Connect2Recover - Digital Infrastructure and Ecosystem Reinforcement Against COVID-19 in Asia-Pacific (9RAS21067)

SURVEY RESULTS OF COUNTRY ASSISTANCES

## INTRODUCTION

Under the partnership project with DITRDCA Australia, titled Connect2Recover - Digital Infrastructure and Ecosystem Reinforcement Against COVID-19 in Asia-Pacific, ​8 countries were assisted during the project duration from Dec 2021 to Nov 2024.

This document provides the summary of the post implementation survey conducted by the RO-ASP to understand the impact and satisfaction of the beneficiary countries with the project deliverables. The survey also requested indication o future areas of assistance which are also presented here:

## SUMMARY OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

Survey was sent to all 8 beneficiary countries and responses were received from 7 countries. No response was received from Bhutan.

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| S.No. | Country | Feedback on the satisfaction with the deliverables of the engagement and the impact created. (Rating based scale from 1-5) | next steps you will take using the deliverables and/or what impact has this activity created | uture areas to be considered for engagement |
|  | Mongolia | 4. Deliverables are of satisfactory quality | With the support of Australia's DITRDCA and the ITU Regional Office, we have obtained the "National Roaming Readiness Assessment" document, which has made an important contribution to taking further steps. Currently, efforts are being organized in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to provide emergency services to citizens regardless of network affiliation. | - Enhancing our digital transformation strategy- Implementing innovative technologies for efficient governance- Building capacity and improving digital infrastructure- Addressing challenges and identifying best practices |
|  | Srilanka | 5. Deliverables fully satisfy our requirement | The final report by the ITU expert guided the development of policy and regulations on telecom infrastructure sharing. The Policy and Rules on both active and passive infrastructure sharing were prepared through an internal committee incorporating recommendations from the ITU consultation report. Subsequently, the Telecommunications Infrastructure Sharing Regulations (Gazette Notification No. 2396/32) were published in 2024. These regulations are expected to reduce operational costs, prevent redundant investments by encouraging resource sharing among telecom operators, and support expand network coverage in under-served areas. This initiative supports a more competitive, efficient, and inclusive telecommunications sector, in alignment with international best practices. | ITU expert assistance for developing a cost model to derive the unit cost for Voice, Data, IPLS, and DPLC services in the Sri Lankan Telecommunications Industry. |
|  | Philippines | 5. Deliverables fully satisfy our requirement | a. The assessment has been instrumental in identifying critical infrastructure, policy, and operational gaps in the Philippines' ICT ecosystem. The DICT will use the findings to:--Strengthen infrastructure resilience and telecom networks by incorporating elastic optical networking and adaptive restoration into national backbone planning, and by expanding satellite and fibre infrastructure to underserved and disaster-prone regions.--Update national policies and strategies, particularly the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP), National Broadband Plan, and National Cybersecurity Plan 2023–2028, ensuring alignment with ITU frameworks and global best practices.--Support disaster risk reduction and early warning systems (EWS) by improving coordination with PAGASA, OCD, PHIVOLCS, telcos and other stakeholders for streamlined dissemination of alerts using CAP protocols and mobile-based emergency communication channels.--Advance affordability and inclusion through support mechanisms like the Universal Service Access Fund (USAF), promotion of infrastructure sharing (active and passive), and potential enablement of MVNOs to increase service-based competition.Guide investment and regulatory actions in data centre resilience, cloud adoption, and ICT energy sustainability, especially as AI and high-bandwidth services grow.b. The deliverables have provided a comprehensive evidence base to shape policy, technical, and regulatory priorities toward a secure, affordable, and resilient digital environment.c. The assessment has highlighted important infrastructure, policy, and operational gaps in the Philippines' ICT ecosystem. To address this, the DICT intends to strengthen infrastructure resiliency via technologies such as elastic optical networking and roll out satellite and fiber in disaster-stricken and underserved regions. It also intends to revise national plans—including the NECP, Broadband Plan, and Cybersecurity Plan—to align them with ITU frameworks and international standards. Also, the DICT shall enhance the coordination of disasters and alerting through mobile and CAP-based systems closely with operating agencies such as PAGASA and PHIVOLCS.d. Other priorities involve encouraging affordability and access through infrastructure sharing, the Universal Service Access Fund, and MVNO support to enhance market competition. The study will also inform investments and regulation reforms in domains like data center resilience, cloud computing technology, and ICT energy sustainability—particularly against increasing AI and high-bandwidth demands. Overall, the deliverables have established a robust evidence base to drive policy, technical, and regulatory choices towards a safer, more inclusive, and disaster-resilient digital space. | a. Support for the finalization and operationalization of the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP), including implementation guidance and simulation-based testing.b. Technical cooperation on deploying elastic optical networking and disaster-resilient infrastructure, including satellite-based connectivity and cloud-based backup systems.c. Capacity-building on DNS resilience, adaptive restoration, and cybersecurity for critical information infrastructure (CII), in line with the National Cybersecurity Plan 2023–2028.d. Guidance in setting measurable Quality of Service Experience (QoSE) benchmarks, to improve monitoring and regulation in both fixed and mobile broadband.e. Assistance in operationalizing the Universal Access and Service Fund (USAF) and establishing frameworks for shared infrastructure, MVNO licensing, and spectrum optimization.f. Regional coordination for Early Warning Systems, especially in establishing cross-border alerting protocols and best practices aligned with the “Early Warnings for All” (EW4All) initiative.g. A key future area for engagement with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the development and implementation of the National Emergency Telecommunications Plan (NETP). As a major deliverable of the recent resilience assessment, finalizing and operationalizing the NETP is a top priority. DICT looks forward to ITU's continued support in aligning the plan with global best practices, integrating Common Alerting Protocol (CAP)-based systems, and enhancing coordination among government agencies, telecommunications providers, and emergency response units.h. Another critical area is infrastructure resilience and expansion. It would be beneficial for DICT to seek the guidance of the ITU in rolling out advanced backbone technologies such as elastic optical networking, satellite communications, and expanded fiber networks, especially in disaster-prone and underserved regions. Technical assistance from ITU in risk mapping, infrastructure audits, and the development of resilience standards would greatly benefit these efforts. |
|  | Fiji | 4. Deliverables are of satisfactory quality | The Report will be used for ensuring sustainability for the Digital Television Infrastructure. | Review of the Telecommunications Act |
|  | Tonga | 4. Deliverables are of satisfactory quality | I have to edit the metrics and remove requirement for tool to test quality of service | Yes we need alot of policies development and capacity building on various topics - AI, cybersecurity, satellites, technology service and access for pwd, scam prevention, spectrum management, economic development by technology, etc.  |
|  | Nepal | 4. Deliverables are of satisfactory quality | The next steps we will take using deliverables include consideration of cell broadcast, allocation of spectrum for emergency communication, coordination with concerned stakeholders and awareness programs. This activity has highlighted the priority areas Nepal has to work for increasing affordability and resilience in telecom infrastructure in Nepal. | Assessment and Gap Analysis of Digital Transformation in NepalAssessment and Gap Analysis for improving ICT indicators in NepalStrategies for Deployment of Early Warning for All in NepalTechnical Readiness for Cyber Security Resilient Infrastructure in Nepal and International Co-operation for Cyber Security |
|  | Lao P.D.R |  | This activity has significantly improved national awareness and inter-agency alignment on the critical role of ICT in disaster preparedness and socio-economic development. It can serve as a foundation for future investment planning and regional cooperation to strengthen Laos’ digital resilience and this report can be based on Laos ICT information in field of study. | N/A |

## CONCLUSION

The feedback from participating countries reflects high satisfaction (average rating of 4-5) with the ITU engagement deliverables, which have significantly contributed to policy development, regulatory reforms, and infrastructure resilience. Key impacts include improved telecom infrastructure sharing (Sri Lanka), enhanced disaster resilience and policy alignment (Philippines), and emergency communication readiness (Nepal, Mongolia).

Future engagement priorities focus on digital transformation, cybersecurity, AI, and regional cooperation for early warning systems. Countries seek further ITU support in capacity building, regulatory reviews, and advanced technology deployment to strengthen inclusive and resilient digital ecosystems.