Regional Interagency Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

12th Meeting

Information and Communications Technology and

Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD)

ESCAP

Objectives of this meeting (IWG12)

1. Share experiences and information on past and future events and activities in ICTs

2. Discuss areas for possible future collaboration/cooperation

Outline of this presentation

1. Overview and outcomes of 1st session of the Committee on ICT (CICT)

2. Overview and outcomes of the 1st session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (CDRR)

3. Brief overview of the 65th Commission session

4. Past areas of collaboration (Pacific ICT ministerial forum)

5. IDD Calendar of up-coming events

1

Committee on Information and Communication

- **Resolution 64/1**: Restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission created the Committee on Information and Communication technology and the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction

Committee on ICT Mandate

1. Integration of ICT-related issues in development policies, plans and programmes

2. Transfer and application of ICT at the regional and sub-regional levels

3. Development of human and institutional capacity in the use of ICT

4. ICT applications for disaster risk reduction

1

1st Session of the Committee on ICT overview

1. 1st session of the Committee on Information and Communication Technology was held from 19 to 21 November 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand

2. Attendance: 17 ESCAP members and associate members participated.

3. 100% of participating delegations which were surveyed fully agreed or partially agreed that they benefited from the discussions during the Committee session.

- AP region has over half of the Internet and mobile connectivity in the world
- Mobile phones have surpassed fixed phones in the region
- Larger portion of Internet users opt for shared accounts through Internet cafes and community e-centres
- Broadband penetration low at 3.5 per cent (2007)
- Still a large digital divide between developed/developing countries, urban/rural populations, rich/poor/
- Current level of ICT access, especially in countries with special needs (LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS) might not be sufficient to achieve the goals (WSIS & MDG)
- Exchange of information and best practices at the regional level, facilitating policy debate on the use of ICT for development, and cooperation among all stakeholders in collectively transforming the digital divide into digital opportunities is critical

1 **Specific recommendations of CICT to benefit ESCAP member states include:**

1. In-depth and focused analysis, research and policy options and recommendations on how to ensure the sustainability and scalability of CeCs

2. A study on viable options for deploying satellite technologies in geographically challenged countries

3. Put in place Follow-up mechanisms of the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS in 2015 and ICT indicators at the regional level in cooperation with international/regional organizations

4. Carry out more research on ICT for food security and sustainable agriculture in cooperation with FAO and other international organizations, and disseminate relevant good practices – including initiating a survey of online networks of agricultural expert systems within the region

5. Develop a regional emergency communications system in synergy with ITU and APT and others

6. Conduct a study on how ICT applications could play a greater role in DRR

7. Institutional capacity building to apply ICT for socio-economic development in conjunction with the Asian Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT)

More info: http://www.unescap.org/idd/events/cict-2008/CICT_6E.pdf

2   **1ˢᵗ session of the Committee on DRR overview**

1. 1ˢᵗ session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction held from 25 to 27 March 2009 in Bangkok

2. Attendance:
   - 30 out of 53 member states participated – majority high-level officials from Capital (21/30).
   - 2/3rd represented national office responsible for disaster management (20/30)

3. Majority of participants felt a sense of ownership for the committee and felt it was a relevant mechanism for discussing DRR

2 **Specific recommendations to benefit ESCAP member states include (CDRR):**

- Provide assistance in using ICT and space technology tools for knowledge-sharing—especially in data collection and dissemination, early warning, disaster monitoring and evaluation, and disaster emergency communications.

- Develop regional cooperative mechanisms using ICT and space technology tools, such as an "Asia-Pacific gateway on DRR and development for information sharing and analysis for disaster risk reduction"

- Promote the Sentinel Asia and the Wideband InterNetworking engineering test and Demonstration Satellite (WINDS) programme.

- Organize workshops on the sharing of best practices and capacity-building at the regional and sub-regional levels to minimize the "last mile" connectivity issue in communities in remote and border areas, islands and mountainous regions

- Develop a capacity building module on ICT for disaster risk reduction (APCICT)

More info: http://www.unescap.org/idd/events/cdrr-2009/CDR_9E.pdf

3

65ᵗʰ Commission Session (23-29 April 09)

- The session comprised of two segments:
  - Senior officials segment was held from 23-25 April 2009
  - Ministerial segment from 27 to 29 April 2009
- 48 members and associate members attended the Session
- The Session endorsed outcomes of both Committees, among others
- The 66ᵗʰ session will be held in Incheon, Republic of Korea in April or May 2010: Theme topic –

  "Addressing the challenges in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals: Promoting a stable and supportive financial system; and Green Growth or environmentally sustainable economic growth, including through technology and financing."

4

Past areas of collaboration (recent examples)

- Expert Group Meeting on WSIS+5 and Emerging Issues in Asia and the Pacific, Thailand, November 2008,

- Pacific ICT Ministerial Forum: Connecting the Unconnected, Tonga February 2009

IDD Calendar of upcoming events

20-22 July 2009,Bangkok, Thailand:

- Expert Group Meeting on regional cooperation towards building an information society in Asia and the Pacific
- Thirteenth Session of the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee on the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development-cum-Expert Meeting
- Sub-regional workshops on Strengthening ICT policies and applications to achieve MDG and WSIS goals in Asia and the Pacific –Pacific and SEA 12-14 Aug in BKK, and CA and SA on 26-28 Aug

Tentatively in China (September), Central Asia (October), Sri Lanka (December):

- Knowledge networks through ICT access points for disadvantaged communities

Dates/location to be announced:

- Sub-regional workshop "Empowering rural areas through community e-Centres" (India, 4th quarter 2009)

Thank you

For more information:

- http://www.aptsec.org/IWG/Index.htm

- http://www.unescap.org/idd