in recent years, affordability remains a challenge in many countries, especially LDCs.



- # Challenges in the ICT sector are increasing

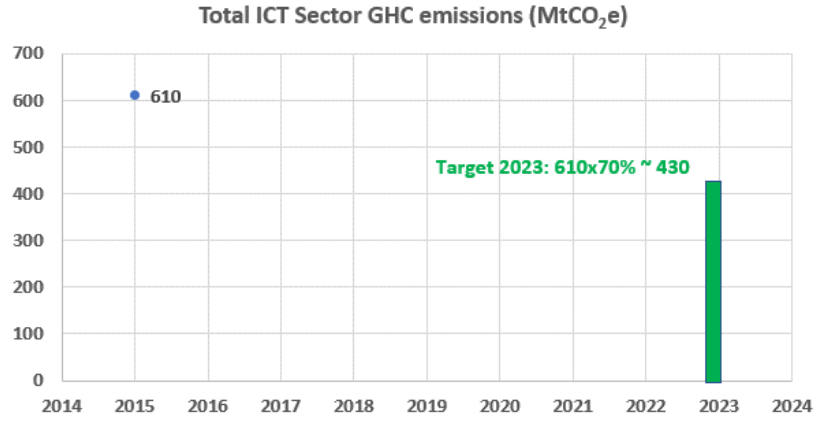
Targets 3.1 to 3.5

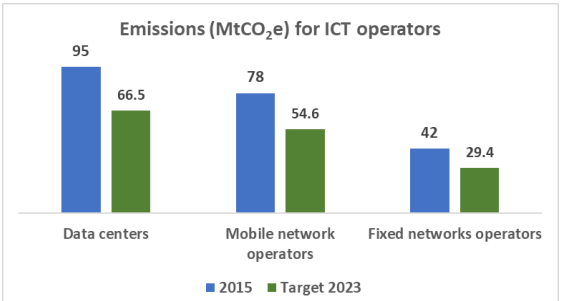
- ❑ The level of energy consumption and the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) are increasing for the growing spread and use of ICT services, networks and devices. The volume of e-waste is on the rise, from 44.7 Megatons generated in 2016 to 53.6 Megatons in 2019, while the percentage of this e-waste which is documented to be collected and properly re-cycled decreased from 20 per cent to 17.4 per cent in the same period. The cyberthreats are also on the rise. However, the percentage of countries having established a CIRT, CERT or CSIRT increased from 56% in 2019 to 60.82 in 2020.

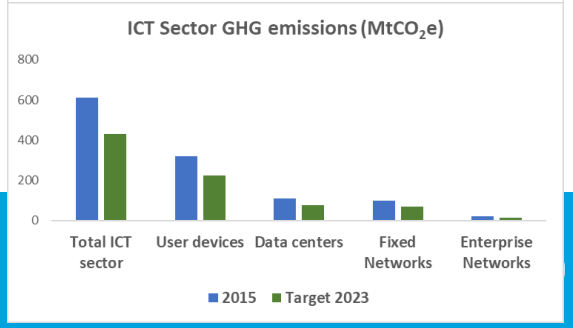
- ❑ Target 3.5 (all countries should have a National Emergency Telecommunication Plan as part of their national and local disaster risk reduction strategies) needs to be measured.

❑Target 3.1 needs to be redefined (not SMART: ".. improve cybersecurity …)

❑Target 3.4 needs to be measured (benchmarked in 2015) AND the GHG abatement **enabled in other sectors by ICTs** has to be measured.







- More countries are introducing policies/strategies fostering telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation

Target 4.1

- In 2019, 66 countries are documented to have policies/strategies fostering telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation. This figure has increased in 2020 up to 74, confirming progress but not at the pace to achieve the 192 countries target by 2023.

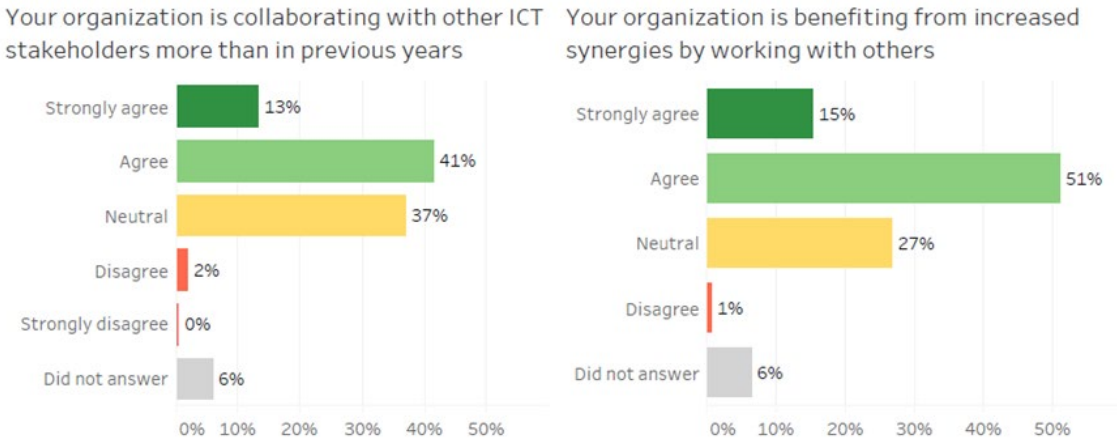
- # Partnerships in the telecommunication/ICT sector are perceived as showing a positive trend

Target 5.1

- Only 4 per cent of the ITU membership surveyed in 2020 disagree or strongly disagree with the sentence “Your organization is collaborating with other stakeholders more than in previous years”; and only 2 per cent disagree with the sentence “Your organization is benefiting with increased synergies by working with others”, in the same ITU membership survey 2020.

However, this is ONLY a Proxy as it concerns exclusively ITU members.

The target/indicator should be reviewed.



Lessons learnt

Reporting on the implementation of the ITU Strategic Plan 2020-2023

- New Targets can only be added if a reliable source(s) of data exists or if there are plans to start measuring them in the near future

  For example, there is no yet data on number of countries having a National Emergency Telecommunication Plan but a first attempt to collect a value is ongoing (Target 3.5); and there is no data on Net telecommunication/ICT-enabled Greenhouse Gas abatement (target 3.4) and no plans to gather these values have been identified (only some values for 2015 on the footprint of ICTs have been found).

- Targets need to be SMART (to be meaningful)

  For example, Target 3.1 is vague ("improve cybersecurity preparedness of countries…"). Using "Improving", "enhancing", etc. as target is not ideal. If possible, a meaningful numeric value should be used.

  Also Targets 4.1 and 5.1 (see below) are not SMART. .

- Keep in mind that we are setting up now (mid 2021) targets for 2024-27, so Targets should be realistic (not very conservative, still not unachievable)

  For example, Target 2.5 was achieved in 2019 even before the SP 2020-2023 came into force (the target was agreed in 2017). See also Target 4.1 below

- Goals 4 and 5 (Innovation and Partnership) are more means than ends, and gathering data for their targets has shown to be very difficult

  For example, Target 5.1 is not SMART ("Increased effective partnerships….") and difficult to measure worldwide (a Proxy coming from a survey of ITU members has been used, but it may not reflect a world trend). Target 4.1, on the other hand, was too aspirational ("all countries should have policies/strategies fostering telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation") as only around 70 countries have it in 2020 (unlikely to eb achieved by 2023).

Reporting on the implementation of the ITU Strategic Plan 2020-2023

- Targets should use data from ITU (STATs Regulatory survey, etc.) or recognized sources

- Targets should account for regional and developmental differences – overall, world averages should be avoided

  For example Target 2.8 (Gender) shows a world average which is not pointing to the closing of the digital gender gap. However, when looking in detail to information per region and level of development it can be assessed that the issue is mainly with the African region and, in particular, with LDCs. All the other regions are showing an improvement. Interventions need therefore to be targeted (not possible to get that conclusion if looking only at data covered by the current target)

- There is a need for the Strategic Plan **targets and KPIs to reflect RBM principles** in that they should ultimately be **impact driven**, as opposed to output/action led.