Evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development**

* ESCAP/77/L.1.
** The present document is being issued without formal editing.
Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT)

Final Evaluation Report

26th August 2020

Prepared by
Seán Ó Siochrú

Commissioned by
ESCAP
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments ........................................................................................................................ i
List of acronyms ............................................................................................................................ ii
Executive summary ..................................................................................................................... iii

1. Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 1
   Background ......................................................................................................................................... 1
   Purpose, objectives, and scope........................................................................................................... 1

2. The object and context of evaluation ................................................................................ 3
   Key APCICT Activities and Outputs ............................................................................................. 3
   Flagship Programme *Modus Operandi* ............................................................................................. 3
   Other activities: AVA, E-Co Hub, Advisory Services and Knowledge Exchange ...................... 4
   Target countries and implementing partners ............................................................................. 5

3. Methodology ........................................................................................................................... 6
   Data Gathering Tools ....................................................................................................................... 6
   A Case Study Approach ..................................................................................................................... 6

4. Findings ................................................................................................................................... 8
   Impact ................................................................................................................................................. 8
   Relevance ......................................................................................................................................... 12
   Effectiveness ..................................................................................................................................... 14
   Sustainability ..................................................................................................................................... 17
   Efficiency .......................................................................................................................................... 19
   Gender and human rights mainstreaming ...................................................................................... 21

5. Conclusions ............................................................................................................................ 22
   Overview and Positioning APCICT for the Future ........................................................................... 22
   Specific Conclusions .......................................................................................................................... 23

6. Recommendations ................................................................................................................. 26

ANNEXES ................................................................................................................................... 32
Annex 1: Case Studies ................................................................................................................ 32
Annex 2: Review of Draft Theory of Change ............................................................................ 48
Annex 3: Terms of reference ....................................................................................................... 53
Annex 4: List of documents reviewed ....................................................................................... 59
Annex 5: List of interviewees ...................................................................................................... 60
Annex 6: APCICT Activities by Country .................................................................................... 62
Acknowledgments

The author is grateful to all those who gave generously of their time and insights to complete this study.

The research assistance of Samiha Zaman from Bangladesh was also hugely appreciated, for her authorship of the Bangladesh WIFI Case Study, her ideas, and tireless proofreading.

Seán Ó Siochrú
Nexus Research Cooperative

August 2020
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADPP</td>
<td>ASEAN Data Protection and Privacy Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APCICT</td>
<td>Asian and Pacific Training Centre for ICT for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Information Superhighway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVA</td>
<td>APCICT Virtual Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCC</td>
<td>Bangladesh Computer Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BICT</td>
<td>Bangladesh Institute for ICT in Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BWIT</td>
<td>Bangladesh Women in Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAREN</td>
<td>Central Asian Research Education Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CESB</td>
<td>Career Executive Service Board (Philippines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DICT</td>
<td>Department of Information and Communication Technologies (Philippines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DITT</td>
<td>Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (Bhutan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-CO Hub</td>
<td>E-Collaborative Hub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCAP</td>
<td>Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCS-UI</td>
<td>Faculty of Computer Science, Universitas (Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD</td>
<td>Gender and Development Team (Philippines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREAT Women</td>
<td>Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women project (Philippines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDD</td>
<td>ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction (ESCAP Division)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILCDB</td>
<td>ICT Literacy and Competency Development Bureau, DICT (Philippines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMC</td>
<td>Incheon Metropolitan City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOT</td>
<td>Internet of Things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCIT</td>
<td>Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoIC</td>
<td>Ministry of Information and Communications (Bhutan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSIT</td>
<td>Ministry of Science and ICT (Republic of Korea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICT</td>
<td>National Information Technology Center (Kyrgyzstan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVOP</td>
<td>One Village One Product National Committee (Cambodia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH-WIFI</td>
<td>WIFI Programme in the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIM</td>
<td>Royal Institute of Management (Bhutan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RISTT</td>
<td>Rural Impact Sourcing Technical Training programme (Philippines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RWTP</td>
<td>Rural Women’s Technology Park (Women’s University, India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDD</td>
<td>Social Development Division (ESCAP Division)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech4Ed</td>
<td>Technology for Education Programme (Philippines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIID</td>
<td>Trade, Investment and Innovation (ESCAP Division)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOT</td>
<td>Training of Trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TU</td>
<td>University of Technology (Myanmar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIFI</td>
<td>Women’s ICT Frontier Initiative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive summary

Purpose, Scope and Objective

The APCICT, located in Incheon, Republic of Korea, was established through UN ESCAP resolution 61/6 of the 18th of May 2005. Its Statute states its objective as: “to build the capacity of members and associate members of ESCAP through training programmes in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) for the purposes of socio-economic development.”

Under Resolution 71/1, the Commission reviews the relevance and financial viability of its Regional Centres every five years. The specific purpose of this evaluation is to assess APCICT’s impact on member States’ capacity to leverage ICT use of socio-economic development, and to strengthen human and institutional capacity in ICT for development.

Timeframe, Methodology and Limitations

This evaluation began in April 2020 and was completed in July 2020. It combined intensive documentary and data analysis with a set of 30 Key Information Interviews, mostly (the main exception being APCICT staff) on a one-to-one basis. Restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic eliminated the possibility of in-person interviews and all were conducted remotely. The approach to impact assessment and in-depth analysis drew on Case Studies - some substantial and others of a schematic nature - developed from the interviews and documentation.

Key findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations

Impact

APCICT has seen many Flagship programmes successfully localised and institutionally mainstreamed in ESCAP member States. A few programmes (or constituent modules) have become mandatory for civil servants, an example being the Academy Programme in Bhutan. Their impact and benefits, although difficult to measure empirically, is certainly significant in some countries. Case Studies and interviews have confirmed this to be the case in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, India, Philippines. For instance, regular government reviews of the Academy programme implemented annually among civil servants in Bhutan find them to be contributing to development there; and the WIFI Programme in Cambodia has been delivered successfully in most Provinces, including very remote ones, to almost 1,750 participants so far and will continue to extend and deepen its impact into the future.

The approach taken is better suited to some countries and sub-regions than others, in terms of initial take-up and partnership development, and those benefiting most are not always the least developed. Different country characteristics influence the depth and sustainability of national programmes; and the Pacific Islands and some least developed countries have missed out in part because the Flagship programmes, as currently designed, are difficult and expensive to implement there.

Technical assistance and policy advice activities are not clearly defined in terms of theme and modalities of delivery, though APCICT is responsive to requests and some success has been achieved.

The impact of AVA is highly diffuse, with few collective online user groups. However, enrolment figures show that the target audience of government officials, youth and educators are being reached in large numbers. Data gathering processes are also being improved.

Relevance

Flagship programme themes are differentiated from others in the region’s ICTD eco-system. They remain relevant in many member States, though some may be approaching a point of saturation.
Modules are being updated and new ones developed, and will facilitate a sub-modular approach to enable disaggregating and flexible use. However, tackling specific needs of the Pacific Island sub-region has proven difficult given demographics and cost, and the lack of Governing Council representation may also contribute.

Yet, new needs are emerging from global digital dynamics and increasingly sophisticated use of ICTs in trade, economy and society that both pose challenges and offer opportunities. To retain its relevance, the APCICT response must empower governments to design and implement effective policy and regulation, to ensure that these trends can contribute to development and Agenda 2030.

**Effectiveness**
In the absence of effective national-level M&E, a case study approach concludes that, overall, the effectiveness of Flagship programmes is high. Module content is well tested and designed. Content and pedagogic localisation enables them to build capacities locally. Module updating includes sub-modules for stand-alone use or tailored to needs, combining global case studies with local use-cases.

**Sustainability**
APCICT donor core funding from the Republic of Korea, though steady, accounted for 94% of income between 2016 and 2019, pointing to the desirability of diversifying sources and expanding income. Plans are being developed to reduce costs; new partners are being sought, and synergies explored with other UN agencies.

At present, the Centre, according to many resource persons and experts interviewed, is widely seen primarily as a training organisation in ICT for development, with no clear thematic ICTD expertise. The absence of a clear focus or expertise in thematic areas might limit the potential to attract new donors and new partnerships, since the latter are themselves often thematically focused. Which new donors or partners might emerge will depend on which priority thematic areas are selected for inclusion in the up-coming Mid-Term Strategy.

**Efficiency**
APCICT could enhance its efficiency through taking full advantage of its access to ESCAP’s Divisions, Subregional Offices and Regional Institutions, that offer a wealth of information and deep insights into areas in which ICTs can contribute to development. A more diverse Governing Council, and a more systematic and strategic engagement by its members to help the Centre explore and engage with all member States, would also assist a better focus on member States’ needs.

**Gender and human Rights Mainstreaming**
The evidence is that APCICT currently prioritises gender mainstreaming and the guidelines are currently being adhered to. No specific information is available on human rights mainstreaming.

**Recommendations**

1: The Centre should review and restate its objectives and vision in line with the dynamics of the evolution of the digital era at the global and regional levels.

The APCICT’s Medium-Term Strategy should clearly restate the relevance of APCICT in the current Digital Era. The Centre’s objective might for instance refer to the wider context of the global digital revolution and reach beyond “training programmes” to include “advisory services”. Its functions might more explicitly refer to “providing advisory and support to government, through advice, and dissemination of best practice on policy and regulation to ensure that the digital revolution contributes to wider socio-economic development.”
2. The Centre should establish an advisory group comprising technical experts from government, academia, research institutions, non-governmental organizations and other ICT-related entities on the front line of ICT opportunities and challenges.

Currently the Governing Council comprises mainly of ministries or entities responsible for ICTs and telecommunications. However, with an almost ubiquitous presence of ICTs and global digital trends towards for instance AI, big data and IOT, the emphasis in terms of capacity-building and policy requirements moves to line ministries and agencies involved across a variety of sectors. It is among these that many of the challenges and much of the potential of ICTs lie in the digital era. A diverse advisory group would be able to contribute more to strategic Council discussions.

3. The Centre should propose that the Governing Council include in its agenda a regular item on members’ contributions to resource mobilization.

Governing Council meeting could include a regular agenda item on how members could contribute to resource mobilisation, for instance through requests to their national authorities to host knowledge sharing events based on relevant Thematic areas.

4. The Centre should define its strategic focus, identity and positioning for the digital era in the medium-term strategic plan for 2021–2023.

1) Identify a preliminary set of Themes for an immediate focus, that are problem-oriented
2) Delineate two clear APCICT Service Lines 1) capacity building programmes and 2) policy advisory & technical assistance services. Existing and new APCICT actions can be clustered under these.
3) Service Line 1: Rebuild implementing partnerships for Flagship programmes, that are focused, time-bound, and sub-regionally sensitive to engagement
4) Service Line 2: Design and develop this Service Line, including modalities to empower governments to address challenges of the Digital Era
5) Develop a Theory of Change approach to enable the identification of clear pathways of causality between these two Service Lines and the final outcomes
6) Integrate Communication and Resource Mobilisation Plans in the Strategic Plan.

5: The Centre should undertake a strategic assessment of the needs of ESCAP member States in the area of ICT for development.

1) APCICT, in collaboration with IDD, could commission a succinct macro-level digital landscape study
2) Coordinating through IDD and the office of the Deputy Executive Secretary and guided by the Landscape Study, an in-depth review of all programmes in ESCAP Divisions, Subregional Offices and Regional Institutions could be undertaken, identifying areas of interest and establishing lines of communication where relevant.
3) Ensure ongoing interaction with ESCAP entities.

6. The Centre should encourage the participation of representatives from underrepresented subregions and least developed countries in sessions of the Governing Council.

APCICT should invite participants from under-represented sub-regions, including the Pacific and least developed countries, and facilitate their participation in sessions of the Governing Council, as observers.
1. Introduction

Background

The APCICT (Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development), located in Incheon, Republic of Korea, was established through UN ESCAP resolution 61/6 of the 18th of May 2005. The Government of the Republic of Korea and ESCAP signed the agreement in January 2006 and the Centre was inaugurated in June 2006.

APCICT’s objective, as stated in its Statute, is:

“to build the capacity of members and associate members of ESCAP through training programmes in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) for the purposes of socio-economic development.”

It serves ESCAP’s 62 members and associate members, guided by the 2030 Agenda and the resolutions and mandates of ESCAP. It fulfils its mandate through implementing demand-driven capacity building and training programmes for policy makers and government officials, women and youth, facilitating knowledge sharing and offering technical advice, and fostering multi-stakeholder dialogue on ICT for development in the region.

Purpose, objectives, and scope

The Commission, through resolution 71/1 on “Restructuring the conference structure of the Commission to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda”, decided to review the continued substantive relevance and financial viability of each regional institution every five years. In response to this mandate, the secretariat’s biennial evaluation plan includes an evaluation of each regional institution.

The objective of this evaluation is to:

“...inform the review by the Commission of the substantive relevance and financial viability of APCICT. It is designed to generate information on its achievements and results of APCICT. The evaluation is also forward-looking, with a focus on providing recommendations to ESCAP member States and management on how to improve the substantive relevance and financial viability of APCICT in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the future APCICT Strategic Plan.”

Specific objectives are three-fold:

(i) To assess the impact of APCICT training actions on member States’ capacity to use ICT for development purposes, and to assist them in strengthening their human and institutional capacities to that end;

(ii) To assess the performance of APCICT against evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and gender and human rights mainstreaming;

(iii) To propose recommendations that can improve the results-orientation and performance of APCICT in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the future APCICT Strategic Plan.

The period covered by this evaluation is four years, from March 2017 to March 2020, although reference is made to activities prior to this period where it is justified and necessary.
The scope of the evaluation is articulated in the following set of evaluation questions. Sub questions are indicated in parentheses. (These are also in the Evaluation Matrix in Annex 3.)

**Impact**
1. What have been the main recorded impacts of APCICT interventions at the national level? (What is the overall impact of APCICT Actions set against its Statute Objective?)
2. How and why have the impacts come about? What causal factors have resulted in the observed impact? (How do these fit within a Theory of Change?)

**Relevance**
3. Given past experience what would be the best way for APCICT to determine the needs of member States (e.g. direct requests, GC workplan/requests, other)? (How does APCICT ensure that those member States most in need can access the programmes? Which LDCs have not benefited and why? Can key policy makers be targeted to enhance relevance? Which themes are rising in relevance?)
4. How responsive was APCICT to meeting member States’ needs and requests for technical assistance? (Which factors determine or limit their responsiveness, and why?)
5. What adjustments are needed to make APCICT more relevant to member States in 2030 Agenda (Which 2030 Agenda aspects are most relevant? Are they prioritised?)

**Effectiveness**
6. How effective was APCICT’s overall training/capacity building approach in enhancing skills and capacities of policy makers, civil servants, and other beneficiaries in the region? (Are training/capacity building activities effective, in terms of outputs?)
7. What can be done to improve the effectiveness of APCICT’s training programmes? (Are they of sufficient quality, to stand out? Will growing use of ICT from home during Covid-19 assist in options?)
8. What specific indicators are, and can be used, to measure the effectiveness of APCICT’s training programmes? (How and when should they be compiled, and using what methodology for data collection? What are the obstacles? Can they be integrated within a Theory of Change?)

**Sustainability**
9. Is the level of contributions to APCICT from member States sufficient to ensure APCICT’s financial sustainability over the next five years?
10. What could be done to increase the resources of APCICT? What other sources and modalities of resources could be explored?
11. How and to what extent are APCICT Programme successfully mainstreamed within member States Institutions, and is support there likely to be sustained?

**Efficiency**
12. To what extent did APCICT coordinate and cooperate with ESCAP substantive divisions and other organisations in the design and delivery of its outputs? (How can the coordination and cooperation with ESCAP entities be further enhanced to improve efficiency?)

**Gender and human rights mainstreaming**
13. How has APCICT mainstreamed gender in the design and delivery of its training programmes and other interventions? (What indicators exist for assessing the outcomes of mainstreaming and are they monitored?)
14. What can be done to improve gender mainstreaming within the work programme of APCICT?
2. The object and context of evaluation

Key APCICT Activities and Outputs

APCICT supports a number of activities. By far the largest are the Flagship programmes, comprising three training programmes implemented across many member States.

- The first, and original, programme is the “Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders”\(^1\). This began in 2007 and now comprises a core curriculum of 12 modules ranging from basic to advance. Like all APCICT programmes they are released as open education resources. Originally they were designed to target policy makers and government leaders but as time went on, they have targeted mid-level government management and officials. A revised and updated version was released in 2012. The latest is on *Realising Data-Driven Governance* launched in December 2018.

- The second was launched in 2012 and is entitled the “Primer Series”\(^2\) as a curriculum to help educators fill a gap in coverage of ICT for development in colleges and universities. It is a concise course, coming in five non-technical Primer modules with a strong focus on themes such as climate change, and the role of social media and disaster risk management, among others. It was also associated with smaller actions targeting youth and, until 2019 APCICT also offered a number of internships in its office in Incheon.

- The most recent of the Flagship programmes is the “Women ICT Frontier Initiative” (WIFI)\(^3\), launched partly to strengthen the contribution to Agenda 2030 (SDG5, target 5b) launched in 2016 to “enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular ICT, to promote the empowerment of women.” The modules target female business people directly but also policy makers in this area.

Flagship Programme Modus Operandi

All three Flagship programmes tend to follow a certain *modus operandi*. This may be characterised, in broad terms, as follows, as it proceeds from problem identification through to building sustainable national institutional implementation.

1. Thematic/problem identification relating to APCICT’s Objective

Each Flagship programme has its own origins. The Statute and objective of APCICT in 2008 led directly to the idea of the comprehensive Academy ICTD training programme for public sector staff and policy makers lacking a background in ICTs and in ICT project management. The origins of the Primer Series was responding to the UN’s Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) in 2010, and later revised it to support ICTD education in third level education institutions aiming at young people. As noted, the WIFI programme in 2016 emerged from the 2030 Agenda SDGs.

2. Stocktaking and Needs Assessment

An assessment is undertaken of existing facilities and opportunities for capacity building and training under the theme, to avoid duplication and identify gaps, as well as to identify relevant potential

\(^1\)The online version on the APCICT Virtual Academy is at [https://e-learning.unapcict.org/courses/category?id=1](https://e-learning.unapcict.org/courses/category?id=1)

\(^2\)The online version on the Primer Series is at [https://e-learning.unapcict.org/courses/category?id=2](https://e-learning.unapcict.org/courses/category?id=2)

\(^3\) The online version of WFIF is here: [https://e-learning.unapcict.org/courses/category?id=4](https://e-learning.unapcict.org/courses/category?id=4)
resource persons, stakeholders and institutions. Gap identification is accompanied by needs assessment in member States.

3. Content Development and Programme Strategy development and Consultation

The broad programme content is sketched in modules and in the programme strategy for implementation in the national institutional context. Several rounds of consultations are undertaken with member States, experts, institutions, the growing set of APCICT Resource Persons, and through surveys, expert meetings and national and regional workshops. The programme content and strategy are affirmed and refined.

4. Programme Module Development and Testing

The first set of modules is developed in detail by Global Resource Persons, and further consultation, expert review, and piloting workshops are undertaken for final verification.

5. Regional Programme Launch and initial Training of Trainers

The Programme is launched at the regional level with the participation of identified national institutional actors who expressed an interest in national implementation. A Training of Trainer programme is delivered by Resource Persons, and participants gain a thorough familiarity with the programme. National plans for implementation are shared, and cooperation with national Resource Persons and National Partners strengthened.

6. Sub-Regional and National Programme Partnerships and Implementation

At sub-regional (for instance in Central Asia or CIS) and national levels, a launch event is organised by National Partners, that includes further Training of Trainers and policy-maker participation. This is followed by implementation nationally. Implementation in general is by means of face-to-face training, following the curriculum and modules, with participants also having access online. A Partnership Agreement with local institutions will ideally include the institutionalization of the programme, and will often include the localisation of modules, and content translation. The principal is that National Partners take full responsibility for implementation, although APCICT may respond to requests for assistance, for instance with further capacity building and module localisation.

7. Programme and Module Review and additional Module Development

APCICT engages in an ongoing review of its Programme relevance and content. New modules have been produced based on expert and member State consultations, and Launch events include further TOTs and knowledge exchange. The April 2019 report Assessing the Relevance and Effectiveness of APCICT Capacity Development Programme reviewed the relevance of the three programmes. Work is underway to update and revise many modules.

Other activities: AVA, E-Co Hub, Advisory Services and Knowledge Exchange

Apart from these flagship programmes, APCICT implements other actions, though they are far less clearly defined.

- APCICT Advisory Services and Knowledge Exchange: These have largely been associated with Flagship programme actions, and APCICT also responds to requests from member States where it can.

---

4 These are drawn from four Briefing Note Appendices for the Governing Council produced in November 2019.
- APCICT Virtual Academy (AVA): This was originally launched in 2009 and is available freely to members of the public. It consolidates all modules from the Flagship programmes, suitably modified for solely online implementation. Localised versions of the Flagship modules are also available in Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese, Russian and Vietnamese. In the decade to March 2019, an annual average of about 1,200 enrollments were registered.

- E-Collaborative Hub (e-CO Hub): Recently renamed the ICTD InfoBank, this brings together publications case studies, blogs and other materials from APCICT, ESCAP and many other sources, and organises them.

**Target countries and implementing partners**

Annex 6 contains a list, provided by APCICT Secretariat, of all activities across Asia Pacific. Only a few member States, notably in the Pacific Islands sub-region, records no activities at all.

The Flagship programmes are implemented with the support of Global Resource Persons, National Resource Persons, and National Partners, with their respective roles broadly outlined above. Resource persons are engaged on a contractual basis, as needs arise, while National Partners are usually associated directly with the National Partner and hence unpaid. Some, though not all, National Partners have signed a written agreement with APCICT outlining the roles and responsibilities of each party.

APCICT directly employs a small staff of just seven people, three international and five local, and all employed under UN regulations. Its programmes are implemented through contracts with consultants - Global and/or National Resource Persons - and national partners.

The previous APCICT evaluation was completed in 2010.

---

5 The Website is it: https://e-learning.unapcict.org/about/platform
3. Methodology

Data Gathering Tools

A four-column Evaluation Matrix was constructed for the evaluation Inception Report. It presents the evaluation questions (above) down column one, documentary sources down the next, a guidance note from APCICT in the third, and individual sources of information in the fourth.

The following data gathering activities were subsequently undertaken.

1. Desk Research examined the documentation and data provided by APCICT and ESCAP, and these were supplemented by further items identified during the research (See Annex 4).

2. APCICT staff (three in number) and ESCAP management (four) were interviewed, in small groups or individually. An initial round was conducted in preparation for this Inception Report, repeated and supplemented later on. (See Annex 5)

3. Key Informant Interviews were undertaken individually with stakeholders at national and regional/global levels. These comprised: National/Global Resources Persons (6); National Partners (11); Governing Council (2); Donors (2); Other (1).

A Case Study Approach

In consultation with the client, it was decided to take a Case Study approach to assessing impacts and obtaining in-depth information regarding APCICT’s main activities. They were selected from the following table. All countries had seen a high level of APCICT programme activity. Those in blue were to be considered of highest priority, and the others as secondary possibilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academy Programme</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
<th>Cambodia</th>
<th>Philippines</th>
<th>Myanmar</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Kyrgyzstan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WiFi Programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primer Series Programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-region Represented</td>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>SE Asia</td>
<td>SE Asia</td>
<td>SE Asia</td>
<td>SE Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing Council Member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The COVID-19 situation made it impossible to carry out field visits, as had originally been hoped. Thus all interviews were carried out remotely. Of the 30 interviews undertaken, most had some bearing on a Case Study, but the main sources of information were the national and/or global resource persons and the national partners.

The documentation available on most national programmes is very limited. APCICT produces cursory descriptions in its annual reports, although Appendices to the Governing Council of November 2019 does consolidate this information. Annual reports from some APCICT national partners tabulate activities and the numbers trained using a general template.

No qualitative analysis is available, with the exception of the WIFI programme in Bangladesh and the Philippines, for which descriptive Case Studies were produced by national resource persons, and these are referenced are the appropriate points.

The limited documentation available, combined with the limitations inherent in remote interviews, made it difficult to complete full Case Studies of some of the more complex programmes. This affected

---

6 Briefing Notes (GC 14 Appendices 1-4) November 2019
in particular the Academy Programme and Primer Series in the Philippines, both of which have seen extensive APCICT activity over the years. However, a couple of additional short Case Studies were completed, not included in the table above, including WIFI in India and the Primer Series in Myanmar.

The final number of Case Studies came to nine, covering the three Flagship programme types. Some are schematic but serve to update and confirm activities in these countries.

An additional short piece is included at the end of in Annex 1 Case Study. It describes a sub-regional approach to providing technical assistance that has recently emerged as a possibility and appears to have potential as a model for collaboration.
4. Findings

Impact

1. What have been the main recorded impacts of APCICT interventions at the national level?

Gathering evidence to accurately record the impact of APCICT’s interventions in terms of reaching its final objective is fraught with difficulties. ICTs are enabling tools for development purposes, and their specific impact combines with that of many other factors to achieve the final objective, and evidence of that impact tends to become diluted and indistinguishable. Thus Project Documents and Annual Reports tend to stop short at output and (usually short-term) outcome indicators, or proxy indicators to assess outcomes. (These are reported under other questions below.)

This research finds that the impact of APCICT-supported activities is seldom, if ever, monitored or recorded by National Partners. APCICT has attempted to facilitate such a process but a number of obstacles have been encountered.

This evaluation therefore adopts a Case Study approach to the question of assessing impacts.

The evidence is that where the APCICT Flagships Programmes have been successfully localised, implemented and mainstreamed within the national institutions or structures, there are good grounds for concluding that the impact on development is high, compared to the resources devoted to it by APCICT. However, they have not been mainstreamed everywhere.

The Case Studies (Annex 1), with an emphasis on the period since 2015 (i.e. the timescale of this evaluation), suggest both significant impacts and challenges. These do not comprise a complete list but are indicative of the kind of outcomes and obstacles from the APCICT Flagship programmes.

The Academy Programme

1. The Academy Programme in the Indonesia is implemented since 2009 in collaboration with the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT) and Faculty of Computer Science, Universitas (FCS-UI). Drawing on selected modules and extensively localised, capacities have been built and skills applied that contribute to development principally at the Provincial government level, for the training of Chief Information Officers, but also in other areas. The prospects for sustaining this into the future are good.

2. In Bhutan, the Royal Institute of Management (RIM), with support from the Ministry of Information and Communications (MoIC), implements the Academy Programme, localised with examples but in the English language, across different levels of public service for a decade. Civil servants are required to complete modules, as part of their professional development. The programme is regularly reviewed by MoIC and judged to be contributing to development there. It is the sole provider of training in ICT for development in this country with a population of 770,000. This is underpinned by a robust relationship with MoIC, which is now moving towards technical assistance with line ministries.

3. The Academy Programme in the Philippines, in operation since 2009 and led by Department of Information and Communication Technologies (DICT), has built capacity especially among middle level management and staff and across a range of government departments. An issue raised has

---

7 See Part 5: John Ure 2019 Assessing the Relevance & Effectives of APCICT Capacity Development Programme
8 A full Case Study could not be completed for the Philippines Academy programme as it proves to be too complex for the data-gathering methods available. A field visit would be needed. This is based on interviews.
been the absence of senior level trainers needed to build capacity among policy-makers, as well as the targeting of modules at different levels. The DICT training system is being overhauled and with it the Academy Programme, but there are prospects for the programme to be integrated within an ICT Academy, part of the Digital Transformation Centre programme supported by ITU in ten countries. Separately, the Career Executive Service Board (CESB) has also integrated parts of the Academy Programme into its senior-level training.

4. Kyrgyzstan’s National Information Technology Center (NITC) was another early partner for the Academy Programme. With UNDP support, it reached into all Kyrgyz provinces in 2009. Modules were translated into Russian and shared within the region, though it was limited to textbooks and PowerPoint presentations. However, funding difficulties and low wages in public institutions has reduced the number of NITC staff with TOT training from ten to just two now. The Academy Programme was last delivered in 2016. The Director argues that absence of an incentive within the public system to upgrade skills means that few seek to apply to the programme, though he is hopeful that a new government commitment to “digital transformation”, and the merging of the NITC within Academy of Public Administration, might yet lead to a revival. He argues that, with a complete content and technology overhaul, a sub-regional platform version could be effective.

The WIFI Programme

5. In Cambodia the WIFI programme, led by One Village One Product (OVOP) under the Office of the Council of Ministers in collaboration with the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, has already, since its launch in 2018, reached a large number of women and men (marginally more men) across all Provinces. It is likely to be achieving a perceptible impact though (as elsewhere) there is no systematic impact monitoring. This early success has given it an impetus to continue into the future. It is partly down to an energetic, committed and experienced leadership well-connected with at the senior political level, and partly to how it has been implemented locally in innovative ways that reduce costs and enhance relevance. Though still identifiable as WIFI it is fully merged from the start into a larger effort to support rural enterprise.

6. India’s WIFI programme is run by the Women’s University in Andhra Pradesh, which also houses on campus a Rural Women’s Technology Park (RWTP). The relationship between APCICT and the University started during the design stage of WIFI in 2016, and was deepened with a learning visit to Sri Lanka, and the University committed to support and fund its from February 2018. Localisation into the Telugu language was professional and thorough and included video and local case studies. Following APCICT-supported TOT locally, a WIFI-TOT group has spread through different departments, and training is being delivered in the RWTP to tribal groups active in traditional product development, combining them with nutrition and health modules. There is definite interest from and interaction with other campuses, though additional TOT support from APCICT would be required to disseminate it further.

7. Bangladesh’s WIFI programme was launched in 2017 in a joint government-NGO-private sector initiative with significant political support and an ambitious target of reaching 30,000 women. The actual number reached by 2019, many outside Dhaka, was 5,300, and 100 policy-makers, which were still impressive figures though it proved difficult to reach the lower-income women they targeted. The initial high-level of political support did not materialize into a separate budget, however, and mainstreaming in its own right has not been achieved. WIFI elements are being integrated into other larger programmes directed at empowering women.

8. The WIFI programme in the Philippines gained impetus from the APCICT launch of WIFI for ASEAN country as a whole. Supported by the Gender and Development (GAD) team of the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT), and with some participation from the Philippines Commission on Women (PCW), two Technical Working Group were established in 2017 to work on the policy-making and enterprise tracks. The goal was to integrate it securely into one or both of two DICT development programmes, Tech4Ed and Rural Impact Sourcing Technical
Training (RISST), though in the meantime initial funding was found from the GAD’s gender focal points system. Localisation began, including into Tagalog and covering local regulations and laws, and a training needs assessment tool was devised. PH-WIFI was then piloted in the small city of Carmona in Cavite province. However, a change in senior level management in DICT came with a set of new priorities and, lacking its own budget line, Technical Working Groups attendance fell greatly during 2019. A detailed proposal to take the next steps never received funding, and the programme has remained there since. Prospects for its future revival are uncertain. In retrospect, locating it in another agency, such as the CSW, may have yielded better results.

The Primer Series

9. University of Technology (UT), Yatanarpon Cyber City, Myanmar, held an APCICT-supported awareness workshop in 2014 covering both Academy and Primer Series, attended by many stakeholders, and this was followed up by selected-module TOT workshops from 2015 to 2017. Primer Series module 2 “Project Management and ICTD” was a good fit with the final-year undergraduate B.E. in Information Science and Technology and in Computer Engineering, and in 2015 UT decided to offer it as an integral course. (TU had been founded in 2010 and this was its first graduating cohort.) The original English textbook is used with local case studies and combined with another textbook. The course accounts for about 15% to 20% of the grades, and it continues to be delivered.

10. Indonesia’s FCS-UI Universitas, in addition to delivering the Academy Series externally, also has a compulsory ICT for development course for undergraduates. The modules are localised in Bahasa Indonesia, with APCICT support, and local languages are used.

11. In the Philippines, the Primer series was endorsed in 2015 by the Commission on Higher Education to be piloted in 18 third level institutions and several, such as Tarlac State University and University of the Philippines Los Baños, have integrated them as electives. Overall, Case Study evidence confirms that the APCICT programmes, and its current approach to partnerships and programme implementation, do contribute to national development in an effective manner in many countries. They have worked better, and achieved a sustainable presence, in some countries more than others.

The Flagship programmes have been the main focus of this evaluation since they account for the bulk of APCICT actions and resources. Evidence of the impact from the other activities is less readily available.

Documentation on technical assistance and policy guidance activities, including policy related events held alongside TOT workshops, comprises participant surveys, but there is little available on impact. APCICT also responds to direct requests from member States. For instance, the government of Bhutan sought assistance in 2014 to develop a policy on social media. With expert assistance from an APCICT Resource Person, the policy was drafted and endorsed in January 2016; and followed up with a training workshop on developing a social media strategy with the Department of Information & Media in the Ministry of Information and Communications (MoIC).

The AVA platform aims to equip government officials, youth, and educators with the relevant knowledge and skills to fully leverage ICT. Limited data is available regarding the sustained use of AVA by specific groups of associated people, but an exception is that the Academy modules are used as

---

9 Information on the Primer series was particularly difficult to source. Commitments had been given, for instance in the Philippines, to apply it across many universities, but evidence that it had occurred, and the extent to which it was integrated as mandatory courses or electives, was difficult to find.

10 A Case Study was not undertaken due to time constraints. This is based on documentary evidence.
part of a master’s Programme in Indonesia, including in examinations. The impact achieved by the Platform is likely to be widely diffused and hence difficult to document.

Overall usage figures, however, demonstrate that the target groups are being reached: of the 4,596 users registered in November 2019, 35% are in government agencies and 31% in academia. Others are in the private sector (13%), NGOs (12%) and development agencies (6%).

APCICT is taking steps since 2019 to improve information from the system.

- Data cleansing and integration consolidated all data from the different versions of APCICT Virtual Academy into a single database;
- Enhancement of the platform’s user registration data collection in February 2020 allows greater insights into the characteristics of its new and future users;
- Restructuring of the post-course evaluation survey in February 2020 will later on generate more information on the user needs

These are expected to help to identify more precisely AVA’s users, to strategize new approaches, to consolidate the promotion of the platform, and to strengthen the impact of its courses.

2. How and why have the impacts come about? What causal factors have resulted in the observed impact?

Within the modus operandi outlined in the previous section, and with specific reference to the period under consideration here, Case Studies and other documentation point to the following seven factors as central to impact:

1. **Successful identification of real needs among some ESCAP member States that, if fulfilled, can support sustainable development.**

   The decision to develop the WIFI programme has been a good example of that during the timeframe of this evaluation.

2. **The development of quality and relevant content for the Programme, and updating them.**

   The Academy Programme modules offered a good basis for national level localisation in a number of countries, and the content has, often selectively, been shown to be relevant and of high quality. In most countries only the most relevant modules are adopted for use. Updating modules has sometimes been slower than optimal. Some modules are also suited to specific target groups, and some target groups (such as senior policy makers) are difficult to reach using this modality.

3. **Identification of an appropriate National Partner and securing high level government commitment.**

   The National Partner must both champion the Programme and be positioned or enabled to secure high-level government support, with some prospects for this to be sustained. This successful combination has been achieved (or re-established after problems) in the successful cases above. But in some countries, National Partners have moved to different positions and high-level support was either was never secured or lost due to political or other factors.

4. **Appropriate content localisation, in language, delivery modality and content (e.g. local case studies).**

   This is a key factor in not diluting the content quality and in maintaining the pedagogic value, and achieving it can demand a major investment for APCICT or from local partners. Whether it must be translated for use in the local language is a major determinant of the effort and cost involved. Some countries have been highly successful at every stage of localisation; in others, no more than
5. **Access to a training or education institution with the capacity to deliver using trained educators after TOT and positioned such they can continue to deliver over a sustained period of years.**

There have been several cases, particularly in government institutions, where trainers, after attending the TOT workshops, have been moved to new positions. Those in dedicated government training institutions have been more stable, though academic institutions appear to be most likely to retain training staff and are usually the most qualified as educators.

6. **An adequate number of TOT Workshop, regionally or nationally, targeting the right trainers.**

Critical to further mainstreaming is that those who attend the TOT Workshop continue on to provide the further training, and ideally to replicate further TOT workshops. On the other hand, some more senior managers, who were never going to deliver training, did benefit from the learning gained during the sessions.

7. **Appropriate and sufficient support provided by APCICT.**

Although the APCICT approach is designed to that National Partners take responsibility for and lead the implementation and mainstreaming processes, selective ongoing support, including additional TOT and sometimes national workshops, have been critical to maintaining impetus at crucial moments and reinforcing political or high-level support.

**Relevance**

3(a) **Given past experience, what would be the best way for APCICT to determine the needs of member States in the use of ICT for development?**

The Ure report in 2009 (ibid) was specifically commissioned by APCICT to examine how relevant and effective the APCICT’s programme is to “developing the capacity of the current ICTD ecosystem in Asia and the Pacific regions”.

After completing a review of other institutions offering training in ICT in a development context, that report confirmed “that APCICT does indeed fill a gap” (page 3). Furthermore, partly in response to this report, APCICT is currently updating several modules, with significant consultation, to ensure these continue to be relevant and to target needs. This programmes’ redesign will also facilitate a more sub-modular approach that can enable modules to be disaggregated and recombined in ways that meet member State’s needs and facilitate localisation.

Thus, the approach deployed by APCICT to determine the needs of member States did successfully identify core themes for capacity-building programme development among government staff and other targeted groups. They have ensured the relevance of those programmes to member State’s needs, through localisation and other means, once that theme has been selected.

However, there is some evidence from interviews and the data that certain elements of the Flagship Programmes, in the context of their current *modus operandi*, may be approaching a saturation point in terms of those countries that are in a position to engage effectively. The Academy Programme has been available to member States for a long period, and has been initiated and/or implemented in many. Similarly, the Primer Series, which is relatively easy to adapt into an academic environment, has also been available for eight years, with (based on limited evidence) take-up and full implementation as a mandatory subject in just a few cases. Both are available to all member States and in principle APCICT is responsive to requests. The WIFI Programme, the most recent addition, has shown itself to be adaptable to diverse circumstances and could probably be replicated in several more. There was a suggestion in one interview that ‘unpackaging’ and ‘repackaging’ the Flagships programmes into a...
single more varied suite of options might enable more flexibility of implementation and expand the pool of potential users.

There is also a wider question.

Are some types of member State needs in the sphere of ICTs for development not readily identified using the current needs assessment methods? One such area, for instance, is targeted advice to policy-makers which currently is treated as an adjunct to the capacity building programmes or undertaken on an *ad hoc* basis. In particular, given global and regional trends in ICTs and the digital platform economy, a set of new challenges is emerging for member States to respond to these with effective policy and regulation, including through regional knowledge sharing and cooperation.

The Ure report comments that consultations with National Programme and member States can result in a “shopping list’ of new technologies and trends that government feel the need to keep abreast of” (page 14), with little sense of priorities or potential impact, or to the capacities and resources of APCICT.

This evaluation suggests that a *problem-solving approach* to identifying member State needs is appropriate.

Guiding questions at the highest level come from two directions: Which development challenges can be addressed, and opportunities taken, through the deployment of ICTs? Which trends in ICTs and the digital economy, globally and regionally, are impacting on the prospects for development, and what specific opportunities and challenges do they pose? APCICT can seek answers to these in the growing literature in the area and in centres of expertise in UN agencies, academic associations and elsewhere.

Current member State priority needs, and the problems they need solving to pursue Agenda 2030, are currently expressed in practice across all ESCAP programmes and Divisions, and this is the starting point to explore which may be addressed through the use of ICT. It will be important also to identify the specific needs of distinct stakeholders groups, from policy makers to mid-management staff, to women and marginalised communities.

**3(b) Which member States and key Stakeholder groups have not benefited and why?**

There is evidence that the needs of some regions, in particular the Pacific Islands sub-region and some least developed countries elsewhere, have not been explored in sufficient depth, and/or modalities have not been available to address needs that have been identified. This is particularly true in relation to supporting policy-makers’ capacity building, but is relevant to other areas.

The composition and current role of the APCICT Governing Council may, according to several stakeholders, be a factor in limiting responsiveness to the needs across all ESCAP member States. Of the eight current members, just two, Bangladesh and Cambodia, are on the UN’s least developed country list. Four of the ten Asia Pacific’s least developed countries are in the Pacific Island sub-region, but none is represented on the Council. It is not unreasonable that countries already engaging with APCICT should seek membership of the Council, since they have familiarity and experience to offer. However, a balanced sub-regional representation on the Council, with guidelines and an agenda to ensure discussion of the needs of all areas, might contribute to the participation of member States in all sub-regions.\(^{11}\)

---

\(^{11}\) A candidate was put forward for the governing Council in 2015, but support from other Pacific nations was insufficient to a secure place.
4. **How responsive was APCICT to meeting member States’ needs and requests for technical assistance? What factors determine or limit responsiveness?**

APCICT actively responds to direct requests for support from ESCAP member States, including especially from least developed countries, where resources and the strengths of Resource Persons have allowed them to do so. A recent example is Bhutan in relation to media literacy policy, and there are others.

APCICT management expresses a desire to focus more on least developed countries. The fact that it is not an explicit requirement in their Statute does not prevent them from doing so, but it does mean they would require explicit justification where a significant amount of additional resources are required to implement a programme there. The geographical location and cost of accessing Pacific island states and their small populations do pose real problems, a fact confirmed in an interview with a senior politician there – who noted that this issue is not unique to APCICT.

More generally, the technical assistance (also termed advisory services) component of the APCICT support portfolio is less clearly defined than the Flagship programmes, and tends to be executed alongside or in association with the latter. (Specific requests, such as that of Bhutan, are the exception.) For instance, topics for high-level briefings tend to be linked to those of new modules being launched; but if the module is targeting middle management or operational staff, the topics covered may not be those of greatest concern to high-level policy-makers.

Thus a factor limiting APCICT’s technical assistance at policy level is that clear themes based on member State needs in relation to capacity building in ICT for development have not been identified at that level; and hence the content and resources (e.g. expert resource persons) are not available. The identification of themes is a precondition to developing a clear set of modalities, such as high-level briefings, from which member states could choose or which could be pro-actively offered.

5. **What adjustments are needed to make APCICT more relevant to member States in 2030 Agenda (Which 2030 Agenda aspects are most relevant? Are they prioritised?)**

The 2030 Agenda specifically identifies the need to enhance access to technology (e.g. SDG Targets 1.4 and 9.6) and some specific areas in which ICT can play a role, such as women’s empowerment: SDG Target 5b. However, at this point it can reasonably be argued that ICTs are central to virtually all areas of sustainable development and of the Agenda 2030. The challenge for APCICT is to develop a comprehensive but focused understanding of where ICTs can contribute most, across all ESCAP sub-regions and member States.

**Effectiveness**

6. **How effective was APCICT’s overall training/capacity building approach in enhancing skills and capacities of policy makers, civil servants, and other beneficiaries in the region?**

Based on APCICT workshop survey questionnaires, the training programmes themselves are effective. Although there are well-known limitations to this type of in the context of long-term effectiveness, the overage score of 84 per cent is impressive.
Table 1: ‘Effectiveness’ responses of participants in Workshop surveys 2012 to 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The activity effectively increased participants’ knowledge on the topic of</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The contents (presentations, visuals, documents) were of high quality,</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concise and clear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The delivery approach and method was appropriate and effective</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: APCICT

The number of participants reached by capacity building workshops is also impressive, amounting to almost 73,000 trained by partners between 2013 and 2019.

Table 2: Workshops & Participants 2013 - 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Parameters</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>Total/annual average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of workshops conducted by APCICT</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60 (Total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 8 workshops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants trained by APCICT</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>3,298 (Total): Average 824 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Women participants</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>15%*</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>30% (994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of workshops conducted by partners</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>330 (Total): Average 47 workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants trained by partners</td>
<td>9,307</td>
<td>19,381</td>
<td>14,461</td>
<td>7,905</td>
<td>5,040</td>
<td>4,707</td>
<td>11,985</td>
<td>72,786 (Total): Ave. 10,398 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of women participants in partner led activities</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>26% (18735)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source APCICT *Note: Percentage of women participants for 2013, 2014 or 2015 are low as gender breakdown was not available from some workshops.

7. **What can be done to improve the effectiveness of APCICT’s training programmes?**

This question is addressed from the perspective of the content, including inbuilt delivery methods, of the core training programmes themselves and not of their implementation at national level.

The current process by which APCICT has developed its training modules involves several stages designed to enhance content and effectiveness. Global Resource Persons involved in this process were interviewed and claim it is a thorough approach. Once the modules have been drafted, the review process moves to a second process of assessment, this time by National Partners and experts likely to take a critical stance. A few that had been involved in this process noted that their suggestions had resulted in significant modifications, and this, in their view, suggested a high level of responsiveness to suggestions from APCICT staff.

This quality control process is likely to result in programmes that are more effective in real-life circumstances of ESCAP partners, and may partly account for the high regard in which APCICT training programmes by almost all of these interviewed.

At the same time, a number of National Partners interviewed commented that some modules had at different points, especially in the Academy Programme and in the Primer Series (as the first two programmes), become out-dated, and therefore less effective and relevant. They are referring to both content and heuristic methods and tools.
The Ure report (ibid) reviewed the APCICT programme contents heuristics, based on a variety of sources including Partners’ surveys and extensive comments. It was positive overall (see ibid Section 4) and proposed some recommendations and areas for improvement (page 30-31). These include creating overview Framework modules, while designing Sub-modules that can be used stand-alone or in various combinations and tailored to needs; building in benchmark Global Case Studies that can be combined with local use-cases; and establishing a revision process for updating.

Interviews during this evaluation affirm the relevance of these. Below is the schedule of modules to be updated following the Ure review, and APCICT staff have indicated that the above issues are being taken into account.

Table 3: Module updates and Target Launch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Last update</th>
<th>Original Target Launch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Media for Development</td>
<td>Emmanuel Lallana</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>May 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT for Disaster Risk Management</td>
<td>Manzul Hazarika</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Jul-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT and Sustainable Development</td>
<td>John Ure/Usha Reddy</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Jul-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Security and Privacy</td>
<td>Freddy Tan</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Jul-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-Government Applications (retitled Digital)</td>
<td>Amit Prakash</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Q4 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: APCICT

An examination during this evaluation of the most recent WIFI module update also demonstrates an extensive and appropriate use of graphics and interactive techniques and digital tools. 12

While mindful of the suffering caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, a number of those interviewed raised the possibility that the enforced adoption by many of remote working and digital communication tools may create a fertile ground for a rapid growth in the acceptability of eLearning. This possibility is echoed the agendas of many organisations. Yet issues relating to infrastructure and internet constraints remain, especially in poorer countries and communities. Nevertheless this possibility cannot be ignored by APCICT, and may lead to closer integration of Flagship programmes and AVA. APCICT management is looking into this possibility.

8. What specific indicators are, and can be, used to measure the effectiveness of APCICT’s training programmes?

The ESCAP Strategic Framework is used by APCICT to monitor and measure effectiveness. The results are available for the 2016-2017 Biennium, and expected results for 2018 to 2019 Biennium. These indicate that, following the parameters used here, targets are generally being reached or exceeded.

While these figures are important to monitoring overall key figures, and further detail is offered from sources in the Annual Partner survey responses and AVA course usage, they offer little in terms of specific effectiveness, particularly qualitatively. The evaluation surveys circulated on completion of all workshops and other sessions (overall results are referenced above in Table 1) offer only a partial insight - since not all participants stay to the course completion - into the immediate reactions of participants to the value of the course. In-course monitoring could also be improved. The Ure report (ibid page 19, 20) recommends, sensibly, that participative techniques can be deployed during

12 See An Enabling Environment for Women Entrepreneurs:
https://e-learning.unapcict.org/learn/course/2183382
courses, for instance based on local use-cases relevant to participants’ employment, and that this can produce more reliable results (ibid page 19, 20).

However, assessing the effectiveness of training programmes must ideally consider how the learning achieved influences the concrete work situation later on. This type of evaluation can be undertaken or overseen by National Partners, and the national institutions involved in implementation. Early on, following a workshop in 2010, APCICT produced a Monitoring & Evaluation Toolkit for the Academy Programme and a Monitoring & Evaluation Guidebook for the Primer Programme. The Ure report noted that these are “exhaustive and thoroughly researched manuals, but they seem predicated on comprehensive and well-sourced data being available” (ibid page 20). Such information may sometimes be available in a university, but generating it is “doubtful within the more time-constrained and resource constrained environments of a typical government agency.”

Interviews with stakeholders during this evaluation confirmed this. While several agencies would welcome a thorough on-the-job assessment of effectiveness of training, they are prevented from doing so because of budget constraints and the absence of institutional incentives. In general, their budget renewal does not demand such evaluation, and oversight departments are satisfied with figures on the volume trained and on proxy indicators such as the level of demand for training. While APCICT can offer guidelines, they are not in a position to offer incentives to partners to complete this time- and resource-consuming work.

This leaves the possibility of using targeted qualitative Case Studies that can trace not just effectiveness but also impact in a few key examples. Since the core programmes evolve very slowly, such in-depth examinations would be required only periodically.

**Sustainability**

9. Is the level of contributions to APCICT from member States sufficient to ensure APCICT’s financial sustainability over the next five years?

Table 4 below shows the level and source of APCICT income.

The steady contribution from two key Korean donors provides a relatively large amount of core funding, and the Centre’s ICT for development mandate is a good fit with both the Incheon Metropolitan City (IMC) and the Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT).

---

13 IMC, in its written responses to questions, does express a strong desire for APCICT to run international events in the City, and to draw on the city’s digital programmes and strategies. Although the donor support is not conditional *per se*, APCICT will have to consider ways in which such events can be run in line with their strategy.
Table 4: Amount and source of APCICT Income 2016-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type &amp; Source</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>Average % all funding 2016-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash Contributions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incheon Metropolitan City</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Science and ICT</td>
<td>672,157</td>
<td>729,670</td>
<td>763,101</td>
<td>688,317</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>1,472,157</td>
<td>1,529,670</td>
<td>1,563,101</td>
<td>1,488,317</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technical Cooperation Projects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>19,960</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macao</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea: MSIT</td>
<td>42,100</td>
<td>45,788</td>
<td>44,456</td>
<td>85,412</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>101,100</td>
<td>52,788</td>
<td>96,456</td>
<td>122,372</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>1,573,257</td>
<td>1,582,458</td>
<td>1,659,557</td>
<td>1,610,689</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But the heavy reliance on these two host-country donors, averaging 94% of all income, points to the desirability of diversifying both source and funding modalities. While there is sufficient to continue operations at the current level, the APCICT Director believes it will be insufficient to fulfil what is being planned for 2021 to 2023 (medium-term strategic plan) and beyond.

10. What could be done to increase the resources of APCICT? What other sources and modalities of resources could be explored?

An interview with an official from the Philippines who has been on the Governing Council for some years revealed that the government has already committed to a small contribution for 2021. However, such modest member State voluntary contributions are small in the context. Furthermore, financial constraints resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic will most likely reduce the funding available and may even cast doubt on existing commitments.

The Centre currently has no Resource Mobilisation Strategy in place. However, plans are being developed to mobilise funds. A focus on the use of ICT to address emergencies such as COVID-19 but also others is one option, as governments seek to develop more robust response systems. Seeking out ASEAN projects that might attract additional Korean funding is also possible. A written response from MIST, one of the two key Korean donors noted: “We hope to see more diverse programmes in the future for vulnerable groups in the digital age, such as women and people living in remote areas.” This may also offer opportunities to expand in these directions.

Given the large proportion of income devoted to staff, the Centre is exploring hiring on a staff-on-demand basis, rather than on renewable contract. New partners are also being sought, which would also have to the advantage of enhancing visibility. And synergies are being explored with other UN agencies, and the Centre points to the example of the Maldives where cooperation with the ITU is underway on a digital government project.

While these are worthwhile exploring, interviews suggest that an issue in identifying new modalities and funding sources is a lack of clarity around the thematic focus of APCICT. The Centre is associated in the mind of most of those interviewed almost exclusively with the provision ICT training...
programmes. Beyond this, few are aware of specific in-house area of expertise or excellence. Even those familiar with the Centre emphasise the ICT component over the development focus, in part because APCICT gravitates towards IT and ICT ministries as distinct from those involved in substantive development areas, for instance within ESCAP programmes, in the Governing Council and among National Partners.

Thus, achieving clarity of focus and a higher level of visibility is likely to be a prerequisite to embarking on a significant fund-raising effort. Furthermore, broadening potential sources of funding may require a greater emphasis on the fact that APCICT is concerned in the end with sustainable development, and with ICTs only in so far as these are means to achieve this.

All the options and actions for funding should be consolidated into a Resource Mobilisation Strategy, in the context of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework.

11. How and to what extent are APCICT Programme successfully mainstreamed within member State Institutions, and is support there likely to be sustained?

In responses to a request from the evaluation, the Centre produced a list of Flagship programmes that have been successfully mainstreamed. The following countries are included under each of the Programmes. (See Annex YY for a complete list of all Programmes implemented per country.)

- Academy Programme (Five countries): Kyrgyzstan, Bhutan, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines.
- Primer Series (Two countries): Indonesia, Philippines.
- WIFI Programme (Five countries): Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Philippines.

This suggests a total of 12 mainstreamed programmes.

These figures are based on the Annual Survey of National Partners, and on other contacts between them and the Centre. Interviews for this evaluation (including the Case Studies) added further information on all the countries with the exception of Sri Lanka. Based on this, the great majority of them are proceeding well and (as noted under the impact section above) making a significant difference. But it would appear that the (reasonable) expectations that the WIFI Programme in Philippines has not been fulfilled and, for the moment at least, its progress is suspended with no certainty as to when it might restart. In Kyrgyzstan, the Academy programme has diminished slowly over the years, and despite it being officially in place and approved and the commitment of the National Partner, it has seen virtually no activity for some time due to lack of funding. Almost all the others were confirmed as still active.

Interviewees also described cases of where specific modules were, after a period of time, selectively mainstreamed or merged into national programmes or third level course programmes, and as such they continue on in that guise. It is also possible, even likely, that some of the programmes (in Annex 6) that were implemented some years back are still continuing in one form or another. APCICT does not - and often cannot, due to changes in personal personnel including the National Partner – keep track of developments in all partner member States.

**Efficiency**

12. To what extent did APCICT coordinate and cooperate with ESCAP substantive divisions and other organizations in the design and delivery of its outputs?

APCICT coordination and engagement with ESCAP occurs at several levels and through different mechanisms, for strategic guidance as well as programme design and delivery.
• The Statute defines its Governance Structure, with a maximum of nine representatives, one from the Republic of Korea (Article 9). The Council (Article 15) annually reviews the Centre’s activities and approves the Annual Report, and offers advice on the following year’s work programme.  

• At the formal level, a Memorandum of March 16th 2020 from the ESCAP Executive Secretary outlines the organisation of the ESCAP secretariat. It states that the Deputy Executive Secretary coordinates the work of APCICT, and that the Director reports to him as the first reporting officer and to the Executive Secretary as the second reporting officer.

• Under a historical arrangement, the Centre is managed by ESCAP’s IDD Division and contributes to their biennial work programme. The Division also provides “backstopping” to the Centre. The IDD Director confirms that operational support is available if call for, noting that over the years regional centres have evolved a degree of independence. A potential point of cooperation is the Asia Pacific Information Superhighway (APIS), the main concern of the ICT unit in IDD, with four pillars: physical infrastructure; traffic and data flows; e-resilience for emergencies; and broadband universal access.

• APCICT engages with the ESCAP Committee on ICT, Science, Technology and Innovation (ICT and STI), one of nine ESCAP Committees through a submission describing its activities and achievements, with a view to exploring opportunities for cooperation.

• At the operational level, APCICT reports that it solicits inputs and comments from ESCAP divisions in the development and its Flagship programmes and new modules. It also engages in jointly implementing two projects, each with two ESCAP Divisions: One jointly with TIID and IDD; the other with TIID and SDD. These comprise the main interaction between APCICT and ESCAP. Given that APCICT’s mandate covers the use of ICTs across all areas of socio-economic development in ESCAP member States, multiple points of communication across different areas and sectors might yield more opportunities for collaboration. This would suggest shifting the Centre’s emphasis away from the capacity to use ICTs in a general sense, to give more prominence to how ICTs can help to solve specific development problems of ESCAP member States as they are experienced across all Divisions and entities.

• It is notable that those nominated to attend the 2019 meeting by member States elected to the Council come from ICT Ministries or institutions. Thailand’s Ministry of Digital Society and Society appears to also have a social and economic remit, but most seem to be more narrowly ICT related. A more diverse Council membership might bring the “development” aspect of ICTD into relief and be better positioned to play a more active role in the Centre especially now with the Medium-Term Strategy under development. The fact that the Pacific Island sub-region has never held a seat might contribute to the very limited level of activity there. 

• The various ESCAP Divisions and entities offer APCICT privileged access to an in-depth understanding of wider development needs of member States as expressed through the multiple programmes and projects implemented across different Divisions, Sub-regional Offices and by

14 Currently it has representative from the following ESCAP member States: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.
15 Interoffice Memorandum 16th March 2020 OES/B/1(a)
16 “Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs and their capacity to effectively integrate into global and regional value chains through innovation and adoption of ICT” for which the total project budget was US$158,426
17 “Catalyzing Women’s Entrepreneurship”, with a budget of US$750,000 for the component on ICT and business skills development for women entrepreneurs. This fits well with the Centre’s WIFI Programme, though the geographic focus is different.
18 A possible exception is the Russian Federation member who comes from the Radio Research and Development Institutions, thought too can be considered as aspect of ICTs.
Regional Institutions such as the APDIM and APCTT. Many such needs have ICT dimensions that may in turn afford opportunities for cooperation.

- APCICT might also seek to make submissions to ESCAP Committees other than the Committee on ICT and STI, such as the Committee on Social Development or the Committee on Environment and Development, as it begins to define new thematic areas and potential areas for collaboration.

Ultimately, deepening interaction with ESCAP will enable the Centre to explore member State challenges and offer a wealth of information and insights into areas in which ICTs can contribute to development. This in turn will enable the Centre to identify priority thematic areas and to review and develop services that focus very precisely on problems faced by member States.

**Gender and human rights mainstreaming**

13. **How has APCICT mainstreamed gender in the design and delivery of its training programmes and other interventions?**

ESCAP, and hence the Regional Institutions, are bound by the UN-wide Action Plan. To that end, ESCAP produced an “ESCAP Gender Equality Implementation Plan 2019-2023” and an “ESCAP Gender Marker Guidance Note”.

For APCICT, gender issues have been included in the design of all modules of the Flagship programmes, and this is evident from a review of content and especially of the new and revised modules. For instance there is a dedicated chapter on “Gender, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction” in the updated Academy module on ICT for Disaster Risk Management. All modules reviews will specifically ensure they are ‘retrofitted’ for gender issues based on the ESCAP Equality Plan Guidance note.

The WIFI programme itself aims to mainstream the use of ICTs among women and is an example of a gender-transformative programme.

The Centre also promotes gender balance in training and other events, and among presenters at its seminars. Efforts are made to ensure that the data gathered concerning training workshops is gender specific, and - though this is often in the hands of National Partners – it is largely successful. However, a challenge for APCICT is that the ministries and institutions are very often focused on ICTs, which is traditionally a male dominated area. Males are thus sometimes over-represented in both TOT workshops, as well as in later training sessions as demonstrated in Table 2: Workshops & Participants 2013 - 2019 above.

No specific information was forthcoming on human rights mainstreaming.

14. **What can be done to improve gender mainstreaming within the work programme of APCICT?**

A discussion with the ESCAP Alternative Gender Focal Point offered a positive assessment of APCICT in relation to gender mainstreaming and indicated that they are already implementing the ESCAP as outlined in the Gender Guidance Marker note. This is confirmed by the APCICT Director. The Focal Point suggested that the UN editorial standards on the language and terminology use be applied, and the Director agreed to write them into consultant contracts relating to module development and other relevant areas. The Gender Focal point at this time offers no specific recommendations.

---

5. Conclusions

Overview and Positioning APCICT for the Future

When APCICT was launched in 2005, it was based on an urgent need for ESCAP member State governments to build the capacity of human resources and institutions, to enable them to manage and deploy ICTs for effective programme management, for e-government, and across key sectors. The Centre developed its a distinctive modus operandi outlined earlier, concentrating first on developing ICTD skills in public institutions, through designing state-of-the-art training modules, and supporting their localisation and institutional mainstreaming. Later the same approach was extended to third level educational institutions that would in principle further multiply the dissemination of these skills among newly qualified engineers and others. Later still, and with the growing importance of Agenda 2030, a third focus was added on the empowerment of women, rolling out a programme to build their capacity to use ICT in their enterprises. ICTs are now close to becoming ubiquitous across almost all spheres of the economy and society, and these Flagship programmes have contributed to building capacity to ensure they contribute to development. Many countries, especially those least developed, continue to need assistance in building the capacity and skills to apply them to promote development.

However, the digital landscape globally and nationally has changed hugely since the launch of the Centre, and new needs are now coming to the fore. A new era is emerging with distinct dynamics in which a small number of huge corporations with global and regional reach are transforming the economic landscape, and fundamentally reorganising trade and economic sectors using highly sophisticated digital technologies such as AI, big data processing and IOT. The capacity to gather and process data on a scale that was unthinkable just a couple of decades ago is transforming economic sectors and many government activities. What were previously seen as online sales platforms such as Amazon are taking control of entire sectors and reshaping the producer end of the value chain. Few sectors are immune from the digital revolution, including transport, retail, health, education, financial services and agriculture. The potential for governments to anticipate and manage disasters (as the Covid-19 pandemic shows), sometimes in partnership with others, is greatly enhanced; and the potential for delivering key social services is, at least in principle, changed beyond recognition.

The need to grapple with this second wave of the digital revolution threatens to overwhelm many governments in the region, especially smaller ones and those of least developed countries. The new dynamics seldom - if ever - consider the long-term impact on sustainable development and their impact in relation to contributing to Agenda 2030 are, ambiguous and uncertain to say the least. A pressing need for ESCAP member States, in contrast to 2005, is to develop the capacity to respond with policies and regulations to ensure that the ever-more sophisticated use of ICTs in the digital platform economy will contribute to development.

Many of those interviewed, including in ESCAP, global and national resource persons and others, recognise this changing landscape, and the huge challenges that most member States face in addressing it. The APCICT is already reaching out to governments, responding to requests that relate to this revolution. An option that emerges from this research, for ensuring the future relevance and impact of the Centre, is for APCICT to reposition itself in the medium-term to support ESCAP member States in navigating this Digital Era, by empowering governments in carefully-targeted niche thematic areas with the greatest potential to support Agenda 2030.
Specific Conclusions

Impact

APCICT has seen a significant number of Flagship programmes successfully localised and institutionally mainstreamed in many member States. Their impact, although difficult to measure empirically, is certainly significant in some countries, and the Case Studies and interviews reveal ongoing benefits being generated by all three Flagship programmes.

The approach to developing and rolling these out also reveals some limitations. It has proven to be better suited to some countries and sub-regions than others, in terms of initial take-up and partnership development, and those benefiting most are not always the least developed. The characteristics of different countries strongly influence the depth and sustainability of the impact of national programmes. The Pacific Islands in particular have missed out, as also have some of the least developed countries. This approach to partnership and programme roll-out can succeed extremely well in the right circumstances, and the potential for further success is undoubtedly present in some ESCAP member States. But, due to a number of factors, elsewhere it will not succeed in building long-term collaboration, with sustained government support at the appropriate level. Thus new approach and modalities of support can be explored.

The impacts of other APCICT actions are more difficult to discern. AVA’s impact, to the extent that it exists, is likely to be widely diffused, with perhaps a few pockets of collective online user groups. The technical assistance and policy advisory activities are not clearly defined in terms of theme and modalities of delivery, though some success has been achieved.

Relevance

The themes covered by the Flagship programmes are well differentiated from what is available in the ICTD eco-system in the region. However, each may retain a different degree of ongoing relevance into the future as currently constituted and implemented. Although evidence is slim, the Academy and Primer programme are available many years broadly in their current format and modus operandi, and may be reaching a saturation point. The WIFI programme, the most recent of the programmes, has shown itself to be flexible in implementation.

Given that the Flagship programme has been available to Member States for a long period of time (albeit expanded and updated), it is possible that the take-up is reaching a point of saturation. Some ESCAP member States probably still need such capacity building. There is an ongoing effort to upgrade the existing modules and develop new ones following more modern and pedagogically effective techniques. This Flagship programme redesign will also facilitate a more sub-modular approach that can enable modules to be disaggregated and recombined in ways that meet member States’ needs and facilitate localisation.

APCICT also responds to specific requests from member States, where resources and access to the thematic area of expertise allows them to. Identifying and addressing the specific needs of the Pacific Island sub-region has proven to be particularly problematic given the small and dispersed population and the cost of working there. The fact that the sub-region is not represented in the Governing Council may be a contributory factor.

At the same time, new needs, as indicated above, are emerging that relate to the digital platform economy and the increasingly sophisticated use of ICT. These both pose challenges and offer opportunities to governments, and effective policy and regulation will be critical to their ability to
ensure they contribute to development and to Agenda 2030. These are areas in which APCICT can enhance the relevance of its programmes for specific target groups, especially at policy level. A problem-solving approach can be taken to assessing these needs, taking as the starting point a bird’s eye view of the challenges they face and opportunities that arise, followed by a fine-grained examination of the current ESCAP programme and actions that respond to member State needs across the board and the role that ICTs can play in them.

**Effectiveness**

Workshop completion surveys indicate that participants find them highly effective, though there are known limitations to this type of survey. The numbers reached in the capacity building workshop - as reported by National Partners - is highly impressive, with an average of over 10,000 people trained by Partner institutions annually between 2013 and 2019. However, there is almost no monitoring or evaluation of effectiveness, and early efforts by APCICT to encourage National Partners to implement these have run up against barriers relating to high costs and an absence of institutional incentives. There is no obvious solution to this, though a case study approach offers a partial answer.

The processes by which the Flagship programme modules are developed are rigorous, involving several stages of expert input, stakeholders’ review and piloting. The localisation process varies in depth and quality, but partners believe the programmes to be effective in both content and at pedagogic level, with appropriate heuristic methods and tools. Module updating and improvements are underway, following recommendations in the Ure Report, with the development of overview Framework modules, while designing sub-modules that can be used stand-alone, or in various combinations and tailored to needs; building in benchmark global case studies that can be combined with local use-cases; and establishing a revision process for updating.

**Sustainability**

In terms of its Flagship programmes, the Centre has succeeded with National Partnerships in mainstreaming ten of its Flagship programmes in nine countries.

APCICT has a steady level of core funding from its main donors, but it accounted for 94% of its income between 2016 and 2019. The Centre’s Director believes that it will be insufficient to fulfil what is being planned for 2021-2023, and underlined the desirability of diversifying sources and expanding income. Budgetary pressures emanating from the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to make this task harder. Plans are being developed to reduce costs by hiring on a staff-on-demand basis. New partners are being sought, and synergies are being explored with other UN agencies.

The Centre is more likely to be attractive to new sources of funding and new partnerships if it more clearly projects a thematic focus and areas of specific expertise. At present, it is known mostly as a training organisation in ICT for development, and this tends to limit the possibilities. Achieving clarity of focus and expertise in thematic areas would thus be helpful.

**Efficiency**

APCICT could enhance its efficiency, in terms of identifying member States’ diverse needs and areas for collaboration, by taking full advantage of its access to ESCAP’s Divisions, Subregional Offices and Regional Institutions. These entities interact with and explore the challenges of member States and will offer a wealth of information and deep insights into areas in which ICT can contribute to development. The Centre could also encourage a more diverse Governing Council membership and engagement at strategic level. This in turn will enable the Centre to identify its priority thematic areas and ultimately to develop services that focus very precisely on problems faced by member States.
Gender and human rights mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is considered, by the ESCAP Alternate Gender Focal Point, to already be a priority in APCICT and the guidelines are currently being adhered or relevant plans are in train.
6. Recommendations

APCICT is poised to begin a new stage in its development, and its Medium-Term Strategic Plan is being drafted. This evaluation is thus timely.

The digital landscape globally, regionally and nationally has changed hugely since the launch of the Centre, and new types of needs are coming to the fore. Engaging effectively with this second wave of the digital revolution is a key challenge for many governments in the region, especially of smaller ones and least developed countries.

The recommendations below are intended to assist strategic planning in certain directions with a three to four year time horizon, specifically to:

1. Achieve clear strategic positioning and identity for the Centre regionally, including its selective thematic focus;
2. Develop two clear service lines and sets of products, that target distinct beneficiaries and each with appropriate delivery modalities;
3. Identify strategic resource partnerships and collaborations that tap into regional and global expertise.
4. Re-build long-term institutional partnerships for programme implementation, well prepared, adequately supported, and periodically reviewed, to cover all sub-regions;

The recommendations are designed to build on key APCICT assets and strengths, namely:

- Being an agency of a UN system, the Centre brings a reputation for independence and neutrality, and a clear mandate to act in the public interest;
- It can leverage other ESCAP entities and UN actors to build mutual collaborations that deliver benefits to member States;
- It has privileged access to ESCAP member State governments and a degree of convening power;
- It has a portfolio of proven products, including quality training modules and platforms with embedded expertise, and experience and expertise in certain delivery modalities;
- It has a number of strong partnerships with organisations mainly at national level, and a track record of capacity building and successfully implemented programmes.

The recommendations are offered in the context of an important distinction that can be drawn by APCICT between seeking strategic direction from ESCAP in the area of needs assessment and alignment of objectives and programmes, and designing modalities for implementation and for partnership development. The former requires close coordination with ESCAP entities; the latter is where APCICT as a Centre is free to identify the most appropriate delivery partners from across all forms of institutions, including government ministries and agencies, local government, NGOs, multi-lateral organisations within and outside the UN system, sub-regional associations and so forth. This freedom to develop many forms of delivery partnerships will enhance the prospects of securing effective and sustainable partnerships.
**Recommendation 1:** The Centre should review and restate its objectives and vision in line with the dynamics of the evolution of the digital era at the global and regional levels.

The APCICT’s Medium-Term Strategy should clearly restate the relevance of APCICT in the current Digital Era. The Centre’s objective might for instance refer to the wider context of the global digital revolution and reach beyond “training programmes” to include “advisory services”. Its functions might more explicitly refer to “providing advisory and support to government, through advice, and dissemination of best practice on policy and regulation to ensure that the digital revolution contributes to wider socio-economic development.”

**Rationale:**

The new Digital Era is having a significant impact on achieving Agenda 2030 goals. A pressing need is for ESCAP member States to develop the capacity to respond with policies and regulations that ensure that the ever-more sophisticated use of ICTs in the Digital Era will contribute to development.

**Recommendation 2:** The Centre should establish an advisory group comprising technical experts from government, academia, research institutions, non-governmental organizations and other ICT-related entities on the front line of ICT opportunities and challenges.

**Rationale:**

Currently the Governing Council comprises mainly ministries or entities responsible for ICTs and telecommunications. However, with the almost ubiquitous presence of ICTs, and global digital trends towards for instance AI, big data and IOT, the emphasis in terms of capacity-building and policy requirements moves to line ministries and agencies involved across a variety of sectors. It is among these that many of the challenges and much of the potential of ICTs lie in the digital era. A diverse advisory group would be able to contribute more to strategic Council discussions.

**Recommendation 3:** The Centre should propose that the Governing Council include in its agenda a regular item on members’ contributions to resource mobilization.

A regular agenda item could be included at the Governing Council meetings on how members could contribute to resource mobilisation, for instance through requests to their national authorities to host knowledge sharing events based on relevant Thematic areas.

**Rationale:**

Governing Council members, by putting themselves forward for election, express a strong commitment to the Centre, and through participation in deliberations gain a deep understanding of its needs and operation. As such they both demonstrate both a motivation and have the information needed to seek additional support from their respective governments, through cash contributions, technical cooperation projects and collaboration on events and activities to which in-kind contributions can be made.
Recommendation 4: The Centre should define its strategic focus, identity and positioning for the digital era in the medium-term strategic plan for 2021–2023.

Specific Actions

1. Identify a preliminary set of Themes for an immediate focus, that are problem-oriented i.e. each Theme will comprise a development issue to which ICTs can contribute. Given the rapid evolution of the digital landscape these will be revised during the Strategy’s lifetime.

2. Delineate two clear APCICT Service Lines 1) capacity building programmes and 2) policy advisory & technical assistance services. For each, this should include the types of partnerships and modalities of action. All existing and new APCICT actions can be clustered under these two.

3. Service Line 1: Rebuild implementing partnerships for Flagship programmes, that are focused, time-bound, and sub-regionally sensitive to engagement.

4. Service Line 2: Design and develop this Service Line, including modalities to empower governments to address challenges of the Digital Era.

5. Develop a Theory of Change approach (see Annex 2) to enable the identification of clear pathways of causality between these two Service Lines and the final outcomes.


Rationale:

The Medium-Term Strategy is an opportunity to rethink the APCICT, and to launch a process of transformation that will result in a clear, high-profile identity and a set of well-defined services to which ESCAP member States can relate and respond to.

Most stakeholders interviewed, including some intimately familiar with APCICT, hold a narrow view of APCICT’s strategic focus and activities. It is most often identified instrumentally as offering specific programmes or as a training agency in ICTs (often even without the word “development” appended), rather than as a centre of excellence or the ‘go-to’ place for a particular thematic area or expertise. This tends to limit the potential for growth through building strategic partnerships and collaborations with agencies and entities, and for attracting funding.

While its Flagship programmes are clearly defined, the areas of advisory services and technical assistance are not clearly delineated in the minds of ESCAP member States, in terms of what is available, its areas of expertise and delivery modalities. Yet the latter activities, if well-conceived and executed, are precisely those that have greater potential to carve out a clear identity for APCICT, in its thematic areas of expertise and in the eyes of senior level policy-makers and UN organisations.

Alongside its capacity building in Service Line 1, APCICT should explore a Service Line 2 that would offer a clearly-branded technical and policy support service to high-level policy makers and governments, using delivery modalities such as High-Level Thematic Symposia and policy and regulatory development support, with appropriate institutional partners for expertise. This could especially target least developing country governments. A small number of selected themes would address challenges faced by governments in addressing the Digital Era, and help to empower them to produce policy and regulatory responses that can reinforce the contributions of ICT to sustainable development in those selected areas.

20 This builds on ideas within the Draft Medium-Term Action Plan Section 1, shared with the evaluator, but with a problem-solving dimension added.
Such a strong emphasis in Service Line 2 on empowering governments in policy and regulation is in keeping with the Centre’s Statute i.e. its objective is to “build the capacity of members and associate members of ESCAP through training programmes in the use of ICTs for the purposes of socio-economic development” (emphasis added); and its first function is: “Enhancing knowledge and skills of ICT for policymakers and ICT professionals.”

Establishing the distinction between Service Lines will, over time, carve out a clearer identify for APCICT as both a Centre that delivers specific services, and as a centre of expertise, which in turn will help to attract additional resources and relevant collaborations. At some point in the future, the Centre might also consider a new name, shorter and more in keeping with the Digital Era.

In relation to Service Line 1, APCICT should rebuild, over a period of years, the network of implementing partnerships with the objective of securing one to three long-term sustainable institutional partnerships in each sub-region, working with institutions at national and/or at sub-regional levels. Such partnerships may be time-bound and include a periodic review process with the intention of moving on to new partnerships - while maintaining certain support actions if appropriate - once a mature stage has been reached in terms of programme mainstreaming.

Some existing partnerships are, in practice, inactive and can be discontinued. Others can be reviewed and, if appropriate, reinforced. New ones will also be established, possibly developing revised modalities of implementation. The approach to new partnerships should involve an in-depth situation analysis; and identifying new partnerships should be flexible in terms of the types of institutions and organisations. Sub-regional networks and associations that have access to partners in several countries might be considered. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that all Asia Pacific sub-regions have at least one ongoing and active partnership.

The APCICT modus operandi in place for most of the period since its foundation, of identifying National Partners, signing often open-ended agreements, running TOT Workshops, localising content, and providing support, has meant taking a uniform approach across different sub-regions and countries, often relying centrally on partnerships with ICT related ministries. This has seen some success. But there is a rationale for exploring new modus operandi and partnerships with new types of entities, beyond ICT-focused government departments and institutions, and including sub-regional institutions.

Finally, the Medium-Term strategy should be accompanied by a Communication Plan in order to enhance the Centre’s visibility in the context of building its thematic expertise. Furthermore, a resource mobilisation component would add to the sustainability of the Centre, especially as progress is being made on redeveloping its services and repositioning itself in relation to other actors in the area.

**Recommendation 5: The Centre should undertake a strategic assessment of the needs of ESCAP member States in the area of ICT for development.**

Though it begins with a succinct Digital Landscape Study on ICTD, this recommendation is not proposing a purely academic exercise. Rather it proposes a focused engagement with the institutions of ESCAP, in the context of developing the Strategic Plan, in the form of a systematic and comprehensive review of ESCAP institutions, including Divisions, Committees, Subregional offices and Regional Institutions.

---

21 The sub-regions are: Central Asia/CIS, South East & East Asia, Southeast Asia, Pacific Islands
The goal is to understand the relevant macro-dynamics of the Digital Era and to map them onto member State needs. In practice, it will identify themes and areas of work that align most closely with those of APCICT and offer opportunities for collaborations and joint activities, and build the basis for ongoing fruitful interactions. The review should explore where global and regional trends in ICTD are posing challenges to member States, and where opportunities are emerging.

**Specific Actions:**

1. APCICT, in collaboration with IDD, could commission a succinct macro-level Digital Landscape Study to identify where challenges and opportunities are emerging for ESCAP member States and specific communities.
2. Coordinating through IDD and the office of the Deputy Executive Secretary and guided by the Landscape Study, an in-depth review of all programmes in ESCAP Divisions, Subregional Offices and Regional Institutions could be undertaken, identifying areas of interest and establishing lines of communication where relevant. This review should determine, in the light of Agenda 2030, which thematic priorities are potentially of most interest to ESCAP member States, which ICTD and digital themes are rising in significance especially for least developed countries and marginalised groups including women, and which areas have high potential for collaboration between APCICT and ESCAP entities.
3. APCICT can ensure ongoing interaction with ESCAP entities and monitoring of possibilities including, as appropriate, identifying regular ongoing opportunities to interact with Divisions and Regional Institutions, and targeted member State delegations.

**Rationale:**

ICTs have now become ubiquitous across virtually all sectors, leading to a second wave of digital transformation. Managing huge volumes of data using AI and other technologies is where value is now generated. This is impacting virtually all sectors relevant to Agenda 2030, and confronting governments with major short and long-term challenges and opportunities.

With its privileged access to ESCAP entities, key priority themes may be identified in all ESCAP Divisions, Subregional Offices, and Regional Institutions relating to member States’ current and future challenges. This will contribute to APCICT’s thematic priority selection while also revealing potential for collaboration in diverse areas. Synergies can be identified and duplications can be minimised, and deeper personal relations can be built across the organisation.

**Recommendation 6: The Centre should encourage the participation of representatives from underrepresented subregions and least developed countries in sessions of the Governing Council.**

APC ICT should invite participants from under-represented sub-regions, including the Pacific and least developed countries, and facilitate their participation in sessions of the Governing Council, as observers, in line with Article 10 of the Statute by which non-members may be invited.

**Rationale:**

Of eight current Governing Council members, just two - Bangladesh and Cambodia - are on the UN’s least developed country list. Four of the ten Asia Pacific’s least developed countries are in the Pacific

---

22 The current outline of a Medium-Term Strategy has begun work.
Island sub-region, but none is represented on the Council. It is thus desirable that their participation is encouraged and enabled.
ANNEXES

Annex 1: Case Studies

Academy Programme, Indonesia ...................................................................................................................... 32
Academy Programme, Bhutan ............................................................................................................................. 34
Academy Programme, Kyrgyzstan ....................................................................................................................... 36
WIFI Programme, Cambodia ............................................................................................................................. 37
WIFI, India .......................................................................................................................................................... 39
WIFI Programme, Bangladesh .............................................................................................................................. 41
WIFI Programme, Philippines .............................................................................................................................. 44
The Primer Series, Myanmar .............................................................................................................................. 46
The Primer Series, Indonesia .............................................................................................................................. 46
Sub-Regional Level Technical Assistance: An Example ...................................................................................... 47

Academy Programme

Academy Programme, Indonesia

Indonesia has had a relationship with APCICT since 2008, and the Ministry of Communication and IT (MCIT) and Faculty of Computer Science, Universitas Indonesia (FCS-UI) have been active collaborators from the beginning. The Academy programme was adopted and has been implemented nationwide by FCS-UI since 2009, with MCIT support; and a master’s degree offered by several universities, funded by MCIT, also draws heavily on the Academy modules. More recently they have been integrated within a large flagship programme launched in 2018 by NCIT, called Digital Talent Scholarships, with ambitious targets to build ICT capacities across the workforce.

FCS-UI argues that three characteristics underpin the extensive of the Academy programme there: A good partnership in place from the beginning; significant investment in localisation; and a strong focus on the training of trainers.

Academy Programme Partners and delivery

Central to the programme’s launch and sustained delivery is an enduring partnership between the three key stakeholders: FCS-UI for programme development and delivery; the MCIT for the funding required to reaching the right level of local government staff; and APCICT to provide the Academy modules, TOT and support.

The main Academy Programme delivery modality is through three courses run annually, delivered in Jakarta, Bali or another regional location. Drawing on a larger national training budget, MCIT allocates sufficient funding annually to run three courses of 50 trainees each. MCIT contacts the ICT agencies attached to each local government unit to nominate the trainees. The full Academy course is presented in overview, but modules 1 (ICTD policy, process and governance) and 3 (E-government applications) are prioritised during the four days, with selected elements of other modules and a field visit. (Other modules are considered to be too technical in nature for this mid-level management,
though trainees can continue themselves later online). On the fifth day, participants complete a 100 multiple-choice exam to achieve CIO (Chief Information Officer) Certification. About 70% succeed. MCIT’s goal is to have two CIO accredited staff members in each of the 600 local government units, a goal that is not unrealistic.

Although attendance is not obligatory, demand always exceeds supply. The course is delivered in hotels or other venues, with accommodation and a small stipend included (part of the incentive). Participants are encouraged to regard this as a TOT session, and the modules are available online to facilitate further local staff training. (This, however, requires a budget, and usually occurs only in wealthier western provinces with good internet access. Occasionally FCS-UI and MCIT staff assist in delivery.) The course carries joint MCIT, FCS-UI and UN-APCICT logos, and the UN connection is considered an important asset.

**Extensive Content Localisation**

A second key characteristic of the Academy programme is the early and effective localisation of content, considered essential given that few local government officials speak English. The initial translation of all modules into Bahasa Indonesia was undertaken by FCS-UI senior staff, funded by APCICT, in an intensive three day session in Incheon (including dubbing videos in Bahasa). FCS-UI also developed numerous local case studies, and reconfigured and supplemented the Academy modules for the different intended audiences. Later, when the Academy programme went online with AVA, they refined the content and offered the online option mainly for the master’s students and for further training by alumni.

**Training of Trainers support**

FCS-UI point to extensive TOT support as a third key factor, reinforced by the retention trainers. Three rounds of TOTs were undertaken in Jakarta, in 2012, 2014 and 2016, delivered by APCICT resource persons, and additional capacity building and upgrading took place at the APCICT annual events. FCS-UI considered such extensive training and support, directly from APCICT, to be critical, enabling their teaching staff to deliver the courses and sustain their knowledge and skills. The fact that these are university teachers, where staff tend to stay long-term and eventually secure tenure, was considered equally important since teaching staff in government training institutions are frequently reassigned elsewhere or to different tasks.

**Impact monitoring and evaluation**

In terms of determining the impact, there is no formal monitoring or evaluation of the later use of the capacities built or the contribution to development. FCS-UI point to some evidence of the continuing use of the skill developed. Alumni set up a WhatsApp group (recently switched to Telegram) with extensive exchange of information on ICTD issues. The Local Authority ICT Centres have also, encouraged by alumni, organised into an e-Government Forum, an informal platform that engages in exchange, conducts an AGM and present position statements to the Minister. These, FCS-UI argues, suggest active and engaged group of local authority staff, many if not most of whom are alumni. Many also continue to be in contact seeking advice.

**Master’s Degree ICTD**

A Master’s degree in ICTD offers deeper capacity building. The government introduced a scheme to fund 150 scholarships (later reduced to 100) for the post-graduate course, to be delivered and awarded by four universities. FCS-UI and the others adopted the Academy programme as a key reference for their master’s awards, combining it with other elements from their respective ICT
courses. In FCS-UI, the masters is offered as a three semester programme at its Salemba campus in Central Jakarta, and a requirement is also to complete the quiz component of each module on AVA.

The Digital Talent Scholarships

The Digital Talent Scholarship is the major MCIT flagship programme, targeting teachers, government officials, graduate students and others. It offers a choice of 20 different ICT courses in a concentrated two-month programme, with accommodation provided, delivered by the country’s universities across all provinces. A total of 1,000 were trained in 2018, its first (partial) year, but the number rose to 25,000 in 2019; and the target for 2020 was 60,000 before the Covid-19 pandemic intervened. The current online delivery is expected to resume in September with classroom delivery. Teachers and government staff are released from employment to attend; and applicants far exceed the numbers of courses available. The programme partners with CISCO, IBM, Microsoft and others, and accreditation comes from partners was well as government. The Academy modules have been integrated into four of the courses on offer.

Conclusion

FCS-UI is satisfied with the quality of the Academy modules, though they recognise the periodic need to update many of them. They welcome the revisions and the proposed updating of a several modules. These will be localised and supplemented as needed. Overall, FCS-UI believe that APCICT support for TOT and more generally for the Academy and Primer Programme has declined in the last couple of years, but that such support is important in sustaining impetus and national level support.

With its combined University-Ministry partnership, Indonesia has been able to offer APCICT the kind of stable high level institutional and political support essential to ensuring that the Academy Programme is retained, year after year, as the key local government capacity building exercise in ICTD. The partnership is beneficial to all sides. A champion at senior level in the ministry is critical to this model of partnership. Inevitably, there are changes at senior management in the ministry, but continuity has been maintained through measures taken by the APCICT partner in FCS-UI and by APCICT itself to fully introduce the incoming manager to the programme, and this is consolidated through the opportunities to take part in APCICT international events.

Academy Programme, Bhutan

National Partner and origins

The Royal Institute of Management (RIM) is a management institute that is also charged with training the country’s public service, which makes up the bulk of the country workforce. ICT are among many of the skills offered, some highly technical but also others directed more to management and programme implementation. When the Ministry of Information and Communication (MOIC) first became aware in 2008 that the newly-founded APCICT was offering a training course in ICT for D, it was natural that they would turn to the RIM to consider whether it might be useful.

RIM assessed the Academy Programme modules and found that they covered many of the same themes, and some were new and relevant. They judged the quality and consistency of the course to be high and the fact that Bhutan provides all its training in English was another factor in deciding to go with the full Academy Programme. Localisation was thus limited to introducing examples and cases studies from Bhutan, and this was done extensively in all modules. APCICT participated in the programme launch nationally in 2011. The modules were gradually introduced by APCICT through regional TOTs Workshops in the Republic of Korea and Bangkok: Modules 1, 2 and 8 in 2011; modules
5 and 6 in 2012; module 11 in 2016, and module 10 in 2017. In October 2019, the TOT on the new module, Data-Driven Governance, was introduced by RIM and APCICT in Bhutan with policy-makers also participating.

RIM has offered the course ever since, and they believe that course upgrades and new modules, combined with their own localisation, have ensured that it is always relevant to their needs. The depth of the relationship with MOIC is indicated by that fact that it survived, after some adjustment, a recent reshuffle in the national leadership and ministry.

**Mainstreaming**

Securing the mandate to deliver the programme nationally, and the budget, is rigorous but relatively straightforward. With no real competition from other training organisations or Ministry Divisions, the task it to gain the agreement of the Civil Service Commission regarding the programme’s relevance and value. The Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DITT) proposed the budget within the MOIC, which vouches for it to government, and the budget is approved. The relevance and budget are reviewed annually, a process that is taken seriously.

RIM makes the point that reaching all those who can benefit from such capacity building, in a country with a total population of about 770,000, is not a major challenge. They have also offered it to the private sector and to NGOs with relatively little uptake, though more interest has been shown among NGO in the Social Media for Development module. RIM initially had two trainers delivering the modules, and as new modules were added, new trainers with appropriate expertise were added.

At the same time, it is worth noting that APCICT maintains a separate relationship with MOIC, which enable ready access to senior level policy makers. This has enabled APCICT to provide capacity-building to higher level officials on social media issues and, from there, currently to provide technical support in developing a media and information literacy policy framework. This work is ongoing.

**Monitoring and evaluation**

RIM did contribute to the development by APCICT of a monitoring and evaluation tool that would enable as assessment of the medium and long-term impact of the programme. However, despite their initial intention to do so, they did not implement it. As a training institute, they distribute the usual feedback forms to participants after completion (and had adjusted these to suit the APCICT approach). These show consistently positive results, and the fact that many of those trained return later for new and upgraded modules is, they feel, an indication that it is useful. From an institutional perspective, they make the case annually to renew the budget to MOIC, in which they offer evidence of ongoing needs. They complete the annual APCICT survey, showing the numbers trained. A more comprehensive analysis of impact thus goes beyond what they need to do; but they also cite the real challenge to gathering valid evidence of impact given the general nature of much of the training and the numerous others factors involved in achieving tangible development outcomes.

**Conclusion**

A small centralised country like Bhutan is ideally suited to taking advantage of the APCICT approach, to their mutual benefit. The programme is localised, though delivered in the English language (as is all training there) which greatly facilitated its adoption. It is successfully mainstreamed through RIM and is likely to continue to be implemented for some time. This relationship has proven to be robust, surviving even high-level ministry changes, and is moving into technical assistance.
Academy Programme, Kyrgyzstan

Origins and Implementation of the Academy Programme

The Director of the National Information Technology Center (NITC) in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan has been an APCICT partner since its earliest years. It was a natural fit for the Academy Programme as the Centre, since its foundation in 2004, is charged with building capacity in ICTs of the country’s public and private sector workers. In 2008, the Centre’s staff were supported by APCICT to translate modules 1 to 8 into Russian; and in 2011 these were followed by modules 9 and 10. All are in the form of textbooks and PowerPoint presentations. These were shared with other members of the Central Asian Research Education Network (CAREN), all involved in providing capacity building in ICTs and some in improving connectivity in their respective countries. Three AVA modules were also translated in 2010.

APCICT supported a TOT Workshop in Bishkek and in subsequent years two NITC staff attended the APCICT TOT in the Republic of Korea. The Academy Programme was launched there in 2009 and, with funding from UNDP, delivered in all Kyrgyz provinces. Though no local case studies or examples were included in the course documentation, trainers would refer to them during delivery. In 2010 NITC delivered the programme to government Ministry staff in neighbouring Tajikistan, funded by SOROS Foundation and APCICT; and delivery in Kyrgyzstan continued intermittently over the following years though never with sustained support.

The Centre last delivered the Academy Programme in Kyrgyzstan in 2016.

Challenges

The explanation for such discontinuous delivery, despite recognition by government of the need for capacity building in ICTs throughout the period, is to be found in several factors.

Due to limited funding and very low wages in the public service generally in Kyrgyzstan, it is very difficult to retain skilled staff. At its height, ten NITC staff had received TOT and were skilled trainers, but that figure dwindled as many left for employment in the private sector or emigrated, taking their skills with them. Even its Director took up a second position in 2014 in a university, as his salary was too low. At the present time, NITC retains just two of its teaching staff.

There also exists a general problem within the public sector i.e. that completing training courses and gaining new skills do not enhance prospects for promotion. This, the Director believes, means that public sector employees have little incentive to apply for the Academy courses. Some public service training programmes (though none in ICTs) are obligatory, but the Director believes that here too motivation among participants is usually low, as is the quality of many courses.

A further problem is that, although the Director has added some new content adapted from his university post, much of the Academy Programme’s Russian content has also become dated.

Prospects and Developments

Despite frustrating setbacks, the NITC Director has attempted to maintain the programme, and hopes it may be run again soon. In 2019, NITC was moved into the Academy of Public Administration, a government institution that currently trains about 5,000 people annually, giving the Centre access in principle to a much larger number of trainers. The government announced a renewed commitment to “digital transformation”, the term used for a systematic move towards e-government, and asked the Centre to update the Academy modules, which it did. An NITC trainer attended a TOT on the most recent Academy module: Realising Data-Driven Governance, which has also been translated into Russian.
The Director believes that online delivery could be a good option for the future, though he says that the AVA system (which has several modules in Russian) is somewhat dated, and less than user-friendly as compared to many of the commercial online platforms. An exploration had been underway with other APCICT partners in the sub-region, as part of the CAREN Network, to see whether Kazakhstan could develop a sub-regional platform, but the departure of the partner there to a new position called a halt to that.

**WIFI Programme**

**WIFI Programme, Cambodia**

**Context:**
Most small and micro enterprises in Cambodia, such as handicrafts, farm produce, small retail shops or food outlets, are run by women, often with the entire extended family relying on the income generated. Yet few are aware of the margins they make over costs, or can take stocks or keep books, let alone target their markets and promote their products. The One Village One Product (OVOP) programme in Cambodia, part of an international movement, has been addressing the needs of such small entrepreneurs for almost two decades. The OVOP National Committee is under the Council of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Office of the Council of Ministers, and the programme leader there is Deputy Secretary General, Noy Shoung.

His first encounter with the WIFI programme was when he was invited in 2015 to a consultative meeting on the programme content, and he immediately saw its direct relevance. Returning to Cambodia, he brought it to the attention of the Deputy Prime Minister, who shared his enthusiasm. A stakeholder meeting was convened, including the Ministries of Women’s Affairs, Post and Telecommunications, of Commerce and others, and approval in principal was gained. This was followed during 2016 by an awareness-raising and learning trip to APCICT to the Republic of Korea by the Minister of Women’s Affairs and Deputy Minister for the Interior, which secured their support to integrate WIFI within OVOP.

**Preparation and Launch**

Work began in 2016 with the selection of four of the five APCICT WIFI modules, all but the module on Enabling Environment for Women Entrepreneurs directed at policy makers since the latter are not a target in Cambodia. However, it was also decided to integrate the Academy module 11 Social Media Development. These were localised into the Khmer language, adjusted for Cambodian business culture and regulations, and numerous case studies were developed. The multi-media training materials include numerous photos and videos, in part because of low literacy among many in the target group. Additional content, for instance on exporting (based on the Incoterms 2010 standard), was also added to the core modules.

The programme in Cambodia goes under the name of “WIFI for All, All for WIFI”. The title (notwithstanding the embedded acronym) is deliberately gender neutral and both men and women are invited to participate at each session in equal number. The thinking behind it is that many small enterprises are family-run and both men and women need the skills.

It was launched in December 2016 in Phnom Penh as a partnership between the OVOP National Committee and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs. It was well attended, including the Deputy Prime
Minister, Minister and Secretaries of State, as well as 200 representatives of ministries, training institutions, business organisations, women’s organisation, farmer cooperatives and NGOs, from all of Cambodia 25 provinces and cities. It generated widespread media support and public awareness, and later translated into high demand for the training itself across the country.

The launch had been preceded by three days of TOT, with over 130 participants. These deliberately included 60% from cooperatives, universities and private sector associations and 40% from local authorities and government training centres.

**Implementation**

OVOP implements the programme, drawing on its structure comprising Provincial Committees, each of which is chaired by the Governor and convenes relevant government department. They provide the Provincial Hall at no cost for training. (To save costs, as many as possible of OVOP events are held in public buildings, including the launch.) A range of organisations (many of which had been at the launch) are asked to identify a given number of training participants following clear criteria, up to a 60 invitees in total for each event.

Many features mark *WIFI for All, All for WIFI* programme out as distinctive.

For the training, the existing seating in Provincial Hall venues, which are large buildings, are removed or rearranged, and additional furnishing sometimes rented, to create a round table configuration of six people instead of the traditional lecture style. The learning techniques at each table are interactive and participative, and discussion is enhanced with local Case Studies from each province. A total of five or six trainers (always including the Programme leader himself) present the multi-media content and facilitate each event.

A clever practice is also in place to build the capacity of those who had attended the initial TOT training in Phnom Penh. Before they deliver training themselves, each first attends a session as a participant. The second time they are invited to assist the trainers, observing and learning the techniques from their experienced colleagues. In their first real delivery, they are always accompanied by experience trainers.

In 2019, the second year of implementation, a cost-effective and content-enriching partnership was introduced by OVOP, supplementing the core content. The international NGO, Transparency International, delivers its own module on *Social Responsibility and Business Ethics* and, in return for being provided with a responsive audience, pays for the course documentation and lunch.

Thus, two additional modules were added, and costs were reduced.

**Follow up.**

A further innovation is designed to enhance follow up. Nine university students are invited to participate in each event. While they benefit from the learning, they also commit to offering assistance to the small and micro enterprises later on to develop marketing and other plans.

Following the events, interactions between participants is enabled through the creation, during the event itself, of multiple-product or theme-based Facebook pages and group messaging. Over 200 such groups have been created and are used actively for queries and seeking assistance; many participants are subscribed to several of them.

Since the arrival of the COVID-19 Pandemic, training has been suspended, but the OVOP team has been supporting many of the micro and small enterprises to expand their online sales, through
Facebook and other means. Product delivery is undertaken by means of the bus network or village taxis.

**Rollout and Impact**

The goal is to implement a training Workshop in all 25 provinces on an annual basis.

According to the figures reported to APCICT, a total of 12 were delivered between June 2018 and December 2018, reaching 802 participants – although only 34% of these were women. Between March 2019 (when they recommenced) and early October 2019, a further 13 were delivered, with 934 participants of which this time 49% were women. Thus the target of reaching all 25 provinces during a twelve period was not unattainable.

The total number of participants (1,736, 42% women) was significantly boosted by the fact that many meetings greatly exceeded the maximum number of 60 invited participants. Despite the organiser’s efforts to stay within the limit, such was the level of interest that many more often turned up, and space would be found for all of them.

The main budget costs involved are to cover transport and materials.

**Impact**

The large number trained and the level of interest shown suggest the potential for a significant impact. According to the programme leader, many participants report sales increases of 40% to 60% or more on the group messaging. The high level of social media activity is indicative of the skills being put to good use. Unfortunately, and to the regret of the programme leader, no impact assessment has been done and no budget is available to do it.

**Conclusion**

The *WIFI for All, All for WIFI* goes to huge lengths to keep costs down and to secure the in-kind and financial support of other partners, and this significantly assists sustainability. They have received no additional funding from central government or from APCICT and operate within the OVOP budgets. Yet its reach, geographically and in terms of numbers, is impressive, thanks in large part of a strong and innovative leadership and a committed team. For the moment at least it has been effectively mainstreamed with the wider OVOP context.

**WIFI, India**

**Context and Origins**

The Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam (Women’s University) in Andhra Pradesh provides third level education exclusively to women, and all but a handful of the 250 staff are women. The University first became involved with APCICT when Prof P Vijaya Lakshmi, the then Registrar of the university and professor of the Department of Communication and Journalism, was invited in April 2016 to the Republic of Korea to a consultative review session of the draft WIFI Programme. She was impressed with the programme and with the open and critical nature of the two-day session. Having expressed a strong interest to APCICT Director, both she and the then Vice-chancellor were invited to the regional WIFI launch in Incheon later in June 2016. Here they engaged in the TOT and other activities and discussed the plan for implementation in India in more depth. A further learning trip was made to Sri Lanka, which saw in September 2016 the first national launch of WIFI, with two tracks, one for policy makers and another for women entrepreneurs.
Implementation and Mainstreaming

Soon after, the Women’s University committed to developing and funding the programme. They formed two WIFI Groups, one on content development, the other on promotion and outreach. The Content group translated the modules into Telugu, the local language, with the assistance of a highly experienced journalist simplifying as well as translating. Numerous local examples were included in the revised modules, and a printed version produced. Full PowerPoint presentations and short videos were integrated during the sessions. The other Group reached out to local policy makers, meeting the Chief Minister, as well as sources of finance for the women. Both National and State policy has supported a drive towards women’s enterprise recently, including even mandatory requirements that a proportion of loans be directed towards the end, facilitating the generation of interest.

In February 2018 the WIFI programme in India was launched on the campus, following by three days of TOT delivered by APCICT experts. About 40 policy makers and lending institution staff, and 60 participants including entrepreneurs and teachers from the University and elsewhere, completed the core modules and the two strands. The University also includes, on campus, the Rural Women’s Technology Park (RWTP), the site of most subsequent training. About 2,000 women from surrounding community and districts have since been trained there. Resource persons have included the policy makers, successful women entrepreneurs, finance professionals and university teachers who were trained during the WIFI launch. The “WIFI TOT Group” is spread across different departments of the University, through RWTP and independently-funded projects of the teaching faculty, including one from the Indian Council of Social Science Research under the Government of India.

Expansion and Constraints

They have also been contacted by universities in other states, one with a technology incubator, and have delivered training in one. Work is underway on proposals to secure funding that would allow them to deliver training there. Another proposal being developed is to support NGOs to become involved, since the latter are well-positioned to identify women that could benefit, gain their trust, and provide further on-the-ground support after training. The WIFI TOT Group has delivered training in the villages to tribal groups active in traditional product development; alongside WIFI they also deliver nutrition and health modules adding further to the benefits.

A key bottleneck noted by lending institutions is that women involved in informal enterprises are reluctant to approach banks and take loans (though those from wealthier backgrounds have no such inhibitions, they have less need of the money). One tactic to support them is to help them form into groups. This is seeing some success, and an example is cited of women selling bamboo products from the tribal villages, who have succeeded in doubling their price online for the products, sold through Amazon.

However, evidence-based research on the impact of WIFI has yet to be undertaken. The staff there can see the results for themselves but, although they have the skills, they lack any specific tool, or indeed strong incentive, to do so.

A constraint on further expanding WIFI is the need for TOT to be completed by trainers from other institutions. The Women’s University is not itself at a level where it can do that. Prof Usha Vyasulu Reddy from India, a Resource Person for APCICT, would be well able to, but the UN’s logo on the training is also a key part in its credibility, and this can only come from APCICT. Thus, they believe that further APCICT support is critical to a further expansion to other Universities and states.
No further training has been undertaken with policy makers. It takes significant time to identify the appropriate people, and securing their commitment to set aside the time to take part is such training, giving competing priorities, is difficult. It would also demand resources.

**Conclusion**

The Women’s University has the willingness and capacity, including trained educators, to take on the WIFI programme. It fits very well with its objectives and the resources - including the Technology Park, available to it and a determined team has embedded it across the campus. There is potential to further disseminate to other campuses, which would take further tailored support from APCICT.

**WIFI Programme, Bangladesh**

**Context and issue addressed**

Women in Bangladesh face multitude barriers when using ICT including the lack of access and capacity and a gender divide that exists for ICT usage.

The Bangladesh government, under its Digital Bangladesh campaign, attaches a lot of importance to digitalization and ICT, while women’s empowerment is also one of the 10 special initiatives by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Yet women’s entrepreneurship is still a not a common phenomenon in Bangladesh due to socio-cultural norms and lack of availability of and access to business development services.

The Ministry of Post, Telecommunications, and ICT (MoPTICT) is designated to govern the ICT sector, through the ICT Division.

**Starting point for WIFI**

Bangladesh had previously engaged in APCICT initiatives and participated in capacity building programmes such as the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders Programme. The ICT Division, through its agency Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC), took the lead in implementing WIFI. APCICT contacted BCC and Bangladesh Women in Technology (BWIT) – a platform for ICT professionals - and it was decided that the Ministry would be the lead implementing agency due to its outreach and capacity. Bangladesh Institute for ICT in Development (BIID, another NGO) and BWIT were tasked with drafting the localised modules, and BCC would provide the trainings.

A pre-launch event for WIFI in Bangladesh was held in March 2017, organized by ICT Division, BCC, and non-government organisations BWIT and BIID.

On July 5, 2017, a “mega-launch” of the WIFI program was organized by the government’s Department of ICT, at which state ministers for ICT and women affairs, speaker of the Parliament, and the director of APCICT-ESCAP were present. At the event, it was announced that under the programme, 30,000 women will be trained in entrepreneurship skills.

The event was preceded by a two-day TOT workshop in Dhaka, including a session for women entrepreneurs and one for policymakers.

---

23 This Case Study was written by Samiha Zaman of Bangladesh, who also participated in the interviews with key stakeholders involved in the WIFI Programme there. Parts of it draw on: Case Study, ESCAP/APCICT. Women in ICT Frontier Initiative (WIFI) in Bangladesh

24 https://www.thedailystar.net/bytes/women-ict-frontier-initiative-wifi-launched-bangladesh-1430917
The target of 30,000 women was chosen because WIFI modules were planned to be integrated with the government’s She Power Project that had a target of 10,500 already. However, this original target was not met and, before the Covid-19 pandemic, BIID presented a new target of 10,000 by 2021 to the government.

**Programme rollout**

BCC was charged with facilitating the training and, with help from BIID and BWIT, the WIFI modules were customized to the local language of Bangla as well as local contexts and references. As of 2019 December, BIID was implementing the training with support from BCC, one in the capital Dhaka and six in regional training centres of BCC.

Participants for the entrepreneur track were recruited through the publication by BCC of advertisements in local newspapers and online, including social media. BCC also sent invitations to various government offices, departments and partners seeking participants for the policy track of WIFI.

Over 5,300 women were trained between 2017 and 2019 under the two-day WIFI entrepreneur track. While well short of the overly ambitious target, it represents an achievement in itself. A further 100 policymakers from various ministries and government institutions gained clarity and sensitization on women empowerment issues through the policy track.

Other than a basic assessment upon training completion, no formal follow-up was undertaken to assess the outcomes for women. Some later approached BIID for additional support regarding access to finance etc. Most were small businesses, food shops and boutique clothes businesses based in urban and semi-urban areas, run by young women with some education. The programme also targeted associations of small-scale women entrepreneurs, some of whom are outside the formal economy. A number of those completing also found paid employment, rather than self-employment, suited to their skills, mostly in the private sector.

**Mainstreaming**

The WIFI programme has not been mainstreamed in its own right. However, the training was subsequently incorporated within “SHE Power”, an ICT Division Project approved in May 2017 that was rolled out in February 2018\(^\text{25}\). SHE Power was designed to provide trainings to 10,500 women initially, creating 4,000 women entrepreneurs, developing skills of another 4,000 women in providing internet-based services and engaging 2,500 women in call centres. The idea of integrating modules of WIFI training into SHE Power had been decided at the early stages of WIFI, when SHE Power was being planned.

Discussions are ongoing for the future mainstreaming. These include integration of WIFI as a regular BCC programme at six regional centres; introducing it into private sector organizations and development NGOs; customizing the training modules to reach micro-entrepreneurs and developing a mobile app; and building broader partnerships with specific roles.

BIID and BWIT are also in talks with several private sector organisations to involve them in WIFI, while BCC was organizing a series of planning sessions.

---

The government is also to launch a programme called “Learning and Earning” for both men and women, and WIFI modules could be incorporated into that. BIID and BWIT have committed to an extension of the programme, according to one interviewee.

Lessons learned

Specific challenges emerged in relation to recruiting suitable candidates. Initially the programme was open to all, and mostly students enrolled. Since many of these later changed their minds, however, it was decided to implement a criteria-based selection process. But identifying suitable women entrepreneurs was a challenge due to a unique segmentation among them: one group come from a well-off class and have the resources to access their own training; while the largest group run micro-enterprises but are not yet ready to avail of it.

According to the Case Study in December 2019, the main weaknesses were “the absence of time-bound action plan and resource allocation to achieve the target... [and] the lack of coordination among the implementing partners which resulted in the lack of understanding about the inclusive approach of WIFI program.”26 An interviewee suggested that a longer-term plan, of five years, would be more appropriate, agreed with ESCAP and with additional support provided to formulate strategy and achieving it.

From the outset, resource mobilization was a major challenge for WIFI. Since it had not been included in the government’s annual development plan, budget allocation had to be improvised e.g. the launch event was undertaken by DoICT while the training was provided by BCC from an existing budget. A mismatch between political will and resources was perceived by those centrally involved, since the initiative was highly appreciated but no commitment was made to mobilizing the resources needed to scale it up. Thus it now appears that the mainstreaming of WIFI, or of some components of it, will be in the context of wider approved programmes.

One reason was that government officials are often transferred from one office to another, and a lot of progress and commitments made are lost. In some cases, trainers who received TOT also moved to other responsibilities, causing a lapse in roll out. For example, Sushanta Kumar Saha, a key focal person during the initial phase of the project, was transferred to another ministry in November 2017, soon after the launch. Luna Shamsuddoha, the president of BWIT, also became a chairman of a public sector bank in March 2018, and became too busy to be involved fully with the WIFI program. An interviewee suggested that there should be a focal point and an alternative focal point at the ministry for the programme, a criterion that could be insisted upon by APCICT from the outset.

WIFI also does not have a specific monitoring and evaluation mechanism, apart from trainee feedback forms. An interviewee felt that APCICT support staff could play a more active role here.

One key participant felt that mainstreaming would be more likely if WIFI were initially conceived as a financial and support package bundled into SHE Power, negotiated directly with government, and that more consultation and a scale-up plan would be required. Several interviewees also thought the training modules needed modification, to make it more relevant and useful for participants.

Conclusion

The WIFI Programme in Bangladesh is an example of multi-sectoral collaboration and public-private partnership, with government organizations worked closely with NGOs. At the organisational level, BIID and BWID as well as BCC benefitted from a capacity-building perspective. The government focal

---

26 Page 11 Case Study, ESCAP/APCICT. Women in ICT Frontier Initiative (WIFI) in Bangladesh
points involved knew the private organisations’ decision makers from before, and good communication between them was evident. It was an achievement to provide training to 5,300 women entrepreneurs between 2017 and 2019, and 100 policy-makers, a testament to the personal commitment of those involved. However, full mainstreaming in its own right proved impossible due to a lack of ongoing budgetary commitment from the government, although WIFI elements are being integrated within other programmes directed as empowering women.

**WIFI Programme, Philippines**

**Context and Issue address**

A striking digital divide exists in the Philippines between the educated middle class and the rural populations in terms of access to internet and digital infrastructure, compounded by the traditional patriarchal structure of Philippines society that often denies women access to ICT – if they are present – for productive use. It is these circumstances that “make ICT promotion among Filipino women a gender gap equalizing tool.”27 Over the years a number of public and private sector initiatives had been launched to address various aspects of this challenge, on both the women’s entrepreneur and the ICT access side, though none directly addressed the kernel of the issue.

The Philippines had been involved with APCICT since its early stages (including as a member of its Governing Council) and was active in supporting the early development of the WIFI programme at the Asia Pacific level. It had been under development by APCICT since 2014, and was piloted at a Workshop in the Philippines in May 2016, organised by the Career Executive Service Board (CESB) and University of Philippines at Clark, with about 40 participants including senior government officials, NGOs and women entrepreneurs. It was launched in the Asia Pacific region later that year.

The following year, the Philippines was the Chair of ASEAN, facilitating the decision by APCICT to hold the ASEAN-wide launch there. It was organised in August 2017 by ASEAN Women’s Association, with the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT), the Philippines Commission on Women (PCW), and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and attended by over 40 delegates from 10 ASEAN countries. They comprised a combination of policy-makers with a commitment to women’s entrepreneurship, and women entrepreneurs themselves, each group participating in own TOT track as well as in common activities and a fruitful dialogue.

At that time, a number of candidates might have been the future implementing agency for WIFI in Philippines. The PCW, though not an implementing agency per se, had hoped it might take it forward under its GREAT Women project (Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women) with significant donor funding. The events in 2016 and 2017 generated sufficient impetus for the key stakeholders to convene a meeting in September 2017, led by the PCW’s GREAT Women and the Gender and Development Team (GAD) of DICT.

It was DICT, eventually, that took the Philippines WIFI programme (PH-WIFI) forward, under the ICT Literacy and Competency Development Bureau (ILCDB). It would be led by the DICT’s GAD Team and rolled out as an interagency activity between government and non-government organisations.

---

27 This draws on a report by the APCICT resource person Maria (Mayette) Macapagal: *Case Study, ESCAP/APCICT. WIFI in the Philippines* who was also interviewed for this Case Study. It can be seen at: [https://www.unapcict.org/resources/publications?f%5B0%5D=type_of_publication%3A457](https://www.unapcict.org/resources/publications?f%5B0%5D=type_of_publication%3A457)
WIFI in the Philippines: PH-WIFI

The GAD Team had mobilised initial funding through its GAD gender focal point system in DICT and secured the commitment of other agencies and civil society groups. A decision was taken at the first PH-WIFI stakeholder event in 2017 to localise the WIFI material. Two PH-WIFI technical working groups (TWGs) were established to work respectively on the policy-making track and the entrepreneur track content. The TWGs convened both a range of government agencies (e.g. PCW, Commission on Higher Education, University of the Philippines Women’s Center, and Commission on Disability Affairs) and civil society groups (e.g. Connected Women, ideacorp, Molave Foundation).

During late 2017 and early 2018, DICT conducted internal orientation programmes and policy reviews to familiarise the personnel with WIFI, and to gain the support from leaders within the relevant development programmes such as Tech4Ed (Technology for Education) and RISTT (Rural Impact Sourcing Technical Training). The hope was that Tech4D and/or RISTT centres could be used to roll-out WIFI, once it was localised.

Consultants were engaged to localise the core modules of both tracks of the programme; and a Logical Framework for the PH-WIFI programme was drafted and agreed. The TWG met in March 2018 to review the Logical Framework and the materials modules and consolidated the plans for the PH-WIFI Programme.

Programme Piloting and the Training Needs Assessment

The localised materials were piloted in Carmona, in the province of Cavite. But first, a training needs assessment (TNA) tool was designed and tested for use with local government units.

The TNA tool is essential to an effective national roll out as it facilitates a decision regarding whether the WIFI programme is in fact needed and which areas of knowledge and capacity are weak among both policy-makers and local government officials and entrepreneurs locally. The TNA tool combined a self-administered questionnaire and a focus group discussion, and the TNA report analysed the level of understanding of gender issues at different local government levels; the knowledge of programme managers and policy makers on women and ICTs.

The WIFI materials themselves were given a pilot implementation among 15 (mostly male) policy makers and 20 (mostly female) entrepreneurs. The first set of Core modules (covering women’s empowerment, SDGs and ICTs) was designed to be completed by all participants, and also enabled a dialogue between the groups. Then each group completed the modules in their own track.

Challenges

Despite the initial impetus, progress achieved, and the enthusiasm of some of those involved, challenges began to emerge as the full implementation of the programme approached. At the root of these appeared to be changes at Assistant Secretary and Director levels at the in DICT, leading to further shifts lower down and priorities being realigned. PH-WIFI was not established under a clear budget line, and it had not been firmly inserted into the Tech4Ed or the RISTT programmes. Initial funding had run out, but it was not yet ready for implementation.

During 2019, some committed people continued with the TWG working groups, but they were overall very poorly attended. An APCICT Resource Person, who had been involved from the start, developed a Terms of Reference to take the next key steps and ready it for implementation i.e. to complete the localisation process with the learning achieved at Carmona pilot; to develop a training plan for Master
Trainers programme to implement it, and to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan. With these in place, it would have been ready for implementation in the appropriate programmatic context.

The proposal never received funding, for technical reasons relating to procurement procedures. It became clear that PH-WIFI was no longer a priority at senior level in DICT. It has not moved forward since early 2019. Prospects for a revival are not clear at this stage, and would probably require another shift in priorities. One prospect lies with the Digital Philippines programme. The DICT’s ILCDB will be involved in two major actions, Digital Education and Digital Workshops and these might offer an opportunity. But the longer the period of inaction, the less likely PH-WIFI can be revived.

**Conclusion**

Despite a serious commitment of effort by many people involved at the early stages, and major progress up to the pilot phase, it appears that senior level changes in DICT led to a change of priority and that PH-WIFI is, for the moment at least, stalled. Lacking a secure budget line, and without, or having lost, a champion at senior level, its prospects are limited. In retrospect, had it been possible to locate it with CSW the outcome may have been better, though that too cannot be said for certain.

---

**Primer Series**

**The Primer Series, Myanmar**

The University of Technology (UT), Yatanarpon Cyber City, founded in 2010 and specialising in ICTs and electronics was invited (along with the University of Computer Studies UCS in Yangon) by APCICT to take part in the development of the Primer Series as early as 2011. UT organised an awareness Workshop in 2014, with the support of APCICT, covering both the Primer Series and Academy Programme; and this was followed up with a TOT workshop run in Myanmar for selected modules from both, delivered by APCICT Resource persons.

Primer Series module 2 “Project Management and ICTD” offered a good fit with the final year undergraduate B.E. in Information Science and Technology and in Computer Engineering, and in 2015 UT offered it as an integral course. This was the University’s the first cohort of graduating students. The module textbook supplied by APCICT, in the unmodified English version, is used, with lectures delivered in local language and with reference as appropriate to local case studies. It is one of two textbooks used in the course. The students complete five or six courses during the year, and this module accounts for about 15 per cent to 20 per cent of their grades.

Since 2015, two lecturers attended two TOT sessions in the Republic of Korea and in the Philippines, and the head of the programme has also participated in various APCICT events in Incheon and Bangkok relating to the Primer Series and Academy Programme.

UT had continued to deliver the course to final students since then, though the Course Director believes the module needs to be updated, and has supplemented it with additional examples and information.

**The Primer Series, Indonesia**

The APCICT Primer programme has been implemented by FCS-UI.
Universities with ICT faculties in Indonesia offer a compulsory ICT for development course at undergraduate level, and FCS-UI decided to integrate elements of the Primer Programme into its curriculum. The modules are localised in Bahasa with APCICT support, local examples are included, and the English version is also available (universities generally combine English and Bahasa content, with lectures delivered in Bahasa).

The Primer Programmes is just one reference amongst several others, and FCS-UI engages other international expertise in its ICTD undergraduate course.

**Sub-Regional Level Technical Assistance: An Example**

The following is offered as a short study of an example of cooperation with a sub-regional intergovernmental body, through one of its thematic Forums. This might suggest a different approach for APCICT to collaborate, as compared to the current modus operandi outlined above. Another might be the CAREN Network in Central Asia, which APCICT has previously interacted with.

The issue of data protection and privacy has recently become a key concern in many ASEAN countries, with only four of the ten ASEAN members having laws in place. The ASEAN Data Protection and Privacy Forum (ADPP Forum) brings together the privacy regulators and privacy enforcement agencies in the ASEAN region, and is currently (in 2019) chaired by the Philippines Privacy Commissioner.

After informal discussions with an APCICT global resource person based in Manila, the Centre approached the ADPP Forum, through its Chair, concerning providing technical capacity building to the Forum members on data privacy legislation, building on existing APCICT modules and resources. After a preliminary meeting between the ADPP Forum Chair and APCICT Director in Manila, a proposal was tabled at an ADPP Forum meeting. The suggestion was taken up, and a dedicated event was planned in the Philippines to bring together two government officials from each of the ASEAN members to discuss the content and process of Privacy Legislation. The objective is for members without privacy laws to learn from global best practices as well as from ASEAN members who already have said laws.

This event is currently postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But it offers potential for APCICT to build, over time, a deeper relationship with the ADPP Forum (and ASEAN more generally) and the agencies sitting on it. Specifically, the ADPP Forum may be seeking to provide national level support in the form of exchange of knowledge and capacity building leading to the development of policy and legislation in these countries in Data Privacy.

Building a partnership over a number of years between the ADPP Forum and APCICT would be mutually beneficial. APCICT could identify and organise international level expertise possibly also liaising with other international organisations and agencies, building the modules for national level, and providing high level training of trainers for national level implementation. The national implementation would be led by the agencies themselves, working with the appropriate ministries and stakeholders.
Annex 2: Review of Draft Theory of Change

The draft APCICT Theory of Change is presented below. It comprises a mapping of a conventional Log Frame, with the inputs on one side and the anticipated impact, in the form of SDG targets to which APDICT hopes to contribute, on the other.
Problem Statement: There is a widening gap in institutional and human capacities among and within countries in Asia and the Pacific to utilize digital technologies for sustainable development.

**INPUT**
- APCICT Annual Workplan
- Host country contribution
- Other member States’ voluntary contributions
- Contributions from APCICT’s partners
- Substantive support from ESCAP division
- Staff Resources of APCICT

**OUTPUTS**
- (Results fromExecution Strategies)
  - Training (module development and delivery)
  - E-learning
  - Technical Assistance/Advisory Services
  - Research and Knowledge Sharing
  - Multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnerships

- Enhanced capacities of policymakers to formulate policies and integrate ICT in national development strategies and programmes
- Strengthened capacity of civil service organizations, institutions of higher learning and other training providers to provide skill enhancement programmes on digital development
- Increased capacities of women entrepreneurs, youth and other beneficiary groups to utilize digital technologies
- Improved availability of and enhanced access to research and knowledge products on digital development for APCICT stakeholders
- Enhanced cooperation on digital development among governments, CSO, private sector, academia and other stakeholders

- (Results in Thematic Priority Areas)
  - Effective, inclusive & gender-responsive digital development policies and programmes
  - Enhanced human resource development programmes that promote development of digital skills
  - Increased adoption and application of digital technologies for sustainable development
  - Increased use of digital technologies towards empowerment of women entrepreneurs, youth and other beneficiary groups

- (SDG Targets)
  - 1.4 Ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have access to appropriate new technology
  - 4.4 Increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant technical skills
  - Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular ICT, to promote the empowerment of women
  - 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through technological upgrading and innovation
  - 9.C Significantly increase access to information and communications technology
  - 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
  - 17.6 Enhance regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge-sharing

**CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS**
- Gender mainstreaming
- Promoting partnerships in programme development and delivery
- Focus on countries with special needs
- Strengthened M&E system to deliver greater impact
While it serves a useful purpose in linking activities to outputs and from there to outcomes, it does not perform the central function of a Theory of Change i.e. to enable a shared understanding of the dynamics and pathways of change, of the logical sequence that can lead to more effective use of ICTs for sustainable development, and of where the Centre might fit into this.

A very simple Theory of Change map for APCICT could start with a Final Objective drawing on the problem statement, such as: “ICTs are contributing to sustainable development (SD), especially in least development countries and marginalised communities.”

The next steps would be to brainstorm about all key preconditions to that, including for instance:

1) That policy-makers and regulators have the skills to design and implement the right policies and regulations;
2) The policy makers and regulators have the right ideas and information to hand to design them;
3) That high level government is committed to deploying ICTs to contribute to sustainable development;
4) That investment is available to develop the internet access and ICT equipment available;
5) That key government Departments and institutions have the human capacity to design, develop and implement ICT programme that contribute to development;
6) That key marginalised groups, that are central to sustainable development, such as women and rural communities, have the skills to deploy ICTs to enable them to benefit.

What is immediately evident is that APCICT can contribute to only some of these, and even then in only a selective manner and to a modest extent. A Theory of Change will regard those that it cannot influence as assumptions, for instance the preconditions 3) on commitment or 4) about investment.

Preconditions that APCICT can plausibly influence directly through their activities i.e. 1) and 2) would then become target Outcomes for the Centre.

The reason that 5) and 6) are not included is the APCICT cannot directly build capacity of key government departments and institutions, or of marginalised groups. Rather, they must work through national institutional Partners. Thus, coming a step further backwards, a precondition, if APCICT is ultimately to influence them is that national partners exist (such as training or education institutions) that have the training capacities, political supports and budget to deliver training capacity building programmes to government and to key stakeholders.

Here again, in the right circumstances (i.e. if the above preconditions are present) APCICT can make effective interventions by providing appropriate modules and Training Programmes, supporting the localisation, and ultimately their mainstreaming.

Thus pathways of change are identified that, with the right preconditions and assumptions, will enable APCICT to identify actions that will ultimately contribute to outcomes sought and final objective. This is very different to the Map on the previous page, and a version of it is schematically presented below. It is important to understand that interventions are not represented by boxes, but by the arrows, that illustrate or enable a logical movement from one given state to the next.

It must be stressed that a Theory of Change map is produced as a collective exercise, and a large part of the value is to develop a shared understanding of what it should include and what it means. The map below is not only partial, but does not in any way serve that purpose.
ICTs are contributing to SD, especially in LDCs and marginalised communities

**OBJECTIVE**

**OUTCOMES/ PRECONDITIONS**

High-level commitment to ICT & gender

Women trained in ICT in enterprise

Policy-makers trained in gender ICT & ICTs

**OUT PUTS /PRECONDITIONS**

Relevant knowledge and best practice is available in ICT for SD

Gov. staff use ICT to design/ manage e-Gov projects

ICT services available/ affordable to all

**INTERVENTIONS**

Targeted capacity-building at women entrepreneurs

ICT mid-management Capacity building

Policy/regulatory Capacity building

**ESCAP MS PROBLEM LEVEL**

Women in enterprise lack

Policy-makers lack understanding of digital economy dynamics

Policy/regulation systems need revision in digital economy

Gov. staff lack ICT skills for programmes design & implementation

**ARROW LEGEND**

APCICT intervention

APCICT partly influences this

APCICT cannot influence this

Loan, donor and Private sector investment is sufficient

ICT infrastructure is present

Highest level commitment to Digital policy

APC ICT cannot influence this

APC ICT partly influences this
Again, this is intended to be merely illustrative.

The boxes along the top indicate loosely the level displayed in the diagram. On the right is the intended overall objective to which APCICT contributes; and to the left of this are outcomes and outputs that are seen as preconditions to this objective. On the far left are the key problems identified by APCICT within ESCAP member States, that ‘motivate’ the system.

APCICT can contribute to solving some of these problems by producing the outputs and outcomes (which are also preconditions). The actual logic of change- actions that influence change in a logical sequence- are shown as arrows. Interventions that APCICT can influence are the large grey ones with writing in them to describe the intervention. The smaller grey arrows do not represent direct interventions by APCICT, but rather are changes to which the earlier actions have contributed. The blue dashed lines cannot be influences at all by APCICT, yet others must take some actions (probably governments) there before the larger outcomes are achieved.

Thus a Theory of Change shows what APCICT aims to influence directly through its interventions, producing outputs or outcomes; it also shows what it hopes to influence indirectly, if other factors are also in place. And it points to what it cannot influence at all, but nevertheless must happen if the objectives sought are to be achieved. This can be called assumptions.

It should be noted that a Theory of Change like this can be developed in a generic sense, but can also be designed for each country in seeking to build a partnership. This could be part of the ‘Situation Analysis’ referred to in Recommendation 3.

Such a simple diagram cannot begin to do justice to a Theory of Change approach. But hopefully it distinguishes it somewhat from the earlier diagram, in that it seeks to analyse how change happens, and how APCICT actions can contribute to it.
Annex 3: Terms of reference

Evaluation of the
Asian and Pacific Training Centre for ICT for Development

Terms of Reference

Draft: 17 February 2020
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the evaluation

Evaluation at ESCAP is an important function that seeks to determine as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of its sub-programmes, projects or initiatives. Recognizing the value of an independent evaluation in guiding efforts to improve ESCAP’s overall performance and effectiveness, the Commission adopted resolution 66/15 on “Strengthening of the evaluation function of the secretariat of the Commission”, which requested the secretariat to ensure that its programmatic work, including the work of divisions, subregional offices and regional institutions, is evaluated periodically.

To further reinforce the importance of evaluation, the Commission decided through resolution 71/1 on “Restructuring the conference structure of the Commission to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda” to review the continued substantive relevance and financial viability of each regional institution every five years. In response to this mandate, the secretariat’s biennial evaluation plan includes an evaluation of each regional institution. The first round of evaluations has been incorporated in the secretariat’s biennial evaluation plan for 2018-2019. The last evaluation conducted for APCICT was in 2010.

APCICT is a regional institution of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), based in Incheon, ROK. APCICT was established through Commission resolution 61/6 dated 18 May 2005 and was inaugurated in June 2006. It serves the 62 members and associate members of ESCAP. It is guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development goals, as well as, the resolutions and mandates adopted by ESCAP.

APCICT’s objective is to build the capacity of members and associate members of ESCAP through training programmes in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) for the purpose of socio-economic development. In pursuance of this objective, APCICT’s work is focused on three pillars, training, knowledge-sharing, and multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnership.

1.2 Purpose and objectives

The evaluation aims to inform the review by the Commission of the substantive relevance and financial viability of APCICT. It is designed to generate information on its achievements and results of APCICT. The evaluation is also forward looking, with a focus on providing recommendations to ESCAP member States and management on how to improve the substantive relevance and financial viability of APCICT in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the future APCICT Strategic Plan.

The specific objectives are:

(i) To assess the impact of APCICT training activities in two areas: (1) member States’ capacity to leverage the use of ICT for the purpose of socio-economic development; (2) APCICT’s

---

28 In accordance with the ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Guidelines, this evaluation will assess the impact of APCICT in terms of achievement of its objectives as stated in the APCICT Statute. It also examines the changes in the behaviour or practices of the target group(s) that ESCAP intends to influence, including through actions taken collectively with its development partners. It describes how the target groups use the outputs delivered by the Centre.
capacity to assist developing countries in strengthening their human and institutional capacities in the use of ICT for development.

(ii) To assess the performance of APCICT against standard evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and gender and human rights mainstreaming;

(iii) To formulate specific and action-oriented recommendations for improving the results-orientation and performance of APCICT in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the future APCICT Strategic Plan.

1.3 Scope

Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation team will further refine the focus and scope of the evaluation following consultation with the evaluation reference group and selected stakeholders. The following shows the tentative questions to be answered by the evaluation under each evaluation criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation criteria</th>
<th>Tentative evaluation questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Impact**<sup>29</sup>  
*Assess the achievement of objectives of APCICT* | • What are the impact of APCICT interventions in the ESCAP members and associate members?  
• How and why have the impacts come about? What causal factors have resulted in the observed impact? |
| **Relevance** | • How did APCICT make its training programmes and other interventions fully responsive to the needs and demands of member States?  
• What are key examples to illustrate APCICT’s relevance to the member States? Which countries have benefited the most from APCICT’s training programmes and how?  
• How responsive was APCICT to meeting member States needs and requests for technical assistances?  
• What adjustments needed to be made to make APCICT more relevant to the member States in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? |
| **Effectiveness** | • How effective APCICT’s overall training/capacity building approach was in enhancing skills and capacities of policy makers, civil servants, and other beneficiaries in the region?  
• What can be done to improve the effectiveness of APCICT’s training programmes? To what extent new training modalities and approaches, e.g. e-learning, were applied effectively?  
• What specific indicators could be used for measuring the effectiveness of APCICT’s training programmes and how and when should they be compiled along with methodology for data collection?  
• How effectively did APCICT leverage on its designation as a UN ESCAP regional institution? |

<sup>29</sup> Refer to the above definition of impact
### Sustainability
- Is the level of contributions to APCICT from member States sufficient to keep APCICT relevant and effective over the next five years?
- What could be done to increase the resources of APCICT? What other sources of resources could be explored?

### Efficiency
- What measures could be in place to improve cost efficiency in delivering APCICT outputs?
- To what extent were in-kind contributions from the host government, other member States and partner organizations were sought and received to supplement APCICT resources?
- To what extent did APCICT coordinate and cooperate with ESCAP substantive divisions and other organizations in the design and delivery of its outputs? How can the coordination and cooperation be further enhanced?

### Gender and human rights mainstreaming
- How APCICT mainstreamed gender in the design and delivery of its training programmes and other interventions?
- What can be done to improve gender mainstreaming within the work programme of APCICT?

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will use a mix of data sources collected through multiple methods, with analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Results will be triangulated where possible.

In assessing impact, the evaluation will make use of a **theory of change approach** to understand the actual results achieved and the process of achieving results. The development of the theory of change should be guided by the strategic framework of the Centre and the actual implementation strategy and delivery of outputs.

The evaluation methodology will cover but not be limited to the following:

1. A desk review of relevant documents, including the APCICT’s programme of work, relevant project documents and progress reports, concept notes, programmes and completed feedback questionnaires and list of participants of the capacity-building activities, relevant ESCAP evaluation reports (to be provided by the evaluation manager);
2. Missions to APCICT in Incheon and to ESCAP in Bangkok to conduct face-to–face key informant interviews/focus group discussions with staff, partner institutions and member states;
3. Missions to selected member States, subject to availability of funds. Interviews with selected focal points of APCICT member States;
4. An online survey to all APCICT focal points, selected member States and relevant stakeholders;
5. Follow-up interviews as may be required to clarify responses provided through the online questionnaire.

Data will be disaggregated by sex and other relevant social categories. The evaluation will undertake a transparent and participatory evaluation process that will involve male and female stakeholders identified in the stakeholder analysis, including: the reference group, development partners and target beneficiaries in all key evaluation tasks.
In analyzing the data, the evaluation will use qualitative and quantitative approaches, and provide charts and direct quotations. Using the data to assess evaluation against the selected criteria. Data analysis will enable useful, evidence-based findings, the conclusions and recommendations.

The following outputs will be delivered to ESCAP’s management and the Reference Group through the Strategy and Programme Management Division:

1. Inception report, including an evaluation work plan and framework detailing the approach of the evaluator (see Annex 1)
2. Online survey
3. First draft and final evaluation reports
4. Summary report for submission to the Commission
5. Presentation (ppt) on the findings, conclusions and recommendations

The draft evaluation report, including preliminary findings and recommendations, will be shared with key stakeholders prior to finalization for their review and suggestions. A summary report will be submitted to the Commission and posted on the ESCAP’s public and internal websites.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Reference group

The evaluation will be managed by an evaluation reference group comprising the Deputy Executive Secretary responsible for APCICT (Chair), Director of Strategy and Programme Management Division (SPMD), Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD), Head, APCICT, and Chief of Evaluation Unit, SPMD (secretariat).

ESCAP uses an evaluation reference group to enhance stakeholder participation and provide oversight and substantive support to the evaluation. The group should be gender balanced and have an appropriate mix of skills and perspectives. It provides technical and methodological guidance to the evaluation process; reviews and agrees on the evaluation terms of reference and inception report; reviews and agrees on a short-list of qualified evaluation consultants for selection and approval by the ES; provides quality assurance support to the preparation of the evaluation report and validation of recommendations; ensures adherence to ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines; and support the dissemination of the evaluation results and the formulation of the evaluation management response and follow-up action plan.

3.2 Evaluator

An external evaluator will assume overall responsibility for carrying out the evaluation in an objective and independent manner. This includes, among other activities, managing the work, ensuring the quality of interviews and data collection, preparing the draft report, presenting the draft report and producing the final report after comments have been received in line with standard templates provided by ESCAP. The evaluator must have:

- Knowledge of the United Nations System; principles, values, goals and approaches, including human rights, gender equality, cultural values, the Sustainable Development Goals and familiarity with the operations of United Nations Economic and Social and Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific and its governing structure;
- Knowledge of results-based management and the formulation of indicators for measuring impact/results, as well as familiarity with the planning and monitoring framework of the UN Secretariat;
- Professional and technical experience in evaluation (application of evaluation norms, standards and ethical guidelines and the relevant organizational evaluation policy and promotion of evaluation and evidence-based learning).\(^\text{30}\)
- Good technical knowledge and experience related to ICTs and related areas of APCICT.

In the absence of an evaluation consultant with strong technical knowledge and experience on ICT for development, the evaluation will engage an expert in an advisory role to provide technical inputs to the evaluation design and support the formulation of recommendations for enhancing the results-orientation, relevance and effectiveness of APCICT’s capacity building activities.

The evaluation report will be developed following the ESCAP standard evaluation report template provided in Annex II and reviewed by the reference group according to the ESCAP quality criteria shown in Annex III).

ESCAP evaluations adhere to the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct in evaluation and all staff and consultants engaged in evaluation are required to uphold these standards. To this end, ESCAP has developed a Consultants Agreement form that evaluators are required to sign as part of the contracting process (see Annex IV).

4. TENTATIVE WORKPLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment and inception phase</td>
<td>March 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection mission</td>
<td>April-May 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of findings &amp; recommendations and finalization of report</td>
<td>June 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annex 4: List of documents reviewed


A/69/6. UNGA. Proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017 Part two: biennial programme plan ESCAP

A/71/6 UNGA. Proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019 Part two: biennial programme plan ESCAP

ESCAP/75/26 Proposed programme plan for 2020

ESCAP Governing Council Report 71st to 75th Section (76th Section being edited)

E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/6 Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation. (First Session) Report of the APCICT on its activities during the period 2014-2016.


APCICT Briefing Notes (GC 14 Appendices 1-4) November 2019.

2017-APCICT-001. APCICT Project Document. Increased human and institutional capacity of ESCAP member states to use ICT for sustainable development.

APCICT Annual Progress Reports 2015-2019


Assessing the Relevance and Effectiveness of APCICT Capacity Development Programme. John Ure 25 April 2019

ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines, 2017

Training and event feedback assessment data;

Educational curricula, reports and other material, including video and presentations;

Workshop and event participant data and lists.
Annex 5: List of interviewees

ESCAP Staff:
Mr. Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary
Mr. Adnan Aliani, Director, Strategy & Programme Management Division
Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division
Mr. Edgar Dante, Chief, Evaluation Unit, Strategy and Programme Management Division
Ms. Channe Lindstrom Oguzhan, Alternate Gender Focus Point, Social Development Division

APCICT Staff:
Mr. Kiyoung Ko, Director, APCICT
Mr. Robert de Jesus, Programme Officer
Ms. Nuankae Wongthawatchai, Programme Officer

National/Global Resource persons
Mr. John Macasio, ICTD Services and Training Lead Consultant, JMLogic Consultancy and Trading, (Global/National Philippines)
Ms. (Prof.) Usha Rani Vyasulu Reddy, ICT and Development Consultant (Global/National India)
Ms. Maria Juanita Reyes Macapagal, Fellow, Ideacorp (Global/National Philippines)
Mr. Emmanuel C. Lallana, Chief Executive, Ideacorp (Global/National Philippines)
Mr. (Prof.) John Ure, Associate Professor and Director, TRP, University of Hong Kong, TRPC Pet Ltd (Global, Singapore)
Mr. Shahid Akbar, Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Institute of ICT in Development, Bangladesh

National Partners
Mr. Susanta Kumar Saha, Additional Secretary (former), ICT Division, MoICT, Bangladesh
Ms. Luna Shamsuddoha, President, Bangladesh Women in Technology, Bangladesh
Mr Karma Nidup, Royal Institute of Management, Bhutan
Mr. Baigal Dorj, Associate Dean, National Academy of Governance, Mongolia
Ms. Luzviminda A. Villanueva, Project Manager (former), GREAT Women Project, Philippines
Commission on Women
Ms. Vijaya Peddiboyina Lakshmi, Dean, Assistant Professor, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam (Women's University), India
Mr. Almaz Bakenov, Director, National Information Technology Centre, Kyrgyzstan
Ms. Sholpan Yessimova, Kazakhstan, Vice Rector for Science and International Relations (former), Academy of Public Administration, Kazakhstan
Mr. Noy Shoung, Deputy Secretary General, One Village One Product (OVOP) National Committee, Cambodia
Ms. Dr Aung Win, University of Technology, Yatanarpon, Rector, Myanmar
Mr. Yudho Giri Sucahyo, Professor and Program Director, Faculty of Computer Science, University of Indonesia

APCICT Governing Council
Ms. Isariyaporn Smiprem, Director of Regional Cooperation Group, International Affairs Division, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Thailand
Ms. Malou Aquilizan, OIC Director/ ICT Literacy and Competency Development Bureau, Department of Information and Communications Technology, Philippines (also National Partner)
Donors:
Mr. Byung Jin KHANG, Director of International Cooperation Division, Incheon Metropolitan City Government (written response), Republic of Korea
Ms. Minkyeong Kim, Deputy Director, Multinational Cooperation Division, International Bureau, Ministry of Science and ICT (written response), Republic of Korea

Other:
Mr. Mya Thwin (Mark Khu), Telenor, Myanmar
Annex 6: APICT Activities by Country

UPDATED by the APICT Secretariat from the John Ure Report (2019): By 2019, Academy Modules had been rolled-out in 36 countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region and translated in 16 languages; the Primer Series in 14 countries and introduced in two sub-regions (ASEAN and the Pacific), reaching over 150 universities and educating more than 24,000 students. The materials have been translated by local partners and are now available in seven languages: Azeri, Bahasa Indonesia, English, Mongolian, Persian, Russian and Tajik. The WIFI courses had been offered in 10 countries and across the CIS region.

The programmes are institutionalised in the following countries. **Academy Programme (5):** Kyrgyzstan, Bhutan, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines. **Primer (2):** Indonesia, Philippines. **WIFI Series (5):** Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Philippines. (These are indicated in bold in Column 1.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Country: CIS region and sub-regional events</th>
<th>Academy Programme</th>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 modules translated in Russian with local case studies (2009); TOT in 2012; 2016</td>
<td>The Central Asian Research and Education Network has utilised the Primer Series in distance learning programme</td>
<td>WIFI ASEAN Sub-Regional Launch and Training of Trainers APCICT in cooperation with the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network (AWEN), ASEAN Secretariat, Philippines Commission on Women (PCW), and the Department of ICT of the Philippines (DICT): 28-30 Aug 2017 in Philippines. APCICT promoted the WIFI Programme to researchers and academics in Central Asia APCICT organised a session on “Women ICT Frontier Initiative: ICT Enabled Women Entrepreneurship” at the Second Regional Central Asia Research and Education Network (CAREN) Conference on 26 Apr 2017 in cooperation with CAREN.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Armenia | Sub-regional 2011 | | NATIONAL LAUNCH and TOT on WIFI IN ARMENIA APCICT in cooperation with the Civil Service Council (CSC) of the Republic of Armenia, Public Administration Academy (PAC) and Armenian Young Women’s Association: 29 Sep 2017. WIFI TOT for policymakers and women entrepreneurs conducted on 26-28 Sep 2017. (GC12, pg.5) | |

| Azerbaijan | Sub-regional 2011; 10 modules in 2012 | Official launch as well as TOT in 2012 | | |

62
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Country:</th>
<th>Academy Programme</th>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                |                  |       |       | P1 in 2013  
P1 & 2 as well as TOT in 2015 |
20 Nov-15 Dec 2017: Academy and WIFI modules used for IT in Public Administration. |
| Kazakhstan     | Sub-regional 2011  
7-9 October 2019: National Training on Evidence-Based Decision Making, co-organized with the Academy of Public Administration (APA) | TOT in 2012, Primer Series incorporated into various mandatory course in 2014, 2015, 2016 |       | CIS Sub-Regional Workshop and National Launch of WIFI and sub-regional TOT for Central Asia/CIS in Kyrgyzstan on 24-27 Apr 2017: APCICT in partnership with the Academy of Public Administration under President of Kyrgyz Republic (APAPKR), and Central Asian Research and Education Network (CAREN) co-organised the CIS Sub-Regional Workshop and the Kyrgyzstan National Launch of WIFI. |
| Kyrgyzstan Institutionalization of Academy | National roll-out 2009; Sub-regional 2011; modules 9 and 10 in 2013; Primer Series translated into Russian workshops based on the Primer Series content in 2013, 2014 Master's degree courses National Information Technology Center utilised Primer Series in 2016 High Level Briefing to ministry officials and universities to showcase the Primer Series and introduce the Engaged Learning initiative in 2017. |       |       | ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy) |
| Tajikistan     | Local language modules 1-8 in 2011; Sub-regional 2011 | Primer series presented at 15 local universities in 2013 pilot undergraduate course, national workshop, localization of the Primer Series into Tajik language completed in 2013, to integrate relevant sections of the Primer Series into ICT |       | Academy training for students 2011  
ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Country:</th>
<th>Academy Programme</th>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>Sub-regional 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td>11 Nov 2017: WIFI Modules used for/during workshop (GC13, pg.10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>National roll-out 2010</td>
<td>Pilot course for both undergraduate and graduate students in 2013 Workshop in 2014, 2015 (P2), regularly implement in civil service trainings and university education</td>
<td>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**South Asia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Afghanistan</th>
<th>Modules 1-7 translated; WS in 2009</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2010-2011 modules 4 and 6; module 10 in 2011; 2014 launch of Academy in BD</td>
<td>2019: BIID organized a Bootcamp on the Primer Series</td>
<td>Pre-launch of WIFI Bangladesh: on 15 Mar 2017 under the leadership of the ICT Division and Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) and in cooperation with Bangladesh Institute of ICT in Development (BIID) and Bangladesh Women in Technology (BWIT). National Launch and TOT on WIFI in Bangladesh on 3-5 Jul 2017: APCICT in cooperation with the ICT Division of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Computer Council, Bangladesh Institute of ICTs in Development and Bangladesh Women in Information Technology. 18-20 Apr 2018: WIFI Modules for Design Camp Nov2017-May2018: WIFI Modules for Women and ICT Training (GC13) 2019: WIFI Modules were used by Bangladesh Institute for ICT for Development (BIID) in 3 training workshops</td>
<td>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region/Country:</td>
<td>Academy Programme</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Bhutan**     | 2011 modules 1,2,8; 2012 modules 5,6; 2015, 2016 module 11; 2017 module 10  
23-25 October 2019: National Training of Trainers on Data-Driven Governance, co-organized with the Royal Institute of Management (RIM)  
Training on ICT Trends for Government Leaders and E-Government Applications, Information Security and Privacy, conducted by RIM. | | | ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy) |
| **India**      | 2011: modules 1,3,4  
30-40 undergraduate/graduate students in 2014 Master’s program 2015 graduate degree programs in 2016, 2017 | Launch and TOT on WIFI in India on 19 Feb 2018 followed by WIFI TOT on 20-22 Feb 2018. (GC13, pg. 4)  
2018-2019: WIFI Modules have been translated into Telugu (Andhra Pradesh language) and customized to fit the audience (rural women entrepreneurs) | ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy) |
| **Maldives**   | 2012: TOT for modules 9, 10  
TOT in 2012, as required reading for undergraduate course in 2012, continues to use materials from the Primer Series as a separate module in the Bachelor of Business programme | | | |
| **Nepal**      | 2014: Academy modules adopted as part of the National Administration Staff College curricula  
TOT on P2 in 2014, Primer Series in 2014  
P1 in 2015, participated in field testing of Engaged Learning | | 25 August 2019: National Launch and Consultation on “Catalyzing Women Entrepreneurship” (ESCAP) | ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Country:</th>
<th>Academy Programme</th>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pakistan</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Toolkit and Guidebook in 2016, has continued to implement Engaged Learning approach</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consultation Workshop in Pakistan on 14-16 Dec 2015. 26 Apr 2018: WIFI Module C1 used for/during the International Women Day <em>(GC13, pg.9)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South-East Asia &amp; East Asia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASEAN sub-region</strong></td>
<td>online content of the Primer Series has been launched on the ASEAN Cyber University network. Efforts to localise content are underway for Khmer (Cambodia) and Myanmar languages.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cambodia Institutionalization of WIFI</strong></td>
<td>2010 modules 1,2,3 30 April-3 May 2019: National TOT on Data-Driven Governance, co-organized with the National Institute of Posts, Telecommunications, and Information Communication Technology (NIPTICT)</td>
<td>TOT in 2013 e-learning orientation 2014 P1, 2 and 5 in 2015, 2016 P5 to high schools in 2016 High Level Briefing to showcase the Primer Series and introduce the Engaged Learning initiative in 2016 2 May 2019: National Primer Workshop on “An Overview of ICTs and Sustainable Development”, co-organized with</td>
<td>National launch of WIFI and TOT Cambodia on 19-21 Dec 2016: APCICT in collaboration with the National One Village One Product (OVOP) Committee under the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development, and support from the Ministry of Women’s Affairs of Cambodia. WIFI in Cambodia supports women in MSMEs to maximise the use of ICTs. Community-level workshop held on 22 Dec 2016. 5 Jun 2018: WIFI Modules used for The Entrepreneurs Management Training (EMT) and WIFI. 26 Jun 2018: WIFI Modules W1/W2 used for Entrepreneurs and Product Enhancement</td>
<td>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region/Country:</td>
<td>Academy Programme</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Module 9 translated and WS</td>
<td>As elective course in 2012 P2, 3 and Academy Module 11 in undergraduate courses in 2018, 160 students contributed to the ongoing translation of P2 into Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peking University has developed an app that allows the Primer content to be utilised and created a “WeChat” account and a plug-in to answer questions about the Primer Series ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>2009: modules translated and WS for 1,2; 15 WS have since been organised</td>
<td>TOT in 2012, 2014, 2016 Primer Series translated into Bahasa Indonesia in 2012 compulsory ICTD course for all undergraduates since 2013 P1, 2 in 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region/Country:</td>
<td>Academy Programme</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>2010: modules 1,2,3 translated; 2011 and 2013 WS; Union of Civil Service Board (UCSB) have adopted all Academy modules and run 8 WS from 2014 to 2018 awareness-raising seminar for P1, 2, 5 in 2014 TOT 2015 P2 for 5th year students in 2016-2017</td>
<td>7-8 August 2019: National Training on Social Media for Development, co-organized with the Union Civil Service Board (UCSB) 13-14 November 2019: National Workshop on ICTs for Sustainable Development, co-organized with the Union Civil Service Board (UCSB)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>2008: modules 1,2 translated with customised cases; Academy adopted locally has run 25 WS Translated into Mongolian has been completed P1 integrated into an IT course</td>
<td>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region/Country</td>
<td>Academy Programme</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>APCICT’s latest Academy Module on “Realizing Data-Driven Governance” (co-organized with the Department of Information Technology DICT) 24-26 September 2019: TOT on Digital Local Government, co-organized with De La Salle University – Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance (DLSU-JMRIG) and the Local Governance Training and Research Institute – Philippines Network (LoGoTRI-PhilNet) 2019: Academy Modules were used by DICT in 32 workshops/trainings</td>
<td>Management”, co-organized with the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT)</td>
<td>National WIFI in Philippines in 2016: Building ICT capacity of women entrepreneurs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td>2010: module 7; modules 1-8 translated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islands</td>
<td>Roll-out agreed 2011 with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and 2012 with the</td>
<td>TOT Workshop in 2012, signed a Partnership Arrangement with USP on the future roll-outs in the Pacific</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pacific sub-region
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Country</th>
<th>Academy Programme</th>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cook Islands</td>
<td>University of the South Pacific (USP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>2008 involving 5 countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati</td>
<td>2008 Cook Islands</td>
<td></td>
<td>24-25 July 2019: National Launch and Consultation on ‘Catalyzing Women’s Entrepreneurship” (ESCAP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micronesia</td>
<td>2012 WS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nauru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niue</td>
<td>2012 WS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palau</td>
<td>2011 WS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoa</td>
<td>2008 Cook Islands</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 July 2019: National Launch and Consultation on ‘Catalyzing Women’s Entrepreneurship” (ESCAP)</td>
<td>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>2008 Cook Islands; 2009 WS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>2011 WS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICTD Capacity Development for SIDS (Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
<td>2008 Cook Islands; 2009 WS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: APCICT