Agenda

11:30 a.m.	Welcome and Instructions

11:35 a.m. — Presentations

- **Connectivity Reframed as a Foundational Infrastructure in a Post-COVID Environment** (Thomas Abell, ADB)
- **Towards Equitable Connectivity** (Aamir Riaz, ITU)
- **Challenges for Connectivity** (Rahul Shah, GSMA)
- **Affordability and Access** (Sonia Jorge and Anju Mangal, A4AI / Web Foundation)
- **Supportive Policies and Spectrum Management** (Scott W. Minehane, Windsor Place Consultants)

12:30 p.m. — **Discussion and Q&A** (facilitated by John Garrity, Economist and Policy Advisor)

12:50 p.m. — **Closing Remarks** (Atsuko Okuda, ITU)

About the Speakers

Thomas Abell
Advisor and Chief of Digital Technology for Development Unit Asian Development Bank

Thomas Abell is the Chief of ADB's Digital Technology for Development Unit, which promotes the effective use of digital technology across ADB programs to improve development impact. His team works with ADB member countries in supporting the transition to the digital economy and provides assistance across many areas, including eGovernment, tech start-up ecosystems, technology policy, and tech industry partnerships. Thomas has over 30 years of professional experience in digital technology, including technology policy and strategy, software development, and systems architecture.

Sonia Jorge
Executive Director, Alliance for Affordable Internet, Head of Digital Inclusion Program, Web Foundation

An expert in the confluence of development and communications policy, Sonia Jorge has over 25 years of diverse international experience in a career spanning both the private and not-for-profit sectors. She leads numerous digital development projects in several countries and international organizations, such as the World Bank, UNDP and UN Women; and for private sector companies, from mobile operators to industry associations. Her work has included ICT policy and regulatory advice and analysis, strategic industry planning, national ICT/broadband policy development, among others.

Anju Mangal
Asia Pacific Regional Coordinator, Alliance for Affordable Internet Web Foundation

Anju Mangal is the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordinator for the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI). Her work focuses on strengthening A4AI's national coalitions and supporting stakeholder collaborations to advance their shared goal of affordable access across Asia. She was affiliated with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community as the Digital Transformation ECM Specialist and Business Analyst Adviser. She is currently the Vice Chair of the Asia Pacific Internet Governance Forum and the Vice Chair of the Pacific Islands Chapter of the Internet Society.

Scott Minehane
Managing Director Windsor Place Consulting

Scott Minehane is an international regulatory and strategy lawyer/economist in the communications sector and has been involved in advising investors, operators, governments and regulators in Australia, Asia, the Pacific and Africa for over 30 years. His expertise extends to policy, legislative drafting, regulation, spectrum management, national broadband network and new generation fixed and mobile technologies including 5G. He was the author of the June 2020 ITU GSR Discussion Paper on the telecommunications sector responses to COVID-19. He has advised governments, telecoms regulators, MNOs and other stakeholders in Australia, Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Aamir Riaz
Programme Officer, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, International Telecommunication Union

Aamir Riaz has been working on ICT development through country-specific actions, sub-regional and regional interventions across the region. Currently he is regional focal point for thematic action areas of Digital Network Infrastructure and Emergency telecommunications. His most recent work is the areas of 5G market readiness assessments, remote satellite connectivity, ICT market regulations and wireless innovation strategies with emphasis on issues related to RF Spectrum. Prior to joining ITU in 2013, he had been working in ictQatar (now CRC Qatar) from 2010 to 2013 as National Spectrum Manager where he implemented several management and planning initiatives. From 2007 until 2010 he was an Assistant Director in Strategy and Development department of the Pakistan Telecomm Authority

Rahul Shah
Director, M4D Asia Pacific Global System for Mobile Communications Association

Rahul Shah currently serves as the Mobile for Development Director (M4D) for the Asia Pacific region, where he manages M4D's portfolio of programs that aim to find innovative, commercially sustainable solutions to a variety of socio-economic problems through partnerships between mobile operators, tech innovators, governments and development organizations. Prior to this, he worked in the M4D Utilities team at GSMA where he managed grants and provided advisory services to operators on the opportunity in the energy, water and sanitation sectors. He spent over a decade in the engineering of wireless communications systems and network planning. Post-MBA, he switched tracks to general management and worked in solar energy and media & entertainment.

John Garrity
WEBINAR FACILITATOR
Independent Consultant, Economist, Policy Advisor, Project Manager, and Author

John Garrity is an economist, policy advisor, and project manager with over 18 years of experience working on economic development issues in the public sector. His focus is on digital inclusion programs, universal access policy and last-mile connectivity deployments to foster universal internet access and adoption. Currently, he is an independent consultant to public sector and private sector organizations, including to Connectivity Capital; UNDP as chief technical advisor on a national rollout of free public WiFi; the UN Broadband Commission as the author of the 2019 State of Broadband Report and upcoming 2020 edition; the ITU/UNICEF as an external advisor to the GIGA program to connect every school in the world to the internet; and the UN ITU in developing a Last-Mile Connectivity Solutions Guide.
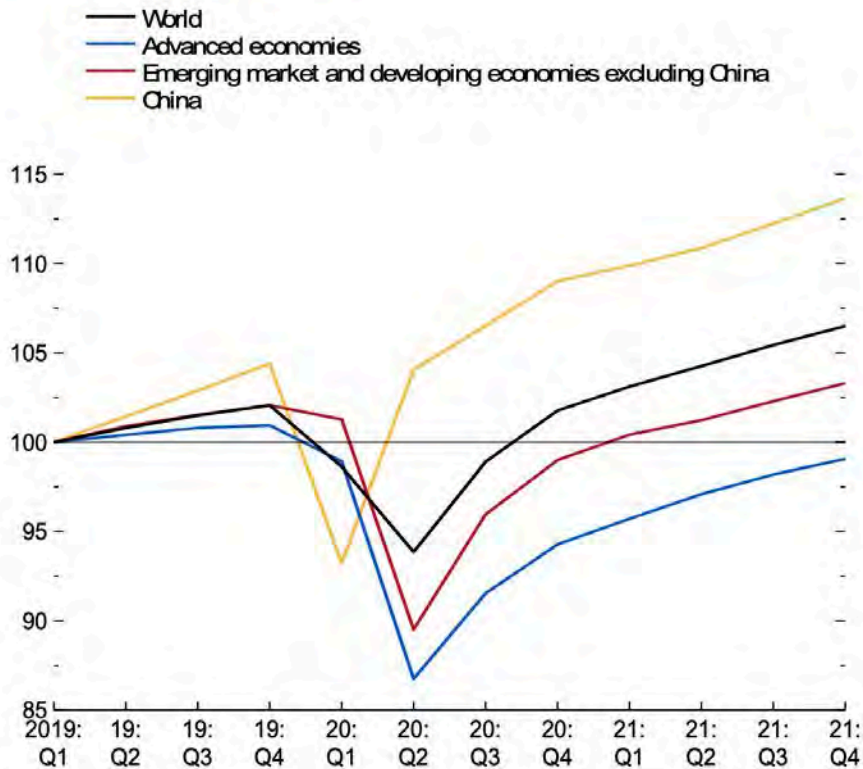
Atsuko Okuda
CLOSING REMARKS
Regional Director, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok) International Telecommunication Union

Ms. Atsuko Okuda was appointed as the ITU Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific in April 2020. Prior to the new assignment, she was the Chief of the ICT and Development Section of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in Bangkok, Thailand, from 2015-2020. Ms. Okuda served the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia from 2012-2015 and contributed to the Umoja project, the UN Secretariat ERP initiative, as Testing Manager at the Department of Management, UNHQ, from 2010-2012. From 2002-2010, she was responsible for promoting a wide range of ICT for development initiatives at ESCAP and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa as Senior IT Officer.

COVID-19 highlights the importance of connectivity

Major economic contraction across the world…

… but impact lessened because of internet.

Figure 1. Quarterly World GDP
(2019:Q1 = 100)

- World
- Advanced economies
- Emerging market and developing economies excluding China
- China

Source: IMF staff estimates.

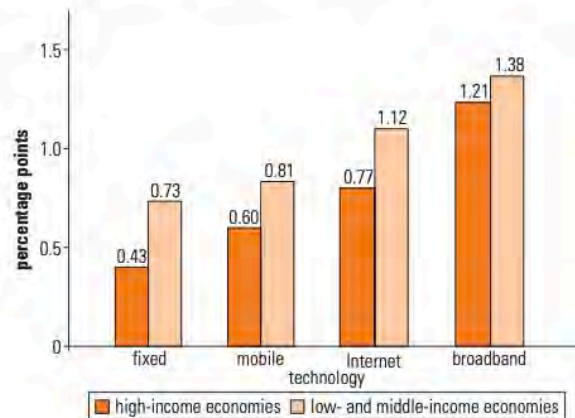*"Technology has been a resilience factor for the global economy.*

[For example] Half of the US labor force has been working from home amid the COVID-19 onslaught, up from 15 percent previously."

- IMF Finance & Development Sept 2020

Impact of connectivity is well documented…

Macroeconomic

Figure 1.1 Growth Effects of ICT

Bar chart showing percentage points for technology types (fixed, mobile, Internet, broadband) comparing high-income economies and low- and middle-income economies:
- fixed: 0.43, 0.73
- mobile: 0.60, 0.81
- Internet: 0.77, 1.12
- broadband: 1.21, 1.38

Legend: high-income economies; low- and middle-income economies

Sectoral

Figure 1: Multi-sectoral impact of connectivity

AGRICULTURE: Increased Incomes; Improved sector health; Increased number of agricultural livelihoods; Reduced vulnerabilities

EDUCATION: Improved student engagement; Improved literacy & employability; Improved productivity & incomes; Increase in skilled workforce participation and productivity

FINANCIAL SERVICES: Increased formalization of economy; Improved ability to scale enterprises; Reduced unemployment, improved incomes

GOVT. SERVICES: Improved enterprise efficiency; Reduction in corruption, improved participatory governance; Improved services/benefits delivery, reduced vulnerabilities

HEALTHCARE: Increased productivity & incomes; Better health in community, prevention of pandemics; Improved hospital linkages, case management; Reduced vulnerabilities

Impact of connectivity on individuals and institutions through improved access to
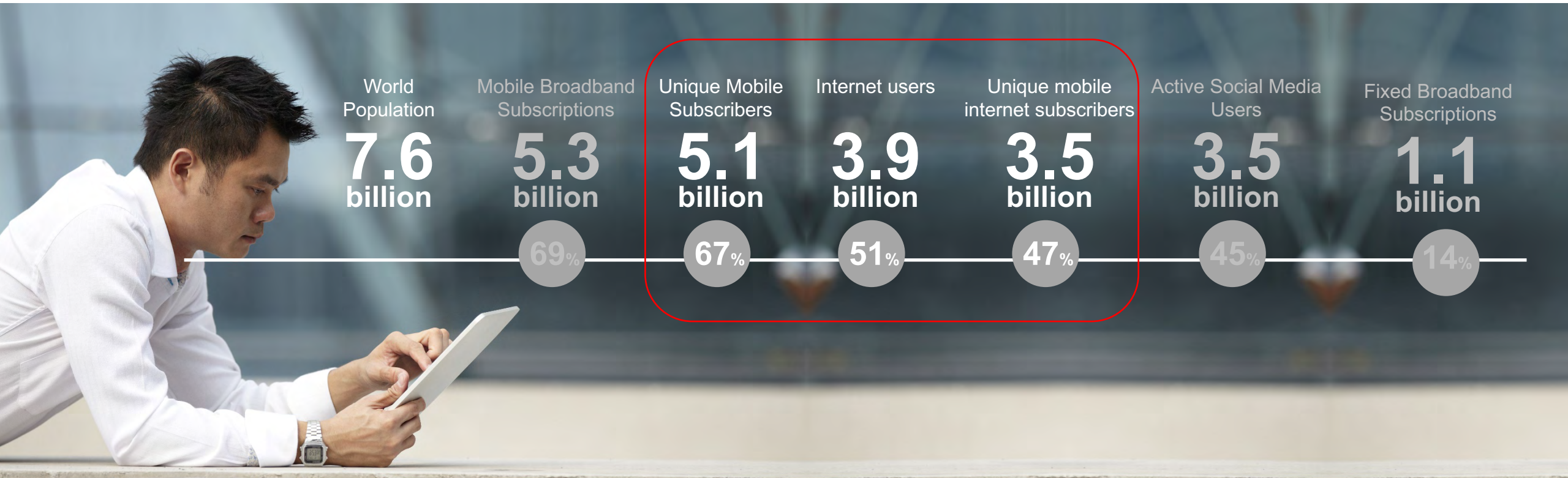- Information
- Products & services
- Finance

SDGs

ICTs specifically referenced in the SDG targets:

SDG4 Quality Education (4b)   SDG5 Gender Equality (5b)   SDG9 Industry, innovation and Infrastructure (9c)   SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals (17.8, as a means of implementation)

Plus at least 38 other targets that rely on universal and affordable access to ICT and broadband to reach achievement
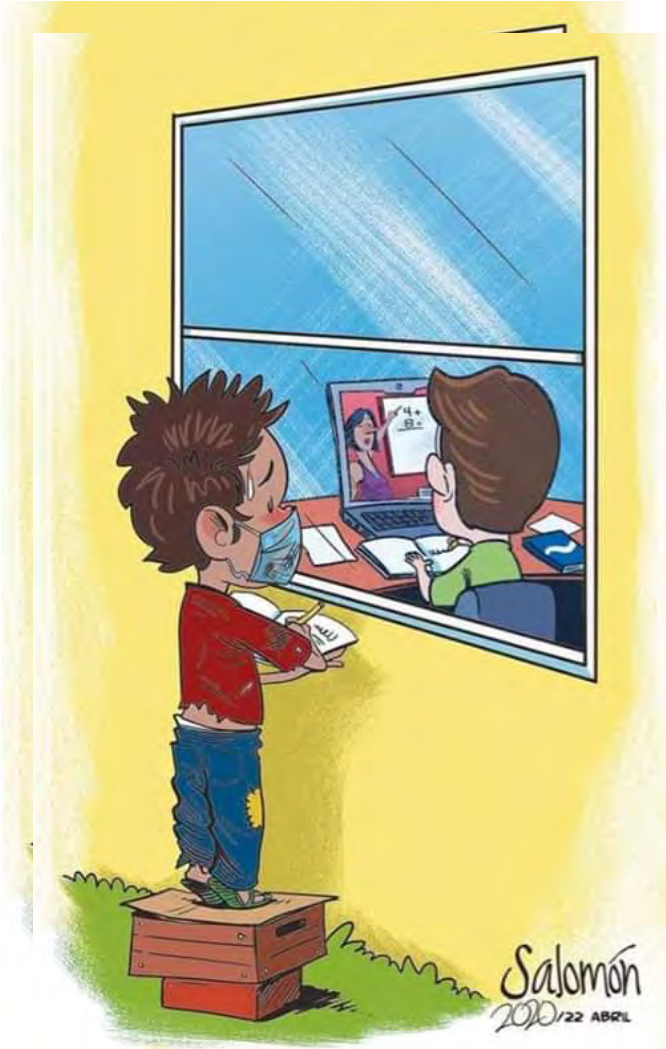
… but major gaps in access and adoption remain.

World Population	Mobile Broadband Subscriptions	Unique Mobile Subscribers	Internet users	Unique mobile internet subscribers	Active Social Media Users	Fixed Broadband Subscriptions
7.6 billion	**5.3** billion	**5.1** billion	**3.9** billion	**3.5** billion	**3.5** billion	**1.1** billion
	69%	67%	51%	47%	45%	14%

Source: 2018 data from ITU, GSMA

Existing digital divide + COVID-19 = Widening Inequality

Education in the time of COVID-19

"*COVID-19 has triggered a mass migration from analog to digital. **But not everyone has seen the benefits; and the growing digital divide is set to become one of the legacies of the crisis.***"
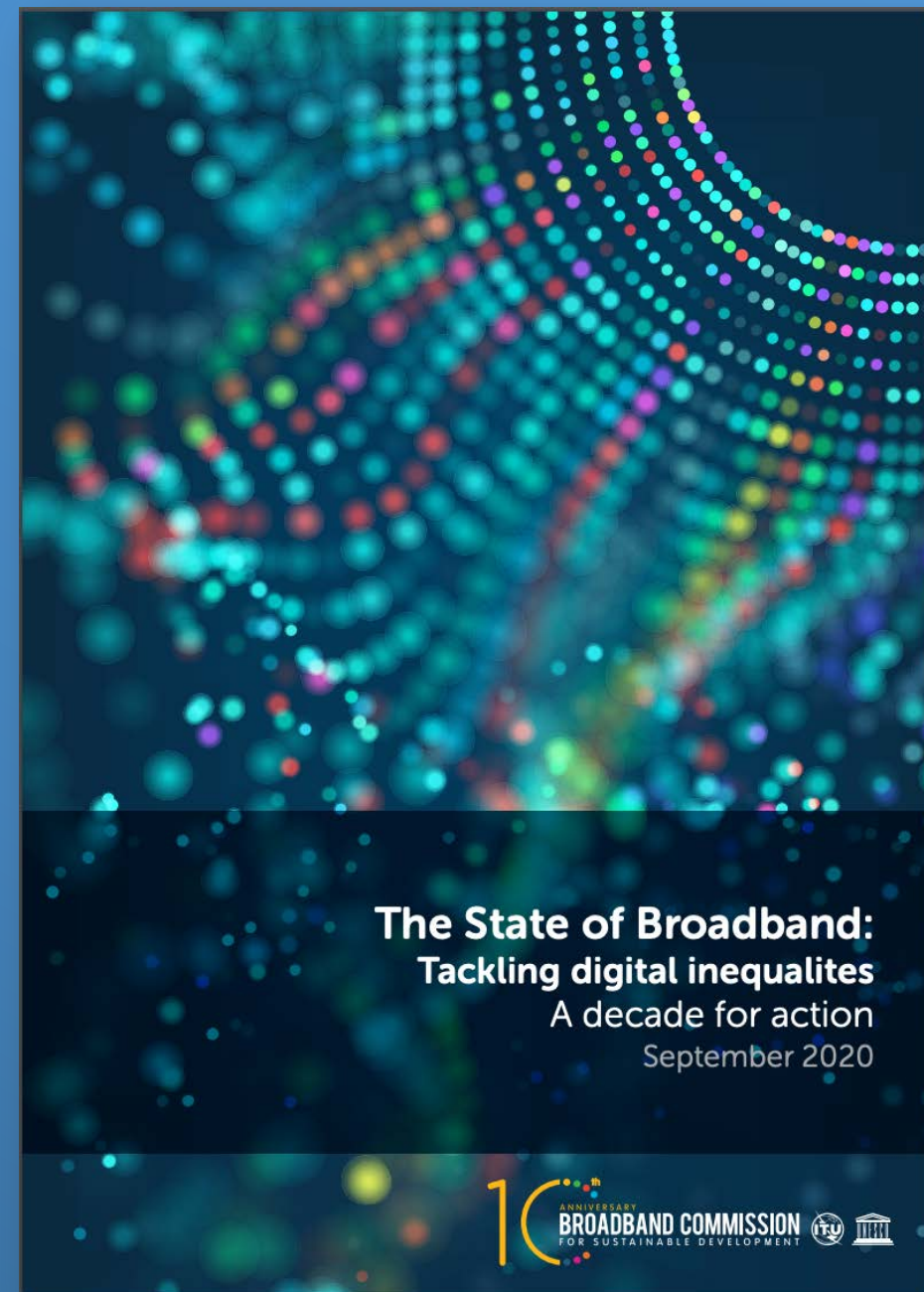
- IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva
June 2020

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