

First Session of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Committee, 1-2 November 2017, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

DRAFT SUBMISSION OF [FIJI]

Broadband Priorities for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Master Plan

[Date]

Objective: This form is sent to the representative of each country in order to prioritise activities and better align broadband connectivity gaps with solutions. All country submissions will be consolidated as per AP-IS Pillar and subregion to develop an implementation plan for 2018 and will be presented by the Secretariat during the First Session of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) Steering Committee, 1-2 November 2017, Dhaka, Bangladesh. A similar template is sent to partners to identify their planned activities.

Please complete this form and submit to ESCAP (escap-ids@un.org) by **no later than 25 October 2017**.

(a). Background Information

(i). Government Ministry/Organization in charge of ICT connectivity: [Min. Of Communications]

(ii). National Broadband Policy: [National Broadband Policy 2011]

(iii). Completed/Current/planned fibre-optic broadband project:

Fiji, Samoa, Wallis & Futuna (branching unit to Vanua Levu, Fiji and Wallis & Futuna)

Expected cable services date of March 2018

Funded through a World Bank (WB) loan (for Fiji)

USD \$27m total project cost

USD \$7.47m for Savusavu branch

(b). Challenges and Opportunities on promoting broadband connectivity:

Within the scope of the AP-IS four pillars

- (1). Connectivity;
- (2). Internet Traffic & Network Management;
- (3). E-resilience; and
- (4). Broadband for all,

ESCAP member countries and partners outlined seven strategic initiatives in the AP-IS Master Plan (http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/pre-ods/CICTSTI1_2E_rev1.pdf) to be implemented between 2016-2018 (please refer to attached chart of AP-IS 4 Pillars and AP-IS Strategic Initiatives).

The AP-IS seven strategic initiatives are as follows:

1. Identification, coordination, deployment, expansion and integration of the regional backbone networks at the cross-border intra- and interregional levels, in collaboration with member countries and subregional organizations;
2. Establish a sufficient number of Internet exchange points at the national and subregional levels and set out common principles on Internet traffic exchange to prevent Internet traffic tromboning, decrease transit costs and improve service quality
3. Regional social and economic studies;
4. Enhancing ICT infrastructure resilience in the Asia-Pacific region;
5. Policy and regulations for leveraging existing infrastructure, technology and inclusive broadband initiatives;
6. Capacity-building; and
7. Asia-Pacific information superhighway project funding mechanism based on public-private partnerships

(c). AP-IS 7 Strategic Initiatives Implementation Plan 2016-2018: priority challenges and proposed activities

In order to match country's sub-region's and region's priorities within the scope of the AP-IS seven strategic initiatives, please complete the matrix below accordingly. Please add a row as deemed necessary.

Priority Challenges	Focus Area	AP-IS Strategic Initiatives (1-7)	AP-IS Pillars (1-4)	Remarks
Priority Challenges:	(i) Main challenge of connectivity between the maritime islands and thus limiting last mile connectivity to end users (ii) Existing infrastructure eg. Fibre cable connections around the country which becomes an issue for service expansion to the	(i) The influx of a sudden explosion of broadband services at affordable prices has seen more people using online services but without the basic knowledge of online threats (ii) Maintaining Telecommunications	(i) Recent damages to national infrastructure has caused millions of dollars in losses. Building into resiliency is key especially for ICT infrastructure linking outer islands for example. Further building onto disaster recovery and	

	<p>rural areas and islands</p> <p>(iii) Cost to build new infrastructure is seen as quite a considerable cost for service providers hence the expansion of some services is more focussed on the major areas where theres more return</p> <p>(iv) Limited connectivity and bandwidth is seen as a barrier for introducing new technologies and services and quality of service eg. IP/Mobile TV, e-applications, digital learning.</p>	<p>regulatory authorities for effective regulation of ICT services, licencing models, standards, etc.</p> <p>(iii) Establishing IXP has been seen as a cost effective and beneficial move for both ISPs and consumers. Reduction in IP transit costs, traffic routes has largely improved the whole experience.</p> <p>(iv) A lot of capacity building initiatives are required for the growing ICT regulatory authorities and policy makers together with the right tools to work with.</p>	<p>business continuity planning and mechanisms for ICT services.</p> <p>(ii) Developing Digital policies to counter threats which are evolving everyday from online usage and building on an effective awareness campaign for end users who don't quite understand the risks and threats involved.</p> <p>(iii) Backhaul capacity will be improved. Less reliance on fixed microwave usage. Fibre cables for example will bring more bandwidth for consumers and reduction in operational costs for service providers.</p>	
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>(i) Look into universal service obligation to expand into areas and USO classified zones and getting basic services to such areas</p> <p>(ii) Service creation and building on business cases to create more demand for broadband data which would drive more businesses, ICT applications, e-commerce services, digital finances, etc</p> <p>(iii) An opportunity to expand into e-services, getting basic services made available online.</p>			

	(iv) Collaborating with other neighbouring countries in the Pacific to work in partnering towards a common aim to build into service expansion projects eg. Submarine cable projects, volume procurement of equipment and capacity, etc	
Proposed solutions/actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Creating platforms for e-applications through infrastructure investments and upgrades eg. Fire cable infrastructure, etc (ii) More regulation into the wholesale and retail cost models for ICT services with the aim to reduce costs for end users. This will benefit consumers. (iii) Providing subsidies and grants to service providers for expansion of ICT services to rural and under-served areas. (iv) Enabling polices to enhance Telecommunications infrastructure and modern services and positioning Fiji as the ICT hub of the Pacific region. (v) 	
<p>(d). Update to terrestrial/submarine fibre-optic cable projects: Based on the ESCAP/ITU interactive transmission map (access via link: http://www.unescap.org/our-work/ict-disaster-risk-reduction/asia-pacific-information-superhighway/asia-pacific-information-superhighway-maps), please check and list down if there is any recent fibre-optic cable project completed/planned for your country, which is not reflected in the interactive map. The input provided below will be used to update the interactive map accordingly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Fiji – Tonga (completed) (ii) Fiji – Vanuatu (completed) (iii) Fiji – Samoa (Tui-Samoa Cable)- expected cable service date is March 2018 (iv) Hawaiki Cable (branching unit to Fiji) – expected to begin at the end of 2017 		
<p>(e). Any other suggestions/issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Also aligning ICT projects with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the Action Lines of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (refer to WSIS 2017) 		