

Panel on Revitalization of Local Community and Ubiquitous Network Society
Summary of Minutes (1st Meeting)

1. Date and Time

Monday, November 27, 2006, 10:00 to 12:00

2. Location

Conference Room 4, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

3. Attendees (honorifics omitted)

(1) Panel Members

Kazuko Aida, Banjiro Uemura, Nagaaki Ohyama, Keiko Kiyohara, Masaru Kotani, Noriko Kondo, Norimasa Shimada, Yasutaka Shimizu, Hisao Taki, Kazunori Tanaka (proxy for Hiromi Wasai), Tomomi Tsubota, Junichi Tsuyuki, Ichiro Nagayoshi, Kazunori Hatano, Koichi Machida (proxy for Kamon Iizumi), Miki Muraki

(2) Observers

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport

(3) MIC Representatives

Tamura (Senior Vice-Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications), Taniguchi (Parliamentary Secretary for Internal Affairs and Communications), Terasaki (Director-General of the Telecommunications Bureau), Imabayashi (Director-General of the Regional Communications Development Division), Uematsu (Director of the Local Governments ICT Promotion Office), Nakata (Deputy-Director of the Regional Communications Development Division)

4. Minutes of the Meeting

(1) Opening

(2) Remarks by MIC (Tamura, Senior Vice-Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications;

Taniguchi, Parliamentary Secretary for Internal Affairs and Communications; Terasaki, Director-General of the Telecommunications Bureau)

(3) Introducing the panel members

(4) Draft Meeting Procedures

The secretariat explained Reference 1-1. The draft meeting procedures were approved.

(5) Appointment of Chair and Nomination of Deputy-Chair

Mr. Shimizu was unanimously elected as chair. Mr. Ohyama became Deputy-Chair following nomination by Panel Chair Shimizu.

(6) Proposed Public Disclosure of Meetings

The secretariat explained the proposal to disclose panel meetings to the public based on Reference 1-2. The proposal was approved.

(7) Agenda

<Initiatives for the revitalization of local communities and creation of a ubiquitous network society

The secretariat explained the initiatives based on Reference 1-3, which was followed by a question and answer session.>

[Questions and Answers]

- Although a wide variety of industries have been developed in local communities, the technologies and expertise of the producers and manufacturers are being lost. Support from the national government is needed.
- While some issues can be shared regardless of regional differences, methodologies to solve particular issues must be diverse.
- I recognize that local communities have excellent human resources, which include not only working-age people, but also retired people building their second career. While revitalizing industries and promoting urban agriculture, people may be able to take advantage of ICT in the achievement of their personal goals.
- We need a new “user-created” viewpoint.

<Presentation on ICT in local communities in the age of the ubiquitous network by Mr. Tsubota

Mr. Tsubota made a presentation based on Reference 1-4, which was followed by a question and answer session.>

[Questions and Answers]

- We need to realize an information society in which everything is well connected. The flow of goods and commerce is satisfactory, but the flow of information needs enhancement. Currently, the production side and the consumer side are divided. Consumer services should be improved by optimizing systems to make identification easier.
- In a ubiquitous network society, it is essential that those who are being monitored should be informed of the fact. It is not fair to be monitored without being informed. Rules must be developed for that.
- It is expected that, even if convenient and easy-to-use information terminals are developed, the number of elderly people who can afford such terminals but do not know how to access them is likely to increase as they do not have family members close by who can tell them about the existence of such terminals or how to use them. The basis of revitalization of local communities is to develop the relationships of trust among local people by using ICT.
- Kawai-mura in Iwate prefecture has used the L-mode service to enable elderly people living alone to access medical assistance when they need it. Deaths have been prevented. Both people and systems are indispensable to support the elderly.
- Broadband services are not widely used in some regions. We need to examine why they are not used as well as whether they can be used or not.

(8) Direction of Future Meetings

The secretariat explained the direction of future panel meetings, based on Reference 1-5, which was approved.