

NEW CHALLENGES >> NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN

Broadband network infrastructure is critical to economic growth. In many countries, a plethora of new and emerging applications and services demand more bandwidth than can be delivered by most current domestic networks. When voice, video and data services are carried along the same pipe, bandwidth requirements can soar. Consumers as well as enterprises are increasing their demand applications and services.

The acceptable bandwidth speed standards are changing all the time with the advent of new applications and services. Today, aspirations of broadband bandwidth of 1 Gbps have supplanted the goal of 100 Mbps only a few years ago.

Many countries are at a critical juncture with respect to its broadband policy. Economic and social development increasingly depends on advanced ICT infrastructure—of which an NBN is an integral part. In the past decade, governments around the world have made efforts to improve their national telecommunications networks to make fast broadband service available and affordable for all segments of the economy. In many countries, there is not yet a concrete and detailed strategy in place for the widespread deployment of next generation broadband networks.

Some of the objectives of the NBN are:

- ✓ Ultra-fast Speeds (to meet the demands for increased bandwidth)
- ✓ Universal Access (reasonable prices)

- ✓ Open Access (nondiscriminatory)
- ✓ Sustainability (ensure long-term usage, provide flexibility and scalability)
- ✓ Economically feasibility (financing by end users, not through taxes)

Without action by the government (i.e., an NBN plan and other regulatory clarity/guidance), countries risk underinvestment, which will result in a serious delay of many positive externalities created by next generation broadband networks. The effects of this failure will be easily observable through:

- ✓ Low international rankings for broadband speed and penetration
- ✓ Relatively low bandwidth at high cost (e.g., price/Mbps)
- ✓ Lack of competition among service providers
- ✓ Missed economic opportunities (albeit less obvious)

ERCC takes the lessons learned from many previous NBP attempts and arrives at the best solution for the client.