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Dear Shoji and Task Force Colleagues

Thank you for your letter and response to the concerns we raised about the relationship between the process of the Task Force's work and its draft findings and conclusions. We fully understand the constraints under which the Task Force has had to operate.

Thank you also for your encouragement to contribute to the final report. We would like to see a set of concrete recommendations to focus the discussion of the governments at Prepcom 2 in Geneva. We think that such a set of recommendations could be drawn from the draft findings and conclusions and the commentary of Task Force members.

If we look at Bill Stibravy and Ayesha Hassan's suggestion, where they suggest the following:

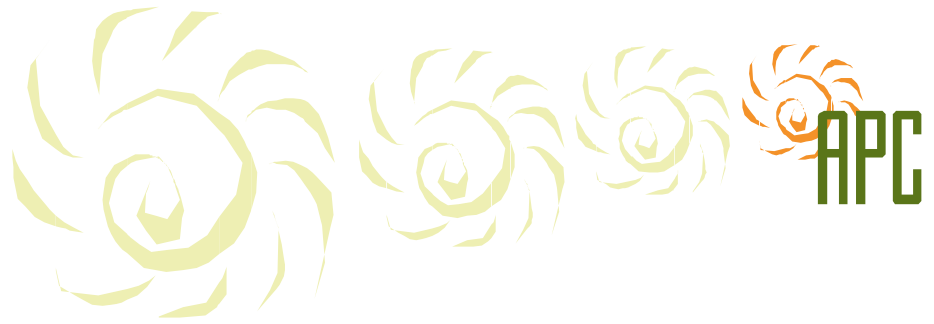
The TFFM suggests the following could be helpful to address the financing needs to promote the information society and to fully utilize ICTs for economic growth and social development: "A mechanism or other appropriate forum to mobilize resources [financing and human and other] for ICT development should be explored. This exploration could be an outcome of the WSIS Tunis process."

And connect this to Owen Barder's comments on co-ordination:

The key to tackling this lack of co-ordination is to bring all programs under the leadership of a national poverty reduction strategy and within that, a national ICT strategy, with ownership, prioritization and decision-making by developing countries and not donors, however well-intentioned.

And then add this from finding 10 of the report on infrastructure development:

Regional organizations and institutions can help facilitate cooperation and coordination and international financial institutions and donors can then play a vital role in seeding and facilitating the financing for such regional infrastructure projects.



And include Owen Barder's proposal on applications and software:

One option that the Task Force discussed was commissioning shared eGovernment application frameworks for common applications e.g. payroll, tax administration, school administration etc, which could be picked up and used across many developing countries.

And add finding 9 of the report on policy and open access:

Policy and regulatory incentives and more open access policies are also needed if private investment and community networks are to be effective in expanding ICT access to high cost (predominantly rural) and low income populations to address the so-called "bottom of the pyramid" populations.

And add finding 16 of the report on capacity-building:

Substantial increases in financial resources would be necessary, in most administrations, to establish capacity building programs commensurate with the goals and needs of effective e-governance and ICT sector policies.

And consider APC's contributions on the notion of a global ICT financial mechanism or a virtual financing facility which emphasizes:

- Coordination needed to leverage existing financial mechanisms;
- An approach towards policy environments appropriate to developing countries;
- The exploration and mobilization of new sources of financing for ICTD;
- Innovative funding solutions based on global public good arguments.

The combination of these threads raises the question of how the intricate meshing of ICT policy and finance can be achieved globally. As things stand in the Task Force, there seem to be two views:

- One view sees the need for some kind of mechanism that could play a coordinating and financial mobilization role;
- The other view sees any form of coordinating mechanism as the creation of another bureaucracy and prefers to rely on developing countries to create enabling policy environments to attract investment.

APC remains in favor of the first view and supports the establishment of a **global ICTD policy and financial mechanism** to play a coordinating role and to mobilize financial and other resources for ICTD and would like to see this as a concrete recommendation of the Task Force.

In addition to this, developing countries could consider organizing themselves regionally to generate **regional e-strategies and financial mechanisms** that would provide the co-ordination and coherence around the ICT policy, infrastructure, access, applications and capacity-building issues raised in the above-mentioned threads, which could then form the platform for leveraging existing financial mechanisms more effectively or mobilizing new sources of finance.



While we would like to see a recommendation for a global ICTD policy and financial mechanism included in the Task Force's conclusions, we do take your point that these ideas, including those mentioned in the report, perhaps need greater reflection and consideration and that WSIS will be able to play that role.

On behalf of APC, I would like to thank you for the valuable role you have played in coordinating the work of the Task Force and would also like to express my thanks and appreciation to Mark Malloch Brown, Task Force colleagues, the government of Japan, Radhika Lal, the team of experts and UNDP for a vigorous debate on the issues. We look forward to the next phase of the process.

Yours sincerely,

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