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|  | **Document CWG-FHR-17/INF/9** |
| **2 February 2024** |
| **English only** |
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| Note by the secretariat | |
| NOTES FROM THE CWG-FHR RESOURCE MOBILIZATION BRAINSTORMING LUNCH – THURSDAY 25 JANUARY 2024 | |
| **Action required**  This report is transmitted to the Council Working Group on Financial and Human Resources **for information**.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |

More than 50 delegates participated in a brainstorming session to help shape the future ITU resource mobilization strategy. Participants contributed with many constructive and creative ideas. The format was informal and comments are not attributed in the report, nor considered as formal positions of Member States.

The session was organized around the three main areas of the strategy: (1) strengthening membership, (2) leveraging products and services and (3) increasing voluntary contributions.

**1) Strengthen Membership**

**Q1. What are the key factors that would help a Member State decide to increase its ITU unit contribution?**

* Member States are interested in greater transparency to strengthen trust, and a clear demonstration that the resources of the Union are being efficiently used (good governance & strong financial management) and that we are modernizing the secretariat (i.e. transformation). Negative audits undermine this.
* Securing unit contributions, especially increases, is a challenge as this also involves finance ministries and foreign affairs who are responsible for contributions across the entire UN system. It is important that ITU and its impact are better understood by these ministries and ITU’s visibility increased at the national level. “The ones paying are not the ones participating in ITU”
* Need to approach Member States and make efforts to understand their priorities much sooner than 6 months before PP as the budget planning cycle starts earlier at the national level.
* Develop promotional / briefing materials which highlight the benefits that a Member State would derive from the increase of the ITU unit contribution.
* Ensure full transparency of the money flow / allocation. The interests of the three Sectors of ITU to be represented equally.
* Identify key priority areas for which additional funding will be needed.
* To include opinions from all membership, a survey would be a good way to collect broader opinions on defined questions, such as:
  + Should there be a relationship between the amount contributed and benefits?
  + What value does ITU add to your country and how could this value be strengthened?
* Generate higher awareness through more regular communication with Member States (strengthen outreach efforts)
  + Common strategies implementation (define target audience, product outline, resulting price, …) “Marketing strategy”
  + “ITU as a company”: Use management principles through the thought experiment, how ITU could compete against other ICT agencies if they existed (development of a USP)
  + Target communication to “the top guys” (i.e., ministers and other high-level representatives) vs. other groups (“customer segmentation”)

**Q2. What would be an acceptable rationale for increasing Sector Membership fees?**

* Conduct a study to determine whether or not current fees cover the cost of Sector Membership.
* Clearly demonstrate the benefits Sector Members will derive from the membership fee increase.
* Carefully consider the risks of increasing sector membership fees. Some expressed concern that an increase in fees could lead to a reduction in membership/ participation.
* Utilize management practices to define an ITU USP and enhance and target communication
* Better promote the activities of ITU and those of the ITU Sector Members (recognition). More regular communications with members.
* Consider establishing a big project/product that would involve Sector Members.
* Review Study Group time frames to reflect faster changes
* Provide greater visibility (certificates, social media and other forms of recognition), value and additional benefits, especially to those who belong to multiple sectors.
* Offer free plenipotentiary participation for members of 3 sectors.

**Q3. How can ITU better engage industry and encourage them to join? And, what are some ways that Member States can help?**

* Modernize study group methodologies and invest further in remote participation (especially to increase SME participation),
* Engage more players outside of ICT – chambers of commerce could be good partners to reach wider audience
* Carefully consider the risks of increasing sector membership fees. Some expressed concern that an increase in fees could lead to a reduction in membership/participation.
* Build on existing Sector Member survey by asking about “(most important) added value within the last 24 months”
* Exchange experiences between Member States on “How to motivate national industry to participate in WTDC and WTSA” (low interest from private sector compared with WRC). Organize brainstorming on this?
* Member States could organize sessions with industry associations to raise awareness of ITU and membership.
* Can ITU “guarantee” something to potential Sector Members: outcomes, benefits?
* Question raised on “what can ITU offer to its industry members?”
  + Use the ITU to build new solutions
  + ITU needs to be open for new topics, especially in the Study Groups  
    - is a rigorous 9-month-cycle for Study Groups the most efficient approach?
  + Potential Study Group changes: review the duration of a cycle, including length of meetings and time between meetings (and potential to streamline using remote for part), make it easier to start or stop a new topic.
  + Could current conference facilities handle more regular (but potentially shorter) Study Group meetings?
* Launch call to attract more small companies – they might not have the (financial) resources to send an employee to a meeting for two weeks so remote participation is key. Consider offering SME fellowships when physical participation sought.
* Review lessons learned through existing and past industry engagement initiatives across ITU
* Organize targeted sessions for industry to share views on current and emerging issues (example of Child Online Protection).
* Encourage the Sector Members in a country to raise awareness on the benefits of joining ITU membership. ITU Member States can also call on industry representatives for their experience/expertise needs to contribute to ITU for better engagement.
* Could there be incentives / rewards for Member States to bring industry / revenues to ITU? i.e. Fellowships, reductions in units, development projects, recognition etc?
* Consider implementation of a 1-year trial period and / or discount for companies willing to join a second or third sector
* Consider additional tier for micro-enterprises.

**2) Leverage products and services**:

**Q1. Which Products and Services have the greatest potential for increased revenues?**

* Explore the potential of replicating the model used by ITU-T on numbering.
* Look at other organizations like WIPO and how they monetize their products and services.
* Provide a list of current products and services to identify costs, improvements and gaps (do not forget regional offices). The non-exhaustive draft list can be accessed at [ITU Products for Sale.docx](https://ituint-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/rahul_jha_itu_int/Ec_ZDV3lnhdJhz1hOlIeliYBP_fSLbAsaCWRzlHOPirkVA?e=Lci2EB) (focusing on the ones that generate revenue)
* ITU Publications were identified as a promising source of revenue, giving examples of other bodies who monetize their content such as GSMA etc.
* Analyze demand for various publications and other products and services.
* Explore the potential for revenue generation with ITU Academy
* Should we introduce subscription models to access ITU content/products?
* Leverage unique value initiatives/events such as Child Online Protection, and explore options for generating revenues (i.e. sponsorship, exhibitions). Preference for free events to attract participants and more sponsors.
* Some ITU events need to be modernized to meet the expectations of members and a fast-changing environment. Review / reinvent events where participation is decreasing. It was mentioned that WSIS has too many parallel sessions, leaving some sessions with few people.

**Q2. For which products and services should ITU implement cost recovery vs revenue generation? For members vs. non-members?**

* ITU should review cost recovery methodology, policies and their implementation to see if we are still covering our costs as the environment has evolved. Examples included publications and numbering. Could use an external party to conduct an audit of cost recovery and to advise on way forward.
* Cost Recovery vs Revenue Generation – Cost recovery for members, revenue generation for non-members. This should include events: free for members, paid for non-members. Includes subscriptions for publications and data.

**3) Increase Voluntary Contributions**

**Q1. Which themes have the most potential for fundraising?**

* Participants started the conversation by emphasizing the importance of defining clearly why ITU is trying to raise additional funds. This will allow the Union to define clear objectives and then focus on priorities of members and donors, which are tailored to regional or national needs.
* ITU needs to put together a specific value proposition highlighting its impact to present to donors.
* Themes for fundraising should be in line with the priority themes of the Union and which require investment and funding. Most promising themes highlighted include SDGs, AI, Space, Digital Skills, Accessibility, ICT incubators in developing countries, Spectrum or satellite connectivity for development countries, amongst others.

**Q2. What are the most promising sources of funding for ITU?**

* The resource mobilization function should seek longer term engagement from donors (as opposed to short-term) and scale up funding to support ITU initiatives.
* Participants also recommended learning from the experience of pledging platforms, like P2C, and exploring how to turn these pledges into concrete funding opportunities at the country level.
* Collaborate with regional organizations for fundraising / partnerships.
* In addition to approaching corporate social responsibility representatives, we should target executives with initiatives that are seen as business opportunities to scale.
* Develop fundraising opportunities during key industry events (e.g. MWC), which provide a unique platform to engage the industry.
* ITU may need to hire additional staff with experience in fundraising.
* Distinguish between members and non-members when fundraising.
* Approach Sector Members for in-kind, as well as pro-bono support. These can provide also relevant opportunities for ITU membership.
* Build trust in ITU and its governance around finance to help convince existing /new donors to invest in ITU’s initiatives and projects.
* Foundations have high potential. Need attractive value proposition and targeted pitch.
* Development agencies and development banks also have potential.