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Items 3 (e) and 3 (f) of the provisional agenda*

**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure
of the Commission, including the work of the regional
institutions: Information and communications
technology and disaster risk reduction**

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its seventh session

Summary

The seventh session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) was held in Bangkok on 21 November 2013. The session was held alongside the third session of the ESCAP Committee on Information and Communications Technology.

The Governing Council reviewed the work undertaken by APCICT since its sixth session. It expressed deep appreciation for the wide range of programmes and activities of APCICT and its efforts to address recommendations of the sixth session. Representatives recounted how APCICT's programmes were being utilized for ICT for development (ICTD) capacity-building at the national level and expressed strong support for its work.

The Governing Council endorsed APCICT's work plan for 2013 in which the targeted outcomes include greater reach and impact of APCICT's and member States' ICTD capacity-building efforts, high quality and relevance of training content and research products, strengthened capacities of member States for programme adoption, utilization of effective mechanisms for knowledge sharing, and sustained partner engagement on all aspects of programme development and implementation.

The Governing Council suggested that APCICT expand its programmes to include new beneficiary groups. In this context, it recommended that APCICT develop a new training module on ICT for Small and Medium Enterprises under its Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders programme. The Council also recommended developing a training module on ICT for people with disabilities.

While reviewing the administrative and financial status of APCICT, the Governing Council called upon all member States to enhance their contribution to the Centre to support its operations.

* E/ESCAP/69/L.1.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention.....	2
Recommendations	2
II. Summary of proceedings	3
A. Report on the administrative and financial status of APCICT	4
B. Presentation of the work undertaken by APCICT since the sixth session of the Governing Council	5
C. Presentation of the APCICT work plan for 2013	8
D. Presentations by APCICT partners on their experience with the roll-out of the Centre's programmes	9
E. Date and venue of the eighth session of the Governing Council.....	10
F. Other matters	10
G. Adoption of the report	10
III. Organization.....	10
A. Opening, duration and organization of the session	10
B. Attendance.....	11
C. Election of officers	11
D. Adoption of the agenda	11
Annex List of documents	12

I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention

Recommendations

1. The Governing Council reviewed the work undertaken by the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) since the sixth session of the Council. It expressed deep appreciation for the wide range of programmes and activities of APCICT and its efforts to address the recommendations emanating from the sixth session of the Council.

2. The Governing Council endorsed the Centre's work plan for 2013, the targeted outcomes of which included: greater reach and impact for the information and communications technologies for development (ICTD) capacity-building efforts of the Centre and member States; high quality and relevance of the Centre's training content and research products; strengthened capacities of member States for programme adoption; utilization of effective mechanisms for sharing knowledge; and sustained partner engagement on all aspects of programme development and implementation. The Council noted the importance of taking a flagship programme approach and the need for long-term institutionalization of APCICT programmes.

3. The Governing Council suggested that APCICT expand its programmes to include new beneficiary groups, such as people living at the grass-roots level, women and children. In that context, it recommended that APCICT develop a new training module under its Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders programme on ICT for small and medium-sized enterprises, which could be followed by a training-of-trainers course on the new module and establishment of a forum to enable participants to learn from each other. The Council also recommended that APCICT develop another training module on ICT for people with disabilities in order to address the needs of that group.

4. In commenting on the monitoring and evaluation “toolkit” that had been developed by APCICT for the Academy programme, the Governing Council expressed support for that development and suggested that member States should be encouraged to measure the impact of the Centre’s ICTD capacity-building programmes. The Council also noted a suggestion for enhancing the toolkit by incorporating within it common competency standards at the regional level.

5. The Governing Council recommended that APCICT provide member States with statistical data relevant to ICT human capacity-building as part of its research efforts.

6. The Governing Council also recommended that the APCICT website be made more interactive by giving member States the option of uploading and downloading content, thus better enabling the sharing of experiences. The Council suggested that APCICT partners insert a link to the Centre’s website on their own organizational websites. As another means of promoting knowledge-sharing, the Council recommended that countries implementing the Centre’s ICTD capacity-building programmes consider inviting other countries to participate in their activities and training programmes in order to enable cross-learning.

7. The Governing Council noted the importance of collecting and sharing case studies as a means for better knowledge-sharing among ICTD partners and stakeholders.

8. In reviewing the administrative and financial status of APCICT, the Governing Council called upon all member States to enhance their contribution to the Centre in order to support its operations.

9. The Governing Council expressed appreciation to the Director and other staff of APCICT for the commendable work and achievements of the Centre.

II. Summary of proceedings

10. The Council had before it the following documents:

(a) Administrative and financial status of APCICT (E/ESCAP/APCICT/GC(7)/2);

(b) Work programme and project activities of APCICT (E/ESCAP/APCICT/GC(7)/3);

(c) Brief on the APCICT “Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders” (Academy) programme;

- (d) Brief on the APCICT “Turning Today’s Youth into Tomorrow’s Leaders” programme;
- (e) Brief on the APCICT Virtual Academy;
- (f) APCICT online: Advancing knowledge development and sharing;
- (g) Brief on the APCICT research pillar;
- (h) Brief on APCICT media outreach.

11. Presentations were made by the Director of APCICT. In addition, as part of a panel discussion on the theme of “Regional capacity-building on information and communications technology for development”, APCICT partners from various institutions in Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and the Philippines as well as the Pacific subregion presented their experiences vis-à-vis the initiation of the Centre’s programmes. The panel discussion was moderated by the Director of APCICT; it was held concurrently with consideration of item 7 of the agenda of the third session of the ESCAP Committee on Information and Communications Technology.

A. Report on the administrative and financial status of APCICT

12. The Council was briefed about the Centre’s: (a) background; (b) administration and management; (c) financial status; and (d) outreach strategy and activities. The Council was informed that, since the establishment of APCICT in June 2006, the Centre had been working to build the human and institutional capacities of member States of ESCAP so that they could use ICTs for their socioeconomic development. There were four interrelated pillars of the Centre’s work, namely training, research and knowledge-sharing, advisory services and serving as a multilateral cooperation mechanism.

13. A summary of the financial status of APCICT was presented to the Council; the summary referred to the first phase (2006-2011) and second phase (2012-2015) of the Centre’s operations. It contained information on voluntary contributions from the host country, the Republic of Korea, which was providing APCICT with institutional support and project funding. The summary also included information on other voluntary contributions from members and associate members of ESCAP and on contributions for the Centre’s technical cooperation activities. In addition, the Council was informed that APCICT had been receiving significant in-kind contributions from member States and programme partners in the form of material, logistical and human resources support for workshops and training programmes, and for localization of training material and knowledge products.

14. The Governing Council was apprised of the Centre’s outreach strategy, which was aimed at increasing the visibility of its programmes, strengthening partnerships, developing new networks and supporting resource mobilization. One of the key outreach activities of the Centre was media engagement through press releases, which had resulted in the publication of 196 news features on APCICT thus far. With regard to the Centre’s online outreach activities, the APCICT website had attracted 160,000 unique visitors to date and the Korean-language version of the website had been launched in order to extend the reach of the Centre to stakeholders in the host country. Other outreach activities included dissemination of newsletters, use of social networking sites and delivery of presentations by APCICT and its partners at international conferences and forums.

15. It was brought to the attention of the Governing Council that, despite its limited human and financial resources, APCICT had been trying to address the constant need for new and localized capacity-building content and the increasing demand from member States for its programmes and services.

16. The Chair briefed the Governing Council about ongoing ICT capacity-building efforts in Bangladesh, which were aimed at narrowing the digital divide and providing people in rural areas with ICT services, including the “Digital Bangladesh” initiative. He expressed his Government’s support for APCICT activities and outlined the plans of the Bangladesh Computer Council to localize the training modules of the Centre’s Academy programme by translating them into the Bengali language.

17. The Governing Council recommended that all member States of APCICT enhance their contribution to the Centre. In that context, while expressing their Governments’ willingness to support APCICT through financial contributions, the representatives of Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Thailand noted that internal approvals within their Governments would be required for that purpose. The Chair announced that the annual contribution of Bangladesh would be enhanced; the intention was to contribute US\$ 10,000 to the Centre in 2013.

18. The representative of Indonesia expressed appreciation to the Director of APCICT for having successfully operated the Centre. She noted that the Government of Indonesia was committed to implementing the Academy programme intensively and extensively. She also indicated that her Government would continue to provide in-kind contributions for the Academy programme and that its intention was to increase that contribution from year to year.

19. The representative of Indonesia recommended that the APCICT website be enhanced to give users in member States the option of uploading and downloading content, which would make the site more interactive. The representative of the Philippines suggested that APCICT partners insert a link to the Centre’s website on their own organizational websites in order to assist in disseminating information about the Centre.

B. Presentation of the work undertaken by APCICT since the sixth session of the Governing Council

20. The Governing Council took note of the programme activities of APCICT since its sixth session (see E/ESCAP/APCICT/GC(7)/3) in the context of the eight key recommendations that had been adopted by the Council at that session:

- (a) Expand the Academy programme;
- (b) Strengthen the pool of Academy resource persons;
- (c) Customize and localize Academy and other APCICT resources to reach a wider audience;
- (d) Expand APCICT activities to new beneficiary groups;
- (e) Implement customized monitoring and evaluation mechanisms;
- (f) Enhance research and knowledge-sharing;

- (g) Strengthen advisory services;
- (h) Enhance outreach mechanisms.

21. The progress that had been achieved under the Centre's training pillar, based on a flagship programme approach, was reported to the Governing Council. Thus far, 148 capacity-building workshops or training events had been conducted by APCICT and its partners. The number of participants and online course enrolments exceeded 11,000 persons from more than 140 countries and territories.

22. The Governing Council was informed that the Academy training programme was being expanded on the basis of the training-of-trainers approach. The programme had been launched in 26 countries in the region and institutionalized into long-term national capacity-building frameworks in many member States. Strong national ownership had been demonstrated by Academy partners that replicated the programme in their countries and invested a significant amount of their own resources in localizing the Academy modules and conducting national or subregional workshops. The programme had also positively influenced policy formulation at the national, organizational and community levels.

23. The Governing Council was informed that, in order to maintain the relevance of the training content, APCICT had updated the set of existing Academy modules and launched the revised version as "Academy 2.0". Development of a new Academy module, entitled "Social media for development", had also been initiated. Partner-driven localization of the content had been promoted in order to increase the reach and uptake of the programme. The Academy curriculum was currently available in nine languages. To enhance the capacity of partners to deliver training, APCICT was strengthening the pool of resource persons by training new resource persons and helping augment the knowledge and competencies of existing resource persons. Moreover, against the backdrop of rapid expansion of the programme, a monitoring and evaluation toolkit had been developed by APCICT to enable partners to better capture the progress and impact of the programme. Four countries had already developed customized national monitoring and evaluation plans based on the toolkit.

24. The Governing Council was informed that the Academy programme had been taken up beyond the Asia-Pacific region, in Africa and the Middle East, and plans were under way to introduce it in the Caribbean in partnership with the respective United Nations regional commission. Ministries responsible for ICT in Belarus, Mauritius, the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine had also expressed interest in utilizing the programme.

25. The Governing Council was informed that, under the Turning Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders Programme, APCICT had launched its Primer Series on ICTD for Youth as a new learning resource. The Primer Series was aimed at enhancing the coverage of ICTD in the curriculum of universities in the region, and increasing awareness and understanding of ICTD among the next generation of leaders. The first issue in the Series, namely *Primer 1: ICT for Disaster Risk Management*, had been introduced in seven countries and one subregion, and ICTD training capacities had been strengthened at 71 universities through the training-of-trainers approach. There had been a high level of uptake of Primer 1, and 14 universities had already adopted it or were scheduled to adopt it in the near future. More than 2,500 workshop participants and students had accessed it thus far. Translation

of Primer 1 into five languages either had been initiated or was at an advanced stage of planning, a development that underscored the importance of collecting and sharing local case studies.

26. The Governing Council was also informed of the progress achieved under the research and knowledge-sharing pillar of APCICT. The Centre had developed or contributed to more than 120 research and knowledge products which had been disseminated throughout the region as publications in print or electronic online formats to assist the work of policymakers and other ICTD stakeholders. The Knowledge Sharing Series, a publication that offered step-by-step guidelines, concrete strategies, best practices and case studies on ICTD, had been launched recently; the first two issues focused on institution-building and cybersecurity. APCICT had also launched Communities of Practice, a collaborative online platform for learners and experts, to share ICTD knowledge and best practices. Knowledge-sharing and partner engagement had been further promoted through the fourth meeting of Academy Partners and the first meeting of the Primer Series Partners, both of which had been held in 2012.

27. The Governing Council was informed that, under the advisory services pillar of the Centre, APCICT had provided member States and partners with technical inputs and consultation to support programme initiation and institutionalization, content localization and customization, and resource mobilization. APCICT had also initiated ICTD trend analysis studies on identified themes, undertaken preparatory work for advisory services on the development of capacity-building programmes for government chief information officers, and commenced compilation of a guidebook on the development of e-learning systems.

28. The Centre's partnership strategy was outlined for the review of the Governing Council. The strategy emphasized establishment of strategic collaboration with the host country, government agencies, international development agencies, other United Nations bodies, civil society organizations, research and training institutions and the private sector. The Council was informed that APCICT currently had a network of 89 partners which had been instrumental in achieving a "multiplier effect" for enhancing the reach and impact of the ICTD capacity-building efforts of individual stakeholders.

29. The Governing Council expressed deep appreciation for the wide range of programmes and activities undertaken by APCICT and its efforts in addressing the recommendations emanating from the sixth session of the Council.

30. The representative of Sri Lanka stated that the Academy modules were very useful for his country and informed the Council that his Government planned to launch training under the Academy programme soon, starting with a workshop utilizing module 6 on information security. He also highlighted plans to conduct a training-of-trainers course for Government officials in two provinces that had formerly experienced unrest.

31. The representative of Cambodia mentioned that his country had been collaborating with APCICT under the Academy programme and was committed to implementing the programme more actively. He informed the Council that the Academy modules had already been translated into the Khmer language and that some universities had agreed to utilize those modules in their programmes.

32. The representative of Thailand stated that her country had been a member of the APCICT Governing Council since its inception. In voicing support for the Centre's ICTD capacity-building programme for youth, she informed the Council that Thammasat University in her country had expressed interest in utilizing the Centre's training content in its academic programmes.

33. In commending the Centre for its work, the representative of Indonesia noted that the reach of APCICT programmes had extended beyond the Asia-Pacific region, and proposed changing the name of the Centre to "Global training centre on ICT for development". She recommended that APCICT provide member States with statistical data relevant to ICT human capacity-building as part of its research efforts.

34. The representative of the Philippines congratulated the Director of APCICT for the commendable work and praiseworthy achievements of the Centre in the previous year. She stated that her institution, the National Computer Institute, was pleased to be a partner in the Academy programme. The representative also conveyed a message from the head of the Information and Communications Technology Office of the Philippines, which reaffirmed the country's support for APCICT programmes.

35. In commenting on the Academy's monitoring and evaluation toolkit, the Governing Council expressed support for the utilization of the toolkit and held the view that member States should be encouraged to measure the impact of the Centre's ICTD capacity-building programmes. The representative of Indonesia informed the Council that, in her country, such measurement of impact had been facilitated by the development of competency standards for government chief information officers who were required to pass an examination in order to attain their qualification. The representative of the Philippines was of the view that, in building upon the monitoring and evaluation toolkit, it was desirable to go a step forward and formulate common competency standards at the regional level.

36. The Chair recommended that countries implementing the Centre's ICTD capacity-building programmes consider inviting other countries to participate in their activities and training programmes in order to promote cross-learning.

C. Presentation of the APCICT work plan for 2013

37. The Governing Council reviewed the Centre's work plan for 2013. Among the outcomes targeted by the Centre for the period were: greater reach and impact of the ICTD capacity-building efforts of APCICT and member States; high quality and relevance of training content and research products; strengthened capacities of member States for programme adoption; utilization of effective mechanisms for knowledge-sharing; and sustained partner engagement with all aspects of programme development and implementation. Some of the specific components of the work plan aimed at achieving those outcomes included developing new Academy modules and Primer Series issues through an inclusive and participatory process, encouraging content localization and customization by partners, supporting the training of trainers, enabling long-term institutionalization of APCICT programmes in more countries, promoting wider adoption of the monitoring and evaluation toolkit, leveraging online platforms for e-learning and knowledge-sharing, developing new issues of APCICT research publications and providing needs-based ICTD advisory services. It was the intention of

APCICT to continue to adopt an integrated approach across all its pillars in order to ensure that each pillar complemented and reinforced the reach and impact of the others.

38. The Chair offered his country's assistance to APCICT in the development of the new module on ICT for small and medium-sized enterprises given that some work had already been done in that area in Bangladesh. In that regard, the representative of Sri Lanka highlighted the need to clearly define small and medium-sized enterprises for the purpose of such a module.

39. The representative of Thailand informed the Governing Council that her Government had developed a centre for supporting people with disabilities and suggested that APCICT develop a training module on ICT for people with disabilities in order to address the needs of that group.

40. The representative of the Republic of Korea expressed sincere appreciation to the Director, Senior Programme Officer and other staff of APCICT for the work done by the Centre. He observed that the Centre had made a significant contribution to the goal of ICTD capacity-building and reiterated his Government's committed support for APCICT programmes. With regard to the Centre's work plan for 2013, he stated that due emphasis could be given to such areas as expanding the Academy programme, localizing content and expanding the beneficiary group.

41. The Governing Council endorsed the APCICT work plan for 2013.

D. Presentations by APCICT partners on their experience with the roll-out of the Centre's programmes

42. The Governing Council benefited from a panel discussion on the theme of "Regional capacity-building on information and communications technology for development", which was held concurrently with consideration of item 7 of the agenda of the third session of the ESCAP Committee on Information and Communications Technology. The panel discussion was moderated by the Director of APCICT; the panellists were: Mr. Almaz Bakenov, Director, National Information Technology Center, Kyrgyzstan; Mr. Chan Basaruddin, Professor, Faculty of Computer Science, University of Indonesia; Mr. Dorj Baigal, Head, Training Division, Public Affairs and Management School, National Academy of Governance, Mongolia; Ms. Maria Lourdes P. Aquilizan, Acting Director, National Computer Institute, Information and Communications Technology Office, Department of Science and Technology, the Philippines; and Mr. Siaosi Sovaleni, Manager, Pacific ICT Outreach Programme, Economic Development Division, Secretariat of the Pacific Community. The panellists, who were also APCICT programme partners, represented a cross section of stakeholders from government training and capacity-building institutions, intergovernmental organizations and academia.

43. During the panel discussion, the panellists reiterated the importance of and need for ICT capacity-building at the national and subregional levels, as reflected in specific policy frameworks and intergovernmental declarations. They presented best practices and success stories in the area of ICTD capacity-building and elaborated on how programmes were being customized in their countries or subregions to ensure greater reach and impact. Cited as some of the strategies for success were promoting partnerships, adopting a multi-stakeholder approach, enlisting the support of national champions and

localizing training content. Institutionalizing ICT capacity-building into long-term national training initiatives and university programmes was also noted as important for addressing the challenge of sustainability.

44. The panel highlighted areas where further work was required, such as ensuring the quality of capacity-building, development of common competency standards for the region and prioritizing programme monitoring and evaluation. For facilitating effective knowledge-sharing, the panel noted that there was a need to develop networks of stakeholders and resource persons, provide effective online and offline platforms for collaboration and enable the collection and sharing of case studies.

E. Date and venue of the eighth session of the Governing Council

45. As no specific suggestions were received with regard to the venue for the eighth session of the Governing Council, it was proposed that the session be held in the Republic of Korea in late November or early December 2013.

F. Other matters

46. As called for under the statute of APCICT, which had been adopted by ESCAP in its resolution 61/6, APCICT was to have a Governing Council that consisted of a representative of the Republic of Korea as the host country and eight representatives of members and associate members of ESCAP elected by the Commission. The issue of increasing the number of members of the Governing Council was discussed, as was the issue of subregional representation. The Council decided to re-examine those issues at its eighth session, in 2013.

G. Adoption of the report

47. The Governing Council adopted the present report on 19 December 2012.

48. The representative of the Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division of ESCAP, the backstopping division for the Centre, expressed gratitude for the appreciation voiced by member States for the work of APCICT. He mentioned that his Division would continue to support APCICT programmes and identify opportunities for collaboration with the Centre.

49. The Director of APCICT acknowledged the support that the Division had provided the Centre in carrying out its backstopping functions.

50. The representative of Thailand thanked the Director and staff of APCICT for organizing the current session of the Governing Council.

III. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

51. The seventh session of the Governing Council of APCICT was held in Bangkok on 21 November 2012, simultaneously with the third session of the ESCAP Committee on Information and Communications Technology.

52. In her opening statement, delivered by the Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP, the Executive Secretary welcomed to the session all the new and re-elected members of the Governing Council, which was meeting

for the first time since elections to the Council had been held during the sixty-eighth session of the Commission in May 2012.

53. The Executive Secretary observed that, while the Asia-Pacific region had made notable advances during the preceding decade, the growth and usage of ICT still varied greatly among and within countries in the region. She highlighted the lack of ICT human and institutional capacities as key constraints in that regard.

54. The Executive Secretary noted the impact of the Centre's flagship programmes through its needs-based and demand-driven approach. She referred to the ongoing geographic and thematic expansion of the programmes and expressed satisfaction at the uptake of the Academy programme in other regions.

55. The Executive Secretary expressed her appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Korea for its generous funding for the operations of APCICT. She also thanked other member States and partners that had provided the Centre with voluntary and in-kind contributions.

B. Attendance

56. The session was attended by 12 representatives of 8 member countries of the Governing Council, namely Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

C. Election of officers

57. The Governing Council elected Mr. Jnanendra N. Biswas (Bangladesh) Chair, and Ms. Rungthip Sripetchdee (Thailand) Vice-Chair.

D. Adoption of the agenda

58. The Governing Council adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Report on the administrative and financial status of APCICT.
5. Presentation of the work undertaken by APCICT since the sixth session of the Governing Council.
6. Presentation of the APCICT work plan for 2013.
7. Presentations by APCICT partners on their experience with the roll-out of the Centre's programmes.
8. Date and venue of the eighth session of the Governing Council.
9. Other matters.
10. Adoption of the report.

Annex**List of documents**

Symbol	Title	Agenda item
E/ESCAP/APCICT/GC(7)/1	Provisional agenda	3
E/ESCAP/APCICT/GC(7)/2	Administrative and financial status of APCICT	4
E/ESCAP/APCICT/GC(7)/3	Work programme and project activities of APCICT	5
N/A	APCICT work plan for 2013	6
N/A	Brief on Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders	5
N/A	Brief on Turning Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders	5
N/A	Brief on APCICT Virtual Academy	5
N/A	Brief on APCICT Online: Advancing Knowledge Development and Sharing	5
N/A	Brief on APCICT's Research Pillar	5
N/A	Brief on APCICT's Media Outreach	5
N/A	Tentative programme	3
N/A	Provisional list of participants	2