



14<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 18-21 September 2023, Geneva Switzerland

## SUMMARY

### Overview

1. The [14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ITU Expert Group on Telecommunication/ICT Indicators \(EGTI\)](#) took place in Geneva, Switzerland, with the option of remote participation, from 18 to 21 September 2023. It was held in conjunction with the [11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ITU Expert Group on ICT Household Indicators \(EGH\)](#) which was held 18-21 September 2023. A joint EGTI/EGH session on the ICT Development Index (IDI) was held on 18-19 September. The summary report of the EGTI meeting and the summary report of the IDI session are available on the webpages of the meetings (see above).
2. Mr. Bernard Banda, Director for Economic Regulation and Consumer Protection at Zambia Information & Communications Technology Authority (ZICTA), and Chair of EGTI, chaired the meeting. ITU staff from the ICT Data and Analytics Division acted as the secretariat.
3. A total of 347 participants<sup>1</sup> attended the meetings, which included 260 experts representing 105 Member States countries, 4 participants from Palestine<sup>2</sup>, 21 participants from ITU-D Sector Members, 5 from Academia, 4 from UN and its Specialized Agencies and 51 from other organizations, including 36 from statistical entities, from all world regions. Women made up 46 per cent of participants and 39 per cent of participants attended physically. Experts from the ITU-R and ITU-D sector, including ITU Regional Offices also attended the meeting.
4. The affiliation of participants included international and regional organizations (Caribbean Telecommunications Union, Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTA), European Commission, OECD, Southern African Development Community (SADC), UN DESA, UNCTAD, UNESCWA and The World Bank) as well as Operating Agencies and Scientific and Industrial organizations (China Telecommunications Corporation, Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba (ETECSA), Emirates Telecommunication Corporation - Etisalat, Huawei Technologies Co., Ltd., Liquid Intelligent Technologies Group, Saudi Telecom and Telefónica S.A.). Members of Academia were affiliated with the University College of Bahrain, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Postes, Télécommunications et TIC of Cameroon, Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo, the Colegio Oficial de Ingenieros de

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<sup>1</sup> Information on participation refers to the entire duration of the EGTI, EGH and Joint EGTI-EGH Meeting on the ICT Development Index.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution 99 (Rev. Dubai, 2018).

Telecomunicación (COIT) and Institute of Telecommunications and Global Information Space, Universidad de Montevideo.

5. The purpose of the 14<sup>th</sup> EGTI meeting was to report on the outcomes of the work of the EGTI subgroups and examine the contributions received from members of the EGTI online discussion [forum](#) over the current working period, with a view to finalizing the items under discussion. The topics that were discussed during the EGTI meeting were those identified by the EGTI Work Programme for 2023, which included discussing the report of the subgroup on the development of indicators measuring over-the-top (OTT) services (jointly with EGH); a report of the subgroup on measuring fixed broadband penetration; and the outcomes of a pilot data collection of recently introduced indicators on mobile money. The meeting also offered an opportunity to provide an update on ICT price baskets data collection, as well as explore new indicators to measure satellite-based broadband Internet.

## Topics discussed

1. As the first item on the agenda, EGTI discussed the report on the **pilot data collection on mobile money indicators**. Recalling that the definition and scope of measuring mobile money was jointly agreed by EGTI and EGH at their meeting in 2021, the ITU conducted in May 2023 a pilot supply-side data collection on the four mobile money indicators defined by EGTI. The ITU Secretariat prepared a [summary report](#) on the results of the pilot data collection.
2. During the meeting, Ms. Linda Kambale (MACRA, Malawi), the former lead of the subgroup on mobile money presented the indicators and the key findings from the pilot questionnaire, focusing on data availability, regional trends and main challenges with respect to data source, definition and availability. This was complemented by a brief overview of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Financial Access Survey (FAS) data collection on mobile money by Daniel Vertesy (ITU) that highlighted data availability, possible overlaps with ITU's supply-side statistics and the plans for future updates. Discussions addressed the challenges that in most countries, central banks and financial regulators are the custodians of mobile money statistics, and if added to the ITU WTI Long Questionnaire, this would imply a significant inter-institutional coordination burden on telecom regulators and ministries of ICT. At the same time, it was highlighted that in some cases, insights and statistics are only available for mobile network operators. EGTI Members agreed on the importance of mobile money for digital inclusion in developing countries, and welcomed the fact that mobile money statistics are collected regularly by the IMF FAS and highlighted the need to avoid duplication of efforts at the country as well as the international levels.
3. EGTI agreed that at country level, it would be important to encourage coordination between ICT regulators and Central Banks or financial regulators to facilitate smooth transmission of information; and while ITU would not collect data for the mobile money indicators in its WTI Long Questionnaires, it will seek to develop a long and strategic partnership with the IMF FAS team to provide feedback and suggestions on their mobile money questionnaire. ITU will continue to keep the forum discussion on mobile money open to continue collecting

experiences and exchange information considering also relevant developments at the IMF FAS.

4. The second agenda item was the **Update on the ICT Price basket data collection**. ITU has been collecting ICT Price statistics according to the current definition of ICT price baskets since 2018 that were further refined in 2021. EGTI agreed at its 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting in 2021 to revisit the ICT Price basket methodology in light of the dynamic changes of the global telecommunications market. Ms. Shazna Zuhyle, the former lead of the ICT Price Basket subgroup and consultant to the ITU on ICT price data collection, presented a summary of the experiences with data collection, focusing on issues with contract modality, as well as the relevance of the entry-level mobile cellular and fixed-broadband baskets in light of latest consumption patterns.
5. During the meeting, EGTI Members discussed the latest experience on collecting ICT price statistics, the relevance of baskets (especially the mobile cellular low-usage basket), of definitions (such as data allowances and the fixed broadband minimum download speed) and rules (such as contract modality and commitment periods) in light of evolving consumption patterns and service offer.
6. The EGTI meeting agreed on the importance of continued review of data collection efforts for ICT Price baskets and to re-activate the subgroup on ICT prices to address suggestions on the price baskets, with special focus on the mobile-cellular low-usage basket, and data collection rules, on the questions of contract modality and commitment period among other considerations.
7. As a forward-looking topic, there were some presentations on **satellite-based fixed broadband Internet** access technologies with the aim to better understand the appropriateness of existing statistics on the topic and the potential need for developing new indicators to capture the diffusion of services offered by providers using Low Earth Orbit LEO satellites. During the meeting, Mr. Róbert Árkosi-Horváth (NMIA, Hungary) provided a presentation on the Hungarian regulatory authority's experience with assessing various attributes related to a specific satellite provider, Starlink, from the perspective of consumers and regulators, followed by Mr. Jorge Ciccorossi (ITU) who provided a presentation on the technology and the relevant work of ITU-R on the matter as well as some possible indicators on satellite-based fixed broadband technology that could be considered. The presentations highlighted that new services may imply a new model of Internet access, with implications for measuring access, pricing, QoS, etc.
8. The EGTI meeting agreed to open an online forum discussion topic to share experiences with the aim to define the scope on what kind of indicators to look at for data collection, and discuss issues related to methodology and scope.
9. Previously, at its 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting in 2022, EGTI agreed to extend the mandate of its joint subgroup with the EGH on the development of **OTT indicators** (initially established at the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of EGTI in 2020 and as a joint subgroup at the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of EGTI in 2021), to continue pursuing its aim of operationalizing the definition agreed and collecting data. The

joint sub-group was co-led by an EGTI representative (Mr. Oliver Füg, Telefónica) and an EGH representative (Mr. Winston Oyadomari, Nic.br).

10. At the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of EGTI in 2023, in a joint session with EGH, the subgroup leads presented a summary of [the joint report](#), highlighting existing challenges for data collection on the supply side and the current OTT-related data collected through ICT household surveys. The subgroup recommended promoting further exchange in the EGH and EGTI forums; that Member states should collect ICT Household Survey indicator on Internet use by activity (HH9) categories related to OTT (making telephone and video calls, listening to web radio, listening to music on streaming, watching web television and watching videos on streaming) and collect further data on the frequency of partaking in these activities; and to continue following developments on Member State practices regarding provider/supply-side data collection at the forum level. During the discussion, EGTI and EGH members asked for clarification on various points of the report, highlighted ongoing supply- and demand-side data collection (Oman) as well as the technical solutions for obtaining aggregate statistics from anonymised data from call detail records (CDRs).
11. The EGTI meeting agreed to close the subgroup and continue to monitor and share country experiences on the EGTI Forum.
12. Previously, at its 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting in 2022, EGTI agreed to create a subgroup to examine the strengths and weaknesses of measuring **fixed broadband penetration** using the number of inhabitants or total number of households as the denominator for fixed broadband penetration in a country. The subgroup was also expected to provide an assessment of the feasibility of alternative measurement approaches and explore the possibility of revising the methodology for the calculation of fixed broadband penetration.
13. At the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of EGTI in 2023, Prof. Iñigo Herguera, the sub-group lead, summarized the findings on the strengths and weaknesses of the numerator and the different denominators and the conclusions drawn in the report. Specifically, it highlighted challenges related to distinguishing residential and business use (especially by micro- and small enterprises) of fixed-broadband subscriptions, the relevance of measuring fixed broadband penetration for households, and the ensuing difficulty to obtain timely, internationally comparable statistics on the total number of households. Along with a preferred indicator of the ICT household survey-based measure of fixed broadband penetration, alternatives examined included dividing the administrative data-based numerator of fixed broadband subscriptions by the total number of households obtained from UN population statistics, or by adult population. In the ensuing discussion, members discussed the data availability challenges and expressed the need for a globally harmonized database on the total number of households. The ITU Secretariat highlighted that it had already brought the issue to the agenda of the upcoming UN Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) meeting. The CCSA, comprised of Chief Statistician of each UN agency, promotes interagency coordination and cooperation on statistical programmes and consistency in statistical practices and development.
14. After the discussion on the sub-group proposal, the EGTI meeting agreed to close the subgroup and that the ITU will work with UN Population Division of UN DESA to improve

availability of comparable data on the total number of households. Furthermore, countries were encouraged to collect the data on households with fixed broadband using household surveys, and to submit total number of households to UN DESA.

15. The meeting offered an opportunity to present the new ITU WTI and Household Long Questionnaire format that was introduced for the recently launched and still ongoing data collection round using the Qualtrics platform. Mr. Fredrik Eriksson (ITU) presented from the user perspective the forms used for updating contact information, and the various validation methodologies implemented in order the collection of high-quality data and reduce the burden on respondents as well as ITU staff for data validation.
16. Regarding future work for 2024, EGTI Members discussed a range of possible topics to address. Based on the guidelines presented by the EGTI Chair, for a subgroup to be launched, at least ten committed participants should sign up by 21 October during the meeting or in the [online forum](#) (otherwise a discussion topic will be opened on the EGTI forum instead), encouraging regional diversity, and establishing a priority so that no more than three subgroups (including joint ones with EGH) would be launched in a year. As is customary for EGTI, the scope of work will be established by the Chair in consultation with the Secretariat. The subgroup lead will be appointed by ITU in agreement with the Chair.
17. The EGTI meeting agreed that the following topics would feature on its future work agenda: ICT prices; reviewing the IDI; Mobile money; Satellite-based broadband Internet measurement; Measuring middle-mile connectivity; Measuring speed; Emerging technologies; and measuring OTT. Feedback during the session indicated sufficient commitment for launching the following topics in the form of a subgroup: ICT prices and a joint EGTI-EGH subgroup on reviewing the IDI.
18. The meeting resolved to subject all the decisions regarding the Agenda to comments until 21 October 2023, after which they would become final.