



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**World Telecommunication and Information Society Day – 17 May 2024**

### **Digital Innovation for Sustainable development**

The World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) is celebrated annually on 17 May to create awareness around the benefits that Information and Communication Technologies can bring to society and the economy, as well as ways to bridge the digital divide. This year's theme is '*Digital Innovation for Sustainable Development*'.

As the regulatory authority for the ICT sector in Mauritius, the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA) plays a fundamental role for the advancement of technology in the country. Besides promoting technological development, digital inclusion is also high on the agenda of the Authority.

As the operating landscape changes, there are growing concerns around sustainability. With this in perspective and in its endeavour to bridge the digital divide, the Authority has made considerable efforts lately to democratise access to ICTs.

For the past two years, the Authority has embarked on a programme, pursuant to Section 16(a) of the ICT Act, to provide ICT devices to several NGOs in Mauritius and Rodrigues. The objective is to make ICT devices available to children without parental support, children with disabilities and children from needy and vulnerable families, with the aim to support their educational needs.

The Authority is also funding the operation of 234 free Wi-Fi hotspots in Mauritius and Rodrigues. This project aims at making free Internet available to all citizens visiting social security and health care centres among other public places. This does not only allow for greater digital inclusion, but it also opens up new opportunities. Those making use of the hotspots are able to take advantage of online services including e-banking and e-government for ease and convenience of various transactions.

Implementation of Digital Service Centres across 97 Post Offices in Mauritius and Rodrigues is another project to provide citizens with a one-stop access to all e-government services, as well as the Government e-platforms. The Digital Service Centres are required to also assist citizens on how to use computer and Internet facilities, access and use e-Government Services amongst other related facilities.

The best approach to promote digital innovation for sustainable development is to continue the implementation of initiatives for inclusiveness with a view to supporting the digital transformation of the country for the good of one and all.

The Authority is committed towards further concerted efforts in shaping the ICT landscape taking into consideration the emerging technologies and the increasing challenges that ICT regulators now have to face in line with this year's theme.

The message from the ITU's Secretary-General, Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin on the World Telecommunication & Information Society Day is available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3qOiBYbRUQ>

Further information about the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day is available at the following weblink:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/telecommunication-day>

17 May 2024