



# **Overview of BDT activities in the Arab Region Arab Broadband Regional Initiative**

**ITU Regional Forum for Arab Region: IMT  
Systems: Technology, Evolution and  
Implementation**

**Gammarth, Tunisia, 7-9 May 2013**



# **BDT activities in the Arab Region**



## Regional Initiatives

### Objective:

- Meet specific needs identified by Member States in each region

### Actions:

- Undertake small and large scale projects
- Led by regional offices, supported by Geneva HQ



## Regional Initiatives for the Arab Region

- **5 regional initiatives decided by the Arab States in the World Telecommunication Development Conference WTDC 2010**
  - **I.1 Broadband Connectivity**
  - **I.2 Digital Broadcasting**
  - **I.3 Open Source Software**
  - **I.4 Arab Digital Content**
  - **I.5 Cybersecurity**



## Highlight of Some Activities Planned in 2013 and 2014

### Broadband Connectivity

- IMT Systems : Technologies, Concept and Deployment
- Seminar on Fiber Optics for Communication Networks; From Standards to Deployment
- Connect Arab Internet Networks (IXPs)
- Workshop on Internet of Things & Machine to Machine communication
- Workshop on SDN Networks
- Cloud Computing Pilot Project

### Digital Broadcasting

- Workshop on Digital Dividend
- Development of Roadmap for transition from Analogue to Digital Broadcasting
- Adaptation and implementation of Roadmaps for transition from Digital to Analogue

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## Highlight of Some Activities Planned in 2013 and 2014

### Arab Digital Content

- Arab Digital Content Forum, Dubai, 24 June 2013 (tentative)
- Competition on Mobile Applications for Development
- Support for Incubators
- Pilot Projects on Smart Water Management, Mobile Education, and Mobile Health

### Free and Open Source Software

- Establishing a Network of FOSS Centers in the Region
- Support for establishing FOSS Centers

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## Highlight of Some Activities Planned in 2013 and 2014

### Cybersecurity

- Working Group to Develop a regional Legal Framework for the Child Online Protection in the Arab Region
- Cybersecurity strategy development and CIRT assessment and assistance
- ITU Regional Cyberdrill simulation
- Empower Cybersecurity Regional Center in Oman

### Other Activities

- Centers of Excellence
- ICTs for Society (Women, Youth, PWDs)
- Direct Assistance



## Arab Broadband Regional Initiative

- *What benefits? challenges? How to move forward?*



## *Why Broadband*

- Broadband is a vital enabler to stimulate economic growth, business development and social welfare.
- High speed Internet access is increasingly viewed as essential infrastructure for the global information economy.
- Accelerating broadband deployment provides a constructive platform for addressing a variety of public challenges including healthcare, education, transportation, security and workforce/economic development.



- Wide spreading of broadband networks will promote the Arabic digital content and local applications.
- The digital divide between the Arab region and the advanced economies is significant especially in terms of broadband penetration (infrastructure, usage, affordability).
- Although developing countries are catching up in terms of mobile broadband penetration, huge disparities remain between mobile-broadband penetration in the developing (8%) and the developed world (51%)



Everyone – wherever they live and whatever their means – needs equitable and affordable access to broadband.

- Hamadoun Touré

## **Background**

- The Regional initiative for the Arab region on Broadband for 2012 to 2014, approved by WTDC-10 in Hyderabad.
- Aimed at describing factors that need to be considered in:
  - improving the broadband penetration in the Arab region
  - preparing a national master plan for the broadband.
  - providing assistance in developing such master plan.



## ***ARO activities related to broadband initiative***

the ARO activities are focused on the following key areas:

- Capacity building
- Internet Exchange Points
- Connect a school, connect a community
- National master plan for broadband
- Strategic partnership



## ***Actions carried out 2011-2012***

- Master plan for broadband Arab region: boosting national broadband master plan initiative
- 4th Working Group Meeting for the Project on "Connect Arab Internet Networks"
- Expert Level Training on Telecom Network Cost Modeling for Regulators in Arab States Region
- Arab Regional Development Forum on Broadband in the Arab Region: Challenges and Opportunities



- ITU Workshop on Survey & Assessment for Internet Traffic Infrastructure
- Working Group Meeting for the Project on "Connect Arab Internet Networks"
- The online course on "Overview of Wireless Networking and Current Practices"
- ITU/BDT Arab Regional Workshop on "Connectivity in Rural Areas"
- ITU/BDT Arab Regional Workshop on "Infrastructure sharing & LLU"
- ITU/BDT Arab Regional Workshop on Long Term Evolution "LTE"



- SMS4DC, ITU granted the training, the license and the logistics for 6 Arab Countries
- Assistance for the establishment of a Data Center in Mauritania,
  - Training course on Spectrum Management for 6 Yemeni Engineers





### ***Planned Actions 2013-2014***

- Master plan for broadband implementation for selected countries in the Arab Region
- IMT Systems : Technologies, Concept and Deployment Forum
- Seminar on Fiber Optics for Communication Networks; From Standards to Deployment
- Connect Arab Internet Networks (IXPs) follow up Meetings
  - New Trends for Building and Financing Broadband: Policies and Economies

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- Workshop on Cloud Computing
- Regional Seminar for Costs and Tariffs for Arab States
- Technical Assistance for Palestinian Authority
- **Workshop on Internet of Things & Machine to Machine communication**
- **Workshop on SDN Networks**
- **Workshop on Cloud Computing Concepts**
  - **Cloud Computing Pilot Project**
- **Regional Forum on NGN**

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- **Technical Assistance to build national backbone and broadband**
- **Assessment of the status of use of the SMS4DC Customers in ARB Countries**



### ***How to Promote broadband***

- Broadband should become a top priority for decision-makers.
- It also needs to be included in the global development agenda post-2015.
- Need a high level dialogue between the stakeholders on strategies & policies directed towards broadband development and to explore new ideas on how to foster demand for broadband and e-services.
- Innovative business models and financing arrangements need to be developed.



- Government will continue to have significant roles to play in providing broadband services, articulating national visions, and stimulating consumer demand.
- Governments to avoid limiting market entry and taxing ICT services to enable broadband markets to realize their full growth potential.
- In addition to broadband networks, a new service, personalized applications and fully multilingual content should be developed to maximize the broadband potential.
- Legislative and regulatory frameworks need to be reviewed.



## *Way Forward*

- Country led planning towards universal coverage with targets set and contribution of key stakeholders clearly identified.
- Ensuring allocation of budget to this commitment.
- Allocation of adequate trained HR at all levels to accelerate the pace of scaling up.
- Exploring innovative approaches of business models that ensure mobilizing resources.
- Advocacy



## Opportunities

- Most of the **Investments** will be directed in the next 10 years to IP-Based Infrastructure & Services.
- The **Digital Divide** is largest in this.
- Special emphasis on **Broadband**; the current decade is the Broadband Decade compared to the previous Mobile Decade
- Different **Scope & Measures** for meaningful Analysis & Planning.
- Different **Business Models**.



## Challenges

- Many of the broadband initiatives are fragmented and not part of a comprehensive national strategy
- *Need a long term vision & commitment to move towards a universal access.*
- *Need to strengthen the capacity to formulate the policy and strategy.*
- *Limiting recognition of role, contribution & potential of private sector in expending the broadband access.*



- *Weak implementation of broadband networks is a constraint to the progress towards achieving the MDGs.*
- *Government will continue to have significant roles to play in providing broadband services, articulating national visions, and stimulating consumer demand.*
- *Stimulate local content production & enhance local capacity.*



## List of countries in Arab region with national broadband strategies

Country	Country has adopted a national policy to promote Broadband	If No, are there plans to adopt one?	Website where the policy is made available
Algeria	Yes		
Bahrain	Yes	Yes	
Comoros	No	Yes	
Egypt	Yes		<a href="http://www.tra.gov.eg/emisr/Summary_En.pdf">http://www.tra.gov.eg/emisr/Summary_En.pdf</a>



Country	Country has adopted a national policy to promote Broadband	If No, are there plans to adopt one?	Website where the policy is made available
Iraq	No	Yes	
Lebanon	Yes		<a href="http://www.tra.gov.lb/SubPage.aspx?pageid=1292#book2">http://www.tra.gov.lb/SubPage.aspx?pageid=1292#book2</a>
Mauritania	No		
Morocco	No	Yes	<a href="http://www.infodev.org/en/Document.1125.pdf">http://www.infodev.org/en/Document.1125.pdf</a>
Oman	No	Yes	
Qatar	Yes		<a href="http://www.ictqatar.qa/department/national-programs/ict-infrastructure/national-broadband-network">http://www.ictqatar.qa/department/national-programs/ict-infrastructure/national-broadband-network</a>

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Saudi Arabia	Yes		<a href="http://www.citc.gov.sa/English/RulesandSystems/Bylaws/Document">http://www.citc.gov.sa/English/RulesandSystems/Bylaws/Document</a>
Sudan	No	Yes	
Tunisia	No	Yes	

By 2015, all countries should have a national broadband plan or strategy or include broadband in Universal Access / Service Definitions

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**Thank You!**

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