WSIS+20 Review
Action Lines
Milestones, Challenges and Emerging Trends beyond 2025

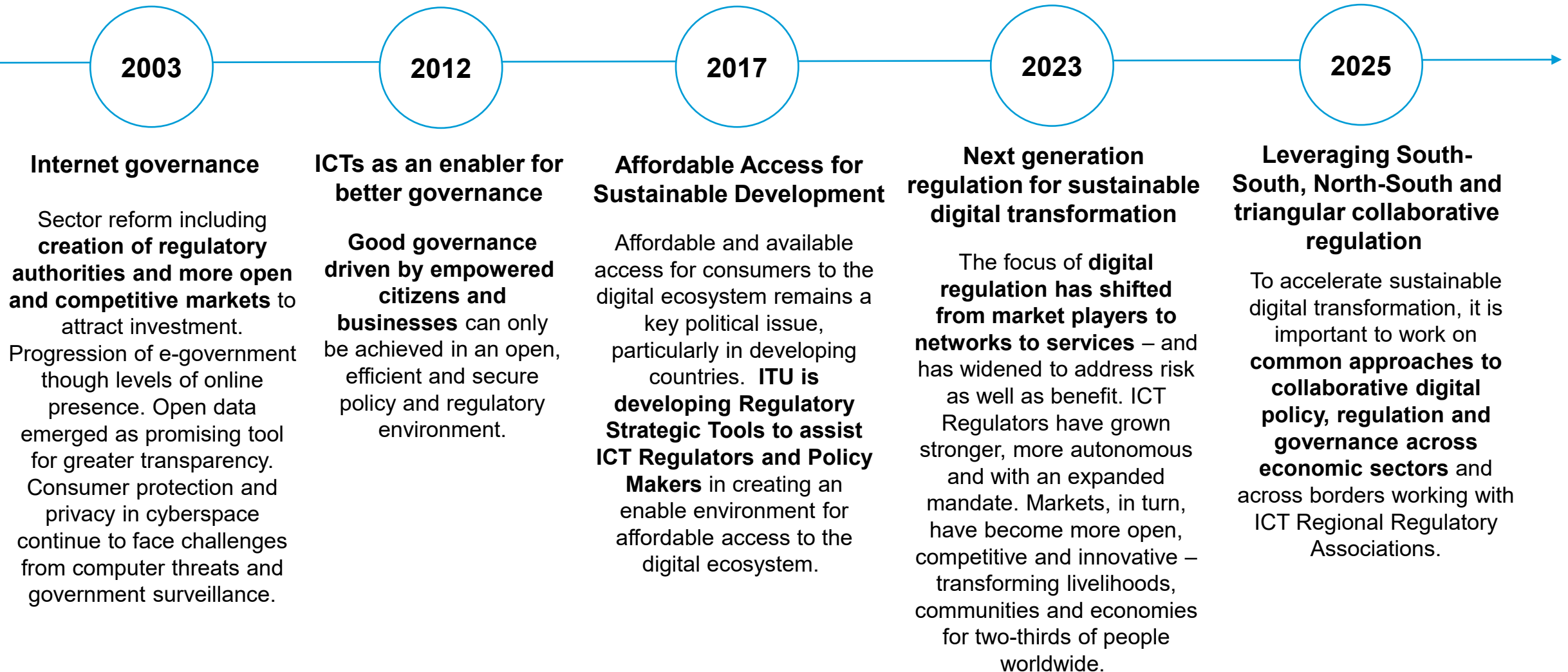## C6 Enabling Environment

The Evolution of Context

- **Transition** has characterized the development of communication technologies since telecom sector reform in the early 1990s – voice to data, fixed to mobile, monopoly to competition.

- Telecommunications/ICT is present in virtually **all sectors** and underpins today's global digital economy and society.

- The challenge is not only one of infrastructure development. **Expanding connectivity is not enough**. WE need to address innovation opportunities for value creation, the skills needed for adoption and the infrastructure for access.

- Digital transformation is creating **convergence** in the business of different industries and associated convergence in the responsibilities of different regulators. The digital landscape depends on a **collaborative** approach between the regulator, other relevant government authorities, industry, and other key stakeholders.

The Evolution of Context

- New overlapping emergencies call for a **more strategic, systemic and concerted approach** to digital policy if we are to enhance public services, build long-term economic resilience, and spearhead innovation and social entrepreneurship over the mid- to long term.

- While the regulatory basics still apply and core regulatory mandates still need to be thoughtfully used – the job of regulators requires **new approaches, new skills, new tools, and new thinking** to create an enabling environment , attract investment, ensure access for all, in a safe, secured an informed manner.

- **Change is needed in policy and regulation.** Iteration, trouble-shooting and incremental improvement are decisive in policy implementation – without this agile approach, one third of the world's people will be left behind.

Key Milestones: 20 years of Achievements

2003 — **2012** — **2017** — **2023** — **2025**

Internet governance

Sector reform including **creation of regulatory authorities and more open and competitive markets** to attract investment. Progression of e-government though levels of online presence. Open data emerged as promising tool for greater transparency. Consumer protection and privacy in cyberspace continue to face challenges from computer threats and government surveillance.

ICTs as an enabler for better governance

Good governance driven by empowered citizens and businesses can only be achieved in an open, efficient and secure policy and regulatory environment.

Affordable Access for Sustainable Development

Affordable and available access for consumers to the digital ecosystem remains a key political issue, particularly in developing countries. **ITU is developing Regulatory Strategic Tools to assist ICT Regulators and Policy Makers** in creating an enable environment for affordable access to the digital ecosystem.

Next generation regulation for sustainable digital transformation

The focus of **digital regulation has shifted from market players to networks to services** – and has widened to address risk as well as benefit. ICT Regulators have grown stronger, more autonomous and with an expanded mandate. Markets, in turn, have become more open, competitive and innovative – transforming livelihoods, communities and economies for two-thirds of people worldwide.

Leveraging South-South, North-South and triangular collaborative regulation

To accelerate sustainable digital transformation, it is important to work on **common approaches to collaborative digital policy, regulation and governance across economic sectors** and across borders working with ICT Regional Regulatory Associations.

Challenges in implementing Action Line C6

- **Challenge 1:** change is needed in the ICT policy and regulation frameworks to create an inclusive and conducive enabling environment, therefore there is a need to develop a common language, based on consultation and evidence; we need to reframe and operationalize policy agendas, and we need to skill up, and up again.

- **Challenge 2:** based on the outputs from our Action Line C6 facilitation meetings, one of the main challenges of collaborative regulation at national and regional level is to break across silos and break through insularity, to bring together the expertise and the enforcement needed to level the playing field across borders.

- **Challenge 3:** while governments could collaborate more closely on regulatory and economic incentives at regional and international level, what is key is an investment-friendly policy and regulatory framework to support digital transformation that positively impact all industries and markets in all sectors. It is very important to have the right incentives to encourage industry to invest on ICT technologies to enhance affordable access and reduce inequalities.

Trends and Opportunities Beyond 2025

Trends

- The new equilibrium will require a systems thinking approach to leverage the connection between digital technologies, public goods and economic activities, and to move towards lean governance models. One of the core focus areas of ICT policy makers and regulators should be to work on the design and adoption of flexible, forward-looking and light-handed regulatory frameworks to enable digital innovation.

- Consumers are confronted with new issues brought about by the wider availability of digital technologies in terms of greater choice of devices, online services and applications. Identifying pro-active policy and regulatory measures in addition to co-regulatory and self-regulatory solutions and initiatives geared towards educating and empowering consumers is essential to protect the rights of all users in an open, transparent and inclusive digital world.

- In the framework of the ITU Global Symposium of Regulators (GSR) and ITU's knowledge exchange platforms and data, research and analysis work, tools are available for effective regulation and assistance provided to members to support them to update their national regulatory frameworks to respond to the new requirements of Digital Regulation.

Trends and Opportunities Beyond 2025

Opportunities for ITU beyond 2025:

- Collaborative regulation should be a multi stakeholders-based activity, including end-users. Bring all together to collaborate is the best way to move forward.

- There are still many digital points that policy makers, regulators and stakeholders need to work together, such as market competition policy, digital taxes, fake news, privacy, security, AI, new technologies…