The world in 2020 is in a state of unprecedented flux because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The broadband ecosystem has proven its scalability and resilience to keep health, education, and financial systems, and whole economies, operating. Once again, broadband has demonstrated its essential role in fueling the achievement of the SDGs. But COVID-19 also uncovered how the lack of connectivity, especially among marginalized communities, is widening the gap between rich and poor, and further growing the digital divide. Building back better and faster with broadband will require an emphasis on digital infrastructure and technologies in the pandemic response, recovery, and resiliency-building efforts to prepare against such future shocks, but more importantly to spur achievement of the SDGs.

While 174 countries now have a national broadband plan, more work must be done to monitor and evaluate the current state of implementation of these national plans. In some cases, even after publishing and endorsing a national plan, government transitions and competing priorities lead to situations where national plans are no longer effectively being implemented and/or targets need to be revised in order to have impact on broadband adoption. Ensuring that national broadband plans are designed to increase network availability, affordability, safety and broadband adoption requires plans that are multifaceted, incorporating many, if not all, of the recommendations that the Commission has been advocating. To implement the above Policy Recommendations, countries will need to adopt various approaches to funding these plans ranging from dedicated funds, to universal service funds, direct government subsidies and grants, government equity and debt's to public-private partnerships. It will also be essential to look into the next century financing and funding models for infrastructure development, and also to look into Artificial Intelligence as a catalyst for broadband development, particularly in the provision of healthcare solutions.