ALLIANCE FOR AFFORDABLE INTERNET

BANGLADESH NATIONAL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COALITION

CONCEPT NOTE AND PROGRAMME

MONDAY, 24 JULY 2017

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, DHAKA

About A4AI

A4AI is a global coalition of 80+ member organisations from across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors, including Google, the US Agency for International Development, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Launched in 2013 by the World Wide Web Foundation, A4AI is now working in seven countries in addition to Bangladesh — Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique, Myanmar, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala — to drive down the cost of broadband internet through locally driven policy and regulatory change. A4AI is committed to using policy and regulatory reform to lower the cost of internet access to a "1 for 2" target (i.e., where 1GB of mobile data is priced at 2% or less of GNI per capita). Until now, two African nations, Ghana and Nigeria have officially endorsed the target, and are working towards achieving the same. A4AI's strategy in Bangladesh too would be aimed at achieving the target.

About a2i Program

The Access to Information (a2i) programme is a Government of Bangladesh run and UNDP & USAID supported project. Driven from the Prime Minister's Office, Access to Information (a2i) programme supports the national public service reform and innovation agenda. a2i works with a 'whole-of-government' approach applying behaviour change methodologies and leveraging the rapid expansion of technologies to foster unprecedented transformations and to take public services to citizens' doorsteps and increasingly within the palms of their hands — the promise of Digital Bangladesh. a2i's primary goal is to ensure easy, affordable and reliable access to quality public services for all citizens of Bangladesh with the following strategies:
- Empower civil servants with the tools, expertise, knowledge and resources they need for experimenting and innovating citizen-centric solutions to public service challenges;
- Establish both physical and online one-stop access points that scale innovative services and make them available to citizens easily, reliably and in an affordable manner;
- Encourage and support non-government actors, including small entrepreneurs, teachers and the youth, to partner with government actors.

A4AI and a2i in Bangladesh

The Access to Information (a2i) programme and the Alliance for Affordable Internet programme share the common goal of advancing affordable access to both mobile and fixed-line internet in Bangladesh to all people, in order to ensure the vision of Digital Bangladesh is realised.

A4AI Focus on Policy and Regulation

A4AI has a dedicated focus on policy and regulatory issues that govern universal and affordable access to broadband internet. Whilst innovative technological solutions to affordability challenges are progressing apace, even the best technologies in the world can't drive change if policy and regulatory factors prevent them from being implemented effectively.

A4AI recognizes that numerous other factors limit internet adoption such as, last-mile coverage, literacy levels, available relevant local content, availability of electricity, digital skills, etc., but believes that the policy and regulatory matters affecting affordability can greatly benefit from a coordinated effort. In working towards this vision, A4AI hopes to bring billions more online rapidly and make universal access a reality. A4AI is therefore particularly concerned with affordable access for marginalised groups, such as those living below the poverty line and those who are most excluded, including women, rural populations and minority groups, among others.

A4AI's Multi-stakeholder Coalition Concept

To achieve conducive policy and regulatory support, A4AI engages with stakeholders in a number of countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. In each country of engagement, A4AI aims to establish multi-stakeholder coalitions interested in collaborating to bring about affordable internet access and empower users to drive change.

A4AI recognizes that achieving sustainable change requires not only workable approaches to the proposed reforms, but also clear consideration of the acceptability of the reforms to key stakeholders. The process of multi-stakeholder coalition building will seek to ensure that public, private, academic, media and CSO sectors are represented in the national multi-stakeholder coalitions and will be grounded upon the principles of consultation and open dialogue. This will also ensure the policy and regulatory reform proposals developed by the national coalitions are informed and shaped by the views and concerns of all stakeholder groups in each country.

Aligned with its approach in Bangladesh, A4AI will seek to build both internal (i.e., national) and external (i.e., regional and international) stakeholder support for change. It will engage with country specific public sector stakeholders in Bangladesh, as well as external stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, academia and media in order to collaborate and collectively develop proposed policy actions leading to increased affordable access. By working effectively with all stakeholders, A4AI aims to generate recommendations that are developed through consensus and consequently result in

additional resources that can be of benefit to the national process, including knowledge and investment.

As the coalition facilitator, A4AI recognizes that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Each engagement is different in every country, and the Alliance in Bangladesh will ensure there is flexibility in terms of both its approach and focus, which takes into account the changing environments in which it is working. A4AI will also preserve flexibility – enabling it to change its strategy to respond to shifting priority needs in countries of engagement.

Objectives and Outline of the A4AI Key Stakeholder Forum

The first A4AI Bangladesh multi-stakeholder forum will take place on 24 July, 2017 at the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The forum's primary objective is to establish a multi-stakeholder coalition in Bangladesh that will contribute towards the government policy to bring about affordable internet access to all citizens of Bangladesh as envisioned in the Digital Bangladesh 2021 plan.

Those key stakeholders who attend the forum will be introduced to A4AI and learn more about its objectives in Bangladesh and further afield. The forum shall yield itself into being a platform for attendees to discuss the key policy and regulatory challenges to greater internet affordability in Bangladesh; begin developing the national coalition that will work to overcome these challenges; and develop an Action Plan focused on priority areas. The following presents the agenda for the forum.

A4AI **ALLIANCE FOR AFFORDABLE INTERNET**

DRAFT AGENDA

Monday, 24 July 2017, 9:00-17.00

Karabi Hall, Prime Minister's Office, Dhaka

09.00-09.30   Registration and Networking Coffee

09.30-09:50   Welcome and Keynote

- Welcome note – Mr. Anir Chowdhury, Policy Advisor, a2i Program, Prime Minister's Office
- Introduction and objectives of the multi-stakeholder coalition and the status of Internet in Bangladesh – Ms. Sonia Jorge, Executive Director, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)

09.50-10:15   Special Addresses

- Special address: Dr. Shahjahan Mahmood, Chairman, Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulations Commission (BTRC)
- Special Address – Mr. Kabir Bin Anwar, Director General, a2i Program
- Special Address: Shyam Sunder Sikdar, Secretary, ICT Division, Government of Bangladesh
- Special Address: Mohammed Faizur Rahman Chowdhury, Secretary, Post and Telecommunications Division, Government of Bangladesh
- Vote of thanks – Mr. Arfe Elahi, IT Manager, a2i Program

10.15-10.30   Networking Refreshment break

10.30 - 12.00   Moderated Panel Discussion I : Key Challenges and Opportunities in ICT Infrastructure Regulatory Framework for Digital Bangladesh

- o Mr. Vishal Mathur, Head of Connected Security, GSMA
- o Mr. Arif Al Islam, CEO, Summit Communications, Bangladesh
- o Mr. Targhibul Islam, DGM, Teletalk Bangladesh
- o Mr. Banamali Bhowmick, Director General, ICT Directorate
- o Dr. Rishabh Dara, Connectivity Lead for South and West Asia, Facebook
- o Mr. Muhammad Khan, President, ICT Journalists Forum
- o Mr. Tapan Kanti Sarkar, President, CTO Forum Bangladesh
- o Professor Rokonuzzaman, NSU University, Bangladesh
- o Ms. Tahmina Rahman, MBE, Regional Director, Article 19, Bangladesh, President, Bangladesh ICT Journalist Forum.

- **Moderator:** Ms. Sonia Jorge, Executive Director, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)

12.00 - 13.10   Moderated Panel Discussion II: Key Challenges and Opportunities for Affordable Public Access Solution

This session will help to look at the potentials of shared access space and the ongoing efforts of GoB towards achieving universal access, from public access centers to community networks and wifi solutions. The session will also highlight on examples from other countries, specially solutions that illustrate public-private partnerships.

- o Mr. Hasan T Emdad, a2i program, Bangladesh
- o Ms. Luna Shamsuddoha, President, Bangladesh Women in Technology, Bangladesh
- o Mr. T I M Nurul Kabir, President, AMTOB, Bangladesh
- o Mr. Osama Manzar, Digital Empowerment Foundation, India
- o Mr. Mohammad Aminul Hakim, President, ISP Association of Bangladesh

- **Moderator:** B. Shadrach, Asia Coordinator, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)

13.10-14.10   Lunch Break

14.10 – 15.40   Moderated Discussion: Identifying Priority Issues for Coalition Engagement

This session will provide coalition members with the opportunity to discuss and identify priority issues to be addressed based on the A4AI best practices for policy and regulation

- Break-up into Groups in order to identify Priority Issue
- Groups Report Back
- Open Discussion

- **Moderator:** B. Shadrach, Asia Coordinator, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)

15.40-15.55   Action Planning

In this session participants will vote on 3-4 key priority issues for coalition engagement and support

- **Moderator:** B. Shadrach, Asia Coordinator, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)

15.55 - 17.00   Closing Session

- Priority issues for coalition engagement – B. Shadrach, Asia Coordinator, A4AI
- Special Address – HE Zunaid Ahmed Palak, State Minister, ICT Division
- Special Address – HE Tarana Halim, Post and Telecommunication Division
- Exchange of MoU between a2i and A4AI in front of dignitaries
- Special Remarks – Ms. Sonia Jorge, Executive Director, A4AI
- Closing Remarks – Mr. Anir Chowdhury, Policy Advisor, a2i

17.00   Refreshments