



TRANSFORMATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR 2015 AND BEYOND **MANIFESTO**



ABOUT

About The Commission

The Broadband Commission for Digital Development was launched by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in response to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's call to step up efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Established in May 2010, the Commission unites top industry executives with government leaders, thought leaders and policy pioneers and international agencies and organizations concerned with development.

The Broadband Commission embraces a range of different perspectives in a multi-stakeholder approach to promoting the roll-out of broadband, as well as providing a fresh approach to UN and business engagement. To date, the Commission has published a number of high-level policy reports, best practices and case studies.

More information about the Commission is available at www.broadbandcommission.org.

Transformative Solutions for 2015 and Beyond

The Sustainable Development Challenge

The world has changed significantly since 2000, when the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted (Millennium Declaration, 2000). While strong economic growth in the developing world has helped lift millions out of poverty, global population growth, modern lifestyles and consumption are now stretching the limits of the planet's resources. During this time, technological advances in information and communication technology (ICT) have radically transformed the way people communicate and lead their lives; now ICT can play a vital, transformative role in helping put the world on a more sustainable path.

Recent crises in the financial, global food and energy sectors have highlighted fragility in global systems, as well as weaknesses in governance and persistent inequalities among vulnerable or disadvantaged populations. In addition, constraints to development have become apparent, such as climate change, increasing environmental degradation and population growth. Together with complex societal issues like rising inequality, ageing, infrastructure, gender equality, childhood development and education, as well as a lack of decent jobs for youth, these challenges point to an urgent need for an integrated, single sustainable post-2015 development agenda.

As well as continuing to drive progress towards the MDGs to 2015 and beyond, the post-2015 sustainable development agenda needs to refocus efforts on reaching vulnerable or marginalized groups and tackling the interrelated root causes of poverty, inequality and environmental degradation. It must shift technology and behaviour towards sustainable consumption and production patterns to decouple continued growth and improved living standards from the unsustainable use of resources. Business-as-usual is simply not an option.

Innovative, scalable multi-stakeholder solutions are needed to deliver inclusive economic growth and a shift to sustainable patterns of consumption and production. The world needs to adopt a more integrated and comprehensive approach to development – and in this, ICT and broadband can make a major contribution. Broadband and ICT can serve as transformative solutions to achieving sustainable development for all.



Dear fellow leaders and stakeholders,

As we approach 2015, a new global partnership is being forged to carry on the work of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and shape a new sustainable development agenda involving all sectors of society. We, the members of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, consider broadband to be a vital part of that discussion, as it is one of the strongest and most effective tools in bringing about transformative solutions for sustainable development. From governance to health to education to gender equality to enabling the low-carbon economy, broadband is already advancing a more equitable, inclusive and environmentally healthy world—but there is more work still to be done.

In 2013, the Broadband Commission issued an Open Letter to the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons, calling for broadband to be prominently recognized in the Post-2015 framework for sustainable development, in recognition of the key role broadband will play in our connected future. In March, the Broadband Commission established a Task Force on Sustainable Development and the Post-2015 Development Agenda to explore some of the issues of how broadband can best contribute to development goals.

The Broadband Commission would like to encourage the international community to recognize the need for transformative solutions in the post-2015 development

agenda. Countries around the world can use their national broadband plans as key policy instruments to leverage the full potential of broadband as an enabling infrastructure to accelerate sustainable development; yet there are also many missed opportunities, not least within poverty reduction and food security.

The multiple problems that need to be tackled and their interlinked nature demand coordinated and effective cross-sector collaboration, in which governments, civil society, business, academia and individual citizens pool their skills, resources and know-how. Stakeholders expect industry to play its part in driving the necessary investment and innovation, and that scalable solutions will be brought to market that address sustainable development challenges. This is both a responsibility and a business opportunity.

For this to happen, a strong enabling framework is required. Governments can accelerate the pace of transformation by linking their development policies to make universal broadband accessible and affordable to all, in order to meet their national development and poverty reduction goals. Policymakers are urged to take timely action to create this framework by acting on the report’s ten recommendations.

The members of the Commission hope this Manifesto will be a valuable contribution to the important global discussions underway today to carry on the work of the MDGs and formulate a new set of goals and targets going forward.

CONTEXT

The world faces a crucial juncture as the fifteen-year period dedicated to confronting the world's persistent problems of poverty, malnutrition, chronic disease and lack of education through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) nears its completion in 2015. The Rio+20 Summit in June 2012 resolved to finish the job of ending extreme poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency. In addition, it set poverty reduction within the broader context of sustainable development. As a follow up to this conference the UN is now carrying out global consultations with diverse stakeholders to help define the post-2015 development framework, potentially including a new set of Sustainable Development Goals to be established after 2015.

The global challenges we face today require urgent action and a broader vision. Ending extreme poverty remains a central challenge, as do improving the areas of health, education, social inclusion and gender equality. Equally critical are improving people's lives within planetary resource limitations; ensuring food security by improving agriculture systems and raising rural prosperity; empowering inclusive, productive and resilient cities; supporting and securing the natural ecosystem and biodiversity; curbing human-induced climate change; and transforming governance. All sectors of society, and all levels of government, will have to work together to ensure that the most effective solutions to these challenges are applied in the best, possible way.

Transformative solutions to these challenges enabled by broadband and information and communication technologies (ICT) are already being deployed on the ground, having an enormous impact across lives and livelihoods, shaping education, healthcare, business efficiency, food security and more. Connectivity is improving access and social inclusion for more vulnerable, disadvantaged populations. Mobile

technology is now enabling real-time monitoring and management of progress towards development goals. Since ICT and broadband cut across other industrial sectors as supporting infrastructure, they enable improvements in speed and scale in implementing solutions that can improve living standards, social fairness, and environmental sustainability, as well as drive down costs and improve service delivery. Broadband is uniquely positioned to deliver the integrated solutions leveraged across sectors that UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called for. In addition, the Rio+20 Summit emphasized that a change in mindset is needed for sustainable development, and the development community is working hard to change outlooks and improve self-reliance, as well as implementing innovative new solutions.

Yet more needs to be done to realize the full potential of broadband and ICT—not least to reach people in marginalized or disadvantaged groups, or more remote locations, who are too often left behind. The next fifteen years and beyond will see complex changes to societies and economies, such as shifting the energy system from fossil fuels to renewable energy. This transition necessitates the practical integration of economics, science, technology, and finance and a new kind of problem-solving.

By actively leveraging these technologies to address global challenges, better solutions can be delivered more rapidly, where they are needed, provided there is a concerted effort from all sectors and a supportive policy framework. The Post-2015 development framework is a perfect opportunity to step up broadband and ICT's contribution to delivering cross-sector efficiencies and to the global partnership, and make sustainable development, in all its dimensions, a real possibility for this generation and beyond.

MANIFESTO OF THE BROADBAND COMMISSION FOR DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

For sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda

We, the members of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, present this manifesto stating our position and shared belief in the benefits of broadband for sustainable development to world leaders, top policy-makers, industry leaders, users and consumers.

Broadband technologies are fundamentally transforming the way we live. Broadband infrastructure, applications and services offer important opportunities for boosting economic growth, enhancing communications, improving energy efficiency, safeguarding the planet and improving people's lives.

In building our interlinked information society, it is vital that no one be excluded, and that all voices be heard. Overcoming the digital divide makes sense not only on the basis of principles of fairness and justice; connecting the world makes sound commercial sense.

The improved communication and greater understanding facilitated by access to ICTs can help us overcome the challenges inherent in building the global digital economy. The report of the Broadband Commission, *Transformative Solutions for 2015 and Beyond*, examines the key role broadband can play in confronting today's challenges, and building a sound and sustainable future, which following generations can enjoy.

Connectivity is necessary, but not sufficient. In addition to the roll-out and deployment of broadband networks and technologies, it is also essential to develop fully multilingual content and new services to ensure people can express themselves freely and develop a presence online, with full respect for human rights.

We, the undersigned, believe that the vital role of broadband needs to be acknowledged at the core of any post-2015 sustainable development framework, to ensure that all countries – developed and developing countries alike – are empowered to participate in the global digital economy.

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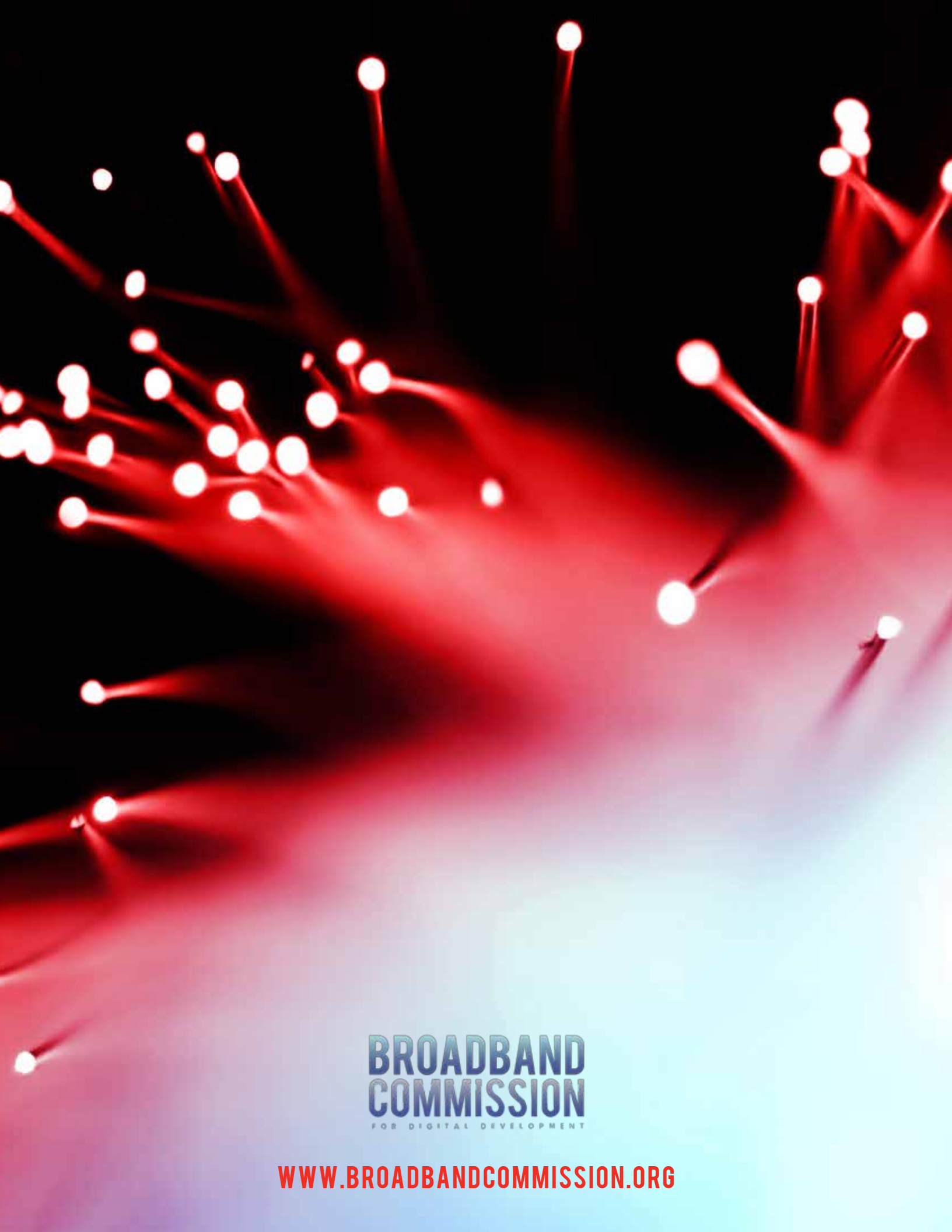
DG, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)

To find out more about the Broadband Commission's work on sustainable development goals download our latest report

Transformative Solutions for 2015 and Beyond

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