Internet outages

The internet is the wider network that allows computer networks around the world run by companies, governments, universities and other organisations to talk to one another. It is that infrastructure that supports our tweets, share our life on Facebook, Instagram or Whatsapp status, stream on Netflix, email and search the web for any kind of information. The role of ICT in achieving the SDGs is so profound that a community or country without access to the internet can be said to be left out on the advancement of life in general. In 2019, Myanmar passed a law restricting access to the internet in some parts of its country. The Myanmar government restricted mobile internet networks to eight townships Rakhine and Chin States. More than 1.4 million people are suffering from this shutdown and are unable to access vital information. A year on these states still suffer from the lack of internet connection and cannot access information about the escalating conflict in the region and the COVID-19 situation in the country. Bridging the digital divide that currently exists among countries is one of the core mandates of the 2030 agenda. With help of technology drastic improvements can be made in the field of health, education, the reduction of inequality, a rapid response to actions under climate changes through smart applications, the implementation of applications for peace, justice and strong institutions and the innovative infrastructure of smart buildings, transportation and cities, just to mention a few. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) serves as a support structure for all of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), helping bring about their advancement towards meeting targets, especially the universal coverage of basic services in the areas of health, education, finance and energy.

Why ICT is important for the SDGs

- **ICT is highly correlated with country-level SDG performance (89%).** This implies that countries that have quality access to ICT perform equally well on SDGs while those that under-perform on ICT are also lagging behind on SDG achievement.

- **Progress on certain SDGs is more likely to be correlated with ICT development.** Goals with higher ICT correlation include, SDG 9: Infrastructure, Industrialization and Innovation, SDG 4: Quality Education and SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, which suggests that these goals are less likely to be attained without leveraging ICT.

- **Overall, developed countries tend to have higher ICT scores than SDG scores, indicating that ICT development is progressing more quickly than sustainable development.** These countries ultimately have the scope to leverage ICT more effectively, for the benefit of sustainability. And, inversely, developing countries generally have a higher SDG achievement score than ICT development score, suggesting that the speed of ICT enhancements is not keeping pace with the progress on sustainable development. Developing nations may well benefit from policies that aim to increase investment in ICT and in turn improve the ICT infrastructure.

Technology and the future.

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