

## **Partnership of non-state actors for SDGs implementation in the field of ICTs: North-East Asia experience and possible options for Russia**

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The information-communication technologies (ICTs) play an important role in the implementation of the SDGs. The ICTs could contribute to the achievement of the SDGs target levels through direct and indirect inputs. It should be highlighted that the developing world, especially the LDCs are facing significant challenges in the ICTs spread and usage. The ICT infrastructure is enlarging being supported by the achievements in mobile broadband connections. In spite of the progress LDCs are still lagging behind emerging and developed economies in ICTs penetration and Internet connections. According to UNCTAD 3G broadband access is available only for 29% of rural areas. Fixed broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants in 2015 were recorded at the level of 7% for the developing world (29% in the developed countries)<sup>1</sup>. The ODA connected with the ICTs plays an important role in supporting development in the partner countries.

The ICT for Development (ICT4D) initiatives are focused on the digital divide problem, the ICT skills improvements, e-commerce and e-government projects. The ICT4D projects are also included as an essential component in a wide range of sectoral initiatives (incl. education and health sectors) with the active involvement of multilateral organizations, state and non-state actors. Nowadays, the field of non-state actors is dominated by businesses and NGOs, who are both getting more involved in the ICT4D. Technology and capacity building, knowledge sharing, trade, PPPs for the ICT infrastructure development became main modalities for the ICT4D programmes. Non-state actors provide significant inputs collaborating with the other actors under the indicated formats. North-East Asia ICT multinationals are carrying out a number of development projects in Africa. Among the leaders in the field are Samsung Electronics and Huawei. The essential model of supporting development in Africa is partnerships with local state and non-state actors. For instance, Huawei in South Africa is collaborating with the local partner for launching the ICT training center project. Samsung is mainly focused on the ICT skills development and schools support having as one of the most ambitious projects "Solar Powered Internet Schools across Africa".

Russia is the re-emerging donor with certain level of business and NGOs involvement in ODA. Russian business and NGOs are carrying out projects mainly focused on food, education and health sectors in full accordance with "New State policy concept of the Russian Federation in the area of contribution in international development". But the ICTs could be considered as one of the promising options for further enlargement of the development cooperation. Russian business has already participated in ICTs development in Nigeria through partnership with NGO ("One Laptop per Child"). Regarding possible strategies for further collaboration with North-East Asia partners in the ICT4D it should be highlighted that Russian ICT companies are improving and enlarging their expertise in CSR through local market projects and joining global initiatives. Having high level of technological expertise and competitiveness Russian non-state actors could be involved in the ICT4D in different modalities incl. PPPs, knowledge sharing, technology

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<sup>1</sup> Development and globalization facts and figures 2016. UNCTAD 2016.  
[stats.unctad.org/Dgff/2016/prosperity/goal9/target\\_9\\_c.html](http://stats.unctad.org/Dgff/2016/prosperity/goal9/target_9_c.html)

transfer and trade. Taking into consideration enlarging cooperation in ICTs between Russian and Asian business possible areas for partnerships in the ICT4D could include fighting against digital divide in Africa and Southern Asia, the ICTs for education and education in the field of ICTs (supporting the ICTs development as a sector in partner countries), the ICTs for SMEs.