SOURCE: ITU

TITLE: Conclusions and Recommendations

10TH WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION/ICT INDICATORS MEETING (WTIM)
25-27 September 2012
Bangkok, Thailand

Conclusions and recommendations

Presented by the Chair

1. The 10th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Meeting (WTIM) focused on the following topics: national coordination of ICT statistics; ICT infrastructure and access; revenue and investment; quality of service; data traffic; wireless broadband; digital broadcasting; the WSIS+10 review; e-commerce; ICT households access and individual ICT use; and gender and ICT indicators.

2. Participants agreed that the name of the meeting should be changed from World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Meeting (WTIM) to World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS), from next year onwards.

3. Based on the WTIM presentations and discussions, the following conclusions and recommendations are made.

1. National coordination of ICT statistics

4. Due to the cross-cutting nature of ICTs, there are a number of actors involved in the monitoring and collection of statistics and indicators, including ICT Ministries, telecommunication regulatory authorities and national statistical offices (NSOs). This requires coordination and cooperation among national data producers and users and the meeting welcomes the steps taken by ITU to create a high-level segment in the WTIM.

5. The meeting recognizes the importance of national coordination of ICT statistics to ensure the efficient and timely production of high-quality official statistics. To this end, it recommends that countries put in place a coordination mechanism which brings together national stakeholders to discuss issues related to the collection, dissemination and analysis of ICT statistics.

6. The meeting considered different models of national coordination of ICT statistics. Participants agree that the NSO should play an active role in coordinating the collection and dissemination of ICT statistics and indicators. The meeting emphasizes the need to include ICT statistics in the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). In this context, the importance of providing a legal basis for the national coordination of statistics is emphasized. Similarly, ICT measurement should be part of any national ICT strategy.

7. The meeting highlights the importance of continuing the discussion on the topic of national coordination using international forums, such as the WTIM and regional forums, such as the

ESCAP Committee on Statistics. This could include the sharing of country experiences and best practices related to the coordination of ICT statistics. ITU should facilitate this process and develop guidelines and models for coordination mechanism that could be considered by countries.

2. ICT infrastructure and access: EGTI results

8. The meeting recognizes the importance of the Expert Group on Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (EGTI) as a unique forum for discussing indicators and methodologies related to ICT data and statistics. The meeting encourages all producers of infrastructure and access indicators, including operators and service providers, to participate actively in the work of the EGTI by sharing their experiences and technical expertise.

9. The meeting acknowledges the excellent work of the EGTI, under the chairmanship of Iñigo Herguera from Spain, in revising telecommunication/ICT indicators. The meeting endorses the outcome of the EGTI meeting held on 23-24 September 2012 at the same venue and recommends that the mandate of the EGTI should continue in order to carry on discussions on outstanding issues, standing items, such as the ICT Development Index and new indicators proposed by the EGTI.

10. The meeting acknowledges the importance of collecting telecommunication investment and revenue data and emphasizes the importance of applying strictly the definition available in the ITU Handbook. Furthermore, the meeting recommends that countries should collect data for the entire ICT sector and ensure that classifications are in line with international standards, particularly ISIC Rev. 4. This should be addressed further in the EGTI forum.

11. To improve the availability, quality and international comparability of administrative data on telecommunication/ICT statistics, the meeting encourages countries to use the ITU Handbook as a basic reference document in national data collections.

12. The meeting acknowledges the difficulties in comparing quality of service indicators internationally, in particular data transmission speed. However, these indicators are very important from a customer perspective and should be collected by regulators at the national level and be made available publically.

3. Measuring data traffic

13. The presentations highlighted the need to measure Internet data traffic given the growing levels of connectivity, devices and data services. While mobile-broadband traffic is below fixed-broadband traffic, it is the main source of growth in Internet traffic.

14. Operators are moving towards monitoring data traffic at a more and more granular level. While this provides important insights into Internet usage, the meeting recognizes the importance of aggregating data at the national level to allow for international comparison. This comparison is

an important contribution to benchmarking ICT uptake and usage and can complement subscription-based data.

15. Following the recommendations by the EGTI, the meeting agrees to include in the 2013 ITU data collection indicators on fixed (wired)-broadband Internet traffic, mobile-broadband Internet traffic (within the country) and mobile-broadband Internet traffic (roaming out), using the definitions agreed by the EGTI.

16. The meeting welcomes the ITU pilot project to collect indicators to measure backbone terrestrial transmission capacity. These include transmission network length (route kms), node locations, equipment type of terrestrial transmission network, network capacity (bit rate), number of optical fibres within the cable, operational status of the transmission network, and population within reach of transmission networks. The data, which will be collected by ITU through an external consultant, will be shared with and verified by national authorities. The aim of the project is to meet the demand for transmission capacity data and to develop an interactive online transmission map.

4.   Wireless broadband

17. Measuring wireless broadband is necessary as it has become an important Internet access technology. The measurement of wireless broadband faces several challenges with regards to the definition, which includes mobile broadband, terrestrial fixed wireless and satellite technologies. Countries are encouraged to use the ITU definition and methodology for the collection of wireless broadband indicators as agreed by the EGTI and included in the ITU Handbook.

18. In view of the rapid growth in mobile-broadband subscriptions globally, monitoring the price and affordability of mobile-broadband services becomes essential. The meeting agrees to the revisions proposed to the methodology to collect mobile-broadband prices, as agreed by the 9th WTIM. Mobile-broadband prices will be included in the 2012 ITU Price basket questionnaire and in the calculation of the 2013 ICT Price Basket. The mobile-broadband price basket will include both handset-based and computer-based services and measure the affordability of low-volume usage.

5.   Digital broadcasting

19. Digital broadcasting is a new and emerging service for many countries and its measurement requires the establishment of new indicators and definitions. The presentations highlighted that the scope of indicators to measure digital broadcasting still has to be defined and data have to be sourced from a number of different providers. Furthermore, distributers offering content beyond traditional broadcasting over the Internet, such as online video distributers (OVD), might play an increasingly important role in the future and have to be measured separately.

20. The meeting endorses the revision of digital broadcasting indicators currently included in the ITU Handbook. In addition, new indicators on services such as IPTV should be defined and measured. To this end, the meeting proposes a number of indicators on IPTV and recommends that the EGTI should include those in the online discussion forum and report the outcome of the discussions in the next WTIS.

6. WSIS+10

21. The meeting acknowledges the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development's continued efforts to track global information society developments. It welcomes the Partnership's contribution to the WSIS+10 review and the assessment of the WSIS outcomes. In this context, it calls upon countries to use the Partnership's statistical framework document "Measuring the WSIS targets" to collect data on the indicators that will be required to monitor progress.

22. The meeting welcomes the Partnerships planned metadata survey on the WSIS targets, which will be sent to countries in 2012. The survey will help to take stock of data availability and countries are encouraged to participate actively. Furthermore, countries are encouraged to start collecting the data necessary to report on the WSIS outcomes by 2014. Such data will be collected by the Partnership in 2013, to prepare the final quantitative assessment report for WSIS+10.

23. Measuring ICT in education is an important area highlighted by the WSIS. The meeting acknowledges the progress made by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in this regard. Countries are encouraged to collect and disseminate data on ICT in education, following the methodologies developed by UIS and the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, in particular with respect to data necessary for the WSIS assessment.

7. Measuring e-commerce

24. The meeting acknowledges the scarcity of official statistical data on e-commerce and recognizes the growing importance of e-commerce data for ICT policy makers. At the same time, it notes that currently governments rely primarily on private sector information that is not necessarily comprehensive or methodologically in line with official statistical principles or definitions. The Partnership indicators on e-commerce are available only for a limited number of developing countries and refer only to online purchases and sales carried out by households or enterprises. Alternative sources of data such as the international postal system are very promising and should be explored further.

25. The meeting considers it essential to measure the value of e-commerce as well as emerging trends such as mobile commerce and collective buying, or barriers to e-commerce such as cybercrime. Some countries consider it important to capture the part of e-commerce in domestic sales, exports and imports, as well as the outsourcing of certain services that might also be considered e-commerce.

26. To this end, the meeting requests the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development to advance the measurement of e-commerce by expanding the current core indicators and helping to build the capacity of countries for producing e-commerce statistics. New indicators on the value of e-commerce, for example, will also require the development of statistical methodology for their collection and countries will need to be trained. Furthermore the working definition of e-commerce needs to be revised in order to address the trends mentioned above.

8. Measuring ICT access and use through household surveys

27. The meeting welcomes the creation in May 2012, of the new ITU Expert Group on ICT Household Indicators (EGH), following the recommendation of the last WTIM. The objective of the EGH, which is chaired by Alexandre Barbosa from Brazil, is to revise the core ICT indicators on household access to, and individual use of, ICTs and the corresponding ITU Manual. Experts in the area of ICT household statistics are invited to join the EGH online discussion forum and provide inputs and share experience with regard to the core ICT household indicators.

28. The meeting recommends that the EGH includes in its discussion new indicators on Internet usage, such as frequency of use, activities carried out online, and barriers to using ICTs. Both the preliminary report from the EGH Chair, and the presentations of country experiences from Brazil, Republic of Korea and Thailand confirmed the need to continue measuring ICTs through household surveys, as well as the need for constant review, including by adding new indicators.

29. The meeting also encourages data collectors to consider extending the age scope of the survey in-scope population to include information on the activities, time spent online and frequency of Internet use for youth and children.

9. Gender and ICT indicators

30. From the presentations and discussions, it becomes clear that the measurement of ICT and gender is critical to understanding information society developments and the digital divide, and to identifying career opportunities for girls and women in ICT-related fields. They are also important to inform ICT policy makers, analysts and other stakeholders.

31. The meeting acknowledges the important work carried out by ITU and the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development in terms of identifying a core set of ICT indicators, including indicators on the use of ICTs by gender and on ICT in education by gender.

32. More needs to be done to develop relevant gender and ICT indicators, in particular in terms of household ICT indicators, indicators based on operators' data, ICT in education, ICT employment and ICT skills. Participants emphasized the importance to distinguish between sex-disaggregated statistics and gender-sensitive statistics. Gender statistics should be mainstreamed into national ICT statistical data collections.

33. The meeting requests that the work of ITU on measuring gender and ICT should be strengthened. ITU should assume leadership in raising awareness among policy makers and

work closely with countries to increase data availability. ITU, in cooperation with members of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, should continue to work on improving the measurement of gender and ICT, including by developing additional gender-relevant indicators and methodologies. The work of other relevant international groups, such as the UN Inter-Agency Expert Group on Gender Statistics, should be taken into consideration.