

## Workshop on AP-IS in the CLMV (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam) countries

28 August 2019

### CONCEPT NOTE

#### Background:

Broadband connectivity and Internet usage in Asia and the Pacific region have witnessed a phenomenal growth in the last decade; however, challenges of inclusive broadband growth remain among many of the economically developing countries of the region. Aimed at reducing the digital divide, and building more inclusive broadband infrastructure in the region, the ESCAP member countries developed the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) initiative to increase the availability, affordability and resilience of broadband networks in Asia and the Pacific<sup>1</sup>.

The CLMV countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam) have lower fixed broadband subscription rates than other countries in the region, with less affordable services. Although these countries have seen rapid growth in the mobile broadband sector, inadequate backbone infrastructure and inefficient data traffic management practices at the core level continue to impact broadband efficiency and limit the benefits of the Internet. To identify the challenges and opportunities in the CLMV countries, ESCAP and National Information Society Agency (NIA) of the Republic of Korea conducted an in-depth study in 2019 based on the previous AP-IS pre-feasibility study for the Southeast Asia<sup>2</sup>.

The report found that expanding fixed broadband infrastructure and establishing carrier-neutral Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) would be needed to reduce the digital divide among CLMV countries. These are fundamental to establish efficient interconnections between the countries, telecom operators and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in the sub-region; which, in return, could help expand the broadband coverage, reduce the cost of bandwidth and provide optimum broadband Internet speed to the fixed and mobile broadband Internet subscribers at affordable rates.

One of the key recommendations of this report is the establishment of at least one Internet Exchange Point (IXP) in each of the CLMV countries, which will help create the suitable technical environment needed for the member countries to connect with each other's IXPs. Based on its findings, the report proposes priority actions and policy measures to secure seamless connectivity, develop inter-connection through IXPs, and estimate the cost of deploying the IXPs.

To share the findings of this report and discuss follow up actions among CLMV countries, ESCAP plans to organize an expert group meeting at the margin of the third session of the AP-IS Steering Committee meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> ESCAP resolution 73/6 at [https://www.unescap.org/commission/73/document/E73\\_RES6E.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/commission/73/document/E73_RES6E.pdf) and 75/7 [https://www.unescap.org/commission/75/document/E75\\_Res7E.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/commission/75/document/E75_Res7E.pdf). The implementation takes place through the AP-IS Master Plan 2019-2022 [https://www.unescap.org/commission/75/document/E75\\_INF5E.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/commission/75/document/E75_INF5E.pdf) and AP-IS Regional Cooperation Framework Document 2019-2022 at [https://www.unescap.org/commission/75/document/E75\\_INF6E.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/commission/75/document/E75_INF6E.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unescap.org/resources/pre-feasibility-study-asia-pacific-information-superhighway-asean-sub-region>

**Objectives:**

Against this background, the objectives of the workshop include the following:

- a) Present the key findings of the report on “An In-depth Study on Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway in CLMV Countries”;
- b) Identify potential opportunities and challenges to implement the recommendations among CLMV countries;
- c) Promote intra-regional exchange of Internet traffic by establishing carrier-neutral IXPs and introduce a mutually beneficial policy and agreement among the CLMV countries;
- d) Review the sub-regional activities, such as GMS Information Superhighway and discuss synergies and partnerships.

**Participants:**

The workshop is intended for government officials, policy makers and regulators in the relevant ministries; agencies and organizations involved in developing ICT connectivity and Internet traffic management in the CLMV countries. Experts, related development partners and private sector representatives will also be invited.

**Venue:**

MR G, United Nation’s Conference Center, Bangkok, Thailand

**Date and Time:**

09:00 – 12:00, 28 August 2019

**Contact Person:**

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**DRAFT AGENDA**

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<i>28 August 2019</i>	
08:30 – 09:00	<b>Registration</b>
09:00 – 09:15	<p><b>Session 1: Opening of the Workshop on AP-IS CLMV countries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction and Workshop Background</b> Ms. Atsuko, Chief of ICT and Development Section, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP</li> <li>• <b>Self-introduction by all participants</b></li> </ul>
09:15 – 11:00	<p><b>Session 2: Report on the AP-IS in CLMV countries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Presentation, Mr. Yeong Ro Lee, National Information Society Agency of the Republic of Korea</b></li> <li>• Views from country representatives</li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p>
11:00 – 11:45	<p><b>Session 3: Discussions on the AP-IS in CLMV countries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner’s initiative</li> <li>• Discussions</li> </ul>
11:45– 12:00	<p><b>Session 4: Closing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ESCAP</b></li> </ul>