

FOR PARTICIPANTS ONLY

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND
THE PACIFIC (ESCAP)**

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION (ITU)

ASIA-PACIFIC TELECOMMUNITY (APT)

Fifteenth Meeting of the regional Interagency Working Group (IWG) on Information and
Communication Technologies (ICT)

2 December 2011
Bangkok

++ DRAFT REPORT ++

- 1) The Fifteenth Meeting of the regional Interagency Working Group (IWG) on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was jointly organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the International Telecommunication Union Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ITU/ROAP), and the Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT).
- 2) At the Meeting the participants (i) exchanged views on recent ICT developments and its trends in the Asia-Pacific region, and provided information on activities completed and planned, and (ii) discussed the “Regional Disaster Communications Capacity in Asia and the Pacific” initiative.
- 3) The meeting was attended by representatives from United Nations organization, international/regional and other inter-governmental Organizations. The programme of the meeting and the list of the participants are attached.
- 4) Opening remarks were made by Mr Xuan Zengpei, Director, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD), ESCAP, Ms. Eun-Ju Kim, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and Mr. Kraisor Pornsutee, Deputy Secretary General, APT.
- 5) In his opening remarks, Mr Xuan Zengpei, Director, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD), ESCAP, at first welcomed the IWG members and expressed his appreciation to all participants for their contribution to the organization of the meeting. He expressed his condolences and shock at the flood devastation that we witnessed since mid-October 2011 in different parts of Thailand including some parts of Bangkok. He highlighted the importance for the participants as key stakeholders for disaster management in the region to position our strategy to be of service to our member Countries in such crisis situations. He expressed his sincere that the meeting would come up with concrete outcomes for the next step, such as future joint activities towards the management of disasters effectively.
- 6) In her opening remarks, Ms. Eun-Ju Kim, Regional Director, ITU, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, stated that she expected the meeting to discuss important issues for our member Countries. She highlighted how the floods in Thailand had affected ITU’s operation for approximately a month. She affirmed that ITU was looking forward to discussing and defining common grounds where IWG members can work on together, and that ITU is very keen on areas of joint collaboration to optimize outcomes benefiting all members. She concluded by wishing a successful IWG meeting.
- 7) Mr. Kraisor Pornsutee, Deputy Secretary General, APT started his opening statement by welcoming everyone in the IWG meeting and by thanking ESCAP for organizing it. He highlighted the fact that despite the devastating damages it caused, the flood in mid-October in Thailand has made us gain appreciation of the need for Disaster Risk Reduction (DDR) through communication, joint effort and cooperation to reduce the risks posed by natural and man-made disasters.

- 8) Mr. Jorge Martinez-Navarrete, Associate Economic Affairs Officer, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Division, ESCAP, presented the ESCAP activities on ICT for Development and ICT for Disaster Risk Reduction. He highlighted three main focus areas which are related to ESCAP's mandate, which are (i) economic connectivity, (ii) Information Economy and Knowledge Society; (iii) ICT for Disaster Risk Reduction. The first focus area includes research and activities to promote the use of ICT to enhance regional integration and economic growth. The second area seeks to facilitate regional cooperation for the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society Plan of Action. Lastly, the third area aims to facilitate regional cooperation for the application of ICT for DRR. (See the full presentation in annex 1).
- 9) Mr. Wisit Atipayakoon, Specialist in Telecommunication Infrastructure Development, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, presented the ITU activities plan for 2012. After highlighting the structure and functions of the ITU he provided an overview and objectives of the Asia-Pacific Regional office including major initiatives and projects from 2011 to 2014. He suggested areas for future potential cooperation between members of IWG such as Emergency Telecommunications and Disaster Management; Broadband Policy and Plan; Cyber Security, Child online Protection; Digital Broadcasting, ICT Services and Applications, Rural ICT development and Human Capacity Building on ICT-related matters. (See the full presentation in annex 2).
- 10) Mr. Stuart Davies from APT provided an overview of the APT activities in 2012. He restated that the mission of APT is to contribute to the development of the telecommunications and ICT industry through promoting the expansion of telecommunications services, developing regional cooperation, and facilitating coordination between regions. ICT Development was shown to be one of main components of the work programme of APT, notably through the APT Development Forum (ADF) in its 9th session and the ICT Development Forum, both of which will be held in June 2012. Mr. Stuart also shared with the participants other activities related to ICT Development such as the support of ICT Pilot Projects in Rural Areas (Funded by Japan), and exchange programmes for human resource development, among others. Special mention was made of the upcoming 3rd Workshop on Disaster Management Communications which will be held in July 2012 in Australia. (See the full presentation in annex 3).
- 11) Ms. Jonghwi Park, Programme Specialist, UNESCO, stated that the work of UNESCO in ICT in Education focuses mainly in three areas, namely, policies in ICT in Education, teacher education for ICT in education, and knowledge clearinghouse. The first area seeks to respond country's request for UNESCO to run workshops for policy makers on how to draft educational policies that integrate ICT. This work helps develop local capacity to mainstream ICT into educational policies. Within the second area of work, UNESCO seeks to empower teachers to use mobile technology for teacher education. This programme is funded by Korean Government and also involves contributions from the private sector from companies such as Nokia. The third area of work, clearinghouse, is aimed at providing an online and offline platform for distribution of learning materials. Ms. Park also mentioned collaboration with the World Bank on measuring ICT in Education

through statistical indicators. More information about the work of UNESCO in ICT in Education can be found at: <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/>.

- 12) Ms. Tinsiri Siribodhi, Deputy Director (Administration and Communication), SEAMEO Secretariat, presented three areas that SEAMEO focused on. These areas include capacity building of the Ministries of Education in Asia-Pacific, the launching of the “Education for sustainable development award” funded by Japan with the theme of disaster prevention in schools, and contributing to the development of the 5 years ASEAN education work plan. This plan seeks to be aligned with the 2015 target for the establishment of the ASEAN community. In this context, SEAMEO collaborates with the ASEAN Secretariat on initiatives for rural connectivity and on the development of online courses to raise awareness about the ASEAN Community.
- 13) Mr. Liu Zhonglin, Regional Project Coordinator, Universal Postal Union (UPU), Thailand Post Office Centre, shared with the participants how the UPU integrates the role of ICT to its strategy. The UPU structures its activities through a three dimensional network including a physical network (e.g. mailing, shipping, warehousing), a financial network (e.g. money transfers and other financial services), and an information network (ICT applications for tracking packages, etc.). Mr. Zhonglin highlighted that within the last few years, UPU has implemented a tracking system for express mail items and has been developing services instant money transfer services similar to those provided by Western Union with lower transfer cost. The presenter expressed interest in having close cooperation with the ITU and other agencies present at the meeting.
- 14) Mr. German Velasquez, Senior Regional Coordinator, Thailand/UNISDR, highlighted the importance of having accurate national disaster databases in the Asia and Pacific Region and mentioned current issues related to the insufficient systematic collection of damages caused by disasters. He then introduced the web-based opensource database named DesInventar, which allows the recording and analysis of the occurrence and effects of natural disasters. The presenter showed how the tool was useful to identify patterns of damages in member countries and to verify the accuracy of hazard risk maps. DesInventar is in use in some Asian countries, but ISDR has the objective to continue to deploy it worldwide, for this purpose they seek to identify suitable partners, and plan to organize training workshops across the region.
- 15) Mr. Ram Tiwaree, Space Applications Section, ESCAP, shared the presentation entitled “Regional Cooperation for Disaster Emergency Communications Capacities -Follow-up to the Decisions of 14th IWG and Way Forward”. He reminded us the decision made in the 14th meeting of the IWG that a joint effort should be made to promote an Asian Pacific regional platform for disaster communications capacities with collaborative emergency communication capacity as its core component. He then provided updates on other related activities such as the ESCAP Second session on the Committee on ICT in Nov 2010 and the ITU Asia-Pacific Regional Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Emergency Telecommunications in Mongolia from July 8th - 10th 2011. (See the full presentation in annex 4).

Potential areas of collaboration in 2012:

- 16) The participants asked questions and proposed ideas for collaboration which are outlined below.
- 17) Mr. Xuan from ESCAP suggested that ESCAP, ITU and other interested partners organize a joint activity to observe the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) 2012 in May 17, 2012 back to back with the ESCAP Commission. This suggestion was accepted by Ms. Kim of ITU who mentioned that the theme of the day would be “Women in ICT”. Ms. Siribodhi from SEAMEO also supported the idea and asked to see a tentative programme of the activity.
- 18) Mr. Atipayakoon from ITU confirmed that ESCAP should liaise with the ITU Regional office for matters relating to the organization of the World Telecom/ICT Indicators Meeting (WTIM) which will be held in Bangkok in September (week of 24-28) 2012. He also mentioned the possibility of cooperating with ISDR towards the further deployment of DesInventar. He requested ESCAP to be informed about the deadlines for submitting project proposals to the ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries.
- 19) Ms. Kim from ITU and Ms. Siribodhi from SEAMEO suggested initiating a collective resource-mobilization effort to move forward with the implementation of the Emergency Communications Capacities initiative. ESCAP was asked to develop a diagram describing the services related to ICT Development provided by each partner of the IWG which could be used when soliciting donors. This initiative was also supported by Ms. Park from UNESCO. Ms. Kim from ITU suggested establishing a timeline and outcome plan for resource-mobilization by mid December.
- 20) Mr. Velasquez from ISDR expressed that ISDR could not collaborate with the other agencies towards the Emergency Communications Capacities initiative because it was a disaster management project, which is beyond his organization’s mandate on disaster risk reduction.
- 21) Ms. Kim from ITU expressed interest in collaborating with UNESCO towards the organization of a high-level ministerial level meeting including education and ICT ministries. Ms. Park from UNESCO mentioned that UNESCO has not yet defined a specific date for the event but that the location is likely to be Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Annex 1
ESCAP presentation “ESCAP activities on
ICT for Development and ICT for Disaster Risk Reduction”

Annex 2
ITU presentation “ITU Activities 2012”

Annex 3
APT presentation “Overview of
APT's ICT Activities and Planning for 2012”

Annex 4
ESCAP presentation “Regional Cooperation for Disaster Emergency Communications
Capacities -Follow-up to the Decisions of 14th IWG and Way Forward”