



AMERICAS

# REGIONAL INITIATIVES

BUENOS AIRES ACTION PLAN

**2018-2021**



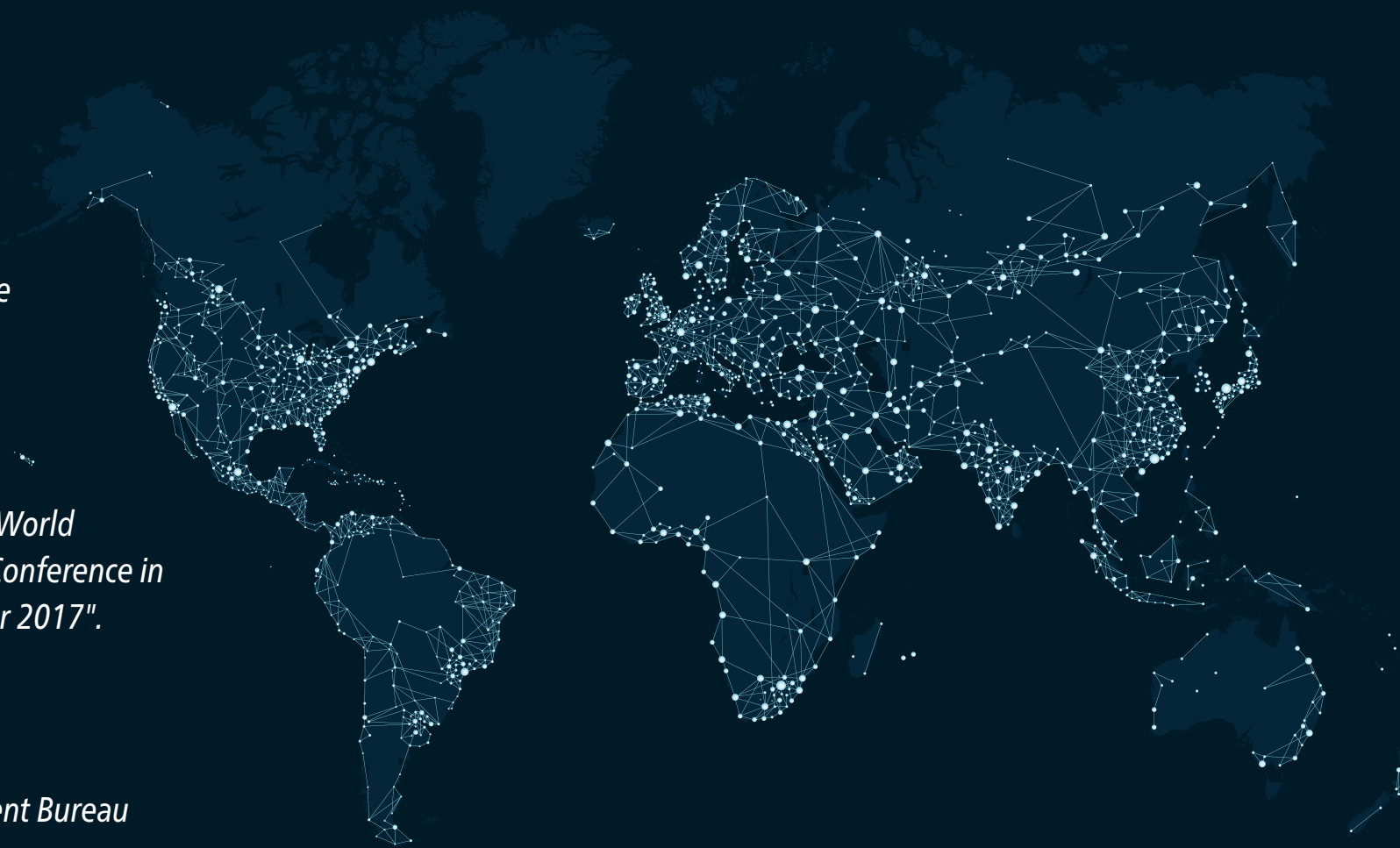
*"The regional initiatives can make a difference on the ground. Through their implementation, we can give a human face to ICTs and accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*

*I therefore call upon all our membership and stakeholders to work with ITU to implement the regional initiatives adopted by the World Telecommunication Development Conference in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in October 2017".*

Brahima Sanou

Director

ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau



Foreword ..... 1

Introduction ..... 2

**AMERICAS REGIONAL INITIATIVES 2018-2021 ..... 4**

AMS1: Disaster risk reduction and management communications ..... 6

AMS2: Spectrum management and transition to digital broadcasting ..... 12

AMS3: Deployment of broadband infrastructure, especially in rural and neglected areas,  
and strengthening of broadband access to services and applications ..... 18

AMS4: Accessibility and affordability for an inclusive and sustainable Americas region ..... 24

AMS5: Development of the digital economy, smart cities and communities  
and the Internet of Things, promoting innovation ..... 32

Disaster risk reduction and management communications, spectrum management and digital broadcasting, broadband access, accessibility, digital economy and smart cities are among the priority areas agreed by the region and on which ITU will focus in 2018-2021.



# Foreword

By Bruno Ramos, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for the Americas

Each year, the Regional Development Forum gives the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) the opportunity to present its work and decide, with its members, on subsequent steps to take. I invite you to follow ITU's work in the region, provide constructive criticism, reach agreements, cooperate and approve the full range of activities that will support both your national and regional objectives.

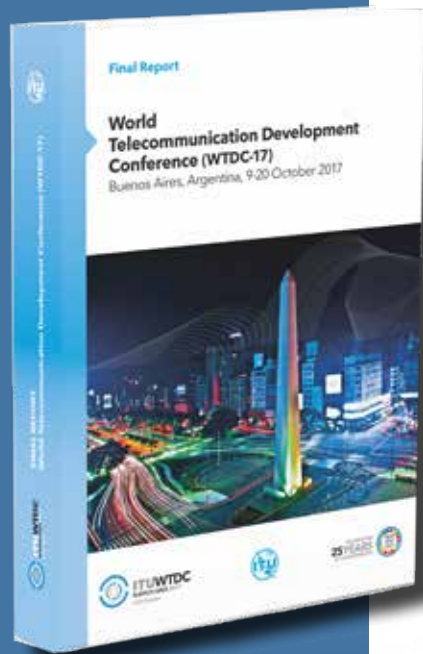
The five regional initiatives for the Americas contained in the Buenos Aires Action Plan of the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2017 (WTDC-17) set the road map that ITU will follow in the coming years. They provide all stakeholders with a path for the development of information and communication technologies (ICTs), in agreement with governments. Disaster risk reduction and management communications, spectrum management and digital broadcasting, broadband access, accessibility, digital economy and smart cities are among the priority areas agreed by the region and on which ITU will focus.

Currently, ICTs are recognized as having a central role in efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). That role, however, cannot be assumed by a single entity or a single economic or social sector. BDT will therefore, through the regional and area offices, work together with all interested parties to transform the intentions of the Americas regional initiatives into realities reflected in the social and economic development of the inhabitants of this beautiful region.

The ITU Regional Office for the Americas is deeply committed to implementing these objectives as a means of paving the way to sustainable development in the region. We will continue building bridges to close the gaps that still divide our societies with regard to the use of ICTs, in our tireless pursuit of the goal of inclusion for all.



The final report of WTDC-17 is available at: [https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC17/Documents/WTDC17\\_FinalReport\\_en.pdf](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC17/Documents/WTDC17_FinalReport_en.pdf)



# Introduction

The mission of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) is not just about connectivity for connectivity's sake, but is more about promoting innovative uses of telecommunications/ICTs that fundamentally improve people's lives. This mission is reiterated in the final report of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-17), which took place from 9 to 20 October 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, under the theme of "ICT for Sustainable Development Goals" (ICT@SDGs).

In preparation for WTDC17, ITU held six regional preparatory meetings (RPMs) around the world in 2016-2017: in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); Kigali, Rwanda, for the Africa region; Khartoum, Sudan, for the Arab States; Asunción, Paraguay, for the Americas; Bali, Indonesia, for Asia and the Pacific; and Vilnius, Lithuania, for Europe. Each regional preparatory meeting was preceded by a one-day Regional Development Forum.

The regions articulated their specific priorities in 30 regional initiatives – five per region for each of the six regions (Africa, Americas, Arab States, Asia-Pacific, CIS and Europe). These regional initiatives were endorsed by WTDC-17 and are featured in the Buenos Aires Action Plan. Regional initiatives are intended to address specific telecommunication/ICT priority areas, through partnerships and resource mobilization to implement projects. Under each regional initiative, projects are developed and implemented to meet the region's needs.

Reflecting the outcomes of the six regional preparatory meetings, WTDC-17 endorsed the following four objectives for ITU-D as the main focus of its work for the years 2018-2021:

**Objective**



**Coordination:** Foster international cooperation and agreement on telecommunication/ICT development issues

**Objective**



**Modern and secure telecommunication/ ICT infrastructure:** Foster the development of infrastructure and services, including building confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs

**Objective**



**Enabling environment:** Foster an enabling policy and regulatory environment conducive to sustainable telecommunication/ICT development

**Objective**



**Inclusive digital society:** Foster the development and use of telecommunications/ICTs and applications to empower people and societies for sustainable development.

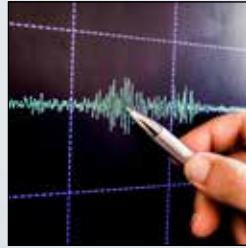
WTDC-17 also adopted the Buenos Aires Declaration reinforcing the political support for ITU's development mission and strategic objectives. As noted in this declaration, implementation of regional initiatives deserves high priority on the part of ITU-D. The declaration underlines how universally accessible, secure and affordable telecommunications/ICTs are a fundamental contribution towards the achievement of the action lines of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the development of the global information society and digital economy.

Through the four objectives above and the regional initiatives, ITU-D will adapt and reinforce the existing links between the WSIS action lines and the SDGs to continue to support global development.

**2018-2021**

*Americas - Regional Initiatives*





**Regional initiative**

**1**

Disaster risk reduction  
and management communications





## OBJECTIVE

To provide assistance to Member States during all phases of disaster risk reduction, i.e. early warning, disaster response and relief and rehabilitation of telecommunication networks, particularly in small island developing states (SIDS) and the least developed countries (LDCs)

## EXPECTED RESULTS

..... 1 .....

Identification of suitable technologies to be used for disaster risk reduction communications, and development of implementation feasibility studies and studies on conformance and interoperability with other technologies and services based on IP technology for emergency telecommunications.

..... 2 .....

Implementation of national and subregional early-warning systems, as well as emergency response and recovery, and identification of critical infrastructure, with special focus on SIDS and LDCs, considering the influence of climate change.

..... 3 .....

Assistance for the development of appropriate policy, regulatory and legislative frameworks, as well as protocols and inter-agency procedures on communications for disaster risk reduction at the national and regional level.

..... 4 .....

Regional meetings and workshops to share experiences and best practices on telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) for preventive measures for disaster risk reduction and emergency response, maximizing resources, creating more innovative and effective programmes and coordinating actions in border areas for the Americas region.

..... 5 .....

Temporary availability of equipment for emergency and recovery communications in the Americas region, at the initial stage of a disaster intervention, as part of ITU cooperation in cases of emergency.





## PROJECT PROPOSAL

Creation of a Disaster-Ready Pan-American Telemedicine Network: Organize emergency response kits integrating medical and video conferencing equipment with mobile and satellite devices and services that will allow assistance to be provided remotely from health centres in the event of medical emergencies in disaster areas.

# PROPOSED PROJECT

Disaster-Ready  
Pan-American  
Telemedicine Network



## 2019 ACTIVITIES

Select five administrations among interested countries; develop a proposal for an emergency response kit, including communication services, in consultation with governments of beneficiary countries and PAHO, and define the optimal network technology; define host workstation (node) location in each of the beneficiary countries.



2020  
ACTIVITIES

Negotiate an agreement with telecommunication service providers and relevant health centres in the region to provide assistance when needed; develop training activities to operate telemedicine emergency services; implement procurement, and launch operations as a pilot project in countries that have joined the agreement.

2021  
ACTIVITIES

Encourage interested stakeholders and other administrations of the region to join the agreement/network using pilot projects as a reference.



Estimated budget

USD 440 000  
(to benefit five countries).



Potential partners

Governments, satellite operators, mobile operators, regional airlines, WHO/PAHO, providers of health services and equipment.



Country or countries involved

Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Regional initiative

2

Spectrum management  
and transition to digital broadcasting





## OBJECTIVE

To provide assistance to Member States in the transition to digital broadcasting, the use of the digital-dividend frequencies and spectrum management.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

..... 1 .....

Capacity building in spectrum management, digital broadcasting technologies and the use of the digital dividend and new broadcasting services and applications, providing assistance in using tools to support developing countries in improving international coordination of terrestrial services in border areas.

..... 2 .....

Support for the elaboration of spectrum-management plans at the national and regional levels, including the transition to digital broadcasting and the promotion of policies for the use of spectrum in underserved areas.

..... 3 .....

Elaboration of studies, indicators and guidelines on aspects of the assignment and use of radio-frequency spectrum, with a view, inter alia, to facilitating the use of spectrum for international mobile telecommunications (IMT) and the harmonization of spectrum use among countries in the region, taking into account WTDC Resolution 9 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017).

..... 4 .....

Assistance to countries in the promotion of inclusive strategies related to the digitization of broadcasting services, including the availability of affordable digital broadcast receivers, and communication strategies to educate and to promote consumer awareness.

..... 5 .....

Assistance in national and regional planning for the use of frequencies released by the transition to digital broadcasting and the deployment of new technologies for broadcasting services.



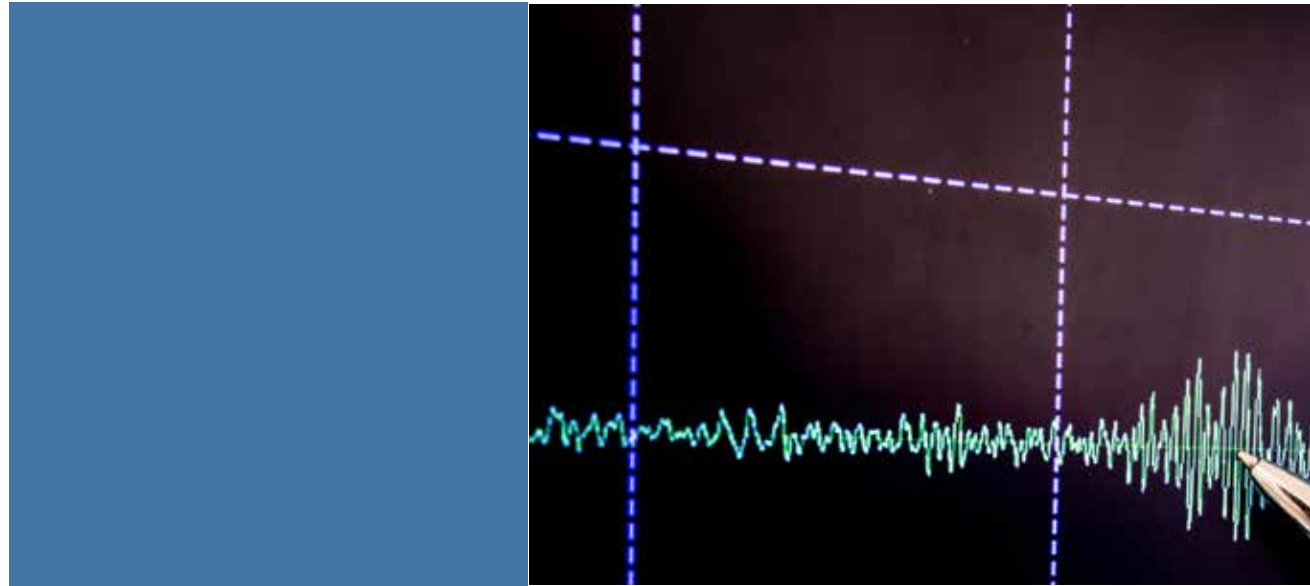
# PROJECT PROPOSAL

Support administrations in the use of digital-dividend frequencies (mobile broadband access and TDT) and in spectrum management by providing human and institutional capacity building, developing and implementing harmonized policies, and updating national radio spectrum plans based on the ITU Radio Regulations and taking account of the decisions adopted at the World Radiocommunication Conference 2019 (WRC-19).



# PROPOSED PROJECT

Support to administrations in the use of digital-dividend frequencies and spectrum management



## 2018 ACTIVITIES

Identify and assess administrations that may be interested in order to plan tailor-made face-to-face training events and define ITU support for developing and implementing harmonized policies and updating national radio spectrum plans.

## 2019 ACTIVITIES

Provide capacity building for two beneficiary countries and launch coordination among beneficiary countries with a view to facilitating harmonization of spectrum use among countries; promote active participation of beneficiary countries in preparations for WRC-19.



2020  
ACTIVITIES

Provide capacity building for three beneficiary countries and support them in updating their national radio spectrum plans in the light of the results of WRC-19; continue coordination among beneficiaries with a view to facilitating harmonization of spectrum use among beneficiary countries.

2021  
ACTIVITIES

Provide capacity building to beneficiary countries and continue to support them in updating their national radio spectrum plans in the light of the results of WRC-19; present the results of coordination carried out among beneficiary countries.



Estimated budget

USD 250 000  
(to benefit five countries).



Potential partners

Governments,  
spectrum agencies.



Country or countries involved

Countries of Latin America and  
the Caribbean.

**Regional initiative**

**3**

Deployment of broadband infrastructure, especially in rural and neglected areas, and strengthening of broadband access to services and applications





## OBJECTIVE

To provide assistance to Member States in identifying needs and in the development of policies, mechanisms and regulatory initiatives to reduce the digital divide by increasing broadband access and uptake, as a means of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## EXPECTED RESULTS

..... 1 .....

Assistance in the development of a situational study on the deployment of broadband infrastructure for fixed and mobile services and spectrum use that will enable administrations to identify needs and opportunities, especially of rural and neglected areas, taking into account specific subregional characteristics.

..... 2 .....

Assistance for the implementation or improvement of national broadband coverage plans, including support to educational institutions, advanced networks, research centres, cooperatives and non-profit organizations that provide telecommunication services, especially in rural, remote and underserved areas, taking into account

networks and fostering an enabling environment to promote investment in networks.

..... 3 .....

Establishment of metrics and methodologies for measuring the condition of broadband services, leveraging public and private investment, public-private partnerships and the participation of small and non-profit operators, especially in landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS).

..... 4 .....

Assistance for the implementation of plans that promote access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) in municipalities, through the concept of digital/smart

cities, and in public social service institutions, as well as increased access to and use of ICTs by the public, especially in rural and underserved areas, to foster access to social services.

..... 5 .....

Consolidation and dissemination of information, including through meetings and workshops, about standards and conformance and interoperability, and exchange of best practices related to the deployment and operation of broadband networks, especially in rural areas, and connectivity, with emphasis on least developed countries (LDCs), LLDCs and SIDS.



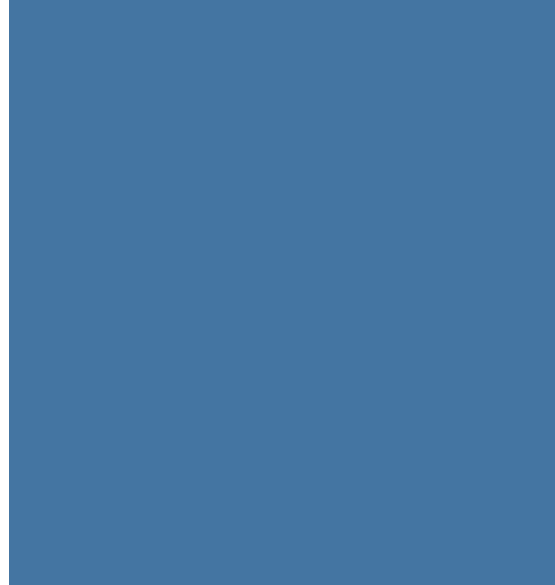


## PROJECT PROPOSAL

In 2015, the world, through the United Nations and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), promised, among many other things, that no one should go hungry by 2030. The Internet is an enabler for these Goals and, by assisting countries in the deployment of broadband infrastructure and the creation of community networks in underserved areas, can contribute to empowering target communities, improving their social and economic livelihoods and helping us to achieve the Goals faster.

# PROPOSED PROJECT

Community networks:  
Deployment of  
broadband infrastructure  
for the development of  
vulnerable communities



## 2018 ACTIVITIES

Select interested countries and promote the creation of community networks, taking into consideration the regulatory environment, geographical conditions, climate, costs (investment and operational expenditures), maintainability, operability and sustainability in beneficiary countries.

## 2019 ACTIVITIES

Develop toolkits with regulation models; provide assistance to two administrations in implementing these models in rural and neglected areas in the form of training events and



Estimated budget

USD 250 000  
(to benefit five countries).



Potential partners

Governments (resources from universal service funds), local institutions (such as village committees), service providers, cooperatives, CABASE, ISOC and academic institutions/projects.



Country or countries involved

Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

## 2020 ACTIVITIES

coordination to exchange information and share maintenance facilities in the interests of feasibility and sustainability.

Continue to provide assistance to another three administrations on implementing these models in rural and neglected areas in the form of training events and coordination to exchange information and share maintenance facilities in the interests of feasibility and sustainability.

## 2021 ACTIVITIES

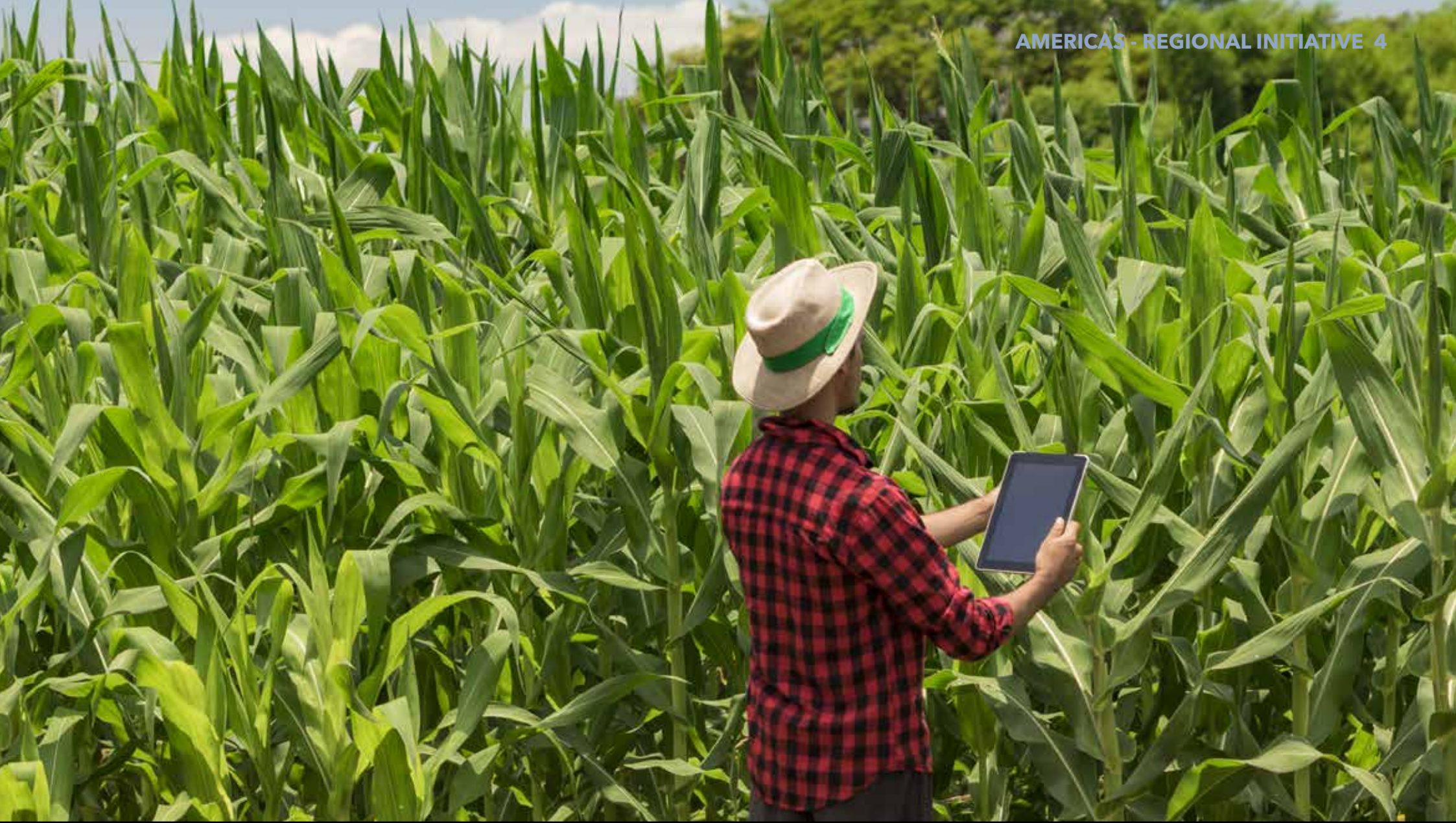
Using the previous implementation as a "showcase", select other countries to continue the project.

**Regional initiative**

4

Accessibility and affordability  
for an inclusive and sustainable  
Americas region





EXPECTED RESULTS

OBJECTIVE

To provide assistance to Member States in ensuring the affordability of telecommunication/ information and communication technology (ICT) services in order to build an information society for all and ensure accessibility of telecommunications/ICTs for persons with disabilities and others in vulnerable situations.

..... 1 .....

Assistance in developing guidelines and public policies to promote efficiency in the provision and accessibility of telecommunication/ICT services, especially mobile and emergency services, also considering, but not restricted to, the use of audiovisual accessibility tools.

..... 2 .....

Assistance for the implementation of recommendations to help improve the affordability of broadband, analysing the different factors, and recommendations on actions for promoting the development and management, as appropriate, of national, subregional and regional Internet exchange points (IXPs), subject to national decision, and related to policy and regulatory aspects for enabling the implementation of agreements and alliances on IXPs, in addition to recommendations to improve the availability of transport to international submarine fibre-optic network connection points, especially for landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS).

..... 3 .....

Studies monitoring affordability levels in countries, disaggregated by socio-economic variables and taking into account specific and vulnerable populations, for inclusion in the broadband plans, policies, strategies, actions and goals for these population groups, as well as recommendations based on studies of policies and initiatives that enable price reduction of telecommunication/ ICT services, broadband deployment and efficient use of spectrum.

## ..... 4 .....

Recommended policies that facilitate an enabling environment to ensure that everyone enjoys the full benefit of telecommunication/ ICT access and use, through the implementation of local/national ICT projects to eliminate disparities in education at all levels and in professional training, the development of platforms to provide communication and relay services for persons with disabilities, the development of accessible websites for government programmes, services and information, and the implementation of e-government services and other services

## ..... 5 .....

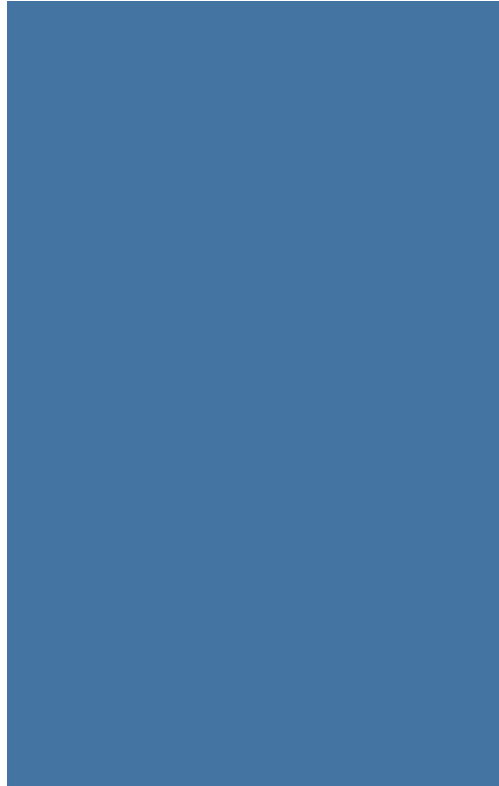
Recommendations on actions for the promotion of cooperation and information sharing on all topics related to public and regulatory policies that will serve to improve the affordability of telecommunication services and broadband.

## PROJECT PROPOSAL

Support administrations in implementing an ICT Inclusion Programme to facilitate ICT access, use and appropriation for the benefit of persons in vulnerable situations in the Americas region; work to reduce disparities through learning, and enhance access to information, knowledge and new technologies; increase participation of women and girls in the development of ICT-related opportunities.

# PROPOSED PROJECT

ICT capacity building  
programme for social and  
economic development  
of persons in vulnerable  
situations







## 2019 ACTIVITIES

Identify countries interested in expanding government programmes to promote ICT inclusion of persons in vulnerable situations (persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, women and girls, young people and the elderly).

Negotiate and prepare agreements with interested stakeholders; develop training content and instructional material, pedagogical strategies and multimedia formats; identify and conclude agreements with technology centres and/or institutions for the delivery of “train-the-trainers” drills.

Prepare a concept paper and organize face-to-face local events to promote ICT inclusion (for example, events to motivate girls in technology such as the TIC TAC\* event held in Brasilia in June 2018, which organized knowledge workshops for 80 girls from public schools).

Another TIC TAC is planned for November 2018 for 100 girls from public schools and vulnerable areas. These events help to promote the international “Girls in ICT Day” and motivate “Make Every Day a Girls in ICT Day”.

\* TIC - Information and Communication Technologies (Acronym in Portuguese and Spanish).  
TAC: Transformation, Access and Knowledge (also in Portuguese and Spanish).

## 2020 ACTIVITIES

Launch the train-the-trainers capacity-building programme during the first semester; each beneficiary country will select the beneficiary groups to receive training; launch the capacity-building programme for the beneficiary groups during the second semester.

Continue to encourage and partner with beneficiary countries to organize face-to-face local events promoting ICT inclusion, as well as promoting the idea of girls in technology.

# 2021

## ACTIVITIES

Continue organizing face-to-face local events to promote ICT inclusion; based on participants' testimonies, evaluate process and outputs in order to improve the programme and replicate it in other countries.

Present the results of the capacity-building programme in the Accessible Americas regional event held every November in the Americas region; continue to encourage and partner with beneficiary countries to organize face-to-face local events promoting the idea of girls in technology.



### Estimated budget

USD 220 000  
(to benefit ten countries).



### Potential partners

Governments, AOS/CITEL, UNESCO, UN WOMEN, academia, public schools, NGOs and the private sector.



### Country or countries involved

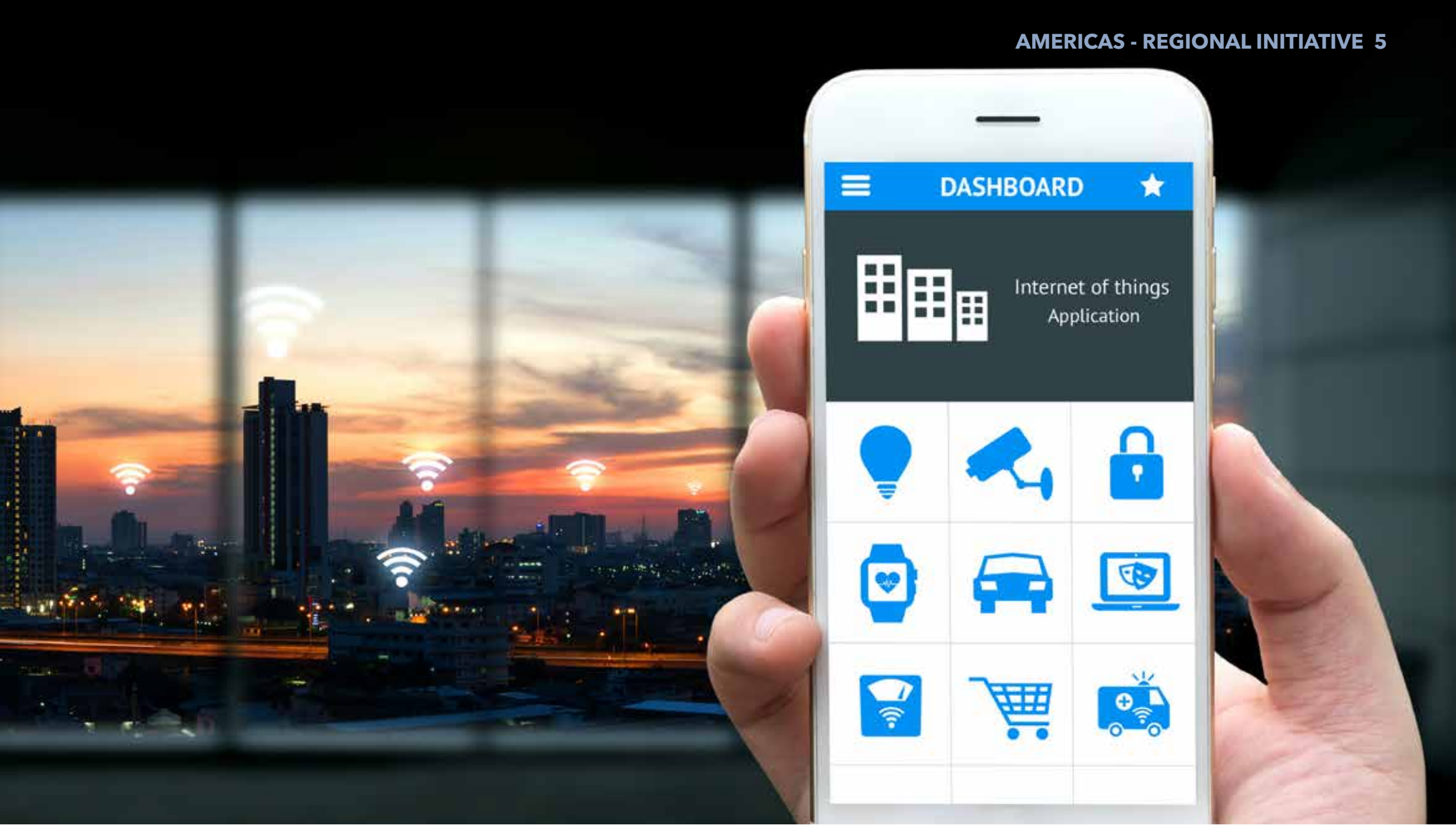
Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Regional initiative**

5

Development of the digital economy,  
smart cities and communities  
and the Internet of Things,  
promoting innovation





## OBJECTIVE

To assist Member States in developing national and regional policies to boost the digital economy, smart cities and communities (SCC) and the Internet of Things (IoT).

### EXPECTED RESULTS

..... 1 .....

Provision of assistance to Member States in the elaboration of information and communication technology (ICT) policies to promote the development of the digital economy in the region, leveraging new technologies to foster development and promotion of appropriate solutions.

..... 2 .....

Meetings and workshops on the impact of the digital economy in the region, in collaboration with other relevant organizations.

..... 3 .....

Elaboration of recommendations to promote the creation of innovation centres, including educational innovation, and projects that contribute to the ICT industry, with emphasis on start-ups, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and young entrepreneurs, and with special focus on women, among others.

..... 4 .....

Identification of partners/alliances to strengthen innovation based on ICT and the funding of projects and initiatives for the development of the digital economy, SCC and IoT, building coalitions and multistakeholder alliances prioritizing young entrepreneurs.

..... 5 .....

Promotion of strategies and dissemination of best practices on the appropriate management of e-waste.



## PROJECT PROPOSAL

Science, technology and innovation (STI) plays a critical role in expediting transition to a sustainable mode of development. The Americas region needs to support the development of emerging industries, which will generate the growth and employment of the future.

Supporting innovation in SMEs can help create a favourable ecosystem for SME innovation and growth.

# PROPOSED PROJECT

Capacity building, identifying and sharing best practices in the development of national/regional innovation ecosystems



## 2018-2019 ACTIVITIES

Assess innovation ecosystems in selected countries and develop research focusing on supporting the development of frontier science and technology through academia and public-private partnerships, creating a culture of entrepreneurship.





2020  
ACTIVITIES

Since the collaboration of different innovation actors is essential, national and regional workshops will be organized to bring stakeholders together and identify the problems and define strategies to help address gaps in the innovation framework; launch the development of a full digital transformation road map, with specific policies and project recommendations at the national level for selected countries.

2021  
ACTIVITIES

Continue the development of the full digital transformation road map with specific policies and project recommendations at the national level for selected countries.



Estimated budget

USD 300 000  
(to benefit seven countries).



Potential partners

Governments, academia,  
private sector,  
financial sector, CAF.




Country or countries involved

Latin America and  
the Caribbean.







International Telecommunication Union  
Telecommunication Development Bureau  
Place des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 20  
Switzerland  
[www.itu.int](http://www.itu.int)

ITU REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE AMERICAS  
SAUS Quadra 6 Ed. Luis Eduardo Magalhães  
Bloco E, 10 andar, Ala Sul  
CEP 70.070-940 Brasília -DF, Brasil  
Tel.: +55 61 2312-2730  
[itubrasilia@itu.int](mailto:itubrasilia@itu.int)