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| **Abstract:** | This document summarizes contribution of the ITU Regional Offices to the implementation of the ITU-T four-year rolling operational plan as requested by the Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference. |

**1 Introduction: ITU Regional Presence**

ITU has offices in the six BDT regions:

* [Africa](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/africa/)
* [Americas](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Americas/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Arab states](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/ArabStates/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Asia and the Pacific](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/asiapacific/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Commonwealth of Independent States](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Europe](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/default.aspx)

[ITU Regional presence](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Pages/Regional-Presence.aspx) counts as of today an overall of thirteen field offices, which include five regional offices in Addis Ababa (Africa), Bangkok (Asia and the Pacific), Brasilia (Americas), Cairo (Arab States), Moscow (CIS countries), and the ITU office for Europe at ITU headquarters, as well as nine area offices, located in Africa, Americas and Asia and the Pacific.

The revised Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) on strengthening the ITU regional presence, mentioned in section 1 below, has enhanced the need for a stronger regional presence.

Regional and area offices play a key role in facilitating discussions on regional matters and in the dissemination of information and results of activities of all three Sectors of the Union and the General Secretariat, while avoiding the duplication of such functions with headquarters, and collaborating with the regional telecommunication organizations to make synergies and avoid duplication of activities and efforts.

2 ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)

ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) “Strengthening the ITU regional presence” confirms the reporting mandates for the Regional and Area offices to the advisory groups of each Sectors:

“further resolves

*3 that regional and area offices shall regularly provide reports to the Sector advisory groups, as appropriate, and to inform the Directors of BR, TSB and BDT on regional activities related to their respective Sectors,*

3 TSB mechanisms of coordination with the Regions

At the initiative of the TSB Director, meetings were organized whenever possible, 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 (reference to the instructs the Directors of the Radiocommunication Bureau and the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau), were conducted keeping in mind the One ITU concept and implementation, with 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.

4 Africa – Regional Office for Africa

In collaboration with BDT, a series of Digital Financial Services (DFS) Security Clinics were held by TSB team for Ethiopia, Eswatini, The Gambia, South Sudan, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Lesotho, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso and Gabon. The DFS clinics are attended by ICT and Financial regulators, telecom operators and financial service provides; the main objective of the DFS clinic is to provide technical assistance to countries on security issues related to digital financial services and to assist member states to adopt the ITU DFS security recommendations and develop their own DFS Security Labs to validate that the DFS applications in compliance with the ITU DFS recommendations.

On 30 January 2025, TSB in collaboration with the BDT through the Regional office for Africa actively participated in a virtual meeting of ITU-T Study Group 13 Regional Group for Africa was held, where WTSA-24 results of importance for African region were deliberated. The meeting also discussed the importance of mapping African challenges to the standardization works carried in SG-13 in this study period and ensure active participation of members in the standardization process.

On 25th February, TSB in collaboration with the BDT through the Regional office for Africa held a webinar on Metaverse Regulation and Policy for African Countries – Jointly Organized by ATU & ITU. The webinar explored among others, the transformative potential of virtual worlds and the metaverse in Africa’s digital landscape. The opportunities for innovation, economic growth, and social impact, while addressing the challenges of governance, infrastructure, and inclusion in shaping a sustainable digital future were discussed. The webinar also made a deep dive on the regulatory challenges and opportunities presented by virtual worlds and the metaverse in Africa. It explored key policy implications, including governance frameworks, digital rights, and cross-border collaboration. The two hours session was attended by more than 78 participants.

On 12th March 2025, TSB in collaboration with the BDT through the Regional office for Africa actively participated in a virtual meeting on the review of WTSA-24 Outcomes and Implications for Africa organized by the African Telecommunications Union (ATU). The meeting brought together ITU, policymakers, regulators, experts in Telecommunications/ICTs standardization work, technologists, industry leaders, academia, and civil society groups to discuss and explore the Africa strategies and priorities for standardization development this study circle. The online meeting was attended by 178 participants.

5 Americas – Regional Office for the Americas

The ITU Regional Office for the Americas and its Area Offices, in Chile (South America), Honduras (Central America) & Barbados (Caribbean), have continued close coordination with TSB on all activities carried out in the Americas region.

Periodically coordination calls with the TSB Director and TSB Management team have been held. They were supplemented by consultations at the operational level, wherever relevant or needed.

The ITU Regional Office for the Americas has continued close coordination with TSB on activities carried out in the region by supporting Member States by implementing various initiatives and projects across the region, including support in the implementation of regional initiatives, aimed at deploying ICT infrastructure, enhancing digital inclusion, innovation and digital transformation.

ITU Regional Office for Americas also facilitated coordination between TSB and regional organizations (CITEL, mainly in PCC.I) for the preparatory process for WTSA and provided any assistance necessary to ensure regional engagement. As well as on the Bridging the Standardization Gap (BSG), the AMS RO is supporting TSB at the highest level of relevant events or platforms in the Regions through the revamped products and services of Bridging the Standardization Gap (cf., Resolution 123 of PP-22 & 44 of WTSA-24). Overall, the Regional Office is facilitating the organization of bilateral meetings in the region as per TSB request.

Active participation of TSB in the 11th edition of Accessible Americas: ICT for ALL, held in November 2024 in Mexico City, Mexico, by sharing knowledge and expertise in the field of Emerging Technologies: Artificial Intelligence as a catalyst for digital inclusion. Also, in the Internet usage gap in the Americas Region. Data, challenges, and opportunities.

Active participation of TSB in the Regional Economic Dialogue (RED-AMS) in September 2024 in Lima, Peru, by sharing knowledge and expertise in the field of Ongoing work of ITU-T Study Group 3 and Focus Group on Cost of Data (FG-CD), also on Circular Economy.

The Regional supported the implementation of the ITU-T Meeting of Study Group 3 Regional Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (SG3RG-LAC) and the Meeting of ITU-T Study Group 5 Regional Group for Latin America (SG5RG-LATAM) and events related to Environment, Climate Change, and the Circular Economy, held in Lima, Peru, in November 2024.

6 Arab States - Regional Office for the Arab States

The ITU Regional Office for the Arab States in Cairo has been engaging with membership in TSB related activities across the region.

The Regional supported the preparations and the hosting of the ITU-T Meeting of Study Group 3 Regional Group for Arab States (SG3RG-ARB), held in Amman, Jordan, in February 2025.

Periodically coordination calls with the TSB Director and TSB Management team have been held. They were supplemented by consultations at the operational level, wherever relevant or needed.

Close collaboration is done with the team in TSB for the preparation and membership attendance to the AI4Good summit 2025.

The Regional office has been hosting a G-staff member of the TSB in the office in Cairo and this has also been beneficial for the coordination work with TSB in relation to the T-sector meetings and work.

#### **7 Asia and the Pacific - Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**

The ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific coordinates closely with TSB on activities carried out in the Asia-Pacific region. Consultations are held at the operational level, wherever relevant or needed. The ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has also been providing support to the TSB with APT and with regional standardization bodies.

What follows are some of the specific activities that the Regional Office coordinated/assisted TSB with:

**Project on Enhancing the Development of Standards and Frameworks for Critical Technologies in Southeast Asia**

* Following consultations with TSB and discussions with the Government of Australia’s Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the ITU team successfully signed a grant agreement on 4 June 2021 with DFAT on this project, under its Cyber and Critical Tech Cooperation Program. This project was successfully extended in 2022 for the full four-year duration and was successfully concluded on 31 December 2024.
* The project focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the potential gender and social biases linked with them. The project enhanced the development and implementation of AI standards, frameworks, policies, and initiatives at regional and national levels across Southeast Asia, which considered diverse stakeholders needs. The project’s initial focus was on Indonesia, Malaysia. The Philippines, and Thailand, as well as the regional context in Southeast Asia.
* The Project was built on four outputs:
  + **Indicative Output 1**: Research outputs on the state of critical technology standards, frameworks, policies, and initiatives, including the capacity gaps among stakeholders, in Southeast Asia.
  + **Indicative Output 2:** Training/Workshops and knowledge sharing activities on Critical Technologies for policymakers in primary beneficiary countries in Southeast Asia.
  + **Indicative Output 3:** Multi-stakeholder Network of Female Policy Makers created at the subregional, regional and global levels.
  + **Indicative Output 4:** Country-specific support provided to assist the policymakers and regulators in the development and implementation of standards, frameworks, policies, and initiatives.

**Preparations and implementation for WTSA 2024**

* ITU Regional Office and Area Office in Delhi supported the organisation of WTSA24 in multiple ways including monthly/weekly coordination meetings with the Indian government, organisation of side events with various partners, suggestion for speakers and arranging the participation of the UN Country team for UN Day on Oct 24, side events as well as the SDG exhibition zone.
* The Area Office in Delhi supported organisation of various side events such as Network of Women, Robotics for Youth Challenge, AI4GOOD Impact India, AI Standards Day, Hackathon and the Workshop on Safe Listening, assisting the TSB team with arranging speakers and helping with the overall coordination with India Mobile Congress (IMC) and DoT.
* A total of 8 UN agencies exhibited in the UN SDG Zone in the Exhibition Area at the Bharat Mandapam during WTSA24. This includes UNRCO, IFAD, UNOPS, UNDP, APCTT, WHO, UNESCO and IOM.
* In the run up to WTSA24, the Area Office assisted TSB with various pre-visits to Delhi assisting with the organisation of meetings with the host country.

**Project on Strengthening Asia and the Pacific Engagement in ITU Conferences (SAPEIC)**

* Following consultations with the Government of Australia’s Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA), ITU signed a project agreement on 18 June 2024 for the SAPEIC project. This project aims to enhance the engagement of ITU’s Asia and the Pacific developing country member states in global ITU conferences by capacitating them to meaningfully contribute to upcoming ITU conferences, namely the 2024 World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), and the 2025 World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC).
* To achieve this, structured and dedicated training will be provided to build understanding of ITU’s Standardization and Development Sectors, and the working methods of WTSA and WTDC, to ensure delegates can meaningfully contribute to these conferences.
* During the course of this reporting period, 23 participants from 13 ITU member states underwent the WTSA portion of the program. They joined the virtual training on WTSA from 10-13 September 2024 and an optional office hour on 18 September 2024. The training was led by ITU staff from the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) and the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, featuring interactive exercises and mock contribution creation.
* Subsequently, the 23 participants were granted fellowships through the SAPEIC project to join the Global Standards Symposium (GSS) and the WTSA in Delhi, India, on 14 October 2024 and 15-24 October 2024 respectively. The fellows successfully participated in both events and are completing their reporting requirements.

**New Project on Artificial Intelligence Technology and Standards Capacity Building in Asia Pacific funded by MIC Japan**

* Following consultations with TSB and discussions with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) of Japan, the ITU team and MIC exchanged letters on 6 February 2025, post which the funds were allocated to ITU to conduct activities under this project. It is currently funded for a period of one year, until February 2026.
* The project aims to build the capacity and awareness among government officials and key stakeholders on artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and standards development for increasing the efficiency of telecommunications/ICTs and the enabling ecosystem, to support project countries’ digital transformation strategies, and to bridge the standardization gap between developed and developing countries, particularly focusing on AI, and drawing upon expertise from both the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) and Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB).
* The first workshop under this project will be organised in Delhi from 5-8 May 2025, where trainings on AI standards and technologies will be provided for the South Asian member states including India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives, in collaboration with the TSB team and partner organisations.
* In addition to the one in Delhi, two other workshops will take place in Southeast Asia and the Pacific targeting participation from those sub-regions.

**Bridging the Standardization Gap (BSG)**

* On 2-3 September 2024, the Area Office in collaboration with the National Communications Academy - Finance (NCA-F, erstwhile NICF) and the Department of Telecommunications organised a workshop on Bridging the Standardisation Gap (BSG) at Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore. With over 270 participants from the government, industry, academia and startups, the workshop guided the participants on how to contribute to and negotiate for the development and implementation of ITU-T standards; and helped build capacity to eventually play leadership roles in this field through interactive role plays and quizzes.

**Network of Women (NoW) in ITU-T**

* ITU Regional Office supported the organization of the NoW in ITU-T Regional Activity for Asia and the Pacific. This activity was held on 20 August 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand, as part of the 5th Meeting of the Asia Pacific Telecommunity Preparatory Group for WTSA-24. The activity featured a networking breakfast, followed by a NOW4WTSA24 Training Session, focusing on building confidence in negotiation skills in a multilateral context.

**Digital Financial Services (DFS) Security Clinic**

* ITU Regional Office and the Area Office in Delhi facilitated discussions with the Bhutan InfoComm and Media Authority (BICMA) and TSB on the DFS Security Lab on 10 October 2024. Following this discussion, ITU and BICMA are now discussing a potential ITU knowledge transfer programme for DFS Security.
* Post these discussions, there was an exchange of letters between TSB Director and BICMA, on 14 Oct and 22 Oct 2024. BICMA is currently evaluating the financials at their end, and a formal response from them is awaited.

**Co-ordination and Participation in External Events to Highlight ITU-T**

* In the run up to WTSA24, the Regional Office and Area Office in Delhi made several presentations to key stakeholders in the entire region highlighting the activities of ITU-T, upcoming assembly in Delhi and the various side events encouraging their participation in WTSA24.
* Regular presentations were made to the UNCT in India during the monthly country team meetings and at any key events where the Area Office and the Regional Office had participation.

**Communications Activities**

* The ITU Regional Office continues to promote TSB activities through its social media channel.

**8 Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) - Regional Office for the CIS Region**

The ITU Regional Office for CIS Region supported TSB on preparations to WTSA-24, including through coordination with the Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC), with the aim to support Member-States in their preparatory process.

On the specific thematic areas of work, the Regional Office worked closely with the TSB team on the following activities:

1. Implementation of a regional project on C&I “International Research, Development and Testing Centre for ITU Member States and ITU Sector Members in the CIS region – Phase 2” co-funded by ITU and Rostelecom, ITU-T Sector Member. Project team is facilitating C&I activities based on the ITU-T Recommendations and also contributes to the research in relevant ITU-T Study Groups.
2. Through awareness raising activities RO CIS has supported adoption in CIS countries of Recommendations and KPIs related to Smart Cities and Communities developed within U4SCC initiative
3. Preparations are ongoing jointly with TSB for the ITU Regional Forum “Future Technologies: Artificial Intelligence, Metaverse, Holography and other ICT Applications and Services. Vision 2030”, to be held from 9 to 11 June 2025 in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation. It will be held back-to-back with meetings of the regional groups of ITU-T Study Groups 11, 13 and 20.

#### **9 Europe - ITU Office for Europe**

The ITU Office for Europe supported TSB on preparations to WTSA-24, including through coordination with the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunication Administrations (CEPT), with the aim of supporting Member-States in their preparatory process. The ITU Office for Europe continues supporting TSB in coordination with CEPT towards the effective implementation of the WTSA-24 outcomes.

On the specific thematic areas of work, the ITU Office for Europe worked closely with the TSB team on the following activities:

* Trainings on 5G Implementation, aiming at building the capacities of the administration of Ukraine (October 2024, Online)
* ITU Workshop on the Future of Television for Europe (November 2024, Geneva)
* ITU-T Briefing to the EU Council Working Party on Telecommunication and Information Society (20 February 2025, Brussels)
* ITU-EC Synchronization Workshop focusing on identification of topics of common interest and areas of potential cooperation in the field of standardisation (19 February 2025, Brussels)
* EU-UN Dialogue on Business and Human Rights (26 March 2025, Brussels), providing the opportunity to provide an update on ITU’s activities related to human rights.

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