ITU-D e-FLASH

JANUARY – MARCH 2015
DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear ITU-D Members,

In the last ITU-D Flash, I promised to make this newsletter more informative and ITU-D's results more visible.

As a start, we have launched a new story-series on the ITU-D website, titled *TOUCHING LIVES: how ITU-D and its Members help make a difference in people's lives*. These short feature stories will show the impact of our cooperation and the results achieved.

The year has been off to a busy start. We have signed an agreement with the Government of Jamaica to give new impetus to the National Computer Incident Response Team, and one with the Caribbean Telecommunications Union and the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization for the development of satellite telecommunications capacity and emergency communications solutions for the Caribbean Islands.

We have deployed satellite communication equipment to flood-hit Malawi and, recently, to Vanuatu, hit by Cyclone Pam on 13 March. In February, with the cooperation of the Government of Japan, we launched the MDRU - the movable and deployable ICT resource unit - in the coastal town of San Remigio in Cebu, in the Philippines.

We have also made a significant contribution in the fight against Ebola. The "Ebola-Info-Sharing" app, which we launched towards the end of last year, can be downloaded for free on IOS and Android platforms by the public and anybody involved in the fight against the Ebola outbreak; it is available in both English and French. The tweet on the Ebola application was one of our most popular and was potentially viewed over 4 million times. We are now working to extend it to other epidemics such as Chikungunya and Dengue fever.

I am also happy to share with you that the reports by the m-Powering Development and Smart Sustainable Development Model Initiatives are now available on the ITU-D website. These reports were presented to the last meeting of Broadband Commission

I would like to thank you all for your significant support and dedication as we continue to build upon our success in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Brahima Sanou

ITU FORUM EXPLORES THE ROLE OF ICTS IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

ITU held a multi-stakeholder forum at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction on 15 March in Sendai, Japan, focusing on the use of ICTs for disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The event explored the critical role of information and communication technology in disaster risk reduction as well as policy, legal, technical, regulatory, and operational issues. It also provided a platform for the review of progress made in implementing the Hyogo Framework and for sharing views on lessons learnt. Discussions also revolved around the role of ICT in addressing disasters that could negatively impact the post-2015 development agenda.

Mr Brahima Sanou said that "with over 7 billion mobile cellular subscriptions worldwide, almost 3 billion people connected to the internet and with 4.9 billion connected devices, the telecommunications and ICT sector can support disaster risk reduction efforts."

Panelists at the forum included Mr Ecweru Musa Francis, Minister of State for Relief, Disaster Preparedness & Refugees of Uganda; Mr Nicolas D. Ojeda Jr., Deputy Executive Director of the Information and Communications Technology Office of the Department of Science and Technology of the Philippines and Mr. Ken Yamamoto, Secretary of the International Amateur Radio Union. The event was moderated by Mr. Cosmas Zavazava, Chief of Department, Project Support and Knowledge Management, in the ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau.

Mr Yasuo Sakamoto, Vice Minister for Policy Coordination of Japan, spoke of

Malawi floods (Credit: OCHA)

the lessons learned from the Great East Japan earthquake that hit the country in 2011. “Many lives were saved as a result of tsunami warning broadcasts on various media outlets,” he said. “When natural disasters strike, delivering precise and prompt information is crucial. We should strongly recognize that ICT is a lifeline for saving lives.”

Mr Ojeda Jr observed that the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan in 2011 Japan and Typhoon Haiyan, which hit the Philippines in 2013, “provided important lessons on disaster management and especially on the need for faster integration of ICTs into disaster risk reduction programmes.”

Mr Sanou spoke about the Smart Sustainable Development Model Initiative which creates a framework for optimizing the use of information and communication technology resources for development (ICT4D) and disaster management (ICT4DM). The initiative, which was launched by BDT, calls for the creation of a favorable policy and regulatory environment, which would enable communications to be restored in an efficient and timely manner in the aftermath of a disaster and for governments to make telecommunication infrastructures more resilient to disasters, especially in developing countries where they are more susceptible to breakdown.

Mr Sanou also mentioned the Development of Satellite Communications Capacity and Emergency Communications Solutions for the Pacific Islands region project. Signed in 2014, the project is an example of how ICTs for development are linked to ICTs for disaster risk reduction. The three year project aims to develop low cost satellite communications systems for the socio-economic development of the Pacific Islands region. The same infrastructure will be used for emergency telecommunications to ensure public safety when disasters strike. He noted that the project was to be replicated in the Caribbean and then Africa since the priority was to support Small Island Developing States through this kind of a project owing to their unique challenges and vulnerability.

He also noted that a multi-stakeholder approach to disaster risk reduction was crucial, adding that projects undertaken by ITU actively encourage the participation of local communities “to effectively respond to local needs and also to build appropriate community resilience.”

REPORTS BY THE M-POWERING DEVELOPMENT AND SMART SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MODEL INITIATIVES NOW AVAILABLE.

Reports by the m-Powering Development and Smart Sustainable Development Model Initiatives now available on the ITU-D website. The Advisory Boards of the two Initiatives released their first reports in Doha, Qatar, in December 2014.

The m-Powering Development Initiative report finds that technological innovations and initiatives that use mobile phones can potentially bring exponential benefits to entire communities and make a valuable contribution to the global development agenda. It calls for the development of an enabling regulatory environment for m-Powering initiatives where no citizen is excluded by affordability, accessibility or availability issues. The Report also affirms that mobile initiatives need to be addressed in a holistic manner to avoid a vertical silo approach.

The report by the Smart Sustainable Development Model Initiative focuses on the link between ICT for Development (ICT4D) with ICT for Disaster Management (ICT4DM) and their role in sustainable development processes. ICTs can have a profound effect on individuals, communities, and nations as specific technological solutions can be utilized in all the phases of disaster management, including disaster preparedness, reduction, mitigation and post-disaster rehabilitation. However, without a favourable regulatory framework within which to operate, the benefits that ICT can provide are significantly reduced. The report urges governments to make telecommunication infrastructures more resilient to disasters, especially in developing countries where they are more susceptible to breakdown.

The Smart Sustainable Development Model Initiative (SSDM) is an international, multi-stakeholder platform that seeks to link ICT for development with ICT for disaster management in order to achieve sustainable development.

The M-Powering Development Initiative seeks to leverage the ubiquity of mobile technology beyond basic communications. Its objective is to capitalize on the availability of mobile networks to strengthen economies and offer new opportunities to improve health, education, governance, banking, sport and commerce.

EBOLA-INFO-SHARING" APP ON UN RADIO

Mr Brahima Sanou was interviewed on 13 January by UN Radio on the recently launched ITU Ebola-Info-Sharing mobile application.

The development of the application is the result of a resolution that was adopted at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference held in Busan, Republic of Korea, in November last year.

In the resolution Member States asked ITU to develop ways in which information and communication technologies can be used to break the chain of health related emergencies such as the Ebola virus transmission.

"The ITU Ebola-Info-Sharing app is part of ITU's first steps in the fight against the Ebola Virus," said Mr Sanou. "We are working with different UN organizations, NGOs, organizations and country officials to continuously update the application by incorporating their data and other relevant information on the Ebola disease outbreak response."

He said ITU has also deployed satellite terminals in the Ebola affected countries to support response efforts and enhance communication among the various international partners working on the ground.

The app can be downloaded for free by the public and anybody involved in the fight against the Ebola outbreak and is available in both English and French.

Mr Sanou said ITU is working in partnership with its members and other UN organizations to harness the power of the mobile phone technology in health, education, agriculture, commerce, sport, banking to achieve sustainable development.

Mr Brahima Sanou's interview with UN Radio.

ITU AND JAPAN AGREE ON A NEW INITIATIVE TO COMBAT THE EBOLA OUTBREAK

ITU and the Government of Japan have signed a cooperation agreement for the development of a mobile phone based health initiative to be used in the fight against the Ebola Virus Disease.

The TeleHealth initiative will consist of two smartphone applications: one designed specifically for village and community leaders in the Ebola affected countries and the other for doctors involved in the global efforts to combat the disease.

Through the App, village and community leaders, especially those in remote areas, will be able to contact doctors registered on the application to relay information to identify, confirm and seek guidance on possible Ebola cases.

Doctors registered to use the App will subsequently be able to coordinate their response, indicate the number of cases they can handle and forward cases to other doctors who are part of the network.

The TeleHealth initiative is intended to provide a possible solution to the problem of shortage of doctors, which is one of the major difficulties facing the global efforts to contain the outbreak of the Ebola Virus disease.

The first phase of the application scheduled roll out will target remote villages which are covered by a mobile phone network. Subsequent phases will tackle villages with no or limited coverage. The application will also be designed to function in low bandwidth areas

ITU CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE: DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCE EXPERTISE FOR THE ICT SECTOR

Ms Guiselle Mejía

Guiselle Mejía from Costa Rica has over 20 years working in the country's telecommunication industry.

Over the years she has witnessed a major transformation of the industry. Not only has the sector been opened up to competition bringing new players, but the convergence of various information and communication technologies has opened up new opportunities for business growth.

"In this rapidly evolving industry, the way we do business is also rapidly changing, and yesterday's business model may be irrelevant today," says Ms Mejía. "We too have to keep upgrading our business knowledge management skills and tools in order to continue to deliver quality services to our client base."

In January 2013, Ms Mejía enrolled for an online Postgraduate Programme in Telecommunications Strategic Management offered by the ITU Centers of Excellence. Spread over an 18 month period, the program's main objective was to train professionals in the telecommunication industry to upgrade their skills in strategic management as well as develop new business practices based on new technologies and new market opportunities.

"The programme was not only informative but very engaging," says Ms Mejía. "It covered topics that are very relevant in today's telecommunication industry among them project management, negotiation strategies, advantages and opportunities of new technologies, business communication, customer service and marketing. I benefited immensely from the programme acquiring fresh insights on how to work and develop products for a very competitive industry."

She adds that during the entire course participants had the opportunity to engage with counterparts from different parts of the world who shared experiences, challenges and strategies on how to remain competitive in the fast changing telecommunication industry. "This opportunity to share experiences with other people from different countries around the world was a great added advantage for me," she adds.

The Centers of Excellence (CoEs) programme is run by the Human Capacity Building Division of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau

(BDT). The centers offer a wide and growing range of general and specialized courses on all aspects of telecommunications. Programmes are delivered face-to-face, as well as online through the ITU Academy e-learning platform. They are designed to equip an expanding number of people with the specialist knowledge and tools they require to find their way around the rapidly-evolving domain of ICTs and to use the skills and relevant technology in creating a knowledge society.

The CoE programme was launched in 2001 with the aim of strengthening human and institutional capacity in telecommunication and ICTs, initially in Africa and subsequently also in other emerging and developing regions.

Since then, thousands of professionals in the ICT sector have been trained across all regions through the global Centers of Excellence network. In 2014, the centers held over 128 training sessions which saw over 4,400 ICT professionals trained through a combination of face-to-face and online training programmes.

In 2010, the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-10) adopted Resolution 73 which called for the programme to be continued and strengthened.

As a result, a study to review the Centers of Excellence was undertaken by BDT in 2014 which led to the adoption a new Centers of Excellence Strategy. The review recognized the positive role the centers have played in developing the much needed skills but noted that the training programmes need to be realigned to meet the needs of the rapidly evolving telecommunication sector.

“Providing assistance in human and institutional capacity building continues to be a priority for ITU,” said Mr Brahima Sanou. “The new CoE strategy adopted by ITU provides an opportunity for renewal and revitalization of the concept, for the emergence of new ideas and objectives and for new ways of working that are attuned to current and future capacity-building needs of the ICT sector.”

Following the sixth World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-14) which took place in Dubai in 2014, ITU Members were invited by the BDT Director to apply to become Centers of Excellence for the next four years in the priority areas including policy and regulation, broadband access and ICT applications and services, adopted by the conference. A thorough, open and transparent selection process was undertaken based on the criteria outlined in the ITU Centers of Excellence: Strategic Review and Recommendations for the Future report.

A list of recommended centers were then submitted to the Group on Capacity Building

ITU CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE: DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCE EXPERTISE FOR THE ICT SECTOR

Initiatives (GCBI) which met in Geneva in October 2014 to deliberate on the selection of the new Centers of Excellence for the 2015-2018 period.

Following the selection of the new Centers of Excellence in November 2014, regional Steering Committees were established, in line with the new strategy and the related operational procedures. The Steering Committees will provide recommendations to ITU concerning the CoEs operations and ways of improving of CoEs performance, were established.

Regional Steering Committee meetings will be held during the months of February and March 2015.

The ITU Centers of Excellence offer more than 150 training opportunities mainly for top and middle level managers and engineers every year. Courses are offered in:

Business and Management:

Areas covered in this category include marketing management, human resource management, project management and Information Systems management.

Policy and Regulation:

Training is offered in telecommunication policy and regulation with a focus on privatization issues in telecommunications, competition and price regulation, law and policy for telecommunications, universal access, radio spectrum management, dispute resolutions, and new technologies.

Technologies and Services:

The training covers newly emerging systems and standards and a variety of services and applications.

Contact the ITU-D Human Capacity Building Division at hcbmail@itu.int.

To view the courses offered by the Centers of Excellence, interested participants must register here

Click here to download the list of selected Centers of Excellence for the 2015/2018 cycle.

Click here for more information on the Centers of Excellence.

See also:

New Centers of Excellence for the 2015-2018 cycle selected

GCBI meets to validate selection of CoEs

ITU'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY: GET INVOLVED!

ITU is the longest established United Nations specialized agency and was founded on 17 May 1865 with the signing of the first International Telegraph Convention in Paris.

The remarkable history of ITU is a story of international cooperation and shared success in coordinating the development and spread of cutting edge information and communication technologies (ICTs) worldwide.

This year provides an excellent opportunity for ITU Members to celebrate the innovations which have led to today's telecommunication/ICT ecosystem, probably the greatest feat of engineering ever, as well as to launch future activities. Further information can be found at ITU's anniversary website .

Members can get involved in different ways:

- Worldwide activities and national celebrations. Submit information online
- ITU150 Awards. Nominate candidates until 15 March 2015
- Associate your events with thematic months
- Participate at the event on 17 May. The invitation is available online
- Become a partner!

The ITU 150th Anniversary team can be contacted at the following email address: itu150@itu.int

ITU'S FIRST IPV6 TEST BED IN AFRICA LAUNCHED IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE.

ITU is partnering with L'Autorité de Régulation des Télécommunications de Côte d'Ivoire (ARTCI) for the implementation of an IPv6 test bed.

(from left)Mr Ali D. Badiel, Mr Andre Apété and Mr Bilé Diéméléou during the IPv6 test bed

The test bed allows engineers to undertake IPv6 networks simulations to verify the quality of service and interoperability in different environments before deployment in corporate networks.

It was launched in December 2014 at ARTCI headquarters in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Mr Bilé Diéméléou, ARTCI Director General presided over the launch in the presence of Mr Ali Drissa Badiel, ITU Representative for West Africa, and Mr André Apété, Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Posts and ICTs.

Welcoming the launch, Mr Brahima Sanou said the Union is committed to facilitating Member States and Sector Members undertake a smooth transition to the new IP address system. "The unlimited capacity offered by IPv6 is an opportunity for countries to offer better and increased internet connectivity, needed to enhance the growth of the digital economy," he added.

Engineers attending an IPv6 test bed training

IPv6 is the latest and most advanced internet addressing system. It is expected to replace the current IPv4 system whose capacity of four billion IP addresses is almost exhausted. IPv6 has a capacity that exceeds 340 trillion, trillion, trillion. To give a more tangible idea of the scale, some have compared the number of available IPv6 addresses to the number of grains of sand on the planet.

ITU'S FIRST IPV6 TEST BED IN AFRICA LAUNCHED IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE.

This is the first time that an IPv6 test bed has been installed in Africa by ITU. Two similar test beds are scheduled to be implemented this year in East and Southern Africa.

ARTCI Headquarters in Abidjan (Credit: ARTCI)

The launch of the IPv6 test bed was preceded by a week-long training session organized by ITU for telecommunication engineers drawn from Côte d'Ivoire's telecom operators, internet service providers, academia, ARTCI and the Ministry of Posts and ICTs.

At the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference held in Busan, South Korea in 2014, Member States adopted a resolution calling on the Organization to collaborate with relevant international partners in policy review, human capacity building and research, in order to encourage Member States to transition to IPv6.

ITU DEPLOYS SATELLITE COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT TO FLOOD-HIT MALAWI

ITU dispatched, in January 2015, emergency telecommunication equipment to Malawi following severe flooding in the country.

ITU deployed 28 units of Thuraya XT satellite phones to support relief coordination efforts.

The Government of Malawi had declared a

Malawi floods (Credit: OCHA)

State of Emergency in 15 districts (out of a total of 28) following the heavy rains which caused extensive damage to infrastructure, including roads and bridges submerged farmlands and displaced many people.

Malawi floods (Credit: OCHA)

"ITU is committed to assisting Member States restore telecommunication links in the aftermath of disasters to facilitate humanitarian response in support of the affected populations," said Mr Brahima Sanou. "It is my hope that the emergency telecommunication equipment provided to Malawi by ITU will successfully contribute to relief and recovery efforts in the areas affected by flooding."

The ITU Telecommunication Development Sector considers emergency telecommunication an integral part of its development agenda for the post-2015 period.

UGANDA: HARNESSING THE POWER OF ICTS TO PROMOTE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

It was just after midnight when Simon* was woken up by a loud blaring noise tearing into the dark night. It had been raining heavily over the past few days and Simon thought a lorry was stuck on the muddy main road.

He tried to ignore the noise, but it got louder with each passing second. He stepped out of his bed. Even before his feet could reach the floor he felt wetness.

Flood water sensors on River Manafwa

He stood up, the water was ankle high.

It was at that moment that he realized the noise outside was not a lorry but the newly installed flood warning system.

"Wake up, wake up," he shouted to his wife. "The flood is approaching we must leave the house now. Get the children out of the house now" he said, wading through the water to reach the door.

"We must try and reach the hill on the other side of the road. It is high ground and the flood water does not reach there," he told his family.

By the time Simon and his family got to the main road the water was already knee high.

Safe on high ground, the villagers huddled in small groups to discuss their night ordeal.

"That siren they have installed by the river has saved the lives of our families. It is very loud, but I don't mind as long as it will help save lives in our village. After all, some of us are deep sleepers," said Simon as his fellow villages nodded in approval.

For many years Butaleja District in Eastern Uganda has been ravaged by flood waters from the River Manafwa.

Residents have watched helplessly as the water destroyed their farmlands, washed away their houses and other properties.

To help address the situation, the Government of Uganda, with the support of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), installed solar powered Flood Early Warning Systems to warn residents of raising water levels.

The first flood warning system was installed on 22 September 2014, on the Namulo Bridge in Butaleja District.

* Simon is not his real name

UGANDA: HARNESSING THE POWER OF ICTS TO PROMOTE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Solar powered flood water siren

The warning system comprises three main components:

- A sensor that is placed in the river;
- A solar-powered siren adjacent to the river and,
- A solar powered Control Centre at the District headquarters with backup computers to monitor the performance of the sensors and siren system.

Once the water levels reach a certain threshold on the sensor, the siren is automatically activated. The blaring sound can be heard over a 10 mile radius. Staff at the control center also use the siren system to broadcast messages in English and Lunyole, the local language, to guide residents to safely evacuate.

"Our partnership with the Government of Uganda reinforces ITU's commitment to increase the use of telecommunications and ICTs to enhance climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster management," said Mr Brahima Sanou.

"The commissioning of this project comes at the right time when the international community is taking stock of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework adopted in 2005 during the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), and preparing for the next WCDRR to be held in March 2015, in Sendai, Japan," he added.

Hon. John Nasasira, Minister of Information and Communication Technology, thanked the International Telecommunication Union for its commitment and assistance to reduce the impact of natural disasters in the country. "This early warning system is a welcome relief for the people of Butaleja District who have for years lost lives and property because there was no flood warning," he said.

"This is a step in the right direction as projects of this nature save many lives,"

UGANDA: HARNESSING THE POWER OF ICTS TO PROMOTE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Launching of the Flood water warning system in Eastern Uganda

said Mr Cosmas Zavazava, Chief of the Department of Project Support and Knowledge Management at ITU. "This is the first time ITU has co-financed an alerting system with a government in Africa. A second flood warning system was installed in Butaleja District on 5 January 2015. Similar work has already been done in Asia and we are looking forward to supporting other countries across the globe in deploying ICTs for disaster preparedness and response financed through solid partnerships forged with governments, local communities and the private sector."

Representing ITU at the ceremony was Mrs Fuatai Purcell, the Head of ITU's Division of Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States, Landlocked Developing Countries, Emergency Telecommunications and Climate Change Adaptation.

"Natural disasters are on the rise. Modern technologies when appropriately deployed can significantly reduce loss of life, injuries and destruction to property," said Mrs Purcell.

Mr Godfrey Mutabazi, Director of the Uganda Communications Commission, described the installation of the system as a new dawn for the population around Butaleja District and the larger Mt Elgon region.

"This project is in line with Uganda's National Vision 2040 which identifies ICTs among key foundations to spur Uganda's transformation into a modern and prosperous economy," he said.

At day break, Simon and his fellow villagers had a first-hand look at the disaster they all managed to escape from. Some houses were still deep in flood waters. It will be a few days before they can go back to their homes and rebuild their lives.

"Thanks to the newly installed flood warning system, my family and I feel much safer," Simon whispered into the ear of his 10-month-old baby.

The ITU Telecommunication Development Sector considers emergency telecommunications an integral part of development agenda in the post-2015

UGANDA: HARNESSING THE POWER OF ICTS TO PROMOTE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Residents celebrate the installation of a flood water warning system

period and is working hard to ensure a natural link between ICTs for development and ICTs for disaster management.

Emergency telecommunications is vital for disaster prediction, detection, alerting and response. In the immediate aftermath of disasters, ICTs ensure timely flow of vital information that is needed by government agencies and humanitarian actors responding to the disaster. ICTs are also crucial in coordinating logistics such delivery of medicines, food, and shelter to the affected population.

ITU-D Study Group question 5/2 deals with the utilization of telecommunications/ICTs for disaster preparedness, mitigation and response.

"Telecommunications/ICTs play a critical role in disaster risk reduction, prediction, preparedness, mitigation and response. It is important for member states to develop telecommunication/ICT disaster preparedness plans and strategies, taking into account of the need for resilient redundant infrastructure and systems."
Dubai Declaration, adopted at WTDC-14

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the International Telecommunication Union. For a century and a half since 1865, ITU has been at the center of advances in communications – from telegraphy through to the modern world of satellites, mobile phones and the Internet. The theme of ITU's 150th anniversary is "Telecommunications and ICTs: drivers of innovation". Throughout 2015, ITU will organize several events highlighting ICTs as the drivers of innovation and sustainable development both at ITU headquarters in Geneva and around the world.

ITU AND SUPERTEL OF ECUADOR SIGN A FRAMEWORK COOPERATION AGREEMENT

ITU and the Superintendencia De Telecomunicaciones (SUPERTEL) of Ecuador signed, in November 2014, a Framework Cooperation Agreement for the implementation of projects in key priority areas, including equipment certification and conformity laboratories, cybersecurity and human capacity building.

Testing Radio frequency signal in Ecuador (Credit: SUPERTEL)

"This agreement covers topics that are of critical importance to the overall development of the ICT sector", said Mr Brahima Sanou. "It is my hope that this cooperation will strengthen SUPERTEL'S role in the development of the telecommunication sector in Ecuador."

"The signing of the cooperation agreement between ITU and SUPERTEL formalizes our mutual cooperation," said Fabián L. Jaramillo, Superintendent of Telecommunications at SUPERTEL. "The agreement paves way for the development of a series of projects related to telecommunications and information and communication technologies which will not only benefit Ecuador but also contribute to the positioning of Latin America as a leader in telecommunications and ICT globally", he said.

JAMAICA'S EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN CYBERSECURITY GAINS NEW IMPETUS

Mr Brahima Sanou and H.E. Mr Phillip Paulwell

In February 2015, ITU and the Government of Jamaica signed an agreement that will bring new impetus to the National Computer Incident Response Team (CIRT), established in 2013. With the new agreement, ITU has committed to providing the CIRT with the necessary software and hardware to support its implementation.

The agreement was signed by Mr Brahima Sanou and H.E. Mr Phillip Paulwell, Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining during the Caribbean Telecommunication Union's 25th Anniversary ICT week in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr Sanou said that the implementation of the CIRT in Jamaica "will help to strengthen cybersecurity." "ITU stands ready to support those countries, like Jamaica, that put cybersecurity on top of their national agenda," he said. "The implementation of the CIRT will certainly give new impetus to our efforts to create confidence in the use of ICTs."

CIRT is a key mechanism to strengthen cybersecurity and provides Jamaica with the necessary skills and technical capabilities to respond in an effective manner to cybercrimes.

H.E. Mr Phillip Paulwell said that the establishment of the CIRT "highlights our commitment to create a safer environment for all ICTs users in Jamaica," and expressed the country's deep gratitude to ITU "for its continuing support in advancing the country's ICT agenda."

Currently there are 101 National CIRT established worldwide.

ITU AND ANATEL: MAKING AN IMPACT IN THE BRAZILIAN TELECOMMUNICATION MARKET

ITU and the Brazilian Agência Nacional de Telecomunicações (ANATEL) successfully completed a two-year joint project on the pricing of telecommunication services aimed at reducing costs and improving services as a result of the increased competition among operators and service providers.

The project began in August 2011, when ITU signed an agreement with ANATEL on the development of a cost-modelling to determine the cost based values of various telecommunication services offered in Brazil such as the interconnection of mobile and fixed services and operation of leased lines.

The USD 10 million contract also saw the involvement of a consortium of consultants from Advisia, Analysys Mason and Grant Thornton.

ANATEL building (Credit : ANATEL)

Mr Brahima Sanou welcomed the completion of the project, describing it as a major milestone for ITU and ANATEL.

Mr Brahima Sanou

"Our longstanding collaboration has yielded positive benefits for ICT users in Brazil which reflects ITU's commitment to ensuring that no one is left out of the digital revolution on account of the cost of ICT services," added Mr Sanou.

"The continuous improvement of regulatory mechanisms, to enhance capacity building programs and the constant monitoring of international best practices are goals pursued and achieved thanks to the projects implemented with ITU, " noted Mr Jeferson Nacif, Head of ANATEL International Affairs Office. "Due to this successful cooperation, ANATEL is not only making an impact in the advancement of the Brazilian telecommunication market, but can also be viewed as a reference institution in Brazil and in Latin America," he added.

The project has provided tools which allow ANATEL to better understand the industry supply chain, not only from a historical

perspective but also from an efficiency standpoint. It has also improved the decision-making process of the Agency, based on reliable and better structured information.

The cost models developed will enable ANATEL to improve the evaluation of the costs s of implementing new regulatory policies; the identification of opportunity costs related to regulatory changes; and the measurement of the benefit generated by the impact of regulatory modifications.

Ms Vera Zanetti, project manager at ITU, commended the team from ANATEL and the consortium of consultants for their professionalism and dedication which resulted in a positive outcome. "ANATEL's dedication as well as the professionalism and dedication of the team that conducted the work of the consortium - led by Advisia - were crucial to the successful implementation of the project."

ITU and ANATEL are already defining new areas of cooperation. Recently, during the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Busan, ANATEL confirmed an additional contribution of USD 2.6 million to a project to enhance the agency's regulatory, human and financial resources capacities and competencies.

"Playing our dual role as a United Nations Specialized Agency and project implementation, we are continuously forging partnerships with public and private sector entities in order to hasten the pace towards the establishment of a truly global information society", said Cosmas Zavazava, Chief of Projects and Knowledge Management Department in the Telecommunication Development Bureau.

ITU and ANATEL have a longstanding relationship in the implementation of large scale projects for the structural reform of the Brazilian telecom sector. Since the early 90's, they have been working together in a variety of areas, ranging from technical regulatory issues to training programs for ANATEL's staff.

ITU SIGNS AGREEMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SATELLITE CAPACITY AND EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SOLUTIONS FOR CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

In February 2015, ITU signed a Letter of Intent with the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) and the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (ITSO) to establish a Framework of Cooperation for the development of satellite telecommunications capacity and emergency communications solutions for the Caribbean Islands.

Mr José Toscano, Director General ITSO, Ms Bernadette Lewis, Secretary-General CTU and Mr Brahima Sanou, Director ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau

The agreement was signed by Mr Brahima Sanou, Director of the ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau, Ms Bernadette Lewis, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Telecommunications Union and Mr José Toscano, Director General of the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization.

"This agreement covers areas that are critical to the sustainable development of small island developing states in the Caribbean," said Mr Sanou. "Improving satellite capacity is critical to boosting internet connectivity in the region." He also added that the agreement reinforces the already existing Comprehensive Disaster Management initiative, which aims to build awareness and promote cooperation and exchange of experiences within Caribbean countries on ICT disaster management tools.

The agreement will enable the Caribbean region to extend ICTs services to underserved communities and ensure that alternative infrastructure is in place to provide reliable telecommunication links in times of natural disasters

CTU
Shaping Caribbean Communications

The Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) is an intergovernmental organization dedicated to facilitating the development of the Caribbean region telecommunications sector.

ITSO

The International Telecommunications Satellite Organization is an intergovernmental organization, established in 1964, that ensures that communications by means of satellites are available to nations of the world on a global and non-discriminatory basis.

ITU ARAB REGIONAL FORUM HELD IN AMMAN, JORDAN

The ITU Arab Regional Development Forum was held in Amman, Jordan, from 23 to 24 March 2015 under the theme “Broadband for Sustainable Development.”

The Forum discussed the five Arab Regional Initiatives approved by the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-14) held in 2014, providing ITU Member States and Sector Members with an opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices in the implementation of the initiatives.

WTDC-14 adopted five Regional Initiatives proposed by the Arab States. The Initiatives focus on the following areas: broadband, cybersecurity, ICTs for the environment, smart learning, and ICTs for persons with disabilities.

Mr Brahima Sanou speaking at the ITU Arab Region Development Forum in Amman, Jordan

Under each Regional Initiative, and through partnerships and resource mobilization, projects will be developed and implemented to meet the real needs of the region.

Mr Brahima Sanou said the implementation of the Regional Initiatives is "his priority and focus." "The implementation requires a true multi-stakeholder approach led by the governments of the region," he said. "We in the BDT will take the needful steps to extend our hands to all the stakeholders in the region and outside the region for the implementation of these initiatives."

He described the forum as a platform for dialogue and interaction between ITU-D Members and BDT on the implementation of Dubai Action Plan, and called for more stakeholders to join ITU-D in order to engage in the conversation on telecom and ICT development.

Ms Majd Shweikeh , Minister of Information and Communications Technology of Jordan, said that "The rapid development of the ICT sector requires all stakeholders to unite and intensify efforts to address the challenges the region faces in bringing the benefits of ICTs to the population."

"The five Regional Initiatives to be implemented over the next three years are of great importance to our countries, and the outcome of this Forum will have a positive impact on the development of the ICT sector in the Arab region and contribute to faster socio economic development," she added.

At the Forum, ITU launched a publication on the Arab Regional Initiative. "The publication includes a detailed proposed action plan to implement the initiatives," said Mr Ebrahim Al Haddad, ITU Regional Director for the Arab States. "We hope that, ultimately, the plan will encourage all stakeholders to cooperate and coordinate in the areas targeted by the Regional Initiatives with the aim of improving people's lives across the region."

ITU DEPLOYS EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT IN VANUATU IN AFTERMATH OF TROPICAL CYCLONE PAM

ITU deployed emergency telecommunication equipment to Vanuatu following the devastation caused by Cyclone Pam, a category 5 tropical storm which hit the archipelago on Friday, 13 March.

ITU dispatched 40 satellite phones, 10 Broadband Global Area Network terminals and 35 solar panels to the Island nation to support relief coordination efforts.

"The frequency and intensity of disasters is increasing worldwide with a disproportionate impact on developing countries," said ITU Secretary General Houlin Zhao. "We are working with our partners to increase the capacity of Member States to integrate ICTs in their disaster risk reduction policies. ITU is also encouraging governments, especially those in developing countries, to invest in telecommunication infrastructure that is resilient to disasters."

"Severe Tropical Cyclone Pam, which hit Vanuatu with devastating force, paralyzed telecommunications and affected rescue and rehabilitation efforts," said Mr Brahima Sanou. "ITU is committed to assisting Member States restore telecommunication links in the aftermath of natural disasters to facilitate humanitarian response to support the affected populations."

Prime Minister of Vanuatu, Mr Joe Natuman, thanked ITU for the support, noting that all 83 islands in Vanuatu suffered substantial devastation as a result of Tropical Cyclone Pam.

"ICTs are critical in these hard times," Mr Natuman said. "As communications are down, the ITU emergency equipment, which we have received and distributed throughout the country, will help us coordinate the relief efforts as well as report the situation in outer islands."

Cyclone Pam slammed into the Vanuatu archipelago, including its capital Port Vila, on Efate Island. Winds are estimated to have reached 250 Km/h with gusts peaking at around 320 Km/h, causing damage to the infrastructure, impacting services such as electricity and leaving debris across the capital.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), an estimated 90 per cent of structures have been damaged or destroyed in Efate. More than 2000 people are sheltering in over 25 evacuation centres in Efate, Torba and Penama.

Vanuatu has a population of 267,000 spread over 65 islands. About 47,000 people live in the capital.

ITU recently participated in the Third UN Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan. The Union has addressed the importance of linking information and communication technologies to disaster risk reduction and the role ICTs can play in empowering local communities to be first responders when disasters strike.

The ITU Telecommunication Development Sector considers emergency telecommunications an integral part of the post-2015 development agenda.

ITU, JAPAN AND THE PHILIPPINES LAUNCH MOBILE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM FOR EMERGENCIES

A movable and deployable ICT resource unit, known as MDRU, has been deployed in the coastal town of San Remigio in Cebu, in the Philippines on 10 February, 2015.

The town was among the areas devastated by Typhoon Haiyan which struck the Philippines in November 2013.

Destruction caused by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013 (Credit: UN Photo)

The MDRU is equipped with an array of communications equipment, servers and storage devices and can be rapidly deployed to provide emergency telecommunication services and ICT infrastructure after a disaster.

An MDRU accommodates equipment for reproducing ICT services such as switches, routers, wired and wireless transmitters, receivers and servers.

The deployment ceremony was attended by Mr Ioane Koroivuki ITU Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, Mr Kiyoshi Mori, Director-General for International Affairs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan, Dr. Atsushi Takahara, Executive Director of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation and Mayor Mariano R. Martinez of the Municipality of San Remigio.

MDRU equipment mounted inside a vehicle (Credit: NTT Japan)

"The development and successful deployment of the Movable and Deployable ICT Resource Unit is the culmination of a fruitful co-operation between ITU, Japan and the Philippines," says Brahima Sanou, Director of the ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau. "ITU acknowledges that when disasters occur, telecommunication services must be restored as quickly as possible. I am confident that this new facility will go a long way to enhance Philippines' emergency telecommunications response capacity."

ITU, JAPAN AND THE PHILIPPINES LAUNCH MOBILE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM FOR EMERGENCIES

"With the frequency and intensity of disasters on the increase in the Asia Pacific region, it is important to have mechanisms that will re-establish communications rapidly in times of emergency," says Ioane Koroivuki, ITU Regional Director for the Asia and the Pacific region. "The MDRU provides such a mechanism and I hope the system can be replicated for use in other parts of the Philippines and the region."

MDRU vehicle (Credit: NTT Japan)

The development and deployment of the MDRU follows an agreement signed in 2014 between ITU, the Japan and the Philippines.


Journalists being briefed about the MDRU (Credit: NTT Japan)

The MDRU can also act as a data center allowing relief workers to track people who have been displaced by a disaster. The unit is self-reliant running on its own power source but is also able to harness other power sources such as generators or local active power lines.

SMART SOLUTIONS TO MAKE TV PROGRAMMING MORE ACCESSIBLE

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in partnership with the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and the European Commission held a workshop on 18 March, 2015, in Barcelona, Spain, on Smart Accessibility on Connected TV. The discussions laid the groundwork for an exchange of good practices on the enabling environment and technical solutions to make television and video programming more accessible for persons with disabilities in the converging ICT ecosystem.

TV sets with enhanced accessibility on display in Barcelona

The workshop was organized within the framework of the ITU European Regional Initiative on "Ensuring access to telecommunications/ICTs, in particular for persons with disabilities", a key area of focus adopted by the 2014 ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference.

"Despite the increasing deployment of telecommunication/ICT networks, equipment and applications, persons with disabilities continue to face enormous barriers in using ICTs," noted Mr Brahima Sanou. "Governments, regulators, technical experts and academic institutions must work together to identify innovative concrete solutions to ensure persons with disabilities can enjoy television, once programming is made more accessible by including solutions such as closed captions and audio description and making users aware of these solutions on electronic programming guides."

Mr Sanou said he was delighted to see that the Regional Initiative for Europe on ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities has achieved its first results. "I invite all stakeholders to respond to our call for contributions to the Regional Initiative for Europe on ensuring access to telecommunication/ICTs, in particular for persons with disabilities," he added. "I also invite stakeholders to join us at the European Regional Development Forum, which will be held from 20 to 22 April 2015 in Bucharest, Romania."

Mr Harald Trettenbrein, Deputy Head of Unit, Converging Media and Content at the European Commission stressed that accessibility has been rapidly becoming an important issue among Members of the European Union. "Enhanced cooperation amongst all stakeholders on

this subject should be further encouraged in order to create necessary incentives to making smart accessibility on connected TV available to all across Europe," Mr Trettenbrein said.

Ms Pilar Orero, Head of Research at CAIAC Research Centre and Director of the European Graduate Studies in Audiovisual Translation at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, stressed that the path to audiovisual media accessibility for persons with disabilities is transforming challenges into opportunities. "Accessibility will not only lead to greater socio-economic inclusion of persons with disabilities but it is also a path to innovation and job creation," Ms Orero said.

The workshop provided a forum for the exchange of best practices in the field of television/video programming access services, including a discussion of the national frameworks of Finland, France, Romania and Spain as well as the European Union, and highlighted recommendations of the ITU Model ICT Accessibility Policy Report. Practical solutions for content developers and broadcasters in providing access services for persons with disabilities were also discussed.

The migration from analogue to digital TV as well as the process of convergence in the world of ICTs represents an ideal opportunity for ITU members to take the necessary steps to ensure that TV becomes more accessible.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the newest Members that have joined ITU-D since January 2015

- **Center for Strategic and Policy Analysis Technology Policy Commission, Pakistan**
- **Universidad Nacional de Luján Centro de Investigación, Docencia y Extensión en TIC, Argentina**
- **Amity Institute of Telecom Engineering & Management, Amity University, India**
- **Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica, Costa Rica**
- **Universidad de Costa Rica, Costa Rica**

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 2015

- **CIS Regional Development Forum on Broadband for Sustainable Development**

Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, 31 March-1 April 2015

The Forum will discuss the five regional initiatives approved by WTDC-14 and will provide Members with an opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices. It will also focus on the ITU Strategic Plan for 2016-2019, the activities of the ITU-D Study Groups, and the Centers of Excellence.

- **Arab regional workshop on ICTs for youth employment and entrepreneurship**

Cairo, Egypt, 7-9 April 2015

The workshop, hosted by ITU and the Arab ICT Incubators and Technoparks Association (ARTECNET) will explore the challenges and strategies for developing tech-startup ecosystems among ARTECENET members. It will also identify promising strategies and practices that could be introduced or scaled-up in the Arab Region to address youth unemployment.

- **Caribbean Regional Training Workshop on ICT Indicators**

Bridgetown, Barbados, 8-9 April 2015

The objective of the training is to strengthen the capacity of Member States, Regulators and ITU-D Sector Members in the Caribbean region to produce national statistics and indicators on telecommunications and ICTs.

- **Training on Conformity and Interoperability for the Arab Region**

Tunis, Tunisia, 20-24 April 2015

The training course will focus on the approved mechanisms to test the compliance of mobile terminals, homologation procedures and market surveillance with the aim of conducting practical testing on Conformity and Interoperability.

- **Regional Development Forum for Europe on "Broadband for Sustainable Development"**

Bucharest, Romania, 20-22 April 2015

The forum is organized by ITU in collaboration with the Ministry for Information Society of Romania and National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications (ANCOM). The forum will discuss the five regional initiatives approved by WTDC-14 and provide Members with an opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices. It will also focus on the ITU Strategic Plan for 2016-2019, the activities of the ITU-D Study Groups, and the Centers of Excellence.

- **Regional Economic and Financial Forum of Telecommunications/ICTs for Latin America and the Caribbean**

Nassau, Bahamas, 21-22 April 2015

This forum is organized by the Development Bureau in collaboration with the Utilities

Regulation & Competition Authority of Bahamas. It will focus on mobile money services; relevant market definition and significant market power; approaches and best practices for broadband costing and pricing; costing methodologies and tariff policies in the region for wholesale and retail telecommunication services.

- **Number Portability Workshop**

Paramaribo, Suriname, 28-30 April 2015

The workshop, hosted by the Telecommunications Authority of Suriname, is part of a regional capacity building training initiative on Number Portability.

- **Telecommunication Development Advisory Group**

Geneva, Switzerland, 28-30 April 2015

May 2015

- **Numbering Planning and Policies workshop for Somalia and Yemen**

Khartoum, Sudan, 3-4 May, 2015

The workshop is to provide participants from Telecommunication and ICT Ministries of Somalia and Yemen with tools to: re-plan their numbering blocks; familiarize with ITU-T's recommendations related to numbering; develop a national numbering plan and framework.

- **Regional Seminar for Europe and CIS on "Spectrum Management and Transition to Digital Terrestrial Television Broadcasting"**

Budapest, Hungary, 5-7 May 2015

Organized by ITU in collaboration with the National Media and Infocommunications Authority of Hungary, this workshop provides participants with a forum to exchange best practices on the digital terrestrial television broadcasting transition. The workshop is organized in the context of the European Regional Initiative approved by WTDC-14 on Spectrum Management and Transition to Digital Broadcasting.

- **Cyberdrill for Africa**

Kigali, Rwanda, 5-7 May 2015

Organized by ITU and IMPACT, the forum will enhance the communication and incident response capabilities of participants.

- **ITU Council**

Geneva, Switzerland, 12-22 May 2015

- **Future networks**

Rabat, Morocco, 19-20 May 2015

This forum will discuss the effects of the changes in the telecom sector and forward looking approaches and regulatory measures to strengthen the collaboration between different players.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 2015

- **Global Symposium for Regulators**

Libreville, Gabon, 9-11 June 2015

- **Training course on Conformance and Interoperability Testing**

Campinas, Brazil, 8-12 June 2015

The main objective of the training is to increase capacity on Conformance and Interoperability, focusing on the international issues related to the C&I Regimes, including market surveillance, the type approval testing for mobile terminals, and NGN integration and interoperability testing.

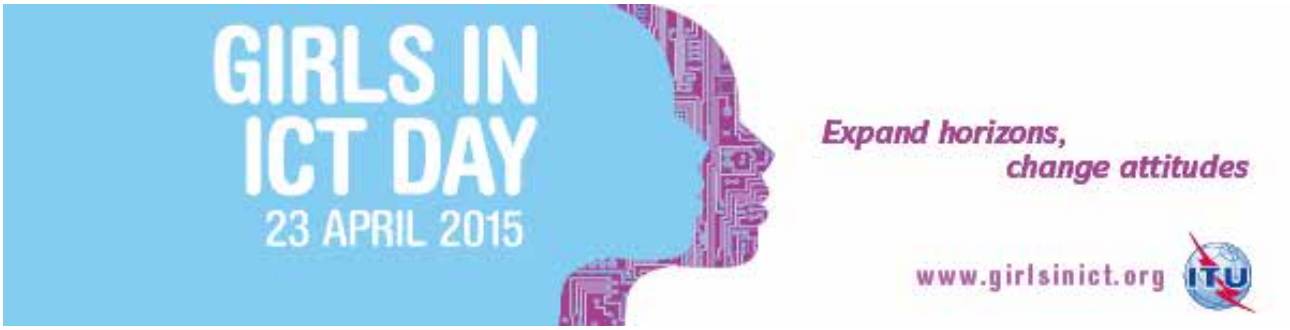
ITU-D STUDY GROUP 1 AND 2 RAPPORTEUR GROUPS MEETINGS

ITU-D Study Group 1 and 2 Rapporteur Groups for the new and revised telecommunication/ICT topics under study will convene in Geneva from 13 April – 8 May 2015 (see the invitation letter). The main purpose of these meetings is to review the input received and assess, discuss and debate where further contributions are needed in order to reach the expected results for each study Question. Interested members are invited to submit their contributions for consideration and discussion during the meetings. Click here to register.

Questions under study.

The annual ITU-D Study Group meetings will be held from 7 to 18 September 2015.

INTERNATIONAL GIRLS IN ICT DAY, 23 APRIL 2015



The Special Initiatives Division is gearing up for Girls in ICT Day which will be held on 23 April 2015. Laura Kangas, the 2015 Girls in ICT Day Campaign coordinator is reaching out to stakeholders around the world and coordinating with regional focal points: Ida Jallow in Africa, Ana Veneroso in the Americas, Rouda AlAmir Ali in the Arab region, Aurora Rubio in Asia and the Pacific, Vera Soloveva in CIS and Marsel Kuzyakov in Europe. Please encourage stakeholders to consult the Girls in ICT Portal at www.girlsinict.org for more information, including a newly developed toolkit to provide organizers with a range of innovative ideas for their events.

Girls in ICT is an initiative backed by all ITU Member States. It aims to create a global environment that empowers and encourages girls and young women to consider careers in the growing field of ICTs.

TDAG TO DISCUSS STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL MATTERS

The Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) will hold its 20th meeting in Geneva from 28 to 30 April 2015. TDAG's broad mandate ranges from reviewing priorities, strategies, operations and financial matters of ITU D.

It meets annually between the World Telecommunication Development Conferences (WTDC) to advise the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) on the implementation of the WTDC Action Plan and measures to foster cooperation with other ITU Sectors and relevant development and financial institutions. TDAG is open to representatives of administrations of Member States and Sector Members of the Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D), as well as to chairmen and vice chairmen of study groups.

This year's TDAG meeting has a full agenda, as it will be meeting for the first time since the 19th ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-14) took place in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 20 October to 7 November 2014. In this context, TDAG will review PP-14 outcomes and resolutions, and their implications for the work of ITU-D. It will review the implementation of the ITU-D Strategic Plan and Operational Plan for 2014, including WTDC-14 resolutions and regional initiatives. In addition, TDAG will consider the draft Operational Plan 2016-2019. It will address ITU-D Study Group-related matters and ITU-D's contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action.

At its last meeting (29 September-1 October 2014), TDAG reviewed the draft Operational Plan 2015-2019, elaborated outcome indicators and fine-tuned key performance indicators based on the decisions of WTDC-14. TDAG also decided to establish two correspondence groups, one on WTDC Resolution 1 (Rev. Dubai, 2014), "Rules of procedure of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector" and the other on the Strategic Plan, Operational Plan and Declaration. These groups work by electronic means, and will hold their first

TDAG TO DISCUSS STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Meeting of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group in 2014

physical meeting in Geneva on 27 April 2015 to report on their preliminary progress.

TDAG will examine ITU-D's collaboration with other Sectors, following the Inter-Sectoral Team on issues of mutual interest which it established at the same time as the two correspondence groups.

TDAG's agenda features several reports, with one on the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives, and the others on the upcoming Global Symposium for Regulators 2015, the World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium 2014 including an outlook on the 2015 event, emergency telecommunications, and Regional Development Forums.

Finally, TDAG will review membership, partnership and innovation-related matters and the calendar of ITU-D events, planned for 2015-2018.

GLOBAL SYMPOSIUM FOR REGULATORS (GSR15), LIBREVILLE, GABON, 9-11 JUNE 2015

The 15th edition of the GSR, organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in collaboration with the Gabonese Autorité de Régulation des Communications Electroniques et des Postes (ARCEP) will take place under the Patronage of His Excellency, Mr Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Republic of Gabon.

Under the central theme of "Mind the Digital Gap - Regulatory Incentives to achieve digital opportunities", participants will explore ways to ensure that all citizens can benefit from the social and economic opportunities brought by the digital economy.

For digital opportunities to fully materialize in today's increasingly complex environment, an adaptive, consultative and innovative approach to regulation is more than ever required. But what kind of regulation is therefore needed to close the digital gap? Regulators, policy makers, industry leaders and other key ICT stakeholders will share their views, engage in interactive discussions and identify best practices moving forward.

GSR brings together heads of national telecom/ICT regulatory authorities from around the world and has earned a reputation as the global annual venue for regulators to share their views and experiences. GSR fosters as well a dynamic Global Industry Regulators' Dialogue (GRID), between regulators, policy makers, industry leaders and other key ICT stakeholders. The first two days of GSR, the GRID sessions, are open to regulators, policy makers and ITU–D Sector members; the third day remains exclusive for regulators and policy makers.

The next Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers meeting (CRO) will take place on 8 June 2015 in Libreville, Gabon, as a part of the GSR-15 Pre-Event Programme. The CRO brings together ITU-D Sector Members' senior Chief Regulatory and Public Affairs Officers to discuss common issues, share best practices and identify industry's perspectives regarding attracting investment; deploying extending and upgrading networks; spectrum management; public-private partnerships; and regulatory processes.

GSR-15 Pre-events and GRID are open to sponsorship. Don't miss the opportunity to increase your visibility and brand as well as to promote your products and services! Become a "GSR-15 Pre-event and GRID" sponsor! Sponsorship Packages are available here. For more information contact psb@itu.int