The Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative aims to increase the availability and affordability of broadband across Asia and the Pacific

- Promote terrestrial and submarine fibre-optic connectivity
- Provide a regional intergovernmental platform focusing on the missing fibre-optic links between ESCAP countries
- ESCAP resolution 73/6 in 2017 and 75/7 in 2019
Project background

- Lack of broadband network (less than 20 per cent penetration)
- Insufficient international bandwidth – missing or lack of access to international fibre-optic cables (infrastructure sharing and co-deployment and financing of ICT infrastructure development).
- Lack of conducive policy and regulations for development of ICT infrastructure
- Poor Internet traffic management and lack of resilient ICT infrastructure
Broadband Access by Major Regions, 2018

Fixed-broadband Subscriptions

- Africa: 12
- Latin America & the Caribbean: 13
- Asia & the Pacific: 14
- Europe: 33
- North America: 36
- World: 15

Mobile-broadband Subscriptions

- Africa: 39
- Asia & the Pacific: 71
- Latin America & the Caribbean: 73
- Europe: 93
- North America: 136
- World: 72

Source: Produced by ESCAP, based on data from ITU’s World Telecommunication /ICT Indicators Database (June 2019 Edition)
Broadband connectivity in the region

Fixed-broadband access by Income-groups (Asia Pacific Region)

Year


ESCAP high-income countries
ESCAP upper-middle income (excluding China)
ESCAP Upper-middle income (including China)
ESCAP lower-middle income countries
ESCAP low-income countries
Challenges of broadband infrastructure

- Asia-Pacific region lacks behind North America and Europe on access to broadband connectivity;
- Digital divide continues to be a challenge in low-income and lower-middle income countries;
- Internet bandwidth divide significant among low-income countries;
- Divergent affordability, quality and speed of broadband connectivity a driver of the digital divide;
- The digital divide among unconnected countries challenges to a wider and sustainable digital inclusion.
The 1st AP-IS Steering Committee

Dhaka, Bangladesh
1-2 November 2017

AP-IS Governance Structure
Proposed Activities and Implementation for AP-IS
The 2nd AP-IS Steering Committee

Bangkok, Thailand
27-28 August 2018

Updated AP-IS Master Plan (2019-2022) and Regional Cooperation Framework (2019-2022)
Key words from the representatives of 2nd AP-IS SC

Cross-border FOC operation

Capacity building

National policy advocacy

Interactive map

Internet bandwidth

Financing mechanism

E-resilience

ICT indicators

AP-IS Academia Network

Co-deployment

Internet traffic management

Best practises

Countries with special needs
The 3rd session of AP-IS Steering Committee (2019)

- 3rd AP-IS Steering Committee and WSIS Regional Review, 26-29 August, Bangkok

- Review and discussion over AP-IS
- 5G Presentation and exhibition
- Deepen regional cooperation and policy dialogue
- Workshop for CLMV countries

*About 180 participants including policy makers, regulators, partner agencies and academic in member countries*
Outcomes of the 3rd session of Steering Committee

- **Capacity**: Enhanced awareness and knowledge on latest research, emerging trends and technologies for evidence-based policy-making

- **Plan**: Reviewed and discussed the AP-IS business plan to guide the implementation of the Master Plan and Regional Cooperation Framework Document (2019-2022)

- **Cooperation**: Deepened regional cooperation and policy dialogue in the development and implementation of the AP-IS subregional implementation plans and ongoing project activities

- **Networking**: Facilitated information sharing and networking among government officials, academia, private sector and other stakeholders

- **Partnership**: Expanded partnerships among government, academia, private sector and civil society organizations for the development of joint initiatives
Strategic Initiatives 2019-2022

1. Identification, coordination, deployment, expansion and integration of the regional backbone network

2. Establish a sufficient number of IXPs at the national and sub-regional levels and set out common principles on Internet traffic exchange

3. Regional social and economic studies

4. Enhancing ICT infrastructure resilience

5. Policy and regulations for leveraging existing infrastructure, technology and inclusive broadband initiatives

6. Capacity-building

7. AP-IS funding mechanism based on public-private partnerships
Strategic initiative 1: regional backbone network

Goal: Development of cross-border and national broadband networks (first phase: Central Asia)

Completed:
- Technical study on co-deployment with power grid
- Cross-border infrastructure operation and maintenance model
- Compilation of ESCAP studies on co-deployment

In progress/planned:
- Subregional and national co-deployment studies (Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan Corridor)
- Capacity development workshops for policy and regulatory updates in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in 2019 and 2020
- Co-deployment capacity development workshop (ICT & Road Sector)
- AP-IS subregional meetings and update to the AP-IS subregional implementation plan in 2019 and 2020

Partners
- Development banks
- Bilateral donors
- Private sector companies

Expected outcomes
- Kazakhstan - Kyrgyzstan corridor project and agreement among operators & ministries
- a co-deployment project (phase 4 and 5) of the North-South Investment Road project and agreement among operators and ministries
Strategic initiative 2: Internet Exchange Point

Goal: Establish a sufficient number of Internet exchange points (first phase: Southeast Asia)

- Technical studies on Internet traffic management among CLMV countries
- Technical study on the GMS Information Superhighway network topology
- EGM to show the findings of CLMV report and conduct consultations, 28 August 2019
- Support to the ASEAN TELSOM meeting in 2020 on the findings of the technical studies and outcomes of the EGM for their guidance

Expected outcomes:
- Development of the common principles and agreement on Internet traffic management among CLMV countries
- Development of a project to construct the IXPs and networks based on the studies and agreement

Partners: ASEAN TELSOM and secretariat, RoK-ASEAN funds, CECP fund
Strategic initiative 3: regional social and economic studies

Goal: Increased knowledge of social and economic impacts of broadband networks and services

Completed

• Technical study on how to measure the digital divide from the AP-IS perspective (by LSE)
• UNESCO-ESCAP report on school connectivity

In progress/planned

• Study on social media and gender digital divide
• Contribution to DESA’s E-government Survey 2020
• To share the findings at the AP-IS SC and subregional meetings (2019 and 2020)

Expected outcomes

• Findings inform other strategic initiative activities to ensure that social and economic perspectives are fully integrated
• Development of AP-IS Academia Network of partner universities which can undertake research

Partners

• Academia partners
Strategic initiative 4: ICT infrastructure resilience

Goal: Develop knowledge, awareness and capacity in e-resilience (first phase: Pacific)

Activities

• Technical study on resilient Internet traffic management in the Pacific
• Technical study on cross-border infrastructure development
• AP-IS subregional meeting for the Pacific countries with PITA in 2020

Expected outcomes

Findings will be mainstreamed in the activities of other strategic initiatives, in particular network design and capacity development

Partners

• With ISOC to conduct a Pacific IXP study.
• Support UNODC in their efforts to increase cybersecurity capabilities of member countries
• USP, PITA among others
Strategic initiative 5: Policy and regulations

Goal: Updated policies and regulations to create synergies with existing infrastructure and initiatives

**Activities**

- Subregional capacity development workshop on co-deployment between ICT and other sectors
- Compilation of ESCAP studies on co-deployment
- Subregional capacity development workshops on co-deployment in 2019

**Expected outcomes**

- Agreement among telecom operators and owners of the fibre optic cables along passive infrastructure to share the cables for lease of the cables to telecom operators
Strategic initiative 6: Capacity building

Goal: Institutional and individual capacity developed to support the development and implementation activities of other strategic initiatives in a systematic and sustainable manner

Activities

• Development of APCICT module on connectivity
• Regional, subregional and national capacity development workshops with APCICT in 2020
• AP-IS Steering Committee and subregional meetings to share the information on capacity development and seek their guidance

Partners  APCICT, UNESCO, ITU/APT

Expected outcomes

Modules and materials developed based on the technical studies and capacity development activities conducted in other strategic initiatives, will then support future AP-IS activities.
Strategic initiative 7: project funding mechanism

Goal: Financing partners as well as private sector companies are aware of the benefits of AP-IS strategic initiatives and develop and financing and collaboration activities in support of AP-IS

Activities

- Financing modalities for cross-border co-deployment infrastructure project
- National workshops planned in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia
- AP-IS Steering Committee and subregional meetings to share the outcomes
- Support to partners' efforts, such as WSIS Forum, UNCT and inter-agency collaboration

Expected outcomes

- AIID, ADB, WB, bilateral donors, private sector and CSOs decide to fund AP-IS strategic initiatives
- UNCT develops CCA and UNSDF with digital technologies which support the member country's efforts for digital inclusion.
Way forward (Master Plan for AP-IS 2019 - 2022)

- **Focusing on three aspects:**
  - (a) seamless, affordable and reliable regional broadband connectivity,
  - (b) the promotion of e-resilience and
  - (c) the promotion of inclusive broadband access in underserved areas

- Network corridor for AP-IS in cross-borderer connectivity

- Regional and subregional partnership for the AP-IS

- Effective governance structure for AP-IS
Thank you!

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