

# 2022

## YEAR IN REVIEW

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**BROADBAND COMMISSION**  
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT





# ABOUT THE BROADBAND COMMISSION

The **Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development** is a high-level advocacy platform and public-private partnership fostering digital cooperation and developing actionable recommendations for achieving universal connectivity. Established in 2010 by ITU, UNESCO, H.E. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, and Mr. Carlos Slim Helú of Mexico, the Commission aims to boost the importance of broadband on the international policy agenda and expand broadband access and use to every country.

Today, the Commission is composed of around 50 members who represent a cross-cutting group of top CEO and industry leaders, senior policy-makers and government representatives, and experts from international agencies, academia and organizations concerned with development.

Learn more about us: [broadbandcommission.org/about-us](https://broadbandcommission.org/about-us)







## MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION

The Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development was founded on the idea that connectivity was fundamental to sustainable and inclusive global development.

Connectivity is now essential to daily life, impacting the way we work, communicate, and receive services like healthcare and education. The Broadband Commission continues its call to world leaders, heads of industry, and civil society, to put connectivity at the forefront of their efforts to ensure meaningful connectivity that is affordable, accessible, and tailored to the use of diverse global communities.

This year, the Commission has released consensus-driven publications, along with several inputs to global events and activities, with strong viewpoints and actionable recommendations for all stakeholders to empower communities with broadband for good.

As we close 2022, we look forward to another year of fruitful discussions, impactful reports, and cross-sectoral partnerships to position the Commission to achieve its 2025 Advocacy Targets in the next 2 years.

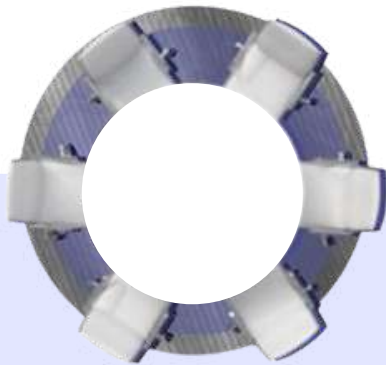
# ANNUAL BREAKDOWN OVERVIEW

# 200+

## Stakeholders engaged

This year, the Broadband Commission community engaged **50** Commissioners, including **7** new members, **150+** external experts of the Working Groups, and **15** strategic partners. In addition, we gained **600+** newsletter subscribers, **11,000+** combined followers on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook, and **26,000+** readers that have downloaded our reports this year.

[Get involved >](#)



# 18+

### Advocacy: Events

- 2** In-person meetings hosted by the Commission
  - A Spring meeting held in Kigali, Rwanda
  - A Fall meeting held in New York

#### The Commission also participated in

- 10** UN agency led events
- 6** Private sector conferences
- +** Commissioner participation in global strategic events

[Learn more >](#)



# 11

### Thought Leadership: Publications

- 1** State of Broadband Report
- 4** Working Group & Interim Reports
- 3** Open Statements to UN processes and events
- 1** SDG4 research compilation

[Learn more >](#)



# 7

### Working Groups: Completed & Active

- 3** Completed Working Groups on AI capacity building, smartphone access, and virtual health and care
- 2** Working Groups in progress on data for learning and connecting MSMEs
- 2** Action Taskforces on smartphone access in progress

[Learn more >](#)

# FUNDERS 2022

The work of the Broadband Commission would not be possible without the generous, voluntary contributions of our Commissioners.



**Dr. Hessa Al Jaber**  
Chairperson, Es'hailSat



**Mr. Carlos Slim Helú**  
Founder of the Carlos Slim Foundation and  
GRUPO CARSO, Co-Chair of the Commission



**Dr. Hyeonmo Ku**  
Chief Executive Officer, KT  
Corporation



**Mr. Pekka Lundmark**  
President and CEO, Nokia



**Mr. Ziyang Xu**  
Executive Director and CEO, ZTE  
Corporation



**Mr. Hans Vestberg**  
CEO, Verizon Communications Inc.



**Ms. Sun Yafang**  
Member of Core Elite Group, Huawei  
Technologies

# ADVOCACY EVENTS 2022

## Annual meetings

Broadband Commissioners convene at annual Spring and Fall Meetings to review actions needed and the next steps for reaching meaningful universal connectivity. Spring Meetings are hosted around the world at the generous invitations of Commissioners, while Fall Meetings are held in New York City on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

**This year, our Annual Meetings brought together over 100 guests, including Commissioners, Special Guests, and Focal Points in the broadband industry, governments, academia and United Nations agencies.**

[Learn more >](#)

## United Nations agency-led events

The Broadband Commission participated in and contributed to the following events:

- World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)
- World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC)
- ITU Generation Connect Youth Summit
- 77th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA)
- ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (ITU-PP)
- Transforming Education Summit (TES)
- United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)
- Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC5), First Phase
- International Governance Forum (IGF)
- Commission on Status on Women 67 (CSW), preparatory process

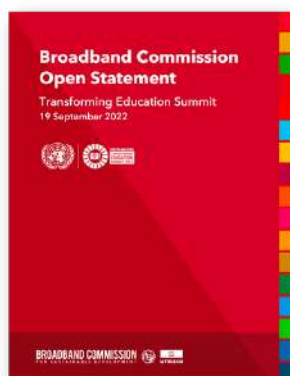
## Industry-led conferences and events

The Broadband Commission was also represented in the following conferences:

- WEF Annual Meeting in Davos
- GSMA's Mobile World Congress, Barcelona
- SAMENA Telecommunications Leaders' Summit
- WEF Edison Alliance Meetings
- Huawei's Global Mobile Broadband Forum
- GSMA's Mobile World Congress, Kigali

## Open Statements and Input documents

The Commission provided inputs and established calls to action to contribute to global conversations and action on broadband development.



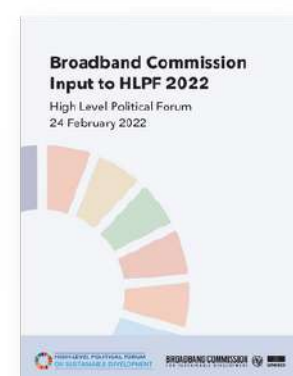
Transforming Education Summit (TES)

[Read the Statement >](#)



Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC5)

[Read the Statement >](#)



United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)

[Read the Statement >](#)



# BROADBAND COMMISSION SPRING MEETING

## 5 JUNE 2022, KIGALI, RWANDA

Special thanks to the Commission Co-Chair, H.E. President Paul Kagame, for hosting this meeting.



Special guests included:

- H.E. Ms. Aminata Zerbo Sabane, ICT Minister, Burkina Faso
- H.E. Mr Yankhoba Diatara, ICT Minister, Senegal
- H.E. Ms. Emma Inamutila THEOFELUS, Deputy Minister of ICT, Namibia
- Mr Deemah ALYahya, Secretary General, Digital Cooperation Organization
- Ms Sinead Bovell, Member, Generation Connect Visionaries Board
- Mr Sebastian Perez Gutierrez, Youth Envoy, Generation Connect



Additional thanks to Smart Africa and its Director General, Commissioner Mr. Lacina Koné for sponsoring the meeting's lunch reception.



# BROADBAND COMMISSION FALL MEETING

## 18 SEPTEMBER 2022, NY, UNITED STATES

Special thanks to UNICEF and its Executive Director, Commissioner Ms. Catherine M. Russell, for hosting this meeting.



Special guests included:

- Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill, UNSG Envoy on Technology
- Mr. Ibrahima Guimba-Saïdou - DG of the National Agency for the Information Society (ANSI), Niger
- Ms. Gitangali Rao, UNICEF Youth Advocate
- Mr. Zhao Chen, UNICEF Youth Advocate



Additional thanks the Permanent Mission of Monaco and Global Partnerships Forum Founder, Commissioner Mr. Amir Dossal, for hosting and supporting the coordination of the Working Group Meetings on 17 September 2022.

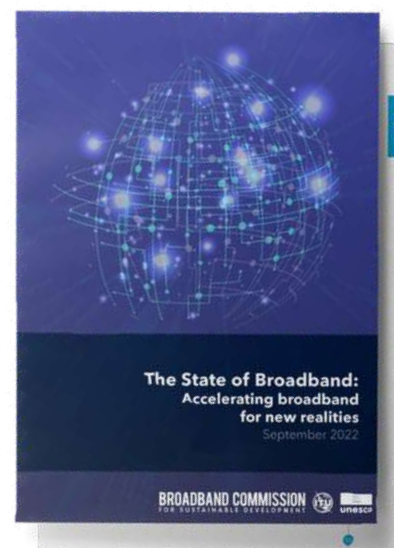




# STATE OF BROADBAND 2022

The State of Broadband annual report is a unique, global snapshot of broadband network access, use, and affordability. It is written through a consensus-driven framework that draws on the insights of the Commission's high-level, multistakeholder membership.

The 2022 Report, Accelerating Broadband for New Realities, examines how COVID-19 has spotlighted the need for a multilateral, collaborative regulatory regime to advance global digital transformation.



[Read the report >](#)

Inside the 2022 report you will find:

1

## The Broadband Landscape: The New Normal

*Overview of the latest trends in digital connectivity, including access, adoption and use.*

2

## Addressing the Post-Pandemic Missing Links

*Approaches for addressing digital supply and demand side, as highlighted by the pandemic.*

3

## Policy Recommendations

*Concrete steps and policy recommendations for enabling broadband adoption and accelerating digital inclusion.*

4

## Commissioner Insights

*Commissioners provide their unique perspectives on actions needed to reach universal connectivity*

## Key Policy Recommendations

The report identifies that for a smooth transition to a more connected post-pandemic world, two things need to occur:

- First is a conducive regulatory environment for broadband services that will attract the vast investment needed to support a more digital world.
- Second, are strategies and policies to enable broadband adoption and accelerate digital inclusion. The pandemic brought into sharp focus the digital divide with many unable to work from home or take part in remote education due to a lack of adequate skills, Internet access, appropriate devices and the means to pay for it.

### Additional recommendations:

- Increase affordability by improving policies, reducing sector taxes and subsidizing devices.
- Support remote learning models to complement traditional education systems.
- Leverage various technologies to provide the best services to all.
- Strengthen network capacity to improve connectivity everywhere.
- Protect personal data through data protection policies, authorities & laws.
- Reduce operational emissions in line with the IPCC's recs for minimizing temperature rise by 1.5°.
- Expand investment in broadband.
- Improve data collection to further understanding of global needs.

# 2025 ADVOCACY TARGETS PROGRESS UPDATE

The seven Advocacy Targets of the Broadband Commission reflect ambitious and aspirational goals and function as a policy and programmatic guide for national and international action in broadband development.

The Commission tracks progress on the Targets in its **annual State of Broadband Report**. Utilizing a variety of data sources, progress is estimated on these goals and multistakeholder policy recommendations are developed to suggest how to achieve them. The Commission's Working Groups also address themes related to these targets to provide more in-depth analysis and detailed recommendations for all stakeholders.



[Download the quick guide >](#)

**01**  
**MAKE BROADBAND POLICY UNIVERSAL**



**The number of economies with a broadband plan has slightly decreased over the past year from 165 to 155**, with plans having expired and not being renewed in some countries. Beyond having a broadband plan, what is in the plan is just as important. This includes concrete strategies for boosting broadband investment, particularly in the wake of COVID-19.

[Learn more >](#)

**02**  
**MAKE BROADBAND AFFORDABLE**



**After years of improvement, the affordability of broadband services worsened in 2021**, according to a joint ITU and A4AI report. This is largely due to a sharp drop in incomes (i.e. per capita income) as a result of COVID-19 rather than an increase in service charges, which continued to drop. Just 96 countries met the target for mobile broadband, down from 103 in 2020 while 64 countries met the target for fixed broadband, down two from 2020.

[Learn more >](#)

**03**  
**GET EVERYONE ONLINE**



**Internet penetration grew as a result of the pandemic**, up from 54% of the population in 2019 to 66% of the population in 2022, according to ITU data. The increase in 2020, saw use increase by 11%, the highest growth in a decade. In 2022, Internet use was 93% in high-income countries, 61% in LMICs but just 36% in the LDCs (ITU estimates). While Internet use is growing, some groups are being left behind such as the elderly and people with disabilities.

[Learn more >](#)



# 2025 ADVOCACY TARGETS PROGRESS UPDATE

04

PROMOTE  
DIGITAL SKILLS  
DEVELOPMENT



**Less than 40% of the population in 45% of countries reporting, carried out at least one of the activities considered a basic ICT skill**, (e.g. sending an email with an attachment), according to ITU. Only 23% of the countries reported more than 60% of the population report having at least one basic skill. Digital literacy is one of the main causes of digital exclusion and is often among the top answers when people are surveyed about why they do not use the Internet.

[Learn more >](#)

05

INCREASE  
USE OF  
E-FINANCE



**Digital financial services present a tremendous opportunity to swiftly increase the number of people using the Internet** and extend access to the social and economic benefits of digital resources. According to World Bank's FINDEX survey, 64% of people aged 15 years and older made and/or received digital payments in 2021. This figure exceeds the target of 40% on a global basis. While low and lower middle-income countries and South Asia have not yet reached the target, they are on track to achieve it by 2025.

[Learn more >](#)

06

GET MSMEs  
ONLINE



**Many MSMEs, particularly in low- and middle-income nations, were caught off-guard following the introduction of quarantines.** With no broadband Internet access, they were unable to pivot swiftly to online operations to sell products and services. Connectivity data disaggregated by enterprise size is widely available for high-income nations, although not always for micro-enterprises. For most low- and middle-income nations, even aggregated data on total enterprises with Internet access is not available, let alone by sector. Hence it is difficult to gauge the severity of the problem.

[Learn more >](#)

07

BRIDGE  
THE GENDER  
DIGITAL DIVIDE



**In 2022, the gender digital divide persisted with 69% of men using the Internet compared to 63% of women**, according to ITU estimates. However, gender parity increased from 0.89 in 2018 to 0.92 in 2020. Some regions and income groups have reached gender parity in Internet use including high-income countries, SIDS, the Americas, CIS countries and Europe. The substantial gender gap in mobile Internet use in LMICs had been improving previously, driven primarily by South Asia where it decreased significantly from 67% in 2017 to 36% in 2020, according to GSMA. However, notable gender gaps in mobile Internet access persist in LMICs, and in some countries the mobile Internet gender gap has even increased.

[Learn more >](#)

# WORKING GROUPS 2022 OVERVIEW

With more than 35 groups to date, the Broadband Commission's Working Groups convene industry leaders, government officials and civil society to address prominent issues affecting broadband access, affordability and use. These groups are proposed, funded, and chaired by Commissioners, with the content support of external experts.

[View all Working Groups >](#)

## 2022 Completed Working Groups



### Smartphone Access

The Working Group on Smartphone Access, co-chaired by Vodafone, UN-OHRLLS & ITU, is the first multi-stakeholder dialogue and analysis to address barriers to smartphone ownership, with a special focus on developing countries.



### AI Capacity Building

The Working Group on AI Capacity Building Report, co-chaired by Nokia & UNESCO, explored how civil servants worldwide can enhance their competencies to implement digital and AI transformation initiatives in governments and create an enabling environment for digital transformation.



### Virtual Health and Care

The Working Group on Virtual Health and Care, co-chaired by the WHO and the Novartis Foundation, examined key themes in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and provided practical recommendations for how countries can achieve access and equity through inclusive policies in virtual health and care.



## Published outcome reports



[Read the report >](#)



[Read the report >](#)



[Read the report >](#)



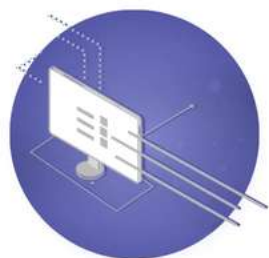
[Read the interim report >](#)



# ACTIVE WORK LOOKING AHEAD TO 2023

In 2023, the Broadband Commission will host two Working Groups and two Action Taskforces.

## Current Working Groups



### Data for Learning

Responding to the need for a greater understanding of the data ecosystem in education, the Broadband Commission Working Group on Data for Learning, chaired by UNESCO, explores the potential assets and risks of Data for Learning, as well as the key challenges and tensions that must be considered.



### Connectivity for MSMEs

The Working Group on Connectivity for MSMEs, co-chaired by GSMA and ITC, seeks to define the opportunity and challenges of getting more micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) online and engaging in online trade.



## Current Taskforces:

Building on the findings of the Working Group on Smartphone Access Report and Action Plan, the co-chairs recommended the creation of two Taskforces for further investigation and programme pilot.



### Smartphone Access: Action Taskforce 1

The first Taskforce will be focused on 'Finance & Subsidy Funding Mechanisms' with the objective of designing and implementing a pilot demonstrating an effective strategy for micro-lending for smartphone access.



### Smartphone Access: Action Taskforce 2

The second Taskforce will be focused on 'Pre-owned Devices' with the objective of designing and implementing a pilot demonstrating effective strategy for mid- and low-tier smartphone re-use with a set of agreed minimum standards.

## 2023 Tentative Calendar

Commission Programme
Annual Spring Meeting
Annual Fall Meeting
Working Group Activities
Action Taskforce Activities
State of Broadband Report
Advocacy Campaigns
Newsletters

[See full calendar >](#)

UN Inputs and Events
World Summit on the Information Society ( WSIS) 13-17 March
Commission on the Status of Women 6-17 March
5th Conference on the LDCs ( LDC5) 5-9 March
World Bank Group Forum 21-23 April
Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) 5-8 June
High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 10-20 July
UNGA 78 12-30 September

UN Inputs and Events
WEF Davos Forum 16-20 January
SAMENA Council Rise Conference 11 January
MWC Barcelona 27 February - 2 March
Transform Africa Summit
SAMENA Leadership Summit
Global Mobile Broadband Forum
Partner2Connect

# ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS & OUTREACH

## WEB

The website, [www.BroadbandCommission.org](http://www.BroadbandCommission.org), continues to serve as a one-stop-shop for all information related to the Commission's activities, publications, and policy recommendation outputs.



### 35+ new webpages

Webpages featuring the work of over 35 Working Groups were upgraded to make the findings and recommendations of these groups even more accessible to the public.

### 26,000+ downloads

Over 26,000 people engaged with Broadband Commission reports this year, an increase of 45% over 2021 report views and downloads.

## SOCIAL

### 2 additions to BTL

Two new videos were added to the Commission's Broadband Transforming Lives (BTL) Campaign and video series. These videos were focused on youth empowerment through connectivity, in alignment with the ITU Generation Connect Youth Summit, TES, and gender equality. *See next page for more.*

### 4 Working Group report campaigns

Working Groups developed dedicated advocacy campaigns to promote the findings and recommendations in their reports.

- [Smartphone Access Campaign](#)
- [AI Capacity Building Campaign](#)
- [Virtual Health & Care Campaign](#)
- [Data for Learning Campaign](#)

## NEWS

This year, we organically grew the subscriber base to our newsletter by **over 600 recipients**.

### 6 newsletters published

We released bi-monthly newsletters, detailing the global state of broadband development and sharing the work of the commission and its members.

### 20+ articles published

Our articles this year provided examples of Commissioners putting our policy recommendations in action, including deep dives into initiatives and partnerships working to bridge the digital divide. These also highlighted the Commission's participation in UN events like TES and HLPF.





# ADVOCACY BROADBAND TRANSFORMING LIVES

The Broadband Transforming Lives Campaign illustrates the use of broadband in everyday life. Connectivity has become an essential component of modern living, acting as a tool for virtual education, healthcare, public services, social interaction, remote work and much more. This series gives a small glimpse into the lives of people around the world and how they use broadband to stay connected for the greater good. This year we added two themes, youth empowerment and gender equality.

*The final two video installments of this campaign were made possible thanks to the generous support from our Commissioner from Huawei.*

[View campaign >](#)



## Youth and Digital Entrepreneurship

Youth are 1.24x more likely to connect to the internet than the rest of the global population. However, much work remains to be done to realize Broadband Advocacy Target 4, which aims to have 60% of youth and adults having achieved at least a minimum level of proficiency in sustainable digital skills by 2025.

In this video, we spotlighted four young change-makers who are using broadband to promote digital skills development, increase online safety and access to information in their various communities around the world.

[Watch the video >](#)

## Women's Safety through Mobile Apps

Access to broadband services, devices and skills has proven to be essential for realizing gender equality. With only 57% of women using the Internet in 2020, compared to 62% of men, the gender digital divide must be bridged to ensure women's safety and equal access to opportunity.

In this video, we spotlighted the power of broadband in improving the lives of women through the lens of 3 female-targeted mobile apps.

[Watch the video >](#)



# PARTNERS

The Broadband Commission collaborates with a variety of partners to support our work and fulfill our common goal of advancing universal connectivity.

We are grateful for the number of organizations listed below that have worked with us to advance this goal.







## FAREWELL AND CONGRATULATIONS

This year, we celebrate ITU Secretary-General, Mr. Houlin Zhao, for eight years of commitment and dedication to the Broadband Commission as his term closes in 2022. Mr. Zhao's leadership was essential in advancing progress on the Commission's advocacy targets.

We also congratulate the Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau and Executive Director of the Broadband Commission, Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, on her appointment as the new Secretary-General-Elect of the ITU. Ms. Bogdan-Martin will be the first woman to lead the ITU in the 157 years of its existence.

## STAY ENGAGED WITH THE BROADBAND COMMISSION

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