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

Work programme and project activities of APCICT*

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I. Introduction

1. The mission of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (UN-APCICT/ESCAP) is to strengthen the efforts of the member countries of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to use information and communication technology (ICT) in their socio-economic development through human and institutional capacity building. Since its establishment in June, 2006 the Centre has been delivering upon its mission through various inter-related pillars of its work, namely training, research

* Issue without formal editing

and knowledge sharing, advisory services, and promoting multilateral cooperation.

2. The sixth session of the APCICT Governing Council was held on 29 October, 2011 and attended by 12 representatives from all 9 member countries. The session was organized immediately after the Second Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on ICT Human Capacity Development (24-28 Oct, 2011), a key quinquennial event of APCICT attended by participants from 41 countries. This enabled the Council representatives to obtain first hand experience of APCICT's programmes and provided them an opportunity to interact with and gather feedback from participants from member States.

3. At the sixth session, the Governing Council commended the work of APCICT and expressed appreciation for the efforts and passion demonstrated by the Centre to carry out its mission. The Council representatives highlighted instances of utilization of APCICT's training content for capacity building of government officials, and referred to APCICT's role in assisting member States with policy formulation in the area of ICT human capacity building. The Council also reviewed and endorsed APCICT's work plan for 2012 which was based on an integrated approach across the various pillars of its work. The endorsed work plan included:

- (a) Expanding APCICT's flagship ICT for development (ICTD) capacity-building programme called the 'Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders' (Academy);
- (b) Strengthening the pool of Academy programme resource persons;
- (c) Customizing, translating and localizing the Academy training content and other APCICT capacity development resources to reach a wider audience;
- (d) Further expanding APCICT activities for new beneficiary groups such as youth, academic institutions and civil society organizations;
- (e) Implementing customized monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to meet the unique needs of different groups or "tiers" of Academy partners;
- (f) Enhancing research efforts as well as knowledge sharing;
- (g) Strengthening advisory services for ICT human capacity development in member States and to institutionalize APCICT's ICTD training programmes.
- (h) Increasing the visibility of the capacity-building activities of APCICT and its partners through enhanced outreach mechanisms to facilitate communication between APCICT and the partners and share capacity-building outcomes.

II. Substantive work programme/project activities

4. Since the sixth Governing Council session, APCICT has made notable progress towards delivering upon its programme of work and in addressing the work plan for 2012 as endorsed by the Council. The progress achieved against each component of the work plan is enumerated below.

A. Work Plan Component 1: Expanding the APCICT flagship ICTD capacity-building programme called the ‘Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders’

5. Capacity building of policymakers is especially critical in enabling countries to fully utilize ICTs for socio-economic development and bridge the digital divide. APCICT’s flagship programme for capacity building of policymakers is the ‘Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders’ (Academy)¹. It includes a comprehensive, 10-module ICTD curriculum and a wide network of strategic partners that are working with APCICT to roll out the Academy at the national level. An online, distance learning version of the curriculum called the ‘APCICT Virtual Academy’² is also available.

6. *Overview of progress:* Overall, since the last session of the Governing Council, a total of 34 Academy-related workshops or training sessions/events have been organized by APCICT and its partners. Together with the course enrolments in the APCICT Virtual Academy, 1,678 participants were reached. In total, since the inception of the Academy programme in 2008, 138 workshops/training sessions/events have been organized by APCICT and its partners and more than 11,000 participants reached through face-to-face training and online course enrolments. APCICT also launched ‘Academy 2.0’, the updated version of modules 1-8 reflecting the latest trends and developments in the field of ICTD.

7. *Programme reach:* During the reporting period, the programme was launched in Maldives in partnership with the Maldives National University, taking the number of countries in the region where the programme has been introduced to 26, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao P.D.R, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Niue, Nauru, Palau, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam. In addition, a briefing and tutoring session on the Academy modules was conducted in Azerbaijan in partnership with the Civil Service Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in preparation for the launch of the programme in the country.

8. *Formalizing partnerships:* APCICT has so far signed 18 Partnership Arrangements for implementation of the Academy programme with partners in Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, the Central Asian sub-region, India, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Pacific sub-region, Philippines, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam. These Partnership Arrangements provide a broad framework to guide the roll out and implementation of the Academy by the partner, and help promote its long-term sustainability.

9. *Programme replication by partners in Asia-Pacific:* APCICT’s Academy partners at the national and sub-regional levels in the region have demonstrated strong national ownership of the programme. A large number of workshops and training sessions utilizing the Academy modules were conducted by partners on their own initiative during the reporting period. A significant amount of their own resource were mobilized and invested by the partners for this purpose, which signifies the local relevance of the programme.

¹ www.unapcict.org/academy

² <http://e-learning.unapcict.org>

10. *Programme institutionalization:* The Academy programme has been successfully institutionalized into long-term national capacity building frameworks in many countries, thus enabling its sustainability. Such institutionalized training on the Academy modules was carried forward during this period by (i) Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of Indonesia and University of Indonesia as part of Masters level as well as short term training programmes for Government Chief Information Officers (ii) Academy of Governance in Mongolia for Government officials and policymakers (iii) Career Executive Service Board and National Computer Institute in the Philippines for career civil servants as well as mid-level officials, and (iv) Tashkent University of Information Technologies in Uzbekistan for policymakers and academics at various levels. Another recent example of institutionalization of the Academy programme is the decision by the ICT Council under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan to adopt the Academy modules for training of civil servants in the country.

11. *Other cases of programme uptake:* Apart from the cases noted in the two previous paras, some other instances of uptake of the Academy programme by partners for training in the region are:

- (a) The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) conducted training on various Academy modules in Niue, Federated States of Micronesia and Nauru as part of a project supported by the European Union.
- (b) The Annenberg School of Communication, University of Pennsylvania, USA, organized a training session on ICT policy in Kyrgyzstan in April, 2012 which utilized Academy module 4 titled 'ICT trends for Government Leaders' and engaged APCICT's Russian-speaking resource person. Similar training sessions were conducted in Moldova (for countries in the Western part of the Commonwealth of Independent States or CIS), Georgia (for countries of the South Caucasus) and Belarus.
- (c) The Hanns Seidel Foundation in Kyrgyzstan supported training for 26 students of Masters in Public Administration in Kyrgyzstan based on the Academy modules in May 2012.
- (d) The Bangladesh Computer Council which is responsible for ICT training of government personnel in the country has incorporated content from Academy modules 2,3,4 and 5 into its training programmes for of policy makers, government officials and members of Parliament.
- (e) In Bhutan, the Royal Institute of Management had utilized the Academy modules for development of courses of programme management and project management imperatives for e-Governance.
- (f) The Ministry of Communication and Information Technology in Afghanistan has developed new training courses utilizing the Academy modules targeting policymakers and other stakeholders.
- (g) The National ICT Development Authority (NiDA) in Cambodia is in discussion with 2 universities in the country including the National University of Management for development of curricula utilizing the Academy modules.

- (h) In Mongolia, the National Academy of Governance plans to utilize the Academy modules for teaching bachelors degree students in the 2012-2013 academic year.

12. *Policy influence:* The Academy programme has positively influenced organizational policies and catalyzed community action in countries of the region. Following the Regional Training of Trainers (TOT) on Module 9 (ICT for Disaster Risk Management) and Module 10 (ICT, Climate Change and Green Growth) in February, 2011, the apex civil service training institution in India called the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration recognized the importance of energy savings and conducted an energy audit within the institution. Moreover, as an outcome of training on Modules 9 and 10 in Maldives in March, 2012, the training alumni established an association for a 'Clean and Safe Maldives Initiative'.

13. *Impact beyond the Asia-Pacific region:* Given its relevance in varied development contexts, there is increasing demand for the Academy programme beyond the region. It has already been introduced in Africa in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA). During the reporting period, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) secured in principle approval for funding from the United Nations Development Account for a project to localize the Academy modules and implement the programme in Western Asia. Some other instances are as follows:

- (a) The Ministry of ICT in Romania has expressed interest in utilizing the Academy modules for capacity building activities. Similar demand has also been received from other countries such as Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and Mauritius.
- (b) New York University in USA has utilized Academy Module 5 (Internet Governance) for a Masters programme.

14. *Content update:* In order to ensure that the Academy modules reflect state of the art content and continue to remain relevant to the needs of ESCAP member States, APCICT had undertaken a comprehensive update of the initial set of 8 Academy modules that were developed in 2008. A rigorous process was adopted for this purpose involving a needs assessment survey of 47 officials and experts from Academy partner organizations across the region, engagement of the original authors, and peer reviews for quality assurance. The updated set of modules was launched as 'Academy 2.0' in January 2012³.

15. *Content development:* In 2011, in response to strong demand from member States, APCICT had developed Academy modules 9 and 10 as the latest additions to the series of Academy modules. Module 10 underwent further re-structuring in collaboration with the Asia Disaster Preparedness Center in 2012 in order to enhance its content, highlight policy implications for the benefit of national policymakers and update relevant case studies. To expand the set of Academy modules, APCICT also initiated the development of another module on Social Media for Development (Module 11). This module aims to build capacities of key stakeholders in leveraging the potential of social media as a tool for promoting socio-economic development in areas such as civic engagement, health and environment etc. A draft annotated table of contents was developed and circulated for review

³ www.unapcict.org/academy/academy-modules/english

to a range of respondents including ICTD experts, Academy partners, government officials and alumni of APCICT's training programmes. Over 100 respondents provided their feedback which is being taken into account for developing the module content.

16. *APCICT Virtual Academy:* The APCICT Virtual Academy represents the online, distance learning version of the Academy programme and offers the Academy modules in the form of video lectures and synchronized Powerpoint presentation. It is part of APCICT's efforts to expand the reach of the Academy programme, diversify the channels for delivery of the training, and facilitate wider dissemination of the content. Through this platform, the Academy module training can be accessed via the internet anytime and anywhere. This platform also offers the localized versions of the first three Academy modules in Bahasa Indonesia and Russian languages. A DVD-ROM version is available for areas with limited or no internet connectivity.

17. *Expansion of the APCICT Virtual Academy:* The number of online course enrolments on the APCICT Virtual Academy continued to increase during the reporting period. In total, along with DVD-ROM distributions, the APCICT Virtual Academy has achieved close to 7,000 course enrolments till date, out of which approx. 500 course enrolments took place in 2012. Learners from 144 countries and territories around the world have accessed the platform so far. The country with the highest number of course enrolments is Indonesia where the platform is being utilized for training of Masters level students by the University of Indonesia. In order to promote the reach of the platform in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries, APCICT also formalized a partnership with the Seoul Cyber University which will utilize the APCICT Virtual Academy in the curricula of the newly established ASEAN Cyber University. Moreover the ASEAN University Network has expressed interest in using the APCICT Virtual Academy for training in the member universities of their network.

B. Work Plan Component 2: Strengthening the pool of Academy programme resource persons

18. APCICT has adopted a multi-pronged strategy to strengthen the pool of Academy resource persons which includes conducting TOT, encouraging the exchange of resource persons between partners, providing tools for constant learning and knowledge sharing such as the Academy Partners Resource Centre.

19. *Sub-regional TOT:* As part of its efforts to strengthen the pool of Academy resource persons, APCICT organized a sub-regional TOT on Academy modules 9 and 10 for Central Asian countries in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in June, 2012. The workshop was conducted in Russian and was attended by 16 participants from 7 countries comprising of trainers from national civil service training institutes and representatives from Ministries and agencies responsible for disaster risk management or environmental matters. The event helped to build capacities of local resource persons to conduct training in their respective countries on how ICT can be used to address disaster risk management and climate change. APCICT actively partnered with the ESCAP Sub-regional Office for North and Central Asia (SONCA) for organizing this event. As follow up, partners in Uzbekistan and Armenia have planned to organize national workshops utilizing these modules in their countries.

20. *National TOT:* The Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation (OSI-AF), APCICT's Academy partner in Tajikistan, conducted TOTs on Academy module 3 in Khujand, Khorog and Kurgan-Tybe cities in November, 2011. Approx. 50 trainers were reached through the training. The alumni of the Academy national TOT conducted in Tajikistan in 2011 served as resource persons for these events.

21. *Exchange of resource persons:* APCICT also continued to strengthen the pool of Academy resource persons in various other ways. It promoted exchange of resource persons across countries in order to enable exchange of knowledge and expertise. For instance, an expert from Sri Lanka served as one of the resource persons for the Central Asian sub-regional TOT on modules 9 and 10 in Kazakhstan in June, 2012 while a participant of APCICT's regional TOT on modules 9 and 10 from India served as the resource person for the workshop in Maldives in March, 2012. APCICT also engaged local resource persons during the sub-regional TOT in Kazakhstan for presenting some of the sessions as well as local case studies, thus providing them hands-on exposure to conducting Academy-related training.

22. *Knowledge sharing:* The engagement of experts from the region for development of new APCICT products such as the 'Knowledge Sharing Series' issues on ICTD institution building and cybersecurity helps in building their skills for serving as resource persons in future. The Academy Partners Resource Centre (APRC) further provides opportunities to the resource persons to access various knowledge products and references to support delivery of the training (more details of the Knowledge Sharing Series and the APRC are provided in later sections of this report).

23. *Linking resource persons with other relevant opportunities:* As another measure to enhance the capacities of Academy resource persons, APCICT has been connecting them with opportunities available with other development partners. For example, on APCICT's suggestion, APCICT's Russian-speaking Academy resource person for the CIS sub-region was engaged by the Annenberg School of Communication of the University of Pennsylvania for conducting an ICT policy workshop.

C. Work Plan Component 3: Customizing, translating and localizing the Academy training content and other APCICT capacity development resources to reach a wider audience

24. Making the Academy modules available in various languages is important for their fuller utilization in the Asia-Pacific region that has a diversity of contexts and languages. The modules are currently available in 9 languages including English, Bahasa Indonesia, Khmer, Mongolian, Myanmar (modules 1-3), Pashto, Russian, Tajik, and Vietnamese. Localization of the modules into these languages has been driven by APCICT's Academy partners with support from the Centre.

25. *Progress achieved in localization:* During the reporting period, the existing localized versions continued to be utilized by the partners for reaching a wider audience in their countries. APCICT also engaged national partners in additional countries to promote localization of the Academy modules in more languages, and made available its recommended localization guidelines to them. As a result, the Civil Service Commission in Azerbaijan initiated localization of modules 1 (The Linkage between ICT Applications and Meaningful Development) and 3 (e-Government

Applications) into Azeri. Further, the Bangladesh Computer Council has expressed interest for localization of the modules into Bangla, while the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) Asia is planning to localize the modules into Chinese.

26. *Content customization:* Apart from linguistic translation and localization, APCICT encourages its partners to customize the Academy modules to suit their needs including addition of local contexts, case studies and country-specific data, and to tailor or adapt the content to meet the needs of specific target groups and programmes. While the collection of local case studies continued, some examples of customization of the modules and their adaptation for local requirements included the adaptation and utilization of Academy module 3 for training by the Institute of Service and Entrepreneurship in Tajikistan, and the utilization of the Academy modules by the School of Computing at the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka to develop two courses for a postgraduate diploma programme in e-Government that will be offered by the Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayawardenapura.

27. *Localization of other APCICT resources:* In addition to the Academy modules, APCICT achieved significant progress in localization of other training and knowledge products such as its new Primer Series on ICT for Development as well as the Knowledge Sharing Series (please see later sections of this report for more details).

D. Work Plan Component 4: Further expanding APCICT activities for new beneficiary groups such as youth, academic institutions and civil society organizations

28. APCICT has recognized the need to expand the beneficiary group of its ICTD capacity building programmes to include students and youth who represent the leadership of tomorrow. To increase their understanding and awareness about the potential of ICT for promoting socio-economic development, APCICT has a programme called the 'Turning Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders' programme ('Youth Programme').

29. *Primer Series on ICTD for Youth:* Under the Youth Programme, APCICT has developed a learning resource called the 'Primer Series on ICTD for Youth' (Primer Series), which seeks to serve as a tool to help educators fill the gap in ICTD coverage in university programmes. The Primer Series is designed to be composed of multiple issues addressing a range of topics in ICTD. It is aimed at students from both technical and

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