

ICTs: leading the way to sustainable development

ITU has been helping the world communicate ever since its inception in 1865. Having brought government and industry together for several decades to coordinate global telecommunications networks and services, it is once again pioneering a new communication path by laying the foundations for a World Information Society.

Following two years of intense negotiations in a multi-stakeholder process that included governments, intergovernmental agencies, civil society, business entities and the media, a Declaration of Principles and an Action Plan was agreed at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). The 11 000 delegates to the Summit agreed on the importance of ICTs as an essential requirement for an inclusive Information society and embraced the idea of universal, accessible, equitable and affordable ICT infrastructure and services as a key goal.

To help focus the world's attention on the strategic role which ICTs can play in reducing poverty and creating opportunities for long-term development, ITU members have selected the theme **ICTs: leading the way to sustainable development** for this year's World Telecommunication Day.

- Raise awareness of the Declaration of Principles adopted at the World Summit on the Information Society
- Consider ways to incorporate the targets for universal access as outlined in the Action Plan adopted at WSIS into your national development strategies
- Encourage participation in a global online survey on the importance of ICTs as a tool to achieve the WSIS targets
- Set up discussion fora (television/radio, Web chat rooms, Internet cafés, schools), special supplements) with national and international stakeholders on how to achieve the WSIS targets
- promote awareness of ICTs as a tool for economic and social development

