PUBLIC CONSULTATION PAPER

THE NEEDS REQUIREMENT OF THE UNDERSERVED GROUPS

FOR THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE PROVISION (USP)

22 MARCH 2010
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PREFACE

Based on the experience of implementing the system of Universal Service Provision (“USP”) to date and coupled with the desire to achieve:

• the national objectives as set out in the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998;

• the national mission as envisaged in the 9th Malaysian Plan (9MP); and

• the goals set out in the MyICMS 886 Strategy

the Commission has continuously endeavoured to improve and enhance the system for the provision of universal service in Malaysia.

To this end, the Commission has conducted internal discussions and also held various sessions and meetings with various parties to obtain views and feedback in order to better the system for USP for underserved purposes. This study has conducted a large number of site visits throughout all regions of Malaysia and including visits to sites representative of all categories of identified target groups.

Various views and proposals have been put forward during the discussions and site visits conducted by the Commission and those views are currently being considered and studied. However, it is also acknowledged that all relevant parties should have the opportunity to submit their respective thoughts and proposals regarding the issues being considered and such as, the Commission has prepared this Consultation Paper (“Consultation”) which will accord an additional avenue for those viewpoints to be voiced and heard.

The Commission hereby wishes to seek your feedback in relation to the issues highlighted in this Consultation and invites submissions from all interested parties on the contents of this document. Written submissions should be provided to the Commission by 5:00pm, 7 April 2010.
Submissions should be provided in hard copy as well as electronic form and addressed to:

The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission
63000 Cyberjaya
Selangor
Attention: En Azizul Rahman Zainal
Tel : 03-8688 8422
Fax : 03-8688 1002
Email: azizul.rahman@cmc.gov.my

In the interest of fostering an informed and robust consultative process, the submissions received by the Commission will be made available to interested parties upon request. Any commercially sensitive information should therefore be provided under a separate cover clearly marked ‘Commercial in Confidence’. The Commission thanks interested parties in advance for their participation in this consultative process.
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<td><strong>Information of Communications Technology (ICT)</strong></td>
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underserved group within the community.

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<th>Term</th>
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<td>USP Regulations</td>
<td>The Communications and Multimedia (Universal Service Provision) Regulations 2002.</td>
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<td>People With Disabilities (PWD)</td>
<td>A person who have long term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society according to Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 (Act 685).</td>
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<td>Children Under Protection (CUP)</td>
<td>According to Child Act 2001 (Act 611) shall mean that a person under the age of eighteen and in relation to criminal proceedings (means a person who has attained the age of criminal responsibility as prescribed in Section 82 of the Penal Code (Act 574).</td>
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<td>Women Under Rehabilitation (WUR)</td>
<td>Any woman who underwent rehabilitation in the institution operating under Department of Women Development (“Jabatan Pembangunan Wanita (JPW)”) and including girls (by definition of Child Act 2001) who</td>
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underwent rehabilitation in the institution operating under Social Welfare Department (“Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat (JKM)”).

Low - cost Housing Residents (LCHR) The low-cost housing provided by the government to low-income group subsidized by the government and they charged a very low rent namely as Local Community Development Programme (“Program Penempatan Masyarakat Setempat (PPMS)”) under Ministry of Rural and Regional Development (“Kementerian Kemajuan Luar Bandar dan Wilayah (KKLW)”); and Integrated Public Housing Programme for Rental (“Program Perumahan Rakyat (PPR) Bersepadu”) under Ministry of Housing and Local Government (“Kementerian Perumahan dan Kerajaan Tempatan (KPKT)”).
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This consultation document provides an insight on the issues which have been considered and the various proposals put forward by various parties towards developing initiatives for the underserved groups in Malaysia.

This document puts forward different approaches and provokes discussion in relation to certain issues with the aim for improving the provision of universal service for underserved purposes.

This consultation also provides interested parties with an opportunity to voice their comments on the issues raised in this document and also welcomes proposals on the same.

This consultation document is therefore structured as follows:-

- **Section 2** provides some background and objective on the underserved groups under the USP programme; and

- **Section 3** highlights some proposals and issues which have been put forward for consideration and discussion in relation to the USP programme toward the underserved group’s development in Malaysia.

These issues and proposals are in line with the following Critical Success Factors:

- Location (current and potential market, infrastructure, skills availability, technical support);

- Awareness and local community support (shared responsibility);

- Right pricing;
• Management and leadership;

• Committed and motivated workers (allowances, skills development);

• Good services and content (based on community needs);

• Networking with other organizations (local NGO’s, business community, schools); and

• Innovation (advertising revenue, coffee/shop/canteen, etc) and entrepreneur approach.
SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

On 13 November 2008, the then Minister of Energy, Water and Communications had approved the notification of underserved groups within the community covering four (4) categories of underserved groups.

The Commission has established plan to embark on the inaugural basic communications access project for the underserved groups namely Persons With Disabilities (PWD), Women Under Rehabilitation, Children Under Protection, and Low-cost Housing Residents.

The Commission has conducted several internal discussions sessions and established a special taskforce comprising selected members from the lead agencies to look into the detailed aspects of the projects requirement for the underserved groups.

Since the ICT requirements for the underserved groups, (in particular PWD) may differ from the ordinary users, the USP Division (USPD) have consulted and collaborated with other lead agencies which oversee the administration and management of the affected underserved groups such as:

(a) PWD, Women, and Children: Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWK) as well as their associate Non-Governmental-Organization (NGO); and

(b) Low-cost Housing Residents: Ministry of Rural and Regional Development (KKKW), and Ministry of Housing and Local Government (KHK).  

A needs assessment study has being conducted prior to fully engaging into the related developmental initiatives for the underserved groups. The main requirements of the study are as follows:
(a) To determine the specific requirements of the each target groups;

(b) To ascertain the most appropriate communications technologies, services and applications which would best serve each target group;

(c) To identify human capital developments scheme that meet the requirements of each target groups;

(d) To recommend holistic approach for the implementation of basic communications access for the target groups which includes the sustainability features e.g. socio-economic development for the underserved groups; and

(e) To establish several key outcomes to be expected from the implementation of USP program for the underserved groups.
SECTION 3: ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION/FEEDBACK

3.1 Issue 1: ICT Facilities Requirements

ICT Facilities refer to premise, infrastructure, equipment, devices and contents.

The collective communication access for the underserved groups e.g. persons with disabilities (PWD) apparently has different specification from the ordinary collective provision. Based on the field visits and survey results:

a) Urban low-cost residents require ordinary ICT facilities. Currently most of them already have experience with computer and internet. There are available computer centres or cyber café nearby the area and some of them have computers at home.

b) For the rural low-cost residents, the ICT literacy is very low and most of them especially adults had never used the computer due to lack of opportunity.

c) For the PWD, they are left behind from ICT technology because of no appropriate facilities available at the centre. Accessibility is further hampered as the centres are not disabled friendly.

d) Most of WUR and CUP already have basic exposure to ICT, but currently they have limited access to ICT facilities especially the internet. Currently the WUR are prohibited from using the internet and hand phones.

e) ICT contents and applications are normally in English and this pose as a barrier to all groups.
The following initiatives are proposed to address the facilities requirement issues.

**A. Configuration and Specification for Persons With Disabilities**

1. Computers with internet connection access with minimum 1Mbps inclusive Wi-Fi network.

2. Printer and scanner e.g. for Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for the blind.

3. LCD Projector for training & teaching purposes.

4. Special Assistive Technology (hardware devices & software):
   
a) Touch Screen as mouse alternative;

b) Big key/Braille keyboard for visually impaired & blind;

c) Braille Embosser & reader for the blind;

d) Table Mounted Monitor to protect the monitor;

e) Text-to-Speech Software (e.g. JAWS) for individuals with reading difficulties; and

f) Eyegaze System (Eye-tracking technology) - Move the cursor according to the user's eye movements by using eye-tracking hardware & software.

5. Interior design requirement for PWD ICT centre to ensure smooth operations and usage of ICT facilities:

   a) Assistive walking path (e.g. rail, directive tiles) for the disabled;
b) Computers equipments and fixtures are securely attached;

c) Wheelchair access (Wheelchair Ramp) is available through all building entrances;

d) Carpets with short, dense pile to assist wheelchair users;

e) Wheelchair-accessible computers and a wheelchair-accessible photocopier; and

f) Floor surfaces need to be non-slip but not overly reflective.

B. Configuration and Specification for Low-cost Housing Residents

1. Computers with internet connection access with minimum 1Mbps inclusive Wi-Fi network.

2. Printer and scanner for learning purposes such as printing reports and scanning pictures.

3. LCD Projector for training & teaching purposes.

4. Photocopier and fax machine for business services.

5. Wi-Fi Service for the community to gather & share information.

C. Configuration and Specification for Women Under Rehabilitation
1. Computers with restricted internet connection access to prevent inappropriate activities and to limit undesirable contents by using filtering applications. The minimum speed of the internet access is at least 1 Mbps.

2. Printer and scanner for learning purposes such as printing reports and scanning pictures.

3. LCD Projector for training & teaching purposes.

D. Configuration and Specification for Children Under Protection

1. Computers with restricted internet connection access to prevent inappropriate activities and to limit undesirable contents by using filtering applications. The minimum speed of the internet access is at least 1 Mbps.

2. Printer and scanner for learning purposes such as printing cards, tuition notes and homework materials.

3. LCD Projector for training & teaching purposes.

We seek your feedback on the following:

1. Do you agree if the facilities are to be provided according to initiatives stated above?

2. If yes, are these initiatives feasible? If not feasible, why?

3. If you disagree, what are the alternatives?

4. What would be the reasonable cost for the ICT facilities related to the needs of the target groups?
3.2 Issue 2: ICT Space

ICT space refers to a physical site for ICT equipment and facilities, accessible to the target group. Issues related to ICT space differs between the four groups. Based on the visits findings:

a) In some PDK the space are already fully utilized due to the differences in design;

b) Urban low-cost residents have no physical space for ICT activities even though they have sufficient infrastructure (electricity, telephone connection and internet service) to support ICT activities;

c) For rural low-cost residents, various options for ICT space are available such as community hall, rural library, etc; and

d) Generally, premises for the WUR and CUP are large enough and well equipped to accommodate ICT facilities.

The following initiatives are proposed to address the ICT space issue.

Identify suitable space:

a) Urban LCHR – Renting a house unit or shop lot, unoccupied space in community hall and office;

b) Rural LCHR – Community hall, Mobile ICT centre or internet on wheels;
c) PWD - within the PDK centre if existing space is available. If not, extend the existing space;

d) PWD under NGOs and associations – within the centre;

e) WUR – within the centre; and

f) CUP - within the centre;

We seek your feedback on the following:

1. In your opinion, is space an issue in setting up ICT centre for each of the underserved/target group?

2. If yes, please elaborate on the extent of the problem.

3. What are the initiatives to resolve it?
3.3 Issue 3: Administration

Based on the experiences of similar centres worldwide, it can be concluded that the major challenges in the administration of ICT centres are as follows:

a) No consensus on an appropriate business model for the sustainability of the centre;

b) Lack of appropriate programs, courses, guidelines and software toolset to be included as part of the centre activities to initiate interest to ICT; and

c) Poor communication between funding agencies, ICT centre management team, service providers and the local community to facilitate and assist the centre.

There are various ICT centre business and management models that have been adopted worldwide. These models differ in terms of how they operate (as individual entities, as part of a franchise, or as a multi-branch organization) and who run them (by government agencies, entrepreneurs, schools, community organizations or NGOs).

The following initiatives are proposed as a guideline for the management of the centre:

1. Provide a standard operating procedure (SOP) to ensure compliance by the management with respect to its day-to-day administration and operation.
2. The centre’s manager must be someone who fully understands the goals of the centre and its role in the community. A suitable candidate is someone with experience in a similar capacity in a business establishment.

3. The staff must have the ICT skills to run the respective programs, as well as other skills that include business, financial, marketing and public relations.

4. The staff must be continuously trained in technical and managerial skills to ensure up-to-date competency level. These skills are necessary prerequisites to ensure the centre’s sustainability.

5. Create a partnership with institutions of higher learning (IHL). They can contribute towards providing qualified manpower and content providers for the various programs and courses to be offered. In addition, most IHL have provisions for community development programs for their students and academic staff as part of their teaching and learning activities.

We seek your feedback on the following:

1. How does having an SOP help to ensure efficiency in the management of ICT centres?

2. What are the characteristics of a suitable manager to manage the centre?

3. What appropriate skills should the staff of the centre have in order to be effective?

4. In your opinion, which is more important, social responsibility or financial sustainability in managing the centre?

5. In your opinion, would it be viable to create a partnership with institutions
of higher learning in managing the centre? If yes, in what manner?

6. In your opinion, how could a win-win situation between community and the centre is achieved?

3.4 Issue 4: Implementation

Evaluation plays vital role for smooth implementation of ICT centre and helps to ensure sustainability. Evaluation keeps ICT centre’s activities on track and guide to achieve objectives.

The following components are important issues to be addressed when implementing this project: day-to-day operation, manpower, programs and services offered, and community participation. The following initiatives are proposed as a guideline for the implementation and management of the centre.

1. Conduct a needs analysis in order to identify appropriate courses, programs, facilities and services for the target groups. For example: Is e-commerce facilities necessary for a community with a majority of factory workers?

2. Continuous permanent awareness campaigns must be undertaken to promote the centres to the community. For example: open day, competitions, posters, and family day.

3. All types of training and services, especially for LCHR should be profitable, with discounts for women, students and families with many children. It should not be free except in special circumstances (PWD).

5. For LCHR, community organizations and institutions such as residents associations, schools, health centres, offices, cooperatives and community leaders can play a vital role for the community ICT centre to survive, by:

a) Participating actively in the promotion of the ICT centre and its activities, as well as supplying the centres with the necessary resources –either direct or indirect forms - to ensure its sustainability; and

b) Providing input in identifying the specific needs of the community. For example: tuition needs for the children, skills training for women, etc. This will ensure that the centres are of maximum benefit to their community.

We seek your feedback on the following:

1. What are the characteristics of a suitable manager so as to ensure the programs implemented are successful?

2. How to ensure the services and program offered are appropriate for the target group?

3. How do we promote the centre to attract participation from the community?
3.5 Issue 5: Sustainability

A range of important issues is linked to the operation and success of ICT centres. These include: sustainability, community relevance, government policy, information and communication technology (ICT), research, community partnerships and participation, ICT centre objectives, and business planning. Training associated with ICT centre management is an issue that relates to all of the issues mentioned.

However, sustainability cannot be achieved beyond the initial public support in localities with very low incomes, with low population densities, or without access to good-quality and competitively priced telecommunications infrastructure. Additional sustainability factors are education levels, social and economic links, infrastructure, and familiarity with modern technology.

Based on various models from Australia and South Africa to Hungary and Canada, these are the initiatives proposed to address the issues of sustainability.

1. The value of having local “champions” (innovators) who can mobilize others (early adopters, opinion leaders) to accept the vision of an ICT centre programme. One example of such a local champion is Masilo Mokobane the director of the most successful telecentre in South Africa. From the first day, Mokobane has not only been fighting for survival of the centre, but he has been entertaining new ideas to better serve his community through the use of new communication technologies. He personifies what we call a “champion.”

2. Community volunteers contribute significantly to the success in operating ICT centres. One can find high school and college students, retired business people, active school teachers and others providing one-on-one and group
training and assistance. Volunteers can also contribute to enlightened decision making in the ICT centre because they reflect a variety of community constituencies.

3. The advantages of clusters or networks of ICT centres working together in a region to develop and share a variety of resources:

   a) Based on the ICT centre model from Canada, the coordinators have successfully aggregated the centre in carrying out joint projects. These projects may involve training, sharing of resources, problem solving, and other activities; and

   b) While, the Government of India cooperated with the NGO to provide leadership in developing community-relevant information resources that are cost-efficient and affordable.

4. The importance of raising awareness about information and ICTs as a valuable resource for individuals, families, organizations and communities. The initiatives targeting popular participation in the Information Society should consider planning vigorous campaigns to illustrate the benefits of information as an important resource for daily living.

5. The role of research in creating a viable ICT centre enterprise. Research needs to be done at the individual ICT centre level. ICT centre personnel should have simple, reliable tools to use in on-going operations such as:

   a) Help them discover and continuously monitor the needs of the community;

   b) Get a reliable picture of the demographics of the area;

   c) Systematically monitor ongoing operations; and
d) Help check systematically on outcomes and consequences. This goes beyond counting the number of users, although this is an important statistic.

6. Telecentres need business plans that fit the culture of the community. The Australian and the Hungarian systems have been innovative in developing income-producing activities to support ICT centre operations. Among the telecottages in Hungary, there are more than 50 different services offered to the community. These range from blood-pressure measurement to computer games and social services assistance. While, The Queensland Open Learning Network’s Learning Centres offer training courses which are paid for by trainees, employers or by the individuals themselves. Businesses and industry groups pay for use of the teleconferencing facilities, and institutions in the community pay membership fees to the centres.

We seek your feedback on the following:

1. In your opinion, how do we identify local champion?

2. What is the initiative to find suitable volunteers? Why is participation of volunteers important to this project?

3. How do we create cluster that can compliment the need of the ICT centre?

4. Who is responsible to address the awareness campaign? Would it be the government or private sector? Give your opinion.

5. What is your opinion on the role of research to sustain ICT centre?

6. In your opinion, what would be the suitable business plan for the ICT centre?

7. For the usage of ICT centre, what would be the reasonable minimum charge (e.g. RM1 per entry) to your opinion?
Note: This applies for those under the LCHR category only.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND COOPERATION AND FEEDBACK