

ADVOCACY TARGET 3: Connecting homes to broadband – by 2015, 40% of households in developing countries should have Internet access.

Access to broadband or the Internet at home is one of the most inclusive ways of bringing people online. At home, all household members can have access – no matter whether they have jobs, go to school, are male or female, children, adults, elderly, or have a disability. Research has shown that children with Internet access at home perform better in school. Globally, 41% of all households will be connected to the Internet by end 2013; in the developing world, 28% of households have Internet access, compared with over three-quarters or 78% of all households in the developed world. Of the 1.1 billion households still not connected to the Internet, 90% are in the developing world.

At current growth rates, the 40% target will not be achieved by 2015, but with the rise of the mobile Internet, access may improve very quickly. Annex 4 presents national rankings. A number of NBPs specifically include a focus on household access as a key national priority – for example, Singapore revised the Code of Practice for Info-comm Facilities in Buildings ('COPIF') in May 2013, to require new residential homes to be pre-installed with optical fibre.

In terms of technologies by which these households are connected, a growing number of national surveys accommodate broadband connectivity via mobile, but a major target for many NBPs is percentage of households passed by fixed broadband technology. In terms of fixed broadband technology, Point Topic (2013)⁶ suggests market shares have remained remarkably stable over recent quarters, with Digital Subscriber Lines (DSL) accounting for nearly six out of ten fixed broadband subscriptions, while fibre optic FTTx and FTTH account for over 22% of the global market for fixed broadband. This implies that many countries and operators are still continuing to engage in upgrades to their existing copper-based networks, to maximize the returns on their investments. For fixed broadband penetration, the top ten countries are all located in Europe, except the

Republic of Korea, which ranks fifth for fixed broadband penetration per capita globally. The only non-European entrants into the top twenty rankings are Canada (12th), Hong Kong (China) (16th), and the United States (20th). Mobile broadband is today connecting many more homes. Five countries have a mobile broadband penetration in excess of 100 connections per capita - Singapore, Japan, Finland, Republic of Korea and Sweden. Thirty countries have mobile-broadband subscriptions in excess of a ratio one per two in habitants, compared to just thirteen last year. Our mobile broadband future discussed in Chapter 2 is being realized more quickly than anticipated.