



**Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)**

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Geneva, 3 August 2023

To :

- Administrations of ITU Member States,
- ITU-D Sector Members,
- Academia,
- Regional and International Organizations,
- Regulators,
- Regional Offices of UN System Organizations,
- Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Advisory Groups (TSAG, TDAG, RAG) and ITU-D Study Groups in the Asia-Pacific Region

Subject: ITU Regional Development Forum for Asia-Pacific (Bangkok, Thailand, 13-15 September 2023)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to invite you to participate in the Regional Development Forum for Asia-Pacific (RDF-ASP) to be organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in close collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT). The Forum will be held in a hybrid format from **13 to 15 September 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand**. The theme of this year's Regional Development Forum is **"Digital transformation and innovation for a sustainable and equitable digital future: Supporting the SDGs"**.

The RDF-ASP will be held back-to-back in Bangkok, Thailand with the following events:

- APT Symposium on Inclusive Connectivity, from 11–12 September 2023.
- Regional Groups of ITU-T Study Group 3 (Tariff and accounting principles and international telecommunication/ICT economic and policy issues) and ITU-T Study Group 5 (EMF, environment, climate action, sustainable digitalization, and circular economy), from 11-12 September 2023. This includes a half-day Bridging the Standardization Gap (BSG) hands-on training session on 11 September (AM), open to all interested parties.

The Regional Development Forum for Asia-Pacific provides an opportunity for exchange of views between ITU and decision-makers of ITU Member States and Sector Members as well as other stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region. It serves as a platform for assessing strategic orientations that may have an impact on ITU's regional work plan.

RDF-ASP will report on the outcomes and progress towards the implementation of outcomes from the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-22) held in Kigali, Rwanda in June 2022. Emphasis will be given to the five Regional Initiatives for Asia and the Pacific approved by the WTDC-22. All the stakeholders will have an opportunity to discuss implementation plans.

A special segment of the RDF will be dedicated to the [Partner2Connect Partnership Roundtable](#) that provides an opportunity for match-making. Member States will have an opportunity to present their individual country or regional priorities, and the partners will be invited to respond by announcing their commitments which could be based on the pledges that they have already made or new pledges under the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition, aimed at addressing those needs in Asia-pacific. This will include commitments to finance or support through in-kind interventions aimed at advancing digital development in the region through the implementation of the WTDC-22 Regional Initiatives.

RDF-ASP will address, from a regional perspective, the results-based management approach applied to all actions carried out in the region as well as activities related to ITU Study Groups, Membership, Partnerships, and special initiatives. These include, but are not limited to, Partner2Connect, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development, GovStack, Smart Villages and Smart Islands (SVSI), Digital Transformation Centres (DTC), Area Office and Innovation Centre in New Delhi, Connect2Recover, Critical Technologies and Cybersecurity, including the Digital Financial Services (DFS) Lab Security Clinic, as well as regional contributions to the implementation of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) Action Lines and United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Additionally, there will be a specific segment dedicated to Cybersecurity and the Digital Financial Services (DFS) Security Clinic. The objective of this clinic is to share findings and recommendations from the [FIGI Security Infrastructure and Trust working group](#) for regulators and DFS providers with regards to addressing security challenges for digital finance. The target audience of the clinic includes ICT regulators, Central Banks/Financial, DFS providers, and other interested stakeholders.

RDF-ASP will also offer an opportunity to discuss ITU's role in the UN system and its contribution at regional and country level to foster digital development. Finally, RDF-ASP will take into consideration the regional activities planned by Standardization and Radiocommunication Bureaus as well as General Secretariat at the regional level.

The agenda of the Forum is attached as **Annex 1**.

The RDF is also open for sponsorships. More information about sponsorship opportunities will be available at the following webpage at <http://itu.int/go/QUK8>. The deadline to express interest in the sponsorship package will be available on that webpage. RDFs are open to all stakeholders willing to strengthen cooperation and partnership among telecommunication/ICT policymakers, regulators, industry, academia, regional and international development agencies, and organizations on specific regional telecommunication and ICT matters.

Fellowship

With support from ITU and partners, **one full fellowship per eligible country of the Asia-Pacific region** may be awarded, subject to available funding, to facilitate participation from developing countries. Priority will be given to fellowship applications from Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Preference will be given to applicants attending all the ITU events in Bangkok from 11-15 September 2023. The duly validated fellowship request form (**Annex-2**) and its annexures, if any, must be returned to the Fellowships Service by e-mail to fellowships@itu.int or by fax: + 41 22 730 57 78, by **11 August 2023** at the very latest. Registration prior to submitting the fellowship request is mandatory.

Contributions

As part of the RDF-ASP 2023, ITU Office for Asia-Pacific is launching a Regional Consultation that presents an opportunity for ITU Member States, Sector Members, and other stakeholders to contribute to ITU's activities at the regional level taking into account the strategic needs of the region and partner offerings/commitments during the period, 2023 – 2025. Stakeholders (Member States, and Partners) who

will attend this RDF'S Partner2Connect roundtables are invited to submit their written contributions to be used as basis for discussions, by **23 August 2023**. These may be submitted to: ITU-RO-AsiaPacific@itu.int using the RDF-ASP Contributions Template available at the RDF-ASP website: [Regional Development Forum for Asia-Pacific](#). The contribution form is available as **Annex 3**.

Please note that RDF-ASP will be paperless. Documents related to this event, including agenda, presentations and practical information with guidance on how to connect to the online platform, will be available on the ITU website at <http://itu.int/go/RDF-ASP-23>.

The Forum will be conducted in English language and Chinese language interpretation will be available.

To participate, please register online using the link available on the direct link at <https://www.itu.int/net4/CRM/xreg/web/Login.aspx?src=Registration&Event=C-00012892> and the ITU Blue page at <http://www.itu.int/go/regitud> no later than **11 September 2023**.

For any additional enquiry, Ms. Atsuko Okuda, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (e-mail: itu-ro-asiapacific@itu.int), remains at your disposal.

Yours faithfully,



Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava
Director

Annex 1: Concept Note and Agenda

Annex 2: Fellowship form

Annex 3: Contribution Form