

Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the next Billion Phase II

Contributor/Prepared by: Fotjon Kosta

Job position/Affiliation: ICT Expert/Head of ICT Ministry of Energy and Industry, Contributor and coordinator for Albanian IGF(in-formation), contributor to SEEDIG, EURODIG

Stakeholder: Government

Country: Republic of Albania

1. How would you define, or how do you understand, the theme “*Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion*”?

“*Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion*” not only bringing the next 1 billion of the world’s citizens to the Internet World but also is the best challenge of enabling all internet stakeholders being connected and working of building the right infrastructure and environment for all, as for developed or not developed countries.

2. The first phase of *Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion (2015)* identified a set of policy options:

- **Deploying Infrastructure** : more investment and public-private cooperation is necessary to strengthen national backbones in the developing world, and, in particular, rural populations, and to increase and scale-up cross-border connectivity. Internet exchange points (IXPs) have become a priority for some countries to increase local infrastructure development and to help bring connectivity costs down.
 1. Physical, Interconnection Layers, and Enabling Technologies (Undersea Fiber Cables, Broadband, Spectrum, Mobile, IXPs, IPv6, etc.)
 2. Funding Sources: Universal Service Funds, Public Private Partnership (PPP)
 3. Deployment i.e establishment of IXPs, IPv6s
- Increasing Usability: ensuring people to use Internet according to their needs was reflected in many of the contributions
 1. Applications : for mobile phones
 2. Services: e-services etc
 3. Local Content, Multilingualism: stimulating the creation of local content in local languages
 4. Media: digital world through using internet access
 5. Accessibility: national and international legal framework on accessibility is available in private and public sector, increasing awareness on education training, copyright, etc.

- **Enable Users:** improved digital literacy, literacy education for all online users issues and internet accessibility (all this groups of individuals can be informed about human rights, inclusiveness(gender, youth), user literacy, digital citizenship, entrepreneurship).
- Ensuring Affordability: focused on the critical issue of costs and the affordability of Internet access, particularly in the developing world:
 1. Digital Divide in the internet economy
 2. Costs of access per capita this can be done by internet access broadband and mobile GSMA(3G/4G)
- Creating and Enabling Environment: 1. Connecting the next 1 billion should be viewed as a Strategy/Project by regions/countries and stakeholders and as such should be approached using best practices, policies and methodologies. 2. All Governmental bodies should be responsible and for ICT/Experts, Innovation/ICT & broadband policies, capacity-buildings, legal framework through enhance multistakeholder cooperation involving diverse stakeholder groups, towards ensuring that all of them are involved in policy implementation.

3. Are you aware of any specificities around connectivity at a local or regional level? (In other words, do you know of factors that impact connectivity in, for instance, rural areas but less so at an urban level? Or factors that affect connectivity at regional or larger scale, but not as noticeably at local or smaller scale?)

The best case for this in local national level is implementation of Digital Agenda of Albania 2015-2020:

1. Improvement of national infrastructure of the ICT, as the main pillar of a fast development of the information society and the growth of electronic readiness:
 - Increase of access with a high transmission speed, of at least 100 Mbps in 50% of families, and at least, 30 Mbps for the whole population;
 - Growth of population percentage that utilizes the Internet from 50 % at the end of 2013 to 90% by the end of 2020;
 - Number of businesses using ICT for e-commerce purposes should be at the rate of 50%;
 - All schools with access to broadband Internet;
2. Development of e-governance and providing of interactive public services through the Internet for the citizens and businesses:
 - Delivery of interactive public services for individuals and businesses from 30% in 2013 to 50 % by the end of 2017;
 - Increase of e-governance, ensuring a change of up to 10 places until 2020;
 - Simplification of administrative procedures and reorganization of processes;
 - Establishment of a services model that puts the citizen at the center through the creation of a unique till for public services, as well as the improvement of access to services for the citizens and the increase of transparency for the services of each public institution, mainly through the utilization of information and communication technology;
 - Basic systems interrelated at the rate of 100%;
 - Basic vital services for citizens and businesses provided electronically, both at the central and local level;

- 30-50% growth of the scale of users of electronic services and e-governance;
3. Implementation of the national policy for the Establishment of National Geospatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) and that of the Multi-Purpose Cadaster Office through the following:
- Creation of the Gravimetric geo-portal and network;
 - Establishment of a Multi-Purpose Cadaster Office;
 - Functioning and certification of the active network ALBPOS, as well as that of the passive network ALBPOS;
 - Establishment of the levelling network, Class I and II, and acquisition of European certifications;
 - Maintenance and update of networks pursuant to the European standards;

4. What does meaningful access mean?

Is the ability to use services and benefits comparable to those enjoyed by members of the mainstream cultures. It is achieved by eliminating communication barriers and ensuring that the client or potential client can communicate effectively

5. How can connectivity contribute to reaching the new SDGs?

ICTs are a crucial enabling platform for the implementation of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as also Albanian Digital agenda sets an ambitious goals to "significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide local, national and in reflected also in regionally due to an affordable access to the Internet by 2020". Collaboration between governmental and non-governmental actors is clearly key to meeting the post-2015 development challenges and the multistakeholder nature of the IGF makes it a unique space for this ongoing discussion.

6. Do you know examples of stories where using ICTs to support development has not worked, and why?

In case of Albania and in South Eastern Europe the cyber-security session is developed very slowly due to financial and political issues.

- As for security we have several hacking attack every day within SEE region to country to country and locally.

7. Can you think of ways in which ICTs or Internet connectivity could be used to help reach the SDGs?

The Internet has been identified as a key enabler of development by helping facilitate positive results in education, healthcare, agriculture, energy, employment, commerce and many other areas. The SDGs are aimed at guiding policy in achieving dignity, well-being, and equality for all the world's people - especially the poor and underserved.

The Internet provides opportunities and allows people to take part in the digital economy, stimulates economic development and enables the transition to knowledge-based economies. It lowers barriers to markets, driving new ideas and innovation, and stimulating demand for data and devices. By enabling individuals to exchange information and ideas instantaneously and inexpensively across national borders, the Internet allows affordable access to information and knowledge regardless of location that was previously unattainable and helps users make informed decisions. For many in the developing world, access to information contributes to the discovery of knowledge, creates access to transformative technology, and drives societal progress as a whole.

8. Do you know of examples of success stories that can illustrate how Internet access can help to address real-world problems (in either developed or developing countries)? For example, do you have stories or experiences to share regarding some or all of the following SDG-related questions:

My answers for each SDG it will be from my personal experience and Albanian experiences

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to reduce poverty in its various forms? (SDG 1)**

- ICT, Internet access can increase poor people's opportunities, empowerment, and security
- ICT can improve poor people's lives but only if policies and projects are designed to exploit its potential as:
ICT, Internet access can increase poor people's opportunities by improving their access to market and health care.
Connecting and enabling and internet access help market to ensuring customers having fair prices, increase transparency, and fast payment.
In health care situation is that are enabling auxiliary nurse midwives to eliminate redundant paperwork and data entry, freeing time to deliver health care to poor people.

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to promote sustainable agriculture? (SDG 2).**

Internet Access and ICT infrastructure to main farms and plants/vegetable/fruits producers in Albania creating a very valuable and secure network for good and innovated agriculture.

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure healthy lives and to promote well-being at all ages? (SDG 3)**

- Management of check-up data for the 40-65 years old age group
- Collection and reporting of the data system by the public or private providers of the health care services
- Inoculation and Vaccination Registration System
- National Patient and Electronic Services Portal for citizens

- On-line service for the regional management of advanced medical examinations
- System of drug registration and control
- Project “e-Health – National Electronic Health Record”

- Hospital Management Computer System (Hospital Information System)

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure inclusive and equitable, quality education? (SDG 4)**

- Digitalization of the education system implementation of digital classes for the secondary education
- Digitalization of pre-university education system – development of data management system in schools (Digital Register).
- Digitalization of pre-university education system – development of online registration system, e-register
- Training of teachers of the pre-university system in the utilization of systems
- ICT in pre-school education
- Development of the computer system for the logistical and financial management of the institutions under Ministry of Education
- Online networking of the private and public higher education institutions

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to promote lifelong learning opportunities? (SDG 4)**

- Digitalization of the pre-university education system development of the e-learning system
- Establishment of the digital library for the pre-university education system
- Establishment of e-libraries for each city
- Availability of computers, access to the internet and broadband services in schools for the development of teachers’ training for the utilization of e-learning content

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to achieve gender equality? (SDG 5)**

Establish of digital registry to National Public Administration Institution and system that enabling gender equality and expert equality

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation? (SDG 6)**

- Establishment of the National Electronic Cadaster of Water Resources

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy? (SDG 7)**

- Capacity building for Renewable Energy

- Management Information System to monitor concession contracts of HPP
- Implementation of Trans Adriatic Pipeline infrastructure
- MIS for certification of building energy, registration and PEN certification
- Project on Agency of Energy Efficiency
- Establishment of National Monitor Center of Energy Transmission
- Implementation of Smart Energy Meters
- Establishment of Critical Infrastructure Information Protection (CIIP) in Energy Sector

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth? (SDG 8)**

- Development of the national e-Tourism programme, establishment of the hotel register, establishment of tourist resources and products, establishment of cultural inheritance, establishment of the tourism portal, coverage of tourist areas with free internet service Wi-Fi
- Designation of a fiscal cadaster system and its connection with the tax authorities
- Development and Improvement of m-TAX

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation? (SDG 9)**

- Electronic application for the driving license and obtaining of a fast service
- Establishment of the national database of Economic Assistance
- Establishment of the state database for Disabled Persons
- Development of an integrated system for human resources, finances and inventory

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to reduce inequality within and among countries? (SDG 10)**

- Implementation of the international standards regarding the e-accessibility WACG /Web 2.0 in the official websites of the line ministries (for disabled persons)

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable? (SDG 11)**

- Replication of the successful multi-user existing systems (schools, City Hall, police, DAR, prosecution): CCTV monitoring of roads, crossroads, schools and other important objects
- Establishment of the Digital Archive in 24 local offices of the Immovable Property Registration
- Improvement of infrastructure for electronic services of the State Police

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to combat climate change and its impacts? (SDG 13)**

- Establishment of an online portal for access by the public and actors in legal draft-documents still ongoing for the
- protected areas Speedy Project IPA Adriatic CBC on the regional cooperation on the air data quality
- Application of the monitoring camera systems of the forestry areas, aiming at presentation of fires and evidencing of illegal woodcutting.

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to provide access to justice for all? (SDG 16)**

- Video Recording System of court sessions
- Equipment of prisons with digital cameras
- Digitalization of the complete Court Archive, in order to preserve and utilize this national wealth of scientific and historic values
- Electronic Register of the free professions at the Ministry of Justice
- Integration of the prosecutorial case management system with the court case management system
- Further development of the web services, integration of the ALBSReP system with the notary register, other governmental registers and actors

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels? (SDG 16)**

- Data protection system for the database of the treasury system
- Expansion of Governmental Financial Computer System SIFQ to 150 budgetary institutions through the web portal and management of documents, foreign funds through the TSA as well as the cost of projects
- Support infrastructure purchasing for the new E-taxation system
- Reform of services in the Public Administration (digitalization)
- *Inter-operability systems connect all Governmental and local institutions*
- Integration of services related to LGUs in the e-Albania portal, starting with the loading of information on the local tax Obligations
- Connection and integration of the address system with the National Register of the Registry Office, according to the EU standards and definitions

➤ **How can connecting and enabling users help to strengthen the means of implementation (SDG 17)**

- Implementation of the connecting and enabling users means to be successful