

UNESCAP

Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science,
Technology and Innovation, Third Session (Virtual Meeting)

19 AUG 2020 TO 20 AUG 2020

UNCC, BANGKOK, THAILAND

11:00-12:00 and 14:00 - 15:00

Item 3: Bridging the digital divide for inclusive broadband access

Timor-Leste Country Statement

Based on Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030 our vision is to, open the telecommunications market to competition, establish a new independent regulatory body and introduce a Universal Service Policy that will dramatically improve access to affordable, reliable, and modern telecommunications services.

This vision is already achieved to a greater extent and now Timor-Leste has 3 telecom service providers, with their presence, we now achieved a 98% network coverage nationally. Our Government have put in place an independent regulatory body named ANC (the National Communication Authority) to regulate the telecommunication sector, while Universal Service Policy is being implemented by enabling citizen-centered e-government initiatives. Furthermore, working towards integrating key government services to remove ICT complexities in the Ministries so that the Ministries can concentrate on the delivery of services.

To ensure that e-government is implemented through a holistic approach, an ICT agency namely TIC TIMOR I.P. was established in 2017 with a mission to:

- Implement **e-government initiatives** to promote modern Government that is electronic and integrated, interoperable, accessible and reachable, simplified and less bureaucratic;
- Implement all related **e-services** (G2G, G2C, G2B, G2E)
- To draft and disseminated approved laws and legislation on ICT

In line with SDP 2011-2030, Timor-Leste took initiatives to implement broadband access to attain national coverage in phases via terrestrial and sub-sea connectivity.

A terrestrial national fiber-optic backbone network across Timor-Leste is already completed in 2017 extending the connectivity to 12 municipalities through the Fiber Optic over Power Line infrastructure, this brings in a significant change at the municipality level to support the decentralization program and also to

access government resources hosted centrally at TIC TIMOR I.P data-center. The network infrastructure provides high-speed connectivity for various Information systems such as the Financial Management Information System (FMIS), Planning Monitoring and Evaluation System to execute faster citizen-centric services across the territory and also provides readiness to connect to the Internet sub-sea Point of Presence (POP).

In light with COVID-19 pandemic, our government concentrate our attention to speed up the sub-sea fibre optic cable as such, the sub-sea Cable Project is one of the Government top priorities to be physically implemented in 2021. The submarine cable when completed will connect Timor-Leste with the global telecommunications network allowing Timor-Leste to have a high quality, faster and cheaper internet access. With the subsea fibre-optic telecommunication cable and a 'point of presence' (or a POP) will provide Timor-Leste with the much needed high-speed internet bandwidth that is also required for e-government system rollouts. It will directly or indirectly contribute to the creation of new businesses and technological innovations, open new routes for local, national, regional and international Internet exchange points amongst other benefits.

The improved connection to the internet also improves services within Government and then Citizens by improving interoperability across systems and services. Also, it facilitates the seamless implementation of e-Services to all citizens.

Broadband Internet access will transform our schools and higher education institutions allowing students to access e-learning platforms and real-time teaching from across the globe.

Modern telecommunications and internet access will also provide a boost to our economy; giving our people access to the world's largest marketplace.

Our health sector will also be transformed, with access to medical expertise via Telemedicine and no longer affected by physical remoteness.

To date Timor-Leste has achieved the following targets:

1. Reliable and affordable mobile phone coverage across the territory with better data and pricing options for mobile-based internet;
2. Regulatory framework and regulatory authorities in place to manage a competitive telecommunication market;
3. Terrestrial Fiber Optic network backbone laid up to the Municipalities level
4. National e-Government Data Center established

To end our statement, we wish to express our interest if possible to be part of the AP-IS program specifically to be included in the Strategic initiative 2019-2022 or the second phase AP-IS implementation of the action-oriented plan. This is particularly important since our Government has several major infrastructure projects and ICT program next year namely:

1. Power distribution modernization project;
2. Power Grid strengthening project;
3. Sub-sea Fiber Optic cable namely Timor-Leste South submarine Cable (TLSSC);
4. Unique ID Number project.

I thank you for the opportunity to be part of this very important virtual meeting and we look forward to enhancing our cooperation with the member states and together reducing the digital divide.