

Session Outcome Document

WSIS Roundtable discussion: Small States towards meaningful connectivity: lessons learned & future perspective

Organizers: Lithuania and Singapore

28 May, 15:45 – 16:45 (UTC+02:00)

Session 464— WSIS Roundtable discussion: Small States towards meaningful connectivity:... | WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event (itu.int)

Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)

- High level representatives from different regions of small states shared their experience in building an ecosystem for meaningful connectivity. They agreed that a holistic approach is necessary.
- While small states exhibit a remarkable diversity - from island nations to landlocked states, and from developed to developing economies, they share quite similar challenges due to their size and limited resources.
- There was a clear recognition of the importance of WSIS as a time-tested implementation mechanism for collaboration and action, one that the GDC should leverage.

Towards WSIS+20 and WSIS beyond 2025, please share your views on the emerging trends, challenges, achievements, and opportunities in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines to date (5-8 bullets)

- During the session, we identified these opportunities for small states, which are the following: the concept of Gov-Tech (which is a citizen-centric approach to facilitate access to public services, and a “whole of Government” approach to digital transformation); small states as sandboxes; small states being able to respond to developments nimbly; public-private partnerships.
- Innovation (e.g. infrastructure, technology, etc.) will gradually improve meaningful connectivity.
- Digital literacy is a prerequisite for digital transformation to ensure that no one is left behind.
- We should pursue a sustainable approach to ensure connectivity.
- For small states, collaboration with other countries in their region and beyond, as well as with other stakeholder groups, is vital to succeed in their digital ambitions. WSIS and its framework of Action Lines continue to provide this mechanism for forging meaningful partnerships and action.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories (3-5 bullet points))

- Small states have many opportunities, which could serve as key drivers to achieving meaningful connectivity targets and contributing to SDGs.
- Digital transformation is not just about improving one's digital infrastructure– a holistic approach is needed.
- WSIS process, including WSIS Action Lines and WSIS Forum, have proven to be a time-tested platform for advancing digital development and digital transformation for small states – from practice sharing to finding and promoting innovative solutions and collaboration partners.

Actionable plan and key recommendations (2-5 points)

- The ITU, GDC, and other UN processes should ensure that Small States are heard and have their role to play in the future, ensuring that digital continues to boost digital development for all.
- Small states can reflect each other's needs and they are more embracing collaboration than others towards digital transformation.

Suggestions for thematic aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2025

(WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event) (one paragraph)

Small States are committed to sharing experience in achieving meaningful connectivity targets and realizing the SDGs. Small States have many opportunities, which could serve as key drivers to success of digital transformation for all. WSIS process serves as a valuable time-tested platform of global digital cooperation for small states in many aspects – from practice sharing to finding solutions and partners, from promoting innovations to the rise of new digital transformations. The ITU and GDC should safeguard this direction and ensure Small States are heard and have their role to play in the future.