

Draft input to the 6th meeting of the Group of Friends of the Chair, 11 July

The Summit underlines importance of implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action and [the Tunis Commitment]. A multi-stakeholder approach to implementation at all levels should be encouraged.

The Summit recommends organizing a follow up process to WSIS at the following levels:

- national;
- regional;
- international.

On each level, the follow up would include the following elements:

- implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action [and the Tunis Commitment];
- evaluation of information society developments (including through a digital opportunity index);
- policy debate.

National level

Implementation:

Based on the WSIS outcomes, governments are encouraged to set up a national implementation framework with active involvement of the civil society and private sector.

Existing bilateral and multilateral technical assistance programmes, including those under the UN Development Assistance Framework, should be used whenever appropriate to assist governments in their implementation efforts at the national level.

Common Country Assessment reports should contain a component on ICT for development.

Evaluation and policy formulation, at the national level, would remain the prerogative of governments. Active participation in the policy debate by the national civil society and private sector should be encouraged.

Regional level

Upon requests from governments, regional inter-governmental organizations could carry out WSIS implementation activities, exchanging information and best practices at the regional level, as well as organizing policy debate on the use of ICT for development, with a focus on attaining internationally-agreed development goals, including those expressed in the Millennium Declaration. A multi-stakeholder approach and the active participation in regional activities by civil society and the private sector should be encouraged.

International level

Implementation of the WSIS Geneva Plan of Action [and the Tunis Commitment] in the UN system could be organized along the main themes and action lines in those documents.

Each UN agency, according to its mandate and competencies, and based on decisions of their respective governing bodies, could facilitate activities among different stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, to help national governments in their implementation efforts. The facilitation could include information exchange, sharing of best practices, and assistance in developing public/private and multi-stakeholder partnerships. Facilitation should be carried out within the approved budgets of the respective agencies.

The establishment of multi-stakeholder partnerships, such as the ITU-led initiative “Connect the World”, which is aimed at bridging the digital divide, should be supported and encouraged.

The modalities of coordination among the UN agencies of implementation activities should be defined by the UN Secretary General on the basis of existing practices within the UN system and within the WSIS. The experience of, and the activities undertaken by, ITU, UNESCO and UNDP in the WSIS process should continue to be used to their fullest extent.

Evaluation of the implementation process, and its results, could be undertaken with a certain frequency, including by using a methodology for a composite ICT development index (digital opportunity index). Regular publication of the index could stimulate the policy debate. The stocktaking of activities related to the implementation of the Geneva and Tunis outcomes could be a valuable source of information in the evaluation process.

Policy debate in the UN system should be organized in the framework of the follow-up to the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits in the Economic and Social fields, as provided for in UNGA Resolution 57/270. It should be an integral part of the review process of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The UN Secretary General would be requested to submit an annual report to the ECOSOC and/or UNGA on implementation activities within the UN family.

The overarching principle should be to continue the multi-stakeholder approach that has characterized all work carried out to date in the WSIS process. Continuous involvement of all stakeholders in the policy discussion after Tunis Summit is essential and the modalities of such participation should be established.