REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Arab States

Dubai Action Plan	2015-2017

150 ITU 1865 2015

ITU

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Regional Initiatives: Dubai Action Plan 2015-2017

Arab States

"The Dubai Action Plan sets out a road map for ITU-D's work and a shared vision to make a tangible difference to people's lives. Regional Initiatives guide BDT, Member States and Sector Members in implementing specific projects that focus on the priority needs of each region. I call upon all our members and partners to join forces with BDT to implement the Regional Initiatives. I thank you for your continued support."

Mr Brahima Sanou, *Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau*

FOREWORD

BY EBRAHIM AL HADDAD, *ITU REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR THE ARAB STATES*

One of the main outputs of the 2014 World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) was the membership's adoption of the five Arab regional initiatives (RIs). Since then, the Arab Regional Office has been working in consultation with relevant stakeholders in the region to formulate an action plan, within the resources available, to meet the aspirations of the region's members for each RI. I am pleased to present to you this publication, which includes a detailed proposed action plan to implement the Arab regional initiatives. It is important to note that the philosophy behind the formulation of this action plan lay in the importance of creating a spark in five priority areas that would motivate and influence stakeholders in the region to focus and boost their consolidated efforts in those five areas, namely: broadband, cybersecurity, ICTs for the environment, smart learning, and ICTs for persons with disabilities. We share the membership's conviction that promotion of these areas will have a significant multiplier effect on the development of knowledge societies in the Arab region. It will also significantly contribute to bridging the increasing digital divide within countries and across the region.

While the main intention is to elicit feedback on the proposed action plan from the regional membership, all stakeholders are and will be invited to provide further feedback and build on it. It is a living action plan, subject to constant review and improvement to better address the challenges and opportunities that will change over the three years. We hope that, ultimately, the plan will encourage all stakeholders to cooperate and coordinate in the areas targeted by the RIs with the aim of improving people's lives across the region.

Ebrahim Al Haddad
ITU Regional Director for the Arab States

Implementation of the Arab Regional Initiatives

Introduction

This publication provides a snapshot of implementation of the regional initiatives, presented to Member States during the Regional Development Forum.

It covers the overall implementation of the Hyderabad Action Plan (WTDC-10) and the Dubai Action Plan (WTDC-14).

The Dubai Action Plan and the regional initiatives (2015-2017)

Regional initiatives are intended to address specific telecommunication/ICT priority areas, through partnerships and resource mobilization to implement small, medium and largescale projects. Under each regional initiative, projects are developed and implemented to meet the real needs of the region.

Information on the regional initiatives, including their respective objectives, outputs and expected results, can be found in the Final Report of WTDC-14: http://www.itu.int/md/D10-WTDC14-C-0118/en.

Development of BROADBAND ACCESS and adoption of broadband
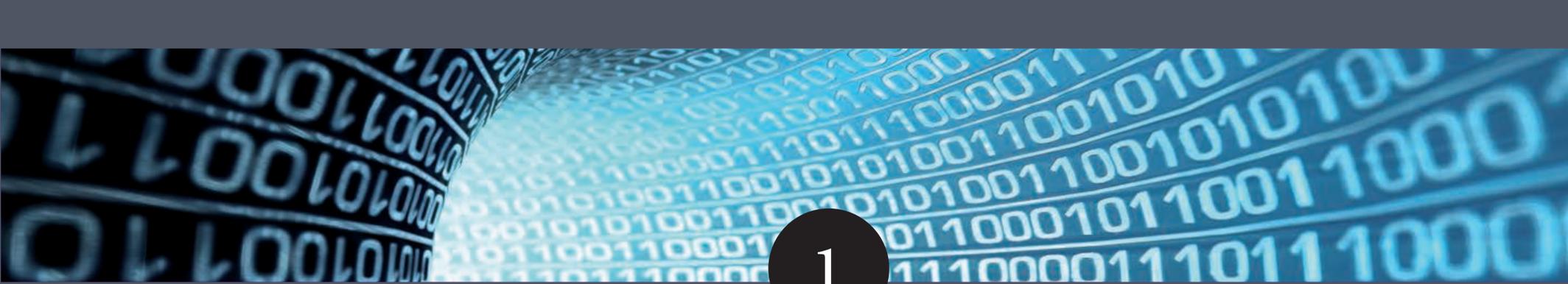
Projects implemented in the Arab States

under Hyderabad WTDC-10, and proposed projects to be implemented in the period 2015-2017.

The broadband access network initiative was one of the five regional initiatives that came out of the Arab regional preparatory meeting held in Damascus in 2010 and became part of the Hyderabad Action Plan (HAP). Owing to its importance, it was also adopted at WTDC-14.

Projects implemented under WTDC-10

- Project to establish and adopt a National Broadband Master Plan: Assistance given to four countries in the Arab region and organization of several related events.
- Connect Arab Internet Networks Project: Assistance given to Arab countries in collaboration with ISOC and AFRINIC on the implementation and management of Internet exchange points (IXPs).
- Capacity building on New Trends for Building and Financing Broadband: two annual forums on economic and financial aspects and on Technology aspects and network migration to NGN.
- Capacity building on Infrastructure Sharing & LLU.
- Cloud Computing Pilot Project: Capacity building on concepts and opportunities of cloud computing technology.

2

What is the situation today?

In the vast majority of Arab States, mobile cellular penetration has reached very high levels of 100 per cent and above. The number of subscriptions exceeds the population in some countries.

Wireless broadband penetration levels vary considerably across the region. A high level of competition and high levels of multi-SIM ownership characterize the region for the Hyderabad WTDC-10 regional initiatives 2011-2014 cycle. This constitutes a summary of what was reported to WTDC for the majority of countries. Data from household surveys show that the actual number of people using a mobile-cellular phone is much lower than the number of subscriptions.

Fixed broadband penetration is generally low in the Arab States, with a regional average of just 3 per cent at the end of 2013. The majority of Arab States have a fixed broadband penetration rate of less than 10 per cent. Mobile (voice and broadband) services are much more popular in the region.

3

Objective

To assist Arab States (particularly least developed countries) in the implementation and development of broadband infrastructure in urban and rural areas, and to develop, facilitate and spread access to broadband networks and services in the Arab States, also addressing issues related to conformance and interoperability.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1 Improvement of broadband network infrastructure, including the deployment and connection of optical fibre cables, for the provision of good-quality and affordable telecommunication/ICT services in urban and rural areas, including migration to next-generation networks (NGNs) and future networks, keeping pace with the rapid developments in this vital, developing field.

2 Improvement of broadband network infrastructure, including the deployment and connection of optical fibre cables.

3 Implementation of national programmes on conformance and interoperability, establishing cooperation agreements with regional laboratories to assist in this regard, and setting guidelines in accordance with international best practices.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

1

Enabling UNIVERSAL,
SUSTAINABLE, UBIQUITOUS
AND AFFORDABLE ACCESS
TO INFORMATION and
communication technologies
(ICTs) and services

OBJECTIVE

Assist Arab countries in the establishment of national and regional strategic plans and work programmes for the telecommunication/ICT sector to meet their needs.

Estimated budget

CHF 140,000.

Potential partners

AREGNET,UNESCO, ISESCO and ESCWA, Member States.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Assist selected countries in developing their Broadband National Plans.
- Annual Regional Forum on Economic and Financial aspects of Broadband development.

2016 Activities

- Assist selected countries in developing their Broadband National Plans.
- Annual Regional Forum on Economic and Financial aspects of Broadband development.

2017 Activities

- Follow-up report on the status of broadband in the Arab region and recommendations.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

2

Adoption of COMMON BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY and network infrastructure for multiple ICT services and applications

OBJECTIVES

1. Adopt and implement IXP concept in the Arab region.

2. Formulate a regional IXP project.

3. Formulation of a Pilot Project on Cloud Computing Platform Connectivity.

Estimated budget

CHF 120,000 .... AREGNET, ALECSO, UNESCO, ISESCO.
CHF 100,000 .... ESCWA, ISOC, AFRINIC.
CHF 100,000 .... Member States.

Potential partners

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Provide assistance to the Arab IXP Group.
- Regional Forum on Future Networks: Technological, Regulatory and Policy Trends (Morocco,19-20 May)
- Improvement of ITU Global Interactive Transmission Map.
- Develop guidelines on establishment of Academia Cloud Computing Platform.
- Formulation of a Pilot Project on Cloud Computing Platform Connectivity.

2016 Activities

- Assist selected countries to establish national IXP.
- Develop model interconnection agreements between IXPs as a basis for formulating a regional IXP.
- Assist countries to align regulatory frameworks with the aim of promoting cloud platforms interconnection.
- Implement cloud computing pilot project

2017 Activities

- Assist selected countries to establish national IXP.
- Assist countries to implement the interconnection agreement.
- Follow-up report on the status of development and use of cloud computing cervices in the Arab region based on the pilot project

PROJECT PROPOSAL

3

Adoption of common programmes on CONFORMANCE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND INTEROPERABILITY

OBJECTIVE

Develop conformance and interoperability cooperation plans and establish mutual recognition agreements between countries and subregions.

Estimated budget

CHF 130,000.

Potential partners

AREGNET, LAS, Maghreb Union, GCC, ISESCO, ISOC, RIPE, AFRINIC, private-sector companies, governments.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Training on conformance and interoperability in selected areas.
- Develop cooperation to establish mutual recognition agreements (between countries and subregions).

2016 Activities

- Training on conformance and interoperability in selected areas.
- Develop cooperation to establish mutual recognition agreements (between countries and subregions).

2017 Activities

- Training on conformance and interoperability in selected areas.
- Follow-up report on the status of C&I laboratories and mutual recognition agreements between countries and subregions.

Regional initiative 2

Building CONFIDENCE AND SECURITY in the use of telecommunications/ICTs
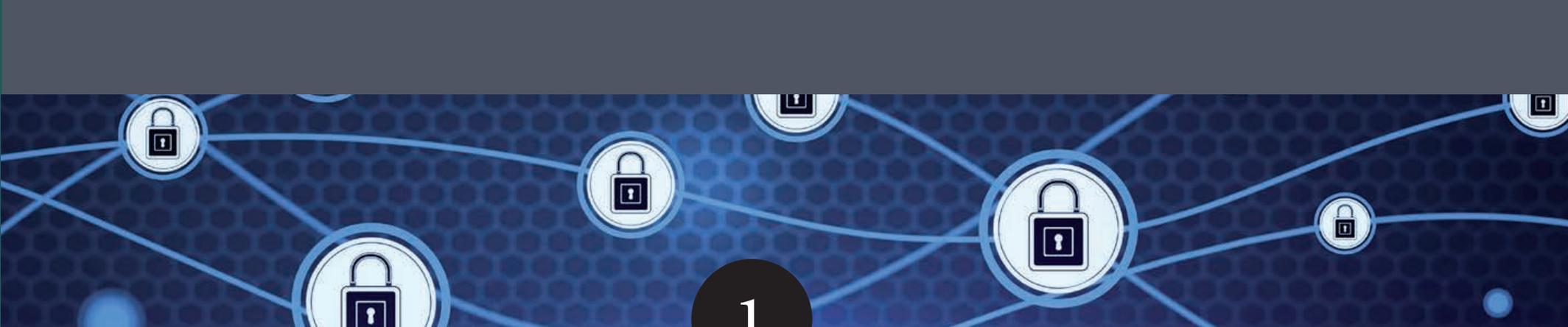
1

Projects implemented in the Arab States

under Hyderabad WTDC-10, and proposed projects to be implemented in the period 2015-2017.

The cybersecurity initiative was one of the five regional initiatives that came out of the Arab regional preparatory meeting held in Damascus in 2010 and became part of the Hyderabad Action Plan (HAP) in accordance with WTDC-10 Resolutions 17 and 32 and Resolution 135 of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Guadalajara, 2010).

The objective of the initiative was to enhance coordination in building confidence in the use of ICTs within the Arab region. This initiative was also adopted at WTDC-14.

What is the situation today?

The ITU Arab Regional Office (ARO) undertook many activities that built upon the five strategic pillars of the ITU Global Cybersecurity Agenda (GCA): legal measures, technical and procedural measures, organizational structures, capacity building and international cooperation. ITU ARO offers development assistance to members and encourages cooperation among members, raising awareness regarding the importance of developing national cybersecurity capabilities and protecting the national critical infrastructure.

In addition, assistance was provided to various Arab States (Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Comoros, Mauritania and Djibouti) in cybersecurity readiness assessment for the establishment and implementation of national CIRTs. Lastly, many activities were undertaken on child online protection in the Arab region, with ITU assisting Member States in understanding the legal aspects of child online protection. In that regard, ITU ARO established a working group which produced guidelines on the regional legal framework for child online protection in the Arab region.

In implementing the cybersecurity initiative, a regional centre was launched in March 2013 in cooperation with Oman and in line with the objectives of the Global Cybersecurity Agenda and the ITU-IMPACT initiative, the aim being to act as ITU's cybersecurity hub in the Arab region localizing and coordinating cybersecurity initiatives.

ITU ARO, in collaboration with the regional centre, enhanced knowledge sharing on building trust in the use of ICTs by organizing several events. These includede a three-day Regional Cybersecurity Summit, in Muscat, Oman, on 20-22 March 2014. The summit focused on critical national information infrastructure protection and aimed to bring public, private and academic sectors together and provide an appropriate platform for up to 200 senior ICT and cybersecurity officials from the MENA region to discuss and formulate strategic directions and plans to tackle emerging threats to global and regional critical infrastructure. Other events were two capacity-building workshops held in parallel with the summit in cooperation with RCC and IMPACT, on malware analysis and incident handling and response.

Within the framework of the Least Developed Countries Infrastructure Protection Project, an assistance programme was provided to some Arab LDCs (Mauritania and Comoros) for strengthening their cybersecurity capabilities to better respond to cyberthreats and ensure enhanced protection of their national infrastructure.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Objective

3

To build confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs and e-commerce in the Arab region and combat all forms of cyberthreat, including the misuse of ICTs.

1 Formulation of national and regional regulatory and technical policies and frameworks and legal measures to ensure data privacy and combat the different forms of cyberthreat in the Arab region, thereby ensuring optimal and secure use of the Internet and its various applications and building confidence in the Internet.

2 Establishment of national computer incident response teams (CIRTs) in the Arab region (in particular in least developed countries) and optimal coordination both among them and between them and CIRTs in the other regions.

3 Protection of Arab children and youth from harmful and abusive content on the Internet and making them aware of its risks, through the launch of awareness-raising campaigns and workshops, training curricula and study of the possibility of establishing a regional centre to prepare special awareness programmes to protect Arab children and youth from the risks of ICTs.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

1

Formulation of national and regional regulatory and technical policies and frameworks and LEGAL MEASURES TO ENSURE DATA PRIVACY and combat the different forms of cyberthreat in the Arab region, thereby ensuring optimal and secure use of the Internet and its various applications and building confidence in the Internet.

OBJECTIVES

- Adopt national strategies and policies related to cybersecurity in the region.
- Harmonize legal frameworks dealing with cybercrime in the Arab region.
- Develop guidelines on digital data privacy.

Estimated budget

CHF 200,000.

Potential partners

Arab Regional Cybersecurity Centre, IMPACT, Member States.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Regional cybersecurity summit (Muscat, 29-30 March).
- Regional workshop on capacity building in the protection of national critical infrastructure.
- Assistance to Djibouti on improving cybersecurity capabilities.

2016 Activities

- Provide assistance to selected countries in the development of national cybersecurity strategy.
- Training and capacity building programmes on formulating model policies on data privacy.

2017 Activities

- Prepare follow-up report on the status of cybersecurity in the Arab region and propose recommendations.

PROJECT PROPOSAL
2

Establishment of national COMPUTER INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAMS (CIRTs) in the Arab region (in particular in least developed countries) and optimal coordination both among them and between them and CIRTs in the other regions.

OBJECTIVES

- Establish CIRTs in the region, especially in the LDCs.
- Conduct regional and interregional cyberdrills.

Estimated budget

CHF 1,000,000.

Potential partners

Arab Regional Cybersecurity Centre,
IMPACT, Member States.

Country or countries involved

LDCs in the Arab region,
All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Perform CIRT assessments for Somalia and Yemen.
- Assist with CIRTs establishment for Palestine.
- Conduct a regional cybersecurity cyberdrill (Egypt).

2016 Activities

- Continued assistance with CIRTs establishment in LDCs.
- Establish CIRT-to-CIRT cooperation by creating an Arab network of CIRTs.

2017 Activities

- Encourage the establishment of inter-regional CIRT cooperation.
- Support the established Arab network of CIRTs.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

3

Protection of Arab children and youth from harmful and abusive content on the Internet, making them aware of its risks, through the launch of awareness-raising campaigns and workshops, training curricula and study of the possibility of establishing a regional centre to prepare special awareness programmes to protect Arab children and youth from the risks of ICTs.

OBJECTIVES

- Develop awareness-raising campaigns through the Arab Regional Cybersecurity Centre.
- Build capacity with regard to child online protection (COP).
- Adopt a legal framework on COP.

Estimated budget

CHF 150,000.

Potential partners

Arab Regional Cybersecurity Centre, IMPACT, Member States.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Regional child online protection strategy workshop.
- Conducted COP challenge in Egypt (February).
- Promotion of the ITU legal framework on COP and Model Law in the Arab region.

2016 Activities

- Provide assistance to selected countries in the development of national COP strategy.
- Provide assistance to selected countries to raise awareness on COP through the Arab Regional Cybersecurity Centre.
- Promotion of the ITU guidelines on COP for the Arab region.

2017 Activities

- Prepare a follow-up report on the status of COP. in the Arab region and propose recommendations.
- Provide assistance to selected countries in the development of national COP strategy.

Regional initiative 3

Use of telecommunications/ICTs for SMART AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT and protection of the environment

1

What is the situation today?

Today, ICTs are playing a crucial role in sustainable development, green sustainable resource-efficient economy, e-waste, smartest sustainable city and protection of the environment. The efficiency and availability of emergency telecommunication services help save lives and reduce devastating effects.

Linking ICT development to emergency telecommunications, disaster management and environmental protection opens opportunities for countries to attain sustainable development through access to and use of telecommunication/ICT services to stimulate the economic growth of all nations and thereby save the lives of all citizens from poverty, reducing risks and protecting the environment.

At the last World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-14), the Arab region introduced a new initiative on the "Use of telecommunications/ICTs for smart and sustainable development and protection of the environment".

This proves that there is high demand in the Arab region for national policies and guidelines on the use of telecommunication/ICT services and applications for smart sustainable development (SSD), including policies and national plans to mitigate climate change and e-waste and on the role of telecommunications in emergencies.

The objective and expected results for the period 2015-2017 as proposed by the Arab region and endorsed by WTDC are given below.

2

Objective

To raise awareness of the importance of sustainable development and environmental protection, and formulate legislation and regulatory frameworks in order to achieve smart and sustainable development.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Assistance to the countries in the following:

1 Formulation of strategic plans and regulatory frameworks for the transition to smart and sustainable development in various relevant spheres.

2 Exchange of expertise between Arab countries in the field of smart and sustainable development in various spheres, study of the negative effects resulting from e-waste and identification of appropriate solutions to deal with them.

3 Addressing the challenges of scarce resources, for example water, in the Arab region by means of smart management of those resources using telecommunication/ICT applications.

4 Use of telecommunications/ICTs to confront the consequences of climate change for the Arab region, formulation of mechanisms to control emissions of harmful gases, and gradual transition to clean and sustainable energy.

5 Exchange of expertise on policy regarding smart, sustainable and green cities in the Arab region, ensuring the gradual transformation of Arab cities into smart and sustainable cities.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

1

Adoption of national strategies for the TRANSITION TO SMART AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (SSD)

3

PROPOSED PROJECTS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE PERIOD 2015-2017

OBJECTIVES

Linking ICT development to sustainable development, emergency telecommunications, disaster management and environmental protection opens opportunities for countries to achieve sustainable development through access to and use of telecommunication/ICT services; and evaluation report on smart sustainable development in the Arab region.

Estimated budget

CHF 270,000.

Potential partners

Member States, Sector Members, UNEP, UNISDR, ESCWA, WMO, WFP, FAO, ISSD, LAS, THUARYA, YAHSAT, SUHILSAT and ARABSAT.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Kick-off meeting on the formulation of a framework for cooperation with key regional organizations (Bahrain, 6 May).
- Awareness Workshop on Smart Sustainable Cities for the Arab region (United Arab Emirates, 3-4 May).

2016 Activities

- Formulation of guidelines to develop strategic plans and regulatory frameworks.
- Formulation of guidelines to develop strategic plans and regulatory frameworks for the transition to smart and sustainable development (SSD).

2017 Activities

- Assistance to adopt strategies and regulatory frameworks in selected countries.
- Training on guidelines on transition towards smart cities.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

2

Formulation of model

POLICY ON E-WASTE

OBJECTIVE

Develop model policies on e-waste in selected Arab countries.

Estimated budget

CHF 200,000.

Potential partners

Member States, Sector Members, UNEP, UNISDR, OCHA, ESCWA, WMO, WFP, FAO, ISSD, LAS, THUARYA, YAHSAT, SUHILSAT and ARABSAT.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

The workshop under Project Proposal 1 will be used to raise awareness on e-waste-related matters.

2016 Activities

Development of case studies report including a model policy on e-waste.

2017 Activities

Assistance to adopt policy on e-waste in selected countries.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

3

Project on smart
WATER MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE

Implementation of smart management of scarce resources in selected Arab countries.

Estimated budget

CHF 200,000.

Potential partners

Member States, Sector Members, UNEP, UNISDR, OCHA, ESCWA, WMO, WFP, FAO, ISSD, LAS, THUARYA, YAHSAT, SUHILSAT and ARABSAT.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Implementation of pilot project on smart water management.

2016 Activities

- High-level expert meeting on smart management of scarce resources.
- Evaluation of the pilot project on smart water management and recommendations to expand the project on a regional level.

2017 Activities

- Assistance to implement project on smart water management in selected countries.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

4

Formulation of model
PLAN ON EMERGENCY
TELECOMMUNICATIONS
in selected countries and
promotion and adoption of
ITU climate change toolkits

OBJECTIVE

Develop model policies on emergency telecommunications and promote the ITU toolkits on ICT and climate change in the Arab countries and provide assistance to implement a model plan on emergency telecommunications in selected countries.

Estimated budget

CHF 200,000

Potential partners

Member States, Sector Members, UNEP, UNISDR, OCHA, ESCWA, WMO, WFP, FAO, ISSD, LAS, THUARYA, YAHSAT, SUHILSAT and ARABSAT.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Awareness workshop on emergency telecommunication and the Tampere Convention for Arab region (Kuwait, 24-26 November).

2016 Activities

- Launching of challenge on ICT application to reduce the effect of climate change.
- Regional Workshop on National Strategies for Sustainable Development including Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change Adaptation for the Arab region.
- Policy guidelines on transition towards smart cities.
- Developing a model plan on emergency telecommunications.

2017 Activities

- Assistance to implement ITU climate change toolkits in selected countries.
- Assistance to implement a model plan on emergency telecommunications in selected countries.

Regional initiative 4
Smart learning

1
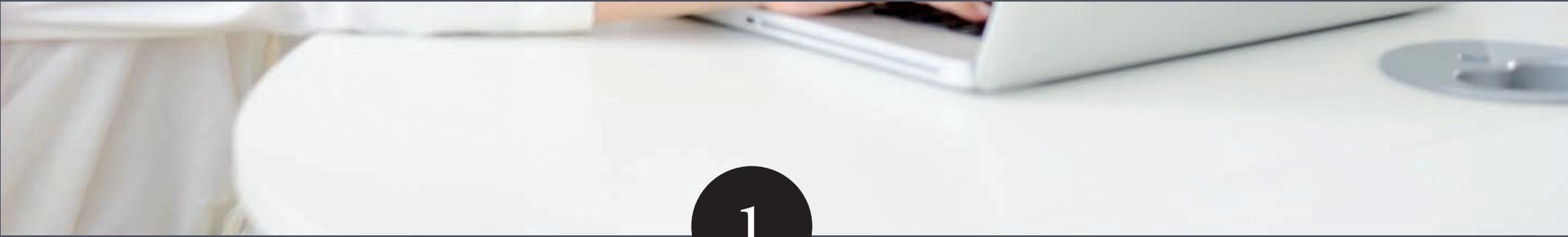
What is the situation today?

As telecommunications/ICTs and broadband become more accessible and available throughout the Arab region, they are beginning to infiltrate all sectors of society. This is quite evident in the education sector, as various initiatives on education reform throughout the region have been launched in recent years with focus on integrating ICTs in the education system. New education media such as mobile education or massive open online courses have been the main focus of such initiatives, to such an extent that it exemplifies the conviction that there is a direct correlation between ICT and education as ICTs have multiplier effects on all aspects of the education system. With this in mind, the Member States participating in WTDC-14 adopted the fourth Arab regional initiative on smart learning. The objective and expected results for the period 2015-2017 as set by WTDC are given below.

2

SMART LEARNING

Objective

To bring about a shift from traditional methods of teaching in schools and universities, using books and paper-based sources, to smart learning with the use of tablet computers, the latest software and modern telecommunication/ICT techniques to provide access to a range of academic information, resources and subject matters.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Assistance to countries in the following:

1 Eradication of digital illiteracy in the Arab region.

2 Identification of smart and low-cost computing devices, either with the support of Arab governments or by concluding agreements with manufacturers to provide such devices.

3 Development of Arab education e-content for schools and universities in the Arab region.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

1

Adoption of national strategies for smart learning and for ERADICATING DIGITAL ILLITERACY

3 PROPOSED PROJECTS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE PERIOD 2015-2017

OBJECTIVES

- Adoption of national programmes on eradication of digital illiteracy.
- Promotion of regional cooperation on smart learning.
- Adoption of national strategies for smart learning.
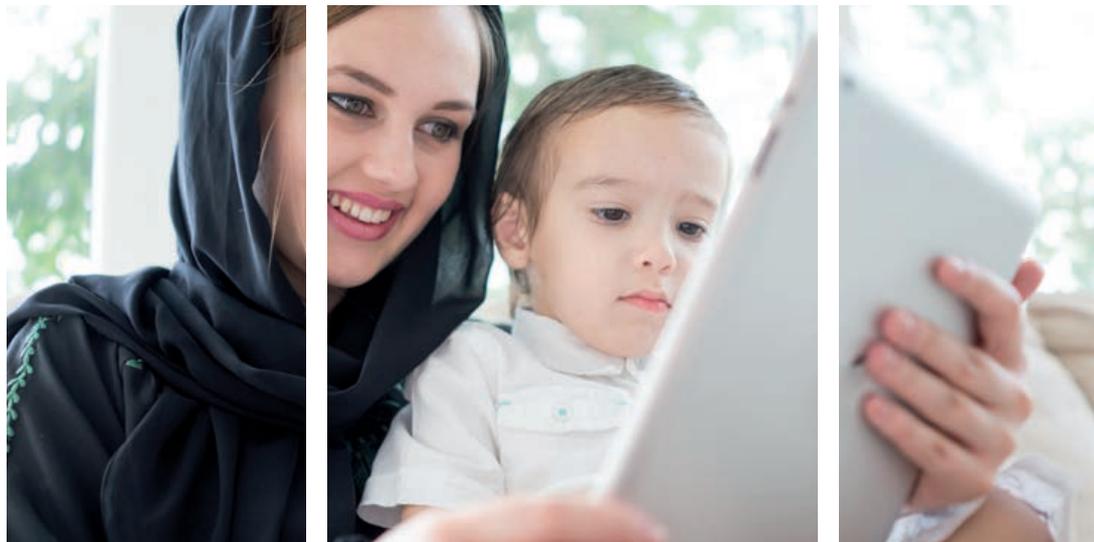
Estimated budget

CHF 230,000.

Potential partners

ALECSO, UNESCO, ISESCO, Intel, Cisco, Microsoft, governments in the Arab region.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Prepare report on the status and future plans of countries in the region regarding smart learning.
- Organize a workshop for all relevant stakeholders in the Arab region to kick off work on this regional initiative and formulate a framework for cooperation with key regional organizations.
- Develop guidelines for adopting national strategies for smart learning and build capacities of high-level executives in selected countries.

2016 Activities

- Develop guidelines on the formulation of national digital illiteracy eradication plans.
- Promote implementation of national strategies on smart learning among countries in the region by conducting workshops and providing expertise to countries in need.

2017 Activities

- Prepare a follow-up report on the status of smart learning in the Arab region and propose recommendations.
- Promote implementation of guidelines on the formulation of national digital illiteracy eradication plans by conducting workshops and providing expertise to countries in need.
- Organize first high-level meeting between ministers of ICT and education to adopt and promote regional strategy for cooperation on smart learning.
- Organize a high-level forum and exhibition on smart learning.

PROJECT PROPOSAL
2

Promotion of deployment of TABLET PCs IN SCHOOLS in the Arab region

OBJECTIVE

Promote the deployment of tablet PCs in schools in the Arab region.
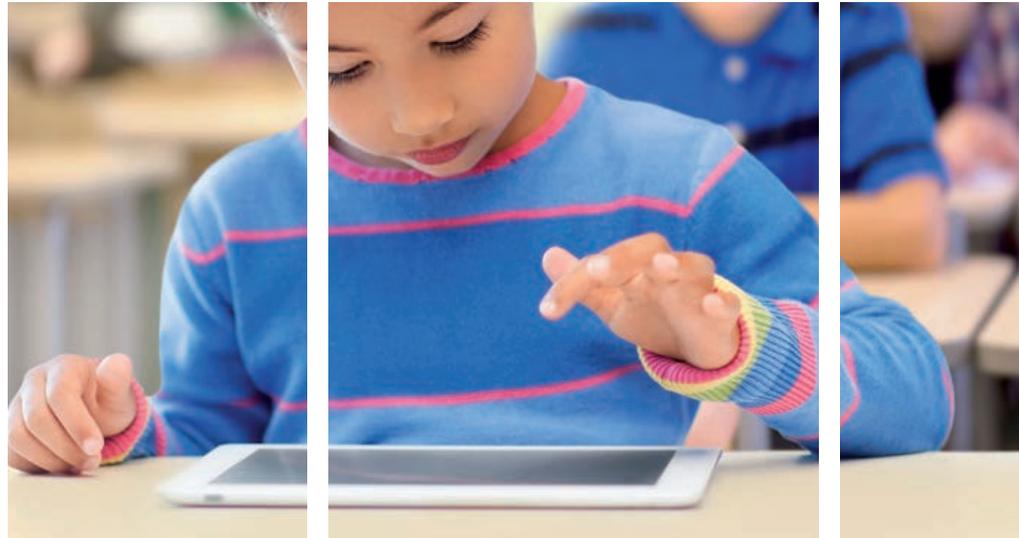
Estimated budget

CHF 140,000.

Potential partners

UNESCO, ALECSO, ISESCO.

Country or countries involved

One LDC,
one middle-income and one rich Arab country.

2015 Activities

Cost-benefit analysis of deploying tablet PCs.

2016 Activities

Develop model agreements between governments and manufacturers.

Formulate pilot project on smart learning in selected schools/countries.

2017 Activities

Implement pilot projects on smart learning in selected schools/countries.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

3

Promoting OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE

Promotion of the development of open educational resources in the Arab region.

Estimated budget

CHF 80,000.

Potential partners

UNESCO, ALECSO, ISESCO, governments in the Arab region.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

Develop guidelines for open educational resources (OER).

2016 Activities

Promotion of guidelines.

2017 Activities

Capacity development activities on OER.

Regional initiative 5
Ensuring access to telecommunications/ICTs, in particular for PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
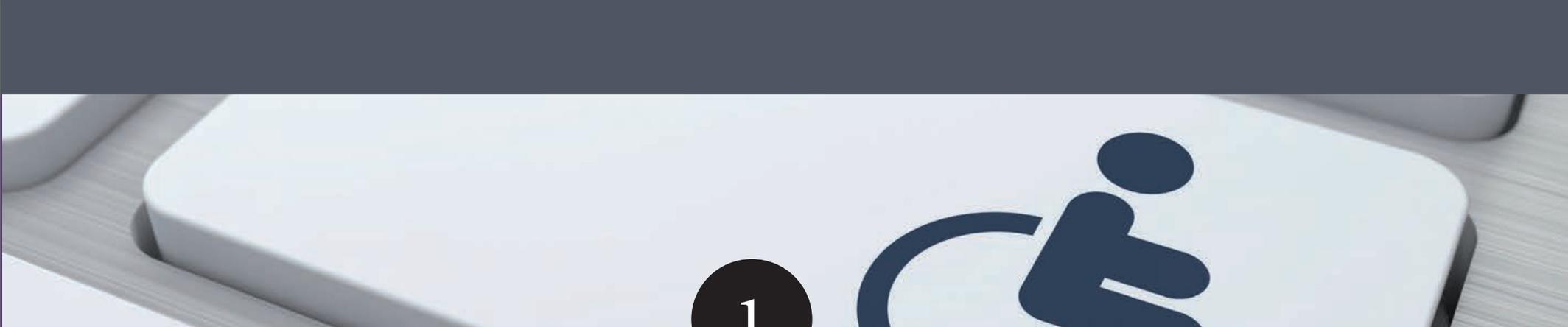
What is the
situation today?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank (WB) (World Report on Disability, 2011), 15 per cent of the world's total population, or over one billion people, live with some form of disability. The number of people with disabilities (PwDs) in the Arab world is estimated to be more than 50 million and in both Arab and African countries the number increases to an estimated 200 million. These remarkably underprivileged strata of society are excluded from social and economic activities, which leads to societal divide and absence of social justice.

Such unprivileged populations are in dire need of ICT solutions to support their empowerment, independence and inclusion. According to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), empowering PwDs and promoting ICT accessibility will ensure the active participation of PwDs in all walks of life, including employment, education and social inclusion, thus providing them with rich and independent lives allowing them to contribute positively to their societies.

Access to telecommunications/ICTs for all, including PwDs, has been acknowledged by many forums. Recently, the World Telecommunication Development Conference adopted the fifth Arab regional initiative entitled "Ensuring access to telecommunications/ICTs, in particular for persons with disabilities". This shows a clear level of acknowledgment and commitment by members especially in the Arab region to prioritize this fundamental issue regionally in the period 2015-2017. The objective and expected results adopted by WTDC for this regional initiative are given below.

ENSURING ACCESS TO TELECOMMUNICATIONS/ICTs,
IN PARTICULAR FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

2

Objective

To ensure the right of access to telecommunications/ICTs for persons with disabilities in the Arab region.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Assistance to countries in the following:

1 Formulation and updating of national and regional regulatory policies and frameworks to ensure access for persons with disabilities of any kind to telecommunications/ICTs, facilitating their involvement in the community and enabling them to enjoy their full rights.

2 Development of ICT applications and software that enable persons with disabilities to access information, references and other resources for education and leisure, and provision of specialized national and regional applications for libraries, databases and other purposes via the Internet and other telecommunication/ICT media.

3 Participation of persons with disabilities in Arab workshops, training courses and conferences, by providing all requirements and facilities and removing all obstacles.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

1

Promoting the adoption of national policies to ensure ACCESS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES of any kind to telecommunications/ICTs.

3 PROPOSED PROJECTS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE PERIOD 2015-2017

OBJECTIVE

Adoption by governments in the Arab region of national policies to ensure access for persons with disabilities of any kind to telecommunications/ICTs.

Estimated budget

CHF 100,000.

Potential partners

Ministries of ICT, health, education and labour, national ICT regulatory authorities, regulators, operators, organizations of persons with disabilities, other UN agencies, NGOs, broadcasters and emergency call centres.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Organize a kick-off workshop to launch activities in this regional initiative (Egypt, 20-21 April).
- Translate and publish the ITU Model ICT Accessibility Policy Report.

2016 Activities

- Online training on the ITU Model ICT Accessibility Policy Report for ICT policy-makers, regulators and organizations of persons with disabilities and other NGOs.

2017 Activities

- Organize a regional workshop to shed light on the successes of and lessons learned from the activities carried out under this regional initiative and suggest ways forward for the region.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

2

Promoting accessibility regarding public phones, telecentres, kiosks, mobile phones and devices, government websites and television/video programming.

OBJECTIVE

Accessible public phones, telecentres, kiosks, mobile phones and devices, government websites and television/video programming should be available to persons with different kinds of disabilities in the Arab region.

Estimated budget

CHF 220,000.

Potential partners

Ministries of ICT, health, education and labour, national ICT regulatory authorities, regulators, operators, organizations of persons with disabilities, other UN agencies, NGOs, broadcasters and emergency call centres.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

- Formulate and launch a project to establish a regional innovation centre for accessibility.
- Develop an online curriculum for Model ICT Accessibility Policy Report for policy-makers, regulators, organizations of persons with disabilities and other NGOs.

2016 Activities

- Organize a workshop on developing and maintaining accessible government websites.
- Establish a regional centre.
- Organize a competition to develop accessible apps for persons with disabilities.

2017 Activities

- Promote and sustain the activities of the regional centre.
- promote applications developed by participants in the competition and organize a second round of the competition if successful.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

3

Assisting regional organizations to make their workshops, TRAINING COURSES AND CONFERENCES more accessible to PwDs.

OBJECTIVE

Development of guidelines on the participation of persons with disabilities in workshops, training courses and conferences organized by regional organizations in the Arab region.

Estimated budget

CHF 60,000.

Potential partners

Ministries of ICT, health, education and labour, national ICT regulatory authorities, regulators, operators, organizations of persons with disabilities, other UN agencies, NGOs, broadcasters and emergency call centres.

Country or countries involved

All Arab countries.

2015 Activities

Prepare guidelines on accessibility of PwDs to workshops, training courses, and conferences.

2016 Activities

Promotion of developed guidelines.

2017 Activities

Organize a workshop for regional organizations and administration on the developed guidelines on accessibility of PwDs to workshops, training courses, and conferences.

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

150 ITU 1865 2015

ITU