

## **RWANDA THEMATIC WORKSHOP AT THE WSIS 2023**

### **Theme: "Harnessing Emerging Technologies for the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals: Role of Governments"**

#### **1.0. Introduction**

The theme of this workshop focuses on the role of governments in promoting the use of emerging technologies to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With the rapid pace of technological advancements, it is essential for governments to understand how these technologies can be leveraged to address the complex and interrelated development challenges of the SDGs.

Rwanda has made significant progress in leveraging technology for sustainable development in recent years. The country has implemented various innovative initiatives to leverage technology for sustainable development.

The workshop will bring together experts in the field to discuss the current state of play and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

#### **2.0. Objectives**

The objectives of this workshop are to:

1. To examine the current state of government policies related to emerging technologies and their impact on sustainable development.
2. To identify the key challenges faced by governments in promoting the adoption of emerging technologies for the achievement of the SDGs.
3. To explore best practices for government approaches that support the responsible and inclusive use of emerging technologies for sustainable development.
4. To provide recommendations for future government policies that support the integration of emerging technologies into sustainable development strategies.

#### **3.0. Link to WSIS Action Lines**

This workshop aligns with several WSIS Action Lines, including Action Line C5 (Building Confidence and Security in the Use of ICTs), Action Line C6 (Enabling Environment), and Action Line C7 (ICT Applications and Digital Content). The discussions and recommendations arising from the workshop will inform the implementation of these Action Lines, particularly in the context of emerging technologies and their role in achieving the SDGs.

#### **4.0. Link to SDGs**

This session highlights role of governments in leveraging emerging technologies to improve governance and service delivery as essential for achieving several SDGs. For instance, digital platforms/technologies can be used to improve citizen engagement and accountability (SDG 16), healthcare (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), and access to financial services (SDG 8).

Harnessing the potential of emerging technologies for sustainable development requires a coordinated effort from governments. Governments have a critical role to

play in creating an enabling environment for the deployment of emerging technologies, through investment in research and development, support innovation ecosystems, and create regulatory frameworks that balance innovation with safety, privacy, and ethical concerns.

### 5.0. Link to WSIS Process

The session's focus on emerging technologies is particularly relevant to the WSIS implementation because new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and the Internet of Things, have the potential to revolutionize development and make progress towards the SDGs faster and more efficient. Governments play a crucial role in ensuring that these emerging technologies are used for the greater good and in a manner that is consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

Thus, the session on "Harnessing Emerging Technologies for the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals: Role of Governments" builds on the WSIS implementation by highlighting the role of governments in harnessing emerging technologies to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

### 6.0. Methodology and Proposed Panelist

The workshop will be organized as a series of panel discussions and interactive sessions. Each session will feature presentations by experts in the identified topics and will be followed by a question and answer session. Proposed agenda of the workshop is as follows:

#### Key Note Speaker:

- **Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava**, Director, BDT at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
  - **Speaking on** "The Role of Telecommunication Technologies in Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Development".

No	Panel Discussion	Panelist
1.	Current state of play: policies and strategies related to emerging technologies and their impact on sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Yolanda Martinez</b> Senior project lead for GovStack at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).</li> </ul>
2.	Challenges and opportunities for promoting the adoption of emerging technologies for the achievement of the SDGs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Preetam Maloor</b>, Head of the Emerging Technologies Division at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).</li> </ul>
3.	Role of government, private sector, civil society, and academia in leveraging emerging technologies to achieve the SDGs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Aminata Amadou Garba</b>, Senior (Technology) Coordinator, Telecommunications Network &amp;</li> </ul>

		Spectrum Management Division (BDT) International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
4.	A toolkit for start-ups in the utilities sectors: Foster multi-stakeholder partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. George Kibala Bauer</b>, Director – Digital Utilities at the GSMA Mobile for development.</li> </ul>
5.	Showcase Rwanda's experience and best practices in harnessing emerging technologies for sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Esther Kunda</b>, Director General, Innovation &amp; Emerging Technologies at Ministry of ICT and Innovation, Government of Rwanda.</li> </ul>

## 7.0. Target Audience

The workshop is designed for government officials, development practitioners, academia, private sector representatives, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders involved in technology-driven initiatives for sustainable development.

## 8.0. Expected Outcomes

The workshop will result with:

1. **Increased Awareness:** The workshop will raise awareness among government officials and other involved stakeholders in technology-driven initiatives about the potential of emerging technologies to support sustainable development and the role that governments can play in promoting their adoption.
2. **Knowledge Sharing:** Participants will have the opportunity to share their experiences, best practices, and lessons learned in implementing emerging technologies in support of sustainable development.
3. **Identifying Opportunities:** Participants will have the opportunity to identify specific opportunities for the use of emerging technologies in their respective countries to support sustainable development and the achievement of the UN SDGs.
4. **Policy Recommendations:** The workshop will result in a set of recommendations for government policies and initiatives that support the adoption of emerging technologies.

## 9.0. Conclusion

The workshop will provide valuable insights into the current state of play and the challenges and opportunities for adoption of emerging technologies for the achievement of the SDGs. The discussions and recommendations arising from the workshop will inform the development of future government policies that support the integration of emerging technologies into sustainable development strategies, in line with the WSIS Action Lines.