2025 Advocacy Targets of the Broadband Commission

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What are the 2025 Advocacy Targets?

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. Starting initially with four connectivity goals established in 2011, the Targets were expanded to five in 2013, with the addition of the gender equality goal, and eventually to seven in 2018.

How is progress towards achieving the targets tracked?

The Commission tracks progress on the Targets in its annual flagship State of Broadband Reports. Utilizing a variety of data sources, it estimates progress on these goals and provides multistakeholder policy recommendations to achieve them. In addition, the Commission’s Working Groups address themes related to these targets, provide more in-depth analysis and detailed recommendations for all stakeholders. The Targets map directly onto the UN Secretary-General’s Digital Cooperation Roadmap areas of actions.

**TARGET 1: MAKE BROADBAND POLICY UNIVERSAL**

By 2025, all countries should have a funded National Broadband Plan (NBP) or strategy, or include broadband in their Universal Access and Service (UAS) Definition

155 countries had a national broadband plan or other digital strategic document emphasizing broadband in 2022, down from 165 in 2021. The number of economies with a broadband plan has slightly decreased over the past year as plans have expired and haven’t been renewed in some countries. While a plan is a useful starting point, it is important to know how well they are operationalized.

**TARGET 2: MAKE BROADBAND AFFORDABLE**

By 2025, entry-level broadband services should be made affordable in low- and middle-income countries at less than 2% of monthly Gross National Income (GNI) per capita

An ITU report carried out in partnership with the Alliance for Affordable Internet (AAAI) finds that after years of improvement, the affordability of broadband services worsened in 2021. 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.

**TARGET 3: GET EVERYONE ONLINE**

By 2025, broadband-Internet user penetration should reach:
- i) 75% worldwide; ii) 65% in low- and middle-income countries; and iii) 35% in least developed countries

ITU data find that Internet penetration grew as a result of the pandemic. Internet use grew to an estimated 66% of the population in 2022, up from 54% in 2019. 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. While Internet use is growing, some groups are being left behind such as the elderly and people with disabilities.

**TARGET 4: PROMOTE DIGITAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

By 2025, 60% of youth and adults should have achieved at least a minimum level of proficiency in sustainable digital skills

Digital literacy is one of the main causes of digital exclusion and is often amon the top answers when people are surveyed about why they do not use the Internet. According to the latest data from the ITU, less than 40% of the population in 43% of the countries reported carrying out at least one of the activities considered a basic skill. Only 23% of the countries reported more than 60% of the population reporting having at least one basic ICT skill.

**TARGET 5: INCREASE USE OF DIGITAL FINANCIAL SERVICES**

By 2025, 40% of the world’s population should be using digital financial services

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 the latest data from the 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.

**TARGET 6: GET MSMEs ONLINE**

By 2025, improve connectivity of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) by 50%, by sector

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.

**TARGET 7: BRIDGE THE GENDER DIGITAL DIVIDE**

By 2025, gender equality should be achieved across all targets

According to ITU estimates, 4.9% of men used the Internet in 2022 compared to 6.3% of women. 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. However, notable gender gaps in mobile Internet access persist in LMICs and in some countries the mobile Internet gender gap has even increased.

For more information and the latest data, visit broadbandcommission.org/advocacy-targets