



infoDev and ITU Launch new Module of Online ICT Regulation Toolkit Policy-makers and regulators get instant access to best enabling environment practices

Issued simultaneously by ITU and infoDev

Geneva, 1 June 2006 – infoDev, a multi-donor program focusing on information and communication technologies (ICT) for development, and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations specialized agency for telecommunications, today launched the second module of their collaborative online ICT Regulation Toolkit, the Legal and Institutional Framework.

“This is the single most helpful regulatory tool that I have seen”, said Dr. Salomão Manhiça Chairman, Instituto Nacional de Telecomunicações de Moçambique, Mozambique. “It has such a tremendous potential to assist all the staff at the INCM, as well as to help me too”, he added. Tracy Cohen, Councillor of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, agrees: “The ICT Regulation Toolkit is a critical resource for regulators, both in developed and developing countries. With its origins in the well known 2000 Telecommunications Regulation Handbook, its credibility and usefulness is already established. The revised toolkit builds on this reputation and is essential reading for all regulators needing to gain access to the leading thinking on effective regulation, especially in a converging environment.”

The ICT legal and institutional framework determines how rapidly markets grow in different countries and how many users have access to ICT. An enabling environment is key to reaching the goal of connecting all the world’s villages to ICT by 2015, as agreed by world leaders at the World Summit on the Information Society.

The Legal and Institutional Framework Module of the joint infoDev-ITU ICT Regulation Toolkit addresses all of these issues and more. This free online resource brings best practices to the fingertips of policy makers, regulators and stakeholders anywhere in the world. It includes in-depth analysis of the key issues, and real examples of how best practices have been put into action in over 50 countries in both the developed and developing world.

It contains a portfolio of over 500 references to laws, regulations, regulatory consultations, proceedings, decisions, licenses and case studies. It is the most comprehensive study of its kind, presenting a wealth of information in a manner that allows for systematic synthesis of regulatory concepts against a backdrop of tried and tested scenarios in developed, transitional and developing economies. To buttress against uncertain change, the module also looks at the future, identifying flexible legal and regulatory solutions to benefit economic growth and consumer welfare.

Developing countries are hungry for in-depth information on best regulatory practices, such as financial and structural independence, organizational structure, corporate governance, enforcement and dispute-resolution procedures, staffing, ethics and appraisal processes. They seek answers to questions such as, what responsibilities should regulators be granted in today’s converged ICT world? Who has the power to authorize market entry – the regulator or the ministry? What mechanisms can regulators adopt to provide consumer protection in a competitive environment? What qualifications do regulators require? How much should they be paid? What guidelines apply to public consultations with ICT stakeholders? What new regulatory frameworks have been implemented to address technological changes in today’s converged ICT sector? How can regulators resolve disputes quickly and efficiently to continue to attract investment in services and infrastructure?

Visit our Web site at www.infoDev.org

This latest module of the ICT Regulation Toolkit was developed by a team of experienced regulatory advisors from Telecommunications Management Group, Inc. (TMG), on the basis of an internationally competitive process. Extensive inputs on the module's content were received from seasoned regulators, the business community, and regulatory experts at infoDev, ITU and the academic world. It was presented to the wider community of regulators and policy makers at the 2005 ITU Global Symposium for Regulators. Their feedback was utilized to further enrich the module. Designed as a living resource, the module will continue to reflect changes as they impact the sector in the quest to achieve effective and efficient regulation worldwide.

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About the ICT Regulators Toolkit

The ICT Regulation Toolkit is the outcome of a collaborative partnership between ITU and InfoDev and is aimed at providing a repository of regulatory resources, especially in developing countries. Additional modules are scheduled to come online later this year. They will cover interconnection, price regulation and competition; new technologies and their impact on regulation; and radio spectrum management. More information about the ICT Regulation Toolkit is available at www.ictregulationtoolkit.org, as well as through links on the ITU and infoDev websites.

About infoDev

InfoDev is a multi-donor programme with close ties to the global operational capacity of the World Bank, and equally strong relationships with a number of key donors. It helps the donor community and developing countries address the opportunities and challenges of ICT for development. Since its creation in 1995, infoDev has been a pioneer in promoting the innovative use of ICT as a tool for poverty reduction and sustainable development. www.infodev.org

About ITU

ITU is the leading United Nations agency for information and communication technology issues, and the global focal point for governments and the private sector in developing networks and services. For more than 140 years, ITU has coordinated the shared global use of the radio spectrum, promoted international cooperation in assigning satellite orbits, worked to improve telecommunication infrastructure in the developing world, and established the worldwide standards that foster seamless interconnection of a vast range of communications systems. One of its key mandates is to foster telecommunication development in developing countries through policy advice, provision of technical assistance, mobilization of resources and initiatives to extend access and bridge the digital divide. www.itu.int