



BDT COMMUNIQUÉ

A human-centric approach to connectivity drives discussions at the ITU Regional Development Forum for the Americas

Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 18 June 2026

The annual ITU Regional Development Forum for the Americas, held on 16 and 17 June 2026 in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, welcomed around 150 participants representing 20 Member States, Regional Organizations, UN specialized agencies, Sector Members, Academia and other stakeholders to discuss priority development issues for the region including the implementation of the new Regional Initiatives adopted at the World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2025 (WTDC-25).

The Forum was hosted by the Government of Colombia and chaired by Felipe Diaz, Commissioner and Executive Director at the Communications Regulation Commission (CRC).

"All the discussions at this Forum have placed people at the centre, reaffirming that only a human-centric approach can drive universal and meaningful connectivity," said Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director of ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau. "With people's needs serving as our compass, the Americas region continues to make significant progress in digital development. This Forum has further strengthened our partnerships across the region and reinforced our collective commitment to moving from dialogue to implementation through the Partner2Connect matchmaking process. We are turning commitments into action and building the partnerships that will deliver meaningful connectivity for all. I thank all Member States and partners for making this possible."

"I would like to thank the Government of Colombia, and in particular the Communications Regulation Commission, for hosting us in the beautiful city of Cartagena de Indias," he concluded.

“The international community took an important step forward with the Baku Action Plan, adopted at the ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2025,” said H.E. Patricia Perdomo, Vice Minister of ICT of Colombia. “The Plan establishes a necessary agenda for the coming years: advancing universal, meaningful, and affordable connectivity; strengthening digital inclusion; promoting innovation ecosystems; consolidating enabling and resilient regulatory environments; and ensuring that digital development serves people. However, its deepest message goes beyond its action lines: connectivity is not an end in itself. It is a condition for development, equity, and human dignity.”

At the Forum, participants reported on the state of digital development and trends in the region and the outcomes of WTDC-25.

They also discussed digital infrastructure for universal and meaningful connectivity, the implementation of the Regional Initiatives and ITU's role in the UN system and its contribution at the regional and country levels to foster digital development.

The Regional Partner2Connect Matchmaking Roundtable sessions allowed participants to match countries and regional needs with stakeholders' interests to support digital development in the Americas region.

“The Regional Development Forum for the Americas is where regional priorities are translated into practical cooperation and concrete action. Our focus is to support countries in implementing the Regional Initiatives by strengthening resilient infrastructure, expanding digital inclusion and skills, fostering innovative digital ecosystems, improving cyber resilience, and building regulatory frameworks that enable investment, innovation and meaningful connectivity for all,” said Bruno Ramos, Director of the ITU Regional Office for the Americas.

Announcements and special sessions:

During the Regional Development Forum:

- An announcement was made on the partnership with the Regional Technical Telecommunications Commission (COMTELCA) on technical and institutional cooperation to support innovation and regulatory improvement and regional digital integration in the field of ICTs.
- Proposals for the Regulatory Experimentation Pilot Projects in Central America and the Dominican Republic were presented. The proposals are part of the project on *Regional Regulatory Innovation for Central America and Dominican Republic*, launched at the Regional Development Forum in 2025.
- A guide for the public sector, titled [*Designing Regulatory Experimentation: A Practical Guide for the Public Sector*](#) was launched. It will support policymakers and regulators in selecting the instruments, assessing risks, and strengthening institutional capacities to foster innovation while protecting users.

The draft RDF outcome report will be available on the RDF Americas website.

Resources and background information:

- [RDF-AMS website](#)
- [RDF-AMS photos](#)
- [RDF-AMS highlights video](#)

Discover what others are saying on social media and join the conversation by searching and posting with the hashtag #ITURDF

For questions, please contact:

ITU Regional Office for the Americas

Phone: +55 61 2312-2730

Email: itubrasilia@itu.int

About the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations agency for digital technologies, driving innovation for people and the planet with 194 Member States and a membership of over 1,000 companies, universities, civil society, and international and regional organizations. Established in 1865, ITU coordinates the global use of the radio spectrum and satellite orbits, establishes international technology standards, drives universal connectivity and digital services, and is helping to make sure everyone benefits from sustainable digital transformation, including the most remote communities. From artificial intelligence (AI) to quantum, from satellites and submarine cables to advanced mobile and wireless broadband networks, ITU is committed to connecting the world and beyond.

For more information, visit: www.itu.int