

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

DRAFT SUBMISSION OF [Lao PDR]

Broadband Priorities for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Master Plan

[16 October 2017]

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: [Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, Department of ICT]

(ii). National Broadband Policy: [Draft National Broadband Plan, MPT Vision towards 2030, 10-years Development Strategies (2016-2025) and 2nd 5-years Development Plan of Post and ICT Sector]

(iii). Completed/Current/planned fibre-optic broadband project: At the end of 2016, we have installed of total 70,948 kilometer of optical-fibre cables to enable 100% of the provinces and 100% of the districts to be connected, there are some works expansion needed to cover 100% total villages. Our national backbone has more than 10 cross border connection with Thailand, China, Vietnam, Myanmar and Cambodia.

2nd 5-years Development Plan of Post and ICT Sector : To expand transmission networks by optical fiber over and underground across the country for further additional length of 20,000 km. Increase the National Transmission Networks to reach across 100% villages nationwide. It is also aimed to expand the telecommunications service to cover 98% of the villages and population nationwide.

(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) The geographical of Lao is a Land locked country, need cross border connection to international bandwidth. Which resulting price of Internet in Lao higher than other countries.	(i) [categorised under Strategic Initiative 2,4,5,7]. (ii) [categorised under Strategic Initiative 2,3,6]. (iii) [categorised under Strategic Initiative 6.]. (iv) [categorised under	(i) [categorised as an issue under Pillar 1, Pillar 2]. (ii) [categorised as an issue under Pillar 2, Pillar 3]. (iii) [categorised as an issue under Pillar 3] (iv) [categorised as an issue under Pillar 3, Pillar	

	<p>(ii) The development of local contents remain a challenge. Foreign language is not widely spoken therefore, people cannot leverage on content developed in other countries. We rely mainly on the neighbouring content.</p> <p>(iii) Lack of ICT skill, therefore there is still digital gap in ICT know how</p> <p>(iv) Several regulations need to be improved to accommodate the fast changing technology</p>	Strategic Initiative 5.].	4].	
Opportunities	<p>(i) Economy: To digitally transform industries, there is a need to increase the investment in ICT. In 2016, Lao GDP growth is 6.9%, with that ICT sector ranked 3rd place in contribution to GDP and state budget. The percentage of ICT investment to GDP will increase from 3.7% in 2014 to approximately 6% in 2020.</p> <p>(ii) Internet use has also skyrocketed. Internet penetration is 35% by 2016 over a third were on Facebook/youtube. This high penetration supported by a massive increase in international Internet bandwidth. therefore, the capacity of Lao' national data traffic needs to increase greatly in order to meet data development in next 5 or 10 years. Existing backbone network expansion is an important part in building national ICT.</p> <p>(iii) Opportunity to Collaboration with multiple stake holder, neighbouring countries, international organization, regional cooperation.</p>			

<p>Proposed solutions/actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) to build data centre to provide services for public and private sectors (such as web hosting, co-location, virtual machine, cloud, etc) to boost local contents and bring foreign contents closer to make the internet cheaper, provide variety of contents for user to learn, work and conduct business. (ii) Human capital development on ICT related technology and its application (iii) Encourage more investment at the underserve areas and infrastructure sharing to enable people nation wide can access to services in affordable price and good quality. construction of nationwide network infrastructure with the characteristics of large network deployment scale, huge investment, long deployment period, low return on investment, and long payback period, the authority needs to be innovative and considerate in terms of both the sources of funding and the available financial instruments for investment. Therefore, Public private partnership model is one of the suitable solution for investment model. 	
<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) Present, there is no terrestrial/submarine cable project hold by government, most of optical fibres are launched by Telecom Operators. 		
<p>(e). Any other suggestions/issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) [one of our priority on ICT human resource development especially. We welcome support and opportunity of cooperation with ESCAP/ITU in technical capacity building areas under 4 pillars of AP-IS. 		