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INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION

WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY FORUM 2023

HIGH-LEVEL POLICY SESSION 4: Inclusiveness – access to
information and knowledge for all / Bridging Digital Divides

ROOM A
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>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Okay? Please have a seat. I'm
Alessandro Caforio. I am Chair of the university whose mission
has been democratizing the access to knowledge. I'm honored to
open and facilitate this distinguished panel.
    In the High-Level Policy Session number 4 about
inclusiveness, access to information and knowledge for all,
bridging digital divides.
    Before giving the floor to the speakers, just a review of
procedures. I will introduce all the speakers, asking them an
introductory question. The speakers will have four minutes to
make their intervention.
    At some point a bell with gently and magically ring when
four minutes are ending. We will try to respect this timing to
give the proper room for every speaker and then at the end if we
will have some room, some questions will come from the audience.
    Now I have the pleasure to give the floor to the
Facilitator, Dr. Tawfik Jelassi, the information Director from
UNESCO.

>> TAWFIK JELASSI: Thank you very much. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon to all of you. Clearly in this day's digital age access to information is not any more a convenience. It is a must. I might say it is a human right. Access to information.

When you talk about freedom of expression as a human right, we cannot express ourselves if we cannot access information, especially information that is in the public domain.

We believe also that the access to information is the key to unlocking a wealth of information. We access information to use it, but we access information also to capitalize on it for value creation. It is also at the heart of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

So keeping that in mind, UNESCO has been at the forefront of the efforts over the past several decades to strengthen the right to information and to create an enabling environment for access to information.

Let me be more specific. What has UNESCO done? UNESCO has been charged with monitoring SDG indicator, the Sustainable Development Goals indicator 16.10.2.

With that, UNESCO has been having the responsibility to help Member States to increase access to information by helping them to draft information access laws, but also to implement them. Through constitutional, statutory, or policy guarantees that guarantee citizens and further access to public information.

We have taken this responsibility seriously and I am very pleased and humbled to report to you the progress we have made over the recent decades.

If you go back to 1990, there were only 14 -- one-four -- 14 countries worldwide with such information access law. Today we can report that 136 countries have implemented such information access law. That is almost a ten-fold increase in the number of countries that have drafted.

(Background noise.)

>> TAWFIK JELASSI: Sorry, this is not an announcement for you to take a coffee break. Let me give a counter announcement to stay in this room, please.

(Laughter.)

>> TAWFIK JELASSI: Let me just finish the sentence I was pronouncing, what you have seen since 1990s, we have seen a ten-fold increase in the number of countries that have drafted and implemented laws to guarantee citizens access to public information. We move from just 14 countries to 136 countries.

But you may say that drafting laws is good, but not sufficient. I would agree with you. What matters most is the effective implementation of such laws in the countries concerned.

And here I would like to mention what UNESCO has put together, the draft policy guidelines for the development and promotion of governmental public domain information. This draft policy guidelines will be presented at this WSIS Forum in Geneva this week.

So we believe that these guidelines provide a valuable tool to ensure that the right to information is protected for all.

Let me finally say that sustainable and equitable strategies are very much needed to ensure that everyone, regardless of gender, of age, of physical ability, regardless of social economic status should have access to information.

And we must pay special attention to inclusion and equity for learners who are at a disadvantage due to multiple forms of discrimination.

Let us redouble our efforts to strengthen the guarantees for the right to information, increasing connectivity, competencies, and Internet access in a truly multilingual way. It is by doing so that we can create a inclusive society based on information and knowledge that can benefit everyone. Thank you.

>> ALLESANDRO CAFORIO: Thank you, Dr. Jelassi. Thank you for giving us the contextualization of this session at the high level of policymaking and guidelines provision.

Now, I will give the floor to Excellency Dr. Em Stojmenova Duh, Chairperson of WSIS Forum 2023 from Slovenia.

The question I pose to you: What is Slovenia doing on to create a more inclusive digital society.

>> EMILIJA STOJMENOVA DUH: Slovenia is doing many things. We are providing access to the Internet, of course, to connectivity. So I am happy to share that Slovenia is one of the countries that has connection to connectivity as a universal service. That means that every woman, man on their permanent residence, they can receive connectivity. So it doesn't have to be very high-speed but functional speed, which means they can use the digital services that are available there.

Another thing is, of course, the digital skills and competencies. We spoke a lot about that today and during the next days I'm sure that we will. So we want to make sure that everyone has the right skills and competencies to know how to use digital technologies that are available out there.

In our country we have many of our public services already available digital. So it is very important for us that people will be able to use them as well.

We have started several initiatives. Many of them are also for elderly people because what we found out is that only 50 percent of our citizens have only basic digital skills. We starting skilling our citizens. For us it was important that we will go to the citizens and not wait for them to come to us.

So especially for the elderly, we have a project called mobile heros, which is a mobile classroom which moves around the country, visits the rural areas. Then there are trainings for the elderly.

Then we have just started another project, digital for more women in ICT. Here we will organise different workshops, organise also different trainings for young girls, but also for women that are older in the labor market so that they will get the ICT skills that are necessary.

We have seen this good practice from Czech Republic. We have brought the same practice to Slovenia as well. We are organising training for people in industries which will not exist anymore. So these people will not have their jobs in the future. We want to make sure that they will have the skills that are needed on the other side. The main problem that we are facing in our country currently in the industry that they don't have employees. So it is not anymore about the financial resources, but it is about where to find workers. This is how we want also to help the companies.

So as mentioned earlier when we were speaking about digital inclusion for us it is important first to make sure that everybody will have access to the Internet. Also here we are speaking about to not only have the Internet to your home, but also to be able to pay for the Internet. So we have some measures there as well to help the people who cannot pay for the Internet so that the government can help them.

Then, of course, the right skills and competencies that are necessary.

Another thing that we found out is that many people don't have the equipment they need. So now the government already prepared the act and this act will be accepted this month by the parliament. We are establishing so-called computer fund, which means there will be equipment for the people who cannot afford themselves to buy this equipment. They can borrow from this public fund.

So maybe just shortly how we are dealing with digital inclusion.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Thank you very much, Dr. Stojmenova, and thank you for explaining this enabling environment, technologies provision, connectivity and also skills and competencies for all. Those are to compensate for the lack of labor market which is emerging all over Europe. Thank you again.

Now I would like to invite His Excellency Pawel Lewandowski, Prime Minister for Poland. What are the will actions that the government is taking to accelerate digital communication in Poland and provide your perspective on how the digital economy

might impact the Sustainable Development Goals. And with respect to COVID, how did digital towing help Poland to overcome such challenges.

>> PAWEL LEWANDOWSKI: In developed countries such as Poland, Slovenia and generally countries in the European Union. We have the same challenges and therefore we have similar solutions.

When I heard what Ms. Stojmenova said I thought she was actually reading my paper when I have very similar activities, activities focused not just only building connectivity, giving away or providing people with the equipment but also with the access to the broadband Internet, with building skills, with focusing on women. And to provide them skills to become experts in ICT sector.

I believe that solutions are universal for countries, as I mentioned with the same sustainable development.

We in particular decided to tell you about two significant projects. One of them is the nationwide educational network which has been created during the first lock down in Poland. It very much helped to combat the whole disadvantages that were caused by COVID-19. And they let all students in Poland to participate in education. Because we were back then already prepared for such a situation. Of course, that network was not designed for the situation, but it turned out to be very effective during the crisis.

We connected every school in Poland to the gigabit Internet and therefore every teacher had access from the school even in rural areas where there is not enough coverage of the other means of Internet. So this thing we like to recommend to you all. Start with schools. Then we decided to connect please stations, fire stations, health care centers and other public entities, other public institutions. I believe that such a connectivity will allow everyone to access to services connected to eHealth, E education, and modern administration.

These are the crucial things for the entire state to work in every crisis that can occur. Even during war, which as you probably know turned out to be very effective in Ukraine because they have many similar solutions and it turns out those solutions are very effective there.

Some other things that we wanted to say. We have one flagship initiative called operational programme digital Poland which was submitted for a prize and we gained a WSIS prize back then. Carrying out 116 projects for which we were given 1 million Euro. We are focused on building infrastructure. Everyone can afford right now to buy certain equipment. Of course, there are some groups of people who are excluded from the possibility of buying something. Therefore, we have special

dedicated programmes similar to those mentioned by Madam Minister, especially dedicated to students, teachers, and the elderly.

People 60 +. In Poland we have expectsly dedicated programme to build a special, how to say, smart societies and communities equipped with modern tablets, computers, and of course they are managed by people who are ICT experts to teach them how to use them.

And these are the solutions that I think are worth mentioning and worth implementing in other countries. Thank you very much.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you, Dr. Lewandowski. You mentioned eServices all over your ski. Your best practices in Europe from your point of view. This is very interesting to understand how European countries are developing services also for including usuallily excluded groups, filling in the gender gap, but also providing support for the silver age and active aging of this part of the population that at least in Europe and all over the world is dramatically increasing.

Thank you again.

Now we should go to Mr. Omer Fatih Sayan, administer from Turkiye. Mr. Fatih Sayan, let me know if he is connected. He will appear remotely.

>> OMER FATIH SAYAN: Yes. Greetings from an car ra. Dear participants I would like to start with the first question, the digital inclusion is the associate lodge cam process that encompasses individuals, communities and vulnerable groups being able to have access to digital skills to use Internet technologies.

Therefore, to be able to participate and benefit from today's growing Information Society.

And as the world becomes increasingly digitized, technologies repeatedly and rapidly transforming how people access information and knowledge, opening up new opportunities for inclusiveness.

In Turkiye, we are committed to leveraging these technological trends to promote greater access and include similar for all citizens. As years progress technology becomes more and more present in daily life leading to emergence of new trends.

One of the most promising emerging trends in technology that can help to increase access to information and knowledge is AI. And AI-powered systems can analyze large amounts of data, make predictions based on data which can help to improve decision making across a wide range of industries including education, healthcare, and transporttation.

For example, A ICANN also be used to create more innovative transportation systems that are more efficient and affordable.

Another emerging trend that holds significant promise for promoting inclusiveness and access to information and knowledge is IOT and IoT involves the interconnectivity of every day objects from smart homes to available devices.

There is, however, it is essential to note that these emerging trends also pose significant challenges that must be addressed to ensure that they are deployed in a way that is equitable and beneficial for all.

For example, there are concerns about the potential of AI to perpetuate bias an exacerbate existing inequalities if not designed and used responsibly. On the other hand, rolling out infrastructure, developing universal access, and ensuring that the use of spectrum is strategic and well managed, aims to make communication infrastructure available to all, but also coverage is not enough. People may live in an area that has mobile Internet coverage but many may not be able to afford the headsets or mobile time or data bundles needed to use it.

Even when people can afford this equipment, they may not be able to access because of language or other factors. Ensuring that no one is left behind therefore requires that ICT communication is available, affordable, and accessible. And the second question, in order to promote social inclusion in opportunities sector, we have published procedures or principles regarding measures for segments that need to be supported socially. According to this regulation, operators in Turkiye who have more than 200,000 subscribers are obliged to take some measures regarding disabled people, veterans, widows and/or fans of duty and veterans. In addition to this, a campaign was conducted for three years from 2017 to 2020 aiming to increase Internet penetration and enable more people to access and utilize ICT services, with low priced plans for the target group who never had any Internet early subscription.

2 million new subscribers benefited from this campaign, which accelerated the fixed household Internet penetration in Turkiye and let me give another initiative that has been carried out in Turkiye to, regional, all same Internet offices within every country, economic social conditions may differ by region which will probably result in Internet penetration rates targeted to some specific regions even townships within a country may have Internet adoption and connect more people.

The regional Internet offices are increasing fixed household penetration by connecting 250,000 new households as of December 2022.

Another initiative -- yes?

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: If you can hear me, I would like to invite you to give a conclusive line in order to save time for other panelists.

>> OMER FATIH SAYAN: Thank you very much. We signed a protocol between the Minister of -- during the COVID pandemic. With this protocol subscribers with educational needs get eight gigabytes of free Internet and mobile operators are offering free Internet service for distance education traf thank you very much for your attention.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you, Excellency and thank you for outlining these emerging trends and how you are incorporating these into your policies, moving now to Dr. Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, Minister of development in Nigeria. How can you bridge the digital divide and promote inclusiveness in terms of of access to knowledge and information for all citizens and on digital literacy how can government promote digital literacy and skills to ensure all citizens have equitable access to information?

>> KASHIFU INUWA ABDULLAHI: Thank you very much.

Okay, thank you, that's great. Thank you very much for the opportunity. Just as was indicated I am representing my chief executive who is unfortunately cannot join online. So bridging the digital divide. I'm sure a lot has been said already about how other clients are doing to bridge digital divide. Inclusiveness and access to information and knowledge for all are essential components of a fair and adequate society.

Unfortunately there are many digital divides that prevent people from accessing the information and resources necessary. They need to thrive in a digital world. One of the most significant digital divides is lack of access to the Internet and digital technologies. This divide affects people both in the developed and Developing Countries. I mean, as mentioned earlier by other speakers.

With low income households an rural communities being particularly vulnerable, without access to the Internet people are unable to access critical information, participate in online learning or take advantage of digital job opportunities and other opportunities for job and wealth creation.

To bridge these digital divides, as the question alluded to, it is necessary to invest in digital infrastructure, including high-speed Internet access and to provide training and support for people who have little exposure to digital technologies.

Governments, businesses, Non-governmental Organizations, Civil Society organisations, all have a role toll play in bridging the digital divide.

Another important aspect of inclusiveness is ensuring that information and knowledge are available in multiple languages.

That also has been mentioned by other speakers earlier and formats.

Many people may not have the ability to read or understand information in a single language. For instance, in Nigeria, you know, it is a country of over 200 different languages. And providing information in one language makes it very difficult for all to have access. So it is important that information is provided in several languages. So that is one very critical consideration for us all.

Now, in Nigeria we have, of course, under the AGUN Chair, Professor Satami developed a policy document that has been driving this development of ensuring the digital divide, call the national policy for Nigeria.

In addition to that we have also developed the national broadband plan, among several other initiatives.

Now in the plan in particular, key areas of intervention by government were identified. Four key areas particularly. One is infrastructure. Deliberate effort just as the previous speakers have said. Deliberate effort has to be made by government towards providing infrastructure.

In terms of high-speed Internet access, in terms of all the relevant infrastructure, and also the devices that are required in order to have access to that information and bridging the digital divide.

Policy is another.

(Bell rings.)

>> KASHIFU INUWA ABDULLAHI: Policy is another thing that has to be met. Policies are there. We set up cities of target. I'm pleased to say that actually for the broadband implementation we have been able to reach our targets in terms of penetration, in terms of access, in terms of speed, in terms of demand and all the targets that we have set.

So we are on course to achieving the targets that we have set in the broadband plan. Thank you very much.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Thank you. And thank you for being on time, for providing us this overview of the situation in your country.

Now, to turn to another two speakers attending remotely. First one is engineer Gilbert Camacho Mora, Council member, telecommunications from Costa Rica. Engineer Mora, you are connected?

>> GILBERT CAMACHO MORA: Yes, thank you very much.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Let me ask you the questions and then you have four minutes. Please you will hear the bell gently ringing at the four minutes. So to continue to promote accessibility to telecommunication services for all, a chapter on the liability operators and providers was incorporated into

the new version of the regulations and protection of bridging for end user of telecommunications services from, regarding the end users with disabilities. The first question is, what kind of inclusion actions have you implemented for the telecommunications operators through the regulatory rules?

And then about the connecting the programme recognised by the ITU at the WSIS 2016, how has this programme contributed to promoting inclusiveness, access to information and knowledge for people with disabilities in Costa Rica? Please?

>> GILBERT CAMACHO MORA: Yes, thank you for the question. Coast is honored to participate in this panel. The regulations has implemented regulations to include people with disabilities into the benefits of telecommunications.

By means of regulations there is some obligation to telecom operators. The Delegation provides accessible information on the -- in content of digital.

(Captioner having some difficulty hearing this speaker clearly.)

>> GILBERT CAMACHO MORA: The responsibility with adapted characteristics facilities.

All applications which favor accessibility on behalf of people with disabilities.

In addition, telecom operators must be available to provide face-to-face or remote assistance to people with disabilities.

By November 2022 through connected households, which is part of SUTEL, we have enhanced the ability. We have provided Internet access to more than 20,000 households with people with disabilities. In addition for that, the centers project we delivered advisors with special keyboards for recognition of consonants, vowels and punctuation mark as well as inclusion of a multi-central piece of letters.

These were delivered so users are able to control their mouse with their mouth or hand.

And additional goals are being set in Costa Rica national development plan in order to provide this type of special telecommunication devices for people with disabilities.

So Sutel is helping with these programmes. Thank you very much.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Thank you, thank you so much.

We can move to the next speaker now, again remotely attending is Mr. Rafael Eduardo Muente Schwarz, the Director of telecommunications protection Peru. Mr. Muente Schwarz, are you connected?

>> RAFAEL EDUARDO MUENTE SCHWARZ: Yes.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Great. Let me ask you the introductory questions. According to recommendations and best practices in terms of management and regulatory policy what are

the advances of Oceptel to develop policies that bridge the digital divide and in your view which are the prospective challenges in information tools that contribute to the gap closing for the next years, which actions you have been carrying out with regard to this?

>> RAFAEL EDUARDO MUENTE SCHWARZ: Thank you very much. Good afternoon in Geneva. And good morning in Peru.

Thanks for the opportunity to address the floor regarding these questions. Ociptel considers relevant that countries implement recommendations that international authorities suggest in terms of management and regulatory policies. So this will allow that public policies will be better aligned with the current sector challenges.

In this context, it is important to mention that Ociptel is the first regulator in Peru that required the OECD recommendation in the methodology. The final report officially launched in 2019, the OECD recommended aligning OCIPTEL aligns with regulatory framework with the needs of a constantly evolving sector.

In addition, it proposed to strengthen the sector coordination improving processes with automated and digital approaches influencing the exposed review of regulations developing open data systems and strengthen the account interest mechanisms.

After that, in 2022, Ociptel was assessed by the OECD to analyze the status of implementation of the 2019 recommendations. This new assessment would help Ociptel to achieve excellence in management. One of the main values pursued by our entity.

After this assessment process, whose final report will be published next April, we are proud to announce that Ociptel has a very good progress implementing these recommendations in order to get the world class regulator category.

On the other hand, regarding the recommendations and tools provided by the ITU, Ociptel takes the ICT regulatory tracker as one of the main reference tools for monitoring and comparison on issues on telecommunications regulatory management.

Oregon to the results published in 2022, Peru keeps good performance in its regulatory management, ranking third among the regional countries with a score of 86 out of 100 maximum. It is important ton point out that Peru has got the maximum possible score in component C4, competence ensure framework which is 28 points.

In addition, the regulatory management of Peru is in the fourth regulation generation, G4, qualified as an integrated regulation directed by the objectives of social and economic policy. This generation is the highest category that has been

reached internationally, equal in countries the countries in the region such as Colombia, Venezuela and others.

We are internationally recognised by the ITU to demonstrate the efficient execution in topics of competence and commitment to fulfill the mandates which guarantees not only its autonomy in regulatory decision making but warranties that there is no interference of other actors in such decisions.

Now, regarding the second issue, the second question, currently Ociptel makes available to users several applications where not only useful information can be attained but also arrangements and procedures can be carried out.

Some examples of this are check out the plan, WSIS -- WSIS 2021 award winner in access to information by the ITU and it provides information on fixed and mobile Internet plans.

We have Poncu, a sector which complies with open data information. And we have others such as (Spanish names) and many others. Despite these efforts, the challenges is still pending. For example, in matters related to networks infrastructure or sites which may be of interest to small operators or new entrants in the market that lead to companies specialized infrastructure like American tower, China tower, et cetera, which require information so that these requirements are carried out in the most efficient way.

At this point I would like to refer our recent report published by Ondia related to the deployment of fiber optics worldwide. The challenges and actions carried out by countries in the deployment of fiber optics are analyzed. One of the main problems identified is associated with the lack of information regarding infrastructure, deployment issues and considering this and fostering the de... it is important to consider the following.

The information.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Doctor, can you --

>> RAFAEL EDUARDO MUENTE SCHWARZ: I'm about to finish, thank you.

This lack of information providing data in a timely manner, technological tools for resources and in line of the aforementioned and according to our Strategic Plan this year Ociptel will start implementation of such information tools.

Thank you.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Thank you, Dr. Schwarz. I will move back to the floor now and there is Ms. Mashael Al Hammadi, Minister of communication information technology from the state of Qatar. Mrs. Al Hammadi what are the key components of digital dwution and what is cat ar doing for digital inclusion?

-- Qatar going for digital inclusion?

>> MASHAEL AL HAMMADI: Good afternoon. I'm honored to have this opportunity to express our utmost gratitude for the fruitful cooperation of all concerned parties organising WSIS Forum 2023.

Today I would like to draw your attention to critical issue of digital inclusion. Digital inclusion refers to the activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities including the most disadvantaged have access to and use of information and communication technology. As well as the digital skills that will enable them to use digital tools to achieve their social and economic integration.

Digital inclusion include five key components: Affordable and reliable Internet service, Internet enabled devices that meet the needs of the user, access the digital literacy training, quality technical support, application and online content design to enable and encourage self-sell sufficiency participation and collaboration.

The significant growth of the Internet user globally. Nearly half of the world population is still lack access to it. Significant digital disparities remain between countries, communities. And populations who are connected and those who are not sufficiently connected, meaning they are digitally excluded.

This issue affects under Developed Countries, low income households, minorities, elderly and all rural population, women, people with special needs, poor areas, and location poorly served with required infrastructure.

Digital inclusions impact an individual's rights such as the right to work, access to public service, and information, and civic participation. Those who are digitally secluded miss out on the freedom to take action.

To take action necessary information, participation in online health service and disaster alerts that can save their lives.

Moreover, they may miss out on opportunities to improve their productivity, access better paying jobs and the required digital skills.

And use mobile phones to buy goods and services or stay in touch with loved ones. In Qatar, inclusion efforts began in 2014 with digital inclusion strategy reaching out to all sectors of society. The initiatives identified six categories of people at risk on digital inclusion.

Nonworking Qatari women and women with low IT skills, school drop outs, students who did not progress in higher education and young people with low ICT skills.

Small communities outside Doha enters and retires people with special needs and finally the lowest skilled labors. A

programme of digital awareness was implemented to secure access to modern technology and necessary training, with support of all members of society. Under this initiatives, women were able to provide basic skills to enable them to use ICT. Raises social media as a channel to promote small businesses and improve their ability to access online services. By adopting relevant digital strategies nationwide, digital inclusion and governments can support inclusivity.

A different more inclusive future of the digital rights is possible if a proactive steps are taken to address challenges related to skills and digital inclusion, especially in the workspace.

In closing I would like to express my gratitude to all the General Secretariat hosting this Forum and all attendees. We wish everyone the best for a decision to -- for the decisions to come. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Thank you, thank you very much.

Next speaker is Mrs. Tatyana Kanzaveli, executive officer of the open health network. Questions for you are: What is the healthcare aspect of access to information and knowledge for all briching the digital divides and how open health network can be used to bridge digital divides and promote universal access to healthcare information and knowledge.

>> TATYANA KANZAVELI: Thank you. Distinguished Delegates, I'm honored to address this esteemed gathering on a crucial topic that affects us all: Information to information and knowledge for all. The need to bridge digital divides in healthcare.

I applaud all the initiatives owe mentioned by in panel and every country, you are not just providing digital access for information. You are on your way to improve healthcare for all.

Information and knowledge are essential for improving healthcare outcomes. Access to these resources should be universal.

If the right to access to Internet should be creds as a human right -- considered as a human right, right to healthcare as well.

There is significant disparities in access to healthcare information and knowledge, especially in low and middle income countries.

The digital divide exacerbates this problem as those without access to technology in Internet are at significant disadvantage. We are talking about health. To address this challenge we must work together to bridge the digital divide and promote universal access to information and knowledge in healthcare.

We probably all realize the importance of this in the context of COVID. We must prioritize investments in digital infrastructure, including broadband access in digital literacy programmes to ensure that people have access to resources they need to make informed healthcare decisions. In addition, we must prioritize the development and dissemination of high quality evidence-based healthcare information and knowledge in local languages, in culturally relevant formats.

This will help ensure that people can access information they need to make informed healthcare decisions that are appropriate for their specific circumstances. To promote equitable access to healthcare information and knowledge we must also engage in multistakeholder collaboration that brings together governments, Civil Society organisations private sector and other stakeholders.

We can't do it in niche players. We have to do it tosmght by working together, we can develop comprehensive solutions that address the complex challenges of bridging the digital divides in healthcare and promote universal access to information and knowledge.

In conclusion, access to information and knowledge is a fundamental human right. And we must work together to ensure that this right is respected and upheld in healthcare. By bridging digital divides and promoting universal access to information and knowledge, we can improve healthcare outcomes and promote an equitable and just world for all.

Now to the second part of the question.

The open health network is a tool that has been used by leading healthcare organisations in United States and globally. And it can be used to bridge digital divides and promote universal access to healthcare information and knowledge.

By leveraging technology in advanced data analytics, I'm glad AI has been mentioned on this panel, the open health network can provide people with realtime access to accurate, evidence-based healthcare information and knowledge regardless of their location and social economic status as long as they have access to Internet.

Okay. So again I want to thank all of you, representatives of all the countries who are making impossible possible and improving access to Internet to improve healthcare for all. Thank you.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Thank you, Ms. Kanzaveli.

Now is the turn of the last speaker today. We will have remotely, Mr. Base Rahnan, CEO of the snerdz. Are you connected, Mr. Rahman? Can you hear me?

>> BAZLUR RAHMAN: Yes, I am hear.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: I ask you two introductory question, what is the role of broadcast in contributing information ideas and knowledge for building an inclusive Information Society? And what is the role again of community radio broadcasting in bridging digital divides in Bangladesh. Please.

>> BAZLUR RAHMAN: Good evening from Bangladesh. Yes. Good evening from Bangladesh.

Do you hear me?

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: We can hear you.

>> BAZLUR RAHMAN: Okay, okay. Thank you.

Good afternoon from Bangladesh. Honorable moderator and WSIS programme, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

I am honored to be here at the WSIS Forum 2023. Basically, Bangladesh has used the network for radio and communication with the development organisation promoting community broadcasting for voices for the voiceless at the grassroots level as well as media development at the -- in line with context sensitive and knowledge given.

We are a fully harmonised with WSIS action line, C12C level and Bangladesh government also harmonised with WSIS action line, the Bangladesh process.

We are harmonised with U.N. Internet governance Forum and we received the WSIS eight for -- award for implementing the WSIS action line in Bangladesh.

We are very much involved with the U.N. open ended Working Group on security of and in use of ICT framework. As well as now we are working on U.N. global digital compact and as well as mobilizing upcoming summit, U.N. summit for the user.

According to your question, now I would like to share with you regarding the role of community radio for promoting digital ecosystem at the grassroots level.

We divided the digital ecosystem in the whole area. One is digital society. And another one is the digital economy and another one is the digital adoption.

So some of the total digital society, we are promoting digital rights for the community broadcasting antdz as well as media Your Honor turning to journalists as far as digital rights and as far as promoting digital governance also. We have created in Bangladesh, the -- the Internet government forms and various IGFs and focus on Internet governance.

Regarding the digital economy area, we are promoting eCommerce in Bangladesh as well as digital financial service and digital financial literacy at the grassroots level and regarding the digital eruption area we are very much, we are, we have a programme regarding the digital divide and also policy advocacy with the government regarding the how the divide as well as promoting the digital literacy at the grassroots level.

Affordability we are promoting, we do advocacy with our government regarding the affordability issue and as well as connectivity. Connectivity is one of the big things also, connectivity is the big area, but very important area and challenges also.

And regarding the Union scow representative comments regarding the multilingual method, we indeed policy advocacy with ICANN with Bangladesh localization for court IGF sharp am shake in 2009. As it is now, we have top level domain so that local language -- yeah?

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Mr. Rahman, we need to conclude your speech.

>> BAZLUR RAHMAN: Yes, and getting involved with permanent with ICANN.

(Voice breaking up.)

Thank you, moderator for your cooperation.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Thank you so much. Now we done have the time to share with the audience some question and answer. Tomorrow we will have the time. I will have the time to summarize in three minutes the main elements coming up from these discontinguished panelists. I will use a metaphor about the needs using the Maslow pyramid infrastructure and we see also skills and finally eServices and probably also accessibility to information.

For the final words I would like our action line Facilitator, Dr. Jelassi to close with his final remarks this session. Thank you.

>> TAWFIK JELASSI: Thank you very much. I think all panelists have stressed the key importance of access to information as the pillar for building and sustaining an Information Society. Three quick examples. Open data is the base for eGovernment and improving eServices to citizens. Open science allows countries especially in the global south to have access to scientific research and publications. And finally, open educational resource is a basis for transforming education through digital.

It is by ensuring access to information that we can empower citizens and by empowering citizens we can motivate them and we can liberate their energy for the benefit of all.

Thank you.

>> ALESSANDRO CAFORIO: Thank you. And we will give the floor to the next session now. And applause.

(Applause.)

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