



THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC TELECOMMUNITY FOR 2024-2026

INTRODUCTION

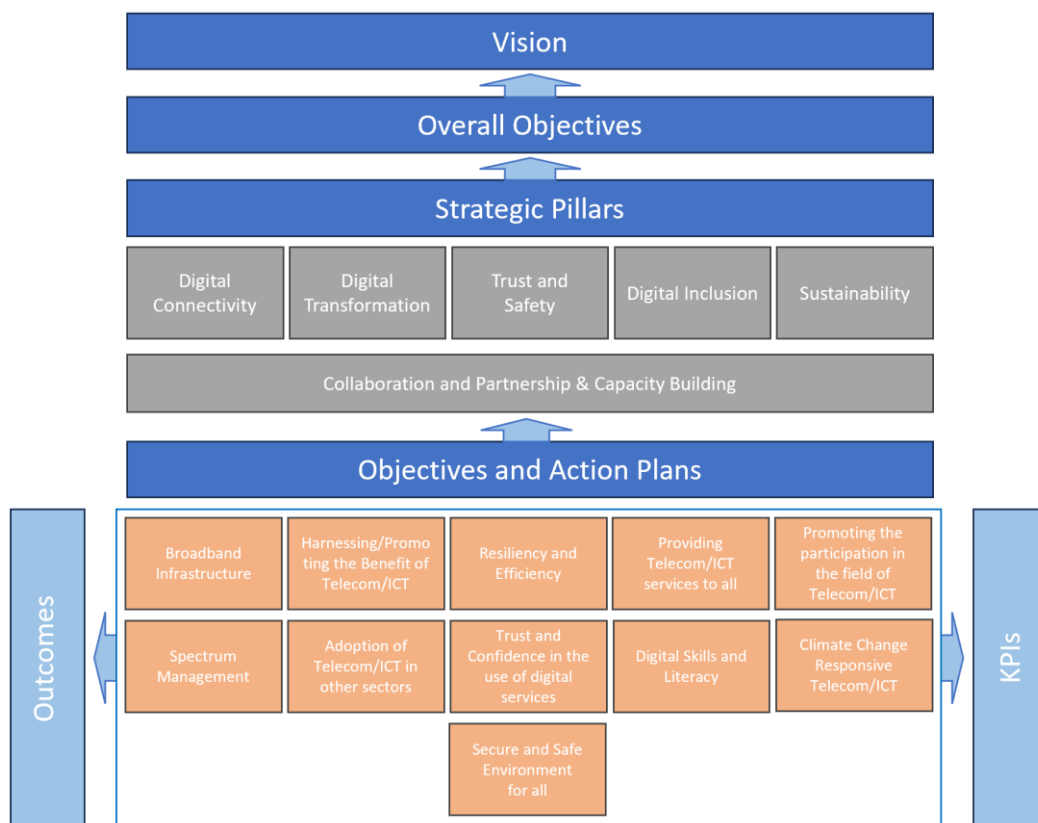
The Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) has played a significant role in the development of telecommunication/Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the region for more than four decades.

The Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting in Singapore on 25-26 June 2019 acknowledged the need for further progress in telecommunication/ICT development to support sustainable growth and capitalise on the digital economy's benefits. The Singapore Statement on "Co-creating a connected digital future in the Asia-Pacific" (the Singapore Statement) outlined five Strategic Goals: Digital Transformation, Digital Innovation and Creativity, Digital Community, Digital Trust, and Digital Capacity Building and Partnership. This statement has served as the foundation for the Strategic Plans of the APT to guide the Asia-Pacific region towards a co-created and connected digital future.

From 2021 to 2023, the APT focused on the implementation of its Strategic Plan, aligning with its Constitution and the Singapore Statement. Working with its members, the APT has been committed to the development of digital infrastructure, embracing new and emerging telecommunication/ICT, enhancing security and resilience, promoting inclusiveness, and strengthening strategic partnerships, capacity building as well as coordinating regional views.

The Strategic Plan of the APT for 2024-2026 adopted at the 16th Session of the General Assembly outlines the vision, overall objectives and action plans to achieve the identified priorities of its members. It also establishes mechanisms to fulfil the plan's objectives through its expected outcomes and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor its progress.

The global crisis sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted the increasing role of telecommunication/ICT for social and economic development. Recognising this important significance of telecommunication/ICT, the APT is committed to maintaining collaboration with its members and other stakeholders to effectively leverage the benefits of telecommunication/ICT for all in the Asia-Pacific region.



(Figure 1) The Overview of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2024-2026

VISION

The APT should continue to foster the development of telecommunication/ICT throughout the region to support the digital transformation of the economy and society, and a connected, inclusive, safe and sustainable telecommunication/ICT environment for all. The APT should undertake this vision with a particular focus on assisting least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS).

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The overarching goal of the APT for 2024-2026 is to accelerate the development of telecommunication/ICT for fostering growth of economy and society in the Asia-Pacific region by enhancing digital connectivity, digital transformation, trust and safety, digital inclusion and sustainability.

To realise this objective, the APT will focus its work within the following Strategic Pillars, which reflect the priority areas established in the Singapore Statement:

- a. **Digital Connectivity:** Enhancing access and efficiency of telecommunication/ICT infrastructure, including digital broadband infrastructure.
- b. **Digital Transformation:** Enabling conducive environment and harnessing the benefit of telecommunication/ICT.
- c. **Trust and Safety:** Ensuring secure cyberspace, security and resilience through telecommunication/ICT.
- d. **Digital Inclusion:** Removing barriers to promote digital inclusiveness.

- e. **Sustainability:** Broadening participation in the telecommunication/ICT sector and using ICTs to adapt to climate change and mitigate its impact.

Digital Connectivity, Digital Transformation, Trust and Safety, Digital Inclusion and Sustainability are the five Strategic Pillars for the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2024-2026, while the Strategic Plan recognises the importance of cross-cutting issues, such as collaboration and partnerships as well as capacity building.

The Strategic Pillars provide focus and clarity for the APT, its Action Plans and Assessment of the Implementation set out in this Strategic Plan. Each Strategic Pillar will assist to plan relevant work, guide their activities and monitor progress.

| COMPONENTS OF STRATEGIC PLAN | DEFINITION |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Vision | The overarching goal the APT is working towards |
| Overall Objectives | Objectives to realise the Vision |
| Strategic Pillars | Priority areas the APT will focus on to realise its Vision and Objectives |
| Objectives | The results the APT seeks to deliver under its Strategic Pillars |
| Action Plan | Activities to be undertaken by the APT to achieve its objectives |
| Expected outcomes | Key deliverables under each objective |
| Implementation / KPI | Specific, quantifiable/measurable, characteristic to monitor progress towards meeting the set objectives |

STRATEGIC PILLARS AND ACTION PLANS

a. DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY: Enhancing access and efficiency of telecommunication/ICT infrastructure, including broadband infrastructure

The APT will assist members to enhance universal and meaningful connectivity (including broadband connectivity) by improving accessibility, availability, affordability, and spectrum management, especially in unserved and underserved areas¹, to support sustainable growth in the region

Objective a.1: To increase accessibility, availability and affordability in providing broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved areas¹, the APT will work with members to:

a.1.1 Support to develop or update the national broadband plans that are equitable, accessible and affordable with special emphasis on unserved and underserved populations and people of vulnerable groups²;

¹ Understood to refer to both unserved and underserved populations within APT Members and Associate Members and to LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS within the APT region.

² Understood to refer to people with specific needs, including children, women, Indigenous people, local communities, refugees, older persons and persons with disabilities. It also refers to people residing in the local or low-return of investment areas or any local areas without service provider or without inclusive or sufficient services to satisfy the needs of the local people.

a.1.2 Encourage members to develop fair, predictable and transparent policy and regulatory environments that promote sustainable investment, productivity, competition, consumer safeguards and quality of service (QoS) / experience (QoE);

a.1.3 Facilitate to develop and adopt advanced and high-quality broadband connectivity through mobile and fixed networks, such as but not limited to fibre optics, international submarine and terrestrial cables, satellites, and other technologies taking into account the aspect of network reliability, security, resiliency and sustainability;

a.1.4 Facilitate partnerships between stakeholders, including the public sector, private sector, academia and other stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental organisations to increase investment in network infrastructure and sustainable last-mile connectivity solutions to provide reliable, high-quality broadband services, especially for low-income households and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs);

a.1.5 Facilitate the discussion and share best practices, legislation, policies, regulations and guidelines to increase accessible, available and affordable broadband connectivity in the region, especially for developing countries, in particular for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS;

a.1.6 Encourage building partnerships and fostering collaboration amongst members, the private sector, and technical communities to increase the technical capacity and deployments of Content Delivery Networks (CDNs) and Internet Exchange Points (IXPs); and,

a.1.7 Build awareness and capacity of members to promote Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6) migration in the Asia-Pacific region.

Objective a.2: To create a conducive policy and regulatory environment for the use of spectrum, the APT will work with members to:

a.2.1 Assist to develop spectrum roadmap and action plans for the development of spectrum management infrastructure, procedures and tools to assist the coordinated development of spectrum;

a.2.2 Assist to develop fair, predictable and transparent policy and regulatory environments in accessing spectrum resources that enable the use of mobile, fixed wireless and satellite technologies to enhance connectivity, especially in unserved and underserved areas¹;

a.2.3 Assist to harmonise spectrum bands for the adoption of IMT and other wireless technologies while helping to respond to evolving market conditions and technological advancement;

a.2.4 Provide support in assessing the spectrum management practices of Members and Associate Members including spectrum sharing, refarming, licensing, pricing, valuation, monitoring, protection and innovative techniques in spectrum management; and,

a.2.5 Encourage and promote collaboration and cross-border coordination among Members and Associate Members for improving spectrum management practices, including regional and sub-regional harmonisation and efficient utilisation of spectrum, and the applications of innovative techniques and tools.

Expected outcomes:

- ✓ *a1* – Increased penetration of broadband with improved quality of service/experience in the region
- ✓ *a2* – Improved spectrum management practices, including timely availability of spectrum according to market demand

b. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: Enabling conducive environment and harnessing the benefit of telecommunication/ICT

The APT will assist its members with digital transformation by harnessing the benefit of telecommunication/ICT and ICT-centric innovation

Objective *b.1*: To harness and promote the benefits of telecommunication/ICT, a key enabler of digital transformation, the APT will work with members to:

b.1.1 Assist to develop enabling and conducive policy and regulatory environments that mitigate risk, and encourage and leverage innovation and investment in telecommunication/ICT, services, applications and platforms, including new and emerging ones;

b.1.2 Support the adoption of international telecommunication/ICT standards by providing relevant guidelines, implementation specifications, compatibility and interoperability reports, use cases and best practices;

b.1.3 Encourage members to develop new and emerging services, applications, and platforms in telecommunication/ICT that would support the digital transformation of the economy and society;

b.1.4 Encourage building partnerships and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, including the public sector, private sector, academia and other stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental organisations in order to unlock the full potential of ICT-centric research and innovation;

b.1.5 Support members' initiatives to bridge standards and the innovation gap between LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS, developing countries and developed countries in the region; and,

b.1.6 Facilitate to share the knowledge of and trends in relation to the effective use of new and emerging telecommunication/ICT, including services, applications and platforms as well as improving practices in managing public data.

Objective *b.2*: To facilitate the adoption of telecommunication/ICT in other sectors, the APT will work with members to:

b.2.1 Facilitate assistance in the development and adoption of innovative telecommunication/ICT services and applications by conducting technical assistance and developing policy and regulatory guidelines, recommendations, and best practices;

b.2.2 Facilitate open consultation for policy makers and regulators as well as private sectors in both telecommunication/ICT and other related sectors to address common issues and challenges; and,

b.2.3 Encourage and engage on collaboration with key stakeholders, including various public sector, private sector, international organisations, academia, and other stakeholders including governmental and non-government organisations to promote the development and deployment of telecommunication/ICT-centric products and services to foster sustainable development.

Expected outcomes:

- ✓ *b1* - Policy and regulatory environments that support innovation ecosystem which enables digital transformation
- ✓ *b2* - Advancement in adoption of telecommunication/ICT-enabled services in other sectors

c. TRUST AND SAFETY: Ensuring secure cyberspace, security and resilience through telecommunication/ICT

Recognising the vulnerability of citizens and members to cyberbullying, malicious cyber activities and natural disasters, the APT will assist them to develop and maintain secure, trusted and resilient telecommunication/ICT network services as well as to address challenges related to disaster preparedness, risk reduction and mitigation

Objective c.1: To improve resiliency and efficiency in providing broadband connectivity, the APT will work with members to:

c.1.1 Support the development and promotion of national and regional telecommunication/ICT policies and strategies for sustainable, reliable and resilient telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and services to ensure their availability and to support all phases of disaster management, including prevention, adaptation, mitigation, response and recovery;

c.1.2 Facilitate the adoption of ICT-based solutions for enhancing disaster readiness, mitigating risk and improving crisis management including business and public service continuity and recovery time objective;

c.1.3 Strengthen cooperation and collaboration between government and non-government entities in disaster management through information sharing and analysis, best practices and ICT-based solutions and services; and,

c.1.4 Encourage the adoption of innovative technologies to improve network performance and increase efficiency, including infrastructure sharing to reduce costs and increase efficiency.

Objective c.2: To strengthen trust and confidence in the use of digital services for wider adoption and continued development of new telecommunication/ICT, as well as ensuring the reliability and security of online platforms and applications, the APT will work with members to:

c.2.1 Promote and assist with the development of relevant national legislation, frameworks, strategies or action plans, including workforce development, for ensuring trust and confidence in the use of digital services including policies and regulations on data privacy and regulatory environments, where required, to facilitate the free and secure flow of information in the region;

c.2.2 Support the strengthening of the human and institutional capacity especially for digital skills and promoting cyber hygiene to prevent and respond to the threats and incidents in cyberspace or to critical information infrastructures;

c.2.3 Encourage the development of policies, standards or regulations to ensure the availability and security of telecommunication/ICT systems, networks, and data that improves capacity to undertake incident response; and that minimises the impact of disruptions and enables the restoring of normal operations as quickly as possible;

c.2.4 Encourage the collaboration between the public sector, private sector, academia, and other stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental organisations to address cybersecurity challenges and build trust and confidence in the use of digital services; and,

c.2.5 Facilitate to strengthening cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders through, enhancing awareness on cyber resilience and cybersecurity, strengthening capacity building, and sharing of information, best practices, legislative frameworks, national initiatives and policies, and experiences.

Objective c.3: To ensure secure and safe environment for all through telecommunication/ICT, the APT will work with members to:

c.3.1 Support the development of policies, regulations, and strategies to promote the online safety of all, to address issues such as cyberbullying; exposure to inappropriate, misleading, or illegal content, and online fraud, as well as promoting physical activities for physical and mental health and wellbeing; and,

c.3.2 Raise collective awareness and encourage educational programmes that promote online safety skills and media literacy for all.

Expected outcomes:

- ✓ c1 – Increased preparedness for all phases of disaster management
- ✓ c2 - Enhanced trust, security, and confidence in the use of telecommunication/ICT services
- ✓ c3 – Secure and safe environment for all

d. DIGITAL INCLUSION: Removing barriers to promote digital inclusiveness

The APT will assist its members to provide inclusive telecommunication/ICT services to all, including vulnerable groups², by removing barriers and providing digital skills and literacy programmes

Objective d.1: To provide telecommunication/ICT services to all, the APT will work with members to:

d.1.1 Assist to develop and implement national digital inclusion policies, strategies, action plans and initiatives to make telecommunication/ICT and its services available, accessible, affordable and relevant for all, including people of vulnerable groups²;

d.1.2 Promote equitable, affordable, and safe access to use digital technologies, devices and services and provide associated opportunities for all;

d.1.3 Promote the development of national digital government policies, strategies, practices and activities, in collaboration with all relevant sectors, in order to greatly enhance the accessibility and delivery of e-services to all;

d.1.4 Encourage environments that enable ICT-centric content and applications in local and ethnic languages and contexts to facilitate active participation in the digital economy and society by all, including diverse user groups;

d.1.5 Encourage to leverage partnerships between the public sector, private sector, academia and other stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental organisations to promote digital inclusion and bridge the digital divide;

d.1.6 Facilitate promoting inclusive digital services and practices for designing and delivering digital services and content that are accessible and relevant for all including diverse user groups;

d.1.7 Build awareness and capacity of Members to promote local language for Domain Names in the Asia-Pacific region; and,

d.1.8 Collect and coordinate regional views and exert collective efforts in agenda setting and advocating at the global level.

Objective *d.2*: To remove barriers and enhance digital skills and literacy among all in the region, the APT will work with members to:

d.2.1 Facilitate identifying challenging stages and share best practices to overcome barrier to promote digital skills and literacy for all;

d.2.2 Assist with providing targeted capacity building programmes to build digital skills and competencies for all, especially the underprivileged and marginalised groups;

d.2.3 Encourage educational institutions to integrate digital skills and literacy programmes into the curriculum to increase the awareness and necessary skills for all;

d.2.4 Support the development of digital literacy programmes, digital competency frameworks and resources, such as online tutorials and training modules, to help individuals and businesses acquire new skills and knowledge; and,

d.2.5 Encourage to leverage partnerships between the public sector, private sector and other stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental organisations to promote digital opportunities, understand the gaps and to provide hands-on training and mentorship to help to gain practical experience and apply their digital skills.

Expected outcomes:

- ✓ *d1* - Established national digital inclusion policies, strategies, action plans and initiatives
- ✓ *d2* - Enhanced digital skill and literacy of all

e. SUSTAINABILITY: Broadening participation in the telecommunication/ICT sector, and using ICTs to adapt to climate change and mitigate its impact

The APT will assist members to promote careers and participation in the telecommunication/ICT sector through policies and programmes, and encourage telecommunication/ICT solutions to address and mitigate climate change-related issues

Objective e.1: To promote participation in the field of telecommunication/ICT and sustain careers in telecommunication/ICT, the APT will work with members to:

e.1.1 Promote policies and initiatives to bolster and encourage investment in telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation, entrepreneurship and MSMEs by supporting start-ups and entrepreneurs, and facilitating access to public platforms and public data, in particular for MSMEs and start-ups;

e.1.2 Promote policies and initiatives to engage youth and people of vulnerable groups² in the field of telecommunication/ICT and support the development of ICT solutions and innovations; and,

e.1.3 Support the development of policies and programmes that empower young people to see telecommunication/ICT professions as viable career paths.

Objective e.2: To facilitate the adoption of climate change responsive telecommunication/ICT solutions, the APT will work with members to:

e.2.1 Encourage green technology solutions, renewable energy, energy-efficient devices and technologies for the development of telecommunication/ICT infrastructure that reduces energy consumption and improves efficiency;

e.2.2 Promote and assist in the development of e-waste management policies, regulations, strategies and/or action plans to enable a shift towards a sustainable circular economy;

e.2.3 Raise collective awareness of the global crisis posed by climate change and facilitate to share relevant policy measures including initiatives related to green ICT and the circular economy, to effectively reduce and mitigate its impact across all sectors to achieve sustainable economic growth in the region; and,

e.2.4 Encourage partnerships and collaboration between the public sector, private sector and other stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental organisations to share expertise on initiatives to address climate change through ICTs, including using ICTs to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions.

Expected outcomes:

- ✓ *e1* - Higher levels of participation and career paths in the telecommunication/ICT sector
- ✓ *e2* - Policy and regulatory environments that support telecommunication/ICT solutions to climate change issues

IMPLEMENTATION

Key Performance Indicators

The expected outcomes above demonstrate how the APT will monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2024-2026. The following additional KPIs will be monitored and reported to sessions of the General Assembly and the Management Committee of the APT:

- (KPI-1 on Digital Connectivity) Telecommunication/ICT Statistics on the broadband connectivity and Telecommunication/ICT development in the region (including broadband penetration, QoS/QoE)
- (KPI-2 on Digital Transformation) The number of technical reports, recommendations, regional views and proposals and other publications developed by APT Work Programmes
- (KPI-3 on Trust and Safety) The number of instances where assistance to APT Members is provided in the development of telecommunication/ICT policies, frameworks, action plans, regulations, and strategies that promote security and resilience
- (KPI-4 on Digital Inclusion) The number of APT Capacity Building Programmes (including training courses and trainees, partnership for reaching out programmes for digital skills and literacy)
- (KPI-5 on Sustainability) Statistics on youth in ICT such as girls/women education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in the region

Reporting System

- The implementation status of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2024-2026 will be reported to each session of the Management Committee for its review and guidance;
- The implementation status report will be comprised of actions undertaken by APT Work Programmes and their outcomes in comparison to each action plan stated in the Strategic Plan. It will also include achievements against the KPIs outlined above; and
- The final report on the implementation of the Plan will be submitted to the next session of the General Assembly.

STATEMENT OF IMPACTS

The Strategic Plan of the APT for 2024-2026 outlines a clear path and roadmap for achieving the objectives of the five Strategic Pillars and unlocking the potential of the digital future in the Asia-Pacific region. Developed by the APT members through the Correspondence Group for the Strategic Plan, this Strategic Plan addresses regional priorities and emerging needs, and encourages cooperation in innovative and emerging telecommunication/ICT.

With KPIs and a reporting system, this Strategic Plan ensures accountability, transparency and continuous improvement. It aligns with the Strategic Pillars and objectives, supporting the goals expressed in the Singapore Statement and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030. This three-year plan encompasses both immediate and long-term impact, empowering APT members to overcome challenges and seize opportunities for growth.