

## **BANGLADESH**

# **INCLUSION OF EQUIPMENT FOR INTERNET ACCESS AND INCREMENT OF REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR INTERNET**

## **1. ISSUE PAPER THEME: Self-Sustainment**

## **2. SUMMARY**

A number of equipment mentioned in COE manual need to be increased to set up acceptable level of internet access vis-a-vis improving the reimbursement in self-sustainment to manage the cost. Today access to internet is a welfare necessity especially in mission area. But due to the remote sites and unavailability/limited mobile network in mission area, members of the contingents cannot be benefited. To improve the quality of the internet access, every contingent has to have VSAT with specific bandwidth and some other accessories in addition to the equipment prescribed in COE Manual. It also incurs additional cost on the part of the contingent which cannot be met up with the current monthly reimbursement rates in the range of USD 4.00 to 4.44 for each peacekeeper including mission factors.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

The current reimbursement rate in self-sustainment category for internet access is USD 4.00 (COE Manual 2020 Chapter 8, annex B, page no- 192/271). Moreover, the COE manual also stipulates seven computers with internet access equipment for each battalion of 800 personnel deployed in up to three locations (Chapter 3, annex B, appendix 2, page no- 63/271-The Guidelines for Internet Access).

During the COE inspection, COE inspectors are very strict in checking the availability of the Wi-Fi connection up to the accommodation area, whereas COE manual suggest the ratio of over one hundred peacekeepers sharing one computer with internet access. The equipment suggested in the COE manual do not allow contingent to provide reasonable internet access to the peacekeepers. Contingent uses VSAT with specific bandwidth for each person of the contingent to provide minimum level of service quality which increases the cost of the contingent. Bangladesh as TCC expended 1,890\$ per

Mbps per month for the contingents in MINUSCA for the purpose of satellite connection (V-SAT). In an average, Bangladesh uses USD 27.52\$ per person per month for the purpose of internet access.

Apropos, to ensure minimum level of internet access with quality (minimum bandwidth for per person), there is an urgent need to define appropriate reimbursement rates and its related equipment.

#### 4. DETAILED PROPOSAL

Consequently, two proposals are viable:

Firstly, the United Nations can provide the internet access in the self-sustainment categories if that is within the capabilities of the Mission and has been agreed upon by the respective TCC/PCC. In these cases the TCC/PCC will not be reimbursed in this category.

Secondly, each TCC/PCC remains responsible for providing welfare internet to their contingents based on current technology trends but with substantial adjustment showing reviewed pricing in line with the minimum acceptable standards. TCCs/PCCs shall not be reimbursed if they fail to meet the minimum acceptable standard or their personnel have access to UN provided internet.

1. COE Manual 2020 Chapter 3, annex B, appendix 2, page no- 63/271-The Guidelines for Internet Access: can be amended as:

The guideline below is based on a battalion of 700 personnel deployed in up to three locations:

Equipment	Quantity	Remarks
Microtic Router	3	Quantity depends on the number of locations
Computers	20	
Webcams	20	
Microphones	20	
Bandwidth	10.00 Mbps	Including uplink and downlink
Scanners/Printers	20	
VSAT	3	Quantity depends on the number of locations

2. COE Manual 2020 Chapter 8, annex B, page no- 192/271 can be amendments as:

For internet access reimbursement rate is USD 27.52.