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Strengthening Involvement of Developing Countries in ICT Standards Development

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What is standardization?

Consumers
- Protection

Suppliers
- Technical, quality assurance

Academics
- Promote research results

Stakeholders

Enterprises
- Strategic
- Product interoperability and maintainability

Governments
- Advance national competitiveness
- Promote domestic markets
- Protects the public interest

Standardization is a tool for stakeholders
What is the standardization divide?

Disparity in the ability of those who access, implement, contribute to and influence international standards (ITU TSB Definition)

Participating Representatives

Non-participating Representatives

Standardization divide typically defined with respect to divide between developing and developed countries
Why should stakeholders be involved in standardization?

- Enables consumers (e.g., service providers) to make better choices
  - Draft better RFPs and reference current technology standards
  - Be better informed about equipment to buy
- Lowers infrastructure cost
  - Ensures competition exists between vendors
- Means to provide feedback on standards activities and understand ongoing work
  - Influence standards work
  - Advance stakeholder knowledge of standards
  - Provide faster Return on Investments (ROI)
  - Reduce Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)
  - Generate more sales

Participation in global standards development helps bridge standards divide dimensions
A global information society is emerging

Growth of the information society
1991-2006

- Main Telephone Lines
- Internet Users
- Mobile Subscribers

Source: ITU, 2007
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ICTs at the centre the global information society

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) power the global information society
Critical infrastructures depend on ICT infrastructure

Standardization of ICTs become even more critical to protect societies critical infrastructures

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Everyone and everything is connected

We live in a world of inter-connected devices and objects
ICT infrastructure in transition

ICT infrastructure is converging on all IP-based network
The role of ICT standards development organizations

ICT standards deal with complexities of convergence
Addressing the standardization divide

- Participation in standards development directly relates to the dimensions of the standardization divide
  - Access
  - Implementation
  - Contribution
  - Influence
- Barriers to participation
- Solutions and best practices to addressing the barriers to participation

Standardization divide hinges on standards development participation
Participation levels in ICT standards development process

Higher level of participation

Making proposals for future study questions
Nominating representatives as leaders of standards activities
Making contributions to standards development
Hosting standards events
Participating in standards meetings
Encouraging participation by domestic sector members or associates
Providing domestic training and capacity building in use of standards
Using standards domestically

Lower level of participation

Influence
Contribute
Access/Implement
Participation by stakeholder groups in standards development process

- Making proposals for future study questions
- Nominating representatives as leaders of standards activities
- Making contributions to standards development
- Hosting standards events
- Participating in standards meetings
- Encouraging participation by domestic sector members or associates
- Providing domestic training and capacity building in use of standards
- Using standards domestically

Governments

Consumers, End Users, Academics

Suppliers, Vendors, Enterprises
Barriers to participation in ICT standards development process

- Accessibility
- Long-term Participation
- National policy making processes
- Lack of technical expertise
- Ongoing process between meetings
- Informal procedures
- Cost
- Networking and alliances
- Private and/or NGO representation
- Culture and language
- Transparency

Key common barriers contributing to standardization divide
Improving accessibility

“E-bookshop sales” relate to Jan-Dec 2006
- 10.4% from LDC and DC

Web downloads relate to Jan-May 2007
- 14.8% from LDC and DC

Overcoming the accessibility barrier helps bridge the standardization divide
What other practical actions can be taken to improve accessibility

- Raise awareness of resources available
- Develop implementation guides for standards
- Develop roadmaps and guide documents for standards
- Sponsor regional workshops

Practical actions to narrow the standardization divide
Solutions and best practices for improving participation

- Technical assistance
  - Subsidize travel costs and offer training
- Regional sub-groups
  - Set agendas and implement programs locally
- Internal capacity-building
- Human capacity-building
  - Mentoring and fellowship programs

Must consider solutions adopted by other organizations to improve participation
### Summary

- The **global information society** is powered by ICTs.
- The **ICT infrastructure is evolving** into a converged network, leading to challenges of interoperability, performance, and security.
- **Global ICT standards** help address these challenges.
- **Participation** is the key to addressing standardization divide dimensions: access and implementation; contribution; and influence.
- Solutions and best practices for improving participation may be adopted from other organizations.

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**We must expand upon actions to improve accessibility and identify additional actions to help overcome all barriers to participation.**