

RECOMMENDATION ITU-D 7-1

Planning and implementation of national telecommunication development plans for rural and remote areas

(January, 2002)

Question 10/2: *Communications for rural and remote areas*

The ITU-D,

considering

- a) that telecommunications are a powerful means of conveying information of all kinds;
- b) that the implementation of telecommunication infrastructures in rural and remote areas, with a view to enabling universal access, promotes economic, social and cultural development;
- c) that such activities are absolutely essential in rural and remote areas for improving the quality of human life in these areas and national development, especially for those nationals that have large populations living in rural and remote areas;
- d) that substantial, planned rural programmes provide major economies of scale in both equipment and ROAs' construction programme costs;
- e) that the telecommunication industry is inherently commercial in nature;
- f) that there is extensive evidence that the provision of telecommunication services for rural and remote areas may be sustainable.

noting

the low level of telecommunication facilities in the rural and remote areas of developing countries and the general lack of supporting and enabling resources,

recommends

1 that administrations,¹ as policy-makers and regulators, and recognized operating agencies (ROAs),² recognizing the strategic role of the development of telecommunications in rural and remote areas and as a part of their universal access policies

¹ Administration: Any governmental department or service responsible for discharging the obligations undertaken in the Constitution of the International Telecommunication Union, in the Convention of the International Telecommunication Union and in the Administrative Regulations. (CS/AN. 1002)

- a) include the development of telecommunications in rural and remote areas among their high priorities;
- b) define, approve and implement national development plans which specifically include rural and remote telecommunications, taking into consideration the particular needs of certain specific groups and communities, especially women, youth, development-oriented institutions, the elderly, the disabled, and the poor;
- c) participate in the promotion and financing of rural telecommunication development programmes in general, with the appropriate authorities at the national level;
- d) encourage private-sector investment by establishing these programmes;
- e) cooperate closely with relevant development agencies, local authorities, non-governmental organizations and other public service users;
- f) organize, supervise and/or implement national rural telecommunication development initiatives through a carefully planned, orderly, progressive, multi-year programme, as part of the national telecommunication development master plan, to ensure that such programmes are implemented efficiently and economically;
- g) consider support from universal service mechanisms to encourage investments and roll out of telecommunication services in rural and remote areas;

2 that administrations arrange that national telecommunication development initiatives, managed as commercial entities, be the responsibility of ROAs under an appropriate national framework.

² Recognized Operating Agency (ROA): Any operating agency which operates a public correspondence or broadcasting service and upon which the obligations provided for in Article 6 of this Constitution are imposed by the Member State in whose territory the head office of the agency is situated, or by the Member State which has authorized this operating agency to establish and operate a telecommunication service on its territory. (CS/AN. 1008, PP-98). Operating Agency: Any individual, company, corporation or governmental agency which operates a telecommunication installation intended for an international telecommunication service or capable of causing harmful interference with such a service. (CS/AN. 1007).