



SATRC Workshop on Policy, Regulation and Services

28 – 30 April 2025, Dhaka, Bangladesh (Hybrid)

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Background

The 24th Meeting of SATRC (SATRC-24) held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 3 to 5 October 2024 approved the SATRC Action Plan Phase IX (SAP-IX) for the implementation period of 2024-2025. SAP-IX consists of four activities: Working Groups, Capacity Building, SATRC Web Portal and SATRC Web Dialogue. SATRC Workshops are held as part of activities under capacity building initiative with the objective of developing the capacity of human resources of the SATRC Members.

SATRC-24 approved the following six Work Items for the activities of SATRC Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services for SAP-IX:

- **Work Item 1:** Study of the regulatory challenges concerning new technologies and smart solutions for Fixed and Mobile Broadband
- **Work Item 2:** Enhancing the Utilization of Universal Service Obligation Fund for Digital Inclusion
- **Work Item 3:** Enhancing ICT E-Waste Management Regulations for Sustainable Development
- **Work Item 4:** Study on challenges and addressal of online scams and digital financial frauds taking into account the consumer information protection and rights
- **Work Item 5:** Analyzing the impact of convergence and emerging services on the tariff policies in SATRC countries
- **Work Item 6:** Smart Cities and Societies: Experience and Case Studies in SATRC countries in deploying IoT, Big Data and similar technologies

2. Objectives

The SATRC Workshop on Policy, Regulation and Services will be held as a part of the implementation of SAP-IX. The objective of this workshop is to share insights, experiences, best practices as well as engage in meaningful dialogue to identify the challenges, opportunities and possible way forward on the Work Items under the SATRC Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services.

Important topics including navigating regulatory challenges in the era of emerging technologies for fixed and mobile broadband, best practices and strategies for utilizing the Universal Service Obligation Fund for digital inclusion, advancing ICT e-waste management regulations for sustainable development, safeguarding digital consumers by addressing online scams and financial fraud challenges, shaping future tariff policies in light of network convergence and emerging ICT services in the SATRC region, and experiences and case studies in deploying IoT, Big Data, and similar technologies for smart cities and societies in SATRC countries will be discussed. It will also provide an opportunity for the SATRC

Members as well as industry to share their experiences. Several experts and speakers will be invited to the workshop to share their invaluable insights and experiences.

3. Expected Participation

The SATRC Workshop on PRS will be targeted at mid-level and senior-level officers of the SATRC Members who are involved in the work of related areas. It is expected that the experts of the SATRC Working Group on PRS for SAP-IX will also attend the workshop. Further, relevant experts from industry are also anticipated to participate at the workshop.

4. Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced understanding of the SATRC Members on the above-mentioned Work Items of SATRC Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services.
- The discussion is expected to provide guidelines and clear directions to SATRC Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services to develop tangible outcomes on the Work Items during the implementation of SAP-IX.

5. Date and Venue

The SATRC Workshop on Policy, Regulation and Services will be held from 28 to 30 April 2025 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. It will be organized by the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and hosted by Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC). Details are provided in the ‘Information for Participants’ document.

6. Tentative Programme

The tentative programme of the SATRC Workshop on Policy, Regulation and Services is provided in Annex A.

7. Contact

For any further information about the Workshop, please contact to:

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(DRAFT) TENTATIVE PROGRAMME**SATRC Workshop on Policy, Regulation and Services**

Time (UTC+6)	Monday, 28 April 2025
08:30 – 09:30	Registration
09:30 – 10:00	<p>Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Address by the Secretary General of Asia-Pacific Telecommunity • Opening Address by the Chair of SATRC Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services • Inaugural Address by the Chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) • Presentation of Token of Appreciation <p>(Group Photograph)</p>
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee/Tea Break
10:30 – 11:00	<p>Session 1 – Overview of the SATRC and the Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes of the 48th Session of the Management Committee of the APT relevant to SATRC • Overview of Policy, Regulation and Services and SATRC related Activities, and Details of the SATRC Workshop on Policy, Regulation and Services • Overview of SATRC Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services
11:15 – 12:30	<p>Session 2 – Navigating Regulatory Challenges in the Era of Emerging Technologies for Fixed and Mobile Broadband</p> <p>In an era of rapid technological advancements, the proliferation of emerging technologies such as 5G, AI, IoT is revolutionizing the fixed and mobile broadband landscape. These innovations are transforming connectivity, enabling new applications, and fostering economic growth. However, they also present complex regulatory challenges, including privacy, cybersecurity, affordability and equitable access amongst others.</p> <p>The objective of this session is to explore these challenges and strategies for policymakers, regulators, and industry stakeholders to foster innovative solutions while ensuring compliance with regulatory frameworks. Panelists will discuss the best practices, lessons learned, and collaborative approaches to navigate the evolving regulatory environment and unlock the full potential of emerging technologies for fixed and mobile broadband in the SATRC region.</p> <p>Discussion Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Understanding the impact of emerging technologies on broadband connectivity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Promoting affordability and equitable access for all – Fostering innovation and collaboration to develop and implement effective regulatory frameworks – Regulatory Challenges – Recommendations, best practices and lessons learned <p>Moderator: TBD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SATRC Members – Industry Representatives
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:15	<p>Session 3 – Universal Service Obligation Fund for Digital Inclusion: Best Practices, Recommendations, Strategies and Impact</p> <p>The Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) plays a crucial role in bridging the digital divide by supporting the development of telecommunication infrastructure and services in underserved and remote areas. In the SATRC region, the effective utilization of the USOF is pivotal for achieving digital inclusion and ensuring equitable access to communication technologies. However, challenges such as fund allocation, project implementation, and monitoring outcomes hinder their full potential. Understanding the current utilization patterns and exploring innovative strategies to enhance the fund's effectiveness are essential for driving socio-economic development and connectivity in the region.</p> <p>The session aims to analyze the current status and utilization of the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) across SATRC member states, highlighting successes, challenges, and gaps in implementation. It seeks to explore innovative strategies and best practices for optimizing the fund's impact in achieving digital inclusion, with a focus on transparent fund management, efficient project execution, and effective monitoring of outcomes. By fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing among SATRC members, the session will address common challenges, identify shared solutions, and develop actionable recommendations for regulators, policymakers, and stakeholders to maximize the USOF's contribution to the region's socio-economic development and digital connectivity goals.</p> <p>Discussion Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Current status and utilization of USOF in SATRC countries – Role of USOF in bridging the digital divide – Innovative strategies including technological advancements, for optimizing USOF impact – Challenges and gaps in USOF implementation – Recommendations, best practices and lessons learned <p>Moderator: TBD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SATRC Members

	– Industry Representatives
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee/Tea Break
15:45 – 17:00	<p>Session 4 – Advancing ICT E-Waste Management Regulations for Sustainable Development</p> <p>The rapid advancement of telecommunication/ICT technologies has led to an increasing volume of electronic waste (e-waste), creating significant environmental and public health challenges globally. In the SATRC region, where the adoption of telecommunication/ICT continues to grow, the need for effective e-waste management is critical. Regulatory frameworks play a pivotal role in addressing these challenges by ensuring proper e-waste handling, fostering resource recovery, and supporting the principles of a circular economy. Strengthening e-waste management regulations not only mitigates environmental risks but also contributes to sustainable development and economic resilience in the region.</p> <p>The session aims to examine the current state of e-waste management regulations within SATRC member countries and identify areas for enhancement. It seeks to explore opportunities for addressing policy/regulatory gaps, identifying strategies to sensitise about e-waste hazards, adopting best practices to improve regulatory effectiveness including promotion of responsible e-waste management practices.</p> <p>Discussion Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Current status of e-Waste regulations in SATRC countries – Promoting awareness on environmental hazards of e-Waste – Leveraging circular economy principles for sustainable e-Waste management – Gaps and challenges in implementing e-Waste management policy/regulations – Recommendations, best practices and lessons learned <p>Moderator: TBD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SATRC Members – Industry Representatives
Time (UTC+6)	Tuesday, 29 April 2025
9:00 – 10:15	<p>Session 5 – Safeguarding Digital Consumers: Addressing Online Scams and Financial Frauds Challenges</p> <p>Technological innovations in the telecommunication and ICT sectors have transformed consumer experiences, offering unprecedented convenience and commercial opportunities. However, the rapid evolution of these technologies has introduced emerging risks, particularly in the form of online scams and digital financial frauds. These threats undermine consumer trust in digital technologies, posing significant obstacles to digital transformation and economic growth. The increasing prevalence of such scams impacts not only individual consumers—causing financial loss and identity theft—but also the broader digital economy by fostering distrust and hesitancy to</p>

	<p>engage with digital services. Regulators and industry stakeholders face mounting challenges in protecting consumer rights and ensuring a safe online environment that supports sustainable digital transformation.</p> <p>This session aims to examine the growing threat of online scams and digital financial frauds and their impact on consumers and the digital economy. It seeks to identify challenges faced by regulators and industry stakeholders in addressing these issues and explore strategies to strengthen consumer protection frameworks. By sharing the best practices and innovative approaches, the session is expected to provide insights pertaining to regulatory measures that safeguard consumer rights, enhance trust in digital technologies, and foster an inclusive and secure digital ecosystem.</p> <p>Discussion Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Current Trends in Online Scams and Digital Financial Frauds – Impact of Digital Fraud on Consumers and Digital Economy – Challenges in Strengthening Consumer Protection Frameworks – Innovative Approaches to Enhance Trust in Digital Ecosystems – Best Practices for Regulatory Measures to Safeguard Consumers <p>Moderator: TBD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SATRC Members – Industry Representatives
10:15 – 10:45	Coffee/Tea Break
10:45 – 12:00	<p>Session 6 – Safeguarding Digital Consumers: Addressing Online Scams and Financial Frauds Challenges <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>Moderator: TBD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SATRC Members – Industry Representatives
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch Break
13:30 – 14:45	<p>Session 7 – Shaping Future Tariff Policies: Analyzing the Impact of Convergence and Emerging telecommunication/ICT Services in SATRC region.</p> <p>The transition from traditional circuit-based networks to IP-based networks has significantly transformed the telecommunication/ICT landscape in SATRC countries over the past decade. This shift has not only revolutionized network topology and service delivery but also introduced new challenges in price regulation and tariff-setting methodologies. Regulators are now tasked with addressing the complexities of convergence in networks and services while navigating conflicting factors such as declining Average Revenue Per User (ARPU), the need for increased investment, ensuring fair competition, managing spectrum auctions, and aligning with evolving tax</p>

	<p>policies. Understanding and adapting to these changes is critical to fostering sustainable growth and innovation in the telecommunication/ICT sector.</p> <p>This session aims to analyse the evolution of tariff-setting methodologies in SATRC countries in response to the transition to IP-based networks. It will focus on the strategies employed by regulators to address network and service convergence, balance conflicting economic and policy factors, and promote fair and sustainable pricing mechanisms. By sharing insights and best practices, the session seeks further highlight on optimizing tariff policies in the context of evolving technologies and market dynamics.</p> <p>Discussion Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Impact of Network and Service Convergence on Tariff Policies – Balancing Declining ARPU with Need for Increased Investments – Strategies for Fair Competition in a Converged Market Environment – Aligning Tariff Policies with Modern Taxation and Market Dynamics <p>Moderator: TBD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SATRC Members – Industry Representatives
14:45 – 15:15	Coffee/Tea Break
15:15 – 16:30	<p>Session 8 – Smart Cities and Societies: Experience and Case Studies in SATRC countries in deploying IoT, Big Data and similar technologies</p> <p>The Internet of Things (IoT), along with Big Data and similar emerging technologies, has become a cornerstone for creating smart infrastructure in both urban and rural areas. These technologies are driving innovation in the development, delivery, and evaluation of services across various sectors, profoundly influencing every aspect of human life. For SATRC countries, the expansion of these technologies offers immense potential to foster smart and sustainable city ecosystems. However, unlocking this potential requires a collaborative approach to knowledge sharing and planning, leveraging experiences and good practices tailored to the region's unique needs and characteristics.</p> <p>This session aims to explore how emerging technologies can be effectively harnessed to promote smart and sustainable city ecosystems in SATRC countries. It seeks to facilitate the exchange of experiences, best practices, and innovative approaches among SATRC regulators and stakeholders.</p> <p>Discussion Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Role of emerging technologies such as IoT, Big Data, AI in Smart City Development – Challenges in Adopting Smart Infrastructure Across SATRC Countries – Fostering Collaboration to Leverage Regional Experiences and Knowledge – Best Practices for Building Smart and Sustainable City Ecosystems

	<p>Moderator: TBD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SATRC Members – Industry Representatives
Time (UTC+6)	Wednesday, 30 April 2025
9:00 – 10:15	<p>Session 9 – Net Neutrality in Developing Countries: Challenges, Opportunities and Policy Directions.</p> <p>Net neutrality is a fundamental principle of the internet that ensures all users have equal access to content and services, without discrimination or favoritism by internet service providers (ISPs). In developing countries, the absence or weak enforcement of net neutrality regulations can lead to practices like zero-rating and preferential treatment, which risk creating unequal access and widening the digital divide.</p> <p>This session will address the status of net neutrality in developing countries, focusing on its implications for fair competition, digital inclusion, and economic development. It will examine the challenges posed by infrastructure limitations, market monopolies, and limited digital awareness, while identifying opportunities for growth through inclusive policies. The role of governments, regulators, and ISPs in establishing a level playing field for all users and service providers will also be explored. Through a collaborative discussion, the session aims to develop practical policy recommendations to uphold net neutrality and ensure that it contributes to sustainable and equitable development in these regions.</p> <p>Discussion Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Current status and implementation of net neutrality in developing countries – Impact of net neutrality on digital inclusion and economic growth – Challenges in enforcing net neutrality, including infrastructure and regulatory gaps – The role of stakeholders in ensuring an open and fair internet – Policy recommendations and lessons learned from global experiences <p>Moderator: TBD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SATRC Members – Industry Representatives
10:15 – 10:45	Coffee/Tea Break
10:45 – 12:00	<p>Session 10 – Digital Transformation in SATRC Countries</p> <p>Digital transformation is reshaping economies, societies, and governance worldwide, offering immense opportunities for growth and innovation. For the South Asian Telecommunications Regulatory Council (SATRC) countries, this transition holds the potential to address socio-economic challenges, enhance regional connectivity, and</p>

	<p>improve citizen services. However, the path to a fully digitized ecosystem is fraught with challenges such as uneven infrastructure development, regulatory hurdles, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, and digital skill gaps. Addressing these issues requires a multi-pronged strategy that involves investing in robust ICT infrastructure, fostering public-private partnerships, and adopting a unified regional approach. By leveraging emerging technologies like AI, IoT, and 5G, SATRC can accelerate digital transformation and ensure inclusivity in their digital economies.</p> <p>The session will focus on understanding the unique challenges faced by SATRC countries, sharing best practices, and identifying areas for policy and technological intervention to foster a digitally empowered South Asia.</p> <p>Discussion topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Primary challenges faced by SATRC countries in building the infrastructure needed for digital transformation. – Fostering partnerships and driving innovation to accelerate digital transformation. – Roles of emerging technologies like AI and 5G play in addressing socio-economic disparities in the region. – How can public-private partnerships be leveraged to enhance digital skills and drive technology adoption? – Strategies that SATRC countries could adopt to ensure cybersecurity and data privacy while promoting digital inclusivity. <p>Moderator: TBD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SATRC Members – Industry Representatives
12:00 – 12:30	<p>Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of the Workshop by the Chair of SATRC WG PRS • Closing
12:30 – 14:00	<p>Lunch Break</p>
14:00	<p>Local Site Visit (TBD)</p>