PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION IN THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

The information age is fueling the expansion and development of reliable information and communications technology (ICT) systems and services throughout the world. Ambitious plans are under way in many countries, and U.S. firms are poised to supply needed technology and equipment. USTDA furthers the development of this sector by funding various forms of technical assistance, early investment analysis, training, orientation visits and business workshops that support the development of a modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment.

In fiscal year 2008, USTDA invested in 17 new activities in the ICT sector. The following is an illustrative list of USTDA-supported projects in this area:

East Asia

China Rural ICT Network Pilot - USTDA is providing $593,398 to support investment analysis and a pilot demonstration of a broadband ICT network, which, if successful, could be deployed to provide cable television, phone and Internet access to rural areas in China. MediaG3, Inc. of Santa Clara, CA, is conducting the study and pilot program.

China E-Government Capacity Program Orientation Visit – USTDA sponsored an orientation visit to the United States for 14 delegates from China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) to learn about U.S. practices in e-government, and to meet with providers of e-government systems and other IT products and services.

China Healthcare IT Systems Orientation Visit – USTDA brought 13 delegates from China's Ministry of Health and various hospitals to the United States to learn about U.S. technology in the healthcare IT sector.

Europe and Eurasia

Turkey ICT - USTDA is sponsoring an orientation visit to the United States for Turkish ICT-sector officials to learn about U.S.-sourced technologies, services and financing options that can support Turkey's 2006-2010 Information Society Strategy. Koeppen, Elliott & Associates of Washington, DC, is planning the visit.

Romania Next Generation Network (NGN) Infrastructure for Emergency Management – A $700,000 USTDA grant to the Special Telecommunications Service of Romania is funding investment analysis on a system that will improve Romania's capacity to manage emergencies by enabling users to share voice, data and multimedia content instantly. Telecordia Technologies of Piscataway, NJ, is conducting the study.

Latin America and the Caribbean

DR-CAFTA Telecommunications Regulatory Workshop – USTDA is sponsoring a workshop to highlight ICT sector opportunities and policy developments in the DR-CAFTA region. The event will bring officials from the region together to discuss the implementation of the DR-CAFTA telecommunications provisions, and will allow participants to exchange experiences in the areas of interconnection, universal service, and spectrum allocation, among others.

Brazil State Government of Minas Gerais Datacenter Project – USTDA awarded a $425,000 grant to the State of Minas Gerais Economic Development Secretariat to support the development of a centralized administrative datacenter within the State's e-government program. The datacenter will consolidate the government's corporate IT infrastructure, while supporting operational staff that share common functions.

Colombia Telecommunications Capacity Building – USTDA provided $484,600 to the Colombian Ministry of Communications to assess long distance licensing, local loop unbundling, and emerging technologies. The assistance seeks to foster enhanced competition in the long distance and cellular markets, as well as develop advanced wireless, broadband and VoIP services.

Jamaica Submarine Telecommunications Cable Regulations – USTDA provided a $235,288 grant to the Jamaican Office of Utilities Regulation to support the development of new submarine telecom cable regulations that will enhance competition.

Middle East and North Africa

Egypt Air Maintenance & Engineering (M&E) ICT Modernization – USTDA is providing $642,577 to assist EgyptAir M&E in upgrading its ICT infrastructure to transform its operations into a modern system that can provide state-of-the-art service to both EgyptAir and its other international carrier customers.

Jordan Smart Card Technology - USTDA is providing $410,083 to the Ministry of Interior to fund strategic advice, technical analysis, and human resources training associated with the introduction of a national Smart Card in Jordan. The cards will promote efficient and modern government infrastructure in areas including the accuracy and organization of elections, health care, immigration, passport control, and alien documentation.

West Bank WiMax Network – USTDA is providing $480,625 to BCI Communication & Advanced Technologies for business advisory services, technical analysis, and human resources training on the establishment of a WiMax broadband wireless network in the West Bank. The network will target the 10 largest cities in the West Bank and provide approximately 45,000 users with broadband wireless services.

E-Government Orientation Visit – Delegates from Egypt, Morocco, Jordan and Lebanon participated in a USTDA-sponsored e-government orientation visit to the United States. The visit introduced them to suppliers of technology and equipment and expertise on establishing and maintaining e-government systems.

South and Southeast Asia

Pakistan Undersea Fiber Optic Cable Project – USTDA awarded $145,000 to determine the viability of a private Undersea Fiber Optic Cable System to connect Pakistan with the FLAG Global Network. Implementation is the first major private sector venture in basic telecom infrastructure in Pakistan and is providing a critical second link in case of interruptions to the existing SMW-3 link. T. Soja and Associates carried out the study.

Indonesia Disaster Management Plan and Technology Strategy - USTDA provided $650,000 to Badan Meteorologi dan Geofisika, Indonesia's Meteorology and Geophysics Agency, to help integrate and modernize its disaster management systems in preparation for implementing a Tsunami Early Warning System and Command and Control Center.

Philippines Meteorological and Hydrological Telecommunications System (MTS) Upgrade – USTDA provided $381,000 for a study on ways to upgrade the MTS operated by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration. The study will identify ways to enhance the monitoring capability to forecast and react appropriately to weather-related events and hazards. A U.S. firm will be competitively selected to conduct the study.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Regional Telecommunications Training – USTDA is funding training for approximately 20 delegates from 16 African countries on ICT management, regulatory frameworks and privatization. The two-part program is being coordinated with the U.S. Telecommunications Training Institute (USTTI) in Washington, DC.

Regional West Africa ICT Roadmap to Opportunities Conference – USTDA sponsored a conference in cooperation with the U.S. Department of State, in Accra, Ghana, in July 2008 for business and governmental decision makers from West Africa and the United States to promote a dialogue on key issues including regional integration, deregulation, privatization, public sector initiatives and telecom solutions.

Rwanda Communication Infrastructure Backbone - USTDA awarded $390,000 to the Rwandan Ministry of Infrastructure to fund a study on the implementation of a communications infrastructure backbone. The study will assess the project's financial viability, ownership and business operational model. The project supports the Government of Rwanda's Vision 2020.

Worldwide

Global ICT Executive Training Cooperation Program In partnership with USTTI, USTDA is funding customized training on ICT technologies and regulatory policy for newly appointed Ministerial-level officials from developing and middle-income countries around the world. The program complements a regional initiative that is providing targeted training for key government officials, with the goal of ICT deployment throughout the region.