

## Summary Assessment

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### **Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, Second Session Bangkok 29-31 August 2018**

#### **I. Introduction**

The Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, Second Session was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 29-31 August 2018.

A questionnaire assessing the relevance, effectiveness and quality of the meeting was distributed to each delegation of ESCAP members and associate members. In total, 13 of the 31 members and associate members in attendance submitted questionnaires. The overall response rate is therefore 42 per cent. The present assessment was prepared on the basis of these questionnaire responses.

The main purpose of this assessment is to support the secretariat's ongoing efforts to improve its servicing of session.

#### **II. Attendance**

The Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, Second Session was attended by 50 per cent of all ESCAP members and associate members (31 of 62). Some 21 of delegations (68 per cent) were headed by officials from the respective capital, including 3 participants at ministerial level. In total there were 129 individual participants, of whom 38 were female (29 per cent).

A number of other entities participated, including United Nations bodies and agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations. From these entities, there were 65 participants of whom 13 were female (20 per cent). Therefore, the total number of participants from both governments and other entities is 194 individuals and the total number of female participants is 51 (26 per cent).

#### **III. Relevance of the session**

Respondents agreed that the agenda items reflected the present development trends and issues in the Asian and Pacific region. The respondents also rated positively on relevance to the needs and priorities of their countries/territories (See table 1).

There were some suggestions and comments on the relevance of the session:

- We would like ESCAP to address STI for inclusive and social development; and economic development.
- My ratings for the agenda items above well indicate that there is no suggestion for this end. Excellent!
- For SIDs, it would be more relevant to have practical discussions, for example, what are the strategies to assist in readiness – AI or Block chain.
- Presentation by the secretariat follows traditional format only, needs more innovative approach using technologies more effectively.
- While Frontier Technology is very exciting and will probably be what all Asia Pacific countries will need to focus on moving into the future, many least developing countries in the region require support getting the fundamentals right, in terms of affordable and reliable connectivity along with the capabilities to manage them better.
- Share more on practical case, problem and the way to solve.

**Table 1**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100) <sup>1</sup>
The agenda items reflected the present development trends/issues of the Asian and Pacific region.	77
The agenda items are relevant to the needs and priorities of my country/territory.	77

#### IV. Effectiveness of the session

The respondents rated favorably on the session’s effectiveness at highlighting regional development trends and issues in the region. The session documents were high quality, concise and clear. The respondents also agreed that the session effectively identified priority areas and emerging issues in the region. Good reviews were made regarding promoting regional dialogue and subregional approaches to ICT but slightly less in promoting regional dialogue and subregional approaches to STI. Respondents rated lower for the effectiveness in addressing gender related issues (See table 2).

There were some suggestions and comments on the effectiveness of the session:

- How can the programme be drawn up so that the sessions on STI and ICT do not clash because some governments are represented by one or two delegates and we do not want to miss any sessions on STI and ICT.
- Disasters are become more frequent. Therefore, it would be exciting and interesting for session on technologies for disaster management, migrating and residence.

<sup>1</sup> Methodology, an index between 100 and 0 is given, whereby, at a value of 100, all respondents rate to a great extent to the statement, and, at a value of 0, all respondents rate to not at all.

Index = actual value of all aggregated responses - minimum value of all aggregated responses / maximum value of all aggregated responses - minimum value of all aggregated responses.

- Discussion at plenary was not active enough. The Secretariat needs to find ways to energize the debate.
- More time for discussion

**Table 2**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
The session effectively highlighted regional development trends and issues.	83
The session effectively identified priority areas and emerging issues in the region.	71
The session effectively promoted dialogue on regional and subregional approaches to STI	69
The session effectively promoted dialogue on regional and subregional approaches to ICT	75
The session effectively addressed gender-related issues.	63
The session documents were of high quality, concise and clear.	79

## V. Efficiency of the session

The respondents rated positively on the efficiency of servicing by the secretariat and the communications to the member States on the preparations for the session (Table 3). However, the respondents gave a relatively lower rating on the time available for discussion during the session.

There were some suggestions and comments on the efficiency of the organizational and servicing aspects of the session:

- It would be most appreciated if schedules of meetings, even across ESCAP divisions, will be coordinated to avoid overlaps and maximize participation of delegates.
- For the sessions on ICT and STI do not clash or carried out concurrently. We finish well before time in this year's meeting, so we can avoid clashing of sessions in the future.
- ESCAP team are great!
- Some sessions ended earlier than schedules. A few more additional presentations could have been added.
- More time is required for better interactions between members with similar issues.

**Table 3**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
The time available for discussion during the session was adequate.	60
The servicing by the secretariat was efficient and effective.	81
The communications from the secretariat to the member States on the preparations for the session were effective.	79

## VI. Other comments

The respondents indicated concrete actions that their government would take in response to the decisions and recommendations of the session included:

- Experience sharing of how “Digital Bangladesh” is built, millions of young with IT skill to be engaged in digital development.
- As overwhelmingly expressed at the item 4c on Technology transfer, our delegation would like to positively contribute to make exchanges among member States on technology transfer promoting South-South Cooperation.
- We look forward to receiving the recommendations and decisions.
- Two parallel meetings were not needed given time left. More active participation of private sector especially for STI needed to be pursued 3 minutes presentation by all participating company could have enriched our discussion.
- At this moment we are in transition between govts and therefore we have yet to finalize our plans. Although in principle the focus will be on improving our investments into the fundamentals more connectivity, reduce costs and increase reliability of connectivity, and focus on leveraging it for improved service delivery though better collaboration through and integrated manner.
- Learn from successful case and use as guide line to develop my country.

## VII. Conclusion

Overall, delegations agreed that the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, Second Session was successful.

The session was generally seen as relevant to the needs of the region; especially in highlighting regional development trends and issues. The efficiency of the session also received positive feedback, in particular, the servicing of the session by the secretariat, and the communications between the secretariat and member States. The issue of addressing gender in the field of ICTSTI as well as time allocated for discussions during the session may warrant some attention in future sessions with a view to further improving the committee’s effectiveness and efficiency.

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