

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION (ITU)

Support to NEPAD

Period of Report: July 2006 to June 2007

Following the adoption of Resolution 35¹ by the World Telecommunications Development Conference in Doha in March 2006, and endorsement by the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference as Resolution 124², ITU member States directed ITU to continue its support to NEPAD, taking into account the ITU Council Resolution 1184 on “bridging the digital divide”, as well as relevant ECOSOC and World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) documents and the call by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee for effective implementation of the NEPAD information and communication technology (ICT) programme. The ITU Strategic Development Plan for 2008-2011 has been defined in line with the various Resolutions which support NEPAD objectives, as well as the UN Millennium Declaration and the Brussels Programme of Action for Least Developing Countries for the Decade 2001-2010.

Collaboration with other UN agencies

ITU and UNHCR jointly established an ICT Training Centre for returnees in Liberia. A similar project is currently under implementation in Burundi. In addition to this, ITU and other partners are collaborating to develop tools for Measuring ICT for Development. The objective is to accommodate and further develop various initiatives for access to and measurement of ICT indicators at the national, regional and international levels. The initiative provides an open framework for coordinating ongoing and future activities, and for developing a coherent and structured approach for the development of ICT indicators globally, and in particular developing countries. Some national statistical offices from advanced countries are also members and contribute to the partnership activities by providing expertise and advice to national statistical offices in developing countries, as well as in the transfer of knowledge in areas such as methodologies and survey programs. The initiative aims to:

- Achieve a common set of core ICT indicators, to be harmonized and agreed upon internationally, which will constitute the basis for a database on ICT statistics;
- Enhance the capacities of national statistical offices in developing countries and build their competence to develop statistical compilation programmes on the information society, based on internationally agreed upon indicators; and
- Develop a global database on ICT indicators and make it accessible via the internet.

As part of this on-going collaboration, ITU, ECA and UNCTAD jointly organized a

¹ Rev. Doha, 2006.

² Rev. Antalya, 2006.

regional workshop on indicators in Addis Ababa in March, 2007.

Financial support for NEPAD programmes and projects

ITU provided direct financial support and experts for the following activities:

Workshop to present a report on Broadband Infrastructure for Central, North and West Africa

ITU supported the e-Africa Commission to organize a workshop in Dakar where the report on broadband infrastructure for Central, Western and Northern Africa was presented and adopted by all stakeholders. The outcome of this workshop enabled the preparation of various strategy documents, including the “Partnership Framework for ICT Infrastructure Development in Africa” which continues to be an important reference document for ICT development in the continent.

Support to the NEPAD e-school project

ITU continued its support to the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative through the e-Africa Commission in the following areas:

- Support for the country liaison persons workshop;
- Fellowships for the country liaison persons to meet with partners to detail in-country roll-out plans;
- Costs of some of the experts involved in the in-country launches;
- Marketing and promotion of the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative through joint workshops with e-Africa Commission;
- Provision of an expert for ICT teacher training.

ITU engaged an expert to assist the NEPAD e-Africa Commission in developing a framework for ICT teacher training in line with the objectives of the NEPAD e-Schools initiative.

Advocacy work in support of African development

ITU, the e-Africa Commission, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), respective member States in the sub-regions, the European Union (EU) and development agencies involved in ICT, such as ECA, continue to collaborate in defining specific projects to address connectivity gaps identified in the study mentioned above, in order to optimize the resources needed to implement broadband networks and to ensure optimum utilization of existing networks. Capacity building was provided through workshops and seminars, while use of local experts from the region provided them with an opportunity to develop their skills and address local needs and peculiarities. In addition to this, ITU continued to support the Centres of Excellency based in Nairobi and Dakar; and projects at national and regional levels, e.g. the EU-funded Market Harmonization project for West Africa.