Official Submission <u>Form #1</u> on the
Outcome Documents of the WSIS +10 High-Level Event
13-17 April 2014, Sharm el-Sheikh

Background: The WSIS+10 High-Level Event will be an extended version of the WSIS Forum to address the progress made in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes related to the WSIS Action Lines under mandates of the participating agencies, while providing a platform for multistakeholder coordination of the implementation of the WSIS outcomes, with involvement and participation of all WSIS action line facilitators, other UN agencies and all WSIS stakeholders.

The WSIS+10 High-Level Event will review the WSIS Outcomes (2003 and 2005) , in particular, related to the Action Lines with a view to developing proposals on a new vision beyond 2015, potentially also exploring new targets. The meeting will be organized taking into account decisions of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly.

This open and inclusive open consultation process will result in:

- Draft Outcome Documents for consideration by the WSIS+10 High-Level Event, by 1st March 2014:

    - Draft WSIS+10 Statement on Implementation of WSIS Outcomes

    - Draft WSIS+10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015 under mandates of the participating Agencies

    (Please see the Official Submission Form #1)

- Multistakeholder guidance on the Thematic Aspects and Innovations on the Format of the WSIS +10 High-Level Event.

    (Please see the Official Submission Form #2)

Please note that formal submission should be sent to the wsis-info@itu.int not later than **20 September 2013**.

A. Your Information

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Organization:	Global eSchools' and Communities' Initiative - GESCI (Founded by the UN ICT Task Force)		
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B. Formal Input on the WSIS+10 High-Level Event Outcome Documents

Referring to the background documents i.e. the WSIS +10 Visioning Challenge, the Final Statement and Final Recommendations from the WSIS+10 Review Event Towards Knowledge Societies for Peace and Sustainable Development, the Booklet WSIS Forum 2012 & 2013: Identifying Emerging Trends and a Vision Beyond 2015 and the WSIS Forum 2013 Outcome Document, all WSIS Stakeholders are kindly invited to provide formal submissions and inputs towards the Outcome Documents of the WSIS+10 High-Level Event.

1. Draft WSIS+10 Statement on Implementation of WSIS Outcomes
(Please note that the anticipated length of this Statement is two pages)

Since the two Summits, in 2003 and 2005, WSIS Stakeholders have made every effort in implementing a common vision of the Information Society.

Overall;

a) What are the main achievements in the area of the information society, in particular, in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines, in the past ten years?

With respect to the WSIS action lines in general, the degree to which the role that ICT plays in the development of information and knowledge societies as enablers of social inclusive, economic development, environmental sustainability and peace has been relatively significant but its potential remains significantly unfulfilled. The majority of developing countries now feature ICTs as key enablers of their national visions and plans for social and economic development. However, the use and incorporation of ICT as a tool or contributor in improving governance, raising levels of social equality and inclusiveness, by and large, remains under-exploited in spite of its increasing potential. While ICT has contributed somewhat to the widening of access to education in many successful efforts to reach EFA targets, its undoubted potential to improve the quality of teaching and learning has yet to be utilised. Greater, more effective, and more sustained use of ICT has been achieved in health and in in business and enterprise development.

With respect to action line C2 'Information and Communication Infrastructure', the roll out of mobile telephony and internet infrastructure, albeit unevenly within countries, together with the availability of cheaper mobile handsets has significantly contributed to social inclusiveness and to improvements

in the lives of people. Interpersonal communications, access to information and knowledge and cheap money transfer capability have rapidly increased in recent years changing the lives of people for the better. Broadband infrastructure continues to galvanise private sector development and, in some countries, is beginning to enhance public service delivery. National and regional broadband network infrastructure continues to be improved. Telecommunications and broadband internet infrastructure continue to be pushed out beyond capital cities to urban areas with national WANs being developed with large fibre pipes. Internet speeds continue to improve. However, most rural areas continue to suffer from lack of access to ICT. Lack of electricity reduces the likelihood of early access to ICT services in rural or remote areas.

In reference to action line C3, access to information and knowledge has widened and deepened in the last 10 years with more opportunities available to exercise freedom of expression and engage in social networking than ever before. Traditional mass media (TV & newspapers) have benefited from the use of ICT and are providing a significantly better news and information service to the people, sic knowledge is also more widely available. Text messaging is relatively widespread and, with the imminent availability of cheap smart phones we will rapidly see the emergence of social media for communication and information. Developing country governments are beginning to provide more access (through open data initiatives and are even legislating for open data) through various communication resources, notably the Internet, to public official information. Establishing legislation to enable greater access to information and the preservation of public data is attracting more champions (such as Kenya).

In terms of action line C7 'ICT Applications', even in the least developed countries new ICT applications and online services contextualised to local needs are beginning to ease daily hardships for the most marginalised of communities and citizens. In a few countries mobile money transfer applications have made personal financing and basic money management immeasurably easier (and even possible) for many of the world's poorest people. Programmers in developing countries continue to bring ICT applications to local health, finance and education markets, which further fuels creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation in domestic economies.

With regard to action line C4 'Capacity Building' developing countries either have, or are, in the process of developing national policies for the use and integration of ICTs in education and training at all levels, including in curriculum development, teacher training, institutional administration and management, and in support of the concept of lifelong learning. Implementation is more patchy with vast numbers of schools and students not yet benefiting from the improvements that ICT can bring to learning and teaching. There is also more cognizance now of the importance of removing the gender barriers to ICT education and training and promoting equal training opportunities in ICT-related fields for women and girls.

b) What key identified challenges would need to be addressed in the next 10 years?

> *In general, countries must widen access to communications media, information and knowledge through improved telecoms and broadband internet infrastructural provision. This, together with the availability of cheap smart phones and mobile devises will lead to their mass diffusion and provide access to online content and the localisation of ICT applications, support e-commerce, e-health and e-agriculture.*
>
> *GESCI is concerned that the provision of a quality learning experience to equip youth and adult learners with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to lead their societies towards inclusive, peaceful and sustainable development is still severely lacking in most developing countries. In particular, GESCI recognises that a lack of appropriate policies (including a lack of policy coherence across*

key knowledge society sectors such as ICT, Science and Innovation, and Education) and a growing skills gap between rich and poor within countries, between countries, and between regions of the world, is hindering economic and social development. Without the required human capital to fuel economic and social development, developing countries will not be able to develop sustainably, eradicate the digital divide and transition from agrarian and (in some cases industrial) to knowledge societies.

Education policies, while increasingly acknowledging the central role of ICTs in the modernisation and enhancement of education, face tremendous challenges when it comes to their implementation. These challenges include the lack of capacity of teachers to integrate ICT in the learning experience to inculcate 21st century skill sets in youth; lack of access to ICTs; lack of infrastructure (especially in rural areas); lack of implementable policies (policies that are visionary but not realistic and do not take account of parallel challenges and opportunities in other sectors that will impact policy implementation). The lack of power and physical school facilities continues to be a huge impediment to the exploitation of the enormous potential that ICT had to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

A critical issue is the lack of appropriate and transformational leadership to craft and champion knowledge society enabling policies; an outdated Technical and Vocational Skills Development (TVSD) sector that cannot equip unemployed youth with the skills they require to be absorbed by modern industries/knowledge industries or to be equipped with the entrepreneurial skills for self-employment and job creation.

GESCI believes that there is an urgent need to provide modern training in a wide range of digital and technology-based skills to meet existing employment opportunities but also to allow creative youth to participate in the development and growth of digitally-based industries including the cultural industries.

The massive pressure on the education system as a consequence of dramatic increases in primary enrollment and the introduction of free basic education, has been eased immeasurably by greater provision of schools and teachers but with insufficient educational budgets to provide a quality education to young people. However, this success had led to a reduction in the quality of both teaching and learning, mostly due to the lack of teachers and the poor quality of those employed.

GESCI believes that the challenge of fully meeting Goal 3 of the MDGs (achieving universal primary education) cannot be met by traditional responses and expenditures. For many countries the capital cost of building and equipping increasing numbers of schools together with associated running costs, the provision of power and funding traditional models of teaching and learning are beyond their reach. ICT now enables a new community-based model which will provide an inter-generational approach to primary education and which, in additions to delivering the regular curriculum, would adopt a "One Planet Earth One People" approach to issues of the environment and sustainable development and to ethical issues relating to safe and responsible use of the internet.

There exists a resoundingly insufficient promotion of open education resource (OER) content and applications resulting in the slow creep of proprietary software monopolization in developing country virgin markets. This is happening despite national policy promoting OER.
Finally, the action lines do not pay due regard to the role that ICTs can play in 'legitimising' or accrediting informal education, which is the nature of the education the majority of those earning a basic wage in developing countries have had.

C2. Information and communication infrastructure: an essential foundation for the Information Society

- *Encourage the use of unused wireless capacity, including satellite, in developed countries and in particular in developing countries, to provide access in remote areas, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and to improve low-cost connectivity in developing countries. Special concern should be given to the Least Developed Countries in their efforts in establishing telecommunication infrastructure.*

- *Governments should take action, in the framework of national development policies, in order to support an enabling and competitive environment for the necessary investment in ICT infrastructure and for the development of new services.*

- *Develop and strengthen national, regional and international broadband network infrastructure, including delivery by satellite and other systems, to help in providing the capacity to match the needs of countries and their citizens and for the delivery of new ICT-based services. Support technical, regulatory and operational studies by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and, as appropriate, other relevant international organizations in order to:*

- *Promote the provision of global high-speed satellite services for underserved areas such as remote and sparsely populated areas;*

- *Explore other systems that can provide high-speed connectivity.*

C3 Access to Information and Knowledge

- *Encourage research and promote awareness among all stakeholders of the possibilities offered by different software models, and the means of their creation, including proprietary, open-source and free software, in order to increase competition, freedom of choice and affordability, and to enable all stakeholders to evaluate which solution best meets their requirements.*

- *Encourage initiatives to facilitate access, including free and affordable access to open access journals and books, and open archives for scientific information.*

- *Governments, and other stakeholders, should establish sustainable multi-purpose community public access points, providing affordable or free-of-charge access for their citizens to the various communication resources, notably the Internet. These access points should, to the extent possible, have sufficient capacity to provide assistance to users, in libraries, educational institutions, public administrations, post offices or other public places, with special emphasis on rural and underserved areas, while respecting intellectual property rights (IPRs) and encouraging the use of information and sharing of knowledge.*

C4 Capacity Building

- *Develop domestic policies to ensure that ICTs are fully integrated in education and training at all levels, including in curriculum development, teacher training, institutional administration and management, and in support of the concept of lifelong learning.*

- *In the context of national educational policies, and taking into account the need to eradicate adult illiteracy, ensure that young people are equipped with knowledge and skills to use ICTs, including the capacity to analyse and treat information in creative and innovative ways, share their expertise and participate fully in the Information Society.*

- *Work on removing the gender barriers to ICT education and training and promoting equal training opportunities in ICT-related fields for women and girls. Early intervention programmes in science and technology should target young girls with the aim of increasing the number of women in ICT careers. Promote the exchange of best practices on the integration of gender perspectives in ICT education.*

- *Develop distance learning, training and other forms of education and training as part of capacity building programmes. Give special attention to developing countries and especially LDCs in different levels of human resources development.*

- *Design and implement regional and international cooperation activities to enhance the capacity, notably, of leaders and operational staff in developing countries and LDCs, to apply ICTs effectively in the whole range of educational activities. This should include delivery of education outside the educational structure, such as the workplace and at home.*

C6 Enabling Environment

- *Governments should foster a supportive, transparent, pro-competitive and predictable policy, legal and regulatory framework, which provides the appropriate incentives to investment and community development in the Information Society.*

- *Governments need to formulate national strategies, which include e-government strategies, to make public administration more transparent, efficient and democratic*

- *Governments, in collaboration with stakeholders, are encouraged to formulate conducive ICT policies that foster entrepreneurship, innovation and investment, and with particular reference to the promotion of participation by women.*

- *GESCI would contend that access to knowledge and information must be immeasurably more equitable in terms of both reach and quality, than it is currently, in order for African knowledge societies to emerge. In Africa's knowledge societies ICTs will act as an enabler for an inclusive and dynamic learning experience (that enriches both formal and informal education) that will inculcate skills in a (majority) youth population who will then be equipped for employment and to contribute to their domestic economies through legitimate and ICT enabled small-to-medium enterprise development, supported by national policies that foster regional trade harmonization. Such national enterprise development policies should provide SMEs with local, domestic, regional and international export markets for refined and added-value goods and services (through technological innovation, and the contextualization of available innovations to meet local and regional agricultural, health, commercial, and educational needs).*
Access to capital will be more widely available to support enterprise creation, and this capital will be brought, in part, and initially, through increased foreign investment triggered by the availability of appropriate human resource capital for knowledge intensive industries.
- *Recognising the economic potential of ICTs for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), they should be assisted in increasing their competitiveness by streamlining administrative procedures, facilitating their access to capital and enhancing their capacity to participate in ICT-related projects.*

- *Governments should act as model users and early adopters of e-commerce in accordance with their level of socio-economic development.*

C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content

- Create policies that support the respect, preservation, promotion and enhancement of cultural and linguistic diversity and cultural heritage within the Information Society, as reflected in relevant agreed United Nations documents, including UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. This includes encouraging governments to design cultural policies to promote the production of cultural, educational and scientific content and the development of local cultural industries suited to the linguistic and cultural context of the users.

- *Support efforts to develop and use ICTs for the preservation of natural and, cultural heritage, keeping it accessible as a living part of today's culture. This includes developing systems for ensuring continued access to archived digital information and multimedia content in digital repositories, and support archives, cultural collections and libraries as the memory of humankind.*
- *Locally produced content and cultural expression through ICT.   Through the digital expression of cultural diversity Africa will develop its cultural creative industries, alleviating pressure on the traditional tourism sector.*

- *Develop and implement policies that preserve, affirm, respect and promote diversity of cultural expression and indigenous knowledge and traditions through the creation of varied information content and the use of different methods, including the digitization of the educational, scientific and cultural heritage.*

c) What do the WSIS Stakeholders envision for an information/ knowledge society ensuring that the youth, women, poor, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples benefit from the enormous opportunities provided by the ICTs?

There's a solid evidence base that confirms that assistive technologies provide an enhanced learning experience for those with a range of disabilities. Exploiting assistive technologies will diminish the need to assign those with disabilities to specific institutions. Moreover, those with disabilities and with the least means to access education beyond their local educational institutions would have an opportunity to continue with their education with the aid of assistive technologies and associated teaching practices. Through holistic technology integration the Technical and Vocational Skills Development sector can reform its course offerings to align with knowledge industries and in so doing attract and absorb growing unemployed youth into the workforce. Women who are traditionally assigned to 'typical' female courses in TVSD institutions, which, when work can be found in these areas (knitting, beauty care etc.), attracts low-pay, can, through the modernifcation of course offerings through ICT, be endowed with skills that will raise their standards of living and therefore those of their families and wider communities. In short, women, children, and those with disabilities, in a knowledge society, will have equal educational opportunities and universal access to a quality education and health care systems.

2. Draft WSIS +10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015 under mandates of the participating agencies (Definition of new priorities and objectives for WSIS Action Lines beyond 2015)

Please note: Participating agency refers to the Agencies tasked by the WSIS Outcomes to lead facilitation of WSIS Action Lines; See Annex to the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society.

a) In your opinion, what are the **key emerging trends** in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) landscape that should be considered in the implementation of WSIS Action Lines beyond 2015? **Please specify the Action Line you are providing an input for**.

Please note: You may wish to refer to the WSIS Forum 2012 & 2013 Booklet on Identifying Emerging Trends and a Vision Beyond 2015, available at www.wsis.org/review/mpp.

- C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
  - o *Multi-stakeholder partnerships while very challenging to manage, are an important trend in securing buy-in for major initiatives. The richness of perspectives guarantees that policies, guidelines and initiatives stemming from such multi-stakeholder initiatives possess the breadth and depth to ensure that they remain applicable and relevant over the medium to long term.*
- C2. Information and communication infrastructure
  - o *Most African countries will not make significant gains in KS development unless access to low-cost connectivity becomes more widespread. The use of unused wireless capacity, including satellite to provide access in remote areas should be encouraged.*
- C3. Access to information and knowledge
  - o *Encourage research and promote awareness among all stakeholders of the possibilities offered by different software models, and the means of their creation, including proprietary, open-source and free software, in order to increase competition, freedom of choice and affordability, and to enable all stakeholders to evaluate which solution best meets their requirements.*
- C4. Capacity building
  - o *Leadership development for national KS policy-making – African Leadership in ICT (ALICT) Develop domestic policies to ensure that ICTs are fully integrated in education and training at all levels, including in curriculum development, teacher training, institutional administration and management, and in support of the concept of lifelong learning.*

- C6. Enabling environment
  - o *Governments, in collaboration with stakeholders, are encouraged to formulate conducive ICT policies that foster entrepreneurship, innovation and investment, and with particular reference to the promotion of participation by women.*

    Recognising the economic potential of ICTs for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), they should be assisted in increasing their competitiveness by streamlining administrative procedures, facilitating their access to capital and enhancing their capacity to participate in ICT-related projects.

    Governments should act as model users and early adopters of e-commerce in accordance with their level of socio-economic development.
- C7. ICT Applications:

- o E-learning
  - ▪ *Develop domestic policies to ensure that ICTs are fully integrated in education and training at all levels, including in curriculum development, teacher training, institutional administration and management, and in support of the concept of lifelong learning.*

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- C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
  - o *Develop and implement policies that preserve, affirm, respect and promote diversity of cultural expression and indigenous knowledge and traditions through the creation of varied information content and the use of different methods, including the digitization of the educational, scientific and cultural heritage.*

b) What are areas that have **not been adequately captured by the framework of the existing 11 WSIS Action Lines** and would need to be addressed beyond 2015? **Please specify the Action Line you are providing an input for**.

- C3. Access to information and knowledge
  - o *Research in, investment in, and development of, good practice models for m-learning to widen access to learning opportunities to rural populations (in particular) in developing countries. The developed country focus on laptops and tablets as the principal modus operandi of the education system has also limited opportunities to invest in, and explore, use of smaller and other hand-held devices to extend educational opportunities to rural populations in many African countries where limited electricity makes widespread roll-out of computer labs and one-to-one laptop models of education impractical and unaffordable on a wide-scale for the near future.*
- C4. Capacity building

  PUBLC SECTOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY ADVANCEMENT

  The Action lines tend to focus on the capacity building of ICT and IT professionals as an enabler of knowledge society development. In fact, from a developing country perspective in particular, it is the capacitating of current and future architects of KS policy (education, STI and Information and Communications) in the skills of coherent, future proofed, and realistic policy development and strategic planning that best prepares an enabling environment for knowledge society development.

  The action lines make but brief mention of the role of teachers, trainers, lecturers and instructors in the creation of sufficient national capacities to facilitate knowledge society advancement. In many African countries, these people are absolutely central to the provision of any kind of quality education, in a region of the world where limited access for many, to information and knowledge, connectivity, and supplemental private tuition means that the local teacher/instructor/lecturer/ is often the only means of any child or adult accessing a basic education. Without greater investment in teacher professional development initiatives that fully integrate ICT in curricula, and raise the quality of teaching and learning at the primary and secondary level, too many African youth will emerge from years of education without more than basic numeracy and literacy skills, making subsequent acquisition of modern 21st century skills a remote likelihood, and finding gainful employment even less likely.

- C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society
  - *There must be programmes of awareness raising at both school and community levels as the ethical and responsible use of the internet and social media in general.*

3. Ensuring accountability of the WSIS Action Lines beyond 2015 (Targets and Indicators for an open and inclusive information/knowledge society for all beyond 2015)

Please note that information provided under this point will be relevant to the second physical meeting of the open consultation process on WSIS+10 High-Level Event.

a) How can the **monitoring and evaluation** of future implementation of the WSIS process, in particular, the Action Lines be better enabled?

If indicators are contextualized to different regions of the world taking into account economic disparities between regions, and goals and milestones embedded in national visions, they can be incorporated into national strategies for ICT integration in health, education, science, and agriculture more readily. By creating multi-stakeholder partnerships on the knowledge society between key KS sectors of govt. (including education, Information and Communications, and Science and Innovation) and international organisations operation in the KS domain and then incorporating contextualised KS indicators into Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, and national policies, KS development can be measured more easily.

b) What are the **priority areas** that the post-2015 WSIS process should focus on and which goals and targets could monitor the new vision for WSIS beyond 2015?

Goals should include the provision of an inclusive quality education through ICT integration with a particular focus on teacher education; distance learning programmes; transformation of the TVSD sector through holistic ICT integration; leadership capacity building for policy coherence for the knowledge society; and the cultivation of digital creative industries.

4. Any additional comments or suggestions

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